SINGING FOR THE PEOPLE: POPULIST SENTIMENT AND RESISTANCE MUSIC IN EGYPT AND MOROCCO

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SINGING FOR THE PEOPLE: POPULIST SENTIMENT AND RESISTANCE MUSIC IN EGYPT AND MOROCCO

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Although the study of populism has thrived in the last two decades, the concept itself remains contested among social scientists. One reason behind the difficulty of grasping this concept is academic parochialism, which can be sense in the "the absence of dialogue between epistemic communities undertaking research in different countries and world regions" (Kaltwasser, 2018, p. 63). This dissertation contributes to this debate, by introducing two cases from the Global South from "the people" rather than the leadership's perspective. It focuses on Egypt and Morocco in the 1960s-1970s, a tumultuous period that knew a rise in populist sentiment across the globe (Heilbronner, 2016). Given the importance of protests music in this era, the populist sentiment is assessed and analyzed through songs of the duo Imam-Negm (Egypt) and Nass El-Ghiwane (Morocco), both pioneers of protest singing in their respective countries (Jubair, 2015; Sadiq, 2014). The method of analysis is Rose (2001)'s "discourse analysis I", which is based on Foucault's critical discourse analysis and Potter (1996)'s constructionist approach.

The results show that in both cases, the expression of populist sentiment aligns with the symbolic dimension of the concept of inclusionary populism, as defined by

Filc (2010). In terms of the communication style, the results emphasize the use of parody, satire, and mockery in the Egyptian case, which reminds of Bakhtine's carnivalesque and the dichotomy of official and unofficial culture. In the case of Morocco, the expression of populist sentiments follows a mystic approach, represented by the idea of Trance, or the depiction of oppression as a supernatural power, possessing the body of the oppressed.

While these results inform about some modes of expression of populist sentiment in Egypt and Morocco, they are my no mean generalizable as they do not account for the internal and external political and social dynamics in these countries or the broader region of North Africa. Future research should also consider other cases of exclusionary populism in North Africa, namely nativist and ethnic movements like the Kabyle movement of liberation, whose discourse echoes the rhetoric of Western European right-wing populism.

Keywords: populism, populist sentiment, inclusionary, exclusionary, protest songs, Morocco, Egypt.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Salma El idrissi was born on August 2nd, 1988, in the city of Agadir, in the South of the Kingdom of Morocco. Prior to moving to the U.S. for pursuing her education in 2014, she obtained a bachelor's degree in information system engineering from the University of Mohammad V in Rabat, Morocco. In 2013, she was granted the Fulbright scholarship by the Moroccan American Commission of Educational Exchange (MACECE). In 2016, she obtained a master's degree in public policy and administration from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. After her long journey at Cornell University as a PhD student and candidate, she is going to join Northeastern University as a teaching postdoctoral fellow. Finally, Salma El idrissi is a proud first-generation college student who is dedicated to help women and BIPOC to thrive in higher education.

To my late grandmother Aisha, my loving parents Khadija and Moulay Ahmad, my siblings Ichrak, and Walid, my sister Oumaima and her beloved family, my husband Farhad, and Madar Jan and her honorable family. Without your unconditional support, I would not be where I am today.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Populism is the ideology of "ordinariness and bad manners" (Moffitt, 2016). In the last two decades, the world has seen a surge in the number of populist leaders, along with their blatant attitude against their opponents. A prominent example is the lengthy *cadenas* of Hugo Chavez, locking the Venezuelan national TV for hours and hours, or his Show *Aló Presidente*, known for tirades of insults and diatribes against the imperialist West. In the United States, President Trump was no exception, calling Mexican men criminals and drug dealers, and taunting a native American senator about her origins.

The freedom of speech that these leaders enjoy is behind these comments. This is not to say that freedom of speech is the culprit, but to highlight that it is not a granted right for everyone. These leaders are either citizens exercising one of their many constitutional rights, or a totalitarian leader speaking in the name of an empty signifier called "the people". This is probably the case of Chavez, known for his phrase "Yo no soy yo, soy el pueblo" (I am not me; I am the people). Who are the "real" people? This question is not easy to answer, especially in the Global South, where most regimes are nominally "democratic". Under such circumstances, freedom of speech becomes a creative endeavor. The people still need to speak, and express their disenchantment with society, economy, and the government. History teaches us that it is possible to fulfill that need under the most oppressive laws of censorship. In Chile, under the regime of Pinochet, the wives of political prisoners (i.e., desaparecidos) created collage on burlap sacks (i.e., Arpilleras) to tell the story of their beloves ones, using their own clothes (Agosín, 1990). In the Soviet Union, the Samizdat (i.e., Self-publishing) was the opposition strategy to circulate and

preserve censored work through snow-ball republication and copying, using handwriting and untraceable typewriters from East Germany[1].

Music is another medium that has been used to express the censored. Thanks to its polysemic nature (Cross & Woodruff, 2009), music has the capacity to function as a message encoder and provoke emotions of resistance when openness and directness are not possible. For this reason, Alan Lomax, the renown American folk specialist, notes that music can be the voice of the oppressed and the "weaker peoples" regardless of their ethnicity, color or nation (Lomax, 2003). For the author, music helps in defining who the people are, and how they want to conduct their long journey for social and political change. Under the tight grip of censorship and the high risk to sanction, Pratt (2013) states that music can be a safe medium that the "weak" can use to confront power. For instance, the oral tradition of African American slaves provides an excellent example of how music was used to express sorrows from the tyranny of slavery and call for rebellion among the slaves (Cox, 2020). It also shows when confronted with censorship, music coupled with persistence, it proves to create safe space for the "weak". When black people were prohibited from using their drum in the British colonies in 1739, slave owners considered it as a weapon that incites on rebellion and insurgency. Cox (2020, para. 10) explains how African American slaves successful circumvented this law by playing drum on their bodies. "Hands clapped, feet stomped, bodies swayed, and mouths provided sophisticated rhythmic patterns".

Despite the richness of all these mediums of expression under dictatorship, a great deal of what we know about "popular" populist communication comes from western, democratic contexts (Canovan, 1999; Laclau, 2005; Mudde, 2004; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013;

[1] the typewriter Erika was purchased by Soviet citizens from East Germany and used in the Samizdat publication process because it was hard to trace by the Soviet intelligence: https://www.gulagmuseum.org/showObject.do?object=334389&language=2

Taguieff, 2012). In non-democratic contexts, populist communication strategies were evaluated at the leadership level (Block & Negrine, 2017; Moffitt, 2016; Rincones, 2013; Sagarzazu & Thies, 2019). For example, Moffitt (2016, p. 53) how the literature on populism, in particular the one defining populism as an ideology or discourse, focuses on the populist leader as the "main protagonist" or "key articulator" that "deliver the content of the populist ideology". Some authors tend to focus on analyzing populism through the overall discourse of political parties and their manifestos. In both cases, "the people" are discussed as an element of the leader's populist discourse. It is often discussed as a discourse destined *to the people,* but rarely as a discourse created *by the people*.

The goal of this dissertation is to examine the expression of populist sentiments under dictatorships on *the popular level*. Beside shifting the focus on populist communication from the geopolitical context of Europe and North America, the main contribution of this dissertation is to highlight the difference in perspectives of the populist question between Western and decolonized countries.

Since their wave of independences in the1950s and 1960s, postcolonial countries in the Global South have been subject to inquiries on the social, economic, and political conditions of its people during the process of decolonization. After imperialism, these countries have entered a new era of self-discovery, along with the newly granted right of self-determination and redemption. In *De-possession of the world* (i.e., Dépossession du Monde), French anthropologist Jacques Berque (1964) define colonization as a "general imbalance in all categories of local life. Religion becomes superstition, law [becomes] custom, art [becomes] folklore". This imbalance also affected social and political life. The void left by the colonizers would soon be supplanted by the new local "elite" formed during the colonial era, leaving little to no space for low-class

citizens and minorities to flourish. The local elite succeeded in maintaining their privilege under the old rule. They either held a position of authority or were somehow tied to the old colonialists. Under the new regime, the local elite played a significant role in policy making, as well as shaping the economic future of their respective societies (Diop, 2012). This contributed to the persistence of the old colonial institutions and the exacerbation inequalities and social disparities. On the political side, sovereignty was not paralleled by democracy. The colonial legacy of uneven distribution of wealth and resources, lack of freedom, and totalitarianism, continued with the postcolonial regimes (Marker, 2003). In Africa (the continent subject of this dissertation), Ikome (2007) states how African states have always been associated and run by a small group of individuals, promoting the idea of the individual leader. They describe postcolonial African states as "very elitist", working on preserving and protecting the interests of the ruling class in detriment of its people:

> Importantly, also, the African state has been very elitist. It has, for the most part, functioned as a pyramidal structure through which only the interests of a few are articulated and secured, in a vertical, hierarchical manner from top down, while the interests of the rest of the majority are hardly articulated at all. This has meant that a majority of African peoples have remained alienated from their states, state institutions, and leaders. (p. 19)

All this contributed to a rise in dissatisfaction and anti-elite sentiment among the decolonized populations. All these circumstances lead to the following questions: how did the people react to the local elite monopolization to power? How did they express these negative sentiments under states that used oppression and coercion to maintain its existence? To what extent were they allowed to express these sentiments? These were the first questions that sparked

my interest in studying populist communication under dictatorships, especially in what came to be known as postcolonial nation-states after the wave of independence. As mentioned earlier, these questions are motivated by the notion of freedom of speech, which is not an equal right for everyone in the world. To answer these questions, I am studying two cases epitomizing the struggles and the aspirations of people in the Global South in the 1960s-1970s.

But before revealing the cases, it is intuitive to ask: why this era? These decades have been described as "the most dynamic and icon-shattering decade of the twentieth century' when 'everything seemed possible for a brief shining moment" (Monteith, 2008, p. 1). It is the decade that ushered in significant events in history that are still impacting our present, and probably the future, namely the civil rights movement, and the counterculture phenomenon in the 1960s. The civil rights movement sought to abolish the remnants of a centuries-long system of slavery and the uncompleted emancipation following the American civil war. The movement called for ending racial segregation, inequality, discrimination, and disenfranchisement under the American law. The 1960s's Counterculture is a cultural phenomenon that can be considered as a byproduct of the Vietnam War and the exacerbation of armed conflicts and violence in the world. The main goal of 1960s 's counterculture was to question established social norms and mode of authorities, as well as supporting identities that do not align with the traditional, mainstream definitions. Counterculture protests were led by leftist students, feminist groups, anti-imperialism activists, and sexual and ethnic minorities among others. Although all these events initially took place in the West, their effects would soon reach the Global South. For instance, In Africa, the student movement consisted in student-led protests across-the continent against African autocratic regimes (Rukato, 2020). The goal of the students movement in Africa was to change the existing neocolonial political system, to establish a genuine rather than nominal democracy, and to

achieve the African dream of Pan-Africanism (Boahen, 1994). Additionally, students sought to influence the public opinion and include the *mere people* in their struggle for freedom. The Ugandan scholar Mohammad Mamdani calls African students of the 1960s-1970s a "catalytic force" because they had the power and the ability to induce revolutionary sentiments, hence bring people to rebellion (Hodgkinson & Melachiorre, 2019).

Also, the 1960s-1970s was a unique moment in contemporary history where popular music begins to echo politics and political dissidence. It was the moment when protest songs shaped and stirred collective sentiments of anti-establishment, which would eventually lead to massive calls for justice and change. In his book *Music and the Elusive Revolution : Cultural Politics and Political Culture in France, 1968-1981,* Drott (2011, p. 4) defines protest music as "that different kind of music, performed of conceptualized in different social contexts, engage politics in different ways". The author proceeds in making the difference between a protest song and a piece of classic music: "the use of meanings ascribed to a chanson are distinct from those ascribed to a piece of avant-garde classical music, which are distinct from those assigned to a Jazz improvisation". For Kizer (1983) explains that for a set of sung lyrics to be considered as a protest song, they should meet the following criteria:

> "(1) [It should be] an expression of discontent of dissent which imply or assert a need for a change; (2) may represent the attitudes of one individual or a collection of individuals, such as members of a special interest group; (3) may be adapted by and utilized as ideological statements of a social movement, whether originally written for that purpose or not, and then the original composer no longer dominates as the message source;(4) may inspire the creation of other rhetorical messages; (5) may serve to stimulate thought, reinforce, or modify attitudes." (p. 4)

For Hill (2013) the Vietnam War and the involvement of the U.S. troops in South Asia was a pivotal point of the performance and production of protest music in the United States. Americans were not in favor of their government intervention in Vietnam, which costs tens of thousands of human lives on both sides. Heilbronner (2016) explains how the Vietnam war, along with the assassination of J. F. Kennedy and Martin Luther Kings in 1968, weighted heavily on the social and political life of Americans. Music became a medium to express shock to the murder of two highly estimated American politicians and activists, and disappointment with the U.S. foreign policy and involvement In Vietnam, as well as the continued oppression of the black people..

My cases of protest music that meet Kizer's (1983) definition are geographically and politically relevant to the African context in the 1960s-1970s. In this dissertation, I am focusing on Morocco and Egypt, both of which witnessed a period of political instability and turmoil during the 1960s-1970s. In the modern history of Morocco, this era (which can be extended to the 80s) is called "the years of lead". The year of lead (in Arabic,سنوات الرصاص ; in French, les années de plomb) was a period characterized by sanction of political activity, oppression of the opposition, and heavy-handed police response to protests and dissenting movements. The word "lead" refers to bullet shots at the public during massive demonstrations. The years of lead started with the ascendence of King Hassan II to power in 1961, the King's control of legislative powers, and the rise of leftist opposition to his regime, led by students' movements in Moroccan universities. The year of lead recorded serious abuse of human rights, a significant number of forced disappearances, and crackdown of freedom of speech, especially criticism of monarchy.

In Egypt, this period coincided with the permeation of the Nasserist ideology in Egypt and the Arab World. The Nasserist regime did not hesitate to dismantle political parties under the

pretext of preserving the success of the revolution. This strategy yielded a single-party atmosphere, where plurality of public opinion was not desirable, and at times punished and silence with power and violence. This situation worsened after Egypt's defeat in 1967's six-days war with Israel, resulting in massive protests among university students against Nasser's failure and negligence of the officers in defending the country, and the loss of Arab lands to Israel. For Huwaidi (2014), The *Naksah* of 1967 (i.e. Setback) put the regime in a state of "nakedness" before the Egyptian people. Shaken by the event, the latter lost confidence in the capability of their government to protect the country and live up to the expectations of the people. Even after the death of Abdel Nasser and the gradual fall of Nasserism, the protests erupted for the second time in 1977, this time it was not only a students' movement, but a spontaneous uprising that included the working class. The demands of the protesters were different from their predecessors in 1968. Workers and students stormed the street, protesting corruption and the cut of government subsidies to food and basic goods, hence its name "the bread riots". The "bread riots" resulted in a brutal encounter between the people and the army: "800 were injured, 80 were killed, and more than 1,000 were imprisoned" ("Egyptians Riot in the Streets in 1977 ," 2011).

Under this tense atmosphere, emerged a strong tradition of protest songs, in both Morocco and Egypt. In this dissertation, I am particularly focusing on the work of Nass El-Ghiwane (Morocco) and the Duo Imam-Negm. Like their fellow protest singers in the 1960s, they both sang for the same values of justice, equality, and liberty, however, their circumstances were not the same. As discussed earlier, the circumstances where Nass El-Ghiwane and Imam-Negm evolved pertain to autocracy and dictatorship. Their right to speech was confiscated by the

ruling power, yet they had to find a way to communicate the ills and sorrows of the people, to sing for the people.

Nass El-Ghiwane is a Moroccan musical band that was established in the end of 1960s. Since their inception, Nass El-Ghiwane were an avant-gardist group that defied the traditional features of the Moroccan modern song. The innovation of Nass El-Ghiwane consists in reviving the popular genres that were neglected by the Moroccan artistic elite, considering them folkloric and archaic. The new style of Nass El-Ghiwane was a popular success because it was able to entertain a cultural dialogue with the Moroccan people. The band found a way to reconcile the people with their past, and a create a new musical genre that could mediate a musical message in a language the mundane people could understand. It did not only address the people in their plain language, but also expressed the diversity in their identities(s). A single song of Nass El-Ghiwane is a mosaic of the Moroccan culture heritage, combing the Amazigh, Arab, Saharoui, Sub-Saharan, and the Sufi elements of the Moroccan identity.

On the other hand, Nass El-Ghiwane emerged in a moment where the people needed a voice. For Edmund Amran El Maleh (n.d.), Nass El-Ghiwane is the first Moroccan band that succeeded in deciphering the intricacy of the daily life of the ordinary people. In a way, their music is a way to confront quotidian life with its sorrow and happiness. El Maleh adds how El-Ghiwane becomes a symbol of resistance and revolution, an awakening a soul that has been "dormant under the effect of monotonous, romantic songs coming from the Orient[2]". El Maleh defines the music of Nass El-Ghiwane as a liberating music, both the soul and the body (El Maleh, n.d., as mentioned in Nejmi, 2002):

[2] The author uses the word Orient, or Al-Sharq, to refer to Egypt and the Levant.

> It is music that finally stops the tears, and makes one self-throw, spiritually and physically, into the rhythm, loaded with strong words, shining with violent and soft rebellion at the same time, nostalgic and life-loving words. Something like this undoubtedly happened with the birth of black jazz in America. The meeting took place and the relationship between the legacy of tradition and the springs of popular culture was created […] (p. 8)

In Egypt, the experience of the Duo Imam-Negm might be outwardly different from Nass El-Ghiwane, especially on the artistic level, but their relationship with the popular and their narrative of revolution is similar in many ways. The Duo Imam-Negm are Sheikh Imam Eissa and Ahmad Fouad Negm. Sheikh Imam was the composer and the singer in the duo, while Negm was the poet. The duo lived together for many years in the poor neighborhood of Khosh Adam in Al-Ghourieyah, where most of their songs were written and performed.

The Duo met in 1962, envisioning an artistic project that advances a novel style of singing, reviving the Egyptian legacy of music and poetry. Thus, the first period of the Imam-Negm cooperation was characterized by a focus on presenting the public with popular songs epitomizing for decades the core of the Egyptian identity and folkloric music and chants. But this would not last longer, because the duo was not insensitive to the political events occurring in their country. The first event, or rather phenomenon, that marked a turning point in their artistic career is what Eissa (2008) calls “the years of socialist transformation”. This term, although positive at appearance, connotes the depth of class dynamics and the broadening rift between the rich and the poor in the first five years of the ruling of Gamal Abdel Nasser. Eissa (2008) mentions that during these five years, new emerging class supplanted old capitalists and feudalists in monopolizing the countries’ economy and capital. When inquired about this

phenomenon, President Gamal Abdel Nasser defended the privilege of the "new class", arguing that "Socialism eliminates inherited class privileges, but it does not eliminate the natural differences that are achieved as a result of work, experience and talent, including the privileges that public sector leaders obtained". Nasser saw that the emergence of a new class not a negative phenomenon, but a natural one, resulting from a significant increase in welfare thanks to his economic reforms. In this respect, Nasser gives the example of the "penniless farmer who now owns five acres of land from the agricultural reform" who eventually ascend the ladder of social class (Abdel Nasser, n.d., as mention in Eissa, 2008, p. 22-23).

The first political song of the duo Imam-Negm was an explicit response to the phenomenon of the "socialist transformation". Their song *Ya'ish Ahl Baladi* [Long live the people of my country!] (1967) describes the social apparatus of the country after promises of equality and justice following the revolution of 1952. The song divides Egyptians into Tanablah and the lower class. The Tanablah (in Egyptian 'amiyah: the lazy men) constitutes the of the military and bureaucracy elites, a new upper class that substituted the local, foreign capitalists, and feudalists after the revolution. On the other side there is the lower class, which has always encompassed the workers and the farmers. *Ya'ish Ahl Baladi* (1967) was the first but not the last political of the duo Imam-Negm. It was the beginning of a new era in the transformation of the work from folkloric to protest songs. but then the1967's Naksah happened, and the duo became determined to devote its songs to criticize the military regime and reveals its shortcoming. The duo chose to commemorate the Naksah with an invective, mocking the bravado of the Egyptian, and their attempt to cloak the defeat with empty slogans and excuses. The song *Alhamdu lilah Khabbatna tahti Batatna* [Thank God, he hit us under our armpits] (1967) was the duo's first

direct confrontation with the military regime, and it will last until the artistic separation of Imam and Negm in the 1990s.

After establishing the significance of the cases of Egypt and Morocco in studying populist communication outside the Western sphere, it is time to explain the importance of comparative research in looking beyond the similarities and differences to appreciate the role of context in shaping the singularities of the compared cases. Comparative research can generally be defined as "comparing two or more nations with respect to some common activity" (Edelstein, 1989, p. 14). In the field of communication, Esser and Hanitzsch (2012, p. 5) states that "Comparative communication research involves comparison between a minimum of two macro-level units (systems, cultures, markets, or their sub-elements) with respect to at least one object of investigation relevant to communication research". Esser (2013) states that the main advantage of comparative research is avoiding "naïve universalism", that is the tendency of assuming that the findings of one country is generalized on the other countries. The author adds how "Comparative analysis thereby helps to prevent parochialism and ethnocentrism, but also to better understand one's own system by juxtaposing its familiar structures against those of other systems" (Esser, 2013, p. 114). Comparative research also has the advantage of clarifying concepts and variables, testing the generalizability of theories, and challenging pre-conceived ideas and assumptions about a certain region/country/system in the world.

So far, comparative research has been quite successful in bringing in knowledge about different media systems in the world and contextualizing the existing differences and similarities among them (Christians et al., 2009; Hallin & Mancini, 2017; Rodny-Gumede, 2020). However, and contrasting what Esser (2013) says about the value of comparative media in avoiding parochialism and naïve universalism, it still perpetuates western perspectives. Willems (2014, p.

7) that in general, the Global South has been theorized through the primes of the Global North. For instance, in comparative media studies, which has been largely influenced by comparative politics, "the Global North is largely seen as a beacon of media freedom and liberal democracy, [while] the Global South is presented as a region with an inferior media system characterized by strong state intervention and lack of press freedom" (Willems, 2014, p. 11). This view assumes that Global South is an obscure box where all modes of communication are exclusively controlled by the authorities. This leads to failure in accounting for the richness of communication arrangements and mode of productions and consumptions of the media that still exists, despite the tight grip of censorship and authoritarianism. In addition, our knowledge of the Global South is primarily informed by Western scholarship, which was initially a colonial project to study and "civilize" indigenous populations in the colonized lands (Mlambo, 2006).

Today, there is an increasing call of attention to considering the complexity of context of the Global South. The authors argue that there are many issues and external factors shaping the reality of the Global South that might be overlooked by Western scholarship. These factors include "colonialism and postcolonialism, ethnic and religious heterogeneity, persistent internal conflict, humanitarian crises, high levels of social exclusion, family and community structure, organization of economic activity, political authoritarianism, and statelessness." (Waisbord & Mellado, 2014, p. 364).

This dissertation accounts for some of these factors to establish a meaningful, cross-regional and cross-temporal comparison between the meanings and modes of populist communication in two countries from the Global South. As mentioned earlier, it does not aim at simply listing similarities and differences, but rather looking beyond a comparison of appearances to delve into the factors that shaped the communication of populist sentiments in

these countries. What I foresee as the main contribution of this dissertation is laying the foundation for future discussions of *the people's populism* rather than the *leaders' populism* in the Global South.

Outline of the dissertation

Chapter 1 offers a detailed literature review of the concept of populism and the role of resistance/protest music in conveying populist sentiment. It provides the different perspective from which populism is currently defined in the literature: populism as a thin-centered ideology (Mudde, 2017), populism as a discourse (Laclau, 2005), populism as a language (Waisbord, 2018), populism as a political style (Moffitt, 2016) or populism as an appeal to the people (Canovan, 1999). Furthermore, it discusses the defining elements and the sub-concepts of the populist discourse, these are "the people", "the elite", "the general will" and "others". The chapter engages in a discussion of the expression of populist sentiment through music. It starts by inquiring about the relationship between music and meaning making. This would eventually lay the foundation for one of the main questions of this dissertation, the extent to which music can make and convey meaning. It then focuses on the role of music in mediating political message, and how its capacity to stir emotion is used in political campaigns and propaganda. It expands this section on talking about the difference between high-brow and low-brow music, and how the latter has always been associated with populism. The last part of chapter 1 concerns the importance of music as a language of resistance, and why protest songs have the potential to inform scholars about the social and political dynamics occurring in a certain point of time and space. It concludes with trends in studying protests music beyond the Western context, and how the latter should pay more attention to analyzing the lyrics rather than looking at music as an electrifying, emotionally stirring set of tunes and rhythms.

Chapter 2 explains the methodologies adopted in this dissertation, namely comparative research and discourse analysis. Comparative research is associated with "social scientific analyses involving observations in more than one social system, or in the same social system at more than one point in time" (Blumler et al., 1992, p. 8). The theoretical models of comparative research can be divided into three types: the ideographic model, the hypothesis mode, and the system-sensitive mode. The ideographic model considers countries as units of analysis The hypothesis model tests one of several hypotheses across countries. The system-sensitive model focuses on the context of each country to derive singularities rather than just listing cross-national similarities and differences. The chapter then moves to discussing the current challenge in comparative research, mainly ethnocentrism (Esser & Hanitzsch, 2012) and the postcolonial heritage of social sciences in the Global South. The second part of this chapter describes discourse analysis as the methodology used in this dissertation. Practically, it define discourse analysis following Rose (2001)'s method, which they call "Discourse Analysis I". This method derives from Foucault (1972)'s critical discourse analysis and Potter (1996)'s constructionist approach. The chapter proceeds in establishing the significance of the cases analyzed in this dissertation: Morocco and Egypt. To do so, it starts with tracing the chronological evolution of populism in these two countries and how it relates to the concept of populism as we know it in the Western context. It then defines the two popular musical bands that constitutes the main units of analysis within Egypt and Morocco, as well as their historical and geographical relevance to the context and focus of this dissertation. Finally, the chapter provides the details of data size and sampling strategy.

Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 provide a detailed analysis of respectively the Egyptian case and the Moroccan case, based on the work of the Duo Imam-Negm and Nass El-Ghiwane. In these

chapters, I analyzed the complete works of Ahmad Fouad Negm in Egyptian ‘amiyah and Nass El-Ghiwane in Moroccan Darija. The emerging themes are related to a sub-concept of populism, including the people, the elite, and others. Each theme is subsequently discussed as related to the social and historical context under which these poems were written and performed. The contextualizing of the poems draws from primary data such as personal accounts of the artists, and secondary data, including the political history of Egypt and Morocco in 1960s-1970s, police reports, testimonies, media sources (newspapers, TV interviews) pertaining to the same era.

