Article

Looking into the border. Whiteness, (un)desirable encounters and research containment at the Spanish–Moroccan border

Lorena Gazzotti

Lucy Cavendish College and CRASSH, University of Cambridge

Abstract

How is the white researcher perceived by the border apparatus? What does this interaction say about the border itself? Ethnographic research has framed such questions as a debate on 'insiders' and 'outsiders' in fieldwork. This is problematic, as it assumes that a researcher can really be 'external' to the social worlds they investigate, as if the field site existed in isolation from transnational processes of racialised extraction. This paper challenges such an assumption by arguing that the white researcher cannot be an 'outsider' to the North African border: they approach it as the beneficiaries of a system of colonial and capital extractivism that feeds itself through migration control. I build on Ahmed's work on white phenomenology to analyse how various border workers perceived, made sense of and reacted to my presence as a white European woman at three different sites on the Spanish–Moroccan border. I argue that the white researcher is an expected presence at the border, as the accumulated history of (post)colonial encounters leads them where others have been before. Although whiteness opens doors, only a certain kind of performed whiteness remains welcome in the borderscape. The white researcher who appears not to be aligning with or supporting the premises of migration control is perceived by border workers as a potentially disruptive presence, and contained in different ways.

غرباء بيض على الحدود. لقاءات (غير) مرغوبة واحتواء الأبحاث على الحدود الإسبانية المغربية

لورينا جازوتي

كيف يتم فهم الباحث الأبيض من قِبل جهاز الحدود؟ ماذا يقول هذا التفاعل عن الحدود نفسها؟ صاغ البحث الإثنوغرافي مثل هذا السؤال على هيئة نقاش حول " المطلعون - من هم بالداخلَ" و "الدخلاء- من هم بالخارج" في العمل الميداني. هذه مشكلة، لأنها تفترض أن الباحث يمكن أن يكون حقاً "خارجياً" عن العوالم الاجتماعية التي يقوم بالبحث فيها، كما لو كان الموقع الميداني موجوداً بمعزل عن عملية الاستخراج العنصري العابرة للحدود الوطنية. تتحدى هذه الورقة مثل هذا الافتراض من خلال القول بأن الباحث الأبيض لا يمكن أن يكون "دخيلاً" على حدود شمال إفريقيا: فهو يتناولها كمستفيد من نظام استعماري و استخراجي لرأس المال يغذي نفسه من خلال التحكم في الهجرة. أعتمد هنا على مفهوم أحمد لـ "اللقاءات الغربية" لتحليل كيفيه استيعاب و فهم، و كذلك ردود أفعال العديد من عمال الحدود وجودي كامرأة أوروبية بيضاء في ثلاثة مواقع مختلفة من الحدود الإسبانية المغربية. أنا أزعم أن الباحث الأبيض هو وجود متوقع على الحدود، حيث أن التاريخ المتراكم للقاءات (ما بعد) الاستعمار يقودهم إلى حيث كان الآخرون من قبل. على الرغم من أن البياض يفتح الأبواب، إلا أن نوعاً معيناً من البياض الذي يتم أداؤه يظل موضع ترحيب في المشهد الحدودي. أستخدم تعبير "غريب أبيض" للإشارة إلى الباحث الأبيض الذي يبدو أنه لا يتوافق مع أو يدعم فرضيات التحكم في الهجرة، وبالتالي ينظر عمال الحدود إليه على أنه وجود معطِّل محتمل.

Keywords: whiteness, encounters, border, Morocco, Melilla, Canary Islands

Introduction

Tangier, 2016. I walked up the street connecting the old walled city to the *Ville nouvelle*, passing alongside the workshops where Moroccan artisans work wood and iron into furniture and small fences. I checked on Google Maps whether I was walking in the right direction. I had arranged an interview with the officer of a drop-in centre for migrant people, located in the precinct of a Catholic church not far from the city's old market.[1] I walked for a few more minutes before reaching the location. I pushed the heavy wooden door at the entrance and stepped into the lounge. The room was a confusion of activity. Migrant people could show up without an appointment at certain times and days during the week to claim financial assistance, ask for support signing their children up to school or take a shower. On the side of the room closest to the entrance, groups of men and women stood or sat, chatting while waiting for their turn.

Further away from me, on the other side of the room, there were a couple of lined-up desks, where workers from the drop-in centre were triaging beneficiaries to the different services. I stood there, trying to understand whether I could identify the person I had spoken to via email. Shortly after, a young woman approached me, and asked 'Are you here for the interview for the social worker position?'. I looked at her, slightly lost. 'No, I am here to meet Salima, I am a researcher from the University… .' 'Ah yes of course, come with me,' she said, nodding towards the opposite side of the room. Laila [not her real name] led me past the lounge, to another room where Salima [not her real name either] was working at her desk.

After the interview, I walked through the lounge again. I looked at the groups of people queuing, and at the workers tending to them. I knew why Laila had mistaken me for an aspiring social worker. The people queuing and waiting (the people labelled by aid-industry jargon as 'beneficiaries') were all dark-skinned. Most of the NGO (non-governmental organisation) workers were light-skinned – the directors were all white Europeans, but most of the mid-level administrative and social work staff were light-skinned Moroccans. The NGO also hired a few Black Central and Western African workers, but as

Corresponding author: Lorena Gazzotti Email: Lg488@cam.ac.uk

community-based officers – a subordinate and lower-paid position in the organisational chart of the NGO. Laila was reading skin tones according to racialised patterns of reading 'colour' at the Spanish–Moroccan border. Race structures the border according to hierarchies of deservedness, visibility and dangerousness, whereby whiteness 'constitutes a form of "capital", insofar as it gives access to resources, spaces and opportunities that are generally accessible only to other white people' (Gazzotti 2021b, 281), and systematically relegates non-white people to subordinate positions. In Laila's eyes, a light-skinned woman, speaking French fluently but with a foreign accent, was easy to place in the racialised hierarchy of the drop-in centre.

In this paper, I ask: *How is the white researcher perceived by the border apparatus? What does this interaction say about the border itself?* Ethnographers have often framed such issues in terms of a tension between the 'insider'/'outsider' perspective on fieldwork (Headland *et al.* 1990). This is particularly true for research involving the white ethnographer's immersion in remote communities, or social contexts far removed from one's own – a condition which characterised the very emergence of anthropology as a colonial discipline (Rachik 2012). More recent research has tried to nuance such binary opposition, especially the implication that 'insiderness' is automatically derived from belonging to the same ethnic group (Ryan 2015). Scholars have emphasised that 'insiderness' and 'outsiderness' do not lie at opposite ends of the spectrum; rather, they are dynamic categories (Pustulka, Bell and Trąbka 2019) that can change over time and are subject to negotiations between researcher and research participant (Carling, Erdal and Ezzati 2014). The researcher can thus occupy a myriad of intermediate positions in relation to the community they are studying – positions which might be attributed rather than actively experienced, and that thus might not map onto the researcher's familiarity with or knowledge of the group. Another recent strand of scholarship has interrogated the relation of the researcher to the border, and to the power structures that animate it (Feldman 2011). In particular, scholars have pointed out that researchers contribute to the broader consumption of 'migration' as a commodity to extract value from, thus reinforcing the same marginalising dynamics that they seek to challenge (Andersson 2014; Sukarieh and Tannock 2019). This has led to renewed attention to issues of ethics and participation in research with migrant communities, and how the superfast rhythm of the marketised university creates fertile ground for the reproduction of colonial extractivist logics (El Qadim *et al.* 2020).

