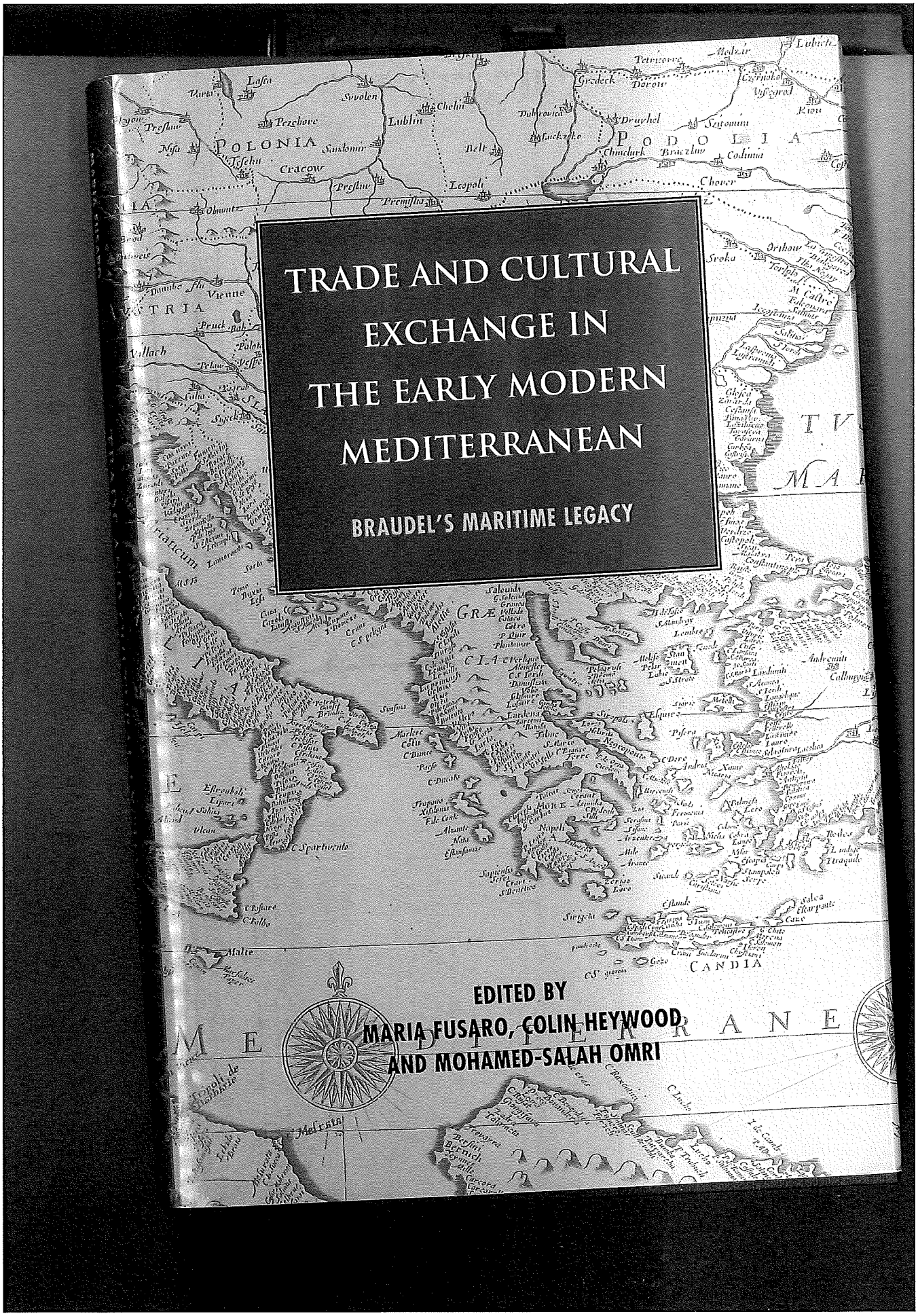
TRADE AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE IN THE EARLY MODERN MEDITERRANEAN
BRAUDEL'S MARITIME LEGACY
EDITED BY
MARIA FUSARO, COLIN HEYWOOD
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REPRESENTING THE EARLY MODERN MEDITERRANEAN IN CONTEMPORARY NORTH AFRICA

Mohamed-Salah Omri

I am not a historian, I cannot help you
(Khodja, *El-Euldj*, 1929)

Rounding off a collection of essays on exchange and cultural contacts in the early-modern Mediterranean by a discussion of historical novels is not only appropriate, it may be actually necessary. The early-modern Mediterranean gave us the very thing we call 'the novel' today. The period and the region, sixteenth century Algeria in particular, are crucial to the rise of the genre and its related subsidiaries such as captivity narratives and the historical novel, beginning in Europe and spreading later back to North Africa.[1] And like other European commodities and cultural products, the novel has travelled across the sea and beyond it. The pioneering Spanish novelist, Miguel de Cervantes, in his life as in his art, looms large across the history of the Mediterranean in the sixteenth century and has affected the way it has been perceived since then, in fiction as in historical writing.[2] Cervantes the 'historical' figure fought in the famous Battle of Lepanto in 1571 and lost his left arm there. He then moved around, serving in various Christian armies until he was captured by Algerian corsairs while he was on his way back home to Spain in 1575, and remained a captive of the 'Barbary' state of Algiers until 1580. In

[1] On Captivity narrative and the rise of the novel in the West, see, for example, Joe Snader, 'The Oriental captivity tale and early English fiction', *Eighteenth-century Fiction*, 9 (1997): 269-298. It is my great pleasure to acknowledge the help of my co-editors in completing this essay. Maria Fusaro suggested the topic itself and commented on an earlier draft while Colin Heywood provided both his perspective on Braudel and valuable historical precision on Ottoman North Africa. I am grateful also to Anissa Daoudi for providing me with rare Algerian sources for this essay. My gratitude to Abdeljalil Temimi, my mentor in all things Ottoman, is immense.

[2] Maria Antonia Garces, *Cervantes in Algiers: a captive's tale* (Nashville, 2002).

Algiers, he joined the thousands of captives in this city of 125,000 people, a city that had defeated Charles V in 1541 and had been the home of the Barbarossa brothers.[3] He also fought in the lost battles of Navarino in 1572 and at La Goletta and Tunis in 1574. Cervantes was also one of those rare figures who wrote about life on both sides of the sea, giving us a view of Christian Europe from the 'Muslim' shore as well as an account of life on the 'Barbary Coast' as experienced by Spaniards and other European captives. In fact, as Juan Goytisolo put it, only because he crossed over, so to speak, was Cervantes able to write against a Spain that he did not like.[4] Cervantes also mixed reality and fiction, by creating a protagonist based on his own life in the sixteenth century. In just a few chapters inserted in *Don Quixote*, much of the characteristic features of the period are laid out, including the movement of people across the sea, the material culture, the languages, conversion, Christian–Muslim relations, and all forms of trade.[5]

The 'spectre' of Cervantes, as a literary founding figure and as a sixteenth century Mediterranean subject, is present in the twentieth-century North African historical fiction set during that period. His themes and his times, as well as some key characters from his *Don Quixote* (Eucheli or Eulj Ali, Hassan Aga or Hassan Pasha the Venetian, Hadj Murad) figure prominently in the North African novels I explore in this essay.[6] And like Cervantes, these literary works delineate intensive contact, complex intermingling and multi-layered conflict within the Mediterranean. In addition, they engage historiography directly, attempting to intervene in the way the period is remembered today while remaining coloured by the ideologies of the moments in which they were written.

