

BORDER IMPERIALISM IN THE MAGHREB

*Violence, Exploitation,
Accumulation and Resistance*

✉ **Subscribe to our newsletter:**
www.tni.org/en/subscribe

or scan the QR code:



AUTHORS: Corinna Mullin

EDITORS: Deborah Eade

DESIGN: Evan Clayburg

Published by the Transnational Institute

Amsterdam, January 2025

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: Max Aji, Essam Elkorhli, Hamza Hamouchene, Mabrouka M'Barek, Niamh Ní Bhriain, Josephine Solanki

PHOTO CREDITS: Niamh Ní Bhriain

Contents of the report may be quoted or reproduced for non-commercial purposes, provided that the source of information is properly cited. TNI would appreciate receiving a copy or link of the text in which this document is used or cited. Please note that for some images the copyright may lie elsewhere and copyright conditions of those images should be based on the copyright terms of the original source.

<http://www.tni.org/copyright>

Contents

Summary	1
Key Findings	5
Introduction	8
Glossary of Terms	9
Historical and conceptual overview	18
– Colonial border-making and anti-colonial re-imaginings	18
– The structural effects of border imperialism: Unequal exchange, super-exploitation, and the global reserve army of labour	24
A political economy of border imperialism in the Maghreb	27
– Counter-mapping the EU's Mediterranean border regime	28
– NATO's Mediterranean Border Regime	35
A political economy of Maghreb legal-institutional frameworks for migration, emigration and super-exploitation	40
– Algeria	43
– Tunisia	45
– Morocco	49
– Libya	52
Resisting border imperialism	57
Conclusion	62



Summary

Barely a week goes by without news of yet another boat capsizing in the Mediterranean as migrants attempt to reach Europe, with each tally of lives lost seeming to be higher than the last. Early December 2024 brought horrific reports of an 11-year-old girl from Sierra Leone who was found floating in the Mediterranean Sea off Italy's southernmost island of Lampedusa; the only survivor of a shipwrecked boat carrying 45 people that had departed from the port of Sfax in Tunisia.¹ She had floated in the sea for three days using innertubes inflated with air from a lifejacket before being rescued by a sailboat. The New Year brought news of at least 27 people who died in two shipwrecks off the coast of Tunisia. One of the dead was a newborn baby.² With the Zionist-imperialist assault on Syria ramping up and a significant number of right-wing European politicians calling for Syrian refugees to be repatriated, we can expect to see an increase in the number of Syrians dying at sea in the coming months.³ While the loss of life on such a scale is often described as 'tragic', this fails to capture the deliberate and structured nature of the racist anti-migrant violence prevailing in the Mediterranean. This violence has resulted in a huge death toll, with more than 2,200 people dead or missing in 2024 alone. Since 2014, at least 31,178 people have drowned or gone missing in one of the world's most perilous migrant routes⁴. Far less documented are the deaths of people crossing the Sahara, presumed to be double those that have occurred at sea.

Legal and humanitarian approaches to explaining these deaths often adopt a human rights framework to the Mediterranean border regime, focusing on the rights of refugees and asylum seekers under international law. More critical approaches shed light on the racialised dimension of border violence, emphasising the euro-centrism embedded in the ideological framework that shapes most Western migration policies and discourses. Both approaches tend to overlook the racialised and hierarchical social relations that underpin the governance of the Mediterranean between capitalist-imperialist core states and institutions, such as the European Union (EU), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United States African Command (AFRICOM) on the one hand, and peripheral states across North Africa, such as Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia on the other. These social relations are in turn determined by the core-periphery structural context, shaped by colonial legacies and maintained by imperialist economic and military interventions, which undermine the sovereignty of countries across the Maghreb as well as other parts of Africa and the global South/Global Majority. One feature of limited sovereignty is the inability of states to determine their own border policies in ways that bolster rather than undermine sovereignty, solidarity and national liberation.

The Mediterranean has sometimes been referred to as an 'empty' space, which obscures the active participation of numerous European and other neo-colonial/imperialist actors and their role in militarising the Mediterranean as well as creating the very material conditions that have led to accelerated migration across the region.⁵ The racist underpinnings of EU policies can be seen in their shifting approach to Search and Rescue Missions (SARs) in the Mediterranean. Over the 2011–2012 period, during the 'Arab uprisings' against western-backed governments in Egypt and Tunisia, followed by the NATO-led intervention in Libya, EU policymakers promoted SARs in the central and western Mediterranean. These missions suited them when the EU could

cast itself as civilised Europe saving people fleeing from chaos. The shift occurred in 2013, when the EU opted to criminalise and demonise racialised migrants crossing the Mediterranean. As detailed in a 2021 report, Frontex began to refer ‘to sea migration as a cross-border crime for the first time...present[ing] border control as its solution’ only in 2013.⁶ In a speech made at the European Commission in May 2023, David Yambio, the Spokesperson for Refugees in Libya, highlighted the hypocrisy of Western states—specifically EU member states and the US—in creating the conditions for the ‘enslavement, torture, and murder of people seeking safety’ from wars for which those very same actors bear responsibility.⁷

In addition to climate breakdown, land and resource grabs, as well as imperialist wars, the neoliberal restructuring of African economies imposed by the international financial institutions (IFIs) as part of the imperialist core’s counter-revolution against Global Majority decolonisation is designed to ensure the external orientation of African economies, unequal exchange, and debt dependency.⁸ Unsurprisingly, countries that faced structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) as a condition for obtaining loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have the highest share of their population emigrating ‘to work in low wage sectors: agriculture, construction, manufacturing, care services, logistics, transportation, and the sprouting gig economy’.⁹ This, coupled with militarisation, including Western military interventions, the construction of military bases, and the provision of training and arms often used to quell popular dissent, shape the conditions of racialised vulnerability and perpetual precarity under which states manage both the ‘immobility and mobility’ of African workers, an important source of periphery-core wealth transfer.¹⁰

This report uses the concepts of ‘capitalist racism’, neo-colonialism, imperialism and core-periphery relations to offer a comprehensive analysis of the structures, overlapping strategies, ideological frameworks, policies and practices of border governance in the Mediterranean.¹¹ It explores why people migrate and seek to eventually cross the Mediterranean, including the numerous forms of violence the Global Majority are subjected to through imperialist borders, wars, economic and military interventions. The primary aim of such neo-colonial violence, as the guerrilla intellectual Walter Rodney argued in a May 1979¹² speech at the Center for Afro-American Studies at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), is to ‘stabilize’ capitalist relations within the capitalist-imperialist core by perpetuating wealth drain from the periphery (‘They gained surplus, they gained new markets, they gained new raw material, etc.’). This stabilisation is particularly required during times of imperialist core crisis. Citing Frantz Fanon, Rodney explained that capitalist relations in the (neo)colonies are ‘extended’ through brute force.¹³ The case of the US backed zionist settler-colonial genocide against Palestinians makes clear how the ‘colonial state c[omes] as close as possible to pure violence’. Unlike the contradictions between labour and capital in ‘the metropole’, in the (neo)colonies ‘the relations of production [are] not “economic or market-determined”’, but rather determined by capitalist-imperialist violence, of which border militarisation is central.¹⁴

In the global economy, maritime transport routes account for 90% of global trade and 95% of cyberspace traffic. The Mediterranean, with its geo-strategic location and many potential ‘choke points’, is of major importance to this traffic.¹⁵ Indeed, 65% of the oil and natural gas consumed in western Europe traverses the Mediterranean. The US-NATO’s proxy war on Ukraine has reinforced the importance of imported oil and gas, especially from Algeria, to

European capital and social stability. A recent confidential NATO report highlights anxieties regarding Algeria's potential to make sovereign policy decisions, such as threats to cut gas supply to Spain.¹⁶ Core capitalist-imperialist states recognise that the rise of a multipolar world order, accelerated by the strategic advances of the Palestinian resistance and its regional allies (in particular Hezbollah, Yemen, Iran and, up until the western-backed regime change in early December 2024, Syria) in the face of genocide, will inevitably provide further policy space for states in the Maghreb to quell surplus value drain. This rapidly transforming global reality has raised the stakes and urgency of imperialist attempts to militarise and pacify the Mediterranean.

This report explores the structural dynamics and mechanisms through which the dominant border governance agents – the EU and US via NATO and the US Africa Command (AFRICOM), the Pentagon's outpost in Africa¹⁷ – attempt to maintain their geo-strategic power over the Mediterranean in the face of these overlapping crises of capitalism-imperialism. It examines the historical roots and political economy of border-making and border violence in the Mediterranean and Maghreb region. The analysis draws on Harsha Walia's concept of 'border imperialism',¹⁸ used to describe the processes 'by which the violences and precarities of displacement and migration are structurally created as well as maintained'.¹⁹ Border imperialism explains one of the key mechanisms through which unequal exchange and wealth drain from the periphery is secured, and racialised hierarchy in the international system – what W.E.B du Bois referred to as the 'global color line', is upheld. North African states subsidise European capital by providing education, healthcare, and training for documented and undocumented migrant workers in Europe, absorbing the costs of social reproduction, and effectively underwriting European capital accumulation. Borders in this sense can be understood as the lynchpin of what Charisse Burden Stelly describes as 'capitalist racism,' the 'racially hierarchical political economy and social order constituting labor superexploitation, expropriation by domination, and ongoing racial/colonial primitive accumulation.'²⁰

The report also considers the role of militarised borders and 'security' collaboration in contributing to the deliberate breakdown of regional solidarity, materially undermining possibilities for integration, a prerequisite for the region's delinking from the capitalist-imperialist core. This strategy reinforces the orientalist and patently racist dichotomy between the European 'garden' and the African 'jungle,' as described by Europe's senior diplomat Josep Borrell, where militarised borders are portrayed as a protective barrier preventing the 'jungle' from invading the 'garden.'²¹ This discursive landscape facilitates the dehumanisation of racialised migrants, relegating them to what Frantz Fanon described as the 'zone of non-being',²² a condition necessary to normalize the extreme violence they endure.

To date, the Transnational Institute's Border Wars series has focused on various aspects of deadly border regimes resulting from EU and US border policies, including an exploration of the various facets of border externalisation to third countries and what they mean in practice, exposing those profiteering both from war and conflict that force people from their homes and from the structural border violence they come up against in their search for a safe haven, or exploring how imperialism is repackaged by agencies such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), among other themes.

This framing paper contributes to our Border Wars work by weaving together various strands of our previous research, presenting a conceptual analysis of the structural dynamics and mechanisms through which Western powers, including the EU and US (via NATO and AFRICOM) attempt to maintain their geo-strategic power over the Mediterranean. The research examines the historical roots and political economy of border-making and border violence in the Mediterranean and countries across North Africa, examining the legal and institutional frameworks of four countries in the Maghreb – Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. The report concludes by looking at the forms of resistance that have emerged to border imperialism, some of which draw on the ethos of earlier anti-colonial, pan-African, and Third Worldist struggles to imagine and practise community beyond an imperialist-capitalist order.



Border fence at the Spanish Moroccan border in Melilla

Key Findings

- The Mediterranean is one of the world's deadliest borders for migrants, with at 31,178 deaths since 2014 due to EU-imposed restrictions on movement that make migration increasingly dangerous.
- The EU uses Frontex, its Border and Coast Guard, in coordination with the US-controlled NATO and AFRICOM to enforce a racialised border system that violates the human rights of migrants. This system upholds and entrenches highly unequal relations between core capitalist states and countries across Africa. Another key mechanism is the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, which oversees visas, refoulement, and the establishment of detention centres in Morocco and Tunisia where people who have been deported, often illegally, are held.
- EU migration policies, particularly the 2020 New Pact on Migration and Asylum, emphasise border 'security' and the fight against 'human trafficking', rather than the safety and well-being of migrants. Although human trafficking is certainly an issue, it should not be conflated with smuggling and can only be combatted by addressing its structural causes, linked to the same colonial legacies and crisis of capitalist-imperialism that contribute to higher levels of migration. The heightened criminalisation of migrants and the framing of rescue missions as complicity in illegal activities only contribute to the violence against migrants.
- The EU pressures countries such as Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia to act as its border guards, detaining and deporting migrants. This 'cooperation' is often coercive, based on a combination of economic incentives and sanctions in a 'carrot and stick' approach to enforce compliance. These tactics undermine the sovereignty of states across the Maghreb, preventing them from developing their own border policies and guaranteeing freedom of movement.
- As a result, migration and asylum systems across the Maghreb offer little legal protection to migrants, many of whom face arrest, labour exploitation, and limited access to essential services.
- Border imperialism plays a crucial role in stabilising the accumulation of capital by expanding and deepening the exploitation of labour and expanding the global reserve army of labour. It explains one of the key mechanisms through which unequal exchange and wealth drain from the periphery is secured, and racialised hierarchies in the international system are upheld.
- Major arms and security companies from Europe, the US, and the Zionist settler colonial state profit from border militarisation, driving a lucrative 'border security' industry that promotes further externalisation of border policies to North African states.
- For the EU and the US (via NATO and AFRICOM) enforcing border militarisation both in the Mediterranean and on the European and African continents is also a way to maintain control in the region and advance geo-strategic interests.

- Border imperialism in the Mediterranean plays a role in protecting Zionist settler colonial rule in Palestine in general, and the ongoing genocide in Palestine in particular. It ensures that an important transportation corridor for the military-industrial-complex's supply chain is kept open, and simultaneously blocks material expressions of regional solidarity with the Palestinian resistance.
- Border imperialism is rooted in colonialism. Before the eighteenth century when French, British and Italian colonial powers violently expropriated the land, resources and labour of the peoples of the Maghreb, borders were fluid in these Mediterranean countries. Colonial powers used border-making as a strategy of divide and rule and a form of enclosure to enable primitive accumulation in the colonies.
- Despite the highly unequal relations established by colonialism, before the establishment of the Schengen Area in 1985 people from Europe and the Maghreb faced minimal restrictions in crossing the Mediterranean. This very recent history has been largely forgotten, leading to the current perception that the Mediterranean has always been a space of restricted migration.
- Across the Maghreb, there are multiple forms of both grassroots and state resistance to border militarisation, often drawing on legacies of anti-colonial struggle and regional solidarity from the 50s and 60s.
- The Arabic term 'harraga', referring to the act of crossing borders without authorisation, symbolises one form of defiance. Migrants also frequently express resistance through direct actions and protests against restrictive policies and detention. States have at times resisted through opposing collaboration with imperialist border actors.
- Structurally, the rise of a multipolar world order may create more space for states to resist border imperialism by enabling them to delink from the capitalist-imperialist core and to develop and implement their own border policies in way that meets the long suppressed needs and aspirations of African peoples.



Introduction

This report explores the structural dynamics and mechanisms through which imperialist border governance agents – including the EU and the US via NATO and the US Africa Command (AFRICOM), the Pentagon’s outpost in Africa – attempt to maintain control over the Mediterranean. It examines the historical roots and political economy of border-making and border violence in the Mediterranean and Maghreb region.

Chapter 1 offers a historical and conceptual overview of colonial border-making and anti-colonial re-imaginings. It sets out how, in addition to their brute violence, the power of (neo)colonial borders lies in their being seen as natural. Contrary to their representation in mainstream media and academia, borders have not always existed in their current form and in fact have transformed the centuries-old fluidity of human movement, identities and socio-economic exchanges in the Maghreb, creating rigid structures that are designed to fragment, capture and facilitate accumulation. This chapter also explores the structural effects of border imperialism, focusing in particular on unequal exchange, super-exploitation, and the global reserve army of labour.

Chapter 2 explores the political economy of border imperialism in the Maghreb, through counter-mapping the dominant imperialist actors, corporations and mechanisms engaged in militarising and controlling the Mediterranean. The chapter focuses on how border militarisation enables unequal exchange and wealth drain from the periphery, stabilising polarised accumulation and reproducing racialised hierarchies in the world system. It does so through fueling the military-industrial-complex, facilitating neo-colonial resource extraction, the super-exploitation of labour and other forms of surplus value extraction, and undermining non/anti-capitalist forms of exchange and regional solidarity for the benefit of the capitalist-imperialist core.

Chapter 3 expands on the political economy analysis by exploring the legal and institutional frameworks for migration, emigration and super-exploitation in four Maghreb countries – Algeria, Morocco, Libya and Tunisia. This chapter adds an additional layer to the Transnational Institute’s Border Wars series by examining the political economy of the legal and institutional frameworks in these four countries, where the EU’s deadly borders regime has shaped and continues to shape domestic policy on behalf of capitalist-imperialist core accumulation.

Finally, chapter 4 looks at the forms of resistance that have emerged to border imperialism, some of which draw on the ethos of earlier anti-colonial struggles to imagine and practise community beyond a capitalist-imperialist world order.

Though the terms migrant, refugee and asylum seeker are used interchangeably throughout this report, because everyone who is on the move is, by definition, migrating from one place to another, they are generally referred to as migrants, irrespective of whether they also fall within the strictly legal definition of refugees as set out in the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, and thus avoid being bogged down in the bureaucratic and political dimensions of the terminology. Whatever the term used or however people define themselves or their status, all persons must be guaranteed the right to move to seek asylum and to live in dignity. It is the obligation of all states to uphold these rights.

Glossary of Terms

Capitalist-imperialism & surplus value

Capitalism is a political-economic system in which the means of production—the material resources and assets, such as tools, machines, raw materials, land, and infrastructure, required for a society to produce goods and services, excluding human labor—are privately owned by a capitalist class. In this system, capitalists exploit workers by compensating them with wages that represent only a fraction of the value they produce. This results in the creation of ‘surplus value,’ which accumulates as profit for the capitalist class. As explained by Marx, surplus value is the value produced by workers’ unpaid labor, forming the basis of capitalist exploitation and driving the development of both productive forces and class relations.²³ Capitalism is inherently expansionist, driven by the imperative of capital accumulation, which compels capitalists to incessantly seek new markets, resources, and labour to exploit for maximum surplus value extraction.²⁴ Marx understood economic crises as inherent to capitalism, arising from the contradictions within the process of capital accumulation, where overproduction, the falling rate of profit, and financial instability converge, ultimately revealing the systemic weaknesses of the capitalist system.²⁵ Crises of capitalist-imperialism necessitate imperialist interventions to stabilise profit accumulation in core countries.²⁶ Imperialist states are those that dominate the world system militarily, politically and economically. They control flows of capital and are net recipients of surplus value transferred from the periphery.²⁷

Capitalist-induced climate breakdown

Capitalist-induced climate breakdown can be understood through a Marxist-Leninist lens as a manifestation of the inherent contradictions within the capitalist mode of production, which prioritises profit over ecological sustainability. This relentless drive for accumulation leads to the overexploitation of natural resources, generating a ‘metabolic rift’ symbolising the alienation between humanity and nature under capitalism. John Bellamy Foster explains that Marx’s concept of the metabolic rift refers to the disruption of the natural cycles of production and reproduction under capitalism, where the extraction of resources and nutrients from the soil is disconnected from their renewal, leading to environmental degradation.²⁸

As imperialism is inherent to the capitalist mode of production it requires a relational approach to understanding climate breakdown. Ecologically unequal exchange (EUE) explains how today’s ecological crisis is deeply connected to an extractive and uneven process of global accumulation, demonstrating how global structures extract resources and labour from the Global South to sustain excessive consumption in the global north. Max Ajl, a development sociologist and Fellow at MECAM/ Université of Tunisia and the University of Ghent, and Lisa Tilley draw attention to how this system not only extracts undervalued commodities but also encloses on the ‘global atmospheric commons,’ displacing ecological harm onto the South.²⁹ Furthermore, this accumulation process is intertwined with the management of racialised populations, ‘from the engineered reproduction of plantation labour, to the arrested reproduction through forced sterilisation of Indigenous residents on land marked for primitive accumulation,’ illustrating how ecology, extraction, and population dynamics are politically interconnected within the world system.³⁰

Capitalist racism

The Wayne State University Professor of African American Studies, Charisse Burden Stelly, describes her concept of ‘capitalist racism’ as the imbrication of racialism within the capitalist mode of production. In particular, they ‘articulate the relationship between racist governmentality and the maintenance of class division, the integral role of repressive discourse in maintaining expropriation and ongoing primitive accumulation in the capitalist mode of production, and how racial hierarchy structures economic exploitation.’³¹ Burden Stelly also discusses the international dimensions, with ‘Wall Street Imperialism,’ the highest stage of capitalist racism.³²

Carceral practice

Carceral practices are the practices of the ‘carceral state’, described by Dan Berger and Toussaint Losier as a deeply entrenched system of ‘punishment, political disenfranchisement, and racial and economic inequality,’ with prisons serving as ‘the most repressive site of social control... especially concentrated by class, race, and gender.’³³ Beyond prisons, these practices are connected more broadly to all forms of policing, including of borders. Carceral practices are designed to maintain the capitalist order by enforcing racialised social control, managing the labour force, and legitimising the dispossession and exploitation especially of racialised workers. Prisons and other forms of incarceration and policing are rooted in capitalist racism, disproportionately affecting Indigenous, Black and Brown, working class and poor communities while failing to address the root causes of harm, such as legacies of slavery, settler colonial dispossession, super-exploitation, white supremacy, and systemic injustice. Instead of viewing prisons as necessary for maintaining order, radical abolitionists advocate for an end to the capitalist-imperialist system that produces harm and for a transformative justice process that prioritises healing, accountability and community-based solutions. Joy James describes abolitionism as a transformative and radical pursuit of freedom, with abolitionists acting as ‘alchemists’ who seek to fundamentally alter political and social conditions for liberation.³⁴

Dialectical Materialism and Contradictions

In *On the Question of Dialectics*, Lenin explains that dialectical materialism views reality as driven by the unity of opposites, where contradictions in nature, society, and thought are the source of development: ‘Development is the ‘struggle’ of opposites.’³⁵ He emphasises that this process is not just repetitive but involves a transformation: ‘The unity (coincidence, identity, equal action) of opposites is conditional, temporary, transitory, relative. The struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute, just as development and motion are absolute.’

Marxists understand contradictions as inherent conflicts and tensions within the capitalist system that drive historical change and social transformation. The labour-capital contradiction refers to the fundamental conflict between the interests of labour (the working class) and of capital (the capitalist class) within capitalism. The capitalist class aims to maximise profits by paying workers the lowest wages possible while extracting as much surplus value from their labour as they can, creating inherent tension. Maoists emphasise the importance of identifying the primary contradiction as the central conflict that drives the development of a situation or process, while secondary contradictions are those that exist within the context of the primary contradiction and are influenced by it.³⁶ US Imperialism can be viewed as the primary contradiction in the contemporary world system, as it exacerbates class contradictions within and between states, intensifying the exploitation of racialised and peripheralised workers in particular through perpetuating super-exploitation, unequal exchange, and polarised accumulation.

Core-periphery relations and the world system

Marxists who conceptualise capital accumulation on a world scale analyse inequality in the capitalist-imperialist system through the lens of polarised core-periphery relations. They argue that capitalist core countries exploit peripheral states for resources and labour, creating a structure of dependency that reinforces socio-economic inequalities. This exploitation occurs through unequal exchange, resulting in the undervaluing of the commodities, land, environment and labour of the periphery, thereby enabling core states to maintain their wealth and power at the expense of the periphery. As the Egyptian Marxist thinker Samir Amir put it: ‘conditions governing accumulation on a world scale...reproduce unequal development. They make clear that underdeveloped countries are so because they are superexploited and not because they are backward.’ Amin expanded on traditional core-periphery models by recognising various social classes within both the core and periphery.³⁷ Walter Rodney emphasised the historical roots of the capitalist world system in the exploitation of the land, resources and labour of the rest of the world via slavery, colonialism, and imperialism, producing structural inequality in the world system.³⁸

Core countries dominate global trade, finance, and technology. In contrast, the ‘periphery’ comprises the formerly colonised ‘underdeveloped’ states, often rich in resources yet economically exploited by

core states. These peripheral countries typically exhibit lower levels of industrialisation, dependence on primary or low value-added commodity exports in the global value chain. Core-periphery relations are by nature exploitative, as core nations extract resources and surplus value from the super-exploitation of labour in peripheral countries, hindering their economic development, autonomy and the possibility of regional integration. This relationship contributes to a global division of labour that entrenches economic disparities. Peripheral states transfer a net of surplus value to core states.

‘Peripheralisation’ refers to the process of subordinate integration into the capitalist world system. This process is characterised by the appropriation of its labour and resources by core countries, resulting in uneven development and deepening inequalities. Peripheralisation reflects the enduring structural legacies of colonialism and slavery, and the ongoing surplus value drain of imperialism. As a result, peripheral nations face structural barriers to development, with their economies externalised and moulded to serve core state interests, perpetuating a cycle of exploitation and alienation within the global capitalist system.

Global reserve army of labour

The ‘global reserve army of labour’ represents the pool of unemployed and underemployed workers, which capitalists use to discipline the work force—forcing workers to accept poorer conditions for fear of unemployment—and sustain their ability to extract surplus value from labour. This surplus labour reinforces the core-periphery dynamic by exerting downward pressure on wages, as employers in core countries can easily draw upon this reserve to keep labour costs low. Marxist economists Utsa and Prabhat Patnaik argue that the global reserve army of labour functions to maintain the stability of the monetary system by suppressing wage growth both in the metropole and the periphery. This global reserve army of labour not only holds down wages but also, outside of moments of economic crisis when the capitalist core working class is sacrificed, prevents wage-driven inflation, helping to ensure the smooth operation of capitalism.³⁹ Bellamy Foster, McChesney, and Jonna point out how the global reserve army of labour contributes to polarisation in the world system with the ‘augmentation’ of ‘imperialist rent’ that is ‘extracted from the South through the integration of low-wage, highly exploited workers into capitalist production. This then becomes a lever for an increase in the reserve army and the rate of exploitation in the North as well.’⁴⁰

Global South/global majority

Global South is another way of describing periphery states, those that have been subjected to colonial domination, imperialist extraction, and neo-colonial policies. Global South states are often characterised by underdevelopment and economic dependency, embodying the proletariat (working class) of the world system—exploited for their resources and labour by the imperialist powers of the global north. This label underscores the historical and ongoing impacts of capitalist imperialism, as well as the shared history of anti-colonial struggle. Solidarity between oppressed states and peoples within the global South (as well as with racialised and marginalised communities within the global north) have been central to the revolutionary struggle against capitalist-imperialist exploitation and domination. Institutions and gatherings like the Bandung Conference (1951), the Tricontinental conference (1966), the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which represents about two-thirds of United Nations members and 55% of the global population, G77 representing 80% and BRICS, representing 45 percent of the world’s population, have attempted at various degrees of success to challenge capitalist-imperialist domination of the world system and foster south-south cooperation.