Both these debates, however, assume that a researcher can really be 'external', as 'not-in-relation-to' the social worlds underlying one's fieldwork. The field site implicitly becomes a reality that exists as separate from the place where the researcher comes from or is based. Both assumptions are inaccurate: histories of trade, domination and exchange, and contemporary relations of capitalist production create connections and intimacies between localities that might seem quite disconnected. The researcher stepping into the field as an 'outsider' already has a relation to the site by virtue of the accumulated history that their body carries: 'encounters', as Sara Ahmed says, 'are meetings […] which are not simply in the present: each encounter reopens past encounters' (Ahmed 2000, 8). Even though I had never met her before, I was not completely unknown to Laila. My appearance guided her in making assumptions about who I was, why I was there, whether I was welcome or not. In a post-colonial context where light skin is a racial marker for desirability, privilege and belonging (Gross-Wyrtzen 2022), my whiteness acted as a 'credential' (Williams 2020, 156): I *surely* was there because I had been shortlisted for the social worker position – even if I did not have a social work diploma; only because I was the only white person waiting amongst dark-skinned people. Even though I had just arrived to the drop-in centre, history had

preceded me, and had shaped the conditions according to which Laila perceived me in the first place (Hannoum 2019).

In this paper, I build on Sara Ahmed's 'phenomenology of whiteness' (Ahmed 2007) and on literature about the coloniality of migration to analyse how various border workers perceived, made sense of and reacted to my presence as a white European woman at three different sites of the racialised Spanish–Moroccan border (Rabat, in Morocco; Las Palmas and Melilla, in Spain). I argue that the white researcher cannot be an 'outsider' to the Spanish–Moroccan border: they approach the border as the beneficiaries of a system of colonial and capital extractivism that feeds itself through migration control. As the border reproduces coloniality by racialising immobility, the researcher's whiteness rubs against and reactivates the hierarchies of domination structuring the field. White border spaces and white border actors thus feel 'within reach' (Ahmed 2012) for the white researcher, not because such places are widely accessible in absolute terms, but because race conditions access to them.

If whiteness opens doors, only a certain kind of performed whiteness remains welcome in the borderscape. The researcher who appears not to be aligning with or supporting the premises of migration control (because they are perceived as challenging the secrecy of the border, because their behaviour breaks patterns of racial segregation, or because they seem to be working to disrupt containment dynamics) is thus perceived by border workers as a potentially disruptive presence. I construct a three-tiered typology of encounter between the researcher and the border worker: tentative coexistence, whereby the presence of the researcher in the field is tolerated but not completely trusted by border workers; puzzlement, where the proximity between the researcher and migrant people is read and expressed as out of the ordinary by border workers; intimidation, when border workers actively try to break down the proximity between the researcher and migrant people. I offer this reflection based on my experience as a cis-gender, middle-class woman, based at an élite university – a perspective that is thus situated and partial. Fieldwork in these different settings was undertaken between 2014 and 2022 as part of distinct research projects aiming at 'studying up' the migration apparatus, with a particular focus on the structures of care established to assist vulnerable migrant people on both sides of the Euro-Maghrebi border. Whereas in Morocco my work mainly centred on semi-structured interviews, in Spain I mainly relied on ethnography and participant observation. To do so, I volunteered in distinct charities that provided support to undocumented and asylum-seeking people. I was also part of migrant solidarity networks operating at the margins or outside state-funded reception centres.

One note on terminology: by border workers, I mean the street-level implementers of border policies, those reconciling legal and organisational norms around the inclusion and exclusion of foreigners from society with the reality on the ground (see Infantino 2016; Ticktin 2011; Maâ 2020). Within this article and my broader scholarship, this label is used to describe a highly heterogeneous group of workers, which includes both traditional and non-traditional security actors. As I have argued elsewhere, such workers might perform migration control functions even if they do not perceive themselves as part of the border. Their involvement in migration control stems from an expansion of the border away from the state. This, in turn, has drawn the most unlikely actors and spaces (like healthcare centres, or NGO offices) into the map of containment, now deployed through elusive techniques that do not *really* look or feel like security instruments (Gazzotti 2021a). The article will illustrate how different border workers might react differently to external scrutiny depending on whether they perform containment through a humanitarian or a security lens.

The article unfolds as follows. First, I sketch the theoretical background underpinning the paper. Then, I provide an overview

of the entanglements between race and border-making at the Spanish–Moroccan border. The three following sections each analyse a response displayed by border workers to my presence in the field. The last section provides a discussion of the findings and identifies avenues for further theoretical inquiry.

Research coloniality, policed solidarity and (un)expected encounters at the border

> 'They [the Spanish colonizers] came looking for workers just like you [the Spanish researcher] came right now.'
>
> (Moreno Nieto 2017)

The border regime is a racialised institution, structured according to hierarchies and rules that bear the marks of colonialism and of the multiple forms of coloniality that have survived the formal end of imperial rule. The control of mobility (intended both as the prohibition to move and the forcible displacement of colonised populations) was a pillar of colonialism (Mayblin and Turner 2020). The migration policy and documentation practices of newly independent countries often showed continuities with the mobility restrictions introduced by colonial powers (Minfegue 2022; Natter forthcoming). Indeed, undocumented migrant and asylum-seeking people crossing to Europe are, in most cases, citizens of former European colonies (Genova 2016), whose subordination to European hegemony was first established through colonial domination, then maintained through the establishment of extractive modes of capitalist production and exchange, as well as through the imposition of unequal barriers to movement (see El-Enany 2020; De Noronha 2020). Indeed, extractivist relations of power linking the West to its former colonies did not disappear after the end of imperialism – they survived through what Maldonado-Torres calls 'coloniality', or the 'long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations' (Maldonado-Torres 2007, 243). Both in the colony and in the post-colony, whiteness works as an organising principle: relations of production, social norms and cultural production are geared towards ensuring whites alone enjoy 'the privilege of the rights to possession and free movement across the whole of the planet' (Mbembe 2019, 103). The border thus becomes the white institution *par excellence*, insofar as it maintains a large proportion of the global non-white population in a state of physical or psychological captivity, all the while being almost oblivious to the white bodies that cross it (Ahmed 2007; Gazzotti 2021b).

Migration studies is imbued with the same coloniality that characterises its object of research. The discipline has indeed been informed by a presentist approach, and has only recently started reckoning with the central place (neo)colonialism plays in shaping contemporary migratory dynamics (Mayblin and Turner 2020). Coloniality structures the material and ontological conditions that allow white, Global North researchers to conduct research about migrant communities (both in the North and in the South). Resorting to the typology built by Maldonado-Torres, we could break this down into the possibility of travel to research sites with no or few restrictions on movement, while having access to the financial resources that allow such movement to happen in the first place ('coloniality of power'); belonging to centres of knowledge production that orient migration research in certain ways (Sukarieh and Tannock 2019) ('coloniality of knowledge'); feeling the legitimacy (if not the entitlement) to conduct research on certain topics and communities ('coloniality of being') (see Maldonado-Torres 2007, 242). Indeed, the white researcher is not a stranger: the border is a place where 'some bodies are already recognised as stranger and more dangerous than other bodies' (Ahmed 2000, 4) through techniques which 'involve