Chapter 6 summarizes the findings in Chapter 4 and 5. It then compares the elements of populism from Egypt and Morocco from what we know about populism from the Western literature. In other words, how can we compare the elements of the populist expression in Morocco and Egypt to the existing definitions of populism? To which type of populism can we associate Nass El-Ghiwane and the Duo Imam-Negm’s populism? A conservative, exclusionary populism? Or a progressive, inclusionary view of *the people*? The chapter then proceeds with the discursive style of each band, and how it serves to provide a singular vantage of the people and their permanent struggle with the elite in each case. In the case of Imam-Negm, I have applied the theory of Bakhtinian carnivalesque to the satiric and burlesque communication that the duo uses to entertain a “discussion” with the elite. The style of Nass El-Ghiwane is far from being a burlesque one. The band show a high level of mysticism in their songs, which can be associated to “trance”, a concept that deals with the relationship between the soul, the body, the outward and the metaphysical.

Chapter 7 concludes with an overview of this work and a summary of its findings, limitations of this present work, and directions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I will review the literature relevant to populism and the use of music in communicating populist sentiments. I will start by providing a general overview of populism as a thin-centered ideology, a political style, an appeal to the people and as a language. I then move on to explaining the meaning of populist sentiment, and how it is expressed through resistance music. This chapter concludes with potential gaps in the literature regarding resistance music and populism, focusing on the work that has been done beyond the western context.

The Concept of populism: General overview

There are four key approaches to populism in the political communication scholarship: populism as a thin-centered ideology (Mudde, 2017), populism as a discourse (Laclau, 2005), populism as a political style (Moffitt, 2016) or simply as an appeal to the people (Canovan, 1999). In this review, I will focus on the understanding of this contested concept from a discursive, performative, and ideological perspective.

Mudde (2017) defines populism as a thin-centered ideology, expressed discursively by a highly charismatic and media savvy populist actor. Jagers and Walgrave (2007) see this discursive aspect of populism as a wholistic political communication style. This style tends to celebrate the ‘pure’ people against the ‘corrupt’ elite. Similarly, Cranmer (2011) views populism as political communication with a great emphasize on ‘the people’. Cranmer explains that a political actor frequently refers to the ‘people’ to show his ‘genuine’ concern about the people and their interests. Unlike other political actors, a populist leader self-proclaims as one of the people. The populist actor really knows who the people are and what they want because they are

simply ‘one’ of them. A perfect, yet extreme example of this assertion would be the iconic self-presentation of Hugo Chavez, the late Venezuelan President: “Yo no soy Yo, Yo soy un Pueblo” [I am not I, I am a people] (Chavez, 2012).

For Canovan (1999), populism is an appeal to people “against both established structure of power and the dominant ideas and values of the society” (p. 3). It conducts, in the name of the ‘people’, an “attack” against established structure of power in the society. Canovan finds that in a democratic context, the established institutions mainly involve traditional political parties.

Krämer (2014a) definition intersects with Canovan’s (1999) in many points, although he does not explicitly link populism to modern democratic society. Instead, he considers populism as a reaction to modernity and the “the structure of modern society”. He also refrains from calling populism a fully formed ideology for two reasons. First it has not yet “reached the same level of theoretical or even “scientification” as other ideologies, such as liberalism or socialism” (Hawkins, 2009). Second, it is not holistic, in that sense that it does not cover all the facets of social and political life. Krämer (2014a) argues that for populism to function like a “full-blown” ideology, it should be complemented by elements from other mature or “thick” ideologies. This probably explains why we find populist actors and movements at any point of the political spectrum, from the extreme left to the extreme right.

Despite its vagueness and contested meaning(s), populism is not an empty signifier. An ideal-type of populism engulfs the following sub-concepts (Krämer, 2014b; Mudde, 2017):

The people. or ‘the pure’, ‘sovereign people’, refers to the Majority, authentic in-group that the populist leaders claim to defend against the corrupt institutions. The authenticity of the people stems from “an idealized conception of the community” (Mudde, 2004, p. 274). Thus, the

attributes of the ideal community are determined by its majoritarian cultural and ideological background. For instance, "no American populist will describe the people as atheist and no West European populist will define the people as Muslim" (Mudde, 2017, p. 32). The people are thus defined according to the values and the attributes of the majority.

The elite. Mudde (2017) argues that the main distinction between 'the people' and 'the elite' is morality. From the populists' perspective, 'the people' are disadvantaged, but 'pure' and 'noble', whereas 'the elite' is 'corrupt' and 'immoral'. In the populist discourse, the word 'elite' is used to refer to a panoply of mainstream social and political institutions, namely politicians, the intelligentsia, the media elite and the economic elite.

The general will. This concept was first coined by the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). The general will, or volonté générale, refers to the "capacity of the people to join together into a community and legislate to enforce their common interest" (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, para. 17). This concept reflects the core of the populist idea of homogeneity of the people and their right to self-determination through democracy. However, some populists still critique that in modern democracies. They claim that the 'people' are treated as a passive entity "mobilized periodically by elections, in which they do nothing more than select their representatives"(Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, para. 17).

Others. This concept is only relevant to extreme-right wing populism[3]. "Others" refers to racial and religious minorities, immigrants and foreigners. The extreme-right wing populists view this category as a nuisance to the social and economic interests of the 'native people'.

[3] Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser (2013) explain that in left-wing populism, 'others' are rather a deprived social class that populists seek to defend and integrate into the large canvas of the 'ordinary folks'. Unlike the right-wing populism, left-wing populism sees the elite exploiting the interests of the 'people' and the 'others'.

‘Others’ are instrumentalized by the elite to implement their project of the Great Replacement (Camus, 2013). The Great Replacement is conspiracy theory postulating that ‘the elite’ are incrementally accepting a significant number of immigrants to change the demographic map of European countries. The elite, or **le pouvoir remplaciste** (in English: The replacing power), are capitalist and globalist leaders organizing a massive immigration to create the new man. According to the theory, this **new man** or **l’homme nouveau**, is stripped from all his national, ethnic and cultural specificities. The elite want to create **exchangeable** and **delocalizable** humans to better serve its global economy interests (Laurent et al., 2019).

Populism as a language

Despite its contended and vague nature, it is legitimate to say that most existing conceptualizations of populism recognize the same characteristics of its discursive frame (Aslanidis, 2015; Jagers & Walgrave, 2007; Gianpietro Mazzoleni, 2008; Moffitt, 2016; Waisbord, 2018). Populism scholars might not agree on what populism ‘is’, but they rarely disagree on who populists ‘are’ (Moffitt, 2016).

I find Waisbord’s (2018) definition to be one of the simplest, most straightforward to convey the idea of “discursive frame”, which also applies to the context of my proposal:

> Populism is fundamentally a language that champions ‘the people’, denounces elites, and transcends common ideological categories. Populism views “the people” as the central actor of politics and demonizes the elite in its different manifestations. (p. 222)

The populist ‘language’ is easy to recognize. It glorifies the virtues of the ‘people’ against the ‘inherently immoral’, ‘corrupt elite’. ‘The people’ are the only legitimate source of power, Whereas the ‘elite’ is hijacking the people’s right to power through their control of

political and economic institutions. These meanings can be inferred from the following quotes of ex-president Donald Trump from his political rallies. In these quotes, Trump accuses the elite of being behind social ills and the suffering of the people:

> Now these same elites, the people who brought us every disastrous foreign war, all of these horrible wars that they never win … these horrible trade deals (Trump, 2016a, as cited in Kruse, 2018).
>
> But the elites, who only want to raise more money for global corporations, ignore the concerns of the American voters (Trump, 2016b, as cited in Kruse, 2018).
>
> The media and the political elite don't know the pain and the suffering these people are living under (Trump, 2016c, as cited in Kruse, 2018).

Trump's accusations exemplify the populist belief in the involvement of the elite in a large-scale conspiracy against the people. Words like "global corporations" and "the media" indicate that the elite are controlling the world, which the people attempt to redeem through defeating the elite and their control in decision-making positions.

Rhetorical elements of the populist discourse

Assuming the simplicity and the mundanity of the populist 'language', what qualifies political discourse as 'populist'? What are the rhetorical elements of a populist discourse?

For Hawkins (2010), a typical populist discourse "assigns a moral dimension to everything". It divides the world into two antithetical entities: the 'good' ***people*** and the 'evil' elite. Alternative signifiers of the concept of 'people' in the populist discourse include '(the) mainstream', '(the) heartland', '(the) public', '(the) citizen(s)', '(the) voter(s)', '(the)

taxpayer(s)', '(the) resident(s)', '(the) consumer(s)' and '(the) population' (Jagers & Walgrave, 2007; Moffitt, 2016).

The elite could be either a group of individuals or institutions. They are inherently 'evil' and working adamantly to strip the sovereign 'people' from their power. They are to blame for all the social and economic ills of the society. In his essay on the paranoid style American politics, Hofstadter (2008) contends that populists view the enemy (i.e. the elite) as "a perfect model of malice, a kind of amoral superman: sinister, ubiquitous, powerful, cruel, sensual, luxury-loving".

The conflict of the people and the elite is perpetual and inevitable. No reconciliation or negotiations is ever possible. This conflict stems from social differences, such as socio-economic status, race, nationality, and ethnicity (Waisbord, 2018). For populists, an ideal end of this conflict is the overturn of the elite and the restoration and the people's full power and sovereignty on the heartland (Waisbord, 2018).

The populist linguistic style is frank and straightforward. It transgresses the conventions of "decorum, civility and diplomatic language." The true voice of people, or ***vox populis*** should be "blunt, crass, direct, harsh, emotional and colloquial" (Waisbord, 2018, p. 224). The language of the people does not recognize taboo. It claims revealing the unspoken and the truth as is.

The populist language is also known for its **apocalyptic tone.** It demands immediate action to stop ongoing **crisis**, provides flattened and overly simplified explanation for **complex problems,** and finally warns for an ineluctable, upcoming **threat** if these problems are not immediately and decisively addressed.

Common sense or the wisdom of the people is beyond facts and evidence. It is more valuable than the 'politically correct' statements of experts and bureaucrats (Moffitt, 2016).

The populist sentiment

Populist sentiment refers broadly to the antagonistic attitude of the authentic, mere people toward the powerful political and economic elite. It is also the expression of a worldview, proclaiming political power as the expression of the "will of people" and dividing society into two homogenous groups, deemed to eternal social and political conflict (Mudde, 2004)

Populist sentiment is a form of political discontent, but political discontent cannot always be qualified as "populist". Canovan (1999, pp. 4) argues that "Populism is not just a reaction against power structures but an appeal to a recognized authority". Thus, what distinguishes populist sentiment from mere frustration with the political status-quo is its appeal to replace elite institutions with the wisdom of the ordinary folks or the "will of the people". Canovan calls this view as ""redemptive politics" based on the democratic promise of a better world through the actions of the sovereign" (Spruyt et al., 2016, p. 336). It is the politics of hope.

The bulk of the studies on this topic focused mostly on assessing populist sentiment in western democracies through surveys and content analysis of political speech (e.g. Hawkins 2009, Jagers and Walgrave 2007, Pauwels 2011, Rooduijn and Pauwels 2011, Akerman and al., 2014). Surveys measure populist attitudes among the public through voting preferences and attitudes toward the elite. In their survey of populism in the United States, Oliver and Rahn (2016) used three indicators of populist attitude: a) Anti-elitism, or the feeling that a small percentage of economically and politically advantaged people control the policy-process b) mistrust of experts and c) national affiliation, or the strength of identification with being

American (Gatz and Darling, 2020). Studies on European populism features other indicators or "symptoms" of populism, such as "growing antipathy to immigrants and the EU, declining trust in politicians, and declining popular attachment to democracy as a political system." (Bartles, 2020, pp. 16). The declining attachment to democracy is not a rejection of it per-se, but as reaction of the people to the undemocratic practices of government institutions. For instance, Liddiard (2019, p. 2) mentions how the public is frustrated by the fact that many decisions skip the process of democratic deliberation, and instead handed directly from "legislatures to judiciaries or bureaucracies" […] creating a sense that "there is no alternative" for certain policies".

Outside the western democratic sphere, research has been focusing on expressions of populism from the supply side (i.e., political parties, political leaders, social movements etc.) rather than the demand side (i.e., the masses, ordinary individuals). According to Kaltwasser and Van Hauwaert (2019), current research provides "very little empirical knowledge about the populist masses, or populist citizens […]" namely their worldview and anti-elite attitude. Assessing such attitudes is an onerous endeavor. Hawkins et al. (2017) note that populist ideas are generally latent. They might be "widespread among individuals, but they coexist with other discourses and must be activated through a context of actual material conditions and linguistic cues" (pp. 276-277). In non-democratic contexts, the latency of political sentiments might also be due to governmental restrictions on freedom of speech (Janenova, 2019). The remaining of this literature review will focus on the expression of the populist sentiment through music, specifically, the role that music plays as a medium to communicate populism from the people's side.

Populist sentiment through music

The intersection of populism with art has invoked several questions on the use of aesthetics to express populist sentiments. These studies focus the **discursive-performative** aspect of populism. The discursive-performative approach understands populism "as something that is performed, [said], and "done", rather than just as a set of ideas or ways of organizing followers" (Moffitt, 2016, p. 64). It is also a "way of being, and acting in politics, embodying in discourse and praxis the culturally popular and "from here", in an antagonistic and mobilizational way against its opposite" (Ostiguy, 2020, p. 29).

The relationship between art and populism has also been discussed in terms of the use of artwork in advancing political and social ideologies. One of the main contributions in this area, is the work of Eyerman and Jamison (1998) on music and political/social mobilization. In their book *Music and social movements: Mobilizing Traditions in the Twentieth Century*, the authors explored the role of music in political and social mobilization in western countries, including populism and populist movements. In the United States, for instance, the authors find that music and "cultural expressions in general has been strongly colored by the democratic values and the "exceptional" political and cultural experiences that have served to define the country's national identity (Eyerman & Jamison, 1998). During the civil right movement, music played a critical role in defining the sentiment of the mere people, and their struggle for a "new" national identity based on equality and justice. In this sense, Martin Luther King Jr. summarizes the role of freedom songs in their strength to "They give the people new courage and a sense of unity. […] they keep alive a faith, a radiant hope, in the future, particularly in our most trying hours" (King, n.d., as mentioned in "Songs and the Civil Rights Movement ," n.d.)

Music and meaning making

Since Plato, the communicative function of Music has been a scholarly subject of debate. However, (Street, 2003) notes a consensus among social and political scientists about its social role. From Plato and Aristotle to Adorno and Bennett, scholars from different disciplines agree that Music does not only exist for amusement and diversion, nor does it exclusively indicate a cultural taste. Indeed, "these writers connect music's aesthetics to morality and political judgement, whilst also linking music to the formation and re-formation of social relations." (Street, 2003, p. 322).

This view is corroborated by historical evidence from ancient and modern times. Musical performances have always been an important element of collective events, including religious rituals, cultural ceremonies, and political agitation. The aggregate of these functions is what Cross and Woodruff (2009) call "the management of social relationships". This implies that, by denoting a wide array of human experiences, emotions and tastes, Music contributes, implicitly and explicitly, in defining and re-constructing human bonds and collective identities.

The debate on the role of music in meaning making can be summarized in two principal views. The first view considers music as auxiliary to a well-defined context or occasion, which means that it plays an elementary role in complementing the meaning of the context or the situation in which it is involved. The second view as an autonomous communicative system, which has simultaneously evolved with human language and gesture (Cross and Woodruff, 2009). However, both views agree that music has a significant impact on the human affective system. This view is best articulated in Street's (2003) words: "If anything, songs and sounds are more powerful weapons in this armory because of the way music works directly on emotions." (p. 114)".

For Blacking (1995), the value of a music is reflected by its capacity of articulating human experiences. Music, as a set of organized sounds, does not create meanings by itself. It mirrors the “history, sociology and psychology of the composer of the sound” (p. 32). For instance, Blacking (1995) claims that a highbrow symphony is generally meaningless, unless it is written for a specific occasion. The symphony, no matter how complex it is, is qualified as “art music” only if it conveys ideas that “add to the significance of the occasion” (p. 32).

Cross and Woodruff (2009) embraces this view, by qualifying music as inherently polysemous. He contends that music, “whatever else its powers” is unable to articulate “simple and complex propositions that may bear specific and unambiguous meanings” (p. 3). Thus, music is inseparable from the social contexts within which it is composed, performed and consumed. As Blacking (1995) noticed: “Not only can the 'same' patterns of sound have different meanings in different societies; they can also have different meanings within the same society because of different social contexts” (p. 237).

Green (1988) challenges this view, by testifying the supremacy of language over music in meaning making. He argues that unlike language, music does not have a specific meaning. It is rather an individual and/or collective experience. It is what the listener makes of it: “music can never be played or heard outside a situation, and every situation will affect the music's meaning" (Green, 1988, p. 143)

Another tradition sees music as an autonomous communicative system, or a “third medium” after language and gesture (Cross and Woodruff, 2009, p. 2) According to Wigram and Elefant (2014), “Music is a universal human form of communication that has the capacity to overcome linguistic, physical, mental and cognitive barriers to understanding with others” (p. 442). But such views limit the function of musical communication in expressing emotions. This

idea is mostly common among music theorists and philosopher in the west (Cross and Woodruff, 2009, p. 3), and has been eventually substantiated by empirical evidence (Juslin & Sloboda, 2010).

However, it is fair to say that that all these views converge to the following conclusion: Music is a ubiquitous medium of communication in different culture, nations, and societies. From an evolutionary perspective, it is also one of the oldest modes of expression known to humans (Brown et al., 1999, p. 3).

Music as political communication

Because of its capacity of invoking human emotions, music has been frequently used for political purpose. Songs have been widely used as political warfare throughout history. In Medieval Europe, troubadours contributed to the agitation and motivation of religious Europeans to liberate the holy land (i.e. Jerusalem) from the Saracens[4]. The language of troubadours' songs is described as crude, and invective, aiming at inciting the mundane, religious European to fight against the eastern enemy (Jeanroy, 1934; Méjean, 1971). The overreaching effect of these songs emanates from their captivating storytelling and the emotionality of their themes, usually touching areas of the Christian faith, chivalry, honor and spiritual ties with the holy land (Dijkstra, 1995).

In modern times, music has become an essential, if not an indispensable element of political campaigns. Street (2003, p. 114) explains the ubiquity of music in the contemporary political life by the increasing awareness of its explicit effect on emotions. They argue that music

[4] Medieval Europeans used this term as a pejorative synonymous to "Muslims". Sahid (1984, p. 125) mentions that a possible etymon of the word Saracen is Saariq, which means in Arabic: Thief or plunderer.

is used in contemporary politics as a form of propaganda, because “it serves to evoke particular images and associations, much in the same way that politicians’ photo-opportunities with pop or film or soaps stars are supposed to do”. The choice of the soundtrack also reflects this intention. It is never done arbitrarily, but purposefully to find the right sounds and words that would appeal to the public and provoke an emotional response to the political message. In this sense, Street (2003, p. 117) contends that “that music’s power can be harnessed to evoke and articulate officially endorsed sentiments and identities”.

For instance, Stalin was conscious of the potential of music in promoting ideology and maintaining social order. His idea consisted in encouraging the making of a populist, nationalist music that is “national in form, socialist in content” (Stalin, n.d., as mentioned in Slonimsky, 1950, p. 236). Stalin consolidated his view in what would eventually become socialist realism. This post-tsarist artistic doctrine “prescribed a generally optimistic picture of socialist reality and of the development of the Communist revolution.” (“Socialist realism,” 2021). The conceivers of socialist realism wanted an art that depicted an idealized, quotidian soviet life, bereft of the depth of the complexities of artistic interpretations (Morson, 1979). This is not to say that socialist realism was devoid of emotions. On the contrary, it was predominantly highly optimistic, promising the proletariat of a prosperous future. But this new portrayal of the soviet life meant for communist leaders a “rupture of romanticism of the old type [bourgeois, tsarist]” (Morson, 1979). Andrei Zhdanov, the cultural ideologist of the communist party, called for “revolutionary romanticism”. For soviet **soul engineers,** including Stalin, Zhdanov and the renowned Maxim Gorky, romanticism in artistic creation were allowed as far as it promotes values of heroism, realism, optimism and devotion for the motherland and the party. Morson (1979) summarizes the

key words of revolutionary romanticism "real life," "revolutionary," "future, "heroic," and "dream." Obviously, this left no place for pessimism, negativity, and tragedy in art.

Ivan Dzerzhinsky's opera, Tikhii Don (in English: And Quiet Flows the Don) epitomizes the revolutionary music engineered by Stalin and his comrades. Originally an adaptation of a social realism novel, Edmunds (2004, p. 14) describes Tikhii Don as “patriotic, uncomplicated, and featured melodies reminiscent of revolutionary songs”. Upon Stalin’s approval, Tikhii Don became the example of a song opera reflecting the soviet values of heroism and “hard-won victory” (Edmunds, 2004).

For a counterexample, I could not find better than Dimitri Shostakovitch, the renowned Soviet composer and pianist to demonstrate Stalin’s persecution of non-conformist, potentially anti-revolutionary romanticism music. In 1936, Shostakovitch performed his opera masterpiece the Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk. The piece was harshly criticized by Pravda, the then-mouthpiece of the communist party in the famous article entitled *Muddle Instead of Music: On the Opera Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*. The author describes the opera as “coarse, primitive and vulgar”. The music “quacks, hoots [and] growls”. Scenes of love are represented in “the most vulgar manner”, with the “merchant double bed occupying the central position of the scene.” After a long diatribe against the inclusion of jazz and its “nervous, convulsive, and spasmodic music”, the author wonders whether the success of this opera within bourgeois milieus abroad is due to their “perverted, neurotic taste” of music, or to its ignorance of the “soviet demand of a savagery and coarseness-free cultural like”? (“Muddle instead of Music,” 1936). Oddly enough, the polysemic nature of the piece induced multiple interpretations. Starting from the head of the state, Stalin saw himself impersonating “the domineering, hypocritical character of Boris [the tyrant father-in-law of Katerina or the lady Macbeth]”, while other critics believe he is the police

inspector, “who indiscriminately arrests people on account of their beliefs, to be a personal attack” (Ashley, 2004, para. 19).

The idea of national music continued to exist in post-Stalin USSR, paralleled with challenging movements. Another example of a threat to the so-called soviet culture is the phenomenon of the Stilyagi, which emerged in the 1960s. The Stilyagi (in Russian: стиляги, meaning stylish) an apolitical counterculture youth movement, was largely persecuted by the soviet regime. The Stilyagi’s crime was embracing the “corrupt” American lifestyle and consuming the “decadent” beats generation music (Lewis, 2015). In democratic regimes, the consumption of a certain genre of music is considered a legal practice of the freedom of expression. In non-democratic societies, any deviation from the mainstream culture is seen as a threat to the status quo. This view might explain the censorship of music within the totalitarian regime. Indeed, music could be a threat to conformity, due to its role in “the formation of individual, and collective, within-group identity” (Hargreaves et al., 2005)

All these examples show that Music survived under Stalin and his successors. Music became a potential cypher of political dissatisfaction and protest. Under the tight grip of communist censorship, Street (2003) states that Soviet musician “developed the ability of encoding political discussion of society within metaphorical lyrics that the audiences could then decode” (p. 124-125). This statement rises the following questions: if music can be encoded, how is it encoded? What makes its metaphors/symbols intelligible by the target audience? Willis (1990) calls this encoding process “symbolic creativity” or “the idea that every person is a semiotician, capable of considerable creativity in the usage of language, and bodies, in drama and in practice” (Harris, 2020a). This definition conceptualizes the idea of encoding meaning in

the musical message, but it does not describe the process of encoding from a communication perspective.

Music, elitism, and populism

How does musical taste indicate inclinations to populism or elitism? For Bourdieu, "nothing more clearly affirms one's 'class', nothing more infallibly classifies, than tastes in music" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 18). Bourdieu's idea of music and class is better translated in his homology framework of culture, further established in the recent work of Veenstra (2015)'s study on class boundaries and musical tastes. Bourdieu divides musical tastes between the "populace" and the "elite" into two homologous strata, upper-class. The upper-class elite tend to appreciate classical music, known for its difficult patterns and abstract meanings, as compared to an indifference, if not denigration of popular music. In his survey among French participants in the 1960s, Bourdieu finds that higher education comes with more appreciation of Bach's the Well-Tempered Clavier, and even more disgust toward "the most popular and the most 'vulgar singers, such as Les Campagnons de la Chanson, Mireille Mathieu, Adamo ou Sheila" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 60). In parallel, the lower-class are more inclined to consume simplistic music in genre, lyrics and structures, which Veenstra (2015, p. 137) describes as "repetitive, such as the popular waltzes of Strauss), typically imposed on them by experts and artists in the field of musical production". This description deprives the lower-class from their intellectual capacity of artistic appreciation, while allocating a significant power to musical producers in making the type of music that forcefully defines what the lower-class or the *populace* should consume. This leads us to the following conclusion, in McGuigan (1992) words: "the whole idea of 'popular culture' is intellectual, 'popular culture was not identified by the people but others' (Williams, 1983, p. 237)" (p. 10). McGuigan (1992) uses the term "others" to refer to intellectuals, precisely

the 18th century's German philosopher Gottfried Herder, who was the first scholar to distinguish between "learned culture" and "popular culture". The latter was defined by the philosopher and his followers at the peak of industrial capitalism in Britain and the French and American revolutions. The conceptualization of popular culture, according to McGuigan (1992) has not only an aesthetic but also a political dimension.

Bourdieu's framing of populist music and culture can be seen in the work of contemporary populism scholars like Pierre Ostiguy (2020)'s socio-cultural dimension of populism and Benjamin Moffitt (2015)'s performative definition. Ostiguy (2020) describes populist leaders' usage of popular culture and music in their political strategy-performances as "flaunting the low", a process popular culture, or the culturally low, is "intentionally (and one may add antagonistically) [celebrated] on the public scene. Similarly, the "self-controlled" high, in its adamant anti-populism, almost always expresses fear of the dérive, "the drift", or of *dérapage*" (p. 33). In this sense, Ostiguy (2020) considers the celebration of popular culture and music in Latin American performance of populism, including epic poetry in the speeches of Hugo Chavez[5] and Eva Peron, the Peronist march music, campaign ads of Cristina Kirchner, or even folk songs in the "American populist tradition", as a depiction of his idea of "flaunting the low" or, seen from an antagonistic dimension, a "joyful desecration of the high" (Ostiguy, 2020, p.33).