The term ‘global majority’ emphasises the demographic reality that the overwhelming majority of the world’s population resides in global South/peripheral states. The term challenges the narrative that positions the imperialist global north as the standard-bearer of ‘progress’, ‘development’ and ‘civilisation’. Instead, it affirms the revolutionary potential of the global South, recognising that the true forces for change and liberation lie within these states and among the working masses.

Imperialist hybrid warfare

Imperialist hybrid warfare is a multifaceted strategy employed to destabilise and dominate countries that resist US imperialist/core domination. This form of warfare blends military tactics with economic, political, and ideological tools, including proxy wars, sanctions and blockades, ‘the mobilisation of US power over international institutions (such as the IMF, the World Bank, and the SWIFT wire service)...the use of information warfare to render governments and political forces to be criminals or terrorists.’⁴¹ The goal of hybrid warfare is to weaken a state’s sovereignty, undermine its social and political cohesion, and reincorporate the state within the world system of polarised accumulation. As Max Ajl contends, these interventions aim to (re)integrate anti-systemic ‘countries into models of subordinate primary-commodity export, agrarian concentration, and...the new international division of labour based on export-oriented industrialisation in strategically selected regions and concentration of technology within the core.’⁴²

Imperialist wealth drain

Imperialist wealth drain refers to the systematic extraction of wealth and resources from peripheral or colonised nations by imperialist powers, benefiting their own ruling classes and as a form of rent that helps stabilise class relations in the imperialist core. Rooted in Marxist, anti-imperialist analysis, this concept highlights how capitalist expansion relies on the exploitation of the global South to sustain profit accumulation in core states. Mechanisms of this wealth drain include genocide, imperialist/hybrid warfare, colonialism/settler colonialism, unequal exchange, among other forms. Additionally, debt accrued through colonial legacies, unequal exchange and IFI imposed structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) further entrench economic subordination and imperialist wealth drain.

Imperialist western-dominated International Financial Institutions (IFIs)

Imperialist western-dominated international financial institutions refer to entities such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and major multinational banks that operate under capitalist frameworks and exert significant influence over the economies of peripheral states. These institutions provide loans and financial assistance conditioned on the implementation of neoliberal policies, such as austerity measures, privatisation, market, labour and environmental deregulation, which prioritise the interests of capital over the needs of local populations. By enforcing such conditions, they facilitate the extraction of resources and labour from peripheral states, perpetuating cycles of debt and dependency while reinforcing global inequalities. IFI policies are designed to benefit the capitalist class in the core at the expense of the popular classes and even capital in the global South, thereby maintaining the world system.

Labour arbitrage

Labour arbitrage refers to the practice of taking advantage of the differences in labour costs—due to the structural legacies of colonialism and ongoing imperialist wealth drain—between countries or regions to reduce costs and increase profitability. This often involves relocating jobs, tasks, or business processes from high-cost labour markets to lower-cost ones, exploiting cost savings from lower operational costs, cheaper wages and social reproductive costs. A critical aspect of labour arbitrage is the ‘race to the bottom’, where largely imperialist core based monopoly corporations seek out states with the lowest labour costs and least stringent labour regulations in order to enable the super-exploitation of workers and extraction of surplus value. As Intan Suwani argues, labour arbitrage is ‘the process of [corporations] profiting from international wage differentials...taking advantage of the much lower unit labour costs in emerging economies.’⁴³

Monopoly capital

In Leninist terms, ‘monopoly capital’ refers to the ‘highest stage of capitalism’ in which there is a concentration of a small number of large enterprises that dominate resources and production.⁴⁴ This concentration results in monopolistic structures designed to stifle competition and manipulate market dynamics, enabling these firms to exert significant influence over state policies and labour conditions. The capitalists involved in these monopolies use sophisticated methods, including market manipulation, strategic alliances, and aggressive tactics like price cutting and boycotts, to crush any opposition, deepening inequality and economic instability. Under monopoly capitalism, the exploitation of workers intensifies, as corporations prioritise profit maximisation through cost-cutting measures, including reduced wages and harsher working conditions. This phase also drives the global expansion of capital, exacerbating inequalities between core and peripheral states, and highlights the inherent contradictions of capitalism, where the pursuit of profit leads to greater economic disparities and systemic instability.

Neo-colonial/imperialist actors

Neocolonial and imperialist actors within the world system are understood as forces that perpetuate polarised accumulation in the world system, economic exploitation and political domination of formerly colonised and enslaved peoples, even after the formal end of colonial rule. These include US-dominated institutions, including the IFIs, credit rating agencies and development organisations, and hegemonic powers, what the Egyptian Marxist scholar Samir Amin referred to as the ‘Triad’, led by the US and including western Europe and Japan.

Normalisation

Refers to the process by which certain Arab League states establish formal diplomatic, economic, and security relations with the settler colonial state of Israel, sidelining the opinions of the vast majority of the Arab people who support Palestinian liberation in exchange for perceived benefits like economic cooperation, investment, trade and deepening imperialist security alliances. Normalisation prioritises Arab ruling class economic and strategic interests over the Arab masses and is part of the broader imperialist project to undermine Arab nationalism and keep the region fragmented and subservient to the interests of the capitalist core. The latest phase of normalisation is the Abraham Accords, initiated in 2020 and signed by the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco, bringing the total number of officially normalised states to 6, including Egypt (in 1979) and Jordan (1994). The Accords encourage cooperation in various fields, including ‘trade, security, and cultural exchange’. Sudan also normalised relations with the Zionist entity in 2023 in return for being removed from the US ‘list of countries sponsoring terrorism’, which is used to discipline states with an anti-systemic orientation.⁴⁵ Several Gulf states, including Qatar and Saudi Arabia, maintain ‘unofficial’ economic and diplomatic relations with the Israeli settler colonial state and therefore contribute to its normalisation.⁴⁶

Racist border regime

In Harsha Walia’s framework of border imperialism,⁴⁷ the concept of a racist border regime is critical to understanding how imperialist core states govern their own as well as peripheral state borders to operate as tools of exclusion and control, reinforcing systemic racism and economic exploitation. This framework posits that borders are not merely physical demarcations but instruments of imperialism that facilitate the flow of capital and surplus value drain while managing the movement of people, particularly those from working class, racialised and oppressed communities in the global South, in a way that suits the needs of capital. As Walia argues, ‘Border controls are most severely deployed by those Western regimes that create mass displacement, and are most severely deployed against those whose very recourse to migration results from the ravages of capital and military occupations.’ The racist border regime manifests through restrictive immigration policies, militarisation, surveillance, and state violence against migrants, reinforcing unequal social relations between the global north and global South. By criminalising migration and perpetuating stereotypes about refugees and undocumented individuals, this regime serves to uphold the interests of the capitalist-imperialist state and its ruling class, reproducing colonial hierarchies. Walia’s analysis calls for the abolition of these borders and an acknowledgment of the interconnectedness of struggles against white supremacy, colonialism and capitalist-imperialism.

Settler colonialism

Settler colonialism is a specific form of colonialism characterised by the expropriation of Indigenous land and resources, genocide and ethnic cleansing as well as cultural violence and dispossession. It entails the permanent settlement of colonisers who establish control over a territory, denying Indigenous sovereignty. Central to the settler colonial project is the use of ‘foundational narratives’ of racial and civilisational superiority. Like franchise colonialism, settler colonialism is also linked to capitalist-imperialist accumulation and entails the exploitation not only of Indigenous land and resources, but also of labour, which has historically been essential to the economic development of settler colonial states as Max Ajl argues.⁴⁸

Super-exploitation

The Marxist concept of super-exploitation builds on Marx’s analysis of exploitation inherent in the capitalist mode of production. In Marxist theory, exploitation occurs when capitalists extract surplus value from workers by paying them less than the value of their labour. Super-exploitation reflects an intensified form of this process, connected to the greater vulnerability of racialised and gendered workers as the Marxist theorist and revolutionary Claudia Jones theorised.⁴⁹ In the context of the globalised capitalist division of labour and unequal exchange between the core and periphery, workers in the latter are subjected to more intense forms of exploitation.

Surplus value drain

In Marxist terms, surplus value is the difference between the value produced by labour and the actual wage paid to labourers. It represents the unpaid labour that workers contribute to the production process, which is appropriated by capitalists as profit. Surplus value drain refers to the systematic extraction of surplus value from workers in peripheral and semi-peripheral countries by capitalist interests in core nations. This process involves appropriating the difference between the value produced by labour and the wages paid to workers, enabling core countries to profit from cheaper labour in the global South while repatriating wealth back to their home economies in the imperialist core, where it benefits primarily the ruling class with some of the surplus unevenly circulated to the popular, middle and upper middle classes as part of the process of stabilising capitalism.

Third Worldist

‘Third worldist’ refers to an anti-colonial/anti-imperialist stance that emphasises the shared experiences and struggles of global South/peripheral states in the context of the capitalist-imperialist world system. Third worldist perspectives focus on issues of dependency, racialised inequality, and the necessity for a distinct path of development that prioritises the needs and aspirations of the global South, rather than simply mimicking the models of the North. This term underscores the importance of solidarity among nations in the Global South and advocates for a collective response to the wealth drain and violence of imperialism.

Uneven development

Uneven development is a relational process driven by capitalist accumulation, arising from spatially differentiated economic growth shaped by historical legacies and the specific trajectory of a state’s integration into the global capitalist economy. World system theorist Immanuel Wallerstein conceptualises exploitation along two axes creating two main contradictions: class antagonism (owner vs. labourer) and geographical antagonism (core vs. periphery). These dimensions mutually reinforce one another, as surplus drained from peripheries—facilitated by local labour exploitation—supports accumulation in core areas. Walter Rodney’s analysis in *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* emphasises how colonial exploitation and imperialism systematically undermined African development.

Unequal exchange

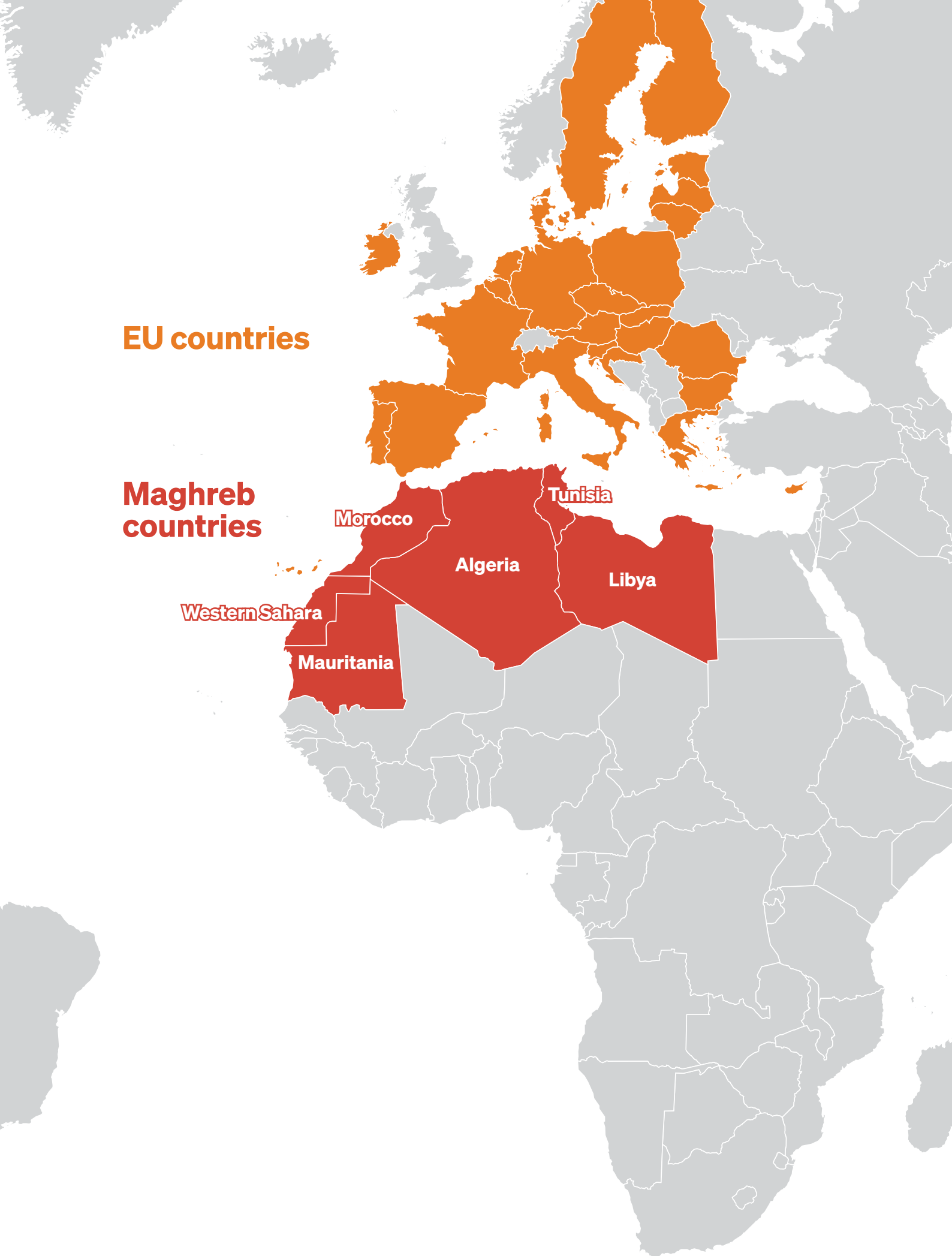
Unequal exchange refers to the systemic imbalance in international trade, where core countries exploit their economic and geopolitical advantages to secure lower prices for commodities and labour sourced from peripheral states. This issue impacts both national economies and global commodity chains, which account for over 70% of trade. As a result, peripheral states and producers are compelled to export increasing amounts of labour and resources through traded goods to the North each year to finance their imports, enabling Northern economies to extract value that benefits their capital and consumers. The dynamics of unequal exchange intensified during the 1980s and 1990s, due to the counter-revolution against socialist/developmentalist states and global South decolonisation with the introduction of SAPs across the global South.⁵⁰

Ruy Mauro Marini's concept of unequal exchange complements this analysis by examining how capitalism perpetuates the super-exploitation of labour in the global South – 'dependent capitalism'. He contends that the international division of labour under capitalism leads to a transfer of wealth from the periphery to the core, reinforcing global economic disparities.⁵¹ He asserts that super-exploitation is inherent in capitalism and grows alongside the development of productive labour power, enabling capitalists to increase profits by exploiting workers in the global South. Marini challenges Marxists who connect super-exploitation to an earlier stage of primitive accumulation, arguing that it is rather inherent in capitalism, with an increase of surplus value achieved through the payment of lower wages (or even no wages).

Zionist settler colonialism

The ideological roots of Zionism, as discussed by the Columbia Professor of Modern Arab Politics and Intellectual History, Joseph Massad, trace back to the 16th century. It was during this era that Protestant millenarianism came to link the return of Jews to Palestine with the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.⁵² Protestant intellectuals and religious movements, particularly during the Reformation in the 18th century, propagated the idea that European Jews were direct descendants of the ancient Hebrews, a concept that supported the Zionist idea of "so-called Jewish restoration to Palestine."⁵³ This religious perspective evolved into an imperialist project by the 19th century, when British and French powers, motivated by both anti-Semitic views (with Jewish migration to Palestine framed as a solution to the "Jewish question") and imperial interests, began promoting the settlement of European Jews in Palestine. They saw it as a way to establish a strategic outpost for imperial expansion in the region, especially with the Suez Canal's growing significance. In his 1977 text *Zionism and Imperialism: The Historical Origins*, Abdul Wahab Kayyali reflected on the strategic role of the Zionist settler colonial state in advancing imperialist interests in the Arab world, not only in terms of control over natural resources and markets, but also on the level of ideological warfare, stifling Arab nationalism, Arab socialism, and anti-systemic developmentalist projects in the region.⁵⁴ The creation of a Zionist settler colonial state was seen as a boon for European imperialism given the geostrategic importance of the land of Palestine, "as the gateway to Africa and the bridge to Asia" as the "growth and expansion of European imperialism...necessitated the search for new sources of raw materials and markets for the finished products, in addition to securing the lines of commercial and military communication."⁵⁵ Massad points out that the settler-colonial project in Palestine was not unique; it was part of the broader European settler colonial project in the Arab world, including Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya, often entailing extreme forms of violence, including genocide and ethnic cleansing, to control territory, labour and resources while eliminating, displacing, exploiting and impoverishing Indigenous populations.

In this paper, 'Zionist settler colonial state' is used interchangeably with the term 'Zionist entity'. As Matteo Capasso and Essam Abdelrasul Bubaker Elkorghli argue: 'The term "Zionist entity" is not a rhetorical or editorial device, it is grounded in Third Worldist understanding of 'Israel' as an imperialist-backed, settler-colonial entity implanted in the region (Kanafani 2022; Kadri 2023). The term is used in place of "Israel" and/or "state of Israel" because it aims to capture the temporary nature of this entity, whose overcoming is central to the development of the region.'⁵⁶



EU countries

Maghreb countries

Morocco

Tunisia

Algeria

Libya

Western Sahara

Mauritania



CHAPTER 1

Historical and conceptual overview



Carthage, Tunisia

Colonial border-making and anti-colonial re-imaginings

The power of imperialist borders lies in their being seen as natural, transforming the fluidity of human movement, identities, and socio-economic exchange over millennia into rigid structures designed to fragment, capture, and facilitate accumulation. For thousands of years, the people living around the Mediterranean enjoyed largely unrestricted movement. This changed with the disruption of the colonial navies and armies from the eighteenth century onwards as they violently expropriated the land, resources and labour of the peoples of the Maghreb. However, despite the highly unequal relations established by colonialism, the period preceding the establishment of the Schengen Area in 1985 was one in which people faced minimal restrictions in crossing the Mediterranean in both directions, including migration from the Maghreb and seasonal workers traveling from European countries to countries in North Africa. This very recent history has been selectively forgotten, leading to the current perception that the Mediterranean has always been a space of restricted migration.

It is not possible to understand contemporary politics of the Mediterranean without first grasping the history and dialectical relationship between western, particularly French, colonial forces and anti-colonial forces in the Maghreb, transforming the region into the entirely different type of geopolitical, social-economic space that exists today. Modern colonial domination of the region, beginning in 1830 with the French colonisation of Algeria (which ended only in 1962 with the victory of the Algerian revolution), followed by Tunisia (colonised by France from 1881 to 1956), Morocco (colonised by France and Spain between 1912 and 1956) and Libya (colonised by Italy from 1912 to 1943 followed by British administration from 1943-1951), was marked by extreme violence and profound social and economic disruptions. The colonial enclosures and new spatial orderings accompanying border-making and border militarisation were central features of colonial-capitalist accumulation. Although borders are often invoked in anti-colonial contexts because of their role in establishing the ostensible cornerstone of international law – sovereign equality – they must also be seen as both reflective and constitutive of the racialised hierarchies and deep inequalities of the international system.

A closer look at border violence reveals its prominence in managing and excluding the ‘disorder’ of historically fluid identities, non-capitalist patterns of trade, anti- or de-colonial forms of political solidarity, both material and epistemological, from a specific territory. In this sense, border-making and border violence serve to sustain capital accumulation not only as the mechanisms of surveillance, walls, policing and militarisation that underpin the security/military-industrial complex that fuels war and conflict, one of its main economic engines; they also contribute to generating precarious labour and vulnerable subjectivities required for the generation of surplus value both within the periphery as well as within the capitalist core. Colonial powers also created internal borders within territories to manage colonised populations, mobilising race as a tool of social control. Former member of the Tunisian constituent assembly and scholar, Mabrouka M’barek, argues that colonial restrictions on movement—including deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation—were as necessary for primitive accumulation as enclosures as they ensured the colonised were ‘forcibly rooted into a capitalist mode of production.’⁵⁷

Prior to colonial expansion, fluidity and mobility characterised whatever territorial demarcations existed in the region.⁵⁸ Before the 1910 Tunisian–Ottoman Treaty, which defined the border between Tunisia and Libya from the Mediterranean to a point about 16 kilometres south of Ghadames,⁵⁹ the Jeffara region where the border now lies, ‘did not correspond to a clear and defined demarcation, but rather a shifting zone.’⁶⁰ The borders drawn by European colonial powers that ignored local realities greatly affected the social fabric and economies of local populations, which had been intertwined through commercial and kinship/tribal ties for centuries; and the links between present-day Algeria and Tunisia that were equally strong. In addition to ethnic affiliations across the new borders, there were abundant intellectual and cultural exchanges between Tunis and Constantine, as well as extensive trading activities between communities along the Aures and southwest towns of Gafsa and Tozeur. Further north, the situation was similar. Colonial borders and the violence entailed in maintaining them were mobilised throughout Tunisia’s anti-colonial struggle (1952–1956) to sabotage regional and other forms of transnational solidarity.

Former colonial powers in West and North Africa, 1914



Border-making was a central feature of the French and British colonial strategy of divide and rule. Not only was it designed to break down exchange and solidarity among neighbouring countries in the region, but also to discursively and ontologically pry the Maghreb region from the rest of the African continent. The anthropologist Abdelmajid Hannoum explains that the geographic representation of the Maghreb as a distinct region was itself a product of French imperial designs and colonial racial constructions: '[...] the Maghreb itself is not only a French colonial creation but also the product of and the field of colonial power'. In the eighteenth century, Hannoum explains, colonial cartographers developed a racist lexicon to describe the region as the 'Barbary' coast, dividing it into different units such as the Kingdoms of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Tripoli, while excluding Egypt and 'Black Africa' (referred to as 'Nigrita').⁶¹ Zubairu Wai, Professor of Political Science and Global Development Studies at the University of Toronto, concurs with this assessment arguing that the region's representation as a distinct geopolitical and cultural-economic space is based on the racist and false assertion that the Saharan desert 'constituted a barrier' between North Africa and the rest of the continent with the former 'more developed because of European influences'.⁶² This framing, he contends, intentionally obscures the rich history of pre-colonial Trans-Saharan trade, which existed for thousands of years but reached its peak between the 8th and 17th centuries, connecting West Africa to the Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean.

Although inter-imperialist rivalries with the British and Italians played out in different ways across the region, France was the primary colonial power in the Maghreb. French control extended post-1943 to parts of southern Libya, the Fezzan region, which it saw as an extension of its Sahelian colonies. This legacy of French colonial domination is one of the primary causes war broke out between Libya and French-backed forces in Chad in the late 1970s/80s.⁶³ Yet France's role in the region can only be properly understood in the broader context of its structural relationship to accumulation in the capitalist-imperialist core. This dynamic explains the role of institutions like NATO in propping up French colonial rule in the face of anti-colonial resistance.⁶⁴

Revolutionary thinkers and organisers of the 1950s and 1960s understood the divide-and-rule aims of the colonial/imperialist actors and were for this reason committed to building regional unity. Groups like *L'Etoile Nord-Africaine* (The North African Star) in the 1920s and the Arab Maghreb Liberation Committee in the late 1940s,⁶⁵ chaired by the Moroccan Emir Abdelkrim El-Khattabi, were centred on the idea of Maghreb unity. Revolutionary intellectuals like Mehdi Ben Barka, Salah Ben Youssef, and Frantz Fanon not only critiqued the violence of colonial borders but also explored anti-colonial alternatives.

In his 1961 text 'Unity of the Maghreb', Mehdi Ben Barka, the Moroccan leftist-nationalist revolutionary politician and secretary of the Tricontinental Conference, emphasised the growing importance of a united Maghreb (Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia) amidst Algeria's anti-colonial revolution (1954–1962). He highlighted the widespread support for the revolution from the political leadership and populations across the Maghreb in the face of intensified French colonial violence seeking to maintain its economic and military dominance in the region. Ben Barka discussed the significance of Pan-Africanism and the solidarity expressed by other African nations in support of the Algerian independence struggle. He outlined the benefits of Maghreb unity, such as economic development, eradicating

feudal and colonial remnants, mobilising popular forces for Algeria's liberation, safeguarding democratic freedoms, and establishing a constituent assembly through universal suffrage. He confidently concluded that there is a deep yearning among the people of the Maghreb 'for unity...a united Maghreb will surely therefore come, and its people alone will decide its political and economic institutions'.⁶⁶

In his 'Letter to the African Youth' published in 1958, Fanon similarly underlined the significance of African unity for African liberation and discussed the importance of all African states joining the struggle for liberation in Algeria 'the bridgehead of Western colonialism in Africa, [which had] rabidly become the hornet's nest in which French imperialism has got itself stuck'.⁶⁷

The Tunisian Third Worldist, pan-Maghrebi and nationalist leader, Salah Ben Youssef, who propounded a more radical understanding of decolonisation than his western-oriented nationalist rival, Habib Bourguiba, also insisted on the importance of regional unity to liberation. In a statement made on 23 March 1956, Ben Youssef harshly criticised the restricted terms of Tunisia's independence as set out in a protocol signed with the French colonial government three days earlier, which he argued not only undermined Tunisia's sovereignty but also the potential for regional liberation. He called on the Tunisian people to continue struggling against colonialism and praised 'with pride the pious fighters of all territories of the Arab Maghreb who, through their sacrifices, their dedication...succeed in opening to the populations of the Arab Maghreb the path to true liberation...within the framework of solid Arab unity, and strong Afro-Asian cooperation'⁶⁸ (author's translation).

Revisiting these histories of colonial border-making and resistance underlines the centrality of 'divide-and-rule' tactics to all imperial-colonial projects, and the racist narratives regarding Indigenous peoples' inability to manage their land in 'productive' ways that have been used to justify colonial dispossession from the Spanish and Portuguese conquest of the Americas in the fifteenth century to Palestine (described by the Zionist mantra as 'a land without people for a people without land') today. Returning to the political discourse of anti-colonial revolutionaries reminds us that these colonial projects and 'origin stories' have always been resisted, not only through nationalist armed struggle but also through imagining and building alternative, liberatory social, political-economic projects. Thinking through these alternatives can help us better navigate the current context of border imperialism and resistance.