ways of reading the bodies of others we come to face' (Ahmed 2000, 3). Such profiling heavily leans on recognising markers of un/desirability determined by histories of past encounters – including colonial encounters. The white researcher is there because others have been there before them. Especially when conducting fieldwork in former colonies, the white researcher steps on a trail first traced by European social scientists whose work was meant to support the expansion of the colonial enterprise (Rachik 2012). As Ahmed writes, white bodies automatically assume certain orientations, because some options are felt as 'within reach' due to 'histories of colonialism, which makes the world 'white', a world that is inherited, or which is already given before the point of an individual's arrival' (Ahmed 2007, 153–54). Operating from a position of privilege derived from intersecting colonial orders, the white researcher thus cannot but embody the empire, its aftermath (Picozza 2021) and the implicit benefits that follow whiteness (see Harris 1993). This is true even if the researcher does not agree with old and new imperial practices, even if they try to distance themselves from and fight against them (Tyszler 2019; Moreno Nieto 2017). Still, this does not mean that relations of solidarity between researchers and members of migrant communities do not emerge. Much to the contrary, experiences of long-standing connection and support have been born out of research encounters. These include the personal implication of researchers in research informants' lives (Tyszler 2019; Floristán Millán 2022), the emergence of new forms of social work inspired by research experience (Jiménez Álvarez 2011; Vacchiano 2007), the creation of professional partnerships (Bachelet and Jeffery 2019) and the confluence of researchers into activist networks that aim to advance migrants' rights (Intrand and Perrouty 2005; Garelli and Tazzioli 2013). Indeed, such critical encounters can be part of broader solidarity movements that attempt to move beyond state policies and build towards the otherwise. These research encounters, though, have to be comprehended with the awareness that solidarity (including when expressed through participatory research practices (El Qadim *et al.* 2020)) is not, in itself, a panacea against the elusive and pervasive grip of coloniality: as Picozza writes, referring to refugee solidarity movements in Germany, 'even those instances of solidarity that contest the border regime tend to unwittingly share its colonial premises' (Picozza 2021, xxiii).

The white researcher thus approaches the border from a position of accumulated privilege. Yet only some forms of performed whiteness remain welcome at the border. This is because liberal democracy is not only compatible with, but actively premised on, the exclusion of some from the realm of rights: enslavement and confinement become fundamental to making an élite standard of living possible, to normalise those rights as the baseline of 'civility' and to protect them from the claim of equal enjoyment by the undeserving (Mbembe 2019, 19). Challenging (or being perceived as challenging) captivity as a societal organising principle can therefore be perceived as a challenge to democracy itself: it marks a boundary between loyal and 'disloyal citizens' (Carrera 2019, 178) and attracts the state-securitised gaze to the latter. It is at this point that the researcher, suddenly perceived as a disloyal citizen, emerges as a figure that needs to be contained, and the environment turns from harmonious to hostile. In their study of policed humanitarianism in the wake of the European 'migration crisis', Carrera *et al.* identify three policing techniques deployed to contain individuals and civil-society organisations supporting migrant people: 'intimidation and suspicion', 'discipline' and 'formal criminalisation'. Humanitarians might be subjected to formal and informal intimidation, or become the object of suspicious narratives depicting them as deviant and invested in criminal acts. The state might also try to regain or maintain control over humanitarian activities by subjecting

organisations to seemingly neutral demands, such as increased financial accountability, funding transparency or formal authorisation for activities which were previously not under the scope of state attention. Such control dynamics can escalate to 'formal criminalisation', whereby the state formally accuses humanitarians of criminal conduct, thus resorting to the legal system to slow down and interrupt the delivery of humanitarian support (Carrera 2019, 174–75).

Fieldwork accounts are punctuated by experiences of state and civil surveillance, on both sides of the post-colonial border (Gazzotti 2021a; Hagan 2018). The increasing criminalisation of humanitarian groups supporting people arriving on Europe's shores after 2015 influenced researchers' choices about whether to provide information or material assistance to people on the move, for fear that the smallest of actions could be framed by state security as criminal behaviour (Allsopp 2018). Even when it does not amount to formal policing, a general climate of suspicion and more personal experiences of intimidation push researchers to self-discipline, reducing the range of solidarity actions they feel safe taking. Your phone makes weird noises, *as if* it was tapped, but *maybe* it is just a question of bad phone reception. Someone who *looks like* a plainclothes policeman keeps stationing in front of your house, but *maybe* you are just paranoid. Psychologically, the feeling of constantly having to deal with the watchful gaze of a state that you cannot really pinpoint (it might be watching you, it might not), coupled with the solitary character of academic research (Gallien 2021), can lead researchers to develop feelings of paranoia (Tyszler 2019). Migration research in a post-colonial border therefore unfolds in a racialised setting, where the researcher operates at the convergence of multiple streams of privilege and inequality, where the boundaries between 'deserving' and 'undeserving' people are policed in an in/formal way by the ever-growing security apparatus.

Race and the making of the Spanish–Moroccan border

At the Spanish–Moroccan border, old and new racial formations conflate to structure exclusion, and channel containment onto bodies visualised as 'non-white'. In Morocco, Blackness has long been conflated with inferiority and out-of-placeness. As Gross-Wyrtzen argues, such association is already present in early Islamic thought, but consolidated with the expansion of the Arabic empire (Gross-Wyrtzen 2022). The development of the trans-Saharan trade, which was responsible for the provision of enslaved people from the Bilad al-Sudan to the Mediterranean region, and its later intertwining with the trans-Atlantic slave trade, firmly established race 'as a marker of otherness that justified enslavement' (Errazzouki 2021, 4). Morocco played a chief role in such a process: the country, in fact, was a departure point for ships bringing slaves to the Americas, and also exported goods produced through a domestic plantation economy fuelled by enslaved labour (Errazzouki 2021). The pillars of Morocco's positioning on the global colour line had emerged, and kept on being re-asserted over the following centuries through policies of mandatory conscription that considered dark-skinned people re-enslavable (El Hamel 2012), and land distribution arrangements that disenfranchised enslaved people (Gross-Wyrtzen 2022; see Becker 2002). In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the build-up to, and then the formal establishment of, colonial rule cemented the conflation of whiteness with 'superiority, power, and beauty' (Hannoum 2019, 16), thus unquestionably sanctioning light skin as a marker of desirability. The stratification of Moroccan society along racial hierarchies was further accompanied by a process of *divide et impera* adopted by the French colonisers to 'pacify' dissident areas and bring them

under central state rule. Such strategies relied on the purposeful essentialisation of the distinction between Arabs and Berbers (Wyrtzen 2016; see Aït Mous 2011).

Despite sitting at two separate and distant edges of the Spanish–Moroccan border, Melilla and the Canary Islands are central to the processes of race- and subjectivity-making that structure the externalised frontier. Since the city was occupied by Spain in 1497, Melilla has banked on its function first as a Spanish garrison and, since 1863, on its status as a free port on the Western Mediterranean coast. The political economy of the city thus revolved around maritime and overland trade, the management of tributes required to people who wanted to trade and the regulation of mobility in and out of the exclave (Pack 2019). Even though exchange with the Berber tribes living in the Riffian hinterland was necessary to the very survival of the enclave, the foundational narrative underpinning Melilla's identity as Spanish, white and Christian revolves around its conflictual relation with the dark, violent, Muslim 'Moors' threatening to assault the city's fortress (Suárez-Navaz and Suárez 2022). Such racist stereotyping had a particular recrudescence with the Riffian War of 1921–1926, when the military defeat inflicted on Spain by the Riffian army at Annual transformed Abd El-Krim Al-Khattabi, the leader of the Riffian Republic, into the symbol of the 'rebel Moor' in the Spanish imagination (Dieste 2017). After Melilla became a free port in 1863, its civilian population started to grow. As migrants from the neighbouring Riffian villages and from Southern Spain settled in the city, Melilla counted 52,000 people in 1925, and almost 96,000 in 1949. The end of the Protectorate determined a loss of Melilla's economic relevance in the region, and led to a decline in its overall population to less than 58,000 people in 1981. The demographic variations in the enclave have left the overall power segmentation unaltered: at the top, Spanish military officers and civil servants; at the bottom, Riffian workers (Soto Bermant 2012).

