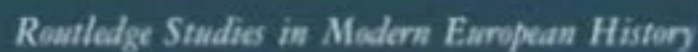

EDUCATIONAL INTERNATIONALISM IN THE COLD WAR

PLURAL VISIONS, GLOBAL EXPERIENCES

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14 "It Was the Time of Utopias, of Turbulence, the Time of Africa"

Algerian Students and French *Coopérants* in the Global 1960s

Andrea Brazzoduro

Introduction: A Different Perspective

> *To make use of the polylingualism of one's own language,*
> *to make a minor or intensive use of it,*
> *to oppose the oppressed quality of this language to its oppressive quality,*
> *to find points of nonculture or underdevelopment,*
> *linguistic Third World zones by which a language can escape*
> –(Deleuze and Guattari 1986, pp. 26–27)

Why, at a certain point during the Short Twentieth Century, did the slogan "10, 100, 1000 Vietnam!" begin to resonate in Milan as in Algiers or in Paris?[1] What was the process that led people, ideas, and revolutionary practices of the "Global South" to gradually integrate the international political agenda and political imagination? And then, more specifically, how, in various countries, did the so-called New Radical Left (Kalter 2016) – born in opposition to the "Old Left" also on the issue of the Third World – produce a "political culture" (Sirinelli 1992, 2010; Berstein 1997) also, by combining in a new way territorial and community dimensions, national belonging, and internationalism (Núñez Seixas 2019a)? How did the convergence of anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist key words occur in the context of the Cold War? And what is the place of Africa, and more generally the Third World, in this history (Brazzoduro 2020, 2021)?

I will try to answer these questions through the case study of the encounter between Algerian students and French educators who left for independent Algeria in the framework of *cooperation* (Ageron 1992; Laskaris 2018). However, unlike many valuable existing studies, I will not focus on *coopération* as the extreme attempt by France to establish a sort of neocolonial bond paradoxically, through a few tens of thousands of young idealists and *gauchistes* (Henry et al. 2012). Although important, I don't even address the issue of international organizations (Kott 2021). On the contrary, according to a bottom-up approach, here the privileged point of view is that of the actors on the ground, of individuals. Furthermore, I focus on a perspective often overlooked: that of *coopération* seen through the eyes of the Third World. More

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specifically, I was interested in the experiences and memories of Algerian high school students based in a city of modest size and located in a relatively marginal position compared to Algiers and the other main cities like Oran, Blida, and Constantine. My case study looks at a Berber region of the newly independent Algeria, the Awres, therefore avoiding the overstudied and overrepresented elite from the University of Algiers (Rahal 2016; Abrous 2002; Mokhtefi 2018). Shifting the focus from the elites attending the University of Algiers to high school students in a peripheral city consequently changes our understanding of the meaning and impact of educational *coopération*. Unlike the university elites of Algiers, many of these high school students came from the villages surrounding Batna, the colonial city capital of the Awres, and therefore they constitute a much more representative segment of the population (although in a certain way they were themselves elite compared to the very poor peasants).

I contend that we need to reconsider the genealogy and the history of the New Radical Left, in time span and scope. If in fact the New Radical Left was certainly born contesting the Cold War *status quo*, on the other hand, its real trigger was decolonization, which reactivated for at least a couple of generations the feeling of being part of a new revolutionary international: *Debut, les damnés de la terre!*, to resume the opening verse of the *International* quoted by Frantz Fanon in his most famous book published in 1961. Or, to quote Jean-Marie Boeglin (1928–2020), the leader of an illegal network supporting the Algerian National Liberation Front in the region of Lyon, France, who later went to Algeria as a *coopérant*: "It was the time of utopias, of turbulence, the time of Africa. […] We believed we were living a new era and contributing to the birth of a 'new man'. Europe was a corpse and Africa was the future".[2] The birth of this "new man" took place – or rather: it had to happen – also through the commitment to educational programs organized in the framework of *coopération*, which was understood as one of the fronts of the internationalist struggle.