But the distinction between the high and low in populist culture is not merely the byproduct of political dynamics, argues McGuigan (1992), neither was it imposed by

[5] An example of that is the adoption of Chavez of the songs of Ali Primera, a Venezuelan populist singer from the Latin American movement of the Nueva Cancion. (Marsh, 2014) notes how Chavez frequent citation and singing of Primera's songs was a strategy to link himself and his government to the masses, and portray himself as a militant on behalf of the people of Venezuela.

"intellectuals" in the Bourdian sense. In this seminal work *cultural populism*, McGuigan (1992, p. 10) explains that popular culture is historically a "romantic reaction of Classicism, [an] attempt to break with excessively formalistic, dry and unemotional art". It is the attempt to restore the spontaneity and the candidness, and "naturalness" of the ordinary people in the artistic creation. The author describes this process as a return to "a myth of an organic past in contrast to a 'mechanical' present, or forward to a Utopian future of popular emancipation". (p. 10). The movement of the Narodniki in the late 19th century exemplifies this romantic idea of populism. Narodniki (from *Narod*, in English: the people), is an agrarian socialist movement that believed that community of peasants represented the "pure people", and that the rural world and its culture represented the Utopia, as opposed to the materialistic world of aristocracy. The Narodniki, who were themselves university students from aristocratic families, held a romantic view of agrarian socialism. They gave up their life in the city and settled among peasants to experience the life of ordinary Russians. In addition to their beneficent activities in the countryside, the Narodniki aimed at spread the socialist doctrine among the peasants, and prepare them for revolution (Fedotov, 1942). Although the revolutionary strategy of the Narodniki failed, they remain one of the few socialist movements that embraced a romantic view of the rural world, seeing the culture of the peasants and their candidness in the highest levels of purity and morality.

Also, McGuigan (1992) links this popular emancipation to the political idea of nationhood, which in its "a constitutive feature of modernity, the formation of national identity", while being an outcome of the process of industrialization and democratization in the West. For instance, the author notes how early interest in folk culture emerged in subordinate regions, or

what he chooses to call “peripheral nations” and “aspiring nations”, that is “Brittany rather than Paris, and in Wales and Ireland rather than England” (p. 10).

Popular music and resistance

Music does not always function in favor of the powerful. It can also be a refuge for suppressed voices. The renowned American folk archivist Alan Lomax (2003) considers music an important channel of “weaker peoples” from all nations to share their dream of unity and brotherhood (Lomax, 2003). Being an active member of the leftist coalition of the People front, Lomax believed that the promotion of the American folk music could “help [in defining] the people” (Street, 2014, p. 123) thus understanding their struggles and bringing social change.

Music might be a **safe** medium of resistance for the “weaker peoples” for several reasons. For (Pratt, 2013) music becomes an alternative to collective action and self-affirmation under the grip of social and political suppression. An intriguing example that Pratt (2013) mentions in the case of African slaves in North Africa and the Caribbean. Musical creativity was a tool of cultural resistance among African slaves, when they were punished for speaking their dialect and performing rituals of ceremonies of birth, death, and marriage. This example also illustrates how music creates private spaces of self-expression. Music consumption could be an act of retreat from the world, or even evasion to a better reality. While this act might be paradigmatic of escapism, it can also be regarded as resistance through the creation of space where opposition could be articulated (Pratt, 2013; Street, 2003)

Why (not) music?

In the last section, I demonstrated how music can communicate subversive ideas and build solidarity among common people, why does it sometime succeed to circumvent the tight grip of totalitarian censorship? What makes it so potent that it breaks the chains of restrictions that subversive political speech usually cannot?

Eissa (2007) and Weickhardt (2004) agree that dictator regimes are very cautious and pragmatic in dealing with the question of music. For the majority, popular music represented an integral part of their cultural heritage. It evokes a myriad of complex attitudes that summarize their quotidian human experiences. the strength of music emanates from its capacity of evoking "moods of tranquility, nostalgia […] group support, religious feelings, party solidarity and patriotism to name a few" (McAllester, 1960, p. 469)

One of these strategies was attempts to assimilate iconic musicians/arts, even their fierce opponents, to promote their political ideology. In post-1952 republican Egypt, the first mission of the army was purifying the artistic scene in the country from all monarchist artists, including the Diva Umm Kathum. Since the outset of her musical career, Umm Kathum was one of the favorite singers of the royal family, which gained her the "perfection medal", the most prestigious medal in royal Egypt. After the coup, Umm Kathum was blacklisted as a close ally to the toppled regime. The Diva was also placed under house arrest and forced to resign from her role as the head of the union of Egyptian musicians. Her songs were officially banned from the national radio, as all the "icons" of the elitist, overthrown regime. Later, Nasser reversed the government's position. The new president saw in *The lady* (or El-Sett, as Egyptians call her) an unprecedented opportunity to advance his political agenda thanks to her overreaching artistic fame in the locally and regionally in the Arab World. Nasser ordered her house arrest to be lifted

and artistic privileges to be restored. Saad (2019) contends that without the support of Abdel Nasser, the legend of Umm Kalthum would not exist.

Another explanation for the resiliency of dictators in permitting certain opposing opinions to be publicly expressed is their view of art as a safety valve institution. This term denotes institutions providing "channels for cathartic release", "that is diverting feelings of hostility into substitute objects" (Chermesh, 2005, p. 588; Coser, 1957, p. 204). Under dictatorship, art might operate as a safety valve institution, offering citizens a margin for expressing their frustration and dissatisfaction. I would call it a placebo, invigorating mundane, helpless individuals by giving the illusion that they can speak out subversion against the status-quo.

A safety valve institution serves primarily for dictators to control potential upraising by creating a space where people can innocuously criticize the system without attempting to change it. In pre-Arab Spring, honorific titles like "the artist of the people" and "the leader"[6] were very common among comedians, actors and singers known for their fierce critic of politicians and bureaucrats in their artwork. Ironically, these so-called dissidents found their way to palaces and courts thanks to their bravado in saying the unsaid. This paradox can be explained by what Cooke (2007, p. 72) calls "commissioned criticism" which they define as "an official and paradoxical project to create a democratic façade". In times of crisis, the government encourages public critics of its policies to demonstrate its commitment to democracy and freedom of speech.

[6] In Syria, the title of the "artist of the people" is of the late actor Rafiq Sbaie, who was known for his support for the regime of Bashar Al-Assad during the Syrian revolution. The "leader" is the title of the Egyptian comedian Adel Imam, also known for his close ties with the late president Husni Mubarak.

But this criticism should not exceed the threshold, which might eventually cause insurgency among the people.

Examples are countless in this regard, at least in the Arab world, but I will discuss the case of Duraid Lahham, the Syrian comedian who stood for years on stage to say what millions of Arabs didn't dare to say among themselves.

Duraid Lahham is best known for his role in the legendary play "Cheers to you, nation" (1979) (In Arabic, Kassak ya Watan). Duraid starring as Ghawar, is the son of a Syrian martyr in the 1948's Palestine war. Ghawar is an ordinary, working-class citizen dreaming for a better future for his songs and unique daughter, Ahlam (Meaning dream in Arabic). Ahlam dies at the hospital due to medical negligence. Unemployed, bereaved, and depressed, Ghawar decided to sell his remaining children and became alcoholic. The play closes with a conversation between drunk Ghawar and his dead father, calling him from the heavens. The father asked Ghawar about the Arab nation and Palestine. In his attempt to hide the "shameful" truth from his father, Ghawar utters what would become an iconic phrase in the play:

The father: what happened with the things that we died for?	الأب: شو صار بالأشيا يلي استشهدنا مشانا؟
Ghawar: Don't worry father, Thank God, your blood was not shed for nothing.	غوار: اتطمن يا بي، الحمد لله، دمكن ما راح هدر أبدااا.
The father: and the freedom?	الأب: والحرية؟
Ghawar: It kisses your hands.	غوار: بتبوس أيدك.
The father: So, there's no prison anymore?	الأب: يعني ما صفي سجون؟
Ghawar: Just for criminals, dad.	غوار: للمجرمين فقط يا بي.

The father: And what did you do with detention centers?	الأب: وشو عملتوا بالمعتقلات؟
Ghawar: We turned them into schools and hospitals.	غوار: المعتقلات كلا حولناها لمدارس ومستشفيات يا بيي
The father: Bravo! You did not tell me about justice?	الأب: برافو عليكن برافو... ما خبرتني عن العدالة!
Ghawar: Justice don't even ask about it, like how would I describe justice here? Father, you find these foreigners and tourists coming from the end of the world to see justice, order, and law. I swear to Allah dad, we became a show.	غوار: العدالة حدث ولا حرج، يعني شلون بدي شبهلك العدالة عنا؟ يا أبي بتلاقي هالأجانب والسواح بيجوا من آآآآخر الدني لعنا ليتفرجوا عالعدالة والنظام والقانون... الله وكيلك يا أبي صرنا فرجة.
	[...]
	الأب: خلاصتو يعني مو ناقصكن شي؟؟
The father: So, you don't need anything?	
Ghawar: **hmm absolutely nothing. I swear to Allah dad, we just need a little bit of dignity.**	**غوار: أمممم أبدا مو ناقصنا شي أبدا... الله وكيلك يا أبي مو ناقصنا إلا شوية كرامة بسسس.**

"Cheers to you, nation" is not the only political play in the artistic life of Duraid Lahham. Other notable plays include "the prairie of Tichrin" (1974), "Alienation" (1976) and "red poppy" (1987), all of them were performed in Syria and other Arab countries. Ironically, these plays did not only bring Duraid Lahham fame, but also the prestigious Order of Civil Merit of the Syrian

Arab Republic (excellence class) by the then-president Hafez-Al Assad in 1976 and his son and successor Bashar Al-Assad in 2007. Lahham remains a striking example of how "commissioned criticism" works in the Arab world, which gives the illusion that the people have a say in the political life while in reality it is not the case.

Resistance, music, and populism: What is missing?

In the west, research on resistance/protest music has been largely focusing on slave songs (i.e., U.S context) and political and social movements in the early and mid-20th century. The most common topics of protest music cover the history of abolitionists (Bush, 2006; Darden, 2014; Eaklor, 1988; Gac, 2007; McClendon, 2014; Radano, 2002), labor movement (Cohen, 2016; Denisoff, 1969; Glazer, 2001; Hobsbawm, 1998; Raulerson, 2013; Richmond, 1999; Weir, 1996; Wells, 2009) , and the civil rights movement (Dunkel, 2012; Feldstein, 2013; Rabaka, 2013, 2016; Reed, 2005; Sanger, 1995). Presently, a growing body of research is investigating the use of music in global activism, mainly issues related to LGBT+ rights (Dhaenens and Burgess, 2019; Greaves, 2018; Kelleher, 2017), feminism (Fast and Jennex, 2019; Goldman, 2019; Koskoff, 2014; Macarthur, 2010; Ross, 2016; Sperling, 2014), and political and social activism (Garofalo et al., 2020; Garratt, 2018; Pedelty, 2016; Rojas & Michie, 2013; Rubin, 2019). These examples of resistance movements stemmed from a diversity of social and political contexts, yet, as Pratt (2013) observes, "the discussion focuses primarily on music growing out of the historical African American experience as paradigmatic of the broader process of resistance through music". In addition, all these movements emanated from a western, democratic context. Their worldwide influence on other resistance movements cannot be denied. However, overestimating this influence might overshadow the authenticity or the singularity of protest music in other cultures.

This issue of authenticity could be seen in Street's (2003) comparison of Taliban's ban of music in Afghanistan to the Stalinist censorship of saxophone in the USSR. The author concludes that in both states, music was banned for fear of its potential to induce political rebellion. While this explanation might apply to the Soviet case, it overlooks the role of the puritanical ideology of Taliban toward arts and social entertainment. Besides being a military organization, Taliban is a religious movement embracing the Hanafi school (in Arabic: *madhhab*, also doctrine), one of the major four schools of Islamic jurisprudence in Sunni Islam. It is also the most radical doctrine in its forbiddance of listening to and playing all kinds of instrumental music including flute and tambourine (Ibn Al-Qayyim as mentioned in Al-Qahtani, 2010, p. 34). The reason is purely moral rather than political: instrumental Music "corrupts the heart and turns it away from the remembrance of God and the recitation of Quran" (Ibn-Baz, n.d.). But **instrumental music** is not a misnomer. Under Taliban, not all types of music were forbidden. Vocal, non-instrumental religious chants, or **Nasheed,** were commonly performed in the country (Bailey, 2009). The chants followed the rules of balance and rhymes found in traditional Afghan poetry. In terms of content, Johnson and Waheed (2011, p. 3) describe their chants as "engendered in emotions of sorrow, pride, desperation, hope and complaints to mobilize and convince the Afghan population of the Taliban's worldview". Street's (2003) comparison of Taliban and Stalin's attitude toward music censorship might be plausible at the surface, but it misses important details that renders the comparable incomparable. Taliban is indeed a dictatorship in every sense of the word. But its ban on music is reminiscent more of religious puritanism than repression of free speech, conveyed by music.

Beyond the western context

As demonstrated before, research on resistance and popular music predominantly covers the western context, besides an extensive literature on the role of music in the battle against the apartheid regime in South Africa (Friedman, 2013; Hamm, 1988; Livermon, 2020). Research covering popular music in the Global South has been focusing on issues of freedom of expression and censorship, especially from an ethnomusicologist and policy dimension. In the context of African studies, popular music refers "broadly to the largely mass-mediated, frequently youth-driven trends cultivated in cities, within particular contexts of labor, politics, leisure, ritual and consumer capitalism" (Eisenberg, 2017). The study of African music was largely influenced by trends in postcolonialism and post-colonial critique. Initiated as a major area of research in the late 80s (Barber, 1987; van der Geest & Asante-Darko, 1982), African popular music has been considered in western scholarship as an expression of grieving a distant past, and attempting to restore traditional art to "Decolonize the [indigenous] ear" (Lovesey, 2016, p. 1).

Censorship is also a common topic in the study of subversive popular music in the Global South. Significant research has been dedicated to examining official censorship of music and artists' strategies and processes of production in the absence of the freedom of expression (Drewett, 2016; Nooshin, 2005). However, the bulk of this scholarship focuses on explicating processes of underground musical production and consumption, supply-and-demand, as well as social taboos and themes addressed in censored music (Leone, 2012; Moody, 2021; Shaghaghi, 2010). For instance, Iran is one of the countries in the Middle East that received unprecedented attention by media and researchers on its government crackdown on individual freedoms, mainly the freedom of expression through music, as well as Iranian popular music in the diaspora.

Nevertheless, the focus on legal issues of production and consumption of music comes in detriment of unveiling a long history of social and political struggle encoded in its lyrics.

Notwithstanding the importance of this research, the meanings of the lyrics remain largely understudied. While the existing literature suggests popular music as a way to understand politics and social ills, it rarely indulges in analyzing the underlying discourse of this music (Barradas & Sakka, 2022). As Barber (1987) notes, popular arts, specifically music, "is also much more than constellation of social, political, and economic relationships—they are expressive acts. Their most important attribute is their power to communicate. This power is eloquently testified to by the frequency with which they are repressed." (p. 2).

Considering the potential power of popular music in conveying repressed sentiments, the main contribution of this dissertation is to look at music as a medium of communicating populist sentiments beyond the western context. Specifically, it focuses on North Africa. North Africa is a region that possesses three characteristics that shapes the identity of the Global South: A rich cultural heritage of popular music, a long-held struggle with colonialism, and its repercussions on the social, political, and economic lives. The importance of popular music in North Africa goes beyond its folkloric aspect. It is the voice of the "common people", denouncing injustice and oppression (Aadnani, 2006). The non-democratic context of North African countries, especially after the wave of independence in the 50s and early 60s, raises questions about the function of a music as a resistance tool and its communicative potential in the absence of freedom of expression. In this respect, this dissertation seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How is populist sentiment expressed through resistance music in non-democratic countries in North Africa?

2. How does the historical and political context shape populist expression in resistance music in non-democratic North African countries?

In this chapter, I provided a general overview of the concept of populism, and highlighted its main definitions in the literature, namely as a thin-centered ideology, a political style, an appeal to the people and a discourse. I also discussed the different facets of music as a medium of resistance and an expression of populist sentiments. In the next chapter, I will talk about the methodology delineating the work of this dissertation. Specifically, I will emphasize the importance of comparative research and discourse analysis in the context of my work, then establish the importance of the cases of Moroccan and Egypt in the study of populist sentiments through music under dictatorship.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I outline the methodology deployed in my dissertation. First, I will start by defining comparative research and its advantages and limitations. Then I will present discourse analysis as the main methodology I am using in analyzing my cases. Finally, I establish the relevance of the two cases subject of this dissertation, and their relevance to the overall context of populism in the Global South.

Defining comparative research

Comparative research is as old as *the Histories* of Herodotus (c. 440 BC), one of the first accounts of life, traditions, politics, and geography in Mediterranean and Eastern societies. It is also a natural aspect of human thought, rather than a specific method. Comparative analysis is merely a natural outcome of the act of observing, perceiving our immediate environment. Blumber (2012) offers an enthusiastic perspective on the trajectory of comparative research, stating that, "the comparative boat, which Michael Gurevitch and I pushed into the political communication seas in 1975, has by now transformed into something like a fleet of ocean liners!" (p. xx). These words paint a positive picture of a research approach, which has not ceased to evolve since its inauguration in the mid-70s. Throughout the years, comparative research has proven to be effective for hypothesis testing and useful to identify disparities and commonalities between different media systems, structures, and cultures.

In social sciences, comparative research consists in comparing "two or more nations with respect to some common activity" (Edelstein, 1989, p. 14). From a purely empirical perspective, comparative method(s) are used in social sciences to refer "to social scientific analyses involving

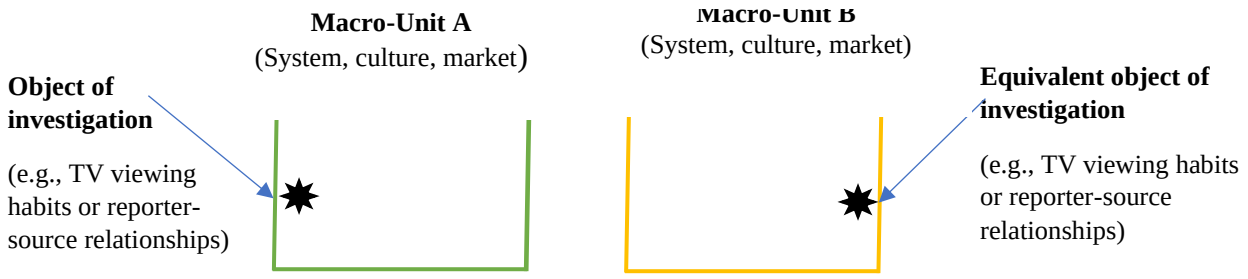
observations in more than one social system, or in the same social system at more than one point in time" (Blumler et al., 1992, p. 8).

Drawing on these classic understandings, Esser and Hanitzsch (2012) developed a comprehensive definition that ties closely with media and communication studies:

> Comparative communication research involves comparison between a minimum of two macro-level units (systems, cultures, markets, or their sub-elements) with respect to at least one object of investigation relevant to communication research. Comparative analysis differs from non-comparative work in that it attempts to reach conclusions beyond single systems or cultures and explain differences and similarities between objects of analysis against the backdrop of their contextual conditions. (p. 5)

Figure 1 illustrates the elements of a basic comparison. First, there is the object of investigation which represents the topic or phenomenon to be compared in two or more contexts. The context of comparison or the Macro-Unit could be a system, culture, market, or a nation.

Figure 1 *Terminology for basic comparison*



Note. Reprinted from *The Handbook of Comparative Communication Research* (p. 5), by F. Esser and T. Hanitzsch, 2012, New York: Routledge. Copyright 2012 by Taylor & Francis.

Advantages of comparative research

The literature suggests four major benefits of comparative research (Blumler, 2016; Esser & Hanitzsch, 2012; Hantrais, 2009; Warwick & Osherson, 1973).

Clarifying the Meaning of Concepts and Variables

In general, the strength of a social-scientific theory depends on the clarity of definitions and their cultural significance. For instance, a concept such as kinship, which is assumed to be as simple as a network of blood ties, turns out to take different structural and anthropological meanings when investigated beyond the family system in western culture (Sagdieva et al., 2019). Comparatively speaking, kinship is studied in terms of family relations, clan structure, marriage, and paternal/maternal roles in families and tribes across cultures.

Testing the Validity and Generalizability of Theory

According to Warwick and Osherson (1973), "there is no other way to determine the generality of findings than to test them in all relevant cultural settings" (p. 9). The authors state an early study on the relationship between socioeconomic status and voting decision. The study, initially focusing on the Great Britain and the United States, revealed an unsurprising finding: in both countries, the working class "has a low rate of electoral participation than the middle class" (p. 9). When tested in other western democracies, namely Austria and Germany, low-income districts had the highest voting turnout. While this example demonstrates the necessity of cross-cultural studies in theory generalization, "the most direct road to generality of theory is through studies in which cultural, personality and societal characteristics are systematically varied" (Warwick & Osherson, 1973, p. 9). In communication research, such studies have the strength to

"unearth contextual influences on communication organization and practices unavailable to single-country investigations" (Blumler, 2017, p. 682) .

Parsimony

The scientific law of parsimony postulates that "the simplest explanation of an event or an observation is the preferred explanation" (American Pyschology Association, n.d.). In practice, this simplicity consists in constructing a theory using the least number of concepts and propositions to convey a concise yet comprehensive explanation of relevant phenomena. Warwick and Osherson (1973) argue that parsimony is one of the intrinsic strengths of comparative analysis. Through its basic function of detecting similarities and overlaps between objects of investigation, it may "put pressure on the researcher to reduce proper names to more basic analytic factors, especially characteristics of total systems" (p. 9). The basic analytic factors, which can also be considered as the features of comparison, help in describing and explaining the characteristics of the unit subjected to comparison, rather than naming specific elements within this unit.

Challenging Existing Paradigms and Personal Assumptions

Cross-cultural research is probably one of the best antidotes to ethnocentrism and naïve universalism. Livingstone (2012) notes that in communication research, a lot of taken-for-granted cases and default assumptions went unquestioned in our field for a longtime. As Esser and Hanitzsch (2012) realize, a lot of interpretations and explanations are predominantly based on western conceptual thinking and normative assumptions (p. 502). Comparative research remains thus an effective corrective measure to widen the scope of analysis and warn against overgeneralizations (Esser & Hanitzsch, 2012; Tsetsura & Klyueva, 2012).

Challenges and gaps in comparative research

It is undeniable that comparative research is one of the best methodologies to inform us about the commonalities and idiosyncrasies of human experience. In political communication, comparative research has proven to be effective in foregrounding the media strategies of political actors in a global context. However, when explicating communication phenomenon, comparative research still suffers from the domination of theories and idea "imported from the West" (Waisbord & Mellado, 2014, p. 362). Esser and Hanitzsch (2012) argue that the Anglo-Saxon and Eurocentric hegemony in the field of communication and the evolution of the English language into the lingua-franca of scientific inquiry have been missing the richness of perspectives and communication paradigms in less scientifically privileged parts of the world.

This Western bias has been reinforced by the complex process of de-colonization. In what today constitutes members of the Non-Aligned Movement[7], the academic field of social sciences as well as media systems were founded on the works of the colonial intelligentsia. In Morocco, a country I am well versed in its pre- and post-colonial history, the institutionalization of sociology as an academic discipline is closely tied to the so-called "colonial scientific missions" (Zahi, 2014). It is no surprise that publications of French scientist missionaries such as *Les Archives Marocains* [Moroccan Archives] and *La revue du Monde Musulman* [The Muslim World Review] are still widely cited by contemporary scholars in social sciences. The same can be said about the development of a national mass media. For instance, the Moroccan post-colonial press was shaped by the professional standards of the French journalism, introduced in the late 19th century. Also, the country inherited the framework of the colonial mass media,

[7] Established in 1961, the Non-Aligned Movement or NAM is a congregation of 120 developing world states expressing no alignment or allegiance to power bloc, formerly the United States and the Soviet Union. For more information see (History of NAM, n.d.).

including radio channels, telegraph companies and a rudimentary TV broadcasting technology (Daghmi et al., 2012).

Unfortunately, simplistic readings of colonial history and the process of de-colonization has yielded several reductionist explanations of the communication phenomenon in the 'third world'. In references to early communication theories of globalization, Curran and Park (2000) explain that several scholars display little to no knowledge of media systems beyond the western sphere. One reason behind this western parochialism, explain the authors, is assuming that any media system is an expression of the "philosophical and the political rationales or theories which lie behind the different kinds of press we have today in the world" (Siebert, 1956, p. 2). Ironically, Curran and Park (2000) note these theories were originally crafted to understand phenomenon emanating from western philosophical and political rationales. Because these rationales and theories were mostly written by western scholars, "the world's communication system could be laid bare by studying their thoughts" (p. 4).

Yet western parochialism is not alone to blame. In de-colonized, authoritarian contexts, the boundaries of social science scholarship are traced by what Sal (2010) calls the "command science" (p. 45), or science in the service of the authorities. Per this logic, science becomes a tool to advance the agenda of the dominant power and cultivating evidence to corroborate its ideology. In such context, scholars lose the freedom to choose and formulate their own questions of investigation. Scholars are stripped from their scientific autonomy and authority, to become executive agents serving the vision of the state.

Comparative populist media strategy: what are we missing?

The answer is: quite a lot. In The previous section, I discussed how the marginalization and the exclusion of decolonized countries as a topic of interest in comparative communication studies is mainly due to western parochialism and the erroneous assumption that western theories can be used to explain complex communication phenomenon in non-western contexts. This section will discuss a topic of comparative research, specifically known for its Anglo-Saxon, Eurocentric tendencies, that is populism and media. Despite several attempts of including Latin American countries in comparative studies on this topic, this area is still missing a myriad of cases that would advance and invigorate its theoretical and conceptual framework, as well as reinforce the generalizability of existing theories on populism and the media.