Like Melilla, the Canary Islands have also played a historical role as a colonial, trade and (forced) migratory juncture at the intersection between Europe, Africa and the Americas. The archipelago was occupied by Spain in the fifteenth century, in conflict with and then subjugation of the Guanche, the local indigenous population, allegedly of Berber origin. Over the following centuries, the Canary Islands consolidated as a lynchpin for Spain's colonisation of the Americas. The archipelago was the last stopover for European fleets needing to load reserves and a cheap workforce before heading to the other side of the Atlantic. This in-between function turned the islands into a laboratory for export-oriented, plantation-based farming (Parsons 1983). This model of plantation economy – which would then be replicated across the Atlantic – was based on the exploitation of a cheap workforce, mostly indigenous or West African enslaved people. The high poverty rates affecting the inhabitants also turned the Canary Islands into an emigration hub, especially to Spanish colonies – such as the Caribbean, Latin America and, in the twentieth century, Western Sahara (Andreu Mediero 2017) and the Spanish colonies in West Africa (Fundacion Mapfre Guanarteme 2008).

The externalisation project reworked the colour line along the Spanish–Moroccan border by leaning on older forms of racism to produce new forms of exclusion. Dark-skinned migrants in Morocco are often harangued by slurs evoking slavery and inferiority. Phenotypical Blackness is also taken by border bureaucrats as a marker of illegality that makes darker-skinned migrant people vulnerable to arbitrary arrest and displacement (regardless of their actual administrative situation) (Hannoum 2009). To the contrary, white Europeans and North Americans can afford to be oblivious of the border, often living in situations nearing administrative illegality, because their light skin acts as a marker of desirability, of being above suspicion, thus keeping them free of

the fear of encounters with the authority (Gazzotti 2021b). In the externalised border, the body becomes a travel document: (not) belonging and (il)legality are determined based on the visual markers one displays, before or as a substitute for one's papers being verified. In Melilla, the solidification of the border following Spain's signature of the Schengen Agreement in 1985 directly supported the replication of what Soto Bermant calls an 'ethnocracy': power in the city is concentrated in the hands of a Christian, white élite that has historically relied on border control and citizenship rules to confine Muslim citizens of Berber or Arab descent to the underclass. Even though active resistance by the Muslim community resulted in the achievement of legal rights for thousands of long-term residents in the late 1980s, racial politics remains a tangible reality regulating relations of domination in Melilla (Soto Bermant 2012, 86). Both in Melilla and in the Canary Islands, reception centres have emerged to host a population of non-white, unwanted irregular migrants. Located at the geographical edges of cities, reception centres confine and distance the unwanted from the rest of society. The racial hierarchies of the border are reflected in the reception centre, where a population of non-white 'residents' live under the authority of white workers (supported by non-white mediators that do not occupy the hierarchy of the organisation) (Sahraoui 2020).

Rabat – Tentative coexistence

Rabat, summer 2017. 'Whenever I speak to you, I feel like your recorder is always on.' The aid worker stopped talking, chasing food on the small plate they had previously filled from the buffet and avoiding making eye contact with me. The atmosphere suddenly grew tense, the flow of small talk froze. We were at a house party, hosted by a common acquaintance. I could hear the people around us continue talking, a sudden sense of incipient awkwardness filling the space between us. The person I was talking to was someone I had interviewed for my research. She first met me as a researcher, but I had bumped into her many times afterwards, as happened with other interviewees as well. That night, our relationship was polite, we had acknowledged each other's presence and engaged in small talk. Then a wall came up: 'Whenever I talk to you, I always feel like your recorder is on.' The tone she used made it sound like: 'I don't trust that your recorder is off.'

The setting where I had bumped into the aid worker was not a research setting, and I had not gone there for research purposes. We were at a house party in central Rabat, hosted by another aid worker and attended mostly by Europeans and Moroccans who worked in the aid industry. I had arrived there, as I had arrived at all the other places where I had bumped into aid workers before: invited by a friend, spotting an event shared by an acquaintance on Facebook, seeing an ad on the door of a café on my way home. Whether I had gone to places for research purposes or simply for leisure did not really matter. Nothing in our encounter was due to chance: I had arrived at that house party, at that cinema, at that café, because my white body was oriented by the same inherited history that oriented other white bodies – a history of privilege created through (neo)colonial dynamics that durably structure Moroccan society (Gross-Wyrtzen 2022; El Hamel 2012). The élite lifestyle NGO workers and I automatically had access to was very much linked to the inflated privilege that the post-colonial border granted to Global North passport holders. My PhD salary, which was very similar to the salary of other aid workers, was just above minimum wage in the UK. In Morocco, it was three times higher than the monthly income of 50% of local households[2] once translated into local currency.

From a member of the low-middle income class in the UK, I had become a member of the élite in Morocco overnight, by virtue of crossing a post-colonial border from North to South. The wage differentials that allowed me and other European migrants to live such élite lives were the product of almost a century of economic, labour and border policies aiming at making local labour as cheap, exploitable and immobile as possible.[3] Referring to Europeans in Tangier, Hannoum writes that 'a European […] becomes in Tangier mainly a European, a white man or a white woman—a person with high social status conferred on him or her by a long history of colonial domination (the politics of which have almost been forgotten but the effects of which are deep and long lasting)' (Hannoum 2019, 180). Whiteness thus acts as both shortcut and credential: aid workers and I thus kept on bumping into each other not because I had developed particularly robust professional networks in the development sector, or because I had any other professional credential that justified access. We kept on bumping into each other because coloniality made bodies with shared inherited histories take up the same institutional, professional and social spaces.

If coloniality made us converge, the nature of our work set us apart. Whereas my interviewee work involved the elaboration and implementation of aid-funded projects in the field of migration, the goal of my work – like an entire body of research committed to 'studying up' (Nader 1972) – was to understand how the aid industry (that the interviewees were part of) worked, and how border power flowed through it (and by extension, through them). In other words, my research tried to sidestep the infrastructures of information management set up by aid organisations. My whiteness allowed me to elude the boundaries between the inside and outside of organisations because it oriented me towards places which racialised 'beneficiaries' of the aid industry were priced out of, or did not have the network to access. Crucially, these were also mundane sites that aid workers did not have complete capacity to control access to: cafeterias, cinemas, parks, beaches – places that did not belong to the institutional premises of the aid industry. In research settings, my interviewees had complete control over which part of our conversations I could retain or which details of the institutions I could observe. The offices of UN agencies were hosted in villas surrounded by high walls and protected by private security guards, that I could only access with an appointment and by presenting an identity document. Some diplomatic delegations obliged external visitors to deposit all electronic devices into lockers before entering. The number and type of documents related to aid-funded projects that were accessible to the public were often reduced. What I could gather as data was heavily conditioned, and relied on my capacity to frame questions in non-threatening ways, to remember the conversation afterwards and to triangulate information by approaching multiple interlocutors. At the house party, however, there was no security guard or metal detector at the entrance to check whether I indeed had a recorder on me or not. At the entrance of a cinema, there were no waiting rooms that could limit my capacity to see who was spending their free time with whom outside of work (information that allowed me to more efficiently approach and understand the field even if it did not amount to research data) (Infantino 2019). My interviewees and I coexisted and interacted in the same non-research spaces, and I, the researcher, became a trespasser. But, like the walls that physically surrounded the headquarters of some institutions, barriers could sometimes suddenly come up during non-research conversations. Irony, implicit comments, or indirect references to past experiences of interaction with researchers worked to recreate boundaries in informal spaces that my whiteness allowed me access to, but

that the containment structures of the institution could not govern.