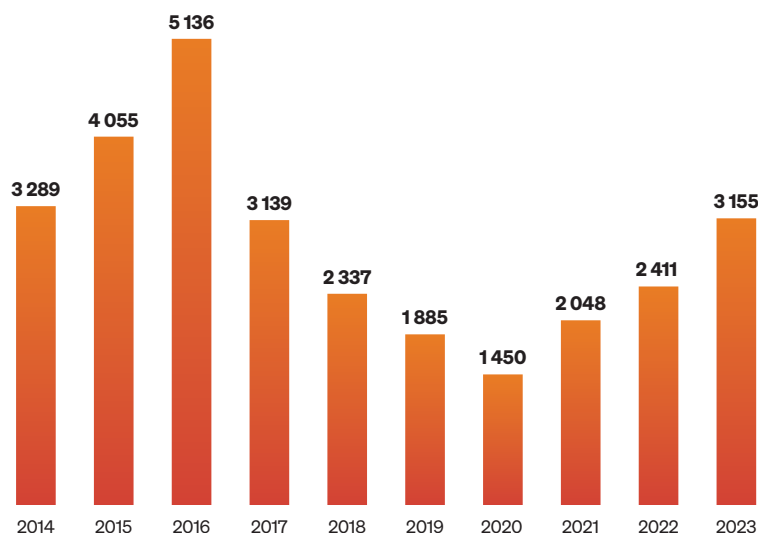
Colonial legacies and neo-colonial relations not only affected the region's border-making and border militarisation but also the political economy of dependent development immediately following formal independence. The effects and dynamics stemming from this period continue to play out and affect the region today. Imperialist economic interventions in the form of International Monetary Fund (IMF)/World Bank SAPs and 'free trade' agreements (FTAs) reversed many of the economic gains of decolonisation, ensuring a return to unequal exchange reminiscent of the colonial era between the capitalist countries in Europe and the US and Morocco and Tunisia in the 1980s, and later Algeria from the 1990s. In Libya, redistributive policies and projects of regional cooperation in the first two decades following the 1969 al-Fateh revolution were gradually reversed by unilateral sanctions imposed by the US since the early years of the revolution, which then became multilateral sanctions by the United Nations in the early 1990s. They were briefly lifted in 2003, only to be re-imposed and accelerated following

the 2011 US-led NATO enacted regime change and dismantling of the state.⁶⁹ Neo-colonial relations have facilitated the continuation of surplus value drain and transfer to the capitalist core, contributing to the burgeoning regional as well as global reserve army of labour.⁷⁰

Migration patterns to and from Algeria, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia have been shaped by various factors and have evolved in response to shifts in the global capitalist-imperialist system. From 1950 to 1973, high youth unemployment in the Maghreb, a legacy of colonial underdevelopment, coincided with Europe's post-war labor demands for reconstruction. This led to the establishment of guest-worker programmes, facilitating emigration from the region to countries like France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany, while also serving broader geopolitical goals of integrating European capital and countering the appeal of the Soviet Union and communism. During this period border control, visa requirements and other restrictions were much less onerous, and movement was far more fluid than today with various post-independence agreements signed between countries in Europe and the Maghreb.⁷¹ The European economic downturn from 1973 to 1990, driven by capitalism's declining rate of return and inherent crises, necessitated an increase in demand for lower-waged, unregulated labour alongside more restrictive immigration policies including discontinuation of the bilateral quota systems, limiting re-entry and return migration, with borders and visas functioning as a form of administrative colonialism and surveillance.⁷² 'Fortress Europe' was the 'capitalist racism' state response to the crisis as it produced the conditions of vulnerability required to squeeze more surplus value out of migrant workers coming from the former colonies.

Indeed, these policies *by design* led to a decline of 'regular' emigration to Europe from Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Morocco and a concomitant rise in undocumented migration as decades of neoliberal structural adjustment led to de-development of African economies making them ripe for labour arbitrage where workers are subjected to more intense forms of super-exploitation. This trend has been compounded by capitalist-induced climate devastation and imperialist-driven conflict and destabilisation across the continent. These developments also produced greater levels of internal displacement and mixed migration paths within the Maghreb sub-region, with Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia all serving as origin, transit, and destination countries for migrants. In the face of the increasing numbers of people on the move owing to contradictions produced by capitalist-imperialism, the Mediterranean region became a focal point for border imperialism.

GRAPHIC 1: Dead and missing migrants in the Mediterranean since 2014



Source: Missing Migrants Project

The structural effects of border imperialism: Unequal exchange, super-exploitation, and the global reserve army of labour

Border imperialism plays a crucial role in stabilising the accumulation of capital in the core by expanding and deepening the exploitation of labour in the periphery and expanding the ‘global reserve army of labour.’ This section considers some conceptual and theoretical tools that help make sense of the ways in which constructions of race and gender interact with history, class and geography to produce heightened forms of vulnerability to surplus value extraction. Historically, colonial borders provided the material means for enclosing on the land, people and resources of the periphery so that value could be extracted from them. Through the process of militarising territories, instantiating systems of identification and surveillance, colonial capital could control the movement of people for its own benefit. Mabrouka M'Barek argues that colonial powers mobilized both immobility and mobility to serve colonial capital accumulation.⁷³ In that sense, colonial and, today, imperialist borders serve a dual function: they admit those whose labour is necessary for capital's needs while holding back surplus labour until their labour is required, hence contributing to the production of racialised vulnerability, keeping workers in perpetual precarity.⁷⁴ This precarity thwarts worker organisation and solidarity, ensuring a cheap, docile labour force.⁷⁵

Marx explained how the capitalist mode of production inevitably creates a reserve army of labour comprising unemployed or underemployed workers, allowing capitalists to maintain flexibility in labour and production costs, ensuring they can quickly expand or contract their workforce in response to market demands, thereby facilitating the continued growth and dominance of capital. ‘The whole form of the movement of modern industry depends’, Marx argued, ‘upon the constant transformation of a part of the labouring population into unemployed or half-employed hands.’⁷⁶

In the contemporary phase of imperialism, global value chains have facilitated and benefited from the globalisation of the reserve army of labour.⁷⁷ The Marxist economist Prabhat Patnaik explains how surplus workers not only generate competition among themselves, driving wages

down and eroding their bargaining power, but also provide capitalists with an easily exploitable labour pool, ultimately leading to increased profits.⁷⁸ The surplus value drain that results from the global labour reserve army is not confined to global South workers and ‘eventually results in [decreases] to the *share of wages in total world output*’. Patnaik underscores the central role of imperialism in shaping the global reserve army of labour, creating the conditions in which workers face soaring unemployment rates and are compelled to accept deplorable working conditions and wages that barely enable social reproduction.

Lucia Pradella of King’s College London and Rossana Cillo of the University of Venice offer a compelling theoretical analysis of the impact of the 2011 US-led NATO intervention in Libya on labour markets, arguing that it played a crucial role in shaping the material conditions that have led to lower wages for African migrant workers in Europe’s agricultural sector.⁷⁹ Their theoretical framework is supported by empirical evidence when we consider how the imperialist destruction and fragmentation of the Libyan state enabled multinational corporations to secure cheaper resource extraction through illicit, non-state contracts, further enriching Libya’s various militias.⁸⁰ Additionally, the US-NATO intervention precipitated a dramatic devaluation of the Libyan dinar, which plummeted from 1.2 to the US dollar before 2011 to 7.5 today. This rendered Libya’s resources and labour more exploitable, amplifying the country’s contributions to the global reserve army of labor, particularly affecting Italy’s labour market.⁸¹ The militarisation of Libya’s borders has facilitated the rise of non-state militias engaged in illicit activities such as smuggling fuel and weapons, as well as human smuggling and trafficking, perpetuating a harsh cycle of detention, extortion, and forced labour that entraps migrants in Libya and at the same time propels them towards Europe.

Although the mainstream academic and policy literature presents human smuggling and trafficking as individual criminal acts, which are the cause of state intervention, a dialectical materialist analysis instead demonstrates that they are the symptom of border imperialism—as smugglers are merely opportunistic intermediaries benefiting from deteriorated social conditions produced by capitalist-imperialism. Without the violent displacement caused by the structural dynamics of capital accumulation on a world scale, smugglers would have no one to smuggle. Pradella and Cillo show how human smuggling networks in Libya profit off migrants’ desperation to reach Europe, charging exorbitant rates for dangerous and often fatal boat trips to Italy, where there is a demand for super-exploitable labour in the agricultural sector. African migrant workers departing from Libya undocumented and traumatised by their journey, are often forced into exploitative labour conditions, such as working in the “caporalato” (gangmaster system), where they are employed informally and without legal protections.⁸² Once in Italy, they contribute to the ‘pool of underemployed and unemployed workers that allows farmers to meet the low production costs and just-in-time (JIT) demands of retail and agribusiness corporations’.⁸³

In other words, Italian—and more broadly western—capital directly benefits from the constructed chaos in post-intervention Libya not only by obtaining much-needed energy resources but also cheapened labour, further exacerbating the diffusion of ‘unfree labour’ in the Italian agricultural sector. Pradella and Cillo situate these dynamics within the wider context and histories of Italian and, more broadly, western imperialist intervention in Libya. They emphasise the crucial role played by the militarisation of borders in rendering workers more vulnerable,

thereby intensifying the exploitation of migrant labour. ‘Similar to Marx’s example of Ireland’, they explain, ‘Libya has come to play a role of labour reserve for Italy, even if the majority of those trying to cross the Mediterranean do not originate in Libya itself’.⁸⁴

Ali Kadri, an economics professor at Sun Yat-sen University in China also explores the impact of imperialism on global labour exploitation through what he terms ‘accumulation by belligerent encroachment’.⁸⁵ He argues that global crises of capital accumulation, such as the current conjuncture marked by a decline of US imperialism and the rise of a multipolar world order ‘necessitates the subsumption of Third World labour and resources to US-led capital’.⁸⁶ The super-exploitation of labour in the periphery accelerates as militarism and war drive wages down, undermining workers’ ability to socially reproduce and resulting in shorter lives. This process results in increased surplus value extraction, with labour in the global South being disproportionately affected as capital seizes opportunities to exploit weaker labour regulations and limited bargaining power. Ruy Mauro Marini’s concept of unequal exchange complements these analyses by examining how capitalism perpetuates the super-exploitation of labour in the global South – ‘dependent capitalism’.⁸⁷ He contends that the international division of labour under capitalism leads to a transfer of wealth from the periphery to the core, reinforcing global economic disparities.⁸⁸ He asserts that super-exploitation is inherent in capitalism and grows alongside the development of productive labour power, enabling capitalists to increase profits by exploiting workers in the global South. This extraction of surplus value is achieved not through increased productivity but through the intensified exploitation of labour, perpetuating a cycle of dependency and underdevelopment in peripheral economies. Marini challenges Marxists who connected super-exploitation to an earlier stage of primitive accumulation, arguing that it is rather ‘inherent’ in capitalism ‘and grows correspondingly with the development of productive labour power’.⁸⁹ Imperialist wars and capitalist-induced climate devastation work together with border militarisation to produce material conditions that monopoly capital exploits to impose lower wages, weaker labour regulations, and workers’ limited bargaining power in the periphery. Before exploring the specifics of the legal-institutional framework that governs migration, emigration and border militarisation, and which shapes the conditions under which migrants live, work and/or choose to flee as a mechanism of survival in the Maghreb region, we first need to understand the broader political economy of imperialism, including its central actors and mechanisms.

CHAPTER 2

A political economy of border imperialism in the Maghreb



Border fence in the Spanish enclave of Melilla looking at Moroccan residences on the other side.

The concept of border imperialism makes it possible to comprehend the intersecting and overlapping neo-colonial jurisdictions and border governance regimes in the Mediterranean region, including the institutional frameworks and actors that shape the control and management of migration. Unequal relations in the Mediterranean derive from colonial legacies and are underpinned by the ‘security dependency’⁹⁰ of African countries, a feature of the neo-colonial era in which the security architecture, mechanisms, weapons systems and security discourses of peripheral states are determined by the needs and interests of the capitalist core and are designed to reproduce polarised accumulation in the world system.

From the EU’s externalisation of its migration policies, known as the ‘Global Approach to Migration and Mobility’ – which claims to ‘manage legal migration while preventing and combating irregular migration’ – Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, to NATO’s Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) initiative and Operation Sea Guardian as well as ‘bilateral’ agreements for border militarisation, this chapter examines the interplay between the key actors, mechanisms and practices used to enable and control racialised capital and migration flows. Although European governments claim the aim of this border architecture is to limit unregulated migration, it is telling that they never enforce stricter labour regulations on capital.

Instead, these policies are designed to stabilise capital accumulation by ensuring a steady supply of cheap labour and undermining the social reproductive capacity of undocumented migrants so that they are more readily exploitable, a fact that no ruling class party in Europe would ever admit to. For example, even though the right-wing Italian prime minister Georgia Meloni correctly identified the role of French imperialism in producing the conditions for increased migration from the African continent, her comments overlook Italy's own participation in border imperialism and its reliance on the precarity this regime produces.⁹¹

Counter-mapping the EU's Mediterranean border regime

The political economy of EU border militarisation involves a complex interplay between state and corporate interests, where major arms and security firms from the US, Australia, European countries, and the Zionist entity, such as Airbus, Elbit, Leonardo, and Thales, dominate the border security and surveillance market. These companies not only profit from border contracts within the EU, the US, and Australia but also benefit from border externalisation programmes funded by these same countries. This 'state-corporate fusion' was described by Mark Akkerman as the 'Border Industrial Complex', where several of the 'leading border industries [...] are also military companies, seeking to diversify their security products to a rapidly expanding new market'.⁹² The EU's External Migration Policy (EMP), through agencies like Frontex or budget lines such as the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF), as well as projects funded through EU research and innovation funding, further integrates border militarisation with finance capital, resulting in human rights violations and the perpetuation of a racialised migration regime.

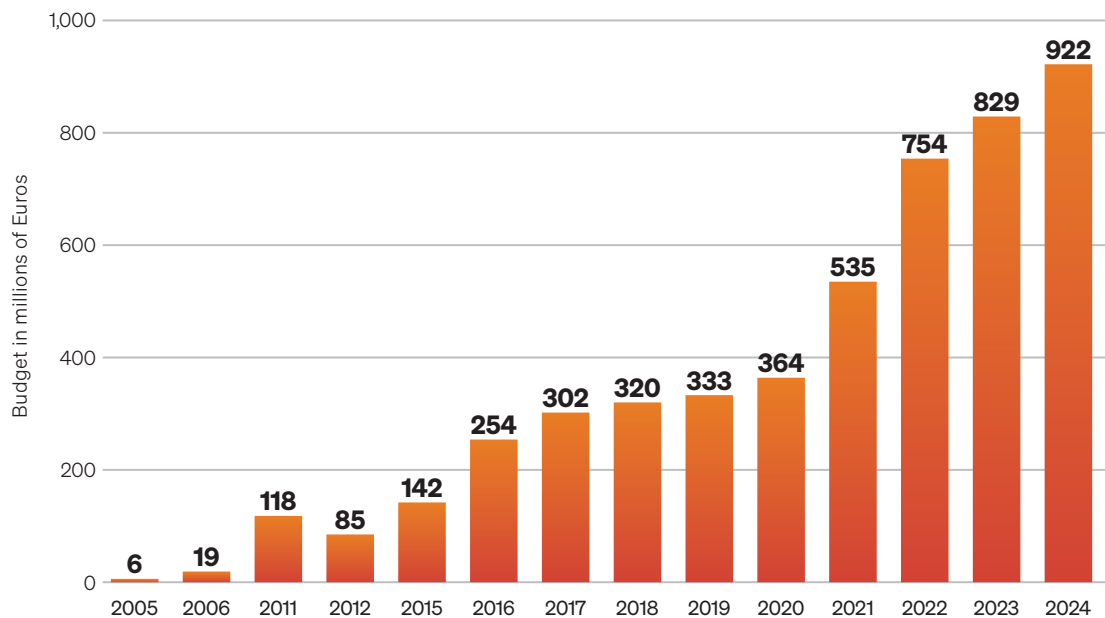
The EU's 'Global Approach to Migration and Mobility' is the overarching framework for the externalisation of EU border policies and ties into the EU's new border policy framework – the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, adopted on 10 April 2024 – as the two work alongside each other to reinforce a racist Fortress Europe. This Pact intensifies the criminalisation and digital surveillance of migrants by using advanced surveillance technologies, including biometric identification systems and bulk data collection, to monitor and control them.⁹³

Frontex, established in 2004, is central to enforcing the EU's Global Approach and plays a significant role in militarising EU borders and beyond, as its mandate allows it to act in countries that neither belong to nor border the Schengen area. Its "standing corps" (including Frontex personnel and officers from the Member States) that first began operating in 2021 is due to reach 10,000 staff by 2027.⁹⁴ Frontex's budget is expected to expand to over €11 billion for the period 2021–2027 'to finance setting up the standing corps, the purchase of new equipment and the performance of additional tasks'.⁹⁵ Ursula von der Leyen, who recently began her second term as president of the European Commission, has pledged to introduce new legislation aimed at 'accelerating and streamlining' deportations and to expand the number of border guards to 30,000, a three-fold rise on the currently projected increase.⁹⁶

Demonstrating the fusion between finance capital and border militarisation as a source of accumulation, PriceWaterhouseCoopers provides consultancy services to Frontex border forces.⁹⁷ One of Frontex's flagship programmes, Operation Themis, coordinates border control and surveillance operations with Italy in the Mediterranean. Frontex also coordinates

with Maghreb states through various mechanisms that further consolidate the economic and security dependency of African states repackaged as mutual interest and equitable collaboration, including ‘operational cooperation’, ‘information exchange’, ‘joint training and operations’ and ‘technical assistance’.

GRAPHIC 2: Growth of Frontex’s budget since 2005



Source: Statista

An important component of Frontex’s role in entrenching border imperialism in the Mediterranean is its generation of knowledge used to normalise and extend border violence in the region. It does so through its various publications (e.g. yearly ‘Strategic Risk Analysis’ and ‘Performance Assessment Methodology’) as well as through the provision of neocolonial ‘expertise’ to the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME) to support research, testing, and development of new border-control technologies.⁹⁸ Specifically, Frontex is assisting the implementation of parts of the multi-annual EU research programmes⁹⁹ Horizon 2020 (2014–2020) and Horizon Europe (2021–2027). The final three-year tranche of Horizon Europe has allocated €118 million to finance research into ‘Border and External Security’. The programme aims to develop various technological instruments, including remotely piloted platforms, biometric data-gathering equipment, and three-dimensional face- and iris-scanning tools. Crucially, this programme serves as a vector for normalising relations with the settler colonial state of Israel under the guise of technological innovation with multi-million euro contracts awarded to Israeli companies such as Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) and Elbit Systems Ltd for providing and operating unmanned drones to monitor and intercept refugees and migrants attempting to cross the Mediterranean.¹⁰⁰ This technology is used to enable Frontex ‘to carry out reconnaissance in the “pre-frontier” area off Tunisia, Libya and Egypt.’ Recently, journalist David Cronin revealed in *Electronic Intifada* that Frontex has been helping market Israeli drone technology, reinforcing Zionist imbrications in the security-industrial-complex.¹⁰¹

Frontex also works closely with the Moroccan government and recently signed a 'migration pact' 'to strengthen dialogue and cooperation with Morocco's border management authorities'. In a statement, Hans Leijtens, the Executive Director of Frontex, said that 'Morocco stands out as a crucial partner in Africa', explaining that this 'political agreement' is the first step in 'mobil[ising] EU budgets and staff to set up the infrastructure so that the migration pact will become reality in a few years'. For playing the role of the EU's outsourced border guard, the EU has pledged to support Morocco's territorial claim to Western Sahara – a former Spanish colony largely annexed by Morocco in 1975, which has since become a popular departure point for migrants aiming for the Canary Islands. In 2020, the US acknowledged the region as part of Morocco in exchange for Rabat's normalisation of diplomatic ties with the Zionist settler colonial state. Since then, several African nations have opened consulates in Western Sahara, and the Gulf States have bolstered Rabat's claim to the phosphate-rich region through investments in infrastructure and energy. However, Western Sahara is also the stronghold of the Polisario Front, supported by Algeria, which advocates the independence of the Sahrawi people.

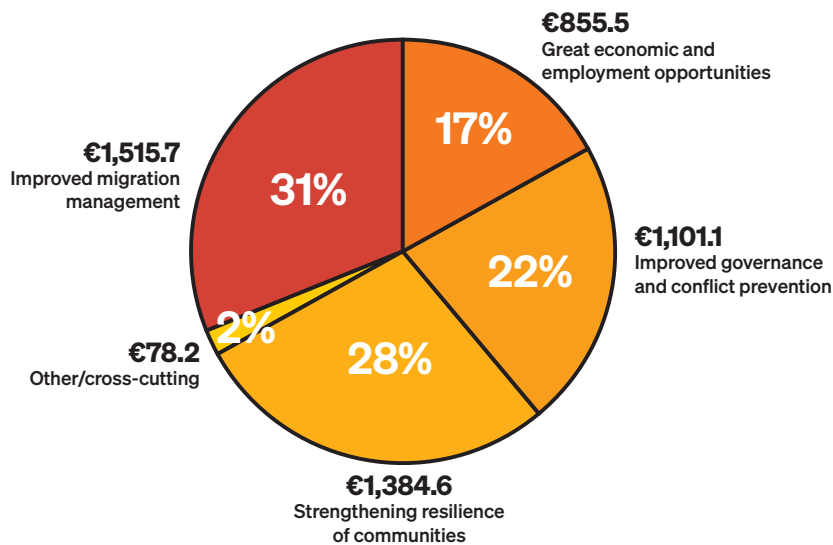
Morocco's normalisation of relations with Israel and increased cooperation with western countries has exacerbated tensions with Algeria. In May 2023, drone attacks by Moroccan forces in Western Sahara, targeting the Polisario Front, forced increasing numbers to flee the desert region for refugee camps in Algeria, or towns on the Mauritanian border.¹⁰² The reactionary Moroccan monarchy also regularly employs Zionist technology in its surveillance of the people of Western Sahara.¹⁰³ This violence contributes to the neo-colonial fragmentation of the region, undermining the kinds of Pan-African/Pan-Maghrebi solidarity required to end imperialist wealth drain from the region. Normalisation and Morocco's enhanced ruling class alignment with Zionist-imperialist interests has also resulted in an increased crackdown on Palestine solidarity organising in the country. Most recently, a 34-year-old Moroccan BDS activist was arrested in Casablanca for opposing his government's hosting of Maersk cargo ships transporting military equipment to Israel and now faces trial for inciting violence under Moroccan law.¹⁰⁴

While Morocco has officially normalised relations with Israel against the will of the population,¹⁰⁵ this is an even greater issue of political accountability in countries like Libya and Tunisia, where historically support has been widespread and expressed in concrete material forms for Palestinian national liberation. In addition to the political implications for anti-colonial solidarity, the use of Israeli-supplied air surveillance accelerates the process of border imperialism, resulting in an increase of the number of interceptions of migrants by the so-called Libyan Coast Guard.¹⁰⁶

Another key mechanism is the EUTF for Africa,¹⁰⁷ which oversees visas, refoulement, and the establishment of 'reception centres' in Morocco and Tunisia – a euphemism for detention centres that house migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, who are forcibly returned from EU countries in violation of international law. By 2023, the EUTF had spent €673 million on North African countries, part of its €4.6 billion 2021–2027 budget. The EUTF implements the Border Management Programme (BMP) Maghreb, which claims to 'mitigate vulnerabilities arising from irregular migration and combat irregular migration'.¹⁰⁸ In reality, the BMP's activities are designed to entrench a racialised migration regime that generates surplus value from the exploitation and/or death of African migrants whose labour is made more precarious by the EU's border violence. Algeria is the only country in the Maghreb that does not receive EU funding to manage migration.

Its substantial oil and gas revenues, especially with recent energy price increases, reduce its need for financial aid. This, combined with the government's recent moves to restructure the economy towards more self-sufficiency, particularly through investment in agriculture, industrial diversification and fostering local production, allows Algeria more sovereign policy space.¹⁰⁹ However, despite legacies of its post-independence radical Third Worldist orientation and the state's current assertion of sovereigntist prerogatives, Algeria refrains from publicly challenging EU migration policies and from adopting a budget that would materially align with an anti-imperialist position towards EU border militarisation.

GRAPHIC 3: EUTF funding by strategic objectives, 2023 (EUR million)



Source: EUTF 2023 Annual Report

Bilateral agreements between EU and Maghreb states enable further border militarisation. Spain and Morocco, for example, collaborate on militarising the land borders of the historically Moroccan and currently Spanish controlled enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, where fences are equipped with high-tech surveillance systems.¹¹⁰ Moreover, Morocco has accepted the arrangement of 'hot' deportations from these enclaves, which allows Spain to immediately deport people who succeed in breaching the barriers, a highly questionable practice under international law that denies their right to seek asylum. Italy also has special arrangements with Libya, including the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by the two countries in March 2017 through which Italy funds a charter flight programme that has forcibly returned thousands of migrants, thereby 'routinis[ing] [the] practice of forcibly taking migrants back from the sea to detention and violence in Libyan prisons'.¹¹¹ Libya's migrant detention centres have become notorious for widespread human rights abuses, including police violence, rape, torture, inadequate food, and overcrowding. These horrific conditions violate the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR).¹¹² Despite legal obligations, the EU has been complicit and actively involved in these rights violations. In essence, the EU's humanitarian claims notwithstanding, these bilateral agreements entail EU member states sharing actionable intelligence with Maghreb states so that border officials can kidnap people fleeing extremely difficult circumstances and drag them back to detain them in torturous conditions.



Border fence in the Spanish enclave of Melilla looking at Moroccan homes on the other side

The EU's Seahorse Mediterranean Network is an additional programme for managing the EU's racist border regime.¹¹³ Initially formed by the northern Mediterranean states of Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta and Portugal, and led by Spain, Libya was the first non-European country to join the network in 2016.¹¹⁴ The network aims to strengthen the so-called Libyan Coast Guard's capacity by 'providing training, establishing a Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre, and enhancing cooperation with EU Member States'. It also endeavours to 'step up the fight against smugglers and traffickers', enhancing information exchange and coordination with Libya and neighbouring countries. As part of this programme, Libya collaborates with the Spanish Guardia Civil and the Italian Guardia di Finanza to conduct training courses in the southern Italian city of Gaeta, on piloting naval units for the staff of the Libyan Coast Guard, Ministries of Defence, and Interior Affairs. The EU eventually aims to 'encourage the participation of Tunisia, Algeria and Egypt in the Seahorse Mediterranean Network'.¹¹⁵

The legal and institutional context for the EU's border regime includes the European Border Surveillance system EUROSUR, established in 2013, which claims to prevent 'cross-border crime and irregular migration while protecting migrants' lives'. Each EU member state has a National Coordination Centre (NCC) responsible for coordinating and exchanging information on external border control, while the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), founded in 1993, has become a crucial service provider, expanding the EU's surveillance and control capacity and facilitating 'cooperation' with Maghreb states through its regional offices.