Yet, the Mediterranean, particularly during the early modern period, presents the Maghrebi novelist with both narrative as well as ideological challenges and opportunities Cervantes was not in a position to

[3] Between 1520 and 1660 more than a half a million Christian slaves ended up in Algiers. "Turks by professions" or renegades came from every European country, all the islands and as far away as Brazil see Garces, *Cervantes in Algiers*, 32, 35.

[4] He "elaborated his complex and admirable vision of Spain while in prison in the African territory, in opposition to the rival model against which he fought", Garces, *Cervantes in Algiers*, 17.

[5] He also wrote the plays: *El trato de Argel* (*The Commerce of Algiers*), *Los banos de Argel* (The Dungeons of Algiers), *El Gallardo Espagnol* (The Gallant Spaniard).

[6] Leaning on historical facts and names, Cervantes weaves out a conversion to Christianity by a wealthy and beautiful 'Moor', Zoraida, together with the story of her twin love for Lella Mariena (Virgin Mary) and a Christian captive whom she judges a gentleman who eventually rescues her and both travel back to Spain. All references are to Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quixote*, translated by Walter Starkie (New York, 1964).

anticipate. And it is remarkable, but rather surprising, to discover that the historical novel in North Africa has paid special attention to the Ottoman and early modern era. The surprise comes from the fact that this period has been particularly vilified by modern nationalist movements and the nation-states to which they gave rise across the Maghreb.[7] For in nationalist historiography – as well as in its European counterparts – the period of Ottoman and colonial rule has been seen as a time of decline, backwardness and weakness that prepared the ground for European colonial domination. But I would like to argue that it is specifically because of nationalist movements that such a considerable literature has been devoted to the pre-colonial era.[8] Indeed, other than the predictable search for explanations of the decline, the tone, themes and characters in those novels – as we will see – reveal, or rather betray, contemporary concerns, ranging from a frantic hunt for early signs of national identity, to poignant stories about religious conversion to Islam in the Mediterranean intended to counter contemporary pressures to convert into Christianity, and to literary pursuits, namely a search for stories and forms of storytelling.

Most of all perhaps, the modern writer has to deal with a major reversal of roles between the Maghreb and Europe which has taken place between the sixteenth and the twentieth centuries. It has involved most aspects of the relationship – conversions, trade, power relations, language and culture, and the movement of people. In the sixteenth century, France was in Algeria as a captive, in metaphorical terms, not as a master. This reversal of fortunes is key to understanding the phenomenon of religious conversion in its historical context, or as a historically-determined phenomenon that is not easily transferable, any more so than the historical conditions themselves. In addition, before the twentieth century, the dimension of modernity was not present; in other words, for Maghrebis, relating the other's modernity to the self became a new issue.[9] How to write a historical novel about assimilation, for example, while taking into

[7] For an example of history as shaped for the purposes of consolidating a new nation-state, see al-Bashir ben Slama, *al-Shaksiyya al-Tûnisiyya: khasâ'suha wa muqawvimâtuha* (The Tunisian Personality: specificities and main components) (Tunis, 1974).

[8] On national movements across the Maghreb, see the extensive study by Mohamed al-Maliki, *al-Harakah al-wataniyyah wa al-Isti'mâr fî al-Maghrib al-'arabî* (*National movement and colonialism in the Maghrib*) (Beirut, 1993). On the intersection between historiography and nationalism, see Youssef Choueiri, *Arab History and the Nation State: A study in modern Arabic historiography, 1820-1980* (London, 1989).

[9] On the relationship between Europe and Islam, see for example, Hishem Djait, *L'Europe et l'Islam* (Paris, 1978). On how Muslim societies handled modernity, see Aziz al Azmeh, *Islams and Modernities* (London, 1993). And for a detailed authoritative analysis of modern Arabic thought, see Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1789-1939* (Oxford, 1983).

account the changes that took place in Algeria between the sixteenth and the twentieth centuries? How did these writers handle the challenge?

The task of the North African novelist has been both daunting and fraught with challenges to the novel as literature as well as to discourses on colonialism and national identity. Writing the early modern history of the Maghreb, even in narrative fiction, comes with risks. How indeed is the writer to penetrate the thick layers of a recalcitrant nationalism which laid blame for European colonisation of the Maghreb at the feet of the Ottomans? How to respond to the narrative of a stifling colonialism that denied the Maghreb any historical roots – other than the Roman past? How to capture what it must have been like the day before that defining violent encounter of 1830 in Algeria, or 1881 in Tunisia? Moreover, there are the other challenges, posed essentially by the historiography of the Mediterranean as such. One of these is the task of navigating through and negotiating historiographies, East and West. For the novelist, 'Western' historiographies were both unavoidable and unsatisfactory.[10] Is the historical novel about the Maghreb destined to pass through the gates (too narrow) of stereotyping and overgeneralization – Blacks and magic, for example?[11]

And then how can it be possible to shake off (explain or explain away) the image of the Barbary pirates, that caught hold of European imagination and saw countless expressions in cultural production down to recent Disney movies.[12] The Maghreb became synonymous with piracy and barbarity, an image replicated in countless captivity tales and throughout popular European imagination.[13]

The stuff of novels, daily life, is not easy to glean from historical sources. By and large, the historian of the Mediterranean must struggle, as Heywood put it, to replace "tropes with facts".[14] But this lack of detail on individual lives, while it frustrates the traditional historian, becomes the terrain of the fiction writer, the historical novelist. For these writers, because it could not be reconstructed with any certainty or at least confidence, daily life in the early-modern Maghreb had to be imagined. In

[10] Khurayyif and Khodja rely on de La Graviere's *Les Corsaires barabaresques et la marine des romains* (Paris, 1887) to describe cities and events, even as they expose the shortcomings or bias of these very sources.

[11] Khodja, *El Euldj*, 74

[12] Note the figure of Captain Hector Barbossa in *Pirates of the Caribbean: the curse of the black pearl* (released in 2003).

[13] See Nabil Matar and Daniel Vitkus, *Piracy, Slavery and Redemption: Barbary captivity narratives from early modern England* (New York, 2001). See also Francois Moureau, *Captifs en Méditerranée (XVI^e-XVIII^e siécles) Histoires, récits et légendes* (Paris, 2008).