Las Palmas – On being puzzled

Las Palmas, summer 2021. The nurse standing outside of the healthcare centre was triaging the people queuing. Patients with a medical appointment were directed upstairs; people needing to sort out administrative paperwork were sent to another queue on the ground floor. I was there with Mohamed, a young Senegalese asylum-seeker who had arrived in Gran Canaria by boat the previous fall. Mohamed had asked me to accompany him to the healthcare centre because he wanted to get vaccinated against COVID-19. As his Spanish was very poor and the healthcare bureaucracy too complicated for someone who was digitally excluded, he needed some help navigating the protocol. The nurse gave us a ticket with a number, then told us to join the queue on the ground floor.

Once our turn arrived, we sat in front of an administrator, and I explained the reason for our visit. After asking for Mohamed's documents, the man started processing our request. Halfway through, he called a female colleague to second him, so she could learn the procedure to assign a healthcare centre to 'a foreigner arrived by boat'. Mohamed and I waited as the two administrators input the data on the registration software. As I scrolled down my Twitter feed to kill time, I heard the man explain to his colleague: 'so when they [the migrants] come here from the [reception] centre, they always come accompanied by an interpreter'. I looked up. The administrator was accompanying the explanation with gestures seemingly to explain the 'case study'. While the word 'migrants' was accompanied by a vague gesture towards Mohamed, the word 'interpreter' was accompanied by a nod towards me. I hesitated. The first administrator seemed to think that I was an interpreter working for one of the state-funded reception centres hosting migrant people in Gran Canaria. Conversely, Mohamed was understood to be one of the residents of such centres. Neither of these assumptions was true: Mohamed had been living outside of the formal reception system for months, and I was not an interpreter – ironically, the first administrator had witnessed me speaking to Mohamed in slow Spanish the entire time because I could not speak Wolof and Mohamed did not understand French.

Even though the assumptions that the administrator seemed to be making were factually incorrect, I was not sure I wanted to correct him. A few days earlier, I had accompanied Alioune, another Senegalese man, to a different healthcare centre to help get a physician assigned to him. That time, the two nurses triaging people at the door had asked me whether we came from the Red Cross or the White Cross – the two charities managing reception centres for migrant people in Las Palmas. I shook my head, and answered that we were from neither. The two women at the door did not reply. They gave each other a questioning look, as if they did not know how to process this information. Although neither said anything, the vibe at the entrance had suddenly turned slightly hostile. It felt as though the fact that Alioune was not from a reception centre and I was not a humanitarian worker was, somehow, wrong – a fact out of the ordinary, a fact that needed further explanation. Other people who used to accompany migrant people around Las Palmas to complete administrative procedures had reported similar incidents – where the volunteer had felt compelled to overexplain their relation to the person they were accompanying to 'puzzled' border workers who had made awkward comments afterwards. Tatiana, a Spanish woman who had volunteered as a language teacher in a reception centre, at the airport bumped into Ahmed, a Malian man who had been her student at the camp. Ahmed was being transferred to mainland Spain, and was accompanied by one of the camp workers, a man that Tatiana vaguely knew from her volunteering time. As the camp worker had been staring at them from a bench in the waiting lounge the entire time, Tatiana went to greet him. Her explanation as to why she had been chatting to Ahmed was met with a dry: 'Oh, I thought you were his fling.' Tatiana left this conversation unsettled. Back in the healthcare centre with Mohamed, all of this kept echoing in my head. I knew perfectly well that the rights to healthcare assistance in Spain were the same for asylum-seekers regardless of whether they were housed in the formal reception system or not. However, I also did not want to risk saying something that could compromise or delay Mohamed's paperwork. Shortly afterwards, the administrator printed the proof of Mohamed's registration with the local healthcare system, as well as a ticket listing the time and date for his COVID-19 vaccination appointment. Mohamed and I left the building, satisfied of our successful endeavour.

At first sight, street-level civil servants read the proximity between myself (a white woman, who spoke Spanish fluently) and Mohamed or Alioune (two Black men recently arrived by boat, who could not speak Spanish very well) according to the categories that the state used to govern the racialised border. Upon their arrival at the border, irregular migrants (as well as people who then decide to apply for asylum) are lodged in reception centres. Such facilities, at least in Las Palmas, kept people spatially distant from the rest of the population: they were lodged in neighbourhoods far away from the city centre, or on the edges of impoverished residential areas. There, they were tended to by (mostly white) humanitarian workers, who in many cases constituted the only Spanish people that camp residents had regular contact with. In a climate of institutionally fostered social segregation, welfare workers could not help but comprehend a white woman accompanying a Black man in the context of the racialised border script. My whiteness was read as a credential, as a marker of professionalism (I was believed to be an interpreter even if I obviously did not speak the language of the person I was accompanying) and of desirability (I was perceived as a white humanitarian figure moving as prescribed by the border apparatus).

If I had revealed my non-conformity to the script (by explaining that Mohamed was not living in state-funded accommodation and that I was not hired by an NGO subcontracted by the government, thus implying that we had met outside of state structures) that would have instantly transformed me into a hostile presence – someone who had gone too far, someone who had breached the rules, someone who was no longer desirable. Being read as a 'disloyal citizen' would have probably produced a reaction of disapproving surprise. Disapproving surprise would also have probably led to further questioning, as if living outside of state structures and supporting people whom the state was trying to marginalise were actions that required justification. There does not need to be an exclusionary policy in place for the environment to turn hostile: for example, a raised eyebrow, a disapproving look, unnecessary questioning. In the case of Tatiana, a white woman showing friendliness to a Black man was read as deviant, the smallest act of closeness being qualified as sexualised, as not closely adhering to the border script, sparked the most primordial racist fears and archetypes (Mbembe 2019). Showcasing proximity to 'undesirable' people that the state is trying to physically distance from the rest of the population is also read as a form of trespass, evidence of having overcome spatial and behavioural boundaries that the state has set up as part of its broader border policy. In a context where sidestepping government-funded humanitarian assistance seems to raise moral questions, letting the state see what the

state is *used to* seeing thus becomes a tactic for preventing being perceived as a trespasser, the erection of barriers and the environment becoming hostile.

Melilla – On policing

Melilla, Spring 2022. Unlike most Spanish cities, Melilla does not have a community kitchen that undocumented foreigners can easily access. Most newly arrived border-crossers are lodged in the Centre for Temporary Immigrant Stay (CETI), built in the early 2000s on the outskirts of the city, close to the border fence. This option, however, is not available to Moroccan citizens whose asylum application has not yet been admitted to examination. Undocumented Moroccans above 18 years of age are therefore barred from accessing any state resource catering to the homeless in the city. It is to make up for this purposeful absence of the state that a group of volunteers gather in the city centre most evenings of the week to run a food distribution stall. Two or three times a week, I would go to the stall – either to help distribute food, or simply because this is where I knew I would certainly find migrant people whom I was supporting but could not otherwise reach as they did not own a phone. One night, as I was about to go home, a Moroccan man, Aziz, stopped me and asked if we could have a quick chat. Aziz had recently applied for asylum, and his interview was scheduled for the following day. He asked me whether I could go with him to the asylum office, located in the area hosting the border post dividing Melilla from the Moroccan village of Beni Ensar. I warned him that the police would not allow me to sit in at the interview, because I was not a lawyer. He told me that it did not matter; he just wanted someone he knew to go with him. I accepted, and we agreed to meet the next day close to the asylum office.