In this sense, two main lines of inquiry have oriented my research. On the one hand, I opted for the periodizing sequence of the "long 1960s" (Sherman et al. 2013). This "loose" scan does not exactly coincide with the classic chronology of the Cold War, because it goes roughly from the mid-1950s to the mid-1970s, and in some cases the 1980s (Marwick 1998; Dreyfus-Armand and de Baecque 2000; Horn 2007; Klimke and Scharloth 2008; Artières and Zancarini-Fournel 2008). First of all, this choice aims to adopt a procedural interpretation. This helps to highlight long-term dynamics that do not ignore the tight chronology of political history but tend to inscribe it in a multivocal score where local, national, and global are coproduced in the same temporal measure. On the other hand – but the operation is identical, so much space and time are inseparable – I tried to visualize history differently. Certainly not to flatten my approach on a linear, homogeneous, and progressive narrative (something like "globalization") that forgets imbalances, asymmetries, and conflicts, but to find a way to focus on history in its making, on the real processes that take place *also* below and above the nation-state (De Vito 2019;

De Vito et al. 2018). This perspective – within the framework of the Global 1960s – therefore aims to redesign Western political geography, to include the (post)colonial space as well (Stoler 2016). The attempt to visualize the diffusion of ideas and practices through a heterogeneity of distant places – not only in strictly geographical terms – allows us to question the relationship between the revolutionary struggle that aims at decolonization and at affirmation of a territorial and political dimension, and the struggle of those who intend to decolonize "everyday life", as declared by the New Radical Left (Lefebvre 1958, 1961). This framework also includes that specific form of *engagement* that has been "education internationalism": that is, the choice by young militant intellectuals who have worked in the educational system (mainly at university and high school levels) to abandon their national comfort zone and go not only and for longer to factories and in the slums, but also directly into countries in the process of decolonization or having just been decolonized, to participate in the construction of a new world by dedicating oneself to the formation of the youngest.

Based on a wide range of sources (from archives to the press), this chapter is mainly grounded in long-standing ethnographic fieldwork. Through in-depth and often repeated interviews with more than 50 people – mainly men but also women – this chapter crosses my research on "historical imagination" in the Awres with a new research project still in progress on the militants of the New Radical Left during the Global 1960s.

Syphax, "A Son of Independence"

In a previous research project (Brazzoduro 2012), my investigation focused initially on the experiences and memories of the Liberation War veterans in the Awres, this region in the southeast of Algeria characterized by a mountainous relief and inhabited by an Amazigh (or "Berber", as the French used to say) population, the Chawi [see Figure 14.1].

However, facing the specificities of the fieldwork in Algeria, I quickly became interested in the children or grandchildren of these mujahidin, who often played an irreplaceable role between myself and their war-veteran parents or grandparents, acting as "fixers", or interpreters. In so doing, I discovered that – born in the 1960s – these men had often participated in their own battle: the Amazigh cultural movement, which appeared in the Awres in the nineties. More recently, the continuation of my acquaintance with the region led me to also meet the generation of the mujahidin nephews. Born in the 1980s, these young peers (or just slightly younger) are themselves developing a specific way of their being Chawi *and* Algerians in the 21st century – in dialogue, but in an independent position with respect to previous generations.

The most important of these fixers is probably Syphax (see Figure 14.2). So he calls himself, referring to the ancient Numidian king (3rd century BC).

Figure 14.1 Children and grandchildren of the *moudjahiddines* (M'Sara, 2016). Photograph by Syphax.

Figure 14.2 The author (Andrea Brazzoduro), Hadda (b. 1933), and Syphax (b. 1960) (Biskra, July 2016).

"I am currently a journalist, photographer", he tells me. "I consider myself *aurasien*, as another could be from Kabylia or from Oran … it is always Algeria".[3]

Syphax was born in 1960 in El-Madher (Tahumamt in Chawi, he is keen to tell me), in a village inhabited by many storks, nineteen kilometers from Batna,

the administrative capital of the Awres. His father was "a former *maquisard* [a member of the *maquis*, the rural guerrilla groups] … he was active in the war of liberation", Syphax tells me, before specifying modestly: but

> not all the time, as some; he was someone who helped, because he was working in an AMG [*assistance médicale gratuite*], the proximity care [*soins de proximité*] nowadays. He worked with a French doctor. He's someone who contributed, who clandestinely gave drugs to the *maquisards*…

Syphax's relationship with the war of independence (1954–1962) follows the same register with which he tells me about his father: anti-heroic, anti-rhetorical, but practical, almost a disenchanted external support.