EU policies regarding migration and asylum significantly shifted in 2015 in response to the manufactured ‘migrant crisis’, which really was a crisis of capitalist-imperialism with many people fleeing conflicts and ecological contexts produced by colonial legacies, western intervention and growing inequality and poverty caused by IFI imposed structural adjustment.¹¹⁶ Initially, the European Union supported search and rescue missions, such as Operation Triton (launched in November 2014) and Operation Sophia (launched in June 2015), aimed at saving lives in the Mediterranean Sea.¹¹⁷ However, by 2018, shifting economic considerations led to a reduction in these operations, with many member states withdrawing their support, arguing that such missions ‘incentivized irregular migration.’¹¹⁸ This withdrawal was accompanied by the criminalisation of humanitarian rescue efforts. Organisations like Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and Sea-Watch have faced legal challenges, fines, and accusations of facilitating smuggling.¹¹⁹ The EU’s focus has increasingly centred on combating ‘human trafficking’ and ‘smuggling networks,’ further securitising migration, intentionally conflating smuggling with trafficking, and obscuring the structural causes of both as discussed above. For instance, the 2020 New Pact on Migration and Asylum emphasised border security and enhanced surveillance, further stigmatising migrants as potential criminals or victims of smugglers.¹²⁰ This narrative not only undermines the humanitarian role of rescue missions but also leads to a paradox where saving lives is viewed as complicity in ‘criminal activities’. Although it is never acknowledged in official EU documentation, the criminalisation of rescue missions is one of the factors behind the rise in migrant deaths in the Mediterranean.

Another important factor is the more restrictive institutional framework governing forced deportations from the EU, implemented in 2008 with the adoption by the European Council of the Agreement on Migration. This agreement, forming the basis of the EU’s immigration policy, imposes stricter controls on family reunification for migrants and advocates measures such as ‘voluntary return’ programmes and repatriation agreements with countries of origin. Woven into the broader fabric of racist European carceral practice, detention centres for undocumented immigrants have been established across the EU to hold apprehended individuals before deporting them to their country of origin.¹²¹ Although it is usually the (often EU-funded) detention centres in the Maghreb that receive the opprobrium of mainstream media and human rights organisations, these European detention centres are often equally bad or worse, lacking minimum conditions for humane treatment.¹²²

The militarisation of the Mediterranean works alongside the liberal-imperialist governance¹²³ dimension of EU border policies, as both are designed to ensure the unequal exchange and transfer of surplus value from the periphery to the core. The EU claims to encourage countries across the Maghreb to adopt legal and institutional frameworks governing migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in line with global ‘human rights standards’ as a way to alleviate member states’ responsibility to accommodate individuals fleeing political, economic and environmental crises – largely created by capitalist core states in the first place. Presenting itself as a benevolent actor in managing the ‘migrant crisis’ in the Mediterranean obscures the EU’s key role in producing the material conditions that lead so many people from the region to be on the move in the first place. This narrative also obscures the fact that EU border militarisation and externalisation of racist border policies not only fail to deter migration but rather force people to take longer and riskier routes, resulting in more deaths and increasingly vulnerable

migrant populations on both sides of the Mediterranean. In a similar way that conditional loans are used to leverage unequal relations that lead to the adoption of harmful SAPs, funding for border security is also a means to reinforce polarised core-periphery relations, including economic and security dependency.

For instance, in June 2023, France committed €258 million to Tunisia to act as border guard for Europe by ‘enhance[ing] the training and equipment of the Tunisian National Guard to prevent unauthorised boat departures’.¹²⁴ After rejecting the EU’s financial support in October 2023, saying the amount was ‘small and goes against a deal’ that had been signed three months earlier, President Kais Saied accepted the EU’s disbursement of €150 million in March 2024 as budget support for financial stability and economic support, as part of a deal aimed at ‘fighting illegal migration’.¹²⁵ Many Tunisians have questioned the purpose and function of the funding in terms of further aligning the Tunisian state with EU/capitalist core state prerogatives, insofar as it is conditional on Tunisia entering into another IMF loan.¹²⁶ The president had rejected a \$1.9 billion IMF loan in April 2023, refusing to accept its neoliberal ‘diktats’ including subsidy cuts and a reduction in the public wage bill, as the government sought to restructure relations with imperialist western-dominated IFIs like the IMF and World Bank and diversify the country’s economic partners, for example by requesting to join China’s Belt and Road Initiative.¹²⁷ The EU’s offer of an additional €900 million loan to Tunisia was made contingent on finalising the International Monetary Fund (IMF) deal.

EU funding performs a similar role in Libya, smoothing the way to externalise and outsource its migration management. The Libyan example also exposes another dimension of accumulation associated with border militarisation as private ‘security’ companies that do everything from managing detention facilities and border checkpoints, to providing training and equipment, are among the EU’s main contractors. For example, the Italian Ministry of Interior has used EUTF funds to award large contracts to private companies for training services, equipment, and assistance to Libyan border guards. These contracts have been criticised for their lack of transparency, limited access to contract details and lack of accountability as private companies are not held to the same standards as governments and are not required to publish their strategies.¹²⁸

The contracted services mainly involve the provision of vehicles and vessels to the Libyan authorities. Well-known companies such as IVECO Defence Vehicle, TEKNE, and Med Spa have been involved in supplying vehicles and vessels, which are crucial for border-control functions.¹²⁹ Moreover, training services are sub-contracted to companies like EY Advisory and Exfor Spa, contributing to the commodification of the EU’s border regime.¹³⁰ Companies from the military/security-industrial-complex will also help in shaping the policies from which they will subsequently benefit through their extensive lobbying efforts in Brussels and serving on various advisory committees with policymakers. Such direct influence of ‘security’ capital in EU policymaking further securitises migration and contributes to the profitability of people-smuggling networks, which exist only because migration is made illegal and curtailed. These networks operate in collusion with the Libyan Coast Guard, an EU ally.¹³¹ For instance, the EU was aware for years that Abd al-Rahman Milad, a former Libyan coast guard commander, was involved in the abuse of migrants and the sinking of migrant boats.¹³² Despite this, the EU continued to fund and train Milad, even though he was sought by Interpol and sanctioned by the UN. Figures like Milad offer the EU a form of plausible deniability, masking the violence inherent in Fortress Europe.



Melilla border fence, Spanish – Moroccan border

NATO's Mediterranean Border Regime

Most critical accounts of NATO acknowledge the institution's historical entanglements with fascism, its structural anti-communism as well as its role in the post-Soviet era in bolstering US hegemony. However, less is known about its role in securing hierarchical relations between the imperialist core and the periphery during the colonial era, a dynamic that continues today.¹³³ NATO's reference to North Africa as its 'southern neighborhood',¹³⁴ echoing the language of the US Monroe Doctrine, is a testament to its role in maintaining core domination over the region. Founded in 1949, NATO initially included countries that were Africa's principal colonisers, such as Belgium, France, Italy, Portugal and the UK. Its engagement in Africa during the colonial period aimed to bolster European colonial powers and exploit Africa's resources. NATO bases in North Africa were strategically positioned to confront the USSR, with the region becoming an important sphere of operations.¹³⁵

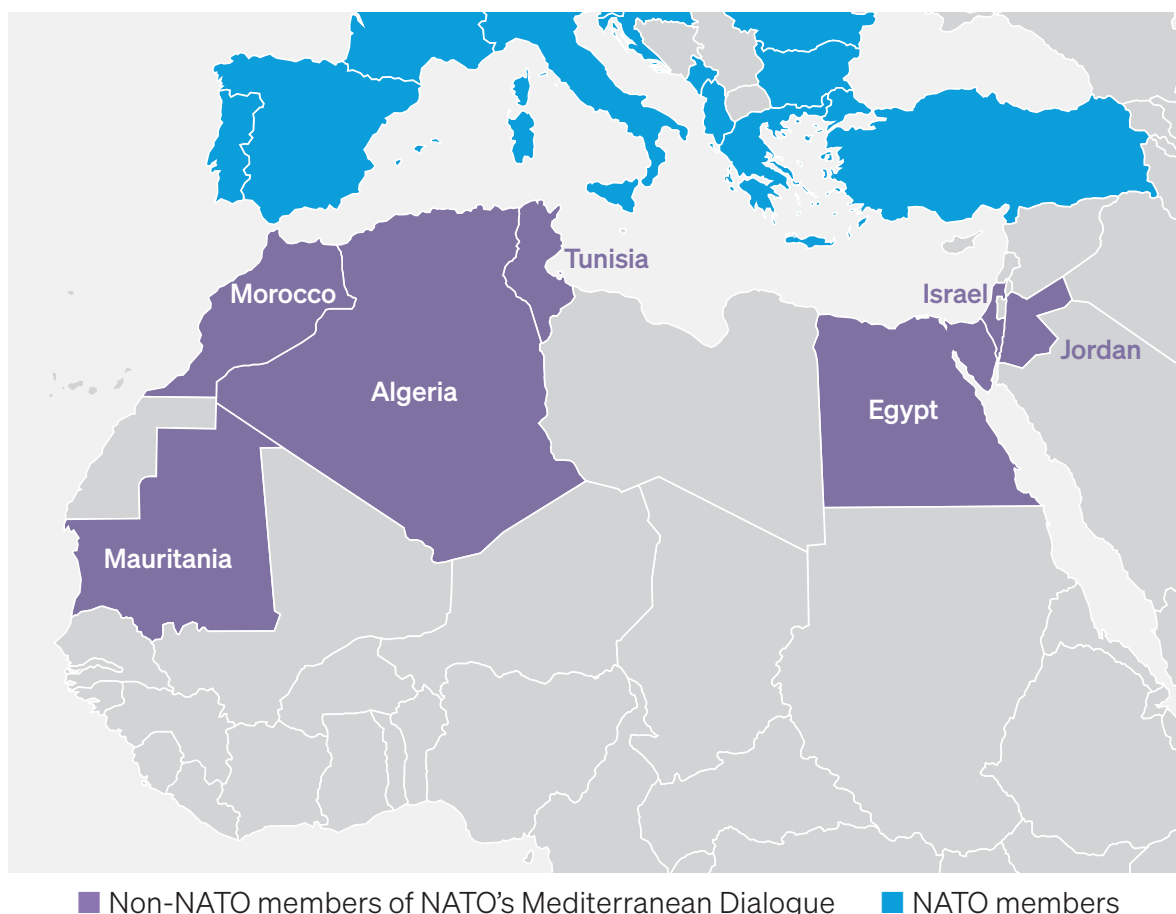
Walter Rodney pointed to NATO's function in shoring up European colonial powers at a time of mounting anti-colonial resistance. Colonised North Africa in particular was forced into performing an important role for the imperialist core states, as it was 'turned into a sphere of operations for NATO, with bases aimed at the Soviet Union'. Rodney warned of the dangers presented by hosting these bases in the region, with provocation having the potential to develop into a nuclear war. Such machinations reinforced the already existing

‘evidence point[ing] to th[e] cynical use of Africa to buttress capitalism economically and militarily, and therefore in effect forcing Africa to contribute to its own exploitation’.¹³⁶ Almícar Cabral, the revolutionary anti-colonial leader from Guinea-Bissau, equally decried the role of NATO in undermining anti-colonial struggles on the continent. As Cabral stated in testimony to the US House of Representatives subcommittee on Africa, ‘the weapons used [by Portugal] against us come, in large part, from the U.S. through NATO’.¹³⁷

NATO’s role in stabilising capitalism in the face of internal contradictions and external resistance in the form of communist and global South national liberation struggles continued and even expanded in the aftermath of the dissolution of the USSR in 1991. As Pawel Wargan has argued, ‘the alliance’s expansion coincided with the creeping spread of neoliberalism, helping secure the dominance of U.S. financial capital and sustain the rapacious military-industrial complex that underpins much of its economy and society’.¹³⁸ The 2011 NATO-led intervention in Libya and manufactured instability in the region was an example of NATO’s continued importance in reproducing a racialised hierarchy in the world system even after the official end of the ‘Cold War’. NATO also plays an important role in the ‘new Cold War’ as the US seeks to limit the growing relationship of African states with anti-systemic actors like China and Russia for fear that the US imperialist surplus value drain from the continent will be negatively affected. There is the added element of the weakening of France’s position in Africa as the US has previously outsourced much of its imperialist military and economic labour to ‘Francafrique’. NATO’s counterrevolutionary role in the Mediterranean has once again been revealed with its material and ideological support for the imperialist-zionist genocide in Gaza. NATO supports the US’s settler-colonial (outpost) state through the broader US-led military-industrial complex in which Israel is heavily integrated and which involves NATO as a key consumer and driving force behind arms related accumulation. NATO has fostered deep military ties with Israel, providing arms, training, and diplomatic cover that have enabled the country’s military operations, including the genocide in Gaza following 7 October 2023.¹³⁹

In addition to its more overt interventions, NATO’s role in militarising the Mediterranean under the guise of ‘security’ has been one of its more successfully obscured features. The main framework for NATO operations in the Mediterranean is the MD initiative, which started in 1995 and claims to contribute to ‘security and stability’ in the wider Mediterranean region. The MD involves ‘partnership and dialogue’ between NATO allies and non-NATO ally countries, including the Maghreb states. It includes training activities and exercises to ‘improve the capability of NATO partners to operate together’. Similar to Frontex, it also entails a normalisation by stealth by incorporating the settler colonial state of Israel as a ‘major non-NATO ally’, so it is de facto engaged in institutional cooperation with other regional non-NATO allies like Tunisia, which has not formally normalised relations with Israel.

GRAPHIC 4: Non-NATO members of NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue



Following the 2011 US-led NATO intervention in Libya, NATO established the Alliance Maritime Strategy, which outlines the parameters for its maritime activities. One of its flagship programmes in the Mediterranean is Operation Sea Guardian, which encompasses various maritime military tasks such as ‘maritime security capacity building, support to maritime situational awareness, counter-terrorism efforts’ as well as assistance to the EU’s Operation Sophia,¹⁴⁰ particularly in ‘information sharing and logistical support’ as well as the implementation of the arms embargo against Libya in order to consolidate the country’s post-2011 security dependency. Operation Sea Guardian also involves reconnaissance, monitoring, and surveillance to intercept migrant boats attempting undocumented crossings. NATO’s operations in the Mediterranean involve engagement with “non-NATO allies” such as Tunisia and Morocco. NATO ships, including those from Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2),¹⁴¹ participate in scheduled port visits to enhance interoperability and cooperation with partner countries. These visits contribute to bolstering ‘partnerships’ and ensuring a US–NATO-dominated order in the Mediterranean. NATO operations also further normalise the presence of US military forces in the Mediterranean region, including AFRICOM and US Naval Forces Africa (NAVAF). One such operation is the Africa Partnership Station (APS),¹⁴² which claims to ‘increase the self-sustaining capability of African partner nations in maintaining maritime security in their territorial waters and exclusive economic zones’ through developing ‘domain awareness, establishing maritime professionals, building maritime infrastructure, and developing response capabilities’. Another example is the annual Exercise Phoenix Express,¹⁴³ organised by US Naval Forces Europe-Africa, which focuses on ‘regional cooperation, maritime domain awareness, information sharing, and operational capabilities’ as part of its claimed mission to ‘promote safety and security in the

Mediterranean Sea'. The African Lion exercise, organised by AFRICOM, is another significant annual imperialist border militarisation exercise involving various countries including Ghana, Morocco, Senegal and Tunisia. In addition to 'combined arms live fire exercises' and 'air exercises', it entails a maritime component, including 'joint forcible entry exercises'.

AFRICOM is open about its aims in terms of policing flows of capital in the Mediterranean region, 'enhancing the readiness training and security in strategic maritime chokepoints and global shipping lanes'.¹⁴⁴ This aim resonates particularly today as we see the impact of the strategic anti-genocide actions undertaken by the Yemeni Ansarullah resistance, disrupting global supply chains by targeting Israeli-linked ships in the Red Sea.¹⁴⁵ The US Navy and NATO actors have been unable to block these attacks, resulting in a steep decline in the profits of Maersk, the Danish shipping company (45% in the second quarter of 2024). Despite US and UK naval efforts to protect these ships, the blockade persists, forcing Maersk to re-route vessels and causing higher operating costs, severely affecting profitability.¹⁴⁶ A Maersk survey of over 2,000 European customers found that more than 76% of businesses experienced significant supply chain disruptions and delays over the past year, leading to substantial financial impacts. Undoubtedly this plays into AFRICOM's and broader western 'security' anxieties about pacifying the Mediterranean, with the US ramping up its bombing campaign targeting Ansarullah military installations over the past year.¹⁴⁷

In addition to militarisation, imperialist border interventions include discursive attempts to delegitimise uses of the sea that serve the interests of the region's people rather than core capital accumulation. Deploying what Jemima Pierre, Professor of Global Race in the Institute of Race, Gender, Sexuality and Social Justice (GRSJ) at the University of British Columbia, describes as a 'racial lexicon of development', we see the designation of certain economic activities – including local fishing – that threaten western monopoly capital as 'illegal'.¹⁴⁸ Through the African Maritime Law Enforcement Partnership (AMLEP), which uses 'detection, boarding, and law enforcement activities' in the name of providing 'maritime security', AFRICOM essentially criminalises the ability of Africans to access their own natural resources in the Mediterranean. In sum, in addition to criminalising and rendering people on the move more vulnerable, as well as contributing to the greater precarity of people living in the countries bordering the Mediterranean, AFRICOM and NATO border interventions serve to undermine African states' sovereign capacity to determine their own border policies.



A grave in Melilla's Muslim cemetery where the body of an unknown man who was taken from the sea was buried. The gravestone reads 'desconocido', unknown.

CHAPTER 3

A political economy of Maghreb legal-institutional frameworks for migration, emigration and super-exploitation



Memorial for the victims of the Melilla Massacre

In recent years, the EU's border militarisation has intensified, marked by the increased budget and expanded role of Frontex, and a new racist policy framework for EU migration policies referred to as 'Protecting/Promoting our European Way of Life'. As detailed in the report 'Telling the Story of EU Border Militarisation',¹⁴⁹ published by TNI and others, this shift has led to the deployment of violent and intrusive border-control measures, including surveillance technologies and expanded detention facilities, which have resulted in routine human rights abuses and preventable deaths. The EU has externalised its racist border violence through deals made with non-EU countries, including in the Maghreb. The TNI report 'Repackaging Imperialism' has documented how border externalisation generates obedience to the security diktats of Fortress Europe even by historically unfriendly states, such as the Balkans states that became dependent upon the EU following the destruction of the Soviet Union.¹⁵⁰

The EU's increasingly militarised approach to border governance is driven by various factors, including the increasingly existential crisis of capitalism-imperialism, the resurgence of an extreme right-wing as well as intensified lobbying by the security industry. This policy framework ensures that rather than using resources to address the root causes of displacement or to provide support for a humanitarian response, they are geared towards retrenching an increasingly repressive border regime by deploying a 'fear-based political discourse'.¹⁵¹

The increased militarisation of the Mediterranean has made the journey to Europe riskier for those with no choice but to be on the move, with the rising number of deaths at sea demonstrating the racist capitalist violence of imperialist border regimes. With the current Zionist-imperialist assault on Syria and declarations by several European politicians that Syrian refugees should return home as part of the western policy of normalising the violence and the newly minted western-aligned government, we can expect to see more deaths of Syrians migrants in the Mediterranean.¹⁵² Meanwhile, accelerated EU border externalisation along with the 'cooperation' of some Maghreb states with the EU – more accurately described as coercion, using the carrots of loans and access to finance and the sticks of the threat of sanctions or other forms of imperialist hybrid warfare tactics – has also led to more African migrants having to remain in Maghreb states by necessity rather than choice. Before analysing the mechanisms and effects of border imperialism, it is important to understand the legal-institutional context governing migration and emigration in the Maghreb. While the focus has often been on Africans attempting to reach Europe, it is imperative to recognise that the majority of the more than 31 million Africans living outside their country of birth are residing in another African country, where resources are much more limited due to colonial legacies and polarised core-periphery relations as discussed above.¹⁵³

Maghrebi states more fully incorporated into the global capitalist economy due to imperialist war (Libya) and comprador class opportunism (Morocco) are unsurprisingly more imbricated in western border imperialist infrastructure. Both countries cooperate closely with Frontex, NATO and AFRICOM and participate in the violence against migrants entailed by the European border regime. Algeria and Tunisia, both major contributors to European migration as well as destination and transit sites for migration from elsewhere on the African continent, have more complicated relationships to the imperialist border architecture on the Maghreb as both states have rejected cooperation with Frontex and have at times challenged imperialist interventions and attempted to forge sovereign policy trajectories. For example, Algeria opposed the US-NATO led intervention in Libya in 2011, has repeatedly refused to ask for loans from the IMF and World Bank and, in an albeit limited way, has expressed support for Palestinian liberation, albeit without actual material support for the resistance forces. Its refusal to enter into a formal partnership with AFRICOM has provided Algeria a modicum of security sovereignty. Tunisia under President Kais Saied has refused the 'dictacts' of the IMF¹⁵⁴ and restored diplomatic relations with Syria in 2023 against Washington's wishes. In a dramatic shift for one of the first Arab countries to support a 'two-state solution' for the Zionist settler colonisation of Palestine, Saied described October 7th as a 'legitimate resistance', saying that 'what some media were referring to as the Gaza envelope is Palestinian land that has been under Zionist occupation for decades,' and that therefore 'the Palestinian people have the right to recover it and to recover all of the land of Palestine.'¹⁵⁵ Both countries have good relations with China and Russia¹⁵⁶ and

are part of China's Belt and Road Initiative. Algeria has also applied to join BRICS.¹⁵⁷ Although both countries have significant gaps regarding legal protection for migrants and asylum seekers, their refusal to cooperate with Frontex signifies more autonomous space for future border policy making. A dialectical approach demonstrates the importance of understanding historical legacies and assessing material and social conditions in the current conjuncture to grasp contradictions and transformation in border policy and why both states diverge from broader regional trends.



Melilla border fence

Algeria

Algeria has the largest landmass in Africa and is bordered by the Mediterranean and seven countries (including Western Sahara). While it is known mainly as a migrant transit country owing to its location, it has increasingly become a destination country. In addition, Algerian migration to France dates from the late nineteenth century and was the earliest and most extensive colonial migration to Western Europe before the 1960s. The migration in particular of Algerian men to France accelerated in the early 1920s at a time when French industry was expanding and required cheap labour. Before the country's independence in 1962, Algerians were considered French subjects but not French citizens. Colonised Algerians were subject to an apartheid legal system (*Code d'Indigénat*) and their migration to France was essentially moving between two colonial socio-political spaces, facing racism, dispossession and exploitation in both.¹⁵⁸



Algerian migrants to France were demonised by economic settler-colonial lobbies in Algeria, who feared losing their workforce to employers in mainland France and supported racist/orientalist propaganda campaigns that portrayed Algerian men as criminals and sexually aggressive.¹⁵⁹ Despite the racism, Algerians continued to emigrate to France in large numbers, reaching 100,000 in 1924.¹⁶⁰ The colonial authorities were concerned about Algerian emigration and established state agencies to politically control and police the population, often on the pretext of paternalistic welfare measures. Attempts to pacify the Algerian population in France were ultimately unsuccessful as nationalist forms of political organisation developed within Maghrebi migrant communities, crystallising in the launch of the *Étoile nord-africaine* (The North African Star) in Paris in 1926. This comprised the North African proletariat, with Paris serving as the cradle of the Algerian revolutionary national movement due to the significant number of Algerian workers, who often returned home after brief periods in the colonial capital.¹⁶¹

Before 1945, Algerian migration was predominantly male and employed in various industries across France. This was largely temporary and aimed at sending remittances to impoverished communities in Algeria. The working class and heavily policed communities in the *bidonvilles* that grew around major cities – mirroring the situation in colonial urban Algeria – came to symbolise the oppressed socio-economic status of Algerians and other racialised colonial migrants in France.¹⁶²

Algerian men recruited to rebuild France after World War II were granted full citizenship as part of reforms undertaken to revitalise the country's colonial grandeur, although they still faced systemic racism and economic marginalisation.¹⁶³ Family reunification policies allowed the spouses and children of Algerian workers to join them in France, transforming the profile of Algerian migration. This marked what the sociologist Abdelmalek Sayad described as the 'second stage' of Algerian migration to France, which saw the increased political involvement of Algerians in the metropole, in particular in anti-colonial and labour struggles.¹⁶⁴ The diaspora in France played a prominent role in the Algerian anti-colonial revolution in the 1950s. Algerian members of the National Liberation Front (FLN) funded their military campaigns in part through money raised among Algerians residing in France. The burgeoning anti-colonial struggle in Algeria further intensified the repression faced by Algerians in France, epitomised by the

17 October 1961 massacre in Paris of anti-colonial protesters, with at least 120 Algerians killed, many of them shot and drowned in the Seine.¹⁶⁵

After Algeria gained independence in 1962, although the French government sought to limit economic migration, France continued to be the top destination for Algerian migrants. In the 1990s, they emigrated in significant numbers, seeking to flee the state violence that followed neoliberal enclosures and economic restructuring.¹⁶⁶ This led to a rise in emigration, with many undocumented Algerians entering Tunisia and seeking asylum in Europe. Approximately 1.5 million Algerians were living in France by the mid-1990s, more than half of whom were French citizens. By the start of the 2020s, the number of Algerians and French citizens with Algerian origin resident in France is close to 7 million, many of whom are undocumented.¹⁶⁷ Algerians, like other migrants from the former colonies, continue to face systemic racism in all walks of life, including disproportionate targeting by the French police/carceral state, producing the kinds of vulnerability required for racist capitalist superexploitation.¹⁶⁸

By the late 1990s, Algeria itself became more of a migration destination. In particular, the number of migrants from West and Central Africa to Algeria increased, driven by demand for labour in agriculture and mining, with many migrants also using Algeria as a transit point to Libya and Europe. As of 2022, Algeria hosted over 250,000 migrants, including over 12,800 forcibly displaced individuals and refugees, mostly from Syria, Cameroon, and other war-torn countries. Since 2018, the number of asylum applications has risen to over 4,000 a year,¹⁶⁹ which is explained by the context of imperialist wars and destabilisation in neighbouring countries (including Libya, Mali, and Niger). There are also over 173,000 Sahrawi refugees from Western Sahara in five camps near Tindouf.¹⁷⁰ In Algeria, refugees and asylum seekers have access to state education and primary health services.¹⁷¹

The legal and institutional framework governing migrants in Algeria is shaped by international commitments, national laws, and the involvement of various actors. Algeria has ratified several international conventions, including the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol, although it is not a party to the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention).¹⁷² Its 2016 and 2020 constitutions both prioritise international treaties ratified by the President of the Republic. The constitution does not explicitly guarantee the right to asylum but includes the principle of non-refoulement (Article 50), a crucial protection in refugee and asylum law as it prohibits states from returning individuals to a country where they would face torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. Algeria has no specific legislation for the registration and processing of asylum claims, which means it is often the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) that handles these claims.¹⁷³ Like Libya, Morocco and Tunisia,¹⁷⁴ Algeria has also ratified the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), which includes the principle of non-refoulement.