[14] Colin Heywood, from paper presented at the Exeter workshop, for reasons of space, the sections of his paper dealing with North Africa will be published elsewhere.

this they do not shy away from claiming to tell the truth, but it is a truth of what might have happened. In addition, linking the two (daily life and the mythical Mediterranean) sanctions a style of representation, including lyricism, empathy and even mythopoeia, in which novelists engage, liberally at times, as I will demonstrate.

In this essay I focus on five novels from, variously, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. Three are written in Arabic: al-Bashir Khurayyif's *Bullara* (1959) and *Barg Illîl* (1961), and *Jârât Abû Mûsa* (1997) by Ahmed al-Tawfiq; and two in French: *El Euldj, captif des barbaresques* by Ckukri Khodja (1929) and *Zaphira* (2007) by Abdelaziz Ferrah.[15] Only one of them has been translated into English.[16] They were written between 1929 and 2007, and thus cover the colonial period, the early independence era and the more recent past. These novels play significant roles in their respective cultures. Khurayyif's books are classics of Tunisian literature and figure prominently as school textbooks. Khurayyif (1917-1983) is the founding figure of the Tunisian realist and historical novel, most famous for mixing Tunisian dialect and Standard Arabic in his work. His *Barg Illîl* was made into a feature film in 1990 by Tunisian Director Ali Labidi. It was also translated into Spanish.[17] Khodja's novel is a landmark in Francophone Algerian literature and therefore has a political as well as historical significance. Khodja, born in Algiers in 1891, has also written another novel, *Mamoun, l'ébauche d'un ideal* (Paris, 1928). *El Euldj* was reprinted five times, the latest in 2008.[18] *Zaphira*, on the other hand, is part of a rising historical literature, much of which has appeared since the early 1990s as part of a wider interest in historical memory, examples of which include Farrah's own other works as well as *La Nuit du corsaire* (2005) by the historian Corinne Chevalier, and *Kitâb al-Amîr* (*The Book of the Emir*) (2007) by Wasini al-A'raj devoted to the life of Emir Abdelkader.[19] Ferrah

[15] All quotations from the novels refer to the following editions: Ckukri Khodja, *El-Euldj, captif des Barbaresques* (Algiers: Editions ENEP 2005); Abdelaziz Ferrah, *Zaphira*. (Algiers: Edition Alpha 2007); Bechir Khurayyif, *Bullara*, Fawzi Zmerli ed. (Tunis: bayt al-Hikma, 1992); Bechir Khurayyif, *Barg Illîl* (Tunis: Dar al-Janub, 2000); Ahmed al-Tawfiq, *Jârât Abu Moussa* (*Abu Musa's women neighbours*) (Casablanca: dar al-qubba al-zarqa', 1997).

[16] All translations from Arabic and French are mine unless specified otherwise. See also *Abu Musa's Women Neighbors*, trans. Roger Allen (Sausalito: Post Apollo Press, 2006).

[17] For more on Khurayyif, see Mahmud Tarshuna, *Min A'lâm al-riwayah fî tûnis* (*Key Figures in the Tunisian Novel*) (Tunis, 2002).

[18] For more on Khodja's work and views, see Abdelkader Djeghloul, 'Un romancier de l'identité perturbée et de l'assimilation impossible: Chukri Khodja', *Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée*, 37 (1984): 81-96.

[19] The period also has witnessed reprinting and presentation to the Algerian reader of various texts about Ottoman Algeria. These include: an Algerian edition with an Introduction by Abderrahmane Rebahi of *Alger au xviiie siècle (1788-1790): Memoirs, notes et observations d'un diplomate espion*, written by Jean-Michel Venture de Paradis (Algiers, 2006); the French

was trained as agriculture engineer and lives in Paris. He is the writer of several historical essays, including *Kahina* (1997), *Massinissa et Sophonisbe* and *L'Algérie: civilisations anciennes du Sahara* (2005). The Moroccan novel, *Jârât*, is audacious in its engagement of issues of spirituality and popular belief in Morocco, in the context of a rising interest in Islamist politics and retreat of secular literature in the region as a whole. Its author Mohamed al-Tawfiq is prominent academic and government official in Morocco. He holds a degree in history and was Dean of the Faculty of Letters in Rabat. In 2002, he was appointed Minister of Habous and Religious Affairs. In addition to essays on the history of Morocco in the nineteenth century, he has written several novels, including *Shajat hinnâ' wa qamar* (*A Henna Tree and a Moon*). *Jârât* was made into a feature film by Moroccan Director Mohamed Abderrahman Tazi in 2002. An English translation of the novel appeared in 2006.

Because this essay concludes and reflects back on the volume as a whole, I pay particular attention to the linkages between historiography and literature, the style of narrating the early modern Mediterranean in fiction, and the treatment of the key themes dealt with in the essays of the present volume, namely corsairing activities, conversion, and other forms of exchange. And because the volume engages the work and legacy of Braudel, I venture to ask a question that may seem unexpected but will prove to be rather illuminating: what do these North African novels and Braudel have in common?

North African Fictions of the Mediterranean

El Eulj, captif des barbaresques by Ckukri Khodja (1891-1967), an Algerian pioneering work of historical fiction, written in French in 1929, is the story of Bernard Ledieux, a French captive in sixteenth century Algiers, who converts to Islam, marries the daughter of his master and raises his son, Youssef, to become *mufti*. This takes place against the political backdrop of Algiers during the regime of Khayreddîn Barbarossa (1518-1536). Much of the novel's focus is the process of conversion at the intellectual and psychological, as well as social, levels. Written during a period of intensive French attempts to convert Algerian intellectuals, the novel is both an explicit and an allegorical take on its time. To stay with Algeria, *Zaphira* (2007) by Abdelaziz Ferrah traces the days of Salîm Tûmî, the last Berber king of Algiers before it turned Ottoman, overthrown by

translation by Louis Adrien Berbrugger and D. Monnereau of *Topographie et histoire générale d'Alger* by Diego de Haedo, presented by Abderrahmane Rebahi (Algiers, 2004); *Les captifs à Alger d'après la relation de Emmanuel d'Aranda, jadis esclave a Alger (XVIIe siècle)*, Introduction by Latifa El Hassar-Zeghari (Algiers, 2004); *L'Algérie Durant la période ottomane* (Algiers, 2002) by Mahfoud Kaddache consists of extracts from original texts, maps, etc…

Khayreddîn's brother and predecessor 'Arûj in 1516.[20] It goes into the details of the politics, society, love and tribal alliances, corsairs and captives, the Spanish and the adventurers, with 'Arûj at the helm. Salim, who is much loved by his people and by his wife Zaphira, is put under pressure to curb corsair activity by either striking an alliance with the Spanish or fighting them on his own. He calls in 'Arûj, the ruler of parts of Algeria and who had liberated Djerba from the Spanish earlier; and Bel Qadi, a local tribal leader, to form an alliance against the Spanish. 'Arûj falls in love with Zaphira and kills Salim, but she rejects him and takes her own life to preserve the memory of her husband. Zaphira is of Berber origin, proud and defiant, and is clearly intended as a symbol for an unattainable Algeria.[21] The novel is deeply concerned with the Berber legacy and the identity of Algeria as well as the uses (and misuses) of religion, and tribal affairs.