After the end of the war in 1962 – once the French had left and taken with them the doctor for whom Syphax's father worked – Syphax's family left the village in 1965 because his father was employed in a high school in Batna. This was a relatively happy moment for the family: "I am a son of independence", Syphax tells me, which does not mean that he has known neither war nor poverty. They were a family of "*civilisés*" [civilized], as was said at the time, and that indicated a "fairly respectable social rank": the children were schooled, the family even owned a car (a Renault 4), the parents could afford to go out together, and with their six children they went off in the car for holidays.

Ten years later, in 1975–1976, the wind of the "Long Sixties" also arrived in the high school in Batna that Syphax attended, and thus began the tussle with his father, although he was a Francophone and read the newspaper every day: "… I personally did not have very good relations with my father…" "Why?" – I ask him.

> Uh … some stuff … [he laughs]… I behaved differently, I dressed differently, I put a thread on something, on my hair, I had a scarf (neck *foulard*)… It was the '70s, I really liked what was happening elsewhere: peace and love, hippies, Europe, people lived differently, imagined the world differently … There were people who lived here, who came from abroad and for whom I had a lot of admiration … how they lived … they just came back in a 2CV, a Renault 4 … an Ami 8 Citroën … if you remember those kinds of cars…

***Coopérants*, *Pieds-rouge* and "the Choice for Africa"**

For Syphax, at the time a high school student in Batna,

> They were teachers who came to teach as part of the *coopération*. Most of them were socialists, communists, or anarchists. […] We didn't have a big age gap between student and teachers, and that brought us closer

together and it was a little dangerous … [he laughs] They said that our parents were right to take up arms … They told us about Frantz Fanon, about Germaine Tillon, about communists … I kept their words in me and then I understood.

[see Figure 14.3]

The *coopérants* arrived in Algeria after independence, to make their contribution and help the new state as they could, ideally picking up the baton from the French people who had directly supported the Algerians in their struggle for independence, joining the more or less clandestine networks, among which the best known are certainly the *réseau* Jeanson and the *réseau* Curiel, the first directed by the Sartrian philosopher and co-editor of *Les Temps Modernes* Francis Jeanson (1922–2009), and the latter led by the Egyptian communist and anti-colonialist Henri Curiel (1914–1978) (Gobin 2017; Charby 2003; Hamon and Rotman 1982).

The *coopération* is without a doubt a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that cannot be reduced to a unidimensional reading: not all the *coopérants* who arrived in Algeria were political activists. As noted by the historian and former anticolonial activist René Gallisot (b. 1934), it is necessary to keep the *coopérants* distinct from the *pieds rouges* (Gallissot 2012, pp. 48–49). The latter

Figure 14.3 Out of the picture. "Alas no, I am not in the photo. The general supervisor had asked me to remove the scarf: otherwise, no photo. I chose not to remove it" (Syphax). Photograph by an unknown source.

– so called in opposition to the European settler *pieds noirs* – settled in Algeria following a conscious political choice, as internationalists and professional revolutionaries. However, it is also true that, especially in Algeria, the intersection and contamination between the two groups was very wide, in any case much more than elsewhere, where they remained clearly separate. In other parts of Africa, beyond the Algerian borders, and in particular in what at the time was called *Afrique équatoriale française* (French equatorial Africa, AEF), many took advantage of privileged situations determined by their status, and the wages of the *coopérants* (greatly increased compared to their colleagues in France) enticed more than one, certainly not just for idealistic reasons, as recently recalled by the historian of Africa Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch (b. 1935) in her memoir (Coquery-Vidrovitch 2021, Chap. 5).

Certainly, the newborn Algerian state needed resources and skills. 132 years of colonization and a terribly violent war of liberation devastated the country, systematically destroying the structure of Algerian society, culture, and economy. France responded to this urgent need for educators and technicians trying to make the most of it. As Philippe Rebeyrol, the *ministre délégué* based in Algiers since 1962, wrote: "We are accomplishing a task which not only serves Algeria but requires the maintenance and development of our presence in a region crucial for our country".[4] Although it remained a privileged interlocutor, France was not the only country to send resources to Algeria. In the context of the competition fueled by the Cold War, there was a rush to take advantage – politically and economically – of the new state's needs. If the French controlled infrastructure, the Soviets focused on mines, while the Cubans preferred the medical sector. There were also Romanians, Bulgarians, and some educators from the Middle East (mainly Egyptians) (Simon 2009, p. 201). After the coup of June 1965, in which Boumediene overthrew Ben Bella, Algeria gradually approached the Soviets. In fact, if Ben Bella had visited Havana in October 1962 immediately after being received at the White House, Boumediene would instead have made his first state visit to Moscow in December 1965. In the following years, hundreds of Algerians would go to train in the Soviet Union thanks to a substantial scholarship program, with the Soviets offering Algeria "circa 100 scholarships to its universities each academic year" (Katsakioris 2010, p. 92).