Migrants in Algeria, mainly from West and Central Africa, are largely employed in the informal economy, where they face low wages and exploitation, particularly in construction and agriculture. These foreign workers help address labour shortages, particularly in agriculture, where their skills are crucial, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic halted many construction projects.¹⁷⁵ While foreign workers must meet strict legal requirements, including obtaining residence and work permits, a recent survey shows that an increasing number are working without legal status, contributing to the informal economy with only minimal social protections.¹⁷⁶

Tunisia

Emigration from Tunisia to Europe has been a longstanding phenomenon, with the country historically serving as a source of exploitable labour in various sectors from manual labour to the health sector and from manufacturing to engineering and agriculture. After gaining independence from French colonial rule in 1956, Tunisians migrated mainly to Western Europe, particularly France, due to labour shortages in the country. In the 1980s, as labour migration to France declined, Italy became the new destination for Tunisian migrant workers, owing to its geographical proximity.¹⁷⁷ In light of today's racist militarised borders it is hard to believe that until the late 1980s Tunisian nationals entering Italy did not need a visa.¹⁷⁸ The introduction of visa permits in the early 1990s between the countries which are close geographically, historically and culturally did not significantly reduce the number of Tunisians migrating to Italy, but it did alter cross-border practices.



Undocumented migration from Tunisia to Europe surged significantly in 2020 and 2021, reaching the highest levels in a decade.¹⁷⁹ From January 2020 to October 2021, Tunisian and Italian authorities intercepted over 69,000 irregular migrants. This follows a peak in 2011 after the revolution, when Italy intercepted 27,646 Tunisians. Migration levels dropped sharply after 2011 but began rising again from mid-2017. The spike in 2020 saw 11,789 interceptions, which escalated to 23,251 in 2021, far higher than the 4,795 interceptions in 2019. Several factors contributed to this surge: The US-NATO proxy war in Ukraine, a country on which Tunisia depends for 40% of its wheat imports, combined with the COVID-19 pandemic, exacerbated economic hardship associated with Tunisia's status as peripheral dependent capitalist state with rising levels of public debt, imported inflation, currency devaluation and high levels of unemployment and underemployment.¹⁸⁰

The tightening of European visa regulations in the 1990s resulted in permanent settlement, undocumented entry, and overstaying characterising much of Tunisian emigration to Europe.¹⁸¹ A growing number of Tunisians have died at sea as they take riskier routes with the reduction of legal migration options.¹⁸² There are numerous reasons why Tunisians migrate to Europe. Perhaps most importantly, from a political economy perspective, are the limited employment opportunities in an economy shackled by neoliberal restructuring and neo-colonial debt. Tunisia's subordinate position in the global economy means that, like other countries in the Maghreb and global South more generally, emigration has become an important element in the value drain. The Tunisian state—similar to the Algerian state—subsidises European capital by educating, feeding, providing health care and training for workers, both petty bourgeois 'professionals' (who are often paid less than European workers racialised as white) as well as low-paid, highly exploited labour. In other words, both countries not only supply cheap labour to Europe but also absorb the costs of social reproduction necessary to 'produce' the migrant worker, effectively underwriting European capital accumulation.

The dynamics of migration from Tunisia changed significantly following the fall of the Ben Ali government in 2011 and the NATO-led war on Libya. This shift was also accompanied by an increase in undocumented migration to Tunisia in the context of the imperialist-driven wars,

climate devastation and economic deterioration across the African continent, with Tunisia becoming the departure country for those undertaking risky undocumented migration to Europe as well as the host country for migrants and refugees unable or unwilling to do so.

Tunisia's migration governance is framed by several Organic Laws,¹⁸³ which regulate foreign nationals' entry and stay and criminalise irregular migration. The country has bilateral agreements with several nations that allow visa exemptions. Tunisia is a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention as well as the 1969 Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, and the right to seek asylum is guaranteed by the Tunisian constitution, although parliament has yet to approve the asylum law.¹⁸⁴ Undocumented migrants can seek protection through the UNHCR office in Tunis. However, those rejected by the UNHCR or unable to afford return flights face detention or deportation.

The western mainstream media tend to individualise structural issues and, in typical orientalist style, overstate the role of individual global South leaders at the expense of a historically contextualised and materialist analysis that considers multiple scales of power and complex dynamics.¹⁸⁵ Consequently they have focused much of their criticism of the racist treatment of migrants in Tunisia resulting from the actions of President Kais Saied. However, the roots of the issue precede by decades Saied's assumption of the presidency in 2019 and can be found in legacies of colonialism, peripheral dependency, and core 'capitalist racism', all of which have made Tunisia more susceptible to EU border externalisation. Tunisia's history of detention and deportation of migrants, both before and since the 2011 revolt, must be understood within this context.¹⁸⁶

The EU's attempts to externalise migration control to Tunisia intensified in recent years, as outlined in the December 2023 document produced under the Operational Coordination Mechanism for the External Dimension of Migration (MOCADDEM).¹⁸⁷ Following the July 2023 EU-Tunisia Memorandum of Understanding, there was increased pressure and an influx of funding for training, border control equipment, and projects run by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to facilitate 'migrant return and reintegration' with Tunisia identified as one of the seven countries targeted for joint deportation actions. The EU's attempts to reinforce neocolonial security dependency via 'mentorship programmes' and through the provision of knowledge on issues like 'migrant smuggling,' functions to subsidise middle class jobs for European 'security experts' while obscuring the structural causes of smuggling in capitalist-imperialism. However, the negotiations for an EU-Tunisia readmission agreement and visa facilitation agreements, which started in 2016, have been on hold since 2019 and 'Tunisia has shown no interest to date to relaunch the negotiations,' demonstrating a certain level of resistance to neocolonial security relations.¹⁸⁸ President Kais Saied vocalised his opposition to the EU's attempt to turn Tunisia into a 'border guard for Europe'¹⁸⁹ and his supporters claimed that there was a conspiracy to destabilise his government for its vocal criticism of the IMF and World Bank as well as attempts to delink from the west by building closer relations with China and Russia.¹⁹⁰

Nevertheless, there has been a marked increase of migrant detentions in recent years. Most detainees are imprisoned for undocumented border crossings, with a significant number from Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire and Sudan.¹⁹¹ In 2023, 3,500 migrants were arrested for 'irregular

stay' and detained in Tunisian prisons, and the government intercepted over 23,000 people that year,¹⁹² a number which rose to 21,000 for the first four months of 2024 alone, of whom at least 2,000 have been detained and passed to Libya.¹⁹³

Tunisia allows 90-day visa-free travel with an entry stamp for several nationalities.¹⁹⁴ Immigrants account for 0.5% (around 60,000) of a population of 12 million.¹⁹⁵ Between 2004 and 2014, the number of non-Tunisian nationals residing in Tunisia increased by 66%, from 35,192 to 53,490.¹⁹⁶ Most come from the Maghreb (36%), followed by 36.4% from other African countries (mostly Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Senegal and Sudan) and 18.5% from Europe. The number of migrants in Tunisia from East and West African states, in particular Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali and Sudan has been on the rise since the early 2000s – a reflection of the crisis of imperialist capitalism and its damaging effect of de-development, declining labour markets and political (in)stability across the region.

There are of course important differences in class and legal status among migrants in Tunisia from elsewhere in the African continent. Many migrants do have legal status, including some 7,200 foreign students and others who do not require a visa because of bilateral cooperation agreements between Tunisia and their countries of origin.¹⁹⁷ UNHCR reports that there are more than 15,000 refugees and asylum seekers living in Tunisia,¹⁹⁸ many of whom are sleeping in the fields outside Sfax, or near Zarzis on the Libyan border. The living conditions of refugees are often far from ideal given the state's limited capacity to cope with rising costs as it struggles to overcome (neo)colonial legacies of debt and dependency by delinking from IFIs.¹⁹⁹ The remaining migrants are undocumented, arriving under a previously relaxed visa regime, with many staying in Tunisia only long enough to save enough money and make the necessary connections to complete the 400 kilometre journey across the Mediterranean to Europe.²⁰⁰

Due to labour restrictions,²⁰¹ the majority of migrants in Tunisia engage in informal work, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, construction, domestic work, manufacturing in the export industries, services, and tourism. Migrant workers on average earn between 600 to 750 dinars a month (€178–222),²⁰² which is not out of line with the average Tunisian salary and above the minimum wage of 430 dinars a month.²⁰³ Although the lack of job security and legal protections hampers the prospects of migrant workers, a large portion of Tunisians (at least 45% overall and up to 68% in some of the historically peripheral regions such as the centre-west and south, who are subjected to extreme forms of resource and surplus value extraction) toil in similar conditions of super-exploitation and precarity due to Tunisia's colonially induced peripheral status.²⁰⁴ M'barek has stressed the gendered dimension of informal work in the agricultural sector in Tunisia, where women, who make up 70 % of agricultural labour, work for long hours, engage in difficult work, with often no access to social security or health care, and for very low pay. M'barek looks at how women agricultural workers, who become the primary labour force as their husbands and children migrate to coastal towns or Europe, generate surplus value that functions as a form of 'imperialist rent' that keeps down wages and prices in the capitalist core.²⁰⁵ This dynamic reveals a cruel irony: Tunisian women subsidise European food production while simultaneously producing and caring for the future migrant labour force that European capitalists exploit. The lack of local agricultural labour is then filled by displaced migrant workers from other African countries, creating a feedback loop that M'barek terms 'trickle-up misery,' which ultimately benefits the European capitalist class.

The plight of undocumented workers was exacerbated by the same deteriorating economic conditions negatively impacting the Tunisian working class, creating the perfect storm of social tensions.²⁰⁶ Tunisia was frequently in the news in 2023 because of reports of incidents of both state and private violence against migrants from other African countries, with over 1,200 people arrested and forcibly taken to neighbouring Libya and Algeria without due process.²⁰⁷ Several of those who were expelled were asylum seekers registered with the UNHCR, while at least two adults had consular cards identifying them as students in Tunisia. President Kais Saied vocalized his opposition to the EU's attempt to turn Tunisia into a 'border guard for Europe'²⁰⁸ and his supporters claimed that there was a conspiracy to destabilise his government for its vocal criticism of the IMF and World Bank as well as attempts to delink from the west by building closer relations with China and Russia.²⁰⁹ Despite having far more limited resources than its European counterparts, Tunisia's coast guard frequently carries out migrant rescues, and the government has not criminalized grassroots rescue efforts.²¹⁰

Much of the even critical media coverage has framed the violence against undocumented African migrants in Tunisia through a liberal anti-Blackness lens that focuses on interpersonal relations at the expense of the social relations and material conditions that produce and sustain racism ('capitalist racism'). The approach undermines the crucial work of anti-racism, limiting resistance to legal and humanitarian responses. A more radical and grounded approach would look at the colonial roots and political economy of racism in Tunisia, understanding racism in relation to other forms of vulnerabilisation arising from Tunisia's status as a dependent capitalist state, including the ways in which working-class Tunisians and migrants from across the Maghreb are also exploited, excluded, oppressed and racialised depending on class and geographic location.

Such an approach enables us to see how Tunisia, a former colonised, dependent global South state, is itself racialised within the international system. Fanon wrote about racial hierarchies enforced by colonialism in order to divide and rule. Pan-African forms of ideological and material anti-colonial solidarity had begun to overturn these hierarchies, although they soon returned as neo-colonial strategies of domination: 'Colonialism, which the birth of African unity had trembling on foundations, is now back on its feet, and now undertakes to break this will to unify by taking advantage of every weak link in the movement', he wrote.²¹¹ Fanon's prescient warning reminds us of the urgency of a return to materialist understandings of liberation and solidarity – rooted in anti-colonial/anti-imperialist Pan Africanism as it was during Fanon's time – to truly continue the work of eliminating capitalist racism and the forms of surplus value extraction it enables in Tunisia and elsewhere in the region.

Morocco

Like other countries in the Maghreb, Morocco is both a source of migrant labour to Europe as well as a destination for migrant workers from other countries across the African continent. Following Morocco's independence in 1956, the government saw emigration as a means to earn foreign currency and alleviate political instability.²¹²

The Ministry of Labour designated recruitment zones based on the belief that providing work opportunities abroad would reduce engagement in opposition movements. It facilitated controlled emigration to encourage outflows from specific regions affected by poverty and drought and prone to popular revolt, such as the northern Rif region. Passports were selectively issued, primarily to single men with limited education or those vetted by local authorities, aiming to limit political organising among diaspora communities. Moroccan emigration to Europe was organised under bilateral labour agreements, with the Moroccan government having discretion in selecting candidates.²¹³



The Moroccan government closely surveilled its nationals in Europe through embassies, mosques, and civil-society groups affiliated with the government.²¹⁴ Information on Moroccans involved in labour unions abroad was collected by teachers and imams sent by the government. The state feared that diaspora political organising could bolster leftist parties in Morocco. Repressive measures included harassment, arrests, and confiscation of passports during the 'Years of Lead' from the 1960s to the 1980s.²¹⁵

In the mid-1980s, following the repression of much of the left-wing opposition, the Moroccan government adopted a more relaxed approach. King Hassan II implemented some reforms, for example allowing Moroccans abroad to participate in elections. Mohammed VI developed a national strategy for engaging the diaspora. However, with its neoliberal, comprador and pro-western orientation, the Moroccan ruling class—the *makhzen*—had little concern for protecting the rights of Moroccan citizens residing in Europe or reversing the surplus value drain associated with emigration to the capitalist core.

Moroccan emigration to Europe, particularly to Belgium, France, Germany, and the Netherlands, has evolved significantly since the early twentieth century, shaped by the political economy of (neo)colonialism and the needs of European capital for low-paid labour, especially in agriculture, industry, construction and the informal economy, such as domestic work. A report by Lalla Amina Drhimeur, a doctoral student in political science at Hassan II School of Law in Morocco, has documented how the number of Moroccan emigrants surged in the late 1960s, from 137,000 in 1968 to 394,000 by 1979, with a consistent growth of 16% every seven years.²¹⁶ This increase was largely due to bilateral agreements Morocco signed with France (1963), Germany (1963), Belgium (1964), and the Netherlands (1969), facilitating the recruitment of both 'qualified' and 'semi-qualified' Moroccan workers. Many Moroccans also emigrated via informal networks of family and friends, a trend made easier by the absence of visa requirements until 1990.²¹⁷ By 2017, the Moroccan diaspora in France numbered more than 1.3 million. Gradually, the emigrant profile shifted from predominantly male labourers to a more socio-economically heterogeneous group, including professionals and families. Much Moroccan emigration to Spain is governed by a 2001 agreement between the two countries which provides thousands

of seasonal visas especially for rural agricultural workers (predominantly landless women and poor farmworkers) to Spanish farms where they are super-exploited and often sexually harassed and abused.²¹⁸

In addition to serving as a corridor for other African migrants seeking to reach Europe, where they face racialised and gendered forms of super-exploitation, Morocco has increasingly become a destination country for migrants and refugees forced to leave home due to the ravages of capitalist-imperialism, largely from West and Central Africa as well as Yemen and Syria.²¹⁹ Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of refugees in Morocco continued to rise, increasing by approximately 45% between 2020 and 2022, with the rates of asylum seekers tripling.²²⁰

Morocco has a legal framework for migration based on Law No. 02-03, passed in 2003, which addresses the entry, stay, and emigration of foreigners, as well as irregular immigration.²²¹ The growing number of migrants mainly from Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Guinea, Mali, Niger and Senegal – close to 700,000, including 19,278 refugees and asylum seekers from over 42 countries settling in Morocco rather than continuing their journey to Europe or returning to their countries of origin – has required shifts in migration policies.²²² In 2013, Morocco announced a new migration policy aimed at adopting a 'humanitarian approach' to migration and asylum. This included the creation of a ministerial department dedicated to migration affairs, the launch of regularisation programmes for undocumented migrants, and the adoption of the 2014 National Strategy on Immigration and Asylum (SNIA) with the stated aim of improving access to residence cards for migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees in Morocco. The government regularised the status of about 24,000 migrants in 2014 and of another 28,000 in 2017, largely from Nigeria, Senegal and Syria, granting them the right to work and access to social services. The second regularisation campaign in 2017 coincided with Morocco's efforts to join the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).²²³

To date, no new laws have been passed to replace the existing legal framework governing migration and asylum in Morocco and the laws in place provide very few protections for refugees and asylum seekers, who are subjected to police raids, arbitrary arrests, detention and displacement as well as a lack of access to essential services, such as education, health care, and work permits.²²⁴ The inhumane treatment of migrants is not entirely out of keeping with the treatment – including socio-economic and political exclusion, exploitation and repression – of working class nationals who are citizens, a reflection of Morocco's ruling class comprador orientation and the state's more complete incorporation within polarised core-periphery relations.²²⁵

Refugee and migrant workers are often employed in the informal sector, facing difficulties due to the lack of residence permits and limited job opportunities. As a result, many work in precarious and seasonal jobs, essentially another form of legalised exploitation. Women comprise 48.5% of the migrant population and often face extreme forms of exploitation and abuse, particularly in domestic and agricultural work. Similar to Tunisia, the surplus value generated by super-exploited women is used to subsidise both domestic and western capital.²²⁶ Migrants and refugees in Morocco also face limited access to food, housing and health care

due to legal and protection gaps. Their vulnerability was exacerbated during COVID-19 with lockdowns significantly affecting their mobility and livelihoods.

Migrants and refugees for whom Morocco is a place of transit often use the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla—the only land borders between the European Union and Africa—as entry points to Europe. Crossing through these enclaves is dangerous, with high razor-wire fences separating Morocco and Spain. Moroccan officials often undertake raids on migrants' living areas, arresting and collectively expelling those suspected of being undocumented. Both Moroccan and Spanish authorities regularly engage in state violence against migrants.²²⁷

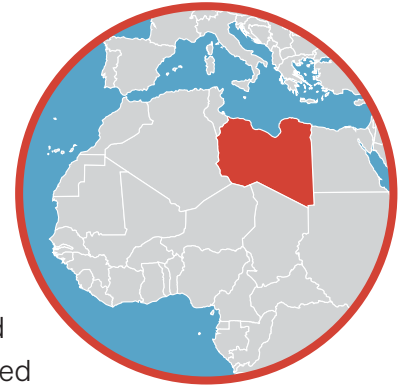
As part of the push to enforce Europe's racist border regime, bilateral cooperation programmes were established between Morocco and Spain starting in 1992, and later with the EU.²²⁸ After the 1992 agreement, Spain and Morocco launched joint patrolling teams in 2004 which see the Spanish Guardia Civil and the Moroccan Gendarmerie Royale control irregular migration across the Mediterranean. In 2014, Morocco created the Migration and Border Surveillance Directorate and the Migration Observatory within the Ministry of Interior in accordance with the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement, which entered into force in 2000, ushering in a new era of neoliberal structural adjustment in Morocco.²²⁹ Unequal Moroccan–EU relations were further institutionalised with the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in 2004.

A horrific incident at the Melilla border between Morocco and Spain on 24 June 2022 laid bare the racist violence of the Mediterranean border regime, often obscured by the larger number but less visible deaths at sea. Several hundred migrants attempting to cross the fence were brutally assaulted by Spanish security forces and their Moroccan subcontractors in a 'joint operation'. At least thirty-seven people were killed and 76 wounded. Like the forced removal of refugees and migrants elsewhere in the Maghreb, this and other incidents have exposed the true aim of EU border policies: to hone and accelerate the border violence so that it is more effective. As with past examples of border imperialism, moral panics are introduced to hide the true aims of this violence. Following the Melilla massacre, the Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez blamed human trafficking and criminalised the migrants.²³⁰ Sánchez intentionally ignored the desperate capitalist-imperialist-induced conditions that led these migrants to subject themselves to such a perilous migration route in the first place, instead praising the security forces involved and expressing gratitude to the Moroccan government.

Morocco has been rewarded for ventriloquising EU violence, held up and praised as a model African 'police officer' in the EU's border externalisation to manage migration flows. The government's effectiveness in enforcing this (the Moroccan navy stopped 75,184 people from migrating to Europe in 2023, up 6% from 2022) results in material and diplomatic neo-colonial rents for the makzen, including through increased funding and recognition of Morocco's control of the Western Sahara.²³¹

Libya

Labour migration to Libya has a longer and deeper history than in the other Maghreb states, beginning with the discovery of oil and hydrocarbon reserves in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Following the 1969 al-Fatih revolution, the Libyan government implemented policies that promoted the redistribution of wealth and fostered regional cooperation.²³² The expanding oil industry created the need for foreign labour to support the growing economy it fuelled. Investment in turn created welcoming conditions for migration in the 1970s. Many came to work, live, and send remittances back to their families. However, these policies were gradually reversed in the late 1980s. The government struggled to reduce its reliance on oil revenues and the US imperialist military and economic assault, including an extensive sanctions regime, started to chip away at the material basis of the revolutionary republic.



In the 1990s, Libya underwent a complete transformation to pursue, in the words of Matteo Capasso, Marie Curie Global Research Fellow with the Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage at Ca' Foscari University of Venice, a new form of 'multipolarity', which included 'diversifying its own political-economic integration and alliances, with a specific focus on the African continent'.²³³ These political-economic changes were accompanied by shifts in migration patterns. In the 1990s, immigration shifted from primarily Arab countries to neighbouring African countries as part of an effort to revive Pan-Africanism. The country adopted an open-door policy for African states, leading to significant migration from Chad, Mali, Niger and other neighbouring countries. Multilateral agreements were signed with other African states, including the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CENSAD), allowing migrant workers to stay for three months without a visa and increasing the number of migrants to more than 1 million during this period (mid-1990s to 2011). Despite the country's descent into manufactured instability following the 2011 NATO-led intervention and subsequent stricter migration policies, the allure of lucrative economic opportunities in Libya has persisted. Capitalist-imperialist-induced wars, climate devastation and high levels of unemployment across Africa and West Asia, and to a lesser extent South Asia, have led to a continuous labour migration to Libya.

Given its geographical location, Libya also became a major transit country for undocumented migrants travelling from Africa to Europe. In 2008 Muamar Ghaddafi's government caved into pressure to accept some European border externalisation policies, though not without significant concessions from Italy, its former colonial power. The Treaty of Benghazi (2008) entailed Italy formally apologising for its colonial past and agreeing to pay \$5 billion in reparations. In return, Libya committed to combatting undocumented migration, including joint patrols off its coast and monitoring its land borders. Collaboration was enhanced two years later when a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the EU Commission and Libya, outlining EU technical assistance and cooperation from 2011 to 2013.²³⁴ An additional Migration Cooperation Agenda was established, with the EU offering what was effectively a bribe of €50 million in exchange for Libya militarising its borders to prevent migrants from transiting through the country to reach Europe.²³⁵

Prior to the agreement with the EU, Libya was already opening up to European influence due to a combination of what Capasso describes as the pressures of the sanctions and the 'constant threat of war', as well as the 'rise of consumerist desires' - a result of the waging of global class warfare and its particular iteration in the region with the 'fantasy of turning Libya in the Dubai of North Africa'.²³⁶ Italy stepped into the vacuum created by the retreat of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya project, playing a particularly important role in shaping Libya's border militarisation policies on the pretext of 'combating human trafficking'.²³⁷ Protocols of cooperation for policing migration were established in 2007, and a Partnership Treaty was signed in 2008 in exchange for the promise of reparations for the multiple forms of violence and expropriation inflicted upon the Libyan people by Italian colonialism. This led to the increasing interception and refoulement of migrants and asylum seekers at sea as well as the establishment of migrant detention centres. Similar to the Zionist-imperialist assault on Syria that has lasted for more than a decade, the sanctions regime followed by the 2011 US-led NATO invasion of Libya comprised an imperialist strategy of accumulation by destruction, aimed at dismantling the state, weakening its security apparatuses, and generating 'security dependency'.²³⁸ Following the assassination of Qaddafi and Libya's subsequent incorporation into the US-led imperialist security architecture, the 'ground-breaking'²³⁹ reparations treaty with Italy was effectively immobilized and Libya's role in border policing on behalf of the EU solidified.

The constructed chaos that followed the US-NATO intervention enabled various forms of value drain and accumulation through waste to continue, creating a context ripe for neocolonial border militarisation. Emerging criminal networks took advantage of the context to engage in human trafficking and exploitation of undocumented migrants' labour. The militarisation of Libya's borders due to EU border externalisation meant that the Mediterranean became an even more perilous route for migrants attempting to reach Europe, with many drowning as boats capsized.²⁴⁰ There were more than 706,000 migrants in Libya at the start of 2024, but Libyan officials say the actual number exceeds 2 million. This includes around 43,000 registered refugees and asylum seekers.²⁴¹

The contemporary legal and institutional framework governing migration in Libya cannot be understood without analysing the decades-old imperialist hybrid war Libyans have endured, including military and economic interventions.²⁴² Profound instability has ensued, deepened by successive post-2011 governments comprised of a comprador bourgeoisie who manage and benefit from the exploitation of the local population on behalf of the capitalist-imperialist centre. These governments are aligned, as Essam Elkorhli, a Libyan PhD student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, puts it, with 'the West as opposed to allying with the people, while installing puppets as heads of militias and so-called military'.²⁴³ It is unsurprising in this context that Libya's migrant governance framework is characterised by a lack of safe pathways for migrants to arrive and settle in order to keep them in a state of perpetual precarity. Instead, the Libyan government criminalises migrants' irregular entry, stay, and exit and does not guarantee the rights of specific categories of migrants as provided under international law. There are anywhere between 10,000 and 20,000 migrants held in official detention centres in Libya on any given day.²⁴⁴ Many facilities remain under the control of militias and as such are inaccessible for independent observers.

Migrants in Libya have faced unimaginable horrors throughout their transit and stay and many find themselves trapped in the country. State and non-state actors abuse and exploit migrants with impunity. A 2022 UN report found that migrants in this country, which was once a safe haven for people on the move from across the African continent, are now 'extremely vulnerable to human rights abuses and regularly subjected to acts of slavery, rape and torture'.²⁴⁵

The Independent Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) on Libya found evidence of systematic and widespread attacks directed at the migrant population, constituting crimes against humanity. The International Organization of Migration (IOM), a central liberal-imperialist global governance actor that is directly complicit in the EU's border externalisation programme in Libya and other countries, participates in this violence through its 'voluntary humanitarian return' programmes, repatriating tens of thousands of migrants with little to no human rights protections.²⁴⁶

Labour migration to Libya has a longer and deeper history than the other Maghreb states, beginning with the discovery of oil and hydrocarbon reserves in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The rapid growth of the petroleum industry and ambitious development projects, like the Great Man-Made River project, created a need for migrant workers due to a labour deficit among the local population. Workers mainly from neighbouring countries such as Tunisia and Egypt took up these jobs, while some came from Asian and Eastern European countries. This trend continued until 1992 when Libya shifted its foreign policies to focus more on strengthening Pan-African relations.²⁴⁷

This led to bilateral and multilateral agreements with other African states, including the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CENSAD), leading to an open-door policy for migrants from member states, which allowed the entry of migrant workers for three months without a visa, increasing the number of migrant to more than 1 million during this period (mid-1990s to 2011). Despite the country's descent into manufactured instability following the 2011 NATO-led intervention and subsequent stricter migration policies, the allure of lucrative economic opportunities in Libya has persisted. Capitalist-imperialist-induced wars, climate devastation and unemployment across Africa and the Middle East (MENA region), and to a lesser extent, South Asia, have led to a continuous migration to Libya, either to seek work there, or to take their chances and attempt to get to Europe in the hope of better job opportunities.