Egypt exemplifies a non-western country that has been on the spot of social scientists, especially in the last decade. The military coup in 2013, led by general Abdel-Fattah El Sisi, raised many questions about the role of the media in restoring the control of the military and toppling the first democratically elected president since the fall of the Monarchy in 1952. One of the possible explanations of this so-called victory is the fervent media campaign and populist narratives that called openly for supporting the army against the government. These campaigns were launched by some Egyptian journalists "in defense of what [they] perceived to be their 'patriotic' role and identity" (El-Issawi, 2014b, p. 300)

Since the Arab Spring, several prestigious western think tanks, research centers and individual scholars have been actively producing reports dealing with media and populism in Egypt. These reports treat this topic from the perspective of western values of freedom of speech and press, issues of human rights, and misinformation (El-Issawi, 2014; Khan & Milbert, 2012; Margalit, 2019; Sayigh, 2019). These elements are either evaluated individually or in comparison

with the so-called Arab Spring countries, namely Tunisia, Libya and Syria (Elmeshad, 2015; Khamis, 2017).

Notwithstanding the importance of this research in revealing the communication strategies in autocratic populist regimes and the crackdown on the freedom of press, it ignores other forms and patterns of communicating censored opinions of the people, those who cannot speak their mind without undesirable consequences. So, what are these clandestine forms of communication? Could we talk about an underground network of populism? If so, how different it is from the common definition of populism in Western democracies?

Methodology: discourse analysis

The relationship of the people to the elite is often expressed in the literature in terms of class struggle and colliding worldviews. These meanings are not explicitly expressed, especially under dictatorship. That perhaps explains dissents' use of artistic creativity to escape the tight grip of dictatorship. Here, creativity implies a codified message, that should be carefully and thoroughly decrypted.

To decipher these codified messages, I opted for discourse analysis as my main working methodology. The Oxford English Dictionary (n.d.) defines discourse as a "written or spoken communication or debate" or technically a "a connected series of utterances; a text or conversation".

But the concept of discourse is not exclusively written or spoken. Nead (1988) contends that art, in all its manifestations, is another form of discourse, that is not necessarily written or spoken. She notes that "discourse of art in the nineteenth century [consisted of] the concatenation of visual images, the language and structures of criticism, cultural institutions, publics for art and

the values and knowledges made possible within and through high culture" (p. 4). The type of discourse I am analyzing in my research combines all these features. Although it comes in the format of written lyrics, it speaks of values of the artists, the cultural institutions, as well as the social and political circumstances underlying its production process.

The musical discourse

Is music a discourse? The existing literature does not provide a decisive answer to this question. McKerrell and Way (2017) contend that the literature on music as an expression of social thoughts is rather "plural and messy" as it draws from a panoply of "theoretical and ideological frameworks". This could be seen in the lack of consensus on a universal definition of music as a discourse. When speaking of music and discourse, Aleshinskaya (2014) observes the usage of different terms such as "musical discourse" (Tagg, 2003), "musicological discourse" (DeNora, 1995) "song discourse" (Murphey, 1992), "music discourse" (Moore, 2001) musical communication (Juslin, 2005) and "discourse about music" (Blacking, 1982). What these terms have in common is their lack of precision on the structure of music. In particular, the words "song" and "music" are often used interchangeably. It is not clear whether music consists of a combination of lyrics (i.e., sung language) and "vocal, instrumental, [and/] or mechanical sounds having rhythm, melody, or harmony" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-a) or just these organized sounds in their pure, wordless form? Research on what music can (or cannot) communicate tend to rely on the second definition rather than the first one. Some of the most common research questions concern the emotional message the performer intends to communicate to the listener and emotional responses to music (Davies, 2012; Gabrielsson, 2012; Hargreaves et al., 2005; Juslin et al., 2012; Juslin & Sloboda, 2010; Meyer, 1961; Stratton & Zalanowski, 1994). Studies of lyrics as a sung language investigate similar topics (Greitemeyer, 2009; Hallin, 2015; Mori &

Iwanaga, 2013; Sousou, 1991). In both cases, extramusical aspects of musical production such as "such as psychological, personal factors, social and historical environment, stylistic conventions, artistic aims" are rarely considered (Aleshinskaya, 2014; Juslin, 2005; Way & McKerrell, 2017).

In my dissertation, I am considering the musical discourse to be a combination of verbal (i.e., lyrics) and non-verbal (i.e., instrumental music) communicative components. I am intending to focus on analyzing the verbal component of the musical discourse, and its potential to communicate the populist worldview of the singers as members of their respective societies. Notwithstanding the importance of sound in musical discourse, I am excluding the non-verbal component in this research. Analyzing instrumental music is a complex endeavor that requires strong knowledge of the arrangement of rhythm, melody, and harmony in the musical sound. Besides being a "qualified listener"[8] (Davies, 2012), I unfortunately lack the necessary expertise to conduct a thorough analysis of sound and music. But convenience is not the only reason for excluding sound from my data. In fact, the communicative potential of musical sound is still an unresolved among scholars. Despite the existence of empirical evidence on the expressive power of music, most of these findings rely on the listener response to the musical stimuli (Juslin, 2005; Way and McKerrell, 2017). Indeed, it is the listener who assigns meaning to music, regardless of the composers' initial intention. Given the purpose of my research, which is primarily understanding the worldview of politically suppressed artists, it is plausible to prioritize their verbal expressions over other forms of communication, as it remains "the most common [and certain] way of producing and transmitting meaning" in society (Ruiz, 2009, p. 2).

[8] According to Davies (2012), a qualified listener can be any person who is familiar with certain music genres. "The majority of qualified listeners have no formal music education and are not familiar with the musicologist's technical vocabulary" (p. 11)

Discourse analysis in practice

Unlike common methods of content analysis, discourse analysis is rarely described in procedural steps. But this also makes it a flexible method, offering more freedom to researchers in their interaction with the data. The method I used is based on Rose's (2001) process of artistic artifacts, or what she calls "discourse analysis I". Her method draws from the *Foucauldian framework of discourse analysis* (Foucault, 1972), as well as Potter's (1996) *constructionist approach*.

Rose (2001) argues that discourse analysis is primarily focused on two aspects of discursive production: 1) Rhetorical organization and 2) Social circumstances of the discursive production. These two aspects apply both to verbal and visual expressions.

Rhetorical organization of the discourse.

Rhetorical organization of the discourse refers to the structure of the discursive statement, and the meanings it attempts to convey. For instance, how does a given discourse describe the concept of "people" and "populist sentiment"? How does it represent the struggle between the elite and the authentic people in society? Potter (1996) suggests other useful questions to this context, namely, "how it constructs blame, responsibility, in how it constructs stake and accountability, in how it categorizes and particularizes".

Other important features of discursive structure are its embedded *contradictions, tensions* and *complexities*. Rose (2001, p. 155) argues that discourse follows a pattern that is not necessarily logical or coherent. She adds that the intrinsic power of discourse may reside in the equivocality and the tensions among and between the arguments and the symbols it uses and produces.

Social circumstances of the discursive production.

The social circumstances of the discursive production. refer to the discourse' authorship, milieu, and circumstances of production. In the classic Foucauldian discussion of discourse and power, the discourse of powerful institutions (in our case, cultural policy and official art) is more productive than any other social entity, especially marginal sources (Foucault, 1972). This comes from the productivity of power. According to Foucault (1972), power produces reality, domains of truth, knowledge and meaning. On the other hand, power has also a negative meaning, which is one of repression and elimination, because it has the ability to suppress the marginal and the weak. Examining sources produced in marginality and clandestinely, escaping the tight grip of censorship and cultural hegemony, is an opportunity to verify this claim. Can censorship, state monopoly of art and suppression of individual freedoms induce creativity and productivity?

Another important aspect of discursive production is the assumed audience of the written, spoken or visual discourse. Rose (2001) argues that the same event or idea might be explained differently, depending on its intended audience. Decisions on the forms and genres of the discourse, as well as the technology underlying its production, are all adapted to social, cultural and economic background of the assumed audience. All these elements are important understanding the destination of the discourse and the ultimate target of its authors, is it persuasion, mobilization, resistance, or something else?

The cases: Egypt and Morocco

In this dissertation, I am conduction a comparative study of the meanings and understandings of populism in Egypt and Morocco. The study will focus on resistance music in periods of turmoil, public disenchantment, and severe crackdown on human rights. But in order

to understand the meaning the populist appeal of resistance music, it is indispensable to first understand how populism historically evolved in these countries. As a thin-centered ideology (Mudde, 2004), populism tends to take the shape and the form of its containing culture. As the history of Egypt and Morocco shown, the concepts of the "people" and the "elite" evolved following the historical dynamics of their respective countries, making them unique in their own ways.

Egypt and Morocco: Countries context

Egypt. Egypt is often considered as the heart of the Arab world, which includes North Africa and the Middle East. The importance of Egypt stems from it being the first country in the region to embrace modernity and pan-Arabism. Researchers consider that the Arab world's first encounter Western modernity to start with Napoleon's conquest of Egypt in 1798. The conquest, described by the French as an "expedition", was the Napoleon's first attempt to introduce the values of the French revolution into the East. Until the time of his conquest, the world that Napoleon targeted was closed to Westerners and their civilization. As Bernard Lewis notes, "This was the first movement of ideas in Europe to break through the barrier that had separated the world of the unbelievers from the world of Islam and to exercise a profound influence on Muslim thought and action" (Lewis, n.d., as mentioned in Ze'evi, 2004, p. 78). The mission to modernize Egypt was later undertaken by Mohammad Ali Pasha, the Vicegerent who declared himself an autonomous sovereign of Egypt from the Ottoman sublime port in Istanbul. Often referred to as "the father of modern Egypt", Mohammad Ali Pasha introduced European educational institutions in the country, and encouraged the formation of a French educated elite that took over the army, bureaucracy, and the intellectual life. Although not Arab himself, research indicate that the idea of Arab nationalism originates from the time of Mohammad Ali,

who envisioned a strong Arab empire that would limit the ambition of the Ottomans in the region (Aziz, 2009).

But it was not until the end of his legacy in the mid-20th century that this idea would be crystallized. After the 1952 coup, the dream of an Arab unity became the new ideology of the newly founded Egyptian republic. Egyptian late President Gamal Abdel Nasser is the first Arab leader to embrace the ideology to pan-Arabism and propagate it in Egypt and the Arab world. Pan-Arabism refers to the political movement that promoted unity and solidarity between Arabs in the Maghreb (North Africa) and the Mashreq (Middle East) in the decolonization era. Pan-Arabism emanates from the idea that the populations of North Africa and the Middle East share linguistic, religious, and ethnic characteristics that consolidate them into one broad Arab nation. Egypt takes its importance from being the intellectual and political center of the Pan-Arabist ideology, which despite its decline after the 1967 defeat against Israel, managed to survive as a political movement among a significant portion of the Arab-speaking population.

Morocco. The Moroccan political identity sets the country apart from other states in the region. Its monarchy was independent from the Islamic caliphate in the East since the inception of its first autonomous state (i.e., the Idrisid dynasty) in the 8th century. The dynasties that ruled Morocco emanated from local tribes, making it one of few states in the Islamic world that were led by native sovereigns.

Its strategic geographic location and demographic composition also make it a unique case in North Africa and the Muslim world. Morocco has always been standing against the European intervention in the African continent and the Muslim world. In the era of the As Miller & Rassam (1983) notice, its reigning dynasties “has acted in the past on the grand scale, treating European heads of state on equal terms” (p. 25). This situation would continue until the late 19

century, when Europe started taking control of North Africa, which was initiated by the conquest of Algiers by the French in 1830.

Morocco is often described as a mosaic of tribes or "the backbone of the Moroccan nation" (Hart, 1999). Tribalism shaped not only the cultural and ethnic diversity of the country, but also the state of political stability and allyship to the head of the states. The role of the Sultan was limited in ensuring the political and territorial unity of the state. In times of rebellion, the tribes tend to detach themselves from the central power and resort to customary law to establish their legal autonomy. The state of anarchy divided the country into two separate worlds: *Blad El-Makhzan*, or the state of the central authority, and *Blad El-Siba*, the land of dissidence. The tribal nature of Morocco makes it an ideal subject to investigate questions of nativism and populism in North Africa. Nativism can be seen in the continuous attempts of tribes to pursue autonomy based on ethnicity and language, while populism can be sensed in the rebellion against the sovereign and their allies from the urban elite.

Colonialism played a pivotal role in consolidating a national identity in Morocco, which shifted the reality of the country from a tribal mosaic into a nation-state. Under the protectorate treaty, French general residents came with a mission to "pacify" *Blad El-Siba* or the land of dissidence. Their efforts focused on suppressing the rural revolutions against the central authorities and reinforcing the presence of the *Makhzan* (i.e., the government) in rural Morocco. A part of the pacification mission also included dividing the population into two separate ethnic and linguistic groups: Arabs and Berbers. The colonial intervention in the redefinition of Moroccans paved the way to what Wyrtzen (2015) calls a renegotiation of the collective identity that transformed the country from the urban/rural dichotomy into multidimensional national identity bearing ethnic, religious, and linguistic considerations.

The people vs. elite

In the traditional Arab-Islamic literature, the distinction between the mere people and the elite is based on morality and knowledge rather than class. The discussion of the people focuses on the moral dimension, but unlike traditional populism, it says how the people are morally "inferior" than the intellectual elite. The people are referred to as Al-'aamah or Al- Jomhour (i.e., the general public) as opposed to Al-Khassah which can be translated into elite, dignitaries or notables. Al-'amah comes as a mass of ignorant, irrational and worthless individuals. Abu Hayyan Al-Tawhidi (923–1023), a prominent 10th century Arab philosopher explicitly warn from befriending the 'aamah, for they are "barbaric, riffraf, thieves, low-life and despicable […] and should not be among the notable ones" (Al-Tawhidi, 1998, p. 33). A similar view is reiterated by the polymath scholar Abu Haamid Al-Ghazali (1058-1111), who considers the 'aamah unworthy of knowledge. In his renown thesis "Restraining the 'Awaam from Ilm Al-Kalam [theological dialectic]", Al-Ghazali explicates how the 'aamah should be "bridled" and deterred from philosophical thinking, merely because they are intellectually inapt to digest its complexities. For Al-Ghazali, Philosophy and theological dialectic are "roses" and "gems", and "roses should not be placed among donkeys, just like gems shouldn't be put in the mouth of pigs" (Al-Ghazali, n.d., as mentioned in Al-Mahmoud, 1995, p. 639). In addition to their intellectual inaptitude and ignorance, Al-Jahidh (776-868) describes the 'aamah as irrational, volatile, and insurgent. He then urges the "elite" to discipline and deal with the 'aamah carefully, because their uprising against the dignitaries means chaos and annihilation (Al-Jahidh, 1991).

Populism in Morocco

In Morocco, colonialism was the main catalyst of a collective national sentiment, which was previously eclipsed by tribalism. As Lyautey (1927) notices, these divisions would instantly disappear in the face of the European colonizer:

> This country, like the most perilous seas for navigation, is full of cyclones. We have just passed one, but we may suffer another tomorrow, because the root causes still exist: Religious fanaticism, attachment to the oldest Islam, the fierce cult of independence, the habit of anarchy, xenophobia. […]. Some were surprised, knowing the deep divisions that separate the various tribes and have always prevented their cohesion. But these are the local divisions which can momentarily disappear in the face of the foreigner. It can then form one of those tidal waves that carry everything away [destroy everything]. (Lyautey, 1927, p. 101)

In these words, Hubert Lyautey, the first resident general of the French protectorate, warns his compatriots from the indigenous of a country they are in the very outset on its colonization. Lyautey (1927) invokes two important aspects of the colonial Moroccan society: A tribal country, divided by diverse, sometimes conflicting loyalties to kinship and tradition. But Islam or "religious fanaticism" as described by the author, can transform this mosaic of tribes into a united mass when the enemy is the "other" French, or any Nasrani (i.e., European Christian) stepping in their land.

Lyauety, along with other early 20th century European travelers and ambassadors sketch a similar picture of the Moroccan society. They all agreed that "the Moghreb [Morocco] is the most inaccessible country in the world, the most dangerous, the most fiercely xenophobic. For

them, [Moroccans are] not a nation, but a human dust, a nebula [complex web], a puzzle of independent and belligerent tribes." (de Sogonzac, 1934, p. 321). This chaotic image is usually accompanied with a description of unstable relationships between the tribes and the central power, which may at times transform in anarchy and hostilities toward the Sultan. We find, for instance, early European observers qualifying this relationship between the tribes and the sultan as a "tug of war between the forces of regionalism and the central power" (Burke, 1976, p. 2). On the other hand, the urban elite, including the Ulama, merchants and the makhzen servants, was more favorable of stability and unity to better serve their economic interests and social class. In this sense, colonial European scholars divided Morocco in two conflictual worlds of authority: *blad el-makhzen*, or the lands under the authorities' control, *blad es-siba*, the lands of chaos and unrest, divided among tribes and their chiefs.

But recent readings of this era tend to disagree with the thesis of "Morocco as a mosaic of anarchic tribes". For Miller & Rassam (1983), this view of Morocco has been widely discarded by post-colonial scholars. They find that the tribes "even those in dissent, carried on relations with the Sultan and his court, regardless of the prevailing political environment" (p. 25). For instance, Ghallab (1987) argues that this colonial view of Morocco as a divided, stateless land was intentionally propagated by colonial scholars to justify their penetration in the country. Their idea was that colonialism or the protectorate in the case of Morocco only power that can transform Morocco into a demographically and politically united, stable, and modern nation-state.

At this point, it is legitimate to ask: If Moroccans were a nation before European intervention, how did they conceive the notion of the motherland or homeland (in Arabic, Watan وطن). Ghallab (1987) explains that before the protectorate, the Moroccan individual had never

seen their "homeland" from a geographical or demographical perspective. Their definition of the homeland had always been shaped by their religious doctrine. The homeland is an abstract concept that takes its legitimacy and existence from Islam. In this sense, the pre-colonial Moroccan divided the world into the land of Islam (i.e., *Dar Al-Islam*) and the land of blasphemy (i.e., *Dar Al-Kufr*). This can be clearly observed throughout the history of European conquests of Morocco. For instance, Ghallab (1987) notes that this conception of the homeland explains the frequent immigrations of Moroccans during the 15th century's Portuguese and Spanish campaigns on their shores. These immigrations were not necessarily motivated by oppression, but rather a belief that this land is not a Dar Al-Islam anymore if it is ruled by an infidel (Kafir), especially if they cannot restore it by Jihad. (p. 550)

The first manifestation of populism in Morocco emerged from the difficult encounter with European modernity and its enforcement on the Moroccan society. Benchenane (2007) explains how this difficult encounter unveiled "the cultural despotism" of Western men, who see themselves as an ideal personification of modernity. For them, a Moroccan cannot become modern unless they are ready to forget their "past" and embrace the European culture in all its aspects. But one obstacle severely impeded the so-called "pacific" penetration of Europe to civilize Morocco and save its barbaric nation. The incompatibility of Islam with modernity, makes this civilizing mission nearly impossible, according to Sir Edmund Hay, a United Kingdom envoy to the Moroccan court "a European transplant in the old Muslim body is of no benefit" (Hay, 1844, as mention in Laroui, 1977, p. 257). As for the Spanish publicist and politician Gabriel Maura, he suggests a simpler formula to facilitate a pacific penetration of Morocco: It is necessary to de-Islamize it first! (Laroui, 1977)

The cultural shock that the Moroccan intelligentsia experienced because of the modernity brought by the European colonizers, induced different reactions, while being conscious of the cultural decadence of the kingdom and its need for a radical reform. The cultural shock was accompanied by a consciousness of the drastic change in the power balance, which was then in favor of imperialist Europe. Reactions to the European "threat" of modernity and colonialism divided the Moroccan intelligentsia in three groups: Conservative, Reformer, and self-deniers (Bouaziz, 2022). The conservatives took an extreme position toward everything "European". Highly aware of the lurking danger of the "Christian enemy", they urged for an isolationist foreign policy, and a complete cultural, and economic political and boycott of Europeans. The attitude of the conservatives was too extreme to the point of considering their "protected" compatriots as blasphemous and infidels (Miller & Rassam, 1983, p. 31). The Reformers were not in favor of isolationism. They were in favor of an "Islamic version" of modernity, embracing science and technology, while preserving Islam as a lifestyle and a principal source of legislation. The last group, which consisted primarily of the "protected" agents of Europeans, embraced modernity in all its aspects while rejecting the traditional values, being a significant obstacle in their quest of social prosperity and self-interests. *Al-Mahmiyoun/protegés* or the protected were granted consular "protection" from respective European authorities in Morocco. Protection involved tax and military exemption, and legal impunity for Moroccan nationals who served or worked with European traders and diplomats, such as brokers, interpreters, and agrarian associates (Kenbib, 1992). Out of all the elite groups, the protégés were the most despised. In addition to their abuse of the protection privilege, their collaboration with Europeans was viewed as a sheer act of treason of a country that was on the verge of collapse (Kenbib, 1992). Their morality was also questioned for engaging in a westernized lifestyle. Their

westernized lifestyle is another aspect that set them apart from the rest of Moroccans, some aspects include “befriending” Europeans and sending their children to secular schools.

After independence, and the piecemeal withdrawal of French colonialists, new boundaries between the “people” and the “elite” are set. Three distinct social classes would emerge, following the classic Marxist division of classes: the urban proletariat, the farmers, and the bourgeoisie, consisting of political leaders and businessmen (Marais, 1969). Previously unified by the fight against the colonial power, these classes maintained conflictual relations in the post-independence era.

Political and mercantilist bourgeoisie, including the class of the protégé, was accused of joining the nationalist movement to serve their own interest. Some even go further in calling the independence Moroccan bourgeoisie “heirs and accomplices of the colonial power to which they succeeded” (Marais, 1969, p. 1172). For El Kohen Lamrhili (1978), this class filled the economic void left by the French settlers, and fought to preserve their long-held privilege through involvement in politics:

> The national bourgeoisie was eager to take the reins of power, not to extend the benefits of the technological and scientific revolution to the rural masses, but to monopolize the privileges enjoyed by the French and Europeans in Morocco. Already since the First World War, the bourgeoisie considered itself the legitimate national force to extract the maximum benefit from the country's boom. It was against the stranglehold of French circles on key positions in the country's economy that this bourgeoisie had embarked on the adventure of the national movement. (p. 34)

On the cultural level, the Moroccan bourgeoisie that was part of the national movement called for new educational reforms in the name of establishing an autonomous Moroccan identity. However, these reforms were not in favor of the lower classes. Among these policies is the Arabization of education, that is imposing Arab language as the official language in public schools and administrations. The critic of this policy sees in it another attempt by the bourgeoisie to broaden economic and educational inequalities. They argue that the officialization of the Arab language did not mean the prevalence of the latter. Paradoxically, the French language continued to be a sign of a refined intellectual education. Cantat (2018) notes that fluency in one or more [foreign] languages in Morocco continues to be a sign of educational privilege and a social boundary between the urban elite, having access to a high-quality education, and a rural mass remaining disadvantaged and illiterate. On the other hand, some argue that the Arabization policy was not nationalist in its essence, but rather a deliberate attempt to control the masses. El Kohen Lamrhili (1978) explains how the very elite who made this policy does not necessarily believe in its effectiveness. Looking at their private life, the author mentions how the bourgeoisie behind the educational reforms did not believe in Arabization: "As for them [the bourgeoisie], they did not believe in the dynamics of such a claim [Arabization], they very early sent their sons to colleges of notables, then to French universities and adopted the Western style." (p. 38). For the author, this policy was merely an attempt from the Moroccan bourgeoisie to control the mass and further broaden the economic and class disparities between the upper class and the mass in Morocco.

Populism in Egypt

As compared to Morocco, the precursor to populism in Egypt goes back to the 19th century, even before the formal British protectorate in 1914. In 1881, the country would know the 'Urabi revolution (name after the general Ahmad 'Urabi), the first revolution in the near history of the country that explicitly called for an "Egypt for the Egyptians". Several factors triggered the anti-foreign sentiment among native Egyptian, including the aristocratic Turco-Circassian monopoly in the Egyptian military, the Anglo-French political and financial interference, and the dictatorship of the Khedive Tawfiq, the-then ruler of Egypt. The Urabi revolution marked the beginning of Egyptian nationalism and unearthed the conflict between the indigenous populations and European powers, and the "foreigner" ruling class, epitomized in the Balkan dynasty of Mohammad Ali Pasha and his descendants.

Motivated the Paris Peace Conference and U.S. President Woodrow Wilson's "fourteen points" on nation's right in self-determination, the 1919 revolutionary were determined to end the British colonialism and foreign exploitation of their country, under the slogan: *Al istiqlal al-tam* (i.e., the complete independence). The uprisings were essentially provoked by the World War I economic sanctions that affected most Egyptians across the social class spectrum. The peasants were the class the most hit by the economic burden of the World War I, with the British's requisitioning of their livestock and wheat, as well as their forced integration in the British army. The urban class middle class was also at disadvantage, and grow even more resentful of the British, due to the massive employment of British nationals in government positions, in detriment of the local civil servants. The economic elite, on the other hand, protested the British forced decrease of raw Egyptian cotton price, "allowing then to reach only 56% of the world market price" (Fahmy, 2011, p. 135). All these circumstances created a unique

moment of national unity in the history of Egypt, where interclass social and economic disparities disappeared in the face of the British colonizer. National unity also meant that a solid national identity should supersede any other consideration of religious or sectarian membership. "The symbolism of 1919, the cross and crescent, and the idea that the two communities formed a single social and [one] national tissue (*nasig wahid*)" were the founding elements of the 20th century Egyptian nationalism, which would later be adopted 1952's free officer revolution (Elsässer, 2014, p. 107).