Dealing with the same transition in neighbouring Tunisia, Bechir Khurayyif's *Bullara* was conceived and drafted in Arabic in 1959, but actually published only in 1992. The novel is set in the late 1560s/early 1570s and tells the story of three princesses, Bullara, the daughter of the deposed Hafsid sultan, Mulay Hamida; Aisha, the daughter of Haydar Pasha ruler of Kairawan, and Malika the daughter of Ali Pasha, the ruler of Algiers (Cervantes' Euceli). All three unite to help liberate Tunis from the Spanish (carried out in fact by 'Eulj Ali Pasha and Sinan Pasha in 1574), with Bullara leading the action.[22] Love stories, intrigue, travel and war fill the novel. The bulk of events is told by the Raïs Sha'shu' forty years after the fact. This is then a historical recollection of history written shortly after Tunisia's independence and during a period of reflection and search for a narrative of direction as well as national cohesion. Khurayyif published an offshoot of *Bullara* titled *Barg Illîl* as early as 1961. The key player in the novel is Barg Illîl (literally, 'night lightning' in the Tunisian dialect), who is the black slave of a famous scientist (Ahmad ben Nakhli).[23] He falls in love with Rym, a married free woman, whom he

[20] For the political and military details of the period see Charles-André Julien, *History of North Africa from the Arab Conquest to 1830* (London, 1970), 273-284.

[21] Here Zaphira recalls Dido and perhaps the Berber Queen Kahena at once. The queen comes from Zakkar, the Meliana region, where women are said to have legendary beauty, masters the art of love and serves as political council to her husband and her son Yahia, heir to the throne. (The present essay is dedicated to Zaphira's legitimate heiress, Belissa bint Issa.) For an argument for the plurality of the Maghreb, and the need to embrace the region's pre-Islamic history, see Abdelkebir Khatibi, *Le Maghreb pluriel* (Paris, 1983).

[22] For the confused political chronology of the actual events, see Julien, *North Africa*, 297-301.

[23] Is it possible that this is a reference to Cervantes' Cide Hamete Benengeli, the presumed author of the Arabic version of Quixote's story? It is worth mentioning that Khurayyif

spied listening to his singing and drumming. The novel is set forty years before *Bullara*'s time, allowing Barg Illîl to make important contributions to the struggle against the Spanish, including poisoning the water supply, which caused the Christian soldiers to fall ill and die in great numbers, prompting the invading Spaniards to flee Tunis.[24] The book presents itself as a panoramic as well as in-depth view of life in Tunis in the sixteenth century. It also rehabilitates Khayreddîn Barbarossa, and serves as a motivating message about the courage of Tunisians in defence of their land.[25]

From further to the West and also in Arabic, is *Jârât Abû Moussa* (1997), by the Moroccan Ahmad al-Tawfiq, the story of Shama (also known as Warqa'), talented servant, holy woman and the devout wife of a convert from Spain. It is also the tale of Abu Moussa, a holy man in a town run by a corrupt tyrant. The story takes place in Salé with some events set in Fes and at sea. Time is not specified but there are indications that the story is set after the reconquest of al-Andalus. Key to the novel is Funduq al-Zayt, the caravanserai where merchants from Genoa, Murcia, Alexandria, Southern France and Venice come together to trade in oil, cotton and grain. The *funduq* is also a refuge for women, including Warqa'. The latter is transported in a ship said to have been leased from Sicily's ruler; most of its crew are Christians who speak a *lingua franca* made of Arabic and European tongues.[26] Written during the last days of King Hassan II of Morocco (d. 1999), the novel is concerned with corruption, tyranny, and loss of spirituality in a society characterised by the plurality of ethnic and religious identities.

The haze, intensity and complexity of the Mediterranean in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries are the focus of these novels. They strive to be realist, historical, and relevant, all at the same time. And like the sixteenth century, the pervasive forms of exchange and interaction are observed through dramas of political intrigue, challenges to faiths, identities and various forms of sovereignty. These dramas are made readable and concrete through stories of contested love and acts of heroism as they impact on individual lives as well as communal destinies. I will focus here only on corsairing, conversion, and languages and codes.

devotes a section to Cervantes in the projected outline of his novel. The section remained unwritten.

[24] Khurayyif, *Barg Illîl*, 137.

[25] Khurayyif is unique in this focus on the local and the popular, among writers of the historical novel of his time. For the position of Khurayyif in Tunisian literature, see Moustafa Kilani, *al-adab al-hadîth wa al-mu'âsir: ishkâliyyât al-riwâya* (*Modern Contemporary [Tunisian] Literature: the novel*) (Tunis, 1990). See also the lengthy introduction by Fawzi Zmerli to his edition of *Bullara*.

[26] Al-Tawfik, *Jârât*, 42.

The canvas against which most of the novels are set is detai by Khurayyif in the novel mentioned above. Before starting his narrati he introduces what he calls a page from Tunisian history. This is a l document, which sheds light on a vision of the Mediterranean in t sixteenth century, corsairing and the historical narrative within which t novel is located. All the other novels mentioned here adhere to t narrative fairly faithfully, although their analyses or takes on it differ. T historical canvas serves both as a backdrop for the stories and justification for the relevance of writing about it in the twentieth century

Khurayyif's basic narrative is that the Mediterranean in sixteenth century was the 'Centre of the world'; therefore understand the sixteenth century allows an understanding of subsequent conflicts a alliances. According to the writer, the crux of the conflict was betw two blocks: Islam and Christianity (For example, he argues, "No Christ nation occupied the land of another nation of the same faith after t time".)[27] As a result of crusades and contact with the Muslim wo Christian nations both developed and united. The Ottomans a Suleyman the Law-giver "carried the banner of Islam" at a time wl North Africa was divided into emirates (Marinids in Fez; Hmanids Tlemçen; Hafsids in Tunis).[28] The latter's dynasty was in decay, isola and unable to control the tribes (Kairawan, for example came under Shabbis). "Our coasts" became the stage for conflict between the t main poles: the Porte and Charles V, who attacked each other's ships: t was *qarsanah* or corsairing.[29] Turks (Turkish corsairs) built their base Tripoli, Djerba, Mahdia, Tunis, and Algiers; and some of them set there and paid dues (1/5th) to the Hafside rulers. Legendary figures wc emerge: 'Arûj and Khayreddîn, and then Dragut, Captain Hassan, Eulj People liked them and they in turn were generous to the loc Khayreddîn decided to attack Tunis (either encouraged by Ibrahim Pa or because he discovered that the Sultan of Tunis was plotting aga him.[30] He landed in Bizerta (1534/A.H. 971). The Hafsid sultan sol the support of Christians and Charles V responds. Khayreddîn is defe and retreats to Annaba; his son, Sinan Junior, is captured and ta prisoner to an Italian island where he was thought to be Barbar himself at first.[31] On this canvas, whose historical sources are ra sidelined, Khurayyif and the other novelist, by and large, construct t tales of a divided sea and contested history.