Nonetheless, it was from France that the largest number of *coopérants* came, and it is to France that the largest portion of Algerian students who could afford it would go. In 1966, according to an official record, there were 11,149 French *coopérants* in Algeria. Of these, 9,000 were civilians and 1,000 military personnel. Among civilians, there were 7,782 educators (Chaib 2016, p. 264; Kadri 2014). While keeping these differences in mind, it does not seem incorrect to speak of an "Algerian generation". This was a generation characterized by a powerful internationalist vocation and composed in a non-negligible way of intellectuals employed in one way or another in the educational system. In a recent interview, René Gallissot (who was a history teacher in Algiers, first as

a French conscript soldier during the Algerian War and then as a *coopérant*) recalled:

> To be twenty years old in 1954 made me belong to the "Algerian intellectual and political generation", that is to say marked both by the eruption of a very close war of national liberation directly questioning the nationalist ideology in France, and by the French and Soviet communist refusal to give militant priority to the liberation struggle and not to preserve the order of peaceful coexistence between the USSR and the United States. Adherence to Soviet "socialism" was replaced by the internationalism of proletarian emancipation. Since I was twenty, this internationalism of transformation of social relations in the world and the future of the human race has become and remains my constant intellectual and political criticism. Without regret or defection.
>
> (Gallissot 2016)

As sociologist Sidi Boumedine wrote, "The generation that arrives in Algeria by choice, often out of sympathy for its struggle, past or future, is a *génération en rupture* (a rebel generation, or in the process of becoming one)" (Sidi Boumedine 2012, p. 287). They rebelled against the orthodoxies characterizing Cold War France, and therefore in particular against the mainstream reading of Marx and against traditional political parties. A clue of this shift was the widespread fascination with Trotskyist tendencies, with radical Catholicism, with new Maoist currents, and, in any case, with unorthodox reinterpretations of Marx (Ruscio 2019; Arthur 2010; Pattieu 2002). However, the majority of these *gauchistes* did not have a formalized political affiliation. Historian Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, explaining her "choice for Africa", recalled:

> On my return to France [after a long period of fieldwork, mainly in Congo] I fell fairly quickly into the effervescence which exploded in May 1968. I experienced the events on the front line at the École des hautes études, where until then I had been locked into the apprenticeship of erudition. Decolonization and revolution then went hand in hand, the intellectual effervescence of the anticolonial milieu was at its peak. Everything had to be built or rebuilt: a demanding anti-Stalinist Marxism, a rethought African history.
>
> (Coquery-Vidrovitch 2021, p. 148)

Jean Peneff (b. 1939) was a high school teacher at the Lycée of Sidi bel-Abbès (1964–1967), and then a professor of sociology at the University of Algiers (1967–1971) in the framework of *coopération*. He remembers:

> The world was new. It was the end of the colonial world. And that was the end of two centuries, if you count slavery. Suddenly Europe and the US realized that their relationship with the rest of the world had to

> change. So we are withdrawing from Egypt, we are supporting the revolts in Budapest in 1956 … The struggle is clear. The struggle is fair and our generation feels they will fight. A global, Third-Worldist struggle. Everything will work and … the past is over, we escaped it, we have nothing to pay for, we are not directly responsible, but we have a duty. With regard to all the civilizations that we have marginalized, that we have eliminated, that we have oppressed, and this enterprise of *coopération* participates in this spirit.[5]

Even more straight to the point were the words of François Chevaldonné (b. 1929), based at the University of Algiers between 1963 and 1980 as professor of sociology: "As we had not been able to overthrow capitalism at home, we were going to help the Third World countries to fight colonialism and therefore to contribute to the revolution in those countries".[6] And contributing to the revolution certainly also meant bringing one's own intellectual skills, possibly as educators, where they were needed – bringing knowledge and scholars out of the ivory tower and using them in the struggle, where it was most needed.