Most migrants who remain in Libya are undocumented and work informally in sectors where they face super-exploitation. Overall, the informal labour market in Libya relies heavily on intermediaries who connect employers with migrant workers.²⁴⁸ The intermediaries offer a range of services, but the process lacks formal agreements and documentation, making it easier to exploit migrant workers – who have repeatedly complained about these intermediaries' abusive practices, including restrictions on freedom of movement, retention of identity documents, threats, intimidation, and forced labour to work off the odious debt accrued from an exploitative migration process. Migrant women who become domestic workers are particularly vulnerable to abuse, as they are worldwide. The lack of legal rights for migrant workers and regulatory bodies governing the activities of these intermediaries contributes to their vulnerabilisation and susceptibility to super-exploitation.²⁴⁹

Migrant workers in Libya work mainly in the private sector, usually for cash in hand. Some also receive in-kind compensation, such as food and other items. Salaries vary significantly, although most migrants earn less than 950 LYD (€180) a month, which is far below the average wage of 1,000–25,000 LYD and even below the minimum wage of 1,000 LYD.²⁵⁰ The working hours and conditions for migrant workers in Libya vary, but they commonly work six days a week, mostly on 10-hour shifts. The majority of migrant workers have verbal or no contracts. In the absence of formal employment agreements, social security coverage is almost non-existent for migrant workers in Libya.²⁵¹

Migrant workers from other African countries (in particular Sudan, Cameroon, Guinea, Eritrea and Ethiopia) are often subjected to racist abuse. As Elkorghli explains, the roots of anti-Blackness in Libya are deeply intertwined with the country's colonial past. Despite attempts to promote Pan-African unity under Ghaddafi, the Libyan government 'still lacked the pedagogical tools to educate the people on values of equality, solidarity, anti-racism – features that were missing from the didactic education discourse despite its Third World orientation'.²⁵² Anti-Blackness in Libya was weaponised by the NATO-supporting bourgeois media to fabricate the 2011 events as uprisings by Libyans (racialised as white adjacent Africans) which were allegedly stifled by mercenaries (racialised as Black Africans). Since then, anti-Blackness has become increasingly normalized and is being used to justify border militarisation and Libya's alliance with NATO as it 'became the norm to hear about politicians pleading for recognition from Western countries and neglecting Libya's history with the rest of Africa, a history of colonialism'. This racism is exacerbated, Elkorghli asserts, by the EU 'funding the notorious Libyan coastguard to do the EU's dirty work in the Mediterranean to imprison migrants in horrendous and inhumane condition[s]'.²⁵³

The migration governance regimes in Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, and Libya are heavily shaped by colonial legacies, now combined with the EU's neo-colonial strategy of border externalisation, where these North African countries have become frontline states in managing vulnerable migrants, refugees and asylum seekers on behalf of the imperialist core. In Algeria and Tunisia, this external influence manifests itself through increased pressures to align with EU migration policies at the expense of their own sovereignty and migrants' rights. Morocco, capitalising on its role as a key EU partner and now the only state in the region to have normalised relations with the settler-colonial state of Israel, has implemented policies that serve European interests in return for economic and political concessions for its comprador ruling class. Libya, in the throes of manufactured instability, illustrates the most extreme consequences of EU intervention, where European support for local militias and the Libyan Coast Guard has led to a complete hollowing out of the state and its sovereign prerogatives to determine its own border policy, with dire consequences for migrants. These dynamics underscore the EU's broader imperialist agenda, where migration governance in North Africa is subordinated to the core capitalist state objectives, to the detriment of local populations and people on the move.

A conjunctural analysis helps us understand contemporary exploitation of migrant labour in the region as part of the broader border imperialist agenda. As this report has argued, the current moment is marked by profound economic crisis and widespread debt distress, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing public health crisis and the ongoing US/NATO proxy war in Ukraine and Zionist-imperialist genocide in Gaza. This is in addition to a structural

political-economic context shaped by the region's dependency and 'extraversion',²⁵⁴ a legacy of colonialism and unequal incorporation into the global capitalist economy. The EU and other US-led imperialist actors have mobilised the crisis of capitalist imperialism, which has resulted in increased migration from African countries, as leverage to attempt to further integrate states within the imperialist border architecture. This integration has in turn contributed to rendering African migrant workers even more vulnerable, so that they are more susceptible to super-exploitation, and to expanding the global reserve army of labour, undermining the well-being of workers across the globe, and in particular in the Global Majority states. This dynamic also exacerbates tensions between workers from the Maghreb and elsewhere on the African continent, who are forced to compete with each other for limited resources, perpetuating racial hierarchies and labour fragmentation. These conditions not only exploit migrant workers but also destabilise local labour markets, reinforcing divisions and maintaining the region's peripheral status in the global economy.

The final chapter will explore the ways in which border imperialism is resisted in both explicit and implicit ways by the people most affected by these policies as well as a growing global solidarity movement. It will also consider what lessons can be learned from the earlier era of anti-colonial and anti-imperialist solidarity and how the struggle to end border imperialism dialectically interacts with radical changes to the world system wrought by the rise of a multipolar world order.

CHAPTER 4

Resisting border imperialism



Melilla Massacre Commemoration March June 2023

One can only fully understand the issue of border imperialism in the context of its dialectical relation with resistance, which in turn shapes its mechanisms and strategies. The act of undocumented migration in the face of the capitalist-imperialist crisis and hyper-militarised borders is in itself a powerful form of resistance. The Arabic term often used in the Maghreb to describe the activity of crossing borders in defiance of the class-based, racist visa system – *harraga* – perhaps best captures the insurgent nature of what are both individual and collective acts of resistance. The term *harraga* comes from the Arabic verb *harga*, meaning ‘to burn’, and refers to the act of people discarding or burning their identification documents to prevent being deported to their country of origin. While the term *migration* is associated with imperialist border regimes requiring “state-obeying, law-obeying, movements of people,” *harraga*, as Amade M’charek, Professor of Anthropology of Science at the University of Amsterdam, contends, ‘is about burning borders.. [it is] an activity that *burns* state-rules and messes up boundaries’.²⁵⁵

The term was originally used to refer to undocumented crossings between Tunisia and Libya, when men from southern Tunisia sought jobs in Libya. Over time, *harraga* came to symbolise the unregulated crossing of Europe’s racist, militarised borders. It also carries within it the historical legacies of colonialism and ongoing forms of capitalist-imperialist domination and

exploitation, as these are responsible for creating – in the absence of reparations and structural transformation of the world system – the socio-economic conditions that drive people to leave their homes in Global Majority states following formal independence. The immediate context for *harraga*, as this report has explained, is the construction of ‘Fortress Europe’, a border regime designed to enable capital to accumulate in the core while making it ever more difficult for people from the periphery to enter the area. It is in the graveyard of the Mediterranean, like the deadly Mexico–US borderlands, that the ontological hierarchy of life underpinning the world system becomes clear. ‘Borders,’ as Ghaman and Hjalmarson put it, ‘at once a cause, symptom, and consequence of violent deracination, division, and dehumanisation, serve as a justification for and byproduct of imposed imperialist will and forced uprooting—carved into the ground and onto bodies’.²⁵⁶ They are designed to ‘signal to us who ought to matter versus who ought not; who is from a “great” place versus who is from a “s-hole;” and who is human versus who is “animal”’.²⁵⁷

Given the risks and difficulties associated with navigating the dangerous Mediterranean route, the act of *harraga* requires preparation, knowledge, networks, and financial resources. In this sense, it is a collective act – a way of re-asserting humanity and the solidarity that borders attempt to break down. Although the media often focus on a host of racialised and criminalised non-state or ‘bad’ (e.g. global South) state actors deemed responsible for the deaths associated with migration, in reality *harraga* can also be a life-affirming process. For M’charek, it is about ‘expanding living space and making connections between different places’, intervening with the politics of borders by ‘shedding light on the dead bodies washed ashore and the securitisation of borders’.²⁵⁸

There is also a network of organisations actively involved in rescuing migrants and refugees in distress in the Mediterranean once they have engaged in the act of burning borders, although this humanitarian work has itself become dangerous due to its increasing criminalisation by European states. Between 2015 and 2017, search and rescue non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as the Alarm Phone Initiative, run by volunteers from Tunisia, Morocco, and European countries,²⁵⁹ and the German rescue organisations Sea-Eye and Sea-Watch played a crucial role in rescuing over 110,000 people in the central Mediterranean. Despite their humanitarian efforts, these organisations face increasing attacks by EU member states, accused of colluding with ‘smugglers’ and described as a ‘pull factor’ for migration. In 2018, the Italian government seized several rescue ships and initiated legal actions against crew members. Cetta Mainwaring at the University of Glasgow and Daniela DeBono at Malmö University argue that this crackdown on NGOs is rooted in a neo-colonial imagination of the Mediterranean as ‘both an empty and European space’, which enables the EU to avoid responsibility for migrant deaths at sea while reinforcing racialised borders.²⁶⁰ The construction of the Mediterranean as ‘mare nostrum (our sea)’ and ‘mare nullius (nobody’s sea)’ allows the EU to suppress historical and contemporary connections, contributing to the exclusion and violence against racialised migrants. Despite legal obligations to assist those in distress at sea, the EU’s actions illustrate a persistent neo-colonial approach that criminalises solidarity and reasserts control over the Mediterranean.²⁶¹

In early 2023, Italy’s right-wing government introduced a new decree that significantly limits the capacity of NGOs to conduct search and rescue missions in the central Mediterranean.

It imposes a strict 'code of conduct' for rescue ships, including requirements that vessels must immediately leave the area after conducting a rescue, even if other boats are still in distress.²⁶² Ships face potential fines of up to €50,000 and the seizure of their vessels for non-compliance. In addition, rescue organisations are required to take asylum applications from rescued individuals, despite the fact that asylum should be processed on land, not at sea. These regulations have been criticised by organisations like Doctors Without Borders (MSF) as part of a broader strategy by Italy to obstruct rescue efforts, arguing that these measures will lead to more deaths at sea and violate international maritime law, particularly the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.²⁶³

Despite facing increasing criminalisation and harassment, these organisations continue their life-saving work, challenging the legality of the new regulations and calling on European governments to uphold international obligations. They continue to conduct search-and-rescue operations in the Mediterranean, as well as providing a critical communication platform for migrants in distress at sea, alerting rescue services and the public to emergencies and providing other forms of support.²⁶⁴ Many of these organisations not only engage in rescue missions but also advocate for the abolition of oppressive border policies, as seen in initiatives like Abolish Frontex, which campaigns against the EU's border and coast guard agency.

At the same time as treating the activities of these rescue operations as crimes, border imperialist actors turn a blind eye to attacks on migrant ships by Libyan Coast Guards, reinforcing a climate of fear and vulnerability in the Mediterranean.²⁶⁵ In addition to their role in restricting search and rescue missions and creating conditions of vulnerability for migrants crossing the sea, these actors also are directly complicit in drowning incidents. This was best evidenced with the June 2023 capsizing of a boat carrying more than 600 migrants in the presence of a Greek Coast Guard ship.²⁶⁶ Institutionalised border violence is also mobilised in the refoulement of migrants, described by Tazzioli and De Genova as acts of 'kidnapping' and a 'a method intended to reassert control over 'unruly' mobilities' which demonstrate the 'enduring coloniality of contemporary border regimes'.²⁶⁷ A recent BBC film detailed how the Greek Coast Guard routinely abducted and abandoned asylum seekers in the Mediterranean Sea, causing the deaths of dozens of migrants over a period of three years, including of nine asylum seekers who had reached Greek soil but were taken back out to sea and thrown overboard.²⁶⁸

Migrants are not passive objects in this macabre setting, and they can and often do engage in different forms of resistance in addition to the act of *harraga* itself. Professor Martina Tazzioli at Goldsmiths, University of London, and Nicholas De Genova at the University of Houston have documented examples of migrants as 'agents of their own liberation – through refusals, mutinies, and hijacking'.²⁶⁹ One example they describe is an incident in March 2019 where 108 migrants hijacked a Turkish merchant ship charged with returning the passengers of a capsized boat bound to Italy to Libya. Italy's Deputy Prime Minister at the time, Matteo Salvini, declared that under no circumstances would the migrants be permitted to disembark in Italy, depicting them as 'pirates'. The criminalisation of this resistance echoes colonial discourses and practices, with three of the migrants accused of leading the rebellion 'summarily arrested for diverting the vessel and...accused of "terrorism"'.



Melilla Massacre Commemoration March June 2023

In addition to direct actions at sea, many migrants organise protests together with solidarity activists in front of detention centres and institutions that claim to provide protection. After a particularly deadly year in 2021 in the region in which about 42 shipwrecks occurred off the Libyan and Tunisian shores, and in the aftermath of a brutal raid by Libyan security forces and affiliated militias on a migrant detention centre in the Gargaresh area (West Tripoli), 4,000 people managed to escape. This was followed by a sit-in organised by several thousand migrants outside the UNHCR Community Day Centre in Tripoli, which lasted for three months.²⁷⁰ The sit-in was eventually forcibly disbanded and the Libyan authorities killed three of the demonstrators. In Tunisia, there have been regular protests in the capital as well as in Zarzis, one of the main departure points for *harraga* from Tunisia and elsewhere on the African continent. In April 2022, over 200 asylum seekers and refugees in Tunisia protested in front of the UNHCR office in Tunis, demanding evacuation and resettlement to a third country due to inadequate protection and prolonged neglect by the UN agency.²⁷¹

There are also the grassroots efforts by local fisherfolk to save stranded migrants who are forced to take ever more perilous routes due to the heightened militarisation and surveillance of the imperialist border regime. The Tunisian Fishermen's Association of Zarzis is perhaps most prominent in this regard, with their frontline work on missions to rescue migrants in distress at sea, and has received much media attention.²⁷² Tunisian fisherfolk first hit the global media in 2017 when they prevented a ship chartered by far-right anti-immigration activists from pulling into port, forcing the vessel to head further along the coastline in search of much-needed supplies.²⁷³ Their rescue efforts have been hindered by the militarisation of the sea and criminalisation of rescue operations. Libyan armed groups, equipped with European systems to track migrant boats, have targeted the sailors, while Algerian Coast Guards pose challenges in the northwest. Despite the risks, the fisherfolk of Zarzis continue to rescue those in peril at sea. Ahlam Chemlali, a Doctoral Fellow at Danish Institute for International Studies, has analysed the impact of the EU's racist border externalisation policies, which have not only undermined migrants' human rights and contributed to environmental crisis and death in the Mediterranean but also, through 'felt externalisation', have 'directly and indirectly impact[ed] fishermen, their livelihoods, families, environment, and their spaces in Zarzis'.²⁷⁴

The fisherfolk's actions are in accordance with international maritime law, which mandates the rescue of those in peril at sea. Yet in their grassroots challenge to border imperialism, they also supersede the more limited logic of the colonially rooted international and NGO liberal-humanitarian framework. Their actions recall a more radical era of Pan-African/Third Worldism, when recognition of shared political and socio-economic conditions and opposition to colonialism-imperialism provided a material basis for a radical solidarity capable of overcoming colonial fragmentation and divide-and-rule tactics. Ultimately, the revitalisation of more sustained forms of South–South solidarity will be necessary to achieve meaningful economic sovereignty—what Samir Amin terms ‘delinking’—a necessary prerequisite for ending the unequal exchange that necessitates border militarisation in the first place. As Amin puts it, ‘delinking implies political solidarity between countries of the south to defeat the project of military control of the planet by the US, Europe and Japan’ in order to ‘buil[d] a sovereign project.’²⁷⁵ It entails the move away from ‘financialized globalisation’, enabling regional integration as well as a diversification of trade and investment partners to prioritise economic relations with the periphery and semi-periphery. Doing so will allow Maghreb states to exit, as the Tunisian scholar Haytham Guesmi contends, the ‘state of dependency on the global economic system dominated by monopolistic capital in the center,’²⁷⁶ where loans from IFIs are used as leverage to force Africans to police, oppress and exploit one another on behalf of western capital. There have been several positive developments in this regard, including Algeria’s application and Tunisia’s expression of interest to join BRICS,²⁷⁷ as well as the signing of 38 Belt and Road Initiative cooperation agreements between China and Algeria (20), Tunisia (7) and Morocco (15).²⁷⁸

The rise of a multipolar world order, and the concomitant decline of the ‘white world order’, holds out hope for delinking and renewed South-South solidarity.²⁷⁹ Yet the birth pangs of this new order have been intensified by the imperialist-backed settler colonial genocide in Palestine and the expansion of the imperialist assault regionally, experienced most acutely with the Zionist-imperialist intervention in Syria. However, the steadfastness of Palestinian and regional resistance makes clear that there is no return to the previous status quo. The world is now fundamentally changed from what it was on 6 October 2023. The liberation struggle in Palestine is a struggle for all of humanity. The abolition of imperialist borders, like the abolition of settler colonialism, is a prerequisite for the liberation of all oppressed peoples. Therefore, while immediate actions such as the demilitarisation of the Mediterranean, the decriminalisation of migration, the provision of humanitarian assistance as well as legal and institutional reforms in the Maghreb concerning refugee, asylum, and labour laws are necessary, none of these is enough on its own. The opposition to border imperialism must ultimately be rooted in an anti-imperialist politics, which provides a solid foundation for dismantling unequal core-periphery relations and the class-based, racist and gendered forms of vulnerability they produce. Ultimately, only once US imperialism, the central contradiction in the current global system, is defeated, will it be possible to halt the centuries-old drain of surplus value from the periphery. This surplus value must instead be invested in sustainable development and life-affirming institutions and services in the countries and regions where it is produced. Even with this, however, people will continue to migrate, as they have done for millennia – but no longer in conditions designed to produce death and precarity for the benefit of capital.

Conclusion

Militarised borders are colonial constructs and their fortification in the Maghreb region serves a Western imperialist agenda. From the earliest expansion of European empires that deployed their armies to secure territorial control of foreign lands that were subsequently occupied, controlled, ravaged, depopulated, de-developed, exploited and settled, borders have played a central part in imperial conquests. Indeed, as this report points out, many of the borders that demarcate African countries today owe their origins to illegal land grabs and colonisation in the late nineteenth century by various western European states. Today, as before, Western imperialism, led by the US and propped up by the EU, is dominant across the world. This is evident in NATO's continued expanse, in the US-backed and enabled Zionist entity's genocidal war on the Palestinian people and broader regional assault, and in the EU and US (via NATO and AFRICOM)'s military presence and intervention in countries across Africa and throughout the Global South.

Colonial power relations continue to shape unequal European-African relations, and nowhere is this more evident than with regard to US-EU influence on the border policies of various African states. This report sets out the recent historical context and provides a conceptual overview of colonial border-making, leaving little doubt that it is possible to draw a direct line between the creation of borders in the Maghreb at the end of the nineteenth century and the role played by western European powers, predominantly France, and the way in which these borders are governed and administered today. Much of TNI's Border Wars research has argued that third countries that enter into agreements with the EU and its member states in relation to what the EU terms 'border management', in effect, become its external border agents. That some regional states, in particular Algeria and Tunisia, have been more successful at resisting subordination to an imperialist border regime demonstrates the importance of dialectical materialist and conjunctural analysis to grasping how the class orientation and changing political projects of peripheral states can impact the kinds of policies adopted as well as how these policies are implemented. Although presented as 'agreements' or 'cooperation', the reality is that border policies are often imposed on African states that have little scope to challenge them due to the structural legacies of colonialism and the ongoing forms of unequal exchange that shape core-periphery relations.

Finally, the paper makes abundantly clear that though African states are often resource-rich, the continued neo-colonialist and capitalist domination and exploitation of African lands, peoples and resources by Western states, corporations and institutions means that many decades after having formally gained independence from their former colonial rulers, African states and peoples continue to be peripheralised. However, the rise of a multipolar world order, and concomitant decline of the 'white world order'²⁸⁰, holds out hope for the delinking of African economies and renewed South-South solidarity. The paper concludes by arguing that the abolition of imperialist borders in the Maghreb, like the abolition of settler colonialism, is a prerequisite for the liberation of all oppressed peoples. Therefore, opposition to border violence in the Mediterranean must ultimately be rooted in an anti-imperialist politics, which provides a solid foundation for dismantling unequal core-periphery relations and the class-based, racist and gendered forms of vulnerability they produce.



Endnotes

- 1 Colleen Barry and Maria Grazia Murru. "Rescue Group Saves 11-Year-Old Girl Floating Alone in the Mediterranean for Days After Shipwreck." *Associated Press*, 12 Dec. 2024, <https://www.kktv.com/2024/12/12/rescue-group-saves-11-year-old-girl-floating-alone-mediterranean-days-after-shipwreck/>.
- 2 "Dozens of Asylum Seekers Drown in Shipwrecks Near Tunisia and Libya Attempting to Reach Europe." *Democracy Now!*, 3 Jan. 2025, www.democracynow.org/2025/1/3/headlines/dozens_of_asylum_seekers_drown_in_shipwrecks_near_tunisia_and_libya_attempting_to_reach_europe.
- 3 Nette Nöstlinger, 'Europe's Syrians Shaken by Debate Over Repatriation to Their War-Ravaged Homeland,' *Politico*, 12 Dec. 2024, <https://www.politico.eu/article/europe-syrians-repatriation-debate-refugees-germany-deportation/>.
- 4 <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/region/mediterranean>
- 5 For example, Laurence Bondard, spokesperson and operations communications manager for SOS Méditerranée, a non-governmental rescue organisation that operates in the central Mediterranean, decries a lack of 'European efficient search and rescue assets', but refrains from pointing to the EU's role in militarising the Mediterranean in way that actually undermines any search and rescue missions. See also Democracy Now! (2023) 'Greek migrant shipwreck highlights media coverage of refugee crisis', 23 June. https://www.democracynow.org/2023/6/23/greece_migrant_shipwreck_media_coverage?utm_source=Democracy+Now%21&utm_campaign=e4065c43ca-Daily_Digest_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fa2346a853-e4065c43ca-191058945
- 6 European Court of Auditors. *Special Report No 21/08: The Effectiveness of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) in Supporting Member States in Border Management*. European Court of Auditors, 2021, www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/SR21_08/SR_Frontex_EN.pdf.
- 7 "David Yambio: EU Policy Causes Refugees in Libya to Face Enslavement." *Freedom United*, <https://www.freedomunited.org/david-yambio-eu-policy/>.
- 8 See glossary for fuller discussion of these concepts.
- 9 Immanuel Ness, "Immanuel Ness and Migration as Economic Imperialism: How International Labour Mobility Undermines Economic Development in Poor Countries," *Anti-Imperialist News*, 16 July 2023, <https://anti-imperialist.net/blog/2023/07/16/immanuel-ness-and-migration-as-economic-imperialism-how-international-labour-mobility-undermines-economic-development-in-poor-countries/>.
- 10 Mabrouka M'Barek. "Affixing the Nomads: Revisiting Marx's Theory of 'So-Called Primitive Accumulation' with a Deleuzo-Guattarian-Inspired Theory of the Colonial State." *Rethinking Marxism*, vol. 36, no. 1, 2024, pp. 6–32.
- 11 See glossary for fuller discussion of these concepts.
- 12 <https://www.blackagendareport.com/transcript-roots-and-consequences-african-underdevelopment-walter-rodney-1979>
- 13 Walter Rodney. "Roots and Consequences of African Underdevelopment." Speech, Center for Afro-American Studies, University of California, Los Angeles, May 1979. Black Agenda Report, <https://www.blackagendareport.com/transcript-roots-and-consequences-african-underdevelopment-walter-rodney-1979>.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 "Global Chokepoints." *Global Guardian*, <https://www.globalguardian.com/global-digest/global-chokepoints>.
- 16 "NATO Considers Algeria a Security Risk for Europe – Confidential Report." *North Africa Post*, 13 June 2022, <https://northafricapost.com/58312-nato-considers-algeria-a-security-risk-for-europe-confidential-report.html>.
- 17 <https://www.blackagendareport.com/imperialist-weaponry-and-shifting-alliances-sahel>
- 18 <https://blogs.law.columbia.edu/abolition1313/files/2021/03/Border-and-Rule-Harsha-Walia.pdf>
- 19 Harsha Walia, *Undoing Border Imperialism* (AK Press, 2013), 14.
- 20 Charisse Burden-Stelly, *Black Scare / Red Scare: Theorizing Capitalist Racism in the United States* (The University of Chicago Press, 2023), 4.
- 21 Bishara, Marwan. "Josep Borrell: The EU's 'Racist Gardener.'" *Al Jazeera*, 17 Oct. 2022, www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2022/10/17/josep-borrell-eu-racist-gardener.
- 22 Fanon, F. (1952). *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Press.
- 23 Marx, Karl. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*. Volume I, translated by Ben Fowkes, Penguin Classics, 1976.
- 24 See Rosa Luxemburg: "IMPERIALISM is the political expression of the accumulation of capital in its competitive struggle for what remains still open of the non-capitalist environment." Luxemburg, Rosa. *The Accumulation of Capital*. Translated by Agnes Schwarzschild, Routledge, 1951. Chapter 31, "Protective Tariffs and Accumulation."
- 25 For a good introduction to Marx's theory of economic crisis see: *The Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research*, "Economic Crisis and the Capitalist System," *Dossier No. 4*, 2024, <https://thetricontinental.org/dossier-notebook-4-economic-crisis/#toc-section-4>.
- 26 See for example Walter Roney's discussion on this in: "Transcript: The Roots and Consequences of African Underdevelopment." Black Agenda Report, 1979, www.blackagendareport.com/transcript-roots-and-consequences-african-underdevelopment-walter-rodney-1979.
- 27 For an overview of the last twenty-five years of imperialist drain from the periphery and core accumulation read: Jason Hickel, Christian Dörninger, Hanspeter Wieland, and Intan Suwandi, "Imperialist Appropriation in the World Economy: Drain from the Global South Through Unequal Exchange, 1990–2015," *Global Environmental Change*, vol. 73, 2022, 102467.
- 28 John Bellamy Foster and Haris Golemis, "The Planetary Rift," *Monthly Review*, 1 Nov. 2021, <https://monthlyreview.org/2021/11/01/the-planetary-rift/>.
- 29 Tilley, L., & Aji, M. (2023). Eco-socialism will be anti-eugenic or it will be nothing: Towards equal exchange and the end of population. *Politics*, 43(2), 201-218.