However, the 1952 revolution would shift the rhetoric of nationalism and national unity to a wider call for Arab unity, beyond the borders of Egypt. For the first time since the 1919 revolution, the conflict became internal: it is no longer between the British and Egyptians, but rather Egyptians and the feudalist elite. The dethronement of King Faruq, the ending of constitutional monarchy and the nationalization of landed gentry properties, all indicate the gradual effacement of deeply entrenched aristocratic class, accused of treason and servitude to foreign powers. Gamal Abdel Nasser (1955), one of the instigators of the coup, and later the second[9] president of the Egyptian republic, insists on the popular and national character of the revolution, and its intention to "reclaim its birthright, and restore the lost national prestige":

> Revolution was the only way out. And it came in 1952, led by the army and backed by the nation. In the pre-revolutionary period the army was an instrument in the hand of despotic rulers who used it against the nationalist movements. Now it understood its position and joined the ranks of the people to head the movement for national liberation […] It was purely national with no international intervention. Conscious of the trend of

[9] The general Mohammad Naguib was the first President of the Egyptian republic (1953-1954)

> events to follow, it realized its objectives within a shorter time than expected. The nation had sworn allegiance to Mohammed Ali in the attempt to overthrow the rule of the Mamelukes, but Mohammed Ali and his descendants unfortunately forfeited this loyalty, embarking on despotic enterprises and usurping the rights of the people. Thus, it was an unconditional imperative that the revolution should overthrow the ruling dynasty, reclaim its birthright and restore the lost national prestige. So, it deposed the Monarch, abolished monarchy, and established the Egyptian Republic. (p. 203)

This Nasserist perspective crystalized in what is today called “Nasserism”, a populist ideology that defined the local political dynamics and foreign policy for more than a decade. Besides being a simple reference to Nasser’s political legacy, Nasserim is generally viewed as an ideological movement, although not as comprehensively defined as other ideologies such as socialism or communism. It is rather a thin-centered ideology (Mudde, 2004) drawing from a complex amalgam comprising the prevalent ideologies of its time such as anti-imperialism, pan-Arabism, Arab socialism, and international non-alignment. The populist dimension of Nasserism can be seen in its two foundational assumptions, as interpreted by Range (1959, p. 1005): “(1) an intellectual and spiritual paralysis that has long stagnated the Arabs; and (2) a plague of foreign and domestic "devils" whose moral evil - greed - impels them”. Nasserism follows the same strategy of Western populism in blaming and vilifying a powerful coalition of foreign and domestic elite, or the “devils”. In his speeches, the “devils” usually refers to European imperialists, the U.S., the Zionists, and the Soviet Union (despite his diplomatic relationship with it), and monarchies in the Arab world. In Nasser’s views, these countries and regimes are historically behind the political and intellectual stagnation of the of the “real”, “pure people”, that is the Arabs and Arab nation, from the Atlantic to the Gulf. Nasserism blames the

"stagnation" of the Arab people to a long history of European exploitation and interference, from Napoleon's military campaign on Middle East to the sweeping colonization that followed it afterward.

Discussing the details of the Nasserist ideology is outside this scope of this dissertation, but it is important to note the pivotal role it played in shaping the notion of populism and the definition of the "Arab people" in the Middle East. Before Nasser, Egyptians were struggling for self-determination, which can also be read as self-definition of their Egypt-ness, which was revealed by the western interference in the country and the monopolization of power by non-native dynasties. It was thus Egyptians, as one homogeneous mass of natives, versus "others" a group of Europeans, Turkish and Circassians elite from the military, bureaucracy, and land gentry. After this long journey with self-definition, Egyptians found themselves with Nasserism, an ideology that created a populism schism within this "homogenous mass of natives: It is now the "pure people" versus the "corrupt elite", "the devils" who conspire with the West to preserve their economic and political privileges. The 1967's defeat of *Naksah* against Isreal (i.e., the setback, also called the six days war) marked the decline of the aspiration of Nasserism in the Arab world, and Egypt in particular. The ramifications of the *Naksah* on the cultural and social life was equally significant. It has marked a proliferation of artistic and intellectual work that questioned the defeat and criticized the repercussions of Nasserism on the Arab individual. It is in this atmosphere that the Duo Sheikh Imam and Ahmad Fouad Negm had burgeoned.

The artists: Nass El-Ghiwane and the duo Imam-Negm

Resistance art refers to artistic productions expressing opposition to the mainstream political power and traditional social institutions. *Degenerate art* in Nazi Germany, mainly produced by Jewish and minority artists, and the apartheid movement in South Africa are usually

used in the literature to illustrate this kind of artistic movements. In my dissertation, I am looking at contexts where artists speak on behalf of the majority or *the people*, as opposed *to the elite*, a despised minority standing against the interests, the culture, and the welfare of the authentic, genuine people.

To study the phenomenon of resistance music in Morocco and Egypt countries, I have chosen the following cases from, who were gained unprecedented popularity in their respective countries (Jubair, 2015; Osorio Fernández, 2011; Sadiq, 2014). Both Nass El-Ghiwane and the duo Imam-Negm are featured in my work not only for their popularity, but also for the significance of their work, their populist cause and, and the socio-political circumstances in which their identity has evolved on the artistic and individual level. In Gramscian terms, these artists played in their respective societies the role of organic intellectuals. The Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci defines this concept as "An intellectual or someone of professional standing (i.e., a doctor, lawyer, or priest) who rises to that level from within a social class that **does not normally produce intellectuals and** remains **connected** to that class." ("Organic intellectual", 2020a). It can also be defined as the opposite of a yuppie, or a member of "the traditional intelligentsia that regards itself as a class apart from the rest of society." ("Organic intellectual, 2020b). Be it Nass El-Ghiwane or the duo Imam-, they all emanated from a socially and economically disadvantaged environment and remained connected to it regardless of the fame their eventually gained (Jubair, 2015; Osorio Fernández, 2011; Sadiq, 2014).

Beside the organic intellectual role that the duo Imam-Negm and Nass El-Ghiwane played in their respective countries, they have also succeeded in cultivating a large audience in the Arab world. This is mainly due to their inspiring songs, which have revived local dialects and spoken of social ills as opposed to "official" music, focusing on romantic theme and love stories.

Recalling the popularity of the duo Imam-Negm among university students in the 1970s, Al-Omari (2009) explains how their songs echoed the aspirations of the Arab youth at that time, and how its language touched people from all walks of life, for it is written in a simple and colloquial, yet eloquent language that everyone can understand and appreciate. Al-Omari (2009) calls the duo Imam-Negm "provocative artists" for their strident criticism of the regime, and their open call for insurgency and revolution against the status-quo. Since their inception in the late 1960s, the duo Imam-Negm continued to inspire revolutions in Egypt, which earned them the title of artists of "the people". In Morocco, Nejmi (2002) contends that Nass El-Ghiwane is not just a transient phenomenon in the post-colonial history of Morocco, but rather a crucial element of the national culture in Morocco. The author adds how the emergence of this band induced collective awareness of the importance of popular art in shaping national identity. Sadiq (2014) states that Nass El-Ghiwane was the emblematic figure of protest singing in the 1960s and 1970s in Morocco. The author adds that Nass El-Ghiwane was also the first band to revive the Moroccan heritage of poetry and epics and include traditional musical instruments reflecting the ethnic and cultural diversity of the country. For Amran El Maleh (n.d.), the uniqueness of Nass El-Ghiwane comes from its capacity to "express the popular sensitivity in facing the vagaries of daily life" and take the listener to a spiritual journey through the strength of the words and the music (Amran El Maleh, as mentioned in Nejmi, 2002).

The Duo Imam-Negm (Egypt) Sheikh Imam Issa (1918-1995) and Ahmed Fouad Negm (1929-2013) were respectively a composer and a poet from Egypt. The Duo was active in the 1960s onward. They were known for their strident opposition to the Egyptian political elite and the western intervention in the country. Sheikh Imam and Negm were arrested several times for "public agitation" and "attempts to overturn the regime" under Abdel-Nasser and El Sadat. The

artistic life of the duo Imam-Negm flourished in the poor neighborhood of Hush Adam in the historical area of El-Ghuriah in old Cairo. This area holds a symbolic value for Egyptians. El-Ghurieh hosts the Mosque of Al-Azhar, and the mausoleum of Al-Hussain ibn Ali, the grandson of the prophet Mohammad and the symbol of martyrdom and resistance for Muslims. But for Jubair (2015, p. 22) El-Ghuriah and specifically Hush Adam is more than just a remnant of a distant past, it is "like a rare show: it is wealthier and richer than all that [monuments], it is full of secrets and stashes that no one knows but its natives [local residents], in each of its corners a long history of patriotic resistance, and in each of its spaces endless artistic and literary memories". But the description of Negm is far from the romantic view of Jubair (2015, p. 22). Negm draws a repelling picture of Hush Adam and its poor residents, inspiring melancholy, despair and depression:

Our neighborhood… our neighborhood	حارتنا..... حارتنا
Sewage and mosquitos	مجاري وناموس
A mirror and a lantern	مراية وفانوس
Stones and chairs	حجارة وكراسي
Youth on the sideroad	شباب ع النواصي
Beards on bellies	دقون ع الكروش
Sweat on piastres [coins]	عرق ع القروش
Cracks in houses	شقوق في البيوت
Houses in cracks	بيوت في الشقوق
It dies in the evening	مساءا تموت
It wakes up in the morning	صباحا تفوق
Old and stupid	قديمه وغبيه

Smart and young	لبيبه وصبيه
Narrow as a needle hole	في ضيق خرم ابره
Deep as an ocean	في غوط المحيط
Enduring humiliation	على الذل صابره
[…]	[…]
The essence of stupidity	أسانس البلاده
A camp of reproduction [birth]	معسكر ولادة
Despicable and coward	خسيسة وجبانه
Wounded and humiliated	جريحه ومهانه

It is in a small room within a dilapidated building that lived the duo, composed their songs, and welcomed dozens of Egyptian and Arab intellectuals to attend their musical performance of populist songs in vernacular Egyptian (Jubair, 2015).

Nass El-Ghiwane (Morocco)

Nass El-Ghiwane (People of Singing, In Moroccan Darija) is a musical group, established in the 1960s-1970s. In addition to their controversial and revolutionary topics, Nass El-Ghiwane are best known among Moroccans to be the first musicians to revive Moroccan folklore and traditional music in the post-colonial era. After Independence, the musical scene in Morocco was dominated by an "elitist" music taste, ranging from classical Andalusian music to the new wave of the "modern Moroccan song" (*Al oghniya Al-Maghribiya Al-haditha*) strongly influenced by Egyptian and Oriental music, especially romantic and non-revolutionary songs. the music of Nass El-Ghiwane can be considered as a stand-alone genre, combining musical elements from

the depth of the Moroccan popular culture, such as Gnawa (i.e., African slaves' music), Laayta (i.e., rural chants), and Lmelhoun (i.e., traditional vernacular poetry).

One of the oldest industrial neighborhoods in Casablanca and Morocco, Al-Hay Al Mohammadi or Al-Hay (In Arabic: the district) as is known among its residents was the birthplace of the quintuple. The Hay was founded in the 20s by the French protectorate to become the first industrial zone in the French Morocco. The Hay would quickly attract hundreds of rural Moroccans from different regions and tribes, fleeing drought, poverty and hunger sweeping the country in the 20s. It became thus a prototype of a Moroccan working class, a mosaic of the people of Morocco from north to south. The ethnic and cultural diversity in Al-Hay would have a great impact on the musical style of El-Ghiwane.

The people of Al-Hay were the first to trigger the "King and people" revolution against the French occupant in 1953. It was also the first place to welcome the returning King Mohammad V from his exile in 1955. Ironically, the same place would become known for the notorious **Moulay Ali Cherif** police station, a post-independence police station and a clandestine center of detention and torture of political dissidents.

Data collection

My data set comprises protest songs from the countries included in this comparative study. As mentioned earlier, I have chosen Nass El-Ghiwane and the duo Imam-Negm as protest singers/artists object of my analysis. These artists gained this label for their dissent opinions, expressed in the vernacular of their fellow compatriots. They were also known for their avant-garde style, reviving popular musical heritage, deemed by the elite as non-conformist and low (Jubair, 2015; Osorio Fernández, 2011; Sadiq, 2014).

The corpus of analysis consists in artistic artifacts produced from the 60s to the 80s of the last century, from different countries/continents. Each of these countries witnessed drastic events and radical political shifts that provoked a strong public resistance to traditional institutions. The following timeline illustrates some of these events (Figure 2).

Primary and secondary sources were also used to explicate and support some of the emerging themes/observations. This includes autobiographies and biographies of the artists, media interviews, vernacular dictionaries, and audio/video of the songs.

Autobiographies and biographies of the artists. In addition to providing the general context of the personal and artistic life of the singers/composers, autobiographies were often useful in this study in explaining the social and political circumstances under which some of the songs were written. Some of these autobiographies include the *Fagoumy* of Ahmad Fouad Negm (Negm, 2007a) and *Al-Rahil* of Larbi Batma (Batma, 1995). Both books narrate the experience of the artists with the production process of the songs and decipher some of its meanings that might not be clear to the audience. Biographies include personal accounts of individuals or researchers that lived close to the artists at some point in time, or witnessed events related to the production of their artwork. In the case of Egypt, one of my references was Eissa (2008)'s archival work on the prosecutor's reports filed against Ahmad Fouad Negm and Sheikh Imam Eissa for their songs criticizing the authorities. In these reports, the duo provided detailed answers about the intentions behind the songs and interpretation to some of their equivocal meanings and allegories allegedly used to attack the regime. In the case of Morocco, I used monographs on the artistic and personal life of the members of Nass El-Ghiwane (Sadiq, 2014; Simour, 2016) . These works also discusses the artistic worth of the songs of Nass El-Ghiwane,

and the diverse political, social, and cultural factors that influenced their artistic identity and songs composition.

Media interviews. Like autobiographies, interviews can also be helpful in further explicating the production process of the songs. Some interviews involve information about songs that gained public acclaim or provoked controversy. The responses provided by the artists are generally a first-hand interpretation of the lyrics and their meanings.

Vernacular dictionaries. The songs analyzed in this dissertation are written in vernacular Arabic, namely Egytian ‘amiyah and Moroccan Darija. In some cases, the terms and idioms used in these songs can be difficult to understand for a fluent speaker, as they come from the old oral tradition that is hardly used in daily conversations. Vernacular dictionaries in both dialects were helpful in explicating such terms and providing historical and social context to their usage.

Audios/Videos clips of the songs. Performance is an important factor in the interpretation process. Although performance analysis is not included in the methodology of this dissertation, the tone and pauses, and repetitions in the singing were considered in interpreting some of the meanings (i.e., satire, irony) that cannot be easily inferred from the written lyrics.

Figure 2 *Comparative timeline for major events in Egypt and Morocco*

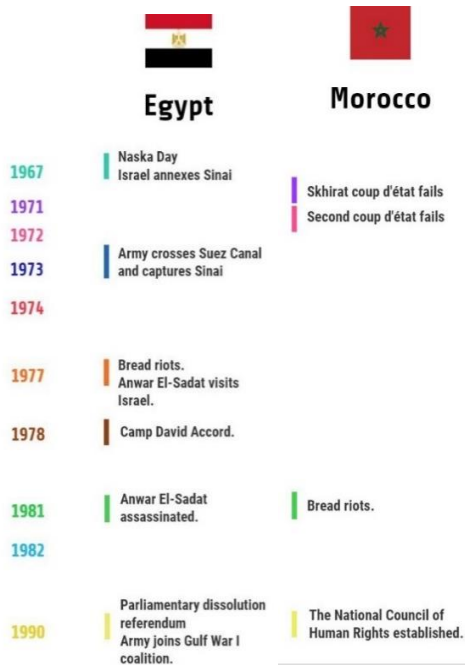


Table 1 *Data type and sources*

Country	Artifact	Corpus size	Sources
Morocco	Nass El-Ghiwane- Songs	117	Print books: *The words of Ghiwan* Language: Moroccan Darija.
Egypt	El Sheikh Imam and Ahmed Fouad Negm – Songs and vernacular poetry.	180	Print book: *The complete works of Ahmed Fouad Negm.* Language: Egyptian ‘Amiya.

In this chapter, I outlined the methodology I will be using in investigating the populist sentiments in both the songs of Nass El-Ghiwane and the duo Imam-Negm. In the next chapter, I

will provide a detailed account of how themes related to the idea of populism in the songs of Imam-Negm.

CHAPTER 4

THE EGYPTIAN CASE: THE DUO IMAM-NEGM

In this chapter, I outline the results of the discourse analysis of the duo Imam-Negm's songs. The emerging themes revolve around the "people", "the elite", "others" and "apocalypse". Each theme is further explicated by sub-themes supporting its meanings. For instance, the songs focus on the concept of "Egyptness" and describe the details of the life of "the people", from their state of mind to their nutritional diet. On the other hand, "the elite" are depicted as inherently corrupt and immoral. "The elite" are served and supported by a group of "sub-elites" that the following sections describe in details. "Others" and "apocalypse" are stand-alone categories that explicate the attitude of the duo toward other "peoples" and their conception of the "apocalypse" or the day where the justice shall be served.

The people

Negm uses several terms to refer to the concept of the people, mainly "Egyptians", "the people", and *awlad al-balad* or "sons of the country". the concept of Awlad al-balad (singular masculine: Ibn al-balad, feminine: Bint al-balad) is a colloquial folk construct often used to denote authentic and true Egyptians, as opposed to *Awlad al-zawat* or sons of importance, "the dissolute, alienated, libertine elite who had lost their souls and identity to foreign tastes and influence" (El-Messiri, 1978, as mentioned in Toth, 2016, p. 162). Awlad al-balad are not defined by their class, because they come from the entire class spectrum. They are not spotted by their literacy, religion, or ethnicity either. Instead, they are defined by their attachment to authentic Egyptian customs, morality, and pride of their decent origins. This makes Awlad al-

balad an inclusive concept, considering that being Egyptian is determined by morality more than any other characteristics, such as race, religion, or class.

The attachment of ibn al-balad to the country, to the point of unity. Ibn al-balad and the homeland are one and indivisible. Ibn al-balad is “the heart and the pulse” of Egypt:

O Egypt’s heart and pulse, O ibn al-balad	يا قلب مصر ونبضها يا ابن البلد
Running throughout it [Egypt], O ibn al-balad	يسري بطولها وعرضها يا ابن البلد
O its morning, O ibn al-balad	يا صبحها يا ابن البلد
O its gain, O ibn al-balad	يا ربحها يا ابن البلد
O its wheat, O ibn al-balad	يا قمحها يا ابن البلد
O the light of its heaven and earth	يا نور سماها وأرضها
O ibn al-balad, O ibn al-balad	يا ابن البلد يا ابن البلد

The inclusive aspect of the concept of Ibn al-balad is palpable in *This is Egypt* (n.d.). In this poem, Negm draws a personality of Egypt, what Egypt represents, or precisely what represents Egypt. *“Egypt is”* is the opening of each verse. Negm’s Egypt is made by the diversity of its people and edifices. Egyptians comes from all walks of life. They come from all walks of life. They are workers, artists, peasants, and soldiers. They pertain to the entire class spectrum. They are Pashas, governors, politicians, clerics, astrologers, and scholars. They are Muslims, Christians, and Pharaohs:

Egypt is the flour, the peasants, the masons,	مصر الطحين والفلاحين والبنايين والسقايين
the watercarriers	و الصيادين والمنشدين
The fishermen, the singers	و الصنايعيه

The [traditional] workers	[…]
[…]	مصر الكنايس ومصر الجوامع
Egypt is the churches, and Egypt is the	مصر المزارع ومصر المصانع
mosques	[…]
[…]	ومصطفى كامل ومحمد فريد
And Mustafa Kamel, and Mohammad Farid	[…]
[…]	مصر الموالد وشيلاه يا طاهره
Egypt is religious festivals, may your blessing	يا ست ام هاشم
be upon us, O pure lady	يا جبر الخواطر
O lady Um Hashem	يا ماري يا جرجس
O solace of the soul	يا سيدي ابراهيم
O Mary Gergis	[…]
O Master Ibrahim	مصر الحديثة ورفاعه رافع الطهطاوي
[…]	مصر العلوم والفراعنه
Modern Egypt [Egypt is modernity] and	و الطب والتنجيم
Refa’ah Rafe’ el tahtawi	مصر محمد علي الفاتح
Egypt is science and Pharaohs	و ابنه ابراهيم العظيم
Medicine and Astrology	
Egypt is Muhammad Ali the conqueror	
And his son Ibrahim the great	

Ibn al-balad does not have to be ethnically Egyptian, because Egypt-ness is not acquired by birth. For Negm, Egypt-ness is not acquired by birth, but rather by love and dedication. In the

same poem, Negm includes two names coming from afar: Sulaiman al-Halabi and Jamal al-Din al-Afghani. As their names suggest, Sulaiman and Jama al-Din are not native Egytians. Nevertheless, they both left an indelible mark in the history of modern Egypt.

And [Egypt] is Sulaiman Al-halabi And Jamalu-din Al Afghani	وسليمان الحلبي وجمال الدين الأفغاني

Sulaiman al-Halabi (1777-1800) was a Kurdish man from Aleppo, Syria. Al-Halabi came to Egypt in his early twenties to study Islamic theology in Al-Azhar University. Al-Halabi is best known for his involvement in the local resistance against the 18th century French campaign on Egypt. in 1800, al-Halabi was accused of assassinating the commander of the French forces, General Jean-Baptiste Kléber. The name of al-Halabi is still invoked in today's Egypt as a symbol of patriotism and resistance. In popular culture, his execution by anal impalement, as reminder of the atrocity of colonialism. Al-Halabi's skull and dagger are still displayed at Musée de l'Homme (i.e., the museum of the man) in Paris (Parsons & Grundner, 2009, p. 67).

Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838-1897) was a Persian journalists and political activists from Asadabaad, Afghanistan[10]. Al-Afghani moved to Egypt in 1871 as a student of theology. He is best known among Egyptians and Arab Muslims for his reform preaching and his opposition to European imperialism in the Muslim world. His political activity in Egypt played a significant role in overthrowing the pro-British governor, Khediv Ismail (Kudsi-Zadeh, 1972).

[10] The birthplace of Al-Afghani is disputed in the literature because the city of Asadaabad exists in both Iran and Afghanistan. I am using the birthplace that Al-Afghani mentioned in his own accounts (Goldziher & Jomier, n.d.) .

Although not Egyptians by birth, the involvement of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Sulaiman al-Halabi in the nationalist and anti-colonial movement in Egypt qualify them for Egyptness. For Negm, they are "Egypt" because they fought for its independence. He defines "Egyptness" as a quality acquired by sacrifice and service for the homeland, rather than nativisim and ethnicity.

Physical attributes

Negm draws a meticulous portrait of the people. They are beautiful, suntanned, brave, and merry. They are like the Nile, they are rough from the outside, but soft and compassionate from the inside:

On the heat of the suntanned land	على صهد الأرض السمرا
My father the Nile made me	أنا أبوي النيل سواني
Sucked and rough from the outside	ممصوص وخشن من بره
Like the clay of Aswan[11]	زى الطينه إلآسوانى
Greenery is in my heart	وألخضره ف جلبي وجلبي

The Nile is invoked in Negm's poetry in several ways. It is primarily the vein of the Egyptian life. The Nile and the people are inseparable. It lives in their homes and within their souls. Its natural movement reflects the happiness and suffering of its people. Its flooding indicates prosperity, and its drought warns of misery and despair. When Negm prays for relief, he hopes that the Nile "parades and floods [the land] with gold".

[11] Aswan is a southern province in Egypt. Aswan has been known of pottery since the Pharaonic era (Frostner-Muller, n.d.)

The birthplace [of an Egyptian]: in any dark room	جهه الميلاد: فى أي اوضه مضلمه
Under the sky	تحت السما
On the land of Egypt	على ارض مصر
From [in] any house within the palms	من أي دار وسط النخيل
Wherever the Nile is running	مطرح ما يجري النيل
As far as it is not a palace	ما دام ما يكونش قصر
[…]	[…]
On the other Egypt, the hallmarked	على مصر التانية ام علامه
The prolific, pregnant, and virgin	ولاده وحبلى وبكريه
[…]	تحبل مواويل
Gets pregnant with Mawawil [traditional vocal music]	من فيض النيل
From the flood of the Nile	وتخلى ولادها يغنوها
And let its children sing it	تسرح غناويها ف حواريها
Its songs strolling throughout its lanes	
[…]	[…]
The Nile is thirsty	النيل عطشان يا صبايا
For love and nostalgia	للحب والحنين
And [in] the [river] bank	والشط
No light	لانور
No breeze	

And no flute	ولا نسمه
And no sprout of Jasmin	ولا ناي
[…]	ولا عود يا سمين
	[…]
O God of the people	يا رب الناس
May I see the Nile swaggering	واشوف النيل بيتمخطر
Gold	دهب
Flowing melodies for the people	سايل نغم للناس

The physique of the people reflects their suffering. Their ailing bodies tell of hunger and misery. They are prolific, but they suffer from malnutrition and diseases. In *the magic potion*, draws a striking portrait of "any citizen that eats broad beans":

Any citizen, that eats broad [fava] beans	أي مواطن يا ولداه
Must have	زاده الفول
a dysfunctional pancreas	لازم تلقاه
constipation	عندهالبنكرياس
on top of diarrhea	بطال
[he] has fatigue	والامساك
Dizziness	فوق الاسهال
Anemia	عنده الرهقة

And children	عنده الدوخة
	عنده انيميا
	عنده عيال

Diet is another distinguishing marker of the people in the Negm's poetry. Negm ironically calls *Fool* (English: broad beans) the "vegetarian meat". It is the meat of poor Egyptians who cannot afford "real" meat. But more importantly, it indicates a deeply entrenched discrimination and class discrepancy in the Egyptian society. In *the song of broad beans and meat* (1974) reports a hypothetical official communiqué flaunting the health benefits of broad beans, and particularly the Egyptian *fool*. The communiqué, citing a certain doctor called Mohsen, urges Egyptians to eat *fool* for the massive energy and protein wealth it bears.

On the topic of broad beans and meat	عن موضوع الفول واللحمة
A source, supposedly responsible	صرح مصدر
Asserted	قال مسئول
That medicine has advanced	إن الطب اتقدم جدا
And Dr. Mohsen says	والدكتور محسن بيقول
That the Egyptian people, in particular	إن الشعب المصري خصوصا
Should eat broad beans	من مصلحته يقرقش فول
Because the Egyptian broad beans, in general	حيث الفول المصري عموما
Makes of a man an Ogre	يجعل من بني آدم غول
It has all the proteins	و البروتين الكامن طيه
A quarter of a bowl equates a leg of meat	تاكل فخذه في ربع زكيبه

Dr. Mohsen is responsible	والدكتور محسن مسئول
[broad beans] give you energy and magical	يديك طاقه وقوة عجيبه
power	تسمن جدا
It makes one fat	تبقى مهول
You become huge	لحمه نباتي ولا في الحاتي
A great vegetarian meat	تاكل قدره تعيش مسطول
You eat a jar, you feel high	

At the same time, Dr. Mohsen warns from the danger of a carnivorous diet. According to Dr. Mohsen, meat is toxic, addictive and would surely cause stomachache and dizziness. Eating meat is a sin that leads a true believer to hellfire:

Dr. Mohsen then added	ثم أضاف الدكتور محسن
That the meat is surely a poison	إن اللحمه دي سم أكيد
That exacerbates stomachaches	بتزود أوجاع المعده
Get one used to stealing	و تعود على طولة الإيد
Makes people sleep more	و تنيم بنى آدم أكتر
And miss their appointments	و تفرقع منه المواعيد
Generally, those who eat meat	و اللي بياكلوا اللحمه عموما
Will go to hellfire for life	حيخشم جهنم تأبيد

The poem concludes with a response from Egyptians to Dr. Mohsen and the government. The response derides the communiqué and questions the scientific authority of Dr. Mohsen. Highly aware of the “dangers” of the meat, they kindly ask Dr. Mohsen and the government to

keep the benefits of fool for themselves and let Egyptian die from meat. Negm uses mockery in this context to show that the people are aware of this government's scheme:

O Dr. Mohsen, O dandy one	يا دكتور محسن يا مزقلط
O irresponsible source	يا مصدر يا غير مسئول
Since you are the world's brain	حيث إن انتوا عقل العالم
And the world needs brains	و العالم محتاج لعقول
What your highness and their highness think	ما رأي جنابك وجنابهم
of this	فيه واحد مجنون بيقول
There is a mad man saying	إحنا سيبونا نموت باللحمه
Let us die from meat	وانتو تعيشوا وتاكلوا الفول
And [let you-plural] live and eat broad beans	ما رأيك يا كابتن محسن
What do you think, Captain Mohsen?	مش بالذمة كلام معقول
It is plausible, isn't it?	