The asylum office in Melilla is located within the precinct of the border post of Beni Ensar, next to the point where travellers have their passports checked by the Spanish police before being able to cross into Morocco. The location has a double effect. First, it shields what happens inside the office from public scrutiny. Before the land border between Spain and Morocco reopened in May 2022, in the aftermath of the COVID-19 closure, no passers-by walked past the office which was solely inhabited by asylum-seekers, police officers, interpreters, NGO workers and, sometimes, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees workers. After the border reopened, people queuing to enter Morocco would pass by the fence separating the asylum office precinct from the border corridor, but police officers worked quite intensively to keep the two groups separated and the queue running smoothly. Second, the location had a high symbolic and anxiety-inducing effect on people applying for asylum. In the weeks immediately before and after the reopening of the Spanish–Morocco land border, prospective asylum-seekers feared that the Spanish police could send them back to Morocco if they were apprehended in the area close to the asylum office (and thus to the border). The office was also a place where arbitrary rules were regularly enforced: asylum-seekers had to show up very early in the morning to get an asylum appointment, even though the office was known to be open until the early afternoon. Appointments for asylum interviews were sometimes postponed, without offering a clear explanation why. Asylum applicants who did not have any sort of identity documentation were generally told to come back when they had at least a copy of an identity document – a requirement not listed by Spanish asylum law.

The next day, Aziz and I walked towards the prefabricated building hosting the asylum office. We sat down in the waiting room, waiting for Aziz's turn. After a couple of minutes, a policeman came out of the office and walked across the waiting room, giving me an inquisitive look. As he walked back, he looked straight at me, seemingly ignoring the other people in the room, and announced that they were about to start interviews. I nodded. He then asked: 'What is your relation to the asylum-seeker?' I answered that I knew him from the food distributions, and that he had asked me to accompany him to the interview. 'You can't enter the interview room, though; only lawyers can', he pointed out, even though I had not made any request to sit in. I replied that I was aware of that, and that I would wait for him to finish the interview in the waiting room. Shortly afterwards, an interpreter called Aziz and invited him to go upstairs, where the interview was due to take place. I sat back on the plastic chairs lined up against the wall, waiting for Aziz to return.

After some time Aziz came down the stairs, holding a bundle of paper in his hands. We left the office and went through his paperwork together, to make sure that everything was in order. I had noticed time and again that Moroccan asylum-seekers were not always provided with a copy of their interview transcript. Aziz's copy was missing, too. The first policeman came out of the prefabricated office and nodded at me. I stopped him and asked him whether Aziz's copy of the asylum interview had remained in the office. The policemen gave me another inquisitive look, as if he did not understand what I was talking about. He looked through the paperwork, then said: 'The number of the lawyer is on the paperwork, he can ask him.' I hesitated again. A lawyer friend had assured me that asylum-seekers can ask for a copy of their interview transcript directly at the asylum office, so what the policeman was advising seemed like an unnecessary complication. I feigned ignorance, and asked: 'So we can't ask for a copy here, we need to call the lawyer and ask him?' '*He* needs to call the lawyer and ask him,' the policeman said, gesturing towards Aziz. '*You* can't do anything,' he concluded.

The asylum office is a further example of an extremely racialised space, where the distinction between 'the powerful' and 'the powerless' is reasserted through the application of arbitrary rules (like limiting the access to asylum appointments according to changing criteria, or postponing asylum interviews without a clear justification). Yet, it constitutes a very different space from the house party, or the healthcare centre. The asylum office is a place whose boundaries are jealously and zealously protected by traditional security actors (in this case, the National Police): access is tightly regulated, with no room allowed for mistakes as to who might or might not be a trespasser. At the house party or at the healthcare centre, my whiteness allowed me unscrutinised access. At the asylum office, my unfamiliar whiteness triggered warnings. The non-familiarity of my face within the border environment induced the street-level border worker to immediately ascertain 'my relation to the asylum-seeker' (and to the border more broadly). Whereas in other border spaces a white person would go unnoticed or mistaken for a humanitarian worker, at the asylum office such mistakes are not allowed to happen because the border worker *tolerates* (not welcomes) a humanitarian whiteness that the law prescribes to be present. Giving an out-of-the-ordinary answer (I was not a lawyer, I was not an interpreter, nor did I work for any of the NGOs that had a scripted interaction with local authorities) immediately flagged me as not part of the humanitarian whiteness prescribed by the law, and thus an outlier to the border space. The outlier is immediately perceived as a potentially disruptive presence before they have pursued any disruption: my sole presence in the waiting room prompted the policeman to remind me that I could not sit in on the asylum interview – even though I had made no request to do so. If quiet presence was already read as a sign of potential disruption (that was tolerated only because I was being passive), my request for clarification about the missing interview transcript (which pointed to a possible irregularity in the follow-up administrative steps to the completion of the asylum interview) was read as a

form of interference (and subjected to a firmer form of intimidation). The presence of the outlier in the domain of traditional state actors is thus zealously watched, never welcomed and threatened to be cut short at every minimal anticipation of disruption.

Discussion and conclusion

This article adds complexity to our understanding of whiteness in border research at the Spanish–Moroccan frontier. I have reflected on my own fieldwork experiences to understand what the white researcher's presence reveals about the flows of power structuring the border apparatus – the racialised hierarchies ordering it, the multiple streams of privilege in which research is embedded and border responses to the researcher's gaze.

I have argued that the very presence of the white researcher in the field is made possible by the long-standing legacies of economic, mobility and knowledge coloniality that tie the North African border to European hegemony. Nothing is casual in the ability of the white researcher to conceive research on, get access to and navigate the border: history orients white researchers towards white border spaces, where others are now and have been before. If whiteness facilitates access to white border spaces, it is only the performance of certain kinds of whiteness that makes the researcher welcome – a whiteness that buys into the border division of labour, that does not scrutinise, that does not subvert the status quo. And yet, white researchers that do not seem to adhere to the border script might be flagged by border workers as potentially disruptive. Initially perceived as welcome or tolerable by the border apparatus, they trigger the anxiety of border workers once unmasked and thus attract containment responses aimed at limiting the capacity of the researcher to *see* the border.

Containment responses are both implicit and explicit, subtle or direct. I have provided a three-tiered typology of encounter between the researcher and the border worker: **tentative coexistence**, where the proximity between border workers and researchers in mundane spaces results in the former enacting boundary-making practices; **puzzlement**, where not adhering to the border script is met with an implicit request for further explanation; and **intimidation**, where the border worker tries to break down the unscripted proximity between the white stranger and the racialised migrant. What these three containment responses have in common is the identification of ordinary behaviours (attending a party, accompanying someone to the healthcare centre, accompanying someone to an asylum interview) as challenges to the structure of the border – where boundaries to scrutiny are firmly established, where contact between the desirable and the undesirable is conceived only in state-funded humanitarian settings, where only a legally mandated, scripted whiteness is tolerated. The perception of behaving in a way that challenges the script of the border is something out of the ordinary, something unexpected, that needs to be addressed.

This article has thus expanded the debate about the insider/outsider's gaze in ethnographic research by highlighting that coloniality and whiteness *precede* and *pervade* the arrival of the white researcher in the field. The white researcher cannot really be an outsider to the research field because the accumulated history that their body carries has shaped the way they will arrive at (and occupy) the border space. This obviously raises the question: how do the administrators of the border react to the presence of the non-white researcher? How do older and new forms of racism condition access to, and presence in, the field of those whose presence does not so easily slip through? Aside from some notable exceptions, more research is needed to expand this field of inquiry and further explore the politics of the researcher's very *presence* in the field, what this says about knowledge production and what it reveals about the intimacies of power structuring the North African border itself.