- 30 Ibid
- 31 Ibid. pg 2
- 32 Ibid. pg 15
- 33 "Rethinking American Prisons." *Abolition Journal*, 25 Aug. 2018, <https://abolitionjournal.org/1880-2/>. Accessed 18 Dec. 2024.
- 34 Joy James, "The Alchemy of Abolitionisms," *Inquest*, March 28, 2023, <https://inquest.org/the-alchemy-of-abolitionisms/>.
- 35 Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, *On the Question of Dialectics, Lenin's Collected Works*, 4th ed., vol. 38, Progress Publishers, 1976, pp. 357-361. Translated by Clemence Dutt, edited by Stewart Smith, Lenin Internet Archive, 2003, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1915/misc/x02.htm>.
- 36 Mao Tse-tung, "On Contradiction," *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, August 1937, transcribed by the Maoist Documentation Project, revised by Marxists.org in 2004, 2019, and 2020, https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-1/mswv1_17.htm.
- 37 I. H. Kvangraven, M. D. Styve, and U. Kufakurinani, "Samir Amin and Beyond: The Enduring Relevance of Amin's Approach to Political Economy," *Review of African Political Economy*, vol. 48, no. 167, 2021, pp. 1-7.
- 38 Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London: Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications, 1972).
- 39 Utsa Patnaik and Prabhat Patnaik, "Imperialism in the Era of Globalization," *Monthly Review*, 1 July 2015, <https://monthlyreview.org/2015/07/01/imperialism-in-the-era-of-globalization/>.
- 40 John Bellamy Foster, Robert W. McChesney, and R. Jamil Jonna, "The Global Reserve Army of Labor and the New Imperialism," *Monthly Review*, 1 Nov. 2011, <https://monthlyreview.org/2011/11/01/the-global-reserve-army-of-labor-and-the-new-imperialism/>.
- 41 Prashad, Vijay. Hybrid War Against Venezuela: A Case Study of Imperialist Aggression, Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research, 27 May 2020, https://thetricontinental.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/20200527_Coronashock2-Hybrid-War-Against-Venezuela_EN_WEB.pdf.
- 42 (Max Ajl (2024). Palestine's Great Flood: Part II. Agrarian South: Journal of Political Economy, 13(2), 187-217. 2024, p 18.
- 43 Suwandi, Intan. *Labor-Value Commodity Chains: The Hidden Abode of Global Production*. *Monthly Review*, 1 July 2019, <https://monthlyreview.org/2019/07/01/labor-value-commodity-chains/>.
- 44 Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism: A Popular Outline*, l. "Concentration of Production and Monopolies," Marxists.org, 1916, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1916/imp-hsc/ch01.htm>.
- 45 Amin, Mohammed. "Israel Normalisation Deal Finds Fury and Favour in Sudan." *Middle East Eye*, 24 Oct. 2020, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israel-normalisation-deal-finds-fury-and-favour-sudan>.
- 46 MEE staff. "Through Kushner Ties, Gulf States Invest in Firm Linked to Israel's Defence Industry." *Middle East Eye*, 9 Apr. 2024, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/through-kushner-ties-gulf-states-invest-firm-linked-israels-defence-industry>.
- 47 Walia, Harsha. *Undoing Border Imperialism*. 1st ed., AK Press, 2013.
- 48 Max Ajl (2023): Logics of Elimination and Settler Colonialism: Decolonization or National Liberation?, *Middle East Critique*, p. 6.
- 49 Boyce Davies, Carole. *Left of Karl Marx: The Political Life of Black Communist Claudia Jones*. Duke University Press, 2021.
- 50 Hickel, J., Hanbury Lemos, M. & Barbour, F. Unequal exchange of labour in the world economy. *Nat Commun* 15, 6298 (2024).
- 51 Marini, Ruy Mauro. *The Dialectics of Dependency*. Edited by Amanda Latimer and Jaime Osorio, Monthly Review Press, 2022.
- 52 Joseph Massad, *Zionism, Imperialism & Why the Arab Uprisings Failed*, BreakThrough News, YouTube, 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBwMLAATCBk>.
- 53 Ibid.
- 54 Abdul-Wahab Kayyali, "Zionism and Imperialism: The Historical Origins," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, vol. 6, no. 3, 1977, pp. 98-112.
- 55 Ibid, 98.
- 56 Matteo Capasso and Essam Abdelrasul Bubaker Elkorghli, "Imperialist Terrorism in Northern Africa," *Review of African Political Economy*, vol. 51, no. 181, 2024, pp. 431-450, <https://doi.org/10.62191/ROAPE-2024-0027>.
- 57 Mabrouka M'Barek. "Affixing the Nomads: Revisiting Marx's Theory of 'So-Called Primitive Accumulation' with a Deleuzo-Guattarian-Inspired Theory of the Colonial State." *Rethinking Marxism*, vol. 36, no. 1, 2024, pp. 6-32.
- 58 For a more detailed discussion on this history see: Mullin, Corinna, and Brahim Rouabah. "Decolonizing Tunisia's Border Violence: Moving Beyond Imperial Structures and Imaginaries." *Viewpoint Magazine*, 1 Feb. 2018, <https://viewpointmag.com/2018/02/01/decolonizing-tunisias-border-violence-moving-beyond-imperial-structures-imaginaries/>.
- 59 Ruf, W.K. (1971) 'The Bizerta crisis: A Bourguibist attempt to resolve Tunisia's border problems'. *Middle East Journal*, 25(2): 201-11. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4324727>
- 60 Ben Tarjam, K. (2015) 'Tunisie-Libye: Une frontière qui derange'. *Inkyfada*, 1 April.
- 61 Hannoum, A. (2021) *The Invention of the Maghreb. Between Africa and the Middle East*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p 31.
- 62 Dr. Zubairu Wai, interview by Momodou Taal, *The Malcolm Effect*, X (formerly Twitter), 7 Jan. 2025, <https://x.com/MomodouTaal/status/1876766523269755005>.
- 63 Al-Qashat, Mohammed Said. *Libyans' Jihad Against France in the Sahara* [كربك لدا ءارحص لدا ي ف اس نرف دض ن ني ب ل ل ل داهج]. Dar Al-Multaqa, 1998.

- 64 Sobukwe, Djibo. "NATO and Africa: A Relationship of Colonial Violence and Structural White Supremacy." 23 Feb. 2022. Black Agenda Report, <https://www.blackagendareport.com/nato-and-africa-relationship-colonial-violence-and-structural-white-supremacy>.
- 65 Alaoui, F. (2024) 'The background bases of the Algerian revolution: Tunisia from the common struggle to support and attribution'. The Journal of El-Ryssala for Studies and Research in Humanities, 9(1): 105-112.
- 66 Ben Barka, M. (1961) 'The Unity of the Maghreb,' Africa South, 5(2): 96-101, p. 101.
- 67 Fanon, Frantz. The Wretched of the Earth. Translated by Richard Philcox, foreword by Jean-Paul Sartre, 1st ed., Grove Press, 2005, p. 147.
- 68 Statement by Salah Ben Youssef on the Franco-Tunisian protocol proclaiming Tunisian independence (23 March 1956) https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/statement_by_salah_ben_youssef_on_the_franco_tunisian_protocol_proclaiming_tunisian_independence_23_march_1956-en-34ab36c9-7b79-4564-8c3f-f4fde9d5438d.html
- 69 Capasso, M. (2023) Everyday Politics in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. New York: Syracuse University Press.
- 70 See for example, Pradella, L., & Cillo, R. (2020). 'Bordering the surplus population across the Mediterranean: Imperialism and unfree labour in Libya and the Italian countryside.' GEOFORUM.
- 71 Natter, K. (2014) 'Fifty years of Maghreb emigration: How states shaped Algerian, Moroccan, and Tunisian emigration.' Working Papers, no. 95. Amsterdam: International Migration Institute, Determinants of International Immigration project paper 21, July.
- 72 Ahmetašević, Nidžara, Manja Petrovska, Sophie-Anne Bisiaux, and Lorenz Naegeli. "Repackaging Imperialism." Transnational Institute, December 2023, <https://www.tni.org/en/publication/repackaging-imperialism>.
- 73 M'Barek, Mabrouka. "Affixing the Nomads: Revisiting Marx's Theory of 'So-Called Primitive Accumulation' with a Deleuzo-Guattarian-Inspired Theory of the Colonial State." *Rethinking Marxism*, vol. 36, no. 1, 2024, pp. 6–32.
- 74 Chowdhury, K. (2023). Border Rules: Imperialism, Race, and the Politics of Development. In: Border Rules. Politics of Citizenship and Migration. Palgrave Macmillan
- 75 Foster, John Bellamy, Robert W. McChesney, and R. Jamil Jonna. 2011. "The Global Reserve Army of Labor and the New Imperialism." *Monthly Review* 63(6).
- 76 Ibid.
- 77 "Dependency and Super-exploitation: The Relationship between Foreign Capital and Social Struggles in Latin America." Dossier, no. 67, Tricontinental Institute, <https://thetricontinental.org/dossier-67-marxist-dependency-theory/>.
- 78 Patnaik, P. (2007) 'Contemporary imperialism and the world's labour reserves'. *Social Scientist*, 35(5/6): 3-18, p. 13.
- 79 Pradella, L., & Cillo, R. (2020). Bordering the surplus population across the Mediterranean: Imperialism and unfree labour in Libya and the Italian countryside. GEOFORUM.
- 80 "Small Private Libyan Firm Exports Oil through Blockade." *Argus Media*, 19 Sept. 2024, <https://www.argusmedia.com/en/news-and-insights/latest-market-news/2609866-small-private-libyan-firm-exports-oil-through-blockade>.
- 81 "Despite Oil Riches, Libyans Hit by Plummeting Purchasing Power." *France 24*, 7 Mar. 2024, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20240307-despite-oil-riches-libyans-hit-by-plummeting-purchasing-power>.
- 82 Ibid. pg 483
- 83 Ibid.
- 84 Ibid. pg 490
- 85 Kadri, A. (2015) *Arab Development Denied: Dynamics of Accumulation by Wars of Encroachment*. London: Anthem Press, 2015, p. 4.
- 86 Ibid.
- 87 Marini, Ruy Mauro. *The Dialectics of Dependency*. Edited by Amanda Latimer and Jaime Osorio, translated by Amanda Latimer, Monthly Review Press, 2022. Originally published in 1973
- 88 Osorio, J. (2016) 'Dialectics, superexploitation, and dependency: Notes on the dialectics of dependency'. *Social Justice*, 42(1): 93-106.
- 89 Ibid.
- 90 Mullin, Corinna. "The 'War on Terror' as Primitive Accumulation in Tunisia: US-Led Imperialism and the Post-2010-2011 Revolt/Security Conjuncture," *Middle East Critique*, vol. 32, no. 2, 2023, pp. 167-193.
- 91 "Fact-checking Giorgia Meloni's Claim About France." *BBC News*, 2 Jan. 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/63708313>.
- 92 Akkerman, Mark. "Border Wars Briefing — April 2021: Financing Border Wars." Transnational Institute, April 2021, <https://www.tni.org/en/publication/financing-border-wars>.
- 93 The EU Migration Pact: A Dangerous Regime of Migrant Surveillance." PICUM, 11 Apr. 2024, <https://picum.org/blog/the-eu-migration-pact-a-dangerous-regime-of-migrant-surveillance/>.
- 94 "New Officers Join the European Standing Corps." *Eucrim*, 2 Dec. 2024, <https://eucrim.eu/news/new-officers-join-the-european-standing-corps/>.
- 95 "Frontex: January 2020 Audit Preview." European Court of Auditors, https://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/AP20_02/AP_Frontex_EN.pdf.
- 96 Cronin, David. "EU's Frontex Gives Seal of Approval to Israeli Surveillance Firm." *The Electronic Intifada*, 4 Dec. 2024, <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/david-cronin/eus-frontex-gives-seal-approval-israeli-surveillance-firm>.
- 97 Akkerman, Mark. "Border Wars Briefing — April 2021: Financing Border Wars." Transnational Institute, April 2021, <https://www.tni.org/en/publication/financing-border-wars>.

- 98 "Borders, Drones, Surveillance: Frontex Security Research." Statewatch, 6 May 2021, <https://www.statewatch.org/analyses/2021/border-surveillance-drones-and-militarisation-of-the-mediterranean/>.
- 99 Ibid.
- 100 "Frontex's Contracted Companies Reportedly Operating Surveillance Equipment to Monitor Migrants & Refugees Crossing the Mediterranean Utilized by the Israeli Military in Its Assaults on Gaza." Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, <https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/frontexs-contracted-companies-reportedly-operating-surveillance-equipment-to-monitor-migrants--refugees-crossing-the-mediterranean-utilized-by-the-israeli-military-in-its-assaults-on-gaza-incl-co-responses/>. McMakin, Wilson. "Morocco's Sahrawi Drone Attacks: A New Phase in the Conflict." The New Humanitarian, 17 May 2023, <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2023/05/17/morocco-sahrawi-drone-attacks>.
- 101 Cronin, David. "EU's Frontex gives seal of approval to Israeli surveillance firm." Electronic Intifada, 4 December 2024, <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/david-cronin/eus-frontex-gives-seal-approval-israeli-surveillance-firm>
- 102 McMakin, Wilson. "Morocco's Sahrawi Drone Attacks: A New Phase in the Conflict." The New Humanitarian, 17 May 2023, <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2023/05/17/morocco-sahrawi-drone-attacks>.
- 103 Elkorghli, Essam. "Genocide and Imperialism in Palestine: A Call for People's Action!" *Black Agenda Report*, 18 Oct. 2023, <https://www.blackagendareport.com/genocide-and-imperialism-palestine-call-peoples-action>.
- 104 El Atti, Basma "Morocco BDS activist faces court for 'inciting' blockade on shipments to Israel", The New Arab, 9 December 2024, <https://www.newarab.com/news/morocco-bds-activist-court-inciting-israel-blockade>
- 105 Kasraoui, Safaa. "Survey: 88% of Moroccans Reject Diplomatic Recognition of Israel." Morocco World News, 8 Oct. 2020, <https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2020/10/322016/survey-88-of-moroccans-reject-diplomatic-recognition-of-israel>.
- 106 "Borders, Drones, Surveillance: Frontex Security Research." Statewatch, 6 May 2021, <https://www.statewatch.org/analyses/2021/border-surveillance-drones-and-militarisation-of-the-mediterranean/>. McKay, Victoria. "A 'New European Border' on the Doorstep of Africa: The Externalization of Migration Management and Its Effects on Migrants' Human Rights." Master's thesis, Maastricht University, Faculty of Law, A.Y. 2018/2019, supervised by Dr. Natasja Reslow, <https://repository.gchumanrights.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/b7ff60ef-bef1-46db-8270-e5319cec49ca/content>.
- 107 McKay, Victoria. "A 'New European Border' on the Doorstep of Africa: The Externalization of Migration Management and Its Effects on Migrants' Human Rights." Master's thesis, Maastricht University, Faculty of Law, A.Y. 2018/2019, supervised by Dr. Natasja Reslow, <https://repository.gchumanrights.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/b7ff60ef-bef1-46db-8270-e5319cec49ca/content>.
- 108 "Border Management Programme for the Maghreb Region (BMP Maghreb)." Trust Fund for Africa, European Commission, 2023, https://trust-fund-for-africa.europa.eu/our-programmes/border-management-programme-maghreb-region-bmp-maghreb_en. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 109 Oumansour, Brahim. "Is Algeria Tightening Its Migration Policy?" Institut de Relations Internationales et Stratégiques, 27 May 2024, <https://www.iris-france.org/186600-is-algeria-tightening-its-migration-policy/>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024; "How This Former French Colony is Now a 'Successful Model' for Africa." RT, 2 Dec. 2024, 13:37, www.rt.com/africa/608558-algeria-way-achieving-economic-sovereignty/.
- 110 Driscoll, Elizabeth. "Shifting Relations: How Spain and Morocco's Bilateral Relationship Affects Violence at the Border." SIT Study Abroad, Fall 2022, https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4563&context=isp_collection. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 111 Tazzioli and De Genova, op.cit.
- 112 European Center for Constitutional Rights. No Way Out: Migrants and Refugees Trapped in Libya Face Crimes Against Humanity. November 2021. https://www.ecchr.eu/fileadmin/Publikationen/NO_WAY_OUT_Migrants_and_refugees_trapped_in_Libya_face_crimes_against_humanity_EN.pdf.
- 113 "Border Surveillance Technology for New Libyan Search and Rescue Zone." Digit, 3 Jan. 2018, <https://digit.site36.net/2018/01/03/border-surveillance-technology-for-new-libyan-search-and-rescue-zone/>.
- 114 "Seahorse Network." Knowledge4Policy, European Commission, https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/organisation/seahorse-network_en. Accessed 1 Nov. 2024.
- 115 "European Agenda on Migration: Questions and Answers." European Commission, 27 Apr. 2017, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/it/MEMO_17_135. Accessed 1 Nov. 2024.
- 116 Hickel, Jason, Christian Dorninger, Hanspeter Wieland, and Intan Suwandi. "Imperialist Appropriation in the World Economy: Drain from the Global South through Unequal Exchange, 1990–2015." *Global Environmental Change*, vol. 73, 2022.
- 117 European Commission. "Operation Triton." 2014, https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/irregular-migration-return_en. Accessed 1 Nov. 2024.
- 118 European Union Naval Force. "Operation Sophia." 2015, <https://eunavfor.eu/operation-sophia/>. Accessed 1 Nov. 2024.
- 119 Médecins Sans Frontières. "The Criminalization of Humanitarian Assistance." 2021, <https://en.msf.org/criminalization-humanitarian-assistance>. Accessed 1 Nov. 2024.
- 120 European Commission. "New Pact on Migration and Asylum." 23 Sept. 2020, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/who-we-are/about-us_en. Accessed 1 Nov. 2024.
- 121 Aal, Monty, Sophia Fehrenbach, Grace Linczer, and Mohammad Abu Hawash. "Inside Immigrant Detention Centers During Coronavirus Times." *Politico*, 4 Aug. 2021, 4:03 a.m. CET, <https://www.politico.eu/article/inside-immigrant-detention-centers-coronavirus-times-covid-19-europe/>. Accessed 1 Nov. 2024.
- 122 Ibid.
- 123 For a helpful discussion of liberal-imperialist governance, see: Corinna Mullin, Nada Trigui, and Azadeh Shahshahani, "Decolonizing Justice in Tunisia: From Transitional Justice to a People's Tribunal," *Monthly Review*, 1 May 2019, <https://monthlyreview.org/2019/05/01/decolonizing-justice-in-tunisia/>.

- 124 Guermazi, Tarek. "France Offers Tunisia €258 Million to Help Tackle Migration." Reuters, 19 June 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/france-offers-tunisia-258-million-euros-help-tackle-migration-2023-06-19/>. Accessed 1 Nov. 2024.
- 125 Elumami, Ahmed, and Tarek Amara. "Tunisia Urges Europe to Increase Assistance to Tackle Migration Crisis." Reuters, 17 July 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/world/tunisia-urges-europe-increase-assistance-tackle-migration-crisis-2024-07-17/>.
- 126 "Thousands Protest Tunisia's Falling Living Standards." France 24, 2 Mar. 2024, <https://www.france24.com/en/africa/20240302-thousands-protest-against-the-socio-economic-crisis-in-tunisia>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 127 Guermazi, Tarek. "Tunisian President Rejects IMF Dictats, Says Public Peace Not a Game." Reuters, 6 Apr. 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/tunisian-president-rejects-imf-dictats-says-public-peace-not-a-game-2023-04-06/>. Accessed 1 Nov. 2024. "Polizia di Stato." "Iniziativa in materia di contrasto all'immigrazione irregolare." Polizia di Stato, 4 July 2022, <https://www.poliziadistato.it/articolo/16215ca5cb72ae013295925187>. Accessed 1 Nov. 2024.
- 128 "Polizia di Stato." "Iniziativa in materia di contrasto all'immigrazione irregolare." Polizia di Stato, 4 July 2022, <https://www.poliziadistato.it/articolo/16215ca5cb72ae013295925187>. Accessed 1 Nov. 2024.
- 129 See: Pacciardi, A. and Berndtsson, J. (2022) 'EU border externalisation and security outsourcing: exploring the migration industry in Libya'. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 48(17), 4010-4028.
- 130 Ibid.
- 131 Ibid.
- 132 MacGregor, Marion. "Libyan Trafficker 'Bidja' Gunned Down in Tripoli." InfoMigrants, 2 Sept. 2024, www.infomigrants.net/en/post/59559/libyan-trafficker-bidja-gunned-down-in-tripoli.
- 133 Ganser, Daniele. NATO's Secret Armies: Operation GLADIO and Terrorism in Western Europe. 2016, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/292475976_NATO's_secret_armies_Operation_GLADIO_and_terrorism_in_Western_Europe. Accessed 1 Nov. 2024.
- 134 Independent Expert Group. *Supporting NATO's Comprehensive and Deep Reflection Process on the Southern Neighbourhood: Final Report*. May 2024, NATO, www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2024/5/pdf/240507-NATO-South-Report.pdf.
- 135 Sobukwe, Djibo. "NATO and Africa: A Relationship of Colonial Violence and Structural White Supremacy." Black Agenda Report, 23 Feb. 2022, <https://www.blackagenda.com/nato-and-africa-relationship-colonial-violence-and-structural-white-supremacy>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 136 Ibid.
- 137 Hightower, Charles, editor. *Cabral in Washington. Washington Notes on Africa*, vol. 1, no. 2, American Committee on Africa, 1971. <https://kora.matrix.msu.edu/files/50/304/32-130-137C-84-woan%20acoa%2011-2%20opt.pdf>.
- 138 Wargan, Paweł. "NATO and the Long War on the Third World." *Monthly Review*, 1 Jan. 2023, <https://monthlyreview.org/2023/01/01/nato-and-the-long-war-on-the-third-world/>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 139 Swanson, David. "What Does NATO Have to Do with the Genocide in Gaza?" *World BEYOND War*, 11 Apr. 2024, <https://worldbeyondwar.org/what-does-nato-have-to-do-with-the-genocide-in-gaza/>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 140 Operation Sophia, formally known as the European Union Naval Force Mediterranean (EUNAVFOR Med), was launched in 2015 to 'combat human smuggling and trafficking in the Mediterranean Sea' and enforce the UN arms embargo on Libya. Tardy, Thierry. "Operation Sophia: Tackling the Refugee Crisis with Military Means." *European Union Institute for Security Studies*, Sept. 2015, https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/193999/Brief_30_Operation_Sophia.pdf. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024. and see also "Operation Sea Guardian." Ministry of Defence of Spain, https://emad.defensa.gob.es/en/operaciones/operaciones-en-el-exterior/34-OTAN-SEA-GUARDIAN-Mediterraneo/index.html?_locale=en. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 141 "Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 Reintegrates in Eastern Mediterranean." NATO Media Centre, 10 Oct. 2023, <https://mc.nato.int/media-centre/news/2023/standing-nato-maritime-group-2-reintegrates-in-eastern-mediterranean>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 142 "Africa Partnership Station." U.S. Africa Command, <https://www.africom.mil/security-cooperation/africa-partnership-station>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 143 U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa Public Affairs. "Exercise Phoenix Express 2022 Set to Begin in Tunisia." U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa, 19 May 2022, <https://www.c6f.navy.mil/Press-Room/News/Article/3037144/exercise-phoenix-express-2022-set-to-begin-in-tunisia/>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 144 Bradley, Maj. Chris. "African Lion 23 Begins." U.S. Africa Command, 19 May 2023, <https://www.africom.mil/article/35209/african-lion-23-begins>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 145 "Houthi: Yemen's Anti-Israeli Operations Will Continue Until Regime Ends Genocide in Gaza." Press TV, 16 Sept. 2024, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2024/09/16/733353/Houthi-Yemen%E2%80%99s-operations-will-continue-until-Israeli-ends-Gaza-genocide>. Accessed 8 Nov. 2024.
- 146 "Maersk Says Red Sea Shipping Disruptions Having Global Effects." Press TV, 17 July 2024, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2024/07/17/729516/Yemen-Red-Sea-maersk>. Accessed 8 Nov. 2024.
- 147 "US Says It Launched Airstrike on Houthi Command and Control Facility in Yemen." *Antiwar.com*, 16 Dec. 2024, <https://news.antiwar.com/2024/12/16/us-says-it-launched-airstrike-on-houthi-command-and-control-facility-in-yemen/>.
- 148 Pierre, Jemima. "The Racial Vernaculars of Development: A View from West Africa." *American Anthropologist*, vol. 122, no. 1, Mar. 2020, pp. 86-98. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 149 "Telling the Story: EU Border Militarization." Transnational Institute, Aug. 2023, [https://www.tni.org/files/2024-04/EU%20Border%20militarization%20narrative%20\(3\).pdf](https://www.tni.org/files/2024-04/EU%20Border%20militarization%20narrative%20(3).pdf). Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 150 Ahmetašević, Nidžara, et al. *Repackaging Imperialism: The EU – IOM Border Regime in the Balkans*. Transnational Institute, 18 Dec. 2023, www.tni.org/en/publication/repackaging-imperialism.