Psychological attributes of the people

According to Negm, the psychology of the people is an interesting phenomenon worth speculation. It amalgamates patience with volatility, and pacifism with belligerence.

Patience. Negm equates the patience of the people to the steadfastness of the prophet Job in bearing with his affliction. The author describes how patience have always been the destiny of Egyptians. Patience is not only their virtue and strength, but also their destiny. For Egyptians, it is the panacea for all their pains and illnesses.

[My] name is Patient on tribulation	الاسم صابر ع البلا
Job, a donkey	ايوب حمار
Carrying burden from my fate	شيل الحمول من قسمتى
And waiting	والانتظار
[…]	[…]
	قال لك تصبر ع المكتوب
He [They] tells you to be patient on your fate	زي ما صبر النبي ايوب
Like the prophet Job did	[…]
[…]	
	فين آخر الصبر يا شيخ أيوب
What is the end of patience, O sage Job?	لآمتي الحر بيات مغلوب
Until when the free remains defeated?	

After all, nothing has changed for Egyptians since the time of Ramses and Khufu, says Negm.

Your [Egypt] peasant are the same	فلاحينك هما هما
The peasants of Rameses and Khufu	فلاحين رمسيس وخوفو
An Army	جيش
No bread, no water canteen	لا عيش ولا زمزميه
To sate his thirst in the scorching heat	فى الهجيره تبل جوفه
Illness dragging it to death	المرض للموت يجره
While he is walking	وهو ماشي
Dragging is fear	يجر خوفه

The patience stereotype seems to go beyond Negm's historical and geographic boundaries. The idea of Egyptians being a patient people appears in medieval Islamic literature. Ka'b Al-Ahbar, an early Muslim scholar, says that "When God created all things, he attributed to each a companion. Reason said: I am going to the Levant. Sedition said: And I with you. Fertility said: I am going to Egypt. Patience said: And I with you (Maqrīzī, 2002, p. 31) .

Ayrout (1968) argues that references to patience are abundant in the quotidian spoken language of Egyptians: "Patience demolishes mountains", "Nothing is lost with patience", "Patience is beautiful", "A patient man sees freedom", "Greed is a humiliation, but satisfaction with one's lot is a full purse" (p. 31).

Negm also contends that modern day Egyptians are as wretched as their ancient ancestors. He calls them the "peasants of Ramses and Khufu". Behind this description hides a long-standing influence of ancient times on the present popular culture in Egypt. It is thus legitimate to ask: Who are Ramses II and Khufu? And what is their position of influence in the Egyptian popular culture?

Ramses II was the third king of the 19th dynasty of the New Kingdom of Ancient Egypt (c. 1550 BC–c. 1077 BC). Ramses II is the most popular among all the Ramses that ruled Egypt. the prevalent theory about Ramses II is him being the Pharaoh of oppression in both the bible and the Quran. Ramses II Like several of his fellow pharaohs, he also claimed to be a divine king, and ordered to be worshipped as god on earth. He is also notable for temples, obelisks and monument edified in his time. Several kings in subsequent dynasties called themselves Ramses to honor his legacy.

The long-standing Muslim and Christian heritages in Egypt shaped the view of Ramses II in the popular culture. Ramses II or simply "The Pharaoh" in the Quran is the symbol of oppression and tyranny. He is known in both the Quran and the Bible for claiming divinity, and oppressing the Israelites, being the monotheistic nation of the time:

> And remember [the Israelites] when We saved you from Pharaoh's people, who afflicted you with cruel suffering, slaughtering your sons and sparing [only] your women - which was an awesome trial from your Sustainer (Al-Baqarah (the Cow) 2:49)

> So they [Pharaoh Egyptians] put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh. 12 but the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread; so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites 13 and worked them ruthlessly. 14 They made their lives bitter with harsh labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their harsh labor the Egyptians worked them ruthlessly (Exodus 1:11-12)

From a historical perspective, several Egyptologists provide evidence of class inequalities and manpower exploitation in the time of Ramses II, namely peasants. For instance, Erman (1966) argues that "several Egyptian texts shed light on the bur- dens endured by the agricultural worker, on his wretched condition, and on his low status in Egyptian society" (p. 426).

Khufu (In Greek: Cheops) was the second king of the 4th dynasty in Ancient Egypt (c. 2575–c. 2465 BCE). Very few historical sources on the reign of Khufu remained to present ("Khufu," 2020). However, he is best known for the building of the Great pyramid of Giza, one of the architectural wonders in the world. However, the reign of Khufu is still a topic of controversy because of circumstances of the pyramid building. The prevalent theory contends

that Khufu used forced labor and slavery in the building of his colossal monuments. This idea stems from the early writings of the Greek historian Herodotus, who describes the era of Khufu as 55 years of oppression:

> […] **Cheops**, who was the next king, brought the people to utter misery. For first he shut up all the temples, so that none could sacrifice there; and next, he compelled all the Egyptians to work for him, appointing some to drag stones from the quarries in the Arabian mountains to the Nile: and the stones being carried across the river in boats, others were charged to receive and drag them to the mountains called Libyan. They worked in gangs of a hundred thousand men, each gang for three months. For ten years the people were afflicted in making the road whereon the stones were dragged, the making of which road was to my thinking a task but a little lighter than the building of the pyramid […]. **Cheops** reigned (so the Egyptians said) for fifty years (Herodotus, 1920, p. 197).

These historical accounts on Khufu and Ramses II, regardless of their veracity[12], might explain why and how these two Pharaohs have cultivated a reputation of oppression and corruption in Egypt's popular history. Negm's description of modern-day Egyptian peasants seem to be consistent with this view. For Negm, it seems that nothing has changed for the peasants since ancient times. The Egyptian peasant is still bearing burden of his predecessors.

[12] Modern day Egyptologists are rather suspicious of this testimony. Herodotus, "father of history" is also dubbed "father of lies" for his exaggerated defamation of Khufu (Evans, 1968; Pipes, 1998). According to Herodotus, Khufu was "so evil of a man […] that for lack of money he made his own daughter to sit in a chamber and exact payment and demanded of everyone who sought intercourse with her that he should give one stone" for building the Great pyramid (Herodotus, 1920, p. 203).

Lightheartedness. Despite all their calamities, the accounts of people depict them as remaining lighthearted, cheerful, and carefree. This view of the Egyptian people is prevalent in the traditional literature on the Egyptian society. Ibn Khaldun, a 14th century A.C North African historian and philosopher, finds that Egyptians don't ruminate on risks and consequences, "as if they are done with the day of judgement" (Amine, 2017, p. 265). Al-Maqrizi, another prominent 14th century historian from the Mamluki era, confirm this view, while adding that Egyptians tend to be fun-loving, playful, and mostly hedonistic (Amine, 2020). Even contemporary observers still embrace these views. In his book *The Egyptian Peasant*, sociologist and Jesuit Egyptian priest Henry Ayrout draws a similar portrait of the Egyptian peasant:

> He [the peasant] is lighthearted, because neither the past nor the future touch him. He enjoys to the full moment: *Carpe diem*. When interrupted by an imperative, he replies, "tomorrow" (*bukra*), driving what he has to do out of the range of his consciousness, holding as long as he can to the present. (Ayrout, 1963, p. 142)

The street is our home, our song	الشارع بيتنا وغنوتنا
And the street is the greatest singer	والشارع أعظمها مغنى
Our word is from the street's melody	من لحن الشارع كلمتنا
On the street's melody	على لحن الشارع
[…]	بنغني
We sing	[…]
We are like this	هو احنا كده
And We shall remain like this	وحنبقى كده

The elite

The concept of the elite is generally defined in the European/western literature on populism as a group of a highly privileged individuals or institutions that are disconnected from the mere people's lifestyle and concerns (Mudde, 2017). Mudde (2017) argues that the main distinction between 'the people' and 'the elite' is ***morality***. From this western perspective, 'the people' are disadvantaged, but 'pure' and 'noble', whereas 'the elite' is 'corrupt' and 'immoral'. In the western populist discourse, the word 'elite' is used to refer to a panoply of mainstream social and political institutions, namely politicians, the intelligentsia, the media elite and the economic elite.

Morality

The morality-based distinction is prevalent in the poetry of Negm. The elite are wealthy, malevolent, corrupt, and insouciant about the suffering and concerns of people. The poetry of Negm is also rich of elite physical description, which is reminiscent of the typical caricature of the potbellied, money-hungry capitalists or "fat cats" in the Soviet propaganda (Rosenfeld, 2019, p. 31). In *The alliance*[13] (1967) Negm draws a portrait of the residents of Zamalek, one of the most prestigious neighborhoods in Cairo. The residents of Zamalek, or the Tanablah (the lazy ones) appear to come from another world. They live the lavish life, despite being lazy and stupid. Their physique indicates satiation. Their bellies are full, and their skins are glittering:

Long live the lazy ones	يعيش التنابله
In the Zamalek neighborhood	في حي الزمالك
And the Zamalek neighborhood	وحي الزمالك

[13] This poem is also published under *Long live the people of my country*.

Is full of alleys	مسالك مسالك
If you ever think getting close	تحاول تفكر تهوب هناك
You lose your life	تودر حياتك
So, avoid danger	بلاش المهالك
That's why	لذلك
If you want to describe their life	إذا عزت توصف حياتهم
You would say that our life is not alright	تقول الحياة عندنا
You can see them in downtown	مش كذلك
If [one of them] passes by you	و ممكن تشوفهم في وسط المدينة
[they ride] a car like a ship	إذا مر جنبك
Their neck(s) is[are] dough [soft]	أتومبيل سفينه
Their bellies are fat	قفاهم عجينه
Their skins glitter	كروشهم سمينه
Their brain[s] is[are] fat	جلودهم بتضوي
	دماغهم تخينه

In term of their personal conduct, the elite are devoid of any sense of honor and morality. They are hedonistic to the extent of libertinage. Negm describes images of the elite that come as shocking to the conservative society of Egypt: Fathers and husbands procuring their daughters and wives for personal interests. The elite call this moral permissiveness progressive and revolutionary behavior, as one the *Eloquent procurer,* one of Negm's personages clearly states:

By the way, Captain Mahmoud	على فكره يا كابتن محمود
Regardless of the existing [sexual] repression	و برغم الكبت الموجود
I am a progressive and revolutionary man	انا راجل ثوري و متحرر
And Aziza plays the Oud	و عزيزة بتلعب ع العود
Play Aziza! Don't be shy	إلعبي يا عزيزة ما تنكسفيش
Mahmoud has become one of us	محمود بقى منا خلاص و لا فيش
O Aziza!	يا عزيزة النيزه كوا النيزه
You should have become a Marchioness!	كان لازم تطلعي مركيزه

In the *Eloquent procurer* (1973), the main "protagonist" is an unscrupulous man who is attempting to sell his daughter Aziza to a notable man called Mahmoud. Through the poem, the father does not cease to extol the virtues of his daughter, while asking her to dance and play music to their guest Mahmoud. The poem ends with the father asking his daughter to come closer to Mahmoud. The closing scene is a euphemism of an intimate encounter between Aziza and her father's guest. The father has finally succeeded in "offering" his daughter to Mahmoud. The poem does not a give a voice to Aziza, so her consent is not clearly articulated.

A similar persona appears in the poem *Antar* (1980). This time, Negm impersonates a certain Antar, a wealthy businessman who sexually exploits his wife Abla to conclude his deals:

Antar Bani Shawarbi[14]	عنتر بني الشواربي
A knight, undoubtedly	فارس ما فيش كلام
With [his] Samsonite suitcase	بالشنطة السامسونايت
And his [secam?] glasses	و النضارة السيكام
Defeats the tax army	يهزم جيش الضرايب
And the state, and the regime	و الدولة و النظام
And roars in speculations	و يلعلع في المضاربة
And bet his wife	ويراهن بالمدام

The remaining part of the poem is a long tirade Antar addresses to his lover Abla. Ironically, Antar is blaming his failure and loss on Abla who refused to gratify the pleasure of his business partners:

Ask the customs and the administration	سلي الجماك والإدارة
O Abla, the she-ass you are	يا عبلة يا حتة حماره
About the game of smuggling and me	عن لعبة التهريب و عني
O, you the daughter of the landlord	يا بنت مالك العمارة
I befriend a thousand of knights	صاحبت فيكي ألف فارس
And I brought them to the cave to you	وجبتهم لك المغارة
You pretended to be timid	عملتي فيها نص فله
And you wore the veil of chastity	ولبستي برقع الطهارة

[14] This surname can be translated in English to “the Mustachian” or “Mustache-son”. The poet is using this reference as a parody of excessive masculinity.

For mister Abdu	عشان سي عبده
You boyfriend	ذا بوي فرندك
With his postiche mustache	أبو الشوارب مستعارة
O stupid	يا هبلة
With a romantic brain	يام دماغ رومانسي
You	يا مأخراني في التجارة
I invested the blood of my heart in you	دفعت فيكي دم قلبي
But you are a loss [on sale]	و طلعتي بيعه بالخسارة

This poem is burlesque of the pre-Islamic Arab romantic folk story of Antarah Ibnu Shaddad (also Antar in Arabic dialects) and his cousin Abla bintu Malek. Antarah is an Arab knight from Najd, Arabian Peninsula (a province in oday's Saudi Arabia) and one of the authors of the seven *Mu'allaqat* (In English: the hanging odes), one of the primordial sources of Arabic poetry and literature. In the popular culture, Antarah symbolizes revolution, bravura, eloquence, virility, and temerity (Scheub, 2002). He is also celebrated for being a persevering, selfless and faithful lover. But his modest origins and tough upbringing in his life earned him the title of a hero in the Arab tradition. Antarah was considered a slave, being the offspring of an Arab man and an enslaved Abyssinian princess (modern day Ethiopia and Eritrea). In the pre-Islamic Arab society, the sons of slave women were not deemed free unless they demonstrate unparalleled chivalry and eloquence in poetry (Ashshantamri, 1983, p. 107). Despite being the son of a free Arab man, his uncle refused to marry his daughter to Antar for being from a black Ethiopian mother.

There is a flagrant contrast between the Negm's postiche Antar and the "original" Antar. While Antar prostituted his beloved one, Antarah challenged his tribe and the social norms of his time to win her love. In the popular Sagar of Antar and Abla, Antar brought one thousand she-camels for Abla's dowry. He was also faithful to death to his lover Abla. Unlike most, if not all his contemporary pre-Islamic Arab poets, Abla was the only woman that ever appeared in his love odes. While the postiche Antar sold his wife to other men, the "original" Antarah fought to death to keep Abla away from other men.

Negm's denigrating view to elite men becomes evident when he explicitly attacks President Sadat. Just like Antar, Negm portrays Sadat as an unscrupulous man who does not miss a chance to involve his wife Jehan in his political deals with Western politicians:

O despicable Carter	يا كارتر يا ندل
You beloved one and friend and your wife's boyfriend	حبيبك وصاحبك وصاحب مراتك
And you are [also] his friend and his wife's boyfriend	وتبقي أنت صاحبه وصاحب مراته
And his father was also your mother-in-law's boyfriend	وكان والده أيضاً مصاحب حماتك
And [your friend] was always a powerful agent in your intelligence	وكان برضه والدك مصاحب حماته
And is your spy on his own intelligence	وطول عمره نافذ علي استخباراتك
	وشغّال جاسوسك على استخباراته

In this poem, Negm refers to an incident that created a controversy in Egypt in the 70s. During an official visit to the White House, the-then US President Jimmy Carter asked the-then Egyptian first lady Jehan El Sadat to dance with him. The first lady accepted and danced with the president, who showed his gratitude by a friendly kiss. For mainstream Egyptian, this is a culturally and religiously unaccepted behavior, especially of someone who self-proclaim as "the believer president" and insists to publicize his religious activities (Abu Al-Naja, 2016).

Elite servants

Negm also evokes the elite servants, which he often refers to as the "dogs" or "the slaves". The constituents of the elite group are not necessarily wealthy or privileged. They are as mundane and poor as the people. In fact, they are "the people", but they chose to sell their soul to the elite. The slaves are ordinary cops, civil servants in bureaucracy, prison guards and investigators. They are "the dogs" of the elite for their loyalty and blind obedience. Nothing can deter them from harming and torturing their own people. At the end of the day, as Negm himself sarcastically justifies, they are just order executives (in Arabic عبد المأمور, literally the: servant of the subordinate).

In the prison Oh yes	فى المعتقل يا سلام سلم
Die and suffer	موت وأتالم
But whom to complain to	لكن لمين راح تتظلم
All are dogs	والكل كلاب
Watchdogs	كلاب حراسه
Hunting dogs	وكلاب صيد
Standing with chains	واقفين بالقيد

Binding Antara and Abu Zayd	يكتفوا عنتر وأبوزيد
And humiliating Diab	ويهينوا دياب

The elite media

In western populism, mainstream media is generally perceived as an elite corporate, working to advance the elite political agenda and preserve their social privilege. This attitude is referred to as antimedia populism (Fawzi & Krämer, 2021). This concept draws from the broader Manichean worldview of populism, that divides society into "the good people" and the "bad elite". According to this view, journalists are "self-serving, corrupt, and detached from the people, and are accused of using their positions to indoctrinate people against their interests" (Fawzi & Krämer, 2021, p. 3295).

Negm echoes a similar view of the mainstream media in Egypt. Journalists are nothing but puppets in the hands of the government. They are corrupt, sycophants and self-serving. Negm has explicitly articulated this opinion during a police interrogation:

> I am with socialism, the covenant and the March 30th communiqué, and the [state's] direction to invigorate freedoms and the rule of law, because it is in my class's interest, this is from the theoretical side, but from the practical side I think that this is not happening, I do not agree of allowing some regressive, suspicious pens, who are convicted for spying like Ali and Mustapha Amin and the puppet Saleh Gawdat, the poet of King Faruq to attack the most valuable achievements of the July revolution which are the public sector, nationalization, the High Dam, the alliance of the people's powers, and the 50% of farmers and workers in the people's assembly. I am surprised that this

> [articles of suspicious pens] is published in newspapers owned by the Socialist Union, whereas the General Intelligence is ambushing honorable people and put them in prisons and detention centers just for expressing the honorable patriotic opinion, no matter how strident it is. I think this is a striking inconsistency between the theoretical and the practical aspects of the Revolution covenants. (Negm, 1975, as cited in Eissa, 2007)

In his songs, Negm summarizes the function of the Egyptian media in four points: diverting people's attention from serious issues, aggrandizing enemies, demoralizing the people, and defending the government.

***Distraction*.** Negm contends that the government is intentionally using the media to divert the people's attention from core issues. In *important communiqué* (1976), he describes the Egyptian media as a massive polyvalent entertainment industry. Programs cover anything and everything, from plays to religious sermons. Broadcasters are mere Sha'labans (i.e., clowns) discussing any topic in any language. Speaking in the person of a Sha'laban, Negm asserts that this extravagant entertainment festival is not catering for the people. The regime knows that people do not listen to the media, but this is not a problem as far as no one is protesting:

Here is the clown [the acrobat]	هنا شقلبان
From the beauty of the past [Halva of the	محطه اذاعه حلاوه زمان
past] radio station	نقدم اليكم بكل اللغات
We present to you, in all languages	مراسح وسيما وجميع الفنون
Theater, Cinema, and all arts	صحافه ومنابر
Press and podiums	وتليفويونات
Televisions	وخطبا ف جوامع

Orators in mosques	وجبنه وزيتون
Cheese and olives	ونفزح ونركب جميع الموجات
We ride all waves	ونبحث ونفهم
We search and understand	فى كل الشئون
All affairs	واديما نلعلع فى كل الحالات
In all cases, we clamor	ولا حد سامع
No one is listening	ولا يحزنون
Wala yahzanoun [and they don't despair]	وتمسع ما تسمع
Whether you listen or not	دا ما يهمناش
We don't care	لان احنا اصلا
Because we are already eating for free	بناكل بلاش
So, mind your business	فخليك فى نفسك
And don't drive us to	وما نخلیناش
Inflict on you the pen	نسلط عليك القلم
And the tongue	واللسان

In the *Students are back* (n.d.), Negm explains the real motivations behind the entertainment strategy of the regime. Be it football or pointless debates in the press, the regime is shifting the focus of the Egyptian youth from their core cause, that is protesting the failure of the regime in maintaining democracy and calling for the trial of those responsible of Egypt's defeat in the 1967 war against Israel:

O Egypt	يامصر انتي
You are the eternal one	اللى باقية وانتى
And you are the ultimate wish	قطف الاماني
Neither football has been effective	لا كوره نفعت
Nor guile	ولا اونطه
Nor byzantine discussions	ولا المناقشة وجدل بيزنطه
Nor the press and journalists	ولا الصحافة
Are distracting us	والصحفجية
From the cause	شاغلين شبابنا
	عن القضية

***

Demoralizing the people. According to Negm, the governing elite uses the media to sow doubt and despair among Egyptians. The media is implementing this strategy by aggrandizing enemies and disparaging the power of the people. In *A shade above the martyr's head* (1973), Negm refers to the parroting philosophers, journalists who kept warning Egyptians against the devastating power of Americans after the 1967's Naksa. He then demonstrates that despite this intense demoralization campaign, the mundane people of Egypt proved "the parrots" wrong. Six years later, people from every corner of Egypt rose and drove Americans and their Israelis allies out of Sinai:

It turned out that parroting philosophers	طلعوا الفلاسفه البغبغان
Are reporting talks	ناقلين كلام
Filling talks	يملا كلام
About the blade of Americans' sword	عن حد سيف الأمريكان
[It is] An Iliad for its massive poetry	إلياذه بالشعر المهول
Horror, cardamom, and profusion	وهول وهيل وهَيْلَمَان
They turned our hair grey	خلونا شبنا يا اسماعين
They made us age before our time	وكبرنا من قبل الأوان
The philosopher went wrong	طبُّوا الفلاسفه في الغلط
[…]	[…]
Peasants and Sa'ayda [upper Egyptians] rose	قزحت صعايده وفلاحين
[…]	بحر الكنال ف شمال يمين
The youth rose	وادّيني عقلك يا اسماعين
And peoples' hearts followed them	واضغط بقلبك ع الزناد
May the name of the Prophet protect their	واجمد يا واد واضرب يا واد
steps from their error	قزحوا الولاد
They beat the barbaric foreign	قزحت قلوب الناس وراهم
Like a genius master	اسم النبي
The aggressor's army retreated	يحرس خُطاهم
And our youth is fire	من خطاهم
Burning their neck	رنُّوا الخواجه البربري
May the name of the Prophet protect their	علقه معلم عبقري
steps from their error	وارتد جيش الفترى

وعيالنا نار

تلحس قفاهم

اسم النبي يحرس خطاهم من خطاهم

Four decades later, Negm narrates in his diary an event confirming his life-long attitude toward the demoralizing media. Specifically, he talks about how and why he wrote his poetic diatribe *The professor Mickey* (1969), against the renown Egyptian journalist Mohammad Hassanein Heikal. Heikal is best known for being the intellectual confident of President Gamal Abdel-Nasser, and the editor-in-chief of the government-owned and record newspaper Al-Ahram for 17 years (1957-1974). Negm says that *The professor Mickey* was response to Heikal's thwarting articles on the undefeated power of America:

> The second composition [we made] that night was for the song *Mickey* that I wrote for the ustadh[15] Mohammad Hassanein Heikal, the then president of the Egyptian press, after he got under our skin with a sequence of his thwarting articles about an expression Professor Heikal invented "We cannot confront America", while our children in the armed forces were up day and night [waiting] for the hour of war, but it seems that usatdh Heikal was not living with us, and he was blithely dealing with things, and he was wise in his reactions, for instance when the National Security Council was listening to the General Investigations report on the Duo Sheikh Imam and Negm [Negm speaking of his companion Sheikh Imam and himself], and the report contained some of our polite songs,

[15] *Ustadh* أستاذ is the Arabic word for professor. In colloquial Egyptian, this word is used as an honorary title instead of *As-sayed* السيد, the Arabic word for Sir or Mister.

the audience, including President Gamal Abdel-Nasser, were waiting for ustadh's Heikal comment on what he heard, he said: "This is a scream of hunger and we will kill it with satiety", When I was hearing these words, I thought that it was Mussolini who was talking, and for this I wrote: [recites the poem *Professor Mickey*]. (Negm, 2010).