[27] Khurayyif, *Bullara*, 37.
[28] Khurayyif, *Bullara*, 39; the Hafsid dynasty ruled Tunisia from 1228 to 1525.
[29] Khurayyif, *Bullara*, 40.
[30] Khurayyif, *Bullara*, 41.
[31] Khurayyif, *Bullara*, 41.

One of the most pervasive issues in these novels is corsairs and corsairing. It must be noted that Arabic makes no distinction between the terms pirate and corsair: both are *qarâsina* (singular *qursân*), derived most likely from the Turkish *korsan*, which is itself an adaptation from Italian.[32] With that in mind, it is notable that the term and the practice are neither stable nor unanimously agreed in these novels. For Khurayyif, corsairs were folk heroes, loved by a people who found their rulers wanting or impotent against foreign threat. Khayradin, as predictable, gets place of pride and is rarely blameworthy. Here is how Khurayyif describes him in *Barg Illîl*: "He was, to judge by his aura, in his eighties; and in his energy and strength, in his forties. His fair face is surrounded by the famous beard that brought him the nickname Barbrosha, a name that made Christians tremble upon hearing it; a beard he coloured regularly. And in his eyes, there was the blue of the sea. He was dressed in a loose red caftan, embroidered with golden thread. Under it, he wore a green velvet gown and an embroidered vest. Around his head, he wrapped a scarf from Mosul as a turban. Around his waist, was the sailor's belt in which were tucked two *tabanjis (tabanca/tabanji*, Turkish for pistol) and three Genoese daggers, decorated with silver and studded with precious stones. On his feet, he wore embroidered yellow slippers (*babouj*). Behind him, stood the fully armed janissaries".[33] Nothing short of this would do for someone the novels credits with delivering Tunis from Christians and setting the course for a dynasty that gave the country relative autonomy and stability for centuries.

In contrast, in *Zaphira*, piracy is described as alien to the body of the nation, a Turkish and Christian practice whose perpetuation ruins Algiers and finally delivers it to its enemy, the brutal 'Arûj who usurps Berber rule and kills a just king. The typical corsair, taking 'Arûj as a prototype, is a composite 'brute'. His arm is sculptured in pure silver in Venice; his beard is dyed the Jerbian way; his wig comes form Egypt; he himself comes from the Greek island of Mitylene. And even when he becomes ruler, he needs royal blood to confer legitimacy on himself hence his failed attempts to marry Zaphira.[34] In *El Euldj*, piracy is, poignantly, of French origin. It is said to have started there in the 1400s and developed as attacks on New World ships.[35] Known corsairs carry their reputations

[32] In modern Arabic, whether they are Khayr al-Din in these novels or Somali pirates in al-Jazeera news reports, or indeed computer hackers, they are all called *qursans*. The connotation is closer to piracy, most likely under the influence of foreign usage of the term. Arabic usage before the nineteenth century was closer to the French *course*.

[33] Khurayyif, *Barg Illîl*, 60.

[34] Farrah, *Zaphira*, 126.

[35] Farrah, *Zaphira*, 52-53.

in their names or nicknames: Catchadiablo is the composite name a captain of French origin.[36] There is also Ali ben Lemmo; Ibrahim Colchak and others. The author steers clear from condemning Kheyreddin but does not spare him either. He is described as a dictator who does not hesitate to suppress brutally his opponents. Corsairs are then politically and narratively important in all the novels, but are rarely represented as uncontested protagonists.

If corsairs carry with them the memory of their travels and conquests across the Mediterranean, converts are the locus of parallel histories or intertwined destines. Conversion permeates all the novels but is most poignantly treated in *El Euldj*, to the point that the novel can be described as the biography of a *convert*. It delves deep into the psychology of conversion and its politics, and concludes with the impossibility of final conversion. The fact that it pits the French Ledieux against Islam and Algeria is, of course, poignant and cannot be ignored for a novel written in French and under French occupation.[37] In his lengthy and informative introduction to the 2005 edition of the novel, the historian Abdelkader Djeghloul asserts: "The novelistic text, in its totality, enacts a rebellion against the ideology of assimilation, which it puts on trial and demonstrates how it is impossible to implement".[38] In fact a parallel is drawn between two moments of intensive conversion activity between Christianity and Islam, the sixteenth and the twentieth centuries. But Islam is not vindicated as the religion to convert to. Djeghloul suggests that the novel demonstrates the "impossibility of definitive conversion in the sixteenth century as in the twentieth, for a Christian as well as for an Algerian intellectual".[39]

In addition to the Ledieux model, there are three types of conversion at play in *El Euldj*. The character Cuisinier, argues that conversion is cowardice but that non-conversion leads to martyrdom. The Priest suggests that renegades are misled and will eventually regret it. Conversion is therefore a temporary phase.[40] But Ledieux remains between two exiles, two exteriorities and tries to navigate both. The name

[36] Farrah, *Zaphira*, 42-43.

[37] Ledieux is prepared for the drama of conversion; he is educated, pious (Ledieux is his name), somewhat soft but has strong opinions. This is a conversion of an intellectual designed to draw a parallel with attempts to convert educated Algerians under French rule. On French policy in Algeria and missionary activities there, see Jacques Berque, *French North Africa: the Maghreb between Two World Wars* (London, 1967).

[38] "Le texte romanesque entre ici en sa totalité en rébellion contre l'idéologie assimilationniste dont il fait procès et 'démontre' l'impossible réalisation", Khodja, *El Euldj*, 25.

[39] "Impossibilité de l'assimilation définitive au XVIe siècle comme au XXème, pour un chrétiens comme pour un intellectuel algérien", Khodja, *El Euldj*, 6.