A Traveling Political Imagination: Being Chawi, Becoming Minority

The focus on the Awres region, however, allows us to visualize some specific aspects of the encounter between Algerian students and French *coopérants* in the Global 1960s. These are aspects that do not emerge if we focus only on Algiers and its elites. It was in fact in Batna, the political and administrative capital of the Awres region, where the alliance between Islam and the nationalist movement was realized, that Syphax became aware of being a Chawi:

> I was in high school, I knew I was a Chawi, and if necessary the people from the city reminded me of it, but I did not speak Chawi, and even my parents did not speak it. Only those who came from rural areas speak it.

It is at this point that the question of belonging to a marginalized community became politically relevant, and language was the "homeland" denied. Syphax, as a teenager, remembers having started asking: "Why don't I speak? Why am I not a speaker?"

From this point began a process of political awareness, which in Boumediène Algeria could legitimately express itself only through the cultural claim. Following the 1980 "Berber Spring" in Kabylia (when, after the state prohibition of a conference on ancient Kabyle poetry by Mouloud Mammeri, there were massive demonstrations and strikes that were then severely repressed), the Amazigh Cultural Movement began to take hold in the Awres. When in the autumn of 1994 the Kabyles launched the *grève du cartable* [schoolbag strike], a school boycott to demand official recognition of the Tamazight language and its teaching in schools and universities, the second March of the Amazigh Cultural Movement [Mouvement Culturel Amazigh, MCA] was organized in

Batna (the first was in 1993, only the previous year). The claims of the MCA – of which Syphax was currently editor, spokesperson, and secretary – were: the official recognition of the Tamazight language in the Constitution, more freedom for the Chaine 2 that transmitted in Tamazight, the opening of a radio station – Radio Awres, and the access of the Tamazight to school programs. Commenting on a picture of this second march of 1994 (see Figures 14.4 and 14.5), Syphax said: "We have waved our identity cards, as you can see in the picture, and shouted that we also are Algerians … The MCA (he goes on) is a modern movement, not addressed to the past".

Figures 14.4 and 14.5

(Continued)

Figures 14.4 and 14.5 Batna, 1994: Second march of the Amazigh Cultural Movement (MCA). In Figure 14.4, in the middle: Syphax waving his ID. Photograph by an unknown source.

Today Syphax is still an activist, "Chawi, and proud of it" – as is often written on his t-shirt. At the end of the nineties, he was threatened and then physically attacked by the Islamists. In 1996 he miraculously escaped an Islamist murder attempt. The following week, he was on a plane to Paris, where he stayed for several years. But the turning point – he tells me in the interview – the beginning of the "Revolution" for this Chawi activist, was the "Long 1960s". It is then that, as a high school student, Syphax met a couple of French *coopérants*: Chris and Guilaine, just twenty years old, teaching in his school. "A couple …" it was quite a free union, he told me. They listened to Leo Ferré, Frank Zappa, Led Zeppelin …

> and I liked it. With them we traveled around the Awres as I'm doing with you. They were these *coopérants* who showed me my region… I didn't know anything about the region. I could not take a bus and spend a day going to Arris or Roufi,

some of the most beautiful sites in the region.

> It was these people who showed me, in an Ami8 Citroën, the place where we were together in Tighanimine. When I told people about it, they said,

> 'Well, what are you doing? Why don't they take you to France, it's better, what are they doing here?'… I re-did, I re-did everything I had done with them; I did it again with a personal vision, with a local vision. And I will never stop thanking them for doing that. So today I understand, I know better their inclination, what they wanted, what they were looking for … And when they went on vacation, because we had winter holidays and a spring break, they left me their home, with the records, and even with the car … So I had plenty of time to 'Europeanize' myself.