Negm does not explain why he called Heikal *Mickey*, but it is most probably a reference to the American cartoon Mickey Mouse. As Negm describes, Heikal is *Mickey* because he is detached from reality. He speaks nonsense, while pretending he does not live in the same country with Egyptians. Finally, Heikal is a Mickey because is an American puppet:

To tell the truth, Professor Mickey	بصراحه يا أستاذ ميكي
You are regressive and skeptical	إنك رجعي وتشكيكي
You are, mind you, speaking nonsense	قاعد لا مؤاخذه تهلفط
And your speech is romantic	وكلامك رومانتيكي
You are not intending to stop writing	ولا ناوي تبطل تكتب
Political talk	بصراحه كلام بولوتيكي
On the role of the peaceful resolution	عن دور الحل السلمي
And its tactic use	وإستعماله التكتيكي
[…]	[…]
Honestly, there are [several] things happening	وحاجات بصراحه بتحصل
In our country, O uncle Mickey	فى بلدنا يا أونكل ميكي
Honestly, you are neither with me	بصراحه ولا أنت معايا
Nor looking from my window	ولا طالل من شبابيكي
As if you are a mummy	

Of the antique Sultan.	وكأنك مثلا موميا
the American colonialism resurrected it	للسلطان الانتيكي
to use it	أحياها لا ستعمالها
it [the mummy] in the form of Mickey	لاستعمار الامريكى
	رجعت على هيئة
	ميكي

Defending the government. Negm shows a particular contempt to sycophantic journalists he calls "pimps" of the authorities. In *Riddles* (1973), Negm lists the portraits of different famous artists and journalists he deems worthy of disdain for their notorious relationship with the government. Among all these personas, Negm seems to scorn Musa Sabry the most. Musa Sabry was a Coptic Egyptian journalist, mostly known for writing famous speeches of President Anwar El-Sadat. The name of Sabry became prominent among Egyptians after his involvement in El-Sadat's conflict with the Coptic Church. In 1981, El-Sadat ousted pope Shenouda III from his appointment as the patriarch of the Egyptian Coptic Church for his trying to be "too much of a political figure" (Ottaway, 1981). Unexpectedly, Musa Sabry supported the ousting decree, despite being himself a follower of the Coptic Church. Sabry then affirmed this position by publicly supporting the decision of Sadat, describing it as "more delicate than the decision of the war of October" and necessary to prevent a potential sectarian war between Copts and Muslims (*Musa Sabry* , 2006). Sabry was therefore accused of treason from Copts, and later excommunicated from the Church. Even Muslims like Negm, shared the same opinion of Sabry. In the following lines, Negm denigrates Sabry in every way possible. He calls him a "damned

trash", and "a dishonored", selling his words for money. He is despised by Copts and Muslims alike.

God help the press	يكون في عون الصحافه
God help	الله يكون في العون
Containing you, O cemetery worm	لماك يا دود القرافه
O damned trash	يا رمه يا ملعون
Devouring preys' flesh	تنهش لحوم الفرايس
In the dark, O bat	في الضلمة يا وطواط
The word for you is a merchandise	و الكلمة عندك بضاعه
And honor is elastic	و أما الشرف مطاط
Our country is innocent of you	بريئة منك بلدنا
Muslims and Copts	مسلمين واقباط
Neither a Moses you are	ولا أنت موسى
Nor a one of the Pharaoh's dogs	ولا أنت
	من كلاب فرعون

The nouveau riche.

A nouveau riche or a parvenu is "one that has recently or suddenly risen to an unaccustomed position of wealth or power and has not yet gained the prestige, dignity, or manner associated with it" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-b). In the 19th century American and European literature, this term was commonly used to refer to a new class of individuals who, despite their modest working-class origins, gained unprecedented wealth and social prestige in a

short period of time. For the then-established elite and aristocracy, the nouveau riche was a serious threat to the upper-class privilege and status. To preserve their authenticity, the established elite "changed the criteria for access to their circles from wealth to the number of generations since this wealth had been gained" (Kreis, 2021, p. 380)

In 20th century Egypt, the nouveau riche phenomenon emerged as a by-product of the economic policy of infitah in early 70s. Infitah (English: opening) is an open-door economic policy officially introduced by President Anwar El-Sadat in 1974. This policy aimed at liberating economy and encouraging domestic and foreign capitalist investments in Egypt through tax incentives and reduced import duties (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2021; Zaalouk, 1989, p. 55).

In the post-73 war Egyptian literature, the nouveau riche class is denoted as "the parasite class" for its detrimental effect on both economy and society. For Imam (1986), this class gained this reputation among Egyptians for its underhanded means of amassing wealth such as monopoly, illegal brokering, nepotism and above all its suspicious relationships with the governing elite. She adds that not only this class benefits from the equivocality of legal texts, but also from the explicit protection of the authorities. In response to the strident critique of this class among the opposition, Sadat personally justified and somehow defended its existence:

> Indeed, a class has emerged because of the economic infitah, but let's not exaggerate because we are talking on a scientific level. It is impossible for 500 millionaires to emerge in four years like one of these Marxists said in the people assembly and they said Oh 500 millionaires surfaced…. He said that two years ago while infitah was two years old…. This means that either the state has worked or opening [as mentioned], or capitals have entered the state, which has allowed 500 people to become millionaires… There has indeed been disparity, and a [new] class has emerged…. True, it is a parasitic class, but

this class has not emerged alone…. Because there is another class that was more conscious than the July 23rd's revolution and more conscious than Abdel-Nasser, they hid money and jewelry under the tile…. When I announced infitah and everyone became safe…. They [money and jewelry] were taken out…. From Masr El Guedida to El-Haram [neighborhoods in Cairo] …. You find at least 1000 buildings at least [repeated in the original speech] …. Of 12 and 14 floors…. But it is luxury housing not like the popular housing we want, who are the owners?... that's the key…. Are they really the millionaire class that recently emerged or those who used to hid money and jewelry under the tile, and who constitute 90% of these owners? ..... I am not resenting anyone, but they [those who hid money and jewelry under the tile] should give me the share of the state. (El-Sadat, 1978, as cited in Imam, 1986, p. 138).

The figure of the nouveau is prevalent in the work of Negm. In *Boutiques*, he mentions a certain Aliwa[16], a penniless, destitute docker who became suddenly a rich bourgeois:

Who among you doesn't know Aliwa	مين فيكوا ما يعرفش عليوه
The penniless docker	شيال المينا الكحيان
He got instantly funded and transformed	فى ثواني اتمول واتحول
Into Monsieur Aliwa Aliyan	بقي مسيو عليوة عليان

"The penniless docker" is Rashad Osman, one of the main antagonists of the 1981 scandal. A millionaire and a former docker in the port of Alexandria, Osman was also a prominent member of Sadat's National party in the people's assembly. He was one of the most

successful nouveau riche in 20th century's Egypt. Thabet (2009) mentions that the wealth of Osman jumped from monthly wage of 30 piastres to a net worth of 300 million pounds (i.e., $80 million dollars in 1981). In December 1981, Osman was convicted of "drug-smuggling, tax evasion, misuse of state lands and corrupt business practices" ("Cairo Trial", 1981).

In the same poem, Negm gives his readers the "recipe" for climbing the social ladders, just like Aliwa did. In the following verses, Negm explicitly impersonates the authorities. According to them, the path for wealth is unconditional submission to the regime. Any attempt to protest or just question the status quo might entail severe consequences:

Your wish is granted, open your brain	شبيك لبيك فتح مخك
Your wish is granted, close your eyes	لبيك شبيك غمض عنيك
If you close your brain, we will shoot you	حتقفل مخك ح نطخك
And we will stab you if you open your eyes	ونلوشك لو تفتح عينك
If you wear two horns, you will ride a Mazda	ركب قرنين تركب مازدا
And will live like a Sultan in that frame	وتعيش سلطان فى البراوز دا
If you protest, all you get is rotten cheese	مش عاجبك فالجبنه الفاسدة
And bread and [fava]beans and green onions	والعيش والفول والكرات

The allyship between the governing elite and the parasitic class is explicitly asserted in *Important communiqué.* In this poem, Negm draws a parody of El-Sadat, under the name of Shehata El Me'assel. The poem comes in the form of a presidential speech, where Shehata is the main speaker. Shehata is introduced as "the master of real estate brokers and gamblers" and a

“greengrocer”. When asked about the rich “big brokers”, he explains that it is against his principles to “disgrace a colleague”:

I am naturally against big brokers	انا بطبعي ضد السماسره الكبار
Due to [honest] competition	بحكم المنافسه
And propinquity	وحكم الجوار
But it is against my nature	لكن مش ف طبيعي
To make a scandal	ان عمل فضيحه
If a colleague of mine	لو احد زميلي
Scavenged few dumpsters	هبش كام صفيحه
All [my] colleagues	ما كل الزمايل
Scavenge dumpsters!	بتهبش صفايح
The upcoming	وكل اللي جاي
Is not like the bygone	مش زي اللي رايح
So, O people	فيا ايها الشعب
Take it easy!	صهين تفعلص

The “dumpster scavenger” is an allusion for *fat cats*, which is another common metaphor for the infitah’s nouveau riche in the Egyptian literature (Eissa, 2007, p. 217). The fat cats are thus well protected by the president himself, who continue his defense of his “colleagues” by calling the Egyptian people to “calm down” and “take it easy”, because the “upcoming” is not like the “bygone”. The reception of this poem confirms its intended

consequences: in 1978, the military court convicted Ahmad Fouad Negm of "insulting the President of the Republic and clamoring[17] to provoke sedition" (Eissa, 2007, p. 220).

Others

There are several "others" in the poetry of Negm that can be divided in two distinct groups: allies and enemies. Allies are "other" people(s) in "other" parts of the world. They share the same suffering and aspirations with "the people". They live under dictatorships and strive for freedom. They serve as an example of perseverance and temerity for Egyptians. They share the same fate of oppression, and destiny for victory. Ethnic and religious ties make this connection even stronger. Negm relates to other Arabs/Muslims in Palestine and neighboring countries as a constituent part of the larger concept of the Ummah (i.e., the Muslim nation) and the Arab world. They are one people that were divided by fake borders, established by colonialists, and reinforced by their local agents.

Neither regressivism	ولا رجعية
Nor colonialism	ولا استعمار
Can separate [two] brothers	بتفرَّق بين الأخين
[…]	[…]
Blessed are the eyes of the redeemers	تكرم عين الفدائيه
The lanterns of the Arab nation	مصابيح الأمة العربية
On the way of the ineluctable union	ع طريق الوحدة الحتمية

[17][17] This term appears in the original language of the court statement as الجهر بالصياح which can be literally translated into "asserting clamor" in English.

From the edges of the Maghreb[18]	من حد المغرب
To the two Easts[19]	للشرقين

But religion and ethnicity cannot separate the "people", per Negm. It does not deter him from mourning the death of Allende, Che Guevara while being in the heart on old Cairo. It does not stop him from celebrating the withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam either.

In Churches	وفى الكنايس
And Mosques	والجوامع
In Lanes	وفى الحواري
And streets	والشوارع
In cafes and Bars	وع القهاوي وع البارات
Guevara died	جيفارا مات
Guevara died	واتمد حبل الدردشه
Stretched the lines of chats and comments	والتعليقات
The exemplary fighter died	مات المناضل المثال
What a great loss for men	ياميت خسارة على الرجال
The young brave died on his guns within forests	مات الجدع فوق مدفعة جوه الغابات

[18] Literally translates in English as the West or the Sunset. In the context of geography, this term is used to refer to North Africa, excluding Egypt.
[19] "The two Easts" refers to Arab countries constituting the near and middle east.

Negm tells us what makes other nations like Egyptians. In *Iran, O Egypt* (1979), he explicates these similarities. Negm wrote this poem to celebrate the Iranian revolution he hoped to serve as an example for Egyptians. As shown throughout his work, Negm shows a particular animosity to the Shah of Iran for his friendship with Anwar El-Sadat and his allyship with Amedfricans. This poem was then an opportunity for Negm to show that what united Egyptians and Iranians is more than what separates them. In addition to kinship, they share the same story of suffering. Thus, "what happened there [Iran], can happen here [Egypt]".

Both Iranians and Egyptians are blessed with mighty countries. They are endowed with beautiful countries and merry atmospheres. Their lands are prosperous and prolific:

O Egypt, Iran is like us	ايران يا مصر، زينا
They [people] had what we have	كان عندهم..
The [their] blood is our blood	ما عندنا
And The [their] distress is of the color of our	الدم هو دمنا
distress	والهم من لون همنا
You hold your ear from your neck	تمسك ودأنك من قفاك
Your hold your ear from here	تمسك ودأنك من هنا
As if God created a twin!	الخالق الناطق هناك
The land is pregnant with spring and wealth	الناطق الخالق هنا
And the atmosphere	الارض حبلى بالربيع وبالغنى
Is charged with poems and singings	والجو
And the sun	مشحون بالقصايد والغنا
Is above all, like our sun	والشمس

And the wealth	فوق الكل تشبه شمسنا
Fills the land, the people, and the edifices	والثروة
	ملو الارض والناس والبنا

Negm believes that Iranians and Egyptians are one in their suffering. They are both plundered and oppressed by Americans and their domestic allies, from journalists and informants to governors.

But the American gang	بس العصابه الامريكانى
Is sitting	مربعه
On the wretched	فوق الغلابه
And the wolves are lurking	والديابه مضبغه
And the four pimp-journalists	والصحفجيه العرصجيه الاربعه
Are wearing [holding] zills [finger cymbals]	لابسين صاجات
And every governing has his own singing	وكل حاكم له غنا
You hold your ear from your neck	تمسك ودأنك من قفاك
Your hold your ear from here	تمسك ودأنك من هنا
As if God created a twin!	الخالق الناطق هناك
The same calamities	الناطق الخالق هناك
Are pilling over the wretched	نفس البلاوي
From poverty, despair and, fear	ع الغلابه متلتله
And oppression is exacerbating	من فقر شوف وهم خوف

The Sword is over peoples' throats	نازل بلا
And informants are like grasshopers	والقهر زاد
Filling the space	والسيف على رقاب العباد
	والمخبرين زي الجراد
	ملو الخلا

After the fall of Shah, Negm wrote several poems to celebrate Khomeini and the Islamic revolution. In all these poems, Negm insists that revolution unites people, regardless of ethnicity or religion. This position is particularly salient in *Deception* (n.d.). In this poem, Negm reveals the elite strategic use of sectarianism to separate Egyptians and Iranians. After being accused of communism, he explains how he is now called a Shi'i just for supporting the overthrow of the Shah. Negm answers these allegations by emphasizing the trans-religious character of revolution. For him, sectarianism does not have a place in religion, because religion is inherently revolutionary. He sees that those who uses the Shi'a-Sunni schism are dividing to conquer. They are precisely scared of a second revolution in Egypt. Negm concludes the poem with an explicit question to the allegators: "Yazid or Al-Hussain?!". This question alludes to the battle of Karbala, where Yazid I, the second Umayyad Caliphate, killed Al-Hussain Ibnu Ali, the grandson of Prophet Mohammad. In this question, Yazid symbolizes oppression, while Al-Hussain incarnates revolution and martyrdom. Negm is thus urging his allegators to clarify their position: either being with the people or against them.

They are Shi'a	دا شيعه
We are Sunni	واحنا سنه

Where are they and where we are!	دا فين ومصر فين!
They want to confuse us	عايزين يدخلونا
Some say you [Negm] are Communist	نظام ودنك منين
And pretending to be Shi'i	وناس تقول شيوعي
Because they are of course afraid	وعامل نفسه شيعي
It becomes two revolutions	عشان خايفين طبيعي
O our masters the thieves	ليبقوا ثورتين
We have read in the texts	يا أسيادنا اللصوص
That if the man becomes desperate	قرينا ف النصوص
The hell with the two sects!	لو الإنسان يلوص
And we saw in the book [Quran]	يغوروا الفرقتين
That religion is God's judgement	وشفنا ف الكتاب
A revolution and a belonging	ولقينا الدين حساب
And eye for eye	وثورة وانتساب
You stole the revolution from us	وعين تساوي عين
And said patience is a blessing	وسرقتوا الثورة منا
And the reward of patience is Heaven	وقلتوا الصبر منّه
And a door with two keys	وعقب الصبر جنّه
	وباب بمفتاحين
Sovereignty became yours	ودان المَلُك ليكو
[…]	[…]
And you made two Islams	وعملتوا اسلامين
And called the Imam [Ali] a blasphemer	وكفرتوا الامام

[…]	[…]
In a nutshell	وخلاصة الكلام..
Yazid or Al-Hussain??!	يزيد ولاّ الحسين!؟؟

Apocalypse

Unlike its definition in the literature on European/Western populism, there is a striking difference as compared to the idea of populism in the works on Ahmad Fouad Negm. Apocalypse is internal to the western populist discourse. For Laclau (1977), crisis is even a pre-condition to populism. He argues that populism is historically linked to a crisis of the dominant ideological discourse, which in turn is part of more general social crisis" (Laclau, 1977, p. 175). In the Western/European context, crisis is manifested in the apocalyptic view of the future. According to this view, the fate of the people is under the control of a malevolent and omnipotent elite. This elite is actively conspiring against the people, aiming at systematically destroying the people's interests and culture. This type of discourse is still prevalent in contemporary right-wing populism.

Negm's people are also awaiting some sort of apocalypse. Ironically, this apocalypse seems more redemptive than detrimental. They are promised salvation and deliverance from injustice and poverty. The elite, on the other hands, are the ones to fear an upcoming apocalypse, when the people rise to change destiny.

Revolution

Revolution is thus a perquisite for salvation to happen and for destiny to adhere to the will of the people. Simultaneously, for the elite, revolution means the great apocalypse. The apocalypse generally means the end of the world, or the end of time or the end of the world. It keeps the same meaning here: It is not a detrimental event for everyone. It is the end of the world of injustice, discrimination, and oppression. It is the end of the heydays of the elite and their exploitation of the people.

[O Egypt] ask on my behalf	واسألِيلي
Every scholar in our country	كل عالم في بلدنا
Every tower, every minaret	كل برج وكل مادنه
Every friend among our friends	كل صاحب من صحابنا
Every child from our children	كل عيِّل من ولادنا
Whether anyone has seen a sign	حد فيهم شاف علامة
From the signs of **the day of resurrection**	من علامات القيامة
Before the coming of good omens	قبل ما تهل البشاير
On the 18th of January	يوم تمنتاشر يناير
When Egypt rose	لما قامت مصر قومه
While they thought it [she] was asleep	بعد ما ظنوها
Cursing hunger and humiliation	نومه
And injustice	تلعن الجوع والمذلة
And the government?	والمظالم
	والحكومة؟

In this chapter, I presented the results of the discourse analysis of the duo Imam-Negm's songs. The analysis showed the existence of four main themes connoting the concept of populism: "the elite", "the people", "others", and "the apocalypse". In the next chapter, I will apply the same methodology on the songs of Nass El-Ghiwane to investigate how these artists express populist sentiments in their respective social and historical contexts.

CHAPTER 5

THE MOROCCAN CASE: NASS EL-GHIWANE

In this chapter, I present the key results of the analysis of the songs of Nass El-Ghiwane using the methodology of discourse analysis. The themes of the coding process are mainly the people, the elite, and others. Within each theme are sub-themes that further explain its meaning. For instance, I find that the main sub-themes under "the people" are "immorality", "nostalgia", and "immigration and alienation". Similarly, the theme of the "elite" includes "conspiracy" and "ignorance". "Others" appears as a stand-alone theme, explaining the relationship between Nass El-Ghiwane and the "people" that live beyond their geographic borders.

The people

Immorality

Unlike the self-glorification rhetoric that dominates western populist rhetoric, Nass El-Ghiwane take a different approach. Their people seem to be weak, wretched, and divided. We learn from Mudde (2017) that in populism, the key distinction between the people and the elite is morality. The people are morally pure and authentic, while the elite is corrupt and treacherous. This "logic of populism" (Müller, 2017) places the people in a position of moral superiority vis-à-vis their opponent. In right-wing populism, the opponent category is extended to include "others" or "out-groupers" including immigrants and minorities.

In their songs, Nass El-Ghiwane draw a shocking picture of an extremely corrupt, immoral people. The behavior of the so-called "pure" people is far from purity and authenticity. They are imbued with greed, selfishness, and treason. But this extreme self-flagellation does not end here. Nass El-Ghiwane further contend that if the people are suffering, it is because of their

sins and misdemeanor. In other words, they are the authors of their own misery. They are weak, divided, and desperate because they drifted away from God. We see these meanings clearly in *Lotf Allah Al-khafi* [The hidden kindness of God] (n.d.)

Life wouldn't oppress us if it was not for	لَــوْلاَ ضُعْــفَ الإِيمَــانْ مَــا يْجُــورْ الزْمَــان
our weak faith	وِيْـوَلّيــوْ الطُّغْيَــانْ بْ لَقَهَــرْ جَايْرِيــنْ
Tyrant wouldn't prevail and get stronger	وَالْمَسْكِــينْ الْهَيْمَــانْ فْ الشّقَــا وُلْمْحَــانْ
And the wretched one, lost in misery	يِتْمَنَّــى الْمُــوتْ عْيَــانْ مَـا وْجْدْهَــا فْ حِيــنْ
Wishing for death, but never find it	[…]
[…]	بَحْنَــا بِالْمُحْرِمَــاتْ وُلَمْعَاصِــي قْــوَاتْ
We basked in the forbidden, **sins intensified**	وُعْقُولْ النَّاسْ طْغَــاتْ غَافْلَــة عْــلْ الْمُــوتْ
And the conscious of people became	
unrestrained, oblivious to death	قُـومَانْ صَمَّتْ وُعْمَــاتْ غَرَّتْهُــمْ الْحَيَــاةْ
	تَبْعُوا حُبُّ الشَّهــوَاتْ
People(s) that become deaf and blind,	
beguiled by life	
Following the love of joys	

But the effect of immorality transcends personal suffering and misery. In *Shufu l'aajab* [Lo and behold] (n.d.), Nass El-Ghiwane lament the decadence and the weakness of the Arab nation. The song is a conversation with a Sage, *Sheikh Leklam*, on the defeat of Arabs before enemies. The band implores the sage for an explanation to the victory of injustice and falsehood in their chaotic world. The people who were strong and pious, are today wretched, lost, and unidentifiable. They ceased to be "Arabs", a word that carries a history of victories and delight,

in the bands' understanding. For Nass El-Ghiwane and their Sage, the people ceased to be "Arabs" because they deviated from the path of their prophet.

Tell us, O sage!	كلمنا يا شيخ لكلام كلمنا
Tell us why falsehood is protecting the Zionists	قول لينا مال الصهيون الزور حاميه
	قول لينا مال المنكر الزور حاميه
Tell us why falsehood is protecting abomination	[…]
[…]	شوفو شوفو لعجب
Lo and behold	ما بقينا عرب
We ceased to be Arabs	السبع ولى خرتيت
The lion became a rhino	[…]
[…]	حنا اضيع من الأيتام
We are more lost than orphans	واصغر من النملة
Smaller than the ant	واضعف من لرنب
Weaker than the rabbit	[…]
[…]	شوفو لعجب ما بقينا عرب
Lo and behold	ناس شايخة و ناس دايخة
Some are drunk and some are cheerful	و ناس تحت الحيوط الخايخة
While others are under rotten walls	شوفو لعجب ما بقينا عرب
[…]	ما انتم كفار ولا مجوس تعبدو النار
Lo and behold	ما انتم مسيح ولا مسلمين منكم لخبار
You are neither blasphemers nor Zoroastrians worshipping fire	ما خلصتو لسيرة زين لبها سيد لبرار

You are neither a Christ, nor Muslim or

apostles

You were not loyal to the legacy of the master

of the righteous [Prophet Mohammad]

In *Shufu Laajab,* Arabness is a moral standard rather an ethnicity. In the context of this poem, Arabness and Islam are inextricably linked. Arabs lost their value when they renounced to the legacy of their prophet. We find this idea to be present in the Islamic tradition. Umar Ibn al-Khattab, one of the earliest Muslim and a prominent caliphate in Islamic history, spoke of Arabs as a "disgraced nation" that only Islam can elevate: "Verily, we were a disgraceful people and Allah honored us with Islam. If we seek honor from anything besides that with which Allah honored us, Allah will disgrace us." (Al-Mustadrak 'alá al-Ṣaḥīḥayn, The book of faith, p. 237). This hadith[20] is one of many religious texts that shapes the relationship between race and faith in the Islamic thought. Notwithstanding the religious diversity in the Arab world, the period preceding the revelations is historically referred to as *Al-Jahiliya*, the Arabic word for *the age of ignorance*. In the collective Muslim memory, this period is remembered for idolatry, hedonism, tribalism, and chauvinism. The disgrace that Umar Ibn Al-Khattab mentions englobes all these social ills that were redeemed by Islam. In his words, Islam seems to be the only remedy for the Arab "disgrace" that if supplanted, would make them worse than they were.

[20] In Islamic theology, a hadith is a quote from the Prophet Muhammad or his companions.

In his interpretation of this hadith, Al-Muqaddam (n.d.) extolls the "uniqueness" of the Arabic experience with religion as a compared to other nations:

> After the nation of Arabs had been the most humiliated and debased of all nations, God raised them with this religion, but any other nation, if it adheres to its religion, will regress! If it leaves its religion, it advances, except for the nation of Islam. If they [Muslims] abandon their religion, they must be at the bottom of nations. Because they rejected the grace of God; Because God honored them with what he did not honor any other nation in the worlds. He honored them with the Qur'an, Islam, and the Sunnah of the master of humankind, may the peace and blessings of God be upon him. Unlike other nations, as we have seen, for example the Japanese nation, they rose and advanced when they abandoned their religion, and when they [westerners] claim that Western civilization is a Christian civilization, this is a lie; Because they did not rise until after they renounced the church and religion and isolated the latter within the walls of churches, as is well known. In the French Revolution, they raised a well-known slogan: Hang the last king with the intestines of the last priest. (p. 17)

The western civilization is thus not Christian, according to Al-muqaddam, but western populists have a different opinion. The western populist discourse is rife with references to Christianity and Christian values, despite its secular foundations. However, several scholars warn that in this context, "Christianity" is emptied from its theological significance. Being Christian switches from being a faith to an ethnic identity. For instance, Spencer (2021) distinguishes between Christendom and Christianity in the populist thinking. Christendom bears "ethno-cultural-national" meanings that "favor material and geographic manifestations of the faith over and above personal or relational ones", Whereas Christianity is a faith that is hardly practiced.

Furthermore, the Christian badge is often used by right-wing populists to reinforce community membership and trace boundaries between the “natives” and “others” among immigrants and minorities. In conclusion, we can see that western populists and Nass El-Ghiwane intersect in their conceptualization of religion as an identity, yet they significantly differ in their understanding of the concept of identity. For western populists, Christianity is hallmark of ethnicity and nativism rather than a way of life. For Nass El-Ghiwane, Islam is a way of life that transcends any ethnic or cultural considerations. In its absence, identity loses its significance.

Yet the relationship between oppression and morality is not steady across their poetry. In *Glory be to Allah* (n.d.) the people seem to be trapped in a colossal moral chaos they did not mean to create. It is mainly attributed to the tyranny of the sovereigns, who are responsible for the misery and the desolation of the people and their world.