- 151 Ibid.
- 152 "German Interior Minister Says Some Syrians May Be Sent Back." DW, 5 Jan. 2025, www.dw.com/en/german-interior-minister-says-some-syrians-may-be-sent-back/a-71218324.
- 153 Egbejule, Eromo. "Migration within Africa: A New Series on New Homes Close to Home." Al Jazeera, 10 July 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2023/7/10/migration-within-africa-a-new-series-on-new-homes-close-to-home>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 154 <https://www.africanews.com/2023/06/02/tunisia-saied-to-tax-the-rich-to-avoid-the-imf/>
- 155 Sharan Grewal. "Tunisia Abandons Two-State Solution, Courts Iran, China, and Russia." Brookings, 5 June 2024, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/tunisia-abandons-two-state-solution-courts-iran-china-and-russia/>.
- 156 <https://greenfdc.org/countries-of-the-belt-and-road-initiative-bri/>
- 157 House, Jim. "The Colonial and Post-Colonial Dimensions of Algerian Migration to France." History in Focus, University of Leeds, 2006, <https://archives.history.ac.uk/history-in-focus/Migration/articles/house.html>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 158 Ibid.
- 159 Ibid.
- 160 Ibid.
- 161 Ageron, Charles-Robert. "Émigration et politique: L'étoile Nord-Africaine et le Parti du Peuple Algérien" ["Emigration and Politics: The North African Star and the Algerian People's Party"]. *Génèse de l'Algérie algérienne*, pp. 389-410, <https://shs.cairn.info/genese-de-l-algerie-algerienne--9789961966273-page-389?lang=fr>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 162 McDonough, Tom. "Invisible Cities: Henri Lefebvre's The Explosion." Artforum, vol. 46, no. 9, May 2008, <https://www.artforum.com/features/invisible-cities-henri-lefebvres-the-explosion-188139/>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 163 House, Jim. "The Colonial and Post-Colonial Dimensions of Algerian Migration to France."
- 164 Sayad, A. (2004) *The Suffering of the Immigrant* (trans David Macey). Cambridge: Polity Press.
- 165 "Resisting French Imperialism: 60 Years Since the 1961 Massacre of Algerians in Paris." The People's Forum, streamed live on 20 Oct. 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rl6e9rWQJw8>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 166 For more on this see: Hamouchene, H. and Rouabah, B. (2016) 'The political economy of regime survival: Algeria in the context of the African and Arab uprisings'. *Review of African Political Economy*, 43(150): 668-680.
- 167 «Le Chiffre a Été Révélé par l'Ambassadeur de France en Algérie: 7 Millions de Franco-Algériens» ["The Figure Was Revealed by the French Ambassador in Algeria: 7 Million Franco-Algerians"]. Fibladi, <https://web.archive.org/web/201711112073953/http://fibladi.dz/actualite/C3%A9l-info/item/209731-7-millions-de-franco-alg%C3%A9riens>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 168 Bobin, Florian. "How Colonialism Shaped Policing in France." Jacobin, 20 July 2020, <https://jacobin.com/2020/07/police-racism-france-africans-colonialism>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 169 "Algeria Country Profile, 2024." UNHCR Reporting, <https://reporting.unhcr.org/operational/operations/algeria>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 170 Ibid.
- 171 Ibid.
- 172 "Ratification of the Kampala Convention." Genida, <https://genida.org/kampala-convention/>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 173 "Country Profiles: Algeria, Integral Human Development."
- 174 "Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment." United Nations Treaties, New York, 10 Dec. 1984, https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=IV-9&chapter=4&clang=en. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024. "Country Profiles: Algeria, Integral Human Development."
- 175 Hamamouche, Meriem Farah, and Amine Saidani. "Sub-Saharan Migrants Transiting Through Algeria: Migratory Farm Labor in Covid Times." *Undisciplined Environments*, 22 Feb. 2022, <https://undisciplinedenvironments.org/2022/02/22/sub-saharan-migrants-transiting-through-algeria-migratory-farm-labor-in-covid-times/>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 176 Makedhi, Madjid. «Travailleurs Étrangers en Algérie : Deux Catégories de Migrants et de Nouveaux Défis» ["Foreign Workers in Algeria: Two Categories of Migrants and New Challenges"]. El Watan, 26 June 2023, https://elwatan-dz.com/travailleurs-etrangers-en-algerie-deux-categories-de-migrants-et-de-nouveaux-defis#google_vignette. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 177 De Bel-Air, Françoise. «Migration Profile: Tunisia.» Migration Policy Centre, no. 2016/08, Dec. 2016, https://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/45144/MPC_PB_2016_08.pdf. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 178 De Stone, Roshan, and David Suber. "Crossing from Tunisia to Italy: A Tale in Three Parts." *The New Arab*, 5 Sept. 2017, <https://www.newarab.com/analysis/crossing-tunisia-italy-1980s-vs-today>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 179 Herbert, Matt. "Losing Hope: Why Tunisians Are Leading the Surge in Irregular Migration to Europe." Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, Jan. 2022, <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/GI-TOC-Losing-Hope-Tunisia-Report-2021.pdf>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 180 Barry, Ndeye Yacine, Khadim Dia, Aïssatou Ndoeye, and Racine Ly. "The Ukraine Crisis and African Economies." *AKADEMIYA2063*, no. 28, Apr. 2023, <https://akademiy2063.org/publications/Ukraine%20Crisis%20and%20African%20Countries/Brief-28-AKADEMIYA2063%20Ukraine%20Crisis%20Brief%20Series.pdf>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 181 Natter, Katharina. "Revolution and Political Transition in Tunisia: A Migration Game Changer?" Migration Policy Institute, 28 May 2015, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/revolution-and-political-transition-tunisia-migration-game-changer>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 182 «Les Tunisiens de la classe moyenne risquent le naufrage face à l'attrait de l'Europe,» Zonebourse, 22 February 2024, ["Middle-Class Tunisians Risk Drowning in the Attraction of Europe"], <https://www.zonebourse.com/cours/matiere-premiere/LONDON-SUGAR-16175/actualite/Les-Tunisiens-de-la-classe-moyenne-risquent-le-naufrage-face-a-l-attrait-de-l-Europe-46008974/>.

- 183 "Tunisia," Global Detention Project, 2024, <https://www.globaldetentionproject.org/countries/africa/tunisia>.
- 184 Dimitriadi, Angeliki. "Migration and Asylum in Tunisia: Domestic Interests, External Influences, and Policy Outcomes." Global Public Policy Institute, September 2022, https://gppi.net/media/Migration-and-asylum-in-Tunisia_ASILE.pdf.
- 185 Capasso, Matteo. *Everyday Politics in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya* (Syracuse University Press, 2023).
- 186 Fakhfakh, Mouna. "Tunisia's Role in the EU External Migration Policy"
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX%3A32022D0060>
<https://www.statewatch.org/news/2024/march/action-file-on-tunisia-outlines-eu-s-externalisation-plans/>
- 189 Ben Bouazza, Bouazza. "Tunisia Doesn't Want to Be Europe's Border Guard to Slow Migration." AP News, 19 June 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/migrants-tunisia-france-germany-boats-03fb289b5f5f1d5e10e80d18263a098f>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
- 190 «Tunisie: La Presse Occidentale et Sioniste Orchestre un Harcèlement Média contre le Président Tunisien Kais Saïed—Pourquoi?» (Tunisia: The Western and Zionist Press Orchestrates Media Harassment Against Tunisian President Kais Saïed—Why?). Al Bagra North Africa, 13 Sept. 2024, <https://albagranadanorthafrica.wordpress.com/2024/09/13/tunisie-la-presse-occidentale-et-sioniste-orchestre-un-harcèlement-médiatique-contre-le-président-tunisien-kais-saïed-pourquoi/>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
- 191 «Note sur la détention arbitraire au centre de détention de migrants d'El-Ouardia» [Note on Arbitrary Detention at the El-Ouardia Migrant Detention Centre]. OMCT-Tunisie, Mar. 2023, <https://omct-tunisie.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Note-juridique-El-Ouardia-VF.pdf>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 192 «Les drames de la migration non réglementaire sur les côtes de la Tunisie en 2023» [The Tragedies of Irregular Migration on the Coasts of Tunisia in 2023]. Forum Tunisien pour les Droits Économiques et Sociaux, 30 Nov. 2023, https://ftdes.net/statistiques-migration-2023/?fbclid=IwAR3Yf2fRgV1yHxlpQ4Dj_SUw6kGGTbo62qqOsZw3NLNo_UzVXr9_fPtjxfq. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 193 Ben Bouazza, Bouazza, and Sam Metz. "Tent Camps Razed and Activists Arrested as Tunisia Clamps Down on Migrants." Associated Press, 9 May 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/tunisia-migration-rights-activist-arrested-975f05fbaf6c41e3258783a69ac6e7e9>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 194 «Visa pour la Tunisie» [Visa for Tunisia]. Aéroport de Tunis, https://www.aéroportdetunis.com/fr/visa_tunisie.php. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 195 Ibid.
- 196 "Tunisia." Migrants & Refugees Section of the Vatican, <https://migrants-refugees.va/country-profile/tunisia/>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024. Parikh, Shreya. "How Tunisia Produces 'Irregular' Migrants." The Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy, 13 June 2023, <https://timep.org/2023/06/13/how-tunisia-produces-irregular-migrants/>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.
- 197 "How Is Tunisia's Kais Saïed Doing After Five Years of Financial Autonomy?" *The Africa Report*, 17 Dec. 2024, <https://www.theafricareport.com/363478/how-is-tunisia-kais-saïed-doing-after-five-years-of-financial-autonomy/>.
<https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/tun>
- 198 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Tunisia, UNHCR, www.unhcr.org/us/countries/tunisia. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024. and "Tunisia: The Migration Trap." Al Jazeera, 10 May 2024, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/5/10/tunisia-the-migration-trap#:~:The%20UNHCR%20said%20it%20registered,%20border%20and%20various%20other%20points>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
- 200 "Tunisia: Presidential Scapegoating Stokes Fear and Support." InfoMigrants, 2 Mar. 2023, <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/47209/tunisia-presidential-scapegoating-stokes-fear-and-support>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
- 201 Katherine Nater, "Revolution and Political Transition in Tunisia"
- 202 Rihab Boukhatia. "Sub-Saharan Migrants in Tunisia: Marginalization of a Replacement Workforce." Nawaat, 19 Oct. 2022, <https://nawaat.org/2022/10/19/sub-saharan-migrants-in-tunisia-marginalization-of-a-replacement-workforce/>. Translated by Vanessa Szakal, images by Chahd Lina Belhadj.
- 203 "Salary in Tunisia." Rivermate, <https://www.rivermate.com/guides/tunisia/salary>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
- 204 Bouzid, Rami. "Tunisia's Informal Employment Crisis." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2023, <https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/2023/02/tunisia-informal-employment-crisis?lang=en¢er=global#:~:The%20western%20and%20southern%20regions,44%20percent%20in%20the%20southeast>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.; "North African Countries Rank Highly in Informal Employment." *TRT Afrika*, <https://trtafrika.com/business/north-african-countries-rank-highly-in-informal-employment-13882121>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
- 205 M'Barek, M. 2021. La femme africaine sous le prisme de la rente impérialiste : le cas de la Tunisie (African women under the prism of imperialist rent: the case of Tunisia), in K. Lamko, A. Niang, N.S. Sylla, L. Zevounou (ed.), *De Brazzaville à Montpellier. Regards critiques sur le néocolonialisme français*. Collectif pour le Renouveau Africain – CORA Éditions, Dakar, pp.160 à 178 ; Imperialist rent refers to the unearned income extracted by imperialist powers from economically dependent countries through the exploitation of their resources and labor, a concept explored by Samir Amin in his analysis of global capitalism and dependency. Amin, Samir. "The Implosion of the World System." *Globalizations*, vol. 11, no. 4, 2014, pp. 529-539, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14747731.2014.860320>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
- 206 "How Tunisia Reached Financial Meltdown." Al Jazeera, 24 Oct. 2021, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/10/24/how-tunisia-reached-financial-meltdown>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
- 207 "Tunisia and Libya Agree to Share Responsibility for Migrants Stranded on Border." Euronews, 11 Aug. 2023, <https://www.euronews.com/2023/08/11/tunisia-and-libya-agree-to-share-responsibility-for-migrants-stranded-on-border>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
- 208 Ben Bouazza, Bouazza. "Tunisia Doesn't Want to Be Europe's Border Guard to Slow Migration." AP News, 19 June 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/migrants-tunisia-france-germany-boats-03fb289b5f5f1d5e10e80d18263a098f>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
- 209 «Tunisie: La Presse Occidentale et Sioniste Orchestre un Harcèlement Média contre le Président Tunisien Kais Saïed—Pourquoi?» (Tunisia: The Western and Zionist Press Orchestrates Media Harassment Against Tunisian President

- Kais Saïed—Why?). Al Bagra North Africa, 13 Sept. 2024, <https://albagranadanorthafrica.wordpress.com/2024/09/13/tunisie-la-presse-occidentale-et-sioniste-orchestre-un-harcelement-mediatique-contre-le-president-tunisien-kais-saied-pourquoi/>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
- 210 Reuters, “At Least 27 Die, Dozens Rescued as Two Migrant Boats Sink off Tunisia,” *Reuters*, January 2, 2025, <https://reuters.com/world/africa/least-27-die-dozens-rescued-two-migrant-boats-sink-off-tunisia-2025-01-02/>.
 - 211 Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Translated by Richard Philcox, foreword by Jean-Paul Sartre, 1st ed., Grove Press, 2005.
 - 212 Sorensen, Ninna Nyberg. *Migrant Remittances as a Development Tool: The Case of Morocco*. Migration Policy Research Working Papers Series No. 2, International Organization for Migration, June 2004, https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/migrant_remittances_morocco.pdf. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
 - 213 Drhimeur, Lalla Amina. *Moroccan Diaspora Politics Since the 1960s: Literature Review*. <https://bpy.bilgi.edu.tr/media/document/2020/10/12/moroccan-diaspora-politics.pdf>, 2020. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
 - 214 Ouheimmou, Mohammed. “Tense Neighbors, Algeria and Morocco Have Divergent Migration Histories.” Migration Policy Institute, 18 May 2023, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/algeria-morocco-migration-history>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
 - 215 Morocco’s ‘Years of Lead’ refers to a period from the 1960s to the 1980s under King Hassan II, marked by widespread human rights abuses, including political repression, imprisonment, torture, and enforced disappearances of dissidents. This era, characterised by the state’s brutal response to opposition, has left a lasting impact on Moroccan society and has been subject to various truth and reconciliation efforts since the 1990s. See for example: Loudiy, F. (2010) ‘The Rhetoric of Transitional Justice: Negotiating the Years of Lead in Morocco’, PhD dissertation, Duquesne University.
 - 216 Lalla Amina Drhimeur, *The State of the Art on Moroccan Emigration to Europe* (Bilgi University, May 2020), https://bpy.bilgi.edu.tr/media/document/2020/05/18/the-state-of-the-art-on-moroccan-emigration-to-europe_lalla-amina-drhimeur.pdf. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
 - 217 Ibid.
 - 218 “Around 400 Moroccan Seasonal Workers Head for Spain.” *Hespress*, 16 Mar. 2024, en.hespress.com/81588-around-400-moroccan-seasonal-workers-head-for-spain.html. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024. and Mortensen, Nikolaj Houmann, and Stefania Prandi. “In Spain’s Strawberry Fields, Migrant Women Face Sexual Abuse.” *Al Jazeera*, 10 July 2021, www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/7/10/in-spains-strawberry-fields-migrant-women-face-sexual-abuse. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
 - 219 Ouheimmou, Mohammed. “Tense Neighbors, Algeria and Morocco Have Divergent Migration Histories.”
 - 220 Lahr, Bus. “The Deadly Transit Through Morocco to Europe.” *Medium*, <https://buslahr.medium.com/the-deadly-transit-through-morocco-to-europe-8f8e2f1bd998#:~:Between%202020%20and%202022%2C%20the,asylum%20seekers%20in%20the%20country>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
 - 221 “Growing Destination for Sub-Saharan Africans: Morocco.” Migration Policy Institute, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/growing-destination-sub-saharan-africans-morocco>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
 - 222 Ibid.
 - 223 “Growing Destination for Sub-Saharan Africans: Morocco.” Migration Policy Institute, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/growing-destination-sub-saharan-africans-morocco>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
 - 224 *Foreigners and Human Rights: Summary*. National Council for Human Rights (CNDH), <https://www.ceja.ch/images/CEJA/DOCS/Bibliotheque/Doctrine/Maroc/CNDH/ENGLISH/Thematic%20reports/Foreigners%20and%20Human%20rights-%20summary.pdf>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
 - 225 “Migration and the Globalization of Capitalism.” *Third World Network*, <https://www.twn.my/title2/resurgence/2017/326-327/world5.htm>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
 - 226 Simoncelli, Marco, Marco Valenza, Davide Lemmi, and Oumar Sall. “Morocco: A Magnet for Migrant Women?” *DW*, 27 Sept. 2023, www.dw.com/en/morocco-a-magnet-for-migrant-women/a-66939589. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
 - 227 BU International Human Rights, “The Deadly Transit Through Morocco to Europe.” *Medium*, <https://buslahr.medium.com/the-deadly-transit-through-morocco-to-europe-8f8e2f1bd998>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
 - 228 “Growing Destination for Sub-Saharan Africans: Morocco.” Migration Policy Institute, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/growing-destination-sub-saharan-africans-morocco>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
 - 229 Yousra Abourabi, “Governing African Migration in Morocco: The Challenge of Positive Desecuritisation,” *Governing Migration for Development from the Global Souths*, Brill | Nijhoff, 2022, pp. 29–59. E-book, www.example.com. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024. Liberio Muñoz, “Massacre at the Melilla Border Fence: The Spanish Government and Bourgeoisie Are Responsible,” *Marxist.com*, 28 June 2022, www.marxist.com/massacre-at-the-melilla-border-fence-the-spanish-government-and-bourgeoisie-are-responsible.htm. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
 - 230 Liberio Muñoz, “Massacre at the Melilla Border Fence: The Spanish Government and Bourgeoisie Are Responsible,” *Marxist.com*, 28 June 2022, www.marxist.com/massacre-at-the-melilla-border-fence-the-spanish-government-and-bourgeoisie-are-responsible.htm. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024. “Morocco Foils 75,184 Illegal Migration Attempts to Europe in 2023,” *U.S. News & World Report*, 23 Jan. 2024, www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2024-01-23/morocco-foils-75-184-illegal-migration-attempts-to-europe-in-2023. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
 - 231 “Morocco Foils 75,184 Illegal Migration Attempts to Europe in 2023,” *U.S. News & World Report*, 23 Jan. 2024, www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2024-01-23/morocco-foils-75-184-illegal-migration-attempts-to-europe-in-2023. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
 - 232 Capasso, Matteo. “Everyday Politics in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya: Q&A with Matteo Capasso.” *Developing Economics*, 5 July 2023, developingeconomics.org/2023/07/05/everyday-politics-in-the-libyan-arab-jamahiriya-qa-with-matteo-capasso/. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
 - 233 Ibid.
 - 234 Baker, Chris. “EU Migration Control Made by Gaddafi.” *Open Democracy*, 6 Apr. 2021, www.opendemocracy.net/en/eu-migration-control-made-by-gaddafi/. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.

- 235 Noll, Gregor, and Mariagiulia Giuffré. "EU Migration Control Made by Gaddafi." Open Democracy, 25 Feb. 2011, www.opendemocracy.net/en/eu-migration-control-made-by-gaddafi/. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
- 236 Capasso, Matteo. "Everyday Politics in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya".
- 237 Gazzini, Claudia. "Assessing Italy's 'Grande Gesto' to Libya." Middle East Report, no. 251, 16 Mar. 2009, www.merip.org/2009/03/assessing-italys-grande-gesto-to-libya/. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
- 238 Mullin, Corinna. "The 'War on Terror' as Primitive Accumulation in Tunisia: US-Led Imperialism and the Post-2010-2011 Revolt/Security Conjunction." *Middle East Critique*, 2023.
- 239 Fetouri, Mustafa. "Libya Gave the World a Unique Treaty Which Should Be Copied by All Ex-Colonial Powers." *Middle East Monitor*, 29 Aug. 2019, www.middleeastmonitor.com/20190829-libya-gave-the-world-a-unique-treaty-which-should-be-copied-by-all-ex-colonial-powers/.
- 240 Attir, Mustafa O. "North African Regular and Irregular Migration: The Case of Libya." *New England Journal of Public Policy*, vol. 30, no. 2, 2020. scholarworks.umb.edu/nejpp/vol30/iss2/5/. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
- 241 "Libya, Tunisia Urge Europe to Increase Aid to Help Tackle Migration Crisis." Al Jazeera, 17 July 2024, www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/7/17/libya-tunisia-urge-europe-to-increase-aid-to-help-tackle-migration-crisis. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
- 242 Elkorghli, Essam. "Libya's Disastrous Flooding: Causes and Hope." *Peoples Dispatch*, 21 Sept. 2023, peoplesdispatch.org/2023/09/21/libyas-disastrous-flooding-causes-and-hope/. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
- 243 Ibid.
- 244 "Italy and the EU 'Complicit' in Crimes Against Non-Nationals in Libya." Global Detention Project, 14 Feb. 2023, www.globaldetentionproject.org/14-february-2023-libya. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
- 245 "UN Experts: Libya's Security Threatened by Foreign Fighters." Al Jazeera, 28 May 2022, www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/5/28/un-experts-libyas-security-threatened-by-foreign-fighters. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024. "Repackaging Imperialism." Transnational Institute, www.tni.org/en/publication/repackaging-imperialism. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
- 246 "Repackaging Imperialism."
- 247 Elkorghli, Essam. "De-Africanization and Re-Europeanization in Libya: The Political Economy of NATO's Legacy in Libya." *Black Agenda Report*, 13 Mar. 2024, www.blackagendareport.com/de-africanization-and-re-europeanization-libya-political-economy-natos-legacy-libya. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
- 248 Girault, Thibaut. *The Insecure Economic Lives of Migrants in Libya: Crossing Borders, Building Livelihoods*. Migration Management Centre (MMC) and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), 11 July 2024, www.library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/libyen/21354.pdf. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
- 249 Ibid.
- 250 "Minimum Wage in Libya." WageIndicator, www.wageindicator.org/salary/minimum-wage/libya. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
- 251 International Labour Organization. *Labour Market Access for Migrants in Libya and the Impact of COVID-19*. Written by the REACH Program, International Labour Organization, Aug. 2022, www.ilo.org/publications/labour-market-access-migrants-libya-and-impact-covid-19. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
- 252 Elkorghli, Essam. "De-Africanization and Re-Europeanization in Libya"
- 253 Ibid.
- 254 Amin, S. (1976) *Unequal development: An essay on the social formations of peripheral capitalism*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- 255 M'charek, A. (2020). Harraga: Burning borders, navigating colonialism. *The Sociological Review*, 68(2), 418-434.
- 256 Gahman, L, and Hjalmarson, E. (2019) 'Border imperialism, racial capitalism, and geographies of deracination'. *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, 18(1): 107-129.
- 257 Ibid.
- 258 M'charek, A. 'Harraga: Burning borders, navigating colonialism'
- 259 Alarm Phone. www.alarmphone.org. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
- 260 Mainwaring, C. and DeBono, D. (2021) 'Criminalizing solidarity: Search and rescue in a neo-colonial sea'. *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, 39(5): 1030-1048.
- 261 Ibid.
- 262 Mellersh, Natasaha "International Law and the Criminalization of Sea Rescue," *InfoMigrants*, 6 Jan. 2023, www.infomigrants.net/en/post/45860/international-law-and-the-criminalization-of-sea-rescue.
- 263 Ibid.
- 264 Sea-Eye. www.sea-eye.org. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
- 265 Urbina, Ian. "Europe's Border Agency Under Fire for Aiding Libya's Brutal Migrant Detentions." NBC News, 29 Nov. 2021, www.nbcnews.com/news/world/frontex-europes-border-agency-fire-aiding-libyas-brutal-migrant-detent-rcna6778. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
- 266 Povoledo, Elisabetta. "Greek Migrant Shipwreck: What We Know." *The New York Times*, 1 July 2023, www.nytimes.com/2023/07/01/world/europe/greece-migrant-ship.html. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
- 267 Tazzioli, M. & Genova, N. (2020) Kidnapping migrants as a tactic of border enforcement. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*. 38.
- 268 "Dead Calm: BBC Film on Greek Coast Guard Abandoning Asylum Seekers at Sea Amid European Crackdown." *Democracy Now!*, 2 Jan. 2025, www.democracynow.org/2025/1/2/dead_calm_mediterranean_deaths
- 269 Ibid.
- 270 Povoledo, Elisabetta. "Greek Migrant Shipwreck"

- 271 Gasteli, Nissim. "From Zarzis to Tunis, Exiles Demonstrate Against the Lack of UNHCR Protection." Inkyfada, 23 Apr. 2022, <https://inkyfada.com/en/2022/04/23/demonstrations-demanding-asylum-hcr-zarzis-tunisia/>. Accessed 8 Nov. 2024.
- 272 Meshkal News Team. "The 'Heroes' of Zarzis: Documentary Follows Fishermen Saving Lives in Mediterranean." Meshkal, 2 Oct. 2019, meshkal.org/the-heroes-of-zarzis-documentary-follows-fishermen-saving-lives-in-mediterranean/. Accessed 7 Nov. 2024.
- 273 Henley, Jon. "Fishermen Stop Anti-Migrant Boat from Docking in Tunisian Port." The Guardian, 7 Aug. 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/07/fishermen-stop-anti-migrant-boat-from-docking-in-tunisian-port>. Accessed 8 Nov. 2024.
- 274 Chemlali, A. (2023) 'Rings in the water: Felt externalisation and its rippling effect in the extended EU borderlands'. Geopolitics, 29(3): 873-896.
- 275 Amin, S., and A. Bush. 2014. "An Interview with Samir Amin." Review of African Political Economy 41: S108–S114. October. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03056244.2014.992624>
- 276 Guesmi, Haythem. "طاب ترالنا ك ف قيرط: ي عارزلا حالص إلّا" [Land Reform: The Path to Decoupling]. Nawaat, 26 January 2023, <https://nawaat.org/2023/12/26/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B2%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%8A-%D8%B7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%82-%D9%81%D9%83%D9%91-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AA%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B7/>. Accessed 8 November 2024.
- 277 Benhizia, Ishak. "Why Arab Countries Are Queuing Up to Join BRICS." Middle East Eye, 22 Aug. 2023, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/arab-countries-brics-queuing-up-join-why>. Accessed 8 Nov. 2024.
- 278 Gupta, Prithvi. "The Dragon in the Maghreb: Assessing the BRI in North Africa." ORF Online, 5 Sept. 2024, <https://www.orfonline.org/research/the-dragon-in-the-maghreb-assessing-the-bri-in-north-africa>. Accessed 8 Nov. 2024.
- 279 Navid Farnia, "Africa, Multipolarity, and the Collapsing White World Order," *Review of African Political Economy*, 24 July 2024, www.roape.net/2024/07/24/africa-multipolarity-and-the-collapsing-white-world-order/.
- 280 Farnia, Navid. "Africa, Multipolarity, and the Collapsing White World Order." *Review of African Political Economy*, 24 July 2024, roape.net/2024/07/24/africa-multipolarity-and-the-collapsing-white-world-order/.



The Transnational Institute (TNI) is an international research and advocacy institute committed to building a just, democratic and sustainable planet. Since 1974, TNI has served as a unique nexus between social movements, engaged scholars and policy makers.

www.TNI.org