Notes

1 The coloniality of the border regime resurfaces in the material infrastructure which racialised people encounter during their journeys (Gross-Wyrtzen and Gazzotti 2020). In Morocco, for example, most of the Catholic churches built during the French and Spanish protectorates have been turned into (formal or improvised) drop-in centres for Central and Western African people endangered by the border regime (see Alioua 2011). It is the case, for example, of the Church of Santiago el Mayor in Nador or the Church of San José in Al Hoceima, both inaugurated during the Spanish Protectorate in Northern Morocco and currently hosting humanitarian assistance projects for migrants stranded at the border (see Bravo Nieto, Bellver Garrido and Laoukili 2021).
2 5133 MAD, approximately 409 GBP in 2021 (Le 360. 2021).
3 Both during colonialism and after independence, cheap labour was the cornerstone of Morocco's extroverted economy, based on the export of raw materials and assembled goods whose low cost made them attractive to purchasers in foreign markets (including European markets). Since the establishment of the Protectorate, the country's productive structure has been mostly centred on export-oriented agricultural, extractive and – most recently – service activities (Capello 2008; Swearingen 1987). Since the 1980s, such dynamics have become even more pronounced through the development of fiscal policies facilitating the delocalisation of foreign production in areas such as the Tangier Free Zone (Rothenberg 2015). Both in colonial times and after independence, the availability of a cheap and easily exploitable labour force was at the centre of such an extroverted economic model (Fernández-Fernández 2018). The French administration first, and the Moroccan bureaucracy later, adopted policies that prevented the substantial increase of wages and limited the expansion of labour protections (Berrada 1986; see also Catusse 2010). Since the 1970s, this economic landscape has been complemented by the introduction of restrictions to the mobility of Moroccan citizens to Europe (Arab 2009).

References

Ahmed, S. 2000. *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality.* Abingdon, Oxon.

Ahmed, S. 2007. A phenomenology of whiteness. *Feminist Theory* 8 (2): 149–68. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464700107078139

Ahmed, S. 2012. *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life.* Duke University Press, Durham, USA.

Aït Mous, F. 2011. Les enjeux de l'amazighité au Maroc. *Confluences Méditerranée* 78 (3): 121–31. https://doi.org/10.3917/come.078.0121

Alioua, M. 2011. *L'étape Marocaine des transmigrants subsahariens en route vers l'Europe: L'épreuve de la construction des réseaux et de leurs territoires*, PhD thesis, Université Toulouse II Le Mirail.

Allsopp, J. 2018. *Becoming Adult in Another Man's Land:the Contested Life Projects of Unaccompanied Young Migrant and Refugee Men Negotiating Pathways through Welfare, Asylum and Immigration Regimes in Europe.* Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Oxford.

Andersson, R. 2014. *Illegality, Inc.: Clandestine Migration and the Business of Bordering Europe.* 1st edition. University of California Press, Oakland, CA.

Andreu Mediero, B. 2017. La colonia canaria en El Sáhara Occidental. De sus orígenes a La descolonización. *Revista de Historia Actual*, nos. 14–15. https://historia-actual.org/Publicaciones/index.php/rha/article/view/1830

Arab, C. 2009. *Les Aït Ayad: la circulation migratoire des Marocains entre la France, l'Espagne et l'Italie.* Presses universitaires de Rennes, Rennes, France.

Bachelet, S. and Jeffery, L. 2019. Creative engagement with migration in Morocco: an ethnographic exploration of photographic encounters. *Crossings: Journal of Migration & Culture* 10 (1): 25–42. https://doi.org/10.1386/cjmc.10.1.25_1

Becker, C. 2002. We are real slaves, real Ismkhan: memories of the trans-Saharan slave trade in the Tafilalet of south-eastern Morocco. *The Journal of North African Studies* 7 (4): 97–121. https://doi.org/10.1080/13629380208718485

Berrada, A. 1986. *La politique de bas salaires au Maroc: ébauche d'analyse.* BESM.

Bravo Nieto, A., Bellver Garrido, J. A. and Laoukili, M. 2021. *La ciudad Marroquì de Nador en la primera mitad del siglo XX. Arquitectura y Historia Urbana*. Instituto Cervantes de Fez – Balearia, Nador.

Capello, C. 2008. *Le prigioni invisibili: etnografia multisituata della migrazione marocchina*. Franco Angeli, Milano.

Carling, J., Bivand Erdal, M. and Ezzati, R. 2014. Beyond the insider-outsider divide in migration research. *Migration Studies* 2 (1): 36–54. https://doi.org/10.1093/migration/mnt022

Carrera, S., Mitsilegas, V., Allsopp, J. and Vosyliute, L. 2019. *Policing Humanitarianism: EU Policies against Human Smuggling and Their Impact on Civil Society*. Hart, Oxford, UK.

Catusse, M. 2010. Maroc: un fragile État social dans la réforme néo-libérale. In: *L'État face aux débordements du social au Maghreb - formation, travail et protection sociale*, 187–228. Karthala, Paris.

De Noronha, L. 2020. *Deporting Black Britons: Portraits of Deportation to Jamaica*. Manchester University Press, Manchester.

Dieste, J. L. M. 2017. *"Moros Vienen": historia y política de un estereotipo*. Instituto de las Culturas. https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=ChtruwEACAAJ

El-Enany, N. 2020. *Bordering Britain. Law, Race, and Empire*. 1st edition. Law, Race and Empire. Manchester University Press, Manchester. http://www.jstor.org.ezp.lib.cam.ac.uk/stable/j.ctvwh8fgs.4

El Hamel, C. 2012. *Black Morocco: A History of Slavery, Race, and Islam*. African Studies. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139198783

El Qadim, İşleyen, N. B., de Vries, L. A., Hansen, S. S., Karadağ, S., Lisle D. and Simonneau, D. 2020. (Im)moral borders in practice. *Geopolitics*, April, 1–31. https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2020.1747902

Errazzouki, S. 2021. Between the 'yellow-skinned enemy' and the 'black-skinned slave': early modern genealogies of race and slavery in Sa`dian Morocco. *The Journal of North African Studies*, May, 1–11. https://doi.org/10.1080/13629387.2021.1927557

Feldman, Gregory. 2011. *The Migration Apparatus: Security, Labor, and Policymaking in the European Union*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA.

Fernández-Fernández, F. 2018. *South-South Agreements in the Framework of North-South Integration. The Case of Morocco in the Euro-Mediterranean process*. PhD thesis, Universidade de Santiago de Compostela.

Floristán Millán, Elisa. 2022. Acompañando a Mohamed: reflexiones en torno al movimiento de la juventud harraga. *Antropología Experimental* 22 (August): 307–17. https://doi.org/10.17561/rae.v22.6676

Fundacion Mapfre Guanarteme. 2008. *Canarios con Salacot: África subsahariana como lugar de emigración (1936–1975)*, 2008. https://cidafucm.es/IMG/pdf/canarios_con_salacot.pdf

Gallien, Max. 2021. Solitary decision-making and fieldwork safety. In: *The Companion to Peace and Conflict Fieldwork*, edited by Roger Mac Ginty, Roddy Brett and Birte Vogel, 163–74. Springer International Publishing, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-46433-2_11

Garelli, G. and Tazzioli, M. 2013. Challenging the discipline of migration: militant research in migration studies, an introduction. *Postcolonial Studies* 16 (3): 245–49.