[40] Khodja, *El Euldj*, 79.

he carries tells his status, his position and his exiles. While his name is Muslim, his title marks him out as convert, and in light of the frequency of re-conversions, a suspect. In *Zaphira* as in *Jârât*, there are examples of converts who revert to their Christianity in the end (the maid in the first and Shama's husband in the second). There are more mundane and altogether familiar reasons for conversion in these novels: putting an end to humiliation, gaining social status and integration.[41]

While religious conversion is seen as neither desirable nor sincere, bilingualism, on the other hand, is neither denied nor frowned upon. In fact, as the essays in this volume demonstrate, the Mediterranean cannot be studied without reference to its multiplicity of languages, and a standing critique of Braudel rests on his inability to draw profitably on Ottoman and Arabic sources to complete his otherwise unparalleled history of the sea in the sixteenth century. With this mixture of peoples and faiths, communication becomes an issue particularly in port cities. The novels reflect this diversity in their own way and attempt to account for it. In *El Euldj*, Youssef, the son of a convert, speaks French, which he learned in secret but does not consider his language. Distancing himself from his French father, Youssef asserts: "This language, which is yours, but which, unfortunately, will never be mine".[42] The subtext is that the emergent Muslim Algerian intellectual may speak French and believe in progress and tolerance but he will remain Muslim and Arab. Youssef recognizes his own hybridity: "I think I can have French blood running in my veins and nourish my brain with the generous food contained in Islam".[43] But not everyone is bilingual. Bernard Ledieux speaks French and his master "l'franque [i.e. *lingua franca*]".[44] "Bacille toi, ya kelb. Toi li

[41] Khodja, *Euldj* 87-8. In *Jârât*, *Bullara*, and *Zaphira* conversion remains important but not as poignant. Prominent corsairs are converts; army informants too. Bullara's lineage also reveals the extent of this diversity. She is the daughter of Juanita, the sister of Elizabeth (165), who is married to the Pasha Sinan. She is of mixed race. But the author has no problem showing her 'Tunisian' patriotism and considering hailing her as well as the black slave, Barg Illîl, as 'Tunisian' heroes and role models. On minorities, and the history of slavery in Tunisia, see the pioneering work by Abdeljalil Temimi, including 'Min ajl kitâbat târikh al-hayât al-ijtimâ'iyyah li al-aqalliya al-ifrîqiyya al-sawdâ' bi al-bilâd al-tûnisiyya: al-masâdir wa al-â'fâq' ('Towards writing the social history of the black African minority in Tunisia'), *al-majallah al-târîkhiyya al-maghribiyya* (*Maghreb Historical Revue*), 14 (1987): 61-88. For an ethnographic study of this minority group, see Mohamed Hedi Jwili, *Mujtam'ât li al-dhâkirah, mujtama'ât li al-nisyân: mâ hiya 'âthâr al'ubûdiyyah fi tûnis?* (*Communities to Remember, Communities to Forget: what are the consequences of slavery in Tunisi?*) (Tunis, 1994). See also *Etre marginal au Maghreb*, Fanny Colonna and Zakya Daoud eds., (Paris, 2003).

[42] Khodja, *El Euldj*, 167.

[43] "J'ai idée que je puis avoir du sang français dans les veines et alimenter mon cerveau de la nourriture généreuse que contient l'Islam", Khodja, *El Euldj*, 167.

[44] Khodja, *El Euldj*, 57.

comprends pas l'franque, moi nou comprends bon franci, ya na pas bono".[45] The boss gives his orders in this language, mixing Spanish, Italian, French, and Algerian Arabic. "Alli, Alli (...) viens avic moi, Lou Pacha mi donni toi trabaja li moro; a la casa de moi donar el-Khoubz et fasir al-visalle trabaja bono emchi, ya mansis".[46] There is an attempt to accommodate Turkish in a number of novels: Turkish words are used in *El Euldj*: guedi (*kedi* 'cat'), chupach (*köpek*: 'dog'), chefuti (*çifut*: pimp, dog, Jew).[47] Khurayyif uses Turkish seafaring terms and titles frequently.[48]

The novels try to replicate the linguistic complexity of the period, including formulaic oral poetry that seems to have survived. An effective example of this is uttered by a mythic figure in *Bullara* in the shape of an oracle:

> O companions! Much time has passed.
> Too long has been the wait.
>
> There is much hearsay,
> But no surprising news in sight.
>
> The Turks and the Spanish are heading your way,
> Scattering your gazelles in fright.[49]

Judging by the reference to the Spanish-Ottoman battles over North Africa, and in line with Khurayyif's enterprise aimed at writing the people's perspective on history, these lines, written in Tunisian colloquial Arabic, bear witness to the manner and language in which local memory preserved disruptive and devastating events in which the local population had no say.

[45] Khodja, *El Euldj*, 59.
[46] Khodja, *El Euldj*, 57.
[47] Khodja, *El Euldj*, 57.
[48] This multiplicity in languages is also revealing of power structures and hierarchies. These can be explained only through analysis of specific instances of their use. For this phenomenon in the novel, the most compelling argument remains Bakhtin's heteroglossia and his work on dialogism in the novel, where languages are not only revealing of social positions and intentions but also interact in complex ways in the narrative text. See Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination* (Austin, 1981). For a specific application of Bakhtin on a late seventeenth century text which features Turkish, Standard Arabic, colloquial dialect as well as 'high' and 'low' poetry, and where Turkish is used to gain social advantage, see Mohamed-Salah Omri, '*Adab* in the Seventeenth Century: Narrative and Parody in al-Shirbini's *Hazz al-Quhuf*', *Edebiyat*, 11 (2000): 169-196.
[49] *Yâ sâahbîi tâl wa atwâl w 'ayyit w na nrâji*
W 'ayyit min qâl w aqwâl w mâ jâsh khbar illî yfaji
Haw jâykum turk w sbân irrîm 'la irrîm sâji (Khurayyif, *Bullara*, 125).

From Fiction to History

In the course of a discussion between characters in Khodja's novel, *El Eulj, captif des barbaresques*, whose title is most likely inspired by de la Graviere's 1886 work *Les Corsaires barbaresques*, Mostepha, a rebellious notable from the sixteenth century, questions the treatment of Christian captives and the standard defence of piracy by the rulers at the time. When the debate gets tough and evidence is sought, his cornered opponent cries out: "I am not a historian; I cannot help you".[50] The Tunisian, Bechir Khurayyif introduces his 1959 novel, *Bullara*, whose focus is the Spanish/Ottoman dispute over Tunisia and Algeria in the sixteenth century, by declaring that historians are actually unable to help. He expresses dissatisfaction with 'official' history and its focus on elites, with nothing on common people and daily life. He even pushes this perceived lacuna to a narrative device. It is while reading old historical documents, his narrator declares, that he comes across a magnifying glass designed to read what is "hidden between the lines". He applies it to these documents and a story is revealed, which "quenches my thirst", he says; so he decides to report it to his readers.[51] For Khurayyif it is the lack of detail about daily life and the marginalization of popular classes that call for an imaginative reconstruction and reclaiming of hidden history. This deficiency may be caused by an official historiography which either idolised the heroes of the day or followed a strong state line.

On the narrative level, the crux of the historical novel, in a way, is that it is captive to the historical period within which it is set. If the novel strays from the period, it stops being a work of fiction.[52] Yet, this occurs again and again in our novels. Intrusions of authorial or narrator's voice occurs in *Zaphira*, *Bullara* and *El-Euldj*. This voice interferes, authorizes and guides interpretation. While describing the meadows of Algiers, the narrator of *El Euldj* observes: "This magnificent bouquet of green beauty and rich vegetation, which elicited the admiring astonishment of many officers of the French army, at the time of occupation in 1830".[53] Here the novel as a self-contained narrative looses its integrity. While it crumbles completely as a fiction at this moment, it gives away its secret key – 1830 dispels the story in order to reveal the history, the colonial factor. The novel becomes historical, in a different sense: of history, about

[50] Khodja, *El Euldj*, 52.