With these words, Syphax does not intend to refuse his own culture and history in exchange for the passport of another country. Instead, what is at stake is the possibility to reconquest one's own history, one's past – but looking forward to the future: in other terms, it is an issue of political imagination, and of its peculiar ability to circulate among the political networks – even unexpected ones – created by the Global 1960s, i.e., by the young internationalists who animated them, like Chris and Guilaine, the *coopérants* teaching at Syphax's school. These networks were capable of redesigning the political geography of the world, joining edges of the geographical map that were also distant, but which found themselves for a moment meeting in a mobile scenario, which was also trying to shake off the cages – practical and mental – of the "Old Left", moving beyond the Cold War *status quo*. In this translation process, Syphax converged with these young protesters who arrived in Batna, these French *coopérants* with whom he hung out. They shared a political culture rather than a political affiliation to a party: they shared – or pretended to, or dreamt to share – a way of life, musical tastes, readings, and clothing that broke with traditional codes – codes that in Syphax's case were also those of a country in the process of forced Arabization, particularly harsh against what collided with another, opposing political imagination and imagined community, and which responded to the creed of "one people, one nation, one religion". In this sense, to "Europeanize" oneself meant keeping a distance (*du recul*), it meant openly criticizing the idea of "*un seul hero, le peuple*", the anonymous actor behind which hid a crypto-fascist idea of people, only Arab and Muslim, which did not take into consideration the differences of class, gender, or race. Above all, it did not take into consideration the millennial history of Algeria before the arrival of the Arabs (Sayad 2002; McDougall 2006). In this sense, the *coopérants* indeed represented the occasion for a mutual discovery and cross-fertilization of new ideas, which mutually supported each other. There had certainly been misunderstandings and misleading projections of mutual fantasies, but "the base of the air was red" – to quote Chris Marker's masterpiece (*Le fond de l'air est rouge*, 1977) – and new perspectives and desires really seemed possible.

In this sense, the story of the scarf still tied today to Syphax's neck is revealing, taken as an identifying trait of a posture that is both nomadic (although almost more as a cowboy than a Chawi) and referring to the protesters of the Global 1960s (the handkerchief on the face to protect oneself from police tear

gas). In fact, Syphax told me that the *coopérants* left every summer in France for the holidays:

> And each time they asked me what I wanted … because it was good to bring you something from there that is impossible to find here: a camera, they brought me a camera, a zoom, then they brought me records, books, scarves … The story of the scarves began in the first year of high school.

"How did it start?" I ask him. "Well, there was a teacher who wore this with a Che Guevara sweater under his jacket". "A *coopérant* that, in high school? – I can't believe it…"; "A *coopérant*. A funny *coopérant* … eheh…"

Oral historians are well aware that informants often tell us less about events than about their meaning. Of course, interviews often shed light on unknown events, or unknown aspects of known events. But present accounts of past events (i.e., memories) can also be invaluable sources for a study of selfhood's narratives: the way in which people selectively remember – sometimes even *imagine* – the past to better cope with the present and the future.

To make this study of selfhood's narratives, I propose to make a radical shift in the field of memory studies on Algeria and France, also bearing in mind the stimulating critical reading that Marie-Claire Lavabre made of Henry Rousso's *Vichy Syndrome* at the time of its publication in 1991 (Lavabre 1991; Rousso 1991). Pushing to the extreme the polarity between past and present – a characteristic of memory – in favor of the present, Lavabre re-introduced the *choice* in the analytical scheme of Rousso. If memory is indeed a present account of a past event, the main focus in Rousso's argument was the *weight* of the past on the present: "the past that does not want to pass away" of the *Historikerstreit*, as it will become commonplace to say. For Lavabre, instead, together with the inert action of the past on the present, we have to consider the *agency* of individuals who in the present – but looking to the future – *choose* to remember (or not) a certain past. In this way, to put it in the words of Natalya Vince in a powerfully argued page of her book, the question instead of "who are we?" becomes "who do we *want* to be?" (Vince 2015). It is thus that the dimension of the political is re-introduced into the field of memory studies, which is too often reduced to a mere passive and infinite rehashing of the past.

Conclusion

Is this one of those case studies that micro-historians have called "exceptional normal" (Grendi 1977)? Historian Xosé M. Núñez Seixas has recently studied precisely these connections and cross-fertilizations between the New Radical Left, anticolonial movements, and oppressed ethnic and cultural minorities fighting for their own self-determination (Nunez Seixas 2019b). What I think we can draw from the story of Syphax, Chris, and Guilaine, who met in the Awres of the late 1970s and discovered/rediscovered (or even invented) together the country of the Chawi, is the stimulus to reassess the complexity of a period

when desires for liberation and self-determination were woven into a traveling political imagination.