Gazzotti, L. 2021a. *Immigration Nation. Aid, Control, and Border Politics in Morocco*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Gazzotti, L. 2021b. (Un)making illegality. Border control, racialised bodies and differential regimes of illegality in Morocco. *The Sociological Review*, 69 (2).

Genova, N. De. 2016. The 'European' question: migration, race, and post-coloniality in 'Europe.' In: *An Anthology of Migration and Social Transformation*, 343–56. IMISCOE Research Series. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-23666-7_22

Gross-Wyrtzen, L. 2022. 'There is no race here': on blackness, slavery, and disavowal in North Africa and North African Studies. *The Journal of North African Studies*, June, 1–31. https://doi.org/10.1080/13629387.2022.2089124

Gross-Wyrtzen, L. and Gazzotti, L. 2020. Telling histories of the present: post-colonial perspectives on Morocco's 'radically new' migration policy. *Journal of North African Studies*, August, 827–43 https://doi.org/10.1080/13629387.2020.1800204

Hagan, M. 2018. *Disassembling the Camp. The Politics of Policing Exiles in Calais, France*. MA Dissertation, Unpublished. University of Amsterdam.

Hannoum, A. 2009. Notes on the (post)colonial in the Maghreb. *Critique of Anthropology* 29 (3): 324–44. https://doi.org/10.1177/0308275X09336702

Hannoum, A. 2019. *Living Tangier. Migration, Race, and Illegality in a Moroccan City*. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia. https://doi.org/10.9783/9780812296532

Harris, C. I. 1993. Whiteness as property. *Harvard Law Review* 106 (8): 1707–91. https://doi.org/10.2307/1341787

Headland, T. N, Pike, K. L., Harris, M. 1990. American Anthropological Association. Annual Meeting 1988: Phoenix. *Emics and Etics: The Insider/Outsider Debate*. Sage Publications, Newbury Park, CA.

Infantino, F. 2016. *Outsourcing Border Control. Politics and Practice of Contracted Visa Policy in Morocco*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York. http://www.palgrave.com/de/book/9781137469830

Infantino, F. 2019. *Schengen Visa Implementation and Transnational Policymaking: Bordering Europe/Federica Infantino*. Cham, Switzerland, Palgrave Macmillan, US [2019].

Intrand, C. and Perrouty, P.-A.. 2005. La diversité des camps d'étrangers en Europe: présentation de la carte des camps de Migreurop. *Cultures et Conflits*, 57: 71–90.

Jiménez Álvarez, M. 2011. *Intrusos en la fortaleza. Menores marroquíes migrantes en la frontera sur de Europa*. Unpublished PhD thesis, Universidad Autonoma de Madrid.

Le 360. 2021. HCP: Au Maroc, le revenu médian par ménage est de 5.133 dirhams par mois, April 28, 2021. https://fr.le360.ma/economie/hcp-au-maroc-le-revenu-median-par-menage-est-de-5133-dirhams-par-mois- 237648

Maâ, A. 2020. Le retour incertain d'Aya et de Prince. Penser l'incertitude et l'intermédiation des retours volontaires à partir d'une trajectoire féminine en instance de départ depuis Le Maroc. *Emulations – Revue de Sciences Sociales* 34: 51–75. https://doi.org/10.14428/emulations.034.03

Maldonado-Torres, N. 2007. On the coloniality of being. *Cultural Studies* 21 (2–3): 240–70. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380601162548

Mayblin, L. and Turner, J. 2020. *Migration Studies and Colonialism*. Polity Press, Cambridge.

Mbembe, A. 2019. *Necropolitics*. Translated by Steve Corcoran. Duke University Press, Durham,.

Minfegue, C. 2022. Trapped in the Global? A look at the contemporary evolution of migration policies in Cameroon. *Territory, Politics, Governance*, March, 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/21622671.2022.2050287

Moreno Nieto, J. 2017. Une ethnographie située au nord du Maroc: le rôle du positionnement et des emotions au cours du travail de terrain. In: Mouna, K., Therrien, C. and Bouasria, L. (eds) *Terrains Marocains: sur les traces de chercheurs d'ici et d'ailleurs*. Centre Jacques-Berque, Rabat. https://doi.org/10.4000/books.cjb.1279

Nader, L. 1972. Up the anthropologists: perspectives gained from studying up. In: Dell, H. (ed) *Reinventing Anthropology*, 284–311. Pantheon Books, New York.

Natter, K. forthcoming. *The Politics of Immigration Beyond Liberal States. Morocco and Tunisia in Comparative Perspective*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Pack, S. D. 2019. *The Deepest Border: The Strait of Gibraltar and the Making of the Modern Hispano-African Borderland*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA [2019].

Parsons, J. J. 1983. The migration of Canary Islanders to the Americas: an unbroken current since Columbus. *The Americas* 39 (4): 447–81. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003161500050173

Picozza, F. 2021. *The Coloniality of Asylum Mobility, Autonomy and Solidarity in the Wake of Europe's Refugee Crisis*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, London.

Pustulka, P., Bell, J. and Trąbka, A. 2019. Questionable insiders: changing positionalities of interviewers throughout stages of migration research. *Field Methods* 31 (3): 241–59. https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X19839368

Rachik, H. 2012. *Le proche et le lointain: un siècle d'anthropologie au Maroc*. Parenthèses, Marseille.

Rothenberg, J. 2015. *The Social Life of Logistics on the Moroccan Mediterranean Coast*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of California, Los Angeles.

Ryan, L. 2015. 'Inside' and 'outside' of what or where? Researching migration through multi-positionalities. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 16 (2). https://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/2333/3785

Sahraoui, N. 2020. Integration into liminality: women's lives in an open centre for migrants at Europe's southern antechamber. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 46 (9): 1809–27. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2019.1597690

Soto Bermant, L. 2012. *Small Places, Large Issues. Identity, Morality and the Underworld at the Spanish-Moroccan Frontier of Melilla*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Oxford. https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:

c7625a33-2cbe-416e-90c1-096fcb8e41b2/download_file?safe_filename=DPHILTHESIS%2520library%2520copy.pdf&file_format=application%2Fpdf&type_of_work=Thesis

Suárez-Navaz, L. and Suárez, I. 2022. Silencing *mestizaje* at the Euro-African Border. Anti-racist feminist perspectives on cross-border lives. *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, February, 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/08865655.2022.2031254

Sukarieh, M. and Tannock, S. 2019. Subcontracting academia: alienation, exploitation and disillusionment in the UK overseas Syrian refugee research industry. *Antipode* 51 (2): 664–80. https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12502

Swearingen, W. 1987. *Moroccan Mirages: Agrarian Dreams and Deceptions, 1912–1986*. Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Ticktin, M. 2011. *Casualties of Care: Immigration and the Politics of Humanitarianism in France*. University of California Press, Oakland, CA.

Tyszler, E. 2019. *Derrière les barrières de Ceuta & Melilla. Rapports sociaux de sexe, de race et colonialité du contrôle migratoire à la frontière Maroco-Espagnole*. Unpublished PhD thesis, Université Paris 8.

Vacchiano, F. 2007. '*Bruciare di desiderio': Realtà sociale e soggettività dei giovani 'Harrāga' Marocchini*. Unpublished PhD thesis, Università di Torino.

Williams, D. 2020. Rethinking black families in poverty: postcolonial critiques and critical race possibilities. In: L. L Martin (ed) *Introduction to Africana Demography*, Chapter 6, 143–64. Brill. Leiden, The Netherlands. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004433168_008

Wyrtzen, J.. 2016. *Making Morocco*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY. https://doi.org/10.7591/9781501704253