[51] Khurayyif, *Bullara*, 30.

[52] The key study of the historical novel remains: Georg Lukacs, *The Historical Novel* (Lincoln, 1983).

[53] "Ce bouquet magnifique de beauté verdoyante et de végétation luxuriante, qui a provoque l'étonnement admiratif de moult officiers de l'armée française, au moment de l'occupation de 1830", Khodja, *El Euldj*, 97.

history, and subject to the weight of history. Ledieux dreams that he saw thousands of soldiers invading Algeria. The narrator adds: "[T]his old El-Djezair that is being dismembered bit by bit at the moment, for the needs of an invading civilization".[54]

In *Bullara*, Khurayyif makes an analogy between moments of popular uprising against repression in the time of the novel (sixteenth century) and outside of it (1930). He explains that *Khatrat al-dâmûs* (a moment of national crisis when people rose against the Spanish and were forced to take shelter in a cave or *dâmûs*) refers to a day, as in "Days of the Arabs" in the mythopoeic narratives of Arab epic tribal raids. He further adds that recent history includes the *khatra* of 9 April 1938, when Tunisians rose against the French and many of them were killed.[55] A memory of resistance links past and present, leaving little doubt as to the didactic intent of the novel. And in *Zaphira*, with more recent history in mind, the narrator reflects on the term *jihad* and the need to be careful with it.[56] Idir reappears fighting under Spanish banner.[57] The narrator justifies the movement of this Algerian prince (son of King Salim from his first wife) over to the other camp as neither odd nor reprehensible. The Spaniards and the Berbers can collaborate because they know each other; it is the Turks who are alien.[58]

In addition, conscious of the power of representation of their cultures in Western literature informed by sensational captivity narratives and orientalist representation, these novelists 'step out' of the narrative world of their novels to engage these discourses. In *Zaphira* images of harem are faced directly and openly ("Harem, the intimacy of the home, not this harem with exotic connotations").[59] There is no narrative logic or function to the remark. To whom does the writer speak? The burden of orientalism and the need to debunk it cut through narrative directly and brutally, particularly when the book sets out a direct response to exotic depictions of harem and colonialist writing on Algerian women. Zaphira is depicted as a powerful political counsel to her husband, a fierce Berber nationalist and proud mother. Yet she also perfects the arts of love and courtship. Yet, she is not a typical odalisque or a submissive oriental woman of leisure, but a subject playing an active role in the politics of her time. Her idealization is rather political and contemporary, as she stands for the nation of Algeria.

[54] Khodja, *El Euldj*, 118.
[55] Khurayyif, *Bullara*, 122.
[56] Farrah, *Zaphira*, 216.
[57] Farrah, *Zaphira*, 450.
[58] Farrah, *Zaphira*, 451.
[59] Farrah, *Zaphira*, 307.

Another response consist in showing a thriving culture, education and social refinement in the Ottoman Maghreb (e.g., the chapter on local festivals in *Barg Illîl*; bookish culture in *El- Euldj*, spiritual learning in *Jârât*). In a discussion between Cuisinier and a priest in *El Euldj*, we are told that Africa is barbarian and stands against civilization; the *Thousand and One Nights* is evoked as a story of frightening salacity.[60] But the writer includes passages of ethnographic nature, such as a narratively unnecessary kitchen scene with explicit name dropping of local dishes and sweets.[61] The implied reader is clearly the French public. In *Bullara*, there is a typical description of popular festival. Yet Khrayif dispels certain images, for example by showing the black Barg Illîl as crafty man, clever as well as being endowed with magic, a lover and a patriot.

The role of these incursions is to mediate and 'regulate' the linkages between past and present, Western narrative and Arabic story. They also 'orient' the reader towards present and pressing action to affect changes in power relations. And it is here that *Bullara* becomes instructive, since it is a draft, or a novel in the making, not a finished one. The book includes several outlines, notes form sources, references, and comments by the author about his won characters and events. It is appropriate to ask: Is this 'problem' a structural feature of historical fiction specific to these novels – i.e., a deviation from the canonical features of the genre – or is it due to the imaginative representation of this particular transition between the early modern and the twentieth century Mediterranean? As a provisional response, I suggest that the seriousness of the task facing Maghrebi writers during and in the aftermath of colonial occupation, 'forced' them to engage historical narratives head on, and in forceful ways. To understand this, one needs to look into what motivated writers to focus on the pre-colonial period. There were clearly serious unanswered questions: Was Ottoman rule a form of colonization or a liberation? To what extent an answer to the decline and weakness of the Maghrebi states can be found in their pre-colonial history? In addition, there was need to make an argument for the origin of the nation-state, specifically Algerian, Tunisian and Moroccan identities that predate French colonial rule.[62] Intellectuals wanted to argue that the roots of colonialist interests in the regions go far back in history, locating these in broad, primarily religious, terms, as continuation of the crusades or Christian revenge over Muslim occupation of Spain. In addition, there is to the literary aim of searching for new and relevant local material for novelistic writing.

[60] Khodja, *El Euldj*, 94.
[61] Khodja, *El Euldj*, 135-7.
[62] Mohamed-Salah Omri, 'History, Literature and Settler Colonialism in North Africa', *Modern Language Quarterly*, 66 (2005): 273-298. See also Khatibi, *Le Maghreb pluriel.*

But with the Mediterranean, there are two additional layers that exercised the minds of independent historians and novelists alike. The first is the intertwined and thereby disputed history of the sea/region while the other is the tendency to lyricise the Mediterranean. To stay with the latter point for a moment, let us consider the question: What do Braudel and the twentieth century Maghrebian historical novel have in common?

The existence of the Mediterranean as a creation of poetry, myth and epic (or what I call the 'lyrical sea') is a fact no serious writer can ignore; and as we discover in this volume, it is a condition that 'infected' even the most well-intentioned of historians.[63] Is it possible to write about the Mediterranean without what might be called 'an aesthetic intrusion'? Can one put aside Virgil or Homer or even more recently, colonial literature, from French nineteenth century towering figures, such as Flaubert in his *Salammbô*, to literature about the so-called 'new Mediterranean man' written largely by French *colons*?[64] The Mediterranean was, for all intents and purposes, what I might call a Latin and Greek 'narrative colony' as far as the Arab writer is concerned. Writers of narrative, fictional and historical, perhaps Maghrebis more than others, had to contend with that legacy and heritage even as they tried to produce counter-narratives to it.[65] ("The frothing tears of the Mediterranean were rushing noisily against the monuments of El-Djezair, which were bathing their bases gently in the blue flow…").[66] Braudel could not ignore that narrative and that legacy, but was unable to connect to the Arabic tradition in his stories of the sea. Any attempt to de-mythify the process must avoid the general and systematic, and take account of the local, the

[63] "Of Algiers and Algerine society in the sixteenth century Braudel writes lyrically, but it is a lyricism deriving from Lope de Vega and the Cervantes of *The Trato de Argel* and *Don Quixote*…", Colin Heywood, 'Fernand Braudel and the Ottomans: the Emergence of an Involvement (1928-1950)', *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 23 (2008): 165-184, 168.