In this sense, it does not seem out of place to recall Deleuze and Guattari's work in their book about Kafka and minor literature published in 1975 (Deleuze and Guattari 1975, chap. III; Deleuze and Guattari 1980, chap. X). For these authors, the concept of *minor literature* meant the "minor" use of a "major" language that subverts it from within: "the possibility of making of his own language – assuming that it is unique, that it is a major language or has been – a minor utilization" (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, p. 26). Writing as a Jew in Prague, Kafka made German "take flight on a line of escape" and joyfully became a stranger within it ("To be a sort of stranger *within* his own language").

> In this sense, Kafka marks the impasse that bars access to writing for the Jews of Prague and turns their literature into something impossible – the impossibility of not writing, the impossibility of writing in German, the impossibility of writing otherwise.
>
> (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, p. 16)

Kafka therefore serves as a model for understanding all critical language that must operate within the confines of the dominant language and culture. And it is perhaps not entirely a coincidence that one of the first research groups on the Amazigh language and culture (Groupe d'études berbères) was established in 1973 at the University of Paris-Vincennes, where Gilles Deleuze was also based (Redajala 1994; Guenoun 1999).

To conclude, were these French *coopérants* and their Algerian students Cold War Warriors or New Left Internationalists? In my case study, I will certainly say they were New Left Internationalists. And this is precisely because these militants wanted to end the maintenance of the status quo imposed by the balances of the Cold War. But this, understandably, certainly cannot be adopted as a precise historiographical definition but, rather, as an operational category that undoubtedly has more to do with self-representation. In fact, *nolens volens*, these militants were also actors of the Cold War. Yet, as the history of mentalities has taught us at least from the *Annales* onwards, cultural frameworks, discursive regimes, and repertoires of action are not idealistic prejudices but extremely effective devices in defining the conditions of the possibility of experience – what Koselleck (1979) has called the relationship between the horizon of expectation and the space of experience. Among the New Radical Left militants of the Long 1960s, one of the central ideas was that of building spaces of autonomy: just as traditional institutions were attacked, with their paternalism, the categories of nationalism and sovereignty were also challenged. The global genealogy of the revolutionary 1960s imaginary must be sought, among other factors, in the international dissemination of images, myths, and slogans – dissemination in which the role of educators, as in this case of the *coopérants*, was very important. The hypothesis from which I started is that this shift would not have been possible without a cross-fertilization process within the (post)colonial space. Taking up

the idea that we must "provincialize Europe" (Chakrabarty 2007) and deconstruct its claims of political superiority, I have tried to develop two lines of investigation.

On the one hand, I have tried to show how discourses and practices from geographical and political contexts traditionally considered "on the margins of history" – to quote Gramsci (1975) – have found a receptive ground within the trajectory of the New Radical Left. On the other hand, a close analysis of a case study – the encounter between Algerian students and French *coopérants* – has tried to show how those "margins" were the workshops that international movements looked at with the utmost attention. Certainly, I do not completely escape the risk of using "other" countries instrumentally, as a mirror, to ultimately once again tell the history from a European perspective. This awareness makes it even more necessary to reflect on translation as an antidote in order not to adopt a naïve and implicitly Orientalizing gaze: the goal is to adopt this perspective, looking "from the other side of the line" (De Sousa Santos 2010, 2018), to show how much of non-Europeanness is in European practices and historical sedimentations – and the other way round – without reading those contexts as merely functional to a political tradition and without failing to underline their differences and discontinuities.

Notes

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2 Jean-Marie Boeglin, interviewed in Atles, France, in 1995 (quoted in Simon 2009, p. 13). All translations are mine unless otherwise stated.

3 Syphax (b. 1960), interviewed in Batna, 26.04.2016. All Syphax's quotations are from this interview, although we've been in dialogue (in person, by email, or by Facebook) over the last 13 years.

4 *Letter from the Minister Delegate, Philippe Rebeyrol, to the Secretary of State for Algerian Affairs*, 20.12.1965, quoted in Chaib 2016, p. 247.

5 Interview from the documentary by Sebastien Denis, *Coopérations*, 86′, France, 2012.

6 Interview from the documentary by Sebastien Denis, *Coopérations*, 86′, France, 2012.

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