[64] On literature by French *colon*, see Yves Chatelain, *La vie littéraire et intellectuelle en Tunisie de 1900 à 1937* (Paris, 1937) For a critical assessment of the same, see Omri, 'Literature, History and Settler Colonialism'.

[65] Arabs did not really have the equivalents to this poetic and mythopoeic specifically Mediterranean literary heritage. Except perhaps al-Andalus and some of Sicily; and in geographical and travel writing, they largely ignored the sea in their canonical poetry and prose literature (*adab*). Popular memory, including oral poetry, however, has kept a record of encounters with the sea, as I mention above; but this literature itself was marginalized and little of it has survived. For a brief overview of Arabic literature see Roger Allen, *An Introduction to Arabic Literature* (Cambridge, 2000). For the rise of the novel, see Roger Allen, *The Arabic Novel: an Historical and Critical Introduction*, 2nd edn. (Syracuse, 1995). For responses to depictions of North African ancient history in Latin literature, see Mohamed-Salah Omri, 'Memory and Representation in Mellah's Novels', *International Journal of Francophone Studies*, 3 (2000): 33-41.

[66] "Les larmes écumeuses de la méditerranée se lançaient bourdonnantes sur les édifices d'El-Djezair, qui, baignaient mollement leurs assises dans les flots bleus", Khodja, *El-Euldj*, 49.

particular and the individual. Novels are perhaps the place where both the local and the mythopoeic find their natural home. But the work of fiction affects history in real ways, particularly at times when literature is called upon to participate in the national narrative, and to mobilize for national destinies. The novels mentioned here are part of national myth-creation processes in colonial and postcolonial North Africa. Through them, the Mediterranean is reclaimed as a component of this myth.

The novels we have discussed are Braudelian in a different sense as well: they believe in and perform events with significant wider historical import. They are *histoires évènementielles* or stories of events, rather than *histoire évènementielle* or a history of events. Characters are developed, to a certain extent, but only as they serve to clarify or recast a major event in national history: the Spanish siege of Algiers, La Goletta battles, etc. Like Braudel's work, the novelists accumulate detail, multiply reference, stylize the Mediterranean and take sides in its conflicts and antagonisms. While Braudel saw North Africa through 'Spanish eyes', Heywood tells us, the novels attempt to reverse the vantage point.[67] But this vantage point was rather useful in sparking self-reflection. Just as Cervantes saw Spain from the southern shore, Braudel's position in Algiers as he wrote his later work, may have helped him develop sensitivity to that shore, despite his neglect of Arabic and Ottoman sources, going as far as declaring: "the Mediterranean as seen from the opposite shore, upside down, had considerable impact on my vision of history".[68] Braudel argued that the Maghreb maintained its independence under Ottoman rule, a statement some Maghrebi novelist were only too happy to concur with as they imagined that independence in their work. Khurayyif's sixteenth century Tunisia is a sovereign state while Farrah's Algeria is struggling to maintain its own independence and Arabo-Berber identity from Turks and Spaniards alike.

Moreover, like Braudel, there is a tendency in these novels to focus on the sixteenth century. Almost without exception, they deal with the transition from 'native' dynasties to Ottoman rule in the face of Spanish threat and occupation. From there, in what may be termed micro-narratives, they interpret the course of history in Algeria and Tunisia, mainly. But why the sixteenth century, one might ask? The sixteenth century Mediterranean was marked by the Ottomanization of North Africa. The period also marks the entry of the English to the Mediterranean and the move of maritime action to the Atlantic, as essays

[67] Heywood, 'Fernand Braudel', 167.
[68] Heywood, 'Fernand Braudel', 169, citing Braudel, 'Personal Testimony', *Journal of Modern History*, 44 (1972): 448-467, 450.

in the present volume demonstrate. This was also an era when most North African states were largely left to their fate and developed relative autonomy from the Porte. Yet, while Braudel saw a Mediterranean world coming together in the sixteenth century, most novelists clearly disagree and therefore part ways with him.[69] This disagreement had very little to do with the sixteenth century: it was a contemporary dispute where that century was no more than the canvas of a battlefield.

Conclusion

In a book about sources and discourses, the Maghrebi historical novel set in the early modern Mediterranean manifests a cultural practice that historians would be wise not to ignore. These novels are tied closely to national narratives and contribute directly to them. In addition, on a number of levels, the North African historical novel is a discourse on historiography. The works mentioned here form part of a rising historical awareness, perhaps even of a revision of history. They participate in the recall, academic and literary alike, of history. In turn they benefit from the more nuanced historiography that has been developing largely through closer and original uses of archives and other material in local languages, examples of which make up the bulk of the present volume. This period of history was both defining and disorienting for North Africans. The novels enact dramas of impossible conversions; make manifest ambivalent feelings towards corsairing and corsairs; and search for the roots of the early-modern roots of the European colonisation of the Maghreb starting in the nineteenth century. As novels, they flesh out, albeit as fictions, individual Maghrebis (as well as foreigners) as they adjust to and affect the changing world around them, particularly in the sixteenth century. No wonder then that historians often, and more frequently in recent years, have resorted to writing fiction.[70] This imaginative presentation of history fills documentary gaps in the reconstruction of what the past may have been like while pinning fiction down to historical research. Or can it be

[69] Braudel was writing at that moment and may have been, perhaps only in part, affected by the ideological content Camus and Audisio have given to the Mediterranean as salvaging colonialism, humanizing empire and creating a new humanism; they were also all enamoured by the sea. On the ideas of Albert Camus and Gabriel Audisio, see Omri, 'Literature, History and Settler Colonialism', 284-86.

[70] Mohamed Tawfiq is professor of history; Abdelaziz Ferrah is an amateur historian; and so is Corinne Chevalier who wrote *La nuit du Corsaire* (Algiers, 2005) set between 1510 and 1570 in Algiers and *Prisonnier de Barberousse* (Paris, 1992). Mention maybe made of the novels of the leading historian Abdallah Laroui who authored three novels: *al-Ghurba* (*Exile*) (1972); *al-Fârâq* (*The Team*) (1986) and *Awrâq* (*Papers*) (1989). The famous historian Ibn Khaldoun is the subject of the novel, *al-'Allâma* (*The Scholar*) (1997) by the Moroccan academic Salim Himmish.

seen as an attempt to keep at bay the allure of the mythopoeic impulse and narrative desire that often await historians of the Mediterranean, Braudel included?