Glory be to Allah, our summer became winter	سبحـان الله صيفنـا ولـى شتـــــوة
And spring became fall	وارجع فصل الربيع ف البلدان خريف
Our days went by, it abruptly stole us	ومضات إيامنا سرقـتـنـا سهـــــوة
And all religions got mixed, what would I describe?!	وتخلط لـديان شلى ليك نصيـــف قلت أعجبي اضحات ف الدين الرخوة
I say, I am surprised religion is not taken seriously	ولى الإيمان عندنا ف لعرب ضعيـف […] ولا تلقـى عـديل كايقبـــل شكـــوى
The faith [in God] of Arabs [us] has weakened	ويبلغ ما يخون ما يرضى تكليـــــف جور الحكـام زادنا تعـــب وقســوة
[…]	لا راحة والعباد ف نكد و تعسيـــــف

You find no judge accepting a complaint

And who convey the message without
betrayal
The tyranny of the sovereign exacerbated our
suffering
No solace, and people are under distress and
oppression

In *Fin ghadi biya* [Where are you taking me?] (1973)[21], we see the impact of immorality on the people's world. Their world is dominated by chaos and confusion. Corruption has altered everything, including the law of nature. Nothing seems to comply with the norms of justice. It is an upside-down place where the brave is detained, while the coward is free and privileged.

The hawk that is in the cage	يا من هو بَازْ فْ لَقفازْ
The Rooster that [proudly] stood on the hill	يا من هو فروج عل الكَنْدْرَة ونشر جناحه
and extended his wings	يا من هو تِلّيسْ اعطى ظهرو لَتَّغْـرَازْ
The brave that gave his back for stabbing	عمرني ما ريت لغزال تمشي بَلْمْهْمَازْ
I have never seen a gazelle walking with a	وفراخ الخيل عَادُوا سْرَاحُوا
spur	عمرني ما ريت النخلة تعطي حب الْغـَازْ
Or the ponies leading horses	بعد الثمر وُتَبْلاَحُهْ

[21] The dates in the citations of Nass El Ghiwane's songs reflect the release date of the album but may not reflect the original date of its composition.

I have never seen a palm throwing doums	[…]
[fruit] after dates	ألیام ألیام یَا بَتِّي مَالْكْ عُوْجَا
[…]	
Oh days, why are you disfigured	

The relationship between immorality and oppression is thus bidirectional. In this sense, Nass El-Ghiwane echo the views of their society. An in-depth look at the explanation of oppression and social injustice in the Arab-Muslim culture confirms this point. We know from the Islamic tradition that corruption and disasters on earth are the natural aftermath of sins, misdeeds:

> Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by [reason of] what the hands of people have earned so He may let them taste part of [the consequence of] what they have done that perhaps they will return [to righteousness]. (Quran 30:41, Sahih International)

"And whatever strikes you of disaster - it is for what your hands have earned; but He pardons much." (Quran 42:30, Sahih International)

Al-Tabari (2003) interprets "corruption" as the misdemeanors of humans, which are manifested in the intentional transgression of the law of God on earth. On the other hand, "disaster" refers to worldly adversities and misfortunes, including poverty, bereavement, and dispossession.

But people can also be mere victims of oppressions, regardless of their piety and righteousness. In his renown *Introduction to history,* Ibn Khaldun explains the impact of tyranny

on the morality of the people. Under severe punishment and oppression, deceit and scheming become a common mean of self-protection. The strive for survival detaches people from their homeland, eventually leady to betrayal and unfaithfulness. Ibn Khaldun concludes that when immorality becomes the norm, the whole society collapses and chaos prevails:

> If the ruler uses force and is ready to mete out punishment and eager to expose the faults of people and to count their sins, (his subjects) become fearful and depressed and seek to protect themselves against him through lies, ruses, and deceit. This becomes a character trait of theirs. Their mind and character become corrupted. They often abandon (the ruler) on the battlefield and (fail to support his) defensive enterprises. The decay of (sincere) intentions causes the decay of (military) protection. The subjects often conspire to kill the ruler. Thus, the dynasty decays, and the fence (that protects it) lies in ruins. If the ruler continues to keep a forceful grip on his subjects, group feeling will be destroyed, for reasons stated at the beginning. The fence (which protects the dynasty) is torn down, for the dynasty has become incapable of (military) protection. (On the other hand,) if the ruler is mild and overlooks the bad sides of his subjects, they will trust him and take refuge with him. They (then) love him heartily and are willing to die for him in battle against his enemies. Everything is then in order in the state. (p. 254) [needs to be edited]

Nass El-Ghiwane might agree with Ibn Khaldun that betrayal and abandonment is prevalent among the people, however, the latter are not totally oblivious of their reality. They want to change it, but they are weak and hopeless. In *Ya Sah* [1971-1978], we witness the confessions of a mundane individual. This person pleads for his defeated people, who despite their consciousness of their situation, cannot make a change. They are alone and forsaken, surrounded and derided by enemies. They don’t see hope because no one is there to help:

O you, have pity on me	واووين أوين شاوروا عليـــــــا
O my friend, this world is not eternal	واه ولفـــي والدنيـــا مـــا تـــدوم
I have shed so many tears	بكاو حتى عياو بالدمع نجالـــــــي
My state has deteriorated	حالي تبدل حالـــه هـــذا أحـــوال
My enemies are all over me	والعديان ف جنابي كلها يشالـــــي
Some are manipulating me, others are	شي سالب عقلي شي عاجبه الحال
scoffing at me	وأنا وسط الحملة و وحدي نلالـــي
Alone, desperate in the crusade	لا من مد لي يده ولا عني ســـــال
No one asked about me, no one extended their	مليت الوحدة ومليت ما جرى لـــي
hands	غرضي بالسلام يفاجي خبالـــــي
I am sick of loneliness; I am sick of what	نبكي على محرابه شلى إيـــــام
happened to me	وين أوين أوين شاوروا عليـــــا
My yearning for peace appeases my	شفتـــي الحالـــة يـــاعينـــي دوي مـــا بيديـــا مـــا
melancholy	نديـــــــر
Crying on its altar over and over	آياي يا عيني ادوي
O you, have pity on me	والرحمـــة ف الدنيـــا قليلـــة مـــا بيديـــا مـــا
You saw my situation	نديـــــــر
There is nothing I can do	آياي يا عيني ادوي
We are a few, we cannot be divided	كيف نوالف يا عالم كيف نوالف عيشتـــي فيـــك بـــلا
I thought only a herd of sheep can be divided	سلـــام
Now we are all the same	آياي يا عيني ادوي

قـــــلال قـــــلال احنـــــــا واش فينـــــــا مـــــا يتقســـــم

عهـدي بلوزيعــة ف لغنـــــم سرنـــــــا فيهـــــا

كامليـــــن

But are they really going to surrender? This is another contradiction we find in the songs of Nass El-Ghiwane. The answer is no, they will not. This poem concludes with a striking description of the will of the people, in the form of an intense ardor that cannot be halted. Complaining, depicted by "the screaming of a raven" will not bring relief. The poem ends with a popular proverb: By God, we cannot steam it [food] unless we close it [steamer]. As Daroun (2000, p. 351) explains, this proverb symbolizes determination and firmness in the Moroccan tradition. In other words, one cannot overcome hardship if they do not challenge it. In the context of *Ya Sah*, it seems that confrontation and revolution are the only way to overturn injustice.

Forgive the mute if he spoke	سَامْحُوا لَبْكَمْ إِلَى تْكَلْمْ
We are a few, we cannot be divided	احْنَا قْلالْ مَا فِينَا مَا يْتقسمَ
If erupted, ardor cannot be halted	ألوَجْدْ إِلَى يْهِيجْ مَا عْنْدُهْ صَحْوَة
If divulged, secrets cannot be cloaked	السَّرْ إِلَى انْحَلْ مَا غَطَّاهْ خْنِيفْ
The sun of the alive cannot warm the dead	شْمْسْ الحَيّينْ مَا تْدْفِي المُوتَى
The rain does not fall from the screaming of a raven	مَاشِي بْصْيَاحْ لْغْرَابْ كَاتْجِي الشْتَا
By God, we cannot steam it [food] unless we close it [steamer]	والله وُمَا قْفْلنَا لاَ فورْنَا

This meaning of determination is further explicated in other songs, including *Ma hamouni* [I only grieve] (1976) and *Nnadi ana* [I am calling] (1971-1978). The opening of *Ma hamouni* describes an unprecedented image of hope and survival. The question here is on grief, or what is worthy of grievance? According to Nass El-Ghiwane, neither poverty nor disasters or imprisonment can be compared with the loss of a human life or the suffering of a child.

I only grieve for the lost men	ما همومي غير الرجال إلى ضاعـــــــو
If walls collapsed, each one of us would build	لحيوط إلى رابو كلها يبنـــــــي دار
a house	ما همومي غير الصبيان مرضو وجاعــو
I only grieve for hungry and sick children	والغرس إلى سقط نوضو نغرسوا أشجار
If plants perished, we would plant trees	والحوض إلى جف واسود نعناعـــــــه
If the mint dried in our basin	الصغير ف رجالنا يجنيه فاكية وثمـــار
The novice of our men would make it a fruit	مصير وحدين عند اخرين ساهل تنزاعه
garden	وشعاع الشمس ما تخزنه لســــــوار
It is easy for some to deracinate [destroy]	
others' destiny	
But a fence can never eclipse sunlight	

Nostalgia

Nostalgia occupies a significant space in the songs of Nass El-Ghiwane. The band invokes an ideal, distant past that cannot be restored. The band yearns for a peaceful life in a utopian village, where everything and everyone are pure and authentic. This notion of nostalgia is comparable to the western "agrarian myth" in many aspects. Originally coined by Hofstadter

(1955), the agrarian myth is “belief that the most desirable form of community is found in rural, specifically agrarian, village life” (Christensen & Levinson, 2014). This concept incorporates community values of integrity, solidarity, and honesty. Hofstadter (1955) the word myth, does not necessarily imply the fictionality of this concept. It rather reflects a set of values, and how these values effect one’s behavior and perception of reality. Hofstadter concludes that the agrarian myth is not a “myth” in the common sense of the word, but its degree of fiction or reality is unstable: “the agrarian myth became increasingly fictional as time went on” (p. 24). The loss of agrarian values to modern urbanism explains why this concept is evoked in the context of nostalgia. Nostalgia to a past, ideal agrarian life is the consequence of a deep disappointment with the present. The present is the counterfeit, materialistic urban dystopia.

The farmer is the main protagonist of the agrarian myth. The farmer embodies the characteristics of the ideal citizen: hardworking, honest, healthy, and happy. He is the community and family man per excellent. All this makes him the “the best and the most reliable sort of citizen” because in addition of his high moral standards, he has his own means of production and contributes to the general welfare (Hofstadter, 1955, p.24). The farmer is also entrusted with a sacred mission, that is cultivating the land and feeding its people.

Christensen & Levinson (2014) qualifies the agrarian myth as “primarily a western phenomenon”, resulting from massive technological development in western countries. The uniqueness of the agrarian myth also comes from its political connotation. For Brass (1997), western populism finds its roots in the peasant’s first contact with modernity or his reaction to capitalism and its phenomena, namely industrialization and urbanization. According to this view, the country utopia is receding and being eradicated and supplanted by the city dystopia. Because the country life embodies morality and authenticity, western populism places it at the center of

national identity. We find this stance in almost all 19th and 20th century populist movements across the west. In the far west, movements like Farmer's Alliance and the Populist Party called place the farmer at the core of American identity. These movements defined their vocation in uniting "the farmers of America class legislation and the encroachments of concentrated capital" (Hamby, 2011, p. 132).

But an in-depth look at the songs of Nass El-Ghiwane reveals that the agrarian myth might not be exclusively a western phenomenon. Its underlying conditions are, nevertheless, different. Similarly, the world of Nass El-Ghiwane is shattered by modernization and urbanization. The difference is that these two phenomena were not brought by a national industrial revolution, but rather imposed by the colonial power. This adds a new dimension to Nass El-Ghiwane's "agrarian myth". It is a feeling of dispossession and deprivation from one's world and home. The village enshrines national identity and strong kinship, where geographic and tribal boundaries overlap. The nature of the post-colonial Moroccan society further corroborate this idea. Pre-colonial Morocco was essentially tribal, or a "mosaic of tribes" as the 19th century European ethnologists choose to describe it. Laroui (1977) that geography is not the only defining factor of the Moroccan tribe. In fact, the history Morocco is rife with instances of tribal mobility pertaining to the nomadic lifestyle of the tribe or displacement by the authorities. Thus, ethnicity and tradition remain the most stable factors in this tribal equation. In the colonial era, the reality of the Moroccan society started to change. We talk about a country whose rural population was more than 80% before independence, all of which lived within tribal regions (El Mansouri, n.d., p. 87). Colonial industrialization and modernization of the country would ultimately push the boundaries of the urban space. In the eve of independence, Morocco knew a phenomenon of rural exodus, mainly caused by the marginalization of the rural world and the

broadening gap between the quality of life in the city and the village (CFCIM, 2015). Expectedly, the rural exodus had contributed in the decomposition of the tribal system, and most importantly the communal life of rural Moroccans.

Being themselves from migrant rural families, Nass El-Ghiwane invoke their rural past in a yearning tone. For them, the village embodies the virtues of honesty, solidarity, and valor. In *Ssiniya*[22] [the tea tray] (1973), we hear Nass El-Ghiwane lamenting the absence of what they call "the people of good faith". "The people of good faith" are the virtuous people of the past. The SSiniya is the tea tray symbolizes solidarity, companionship, and harmony. The choice of the Ssiniya is not arbitrary. In the Moroccan culture, tea drinking amounts to a social ritual. It is essentially a group activity. Tea not the drink of the solitary and should be enjoyed in group. The ceremonial preparation of tea connotes this meaning of social unity. The custom dictates the tea to be prepared under the sight of guests. The act of pouring and distributing tea glasses is an honorary role, attributed to the senior of the group. When serving, the guest receives the first glass, as an expression of estimation and recognition. Omar Sayed, one of the founders of Nass El-Ghiwane, confirms this view. He specifies that the English word "tray" would not do justice to the rich meanings of the "Siniya". He suggests "The pleasure to Share" as its closest translation (Simour, 2016, p. 6).

The Siniya unfolds in a mournful narrative of the present. The band is bereaved with the joy of sharing and companionship. This feeling is depicted with a solitary tea glass in the tray. Even the taste of its tea has changed. Its bitterness cannot be alleviated with the sweetness of sugar or the freshness of mint.

[22] Assiniya الصينية is a traditional Moroccan tea tray, made of silver or cooper.

Where are those who gathered around you	فين اللّي يْجْمْعُو عْلِيكْ اهَلْ النِيَّة
The people of good faith	آه يا الصينية
O, the Ssiniya!	فين اللّي يْجْمْعُو عْلِيكْ اهَلْ النِيَّة
	آه يا الصينية
Those who kept you good company	
The people of generosity and contentment	دُوكْ اللّي يَونْسُوكْ
My life, my neighborhood, everything I own	فِينْ اهْلْ الجُودْ وَالرْضَى
O, The Ssiniya!	فَينْ حْيَاتِي، فِينْ حُومْتِي وُاللّي لِيَّا
	أه يَا الصِّينِيَّة
Habits are hard to break	
The love of the glass is not easy	وَاعْرْ بْلاَهْ، مَا سَاهْلْ حْبْ الكَاسْ
Their [people] affection is addictive	آهْ يَا غْيَّاثْ، مَا نْسَاكْ الخَاطْرْ
The love of the people is not easy	وَاعْرْ بْلاَهْم، مَا سَاهْلْ عَشْقْ النَّاسْ
O Redeemer, my soul did not forget you	آه يَا غْيَّاثْ، حْرَامْ يِنْسَاكْ الخَاطْرْ
Why is my glass sad among the glasses?	
Why is my glass lost, burdened by sorrow?	أَيَا نْدَامْتِي وَيَا نْدَامْتِي
Why is my glass crying alone?	وُمَالْ كَاسِي حْزِين مَا بِين الْكِيسَانْ ؟
Why is my glass mourning its luck?	أَيَا نْدَامْتِي وَيَا نْدَامْتَي
Why is my glass unfortunate?	وْمَالْ كَاسِي تَايْهْ تَايْنِينْ زَادْ قُوَّا عْلِيَّا ْلحْزَانْ ؟
	مَالْ كَاسِي بَاكِي وَحْدُه

O, the Siniya	مَالْ كَاسِي نَادْبْ حَظُّه
	مَالْ كَاسِي يَا وَعْدُه هَذَا نَكْدُه، غَابْ سَعْدُه؟
Why can't my glasses eliminate this	أُه يَا الصِّينِيَّة
bitterness?	
Why can't my mint diffuse greenness?	[...]
Why everything hurts?	أَيَا نْدَامْتِي وُمَالْ سُكْرِي عَاجْزْ يْزُولْ هَادْ لَمْرُورَة ؟
Why is my soul forsaken, neglected, and	أَيَا نْدَامْتِي وُمَالْ نَعْنَاعِي عَاجْزْ يِطْلْقْ لْخْضُورَة
oppressed?	
O, the Siniya	مَالْ كُلُّ حَاجَة مَعْكُورَة؟
	مَالْ دَاتِي هَكْذَا مَهْجُورَة، مَنْكُورَة مَقْهُورَة ؟
	آهْ يَا الصِّينِيَّة

The image of the tray is further substantiated in *Fin ghadi biya* [Where are you taking me?] (1973). In this song, Nass El-Ghiwane invoke the good old days in the Moroccan village. Aspects of the rural life in Morocco are meticulously described. The band mentions musical instruments, artifacts, and ceremonial festivities that were eclipsed by the post-independence wave of modernity. Although not explicitly stated, these images imply an altered, materialistic reality on the urban side of Morocco.

I did not forget the Bendir[23], I did not forget	أنا ما نسيت البنديـــر أنا ما نسيت القصبـــة
the Qasbah[24]	أنا ما نسيت الموسم والخيل سربة سربـــة

[23] The bendir (musical instrument) is the Moroccan variant of the frame drum.
[24] In the Moroccan architecture, the Qasbah is the "central part of a town or citadel" (Petersen, 1996, p. 236). The closest translation to Qasbah is "fortress".

I did not forget the ceremony and the fantasia[25]	أنا ما نسيت الگـُـورْ ولا مجمع الطلبـــــة
I did not forget the agora and the reciters' gathering	أنا ما نسيت دواري يـا بـلاد القصبـــــة
I did not forget my neighborhood[26], O land of the fort	أنا ما نسيت لعشيـرة ولا گمـــح الرحبـــة
I did not forget tribe, nor the wheat of the grain market	أنا ما نسيت حياتـــي يـــا نـــاس المحبـــة
I did not forget my life, O people of compassion	أنا ما نسيت ناســـي خَايْتْ هَدِي نَكْبَـــــة
I did not forget my people, O this is a calamity	

Similar rural nostalgia appears in the autobiography of Laarbi Batma, a founding member of Nass El-Ghiwane. Batma (1995) recalls in desolation a utopian life in his village. He describes an intense feeling of serenity and complete unity with nature. This dream was shattered by his father's decision to migrate to the city. The author describes a "city monster", tearing him apart:

> I was torn between the country and the city… ignorant of the torment of the city… and the bliss of the country… O my beautiful, extinct village… God bless beautiful feelings

[25] The Moroccan fantasia, also called Tbourida التبوريدة (in Darija: the gunpowder game) is a traditional Moroccan equestrian show dating back to the 16th century. Tbourida is equivalent to a military parade, commemorating the Arab-Amazigh war rituals. In 2021, UNESCO inscribed Tbourida as intangible cultural heritage of humanity (UNESCO, 2021).

[26] This word appears in the original text as *Douar* دوار refers to a "group of habitations, fixed or mobile, temporary or permanent, gathering individuals related by blood or kinship" (CNRTL, 2021).

> in the arms your nests, mountains, and plains. Delightful, clamorous feelings, between your valleys, rivers, and wells… It was verily, a beautiful feeling. I tried to remember it, and I know a lot slipped out of my mind…Beautiful feelings that were changed by the arrival of my father one day, when he insisted to take his children to the city. It was thus separation, tears, and pain from the families' end… He entrusted one child to them, and took the rest… And then, it was the city monster (p. 59).

The city monster is no other than Casablanca. After the independence, Casablanca emerged as the first and largest industrial city in Morocco. The city thus witnessed an unprecedented rural migration. Families, escaping drought and poverty, relocated in slams around the industrial zone. Among the first and most known migrant neighborhood in Casablanca is Carriere Central, later re-named as Al-Hay Al- Mohammadi or simply Al-Hay. Among the first families to relocate in Al-Hay are the ones of Nass El-Ghiwane members. What they have in common is poverty and the rural past. They all come from remote villages across the country. In remembrance of their debut, Omar Al Sayed recalls the birthplace of their band:

> We are all from Al-Hay Al-Mohammad, where our families have resided for more than seventy years. My Father, Ba Abdullah, came from Souss like the parents of Boujmi' and Allal, whereas the family of Laarbi Batma is from the Shaouia, precisely from the reguon of Oulad Bouziri. Back then, Al-Hay Al-Mohammadi was called" Carriere Central" or "the industrial zone", because it is originally an industrial neighborhood. There was a roadway for factories and workshops, and it was the first paved road in Casablanca for big and hard trucks, just like its drivers. […] Carriere Central was back then a big neighborhood of slams. In the slams lived people who came [to Casablanca] looking for

jobs from all over Morocco. In addition to their relatives, they brought with them their authentic customs and qualities (p. 377).

Immigration and alienation

It is not surprising that immigration gets often evoked in the songs of Nass El-Ghiwane. In Morocco, as well as in the rest of Africa, immigration is essentially a post-colonial phenomenon that was initiated in the 1950s. The first wave consisted of "indigenous allies" or those who fought with the French legion in Southeastern Asia and Europe during the WWII. The second wave of "wanted immigrants" were low-skilled guest-workers who were massively solicited in Europe to tackle the postwar labor shortage. For this second category of breadwinner immigrants, crossing the Mediterranean was more of a way of fleeing poverty and supporting their families back home, rather than a pursuit of the European Eldorado. The roots indeed remained in the homeland, making the new host country similar to a "temporary exile". In the North African popular culture of the era, we can sense a deep attachment to the origins. One of the most famous songs commemorating this phenomenon is Dahman El-Harrachi's *Ya Rayah* (1973), a Sha'bi[27] song that is still considered the anthem of immigration. The song is a reproach for a man who is set to leave his country for the northern shore. The tone of reproach is nevertheless compassionate, warning this man from the vagaries of life and the uncertainty of the future in the land of foreigners. The reproaching friend speaks of fact: he was/is himself an immigrant that experienced the pain of alienation.

O you who is leaving, where are you travelling?	يا الرَايح وين مسافر تروح تعيّا وتولي شحال. ندمو العباد الغافلين قبلك وقبلي

[27] Sha'bi (in English: popular or of the people) is the Arabic name of the pop music genre in North Africa.

You will eventually feel exhausted and come back	شحال.شفت البلدان العامرين والبر الخالي
Many have regretted it, before you and me	شحال. ضيعت اوقات وشحال تزيد ما زال تخلي
How many countries and deserts have you seen?	يا الغايب في بلاد الناس شحال تعيَا ما تجري
How much time you wasted, how much you will still be wasting.	بِك وعد القدرة ولّى زمان وأنت ما تدري
O absent one, no matter how much you run in foreign lands[28]	
You will certainly encounter your fate, but you don't know.	

We find similar meanings in the songs of Nass El-Ghiwane. In Hawd Al-na'na' [the basin of mint] (n.d.), the band is calling a friend to revoke his decision of leaving the homeland. The homeland here is the family and the hearts of the beloved ones. Like the reproaching friend in *Ya Rayah*, Nass El-Ghiwane are describing a world of hazard, deceit, and deception in the land of foreigners. His departure is loss for everyone. The band choses to call this unnamed person "the basin of spearmint". It is important to note that this metaphor does not merely serve aesthetic purposes. As mentioned before in the discussion of *As-siniya*, mint tea is a symbol of conviviality, hospitality, and social harmony in the Moroccan culture. Green tea, spearmint, and sugar are its inextricable ingredients. The absence of spearmint means an un-aromatic, dull, bitter

[28] This expression appears in the original text as بلاد الناس (i.e., the land of the people) which is used in local dialects to refer to the land of "others" or "foreigners" from the speakers' standpoint.

glass of tea. Such is the absence of the band's beloved one. He is refreshing, reviving, generous and most important essential, like spearmint for a tea pot.

The Heart is asking about you, O you who left without a farewell	القلب مسول عليك أيَا رَّايْحْ بْلاَ وْدَاعْ مخلي اهلك ومالیك تطرح سؤال وُشَّاعْ
You left your family and people, lost in confusion	لفين يا غادي قصدك طريق كله غداع ظلام حايط بيك و النور كله سباع
Where are you heading to? Your way is full of deception	خليك معانا خليك يا حوض النعناع كلنا محتاجين ليك ف قلبنا حبك صراع
You are surrounded by darkness, and the light is full of [reveals] lions	محال نعيشو بلا بيك محال حبك يتباع ارجع نغمو فيك ريح الراحة و تساع
We cannot leave without you, O basin of spearmint	أنت إيمانا ف الحب أوراقنا مسقية بعينيك
Come back, so we enjoy your serenity and comfort	[…]
You are our belief in love, our leaves are watered by your eyes	يا رايح والليل راح والما عل الوطان راح
O you who is leaving, the night is gone, and the water left the homelands	كون طاير صداح بالأمل لكل رباع
Be the bird chanting hope for everyone	الغربة شانها طاح خليك يا حوض النعناع
Estrangement has become unworthy, please stay O basin of spearmint	

Although released earlier than *the basin of spearmint*, Ash-shams at-tal'a [the rising sun] (1978) seems like a response from an immigrant to calls of return. His tone suggests a deep melancholy and sorrow. The immigrant is desperate for a reunion with his mother and his beloved ones, to the point that he is imploring the sun and passerby to send them his greetings. His life in the foreign land is a perpetual struggle for acceptance. But he attests that separation was not a choice, but a destiny.

O rising sun if you see my dear mother	حَنـَّـــــــا واه يا ديك الشمس الطالعة إلى شفتي مَامّا
Tell her your son is crying	واگول ليها راه وليدك دموعه ضَارْعـَـهْ
O you, departing Caravane, if you see my dear mother	واه يا ديك الگافلة الغاديــة إلى شفتي مَامًا حَنـَّـــــــا
Tell her no Zawiya[29] accepted your son	واگول ليها راه وليدك ما قبلاته زاوية
[…]	[…]
Tell my beloved ones to be patient, separation is a destiny from God	گولو لحبابي غير صبـــرو لفـــراق جابــو ربـــــي

But if immigration was not a choice, how did it become destiny? This question is answered in Essamta [the belt] (1992). In this song, Nass El-Ghiwane tell us the true story behind immigration. The immigrant is a Moroccan citizen who is burdened by oppression and injustice. The song opens with a strikingly disturbing image of death: A turbulent dark sea, feeding drowned bodies to its creatures. The story is followed by a plea from one of those who

[29] In the Muslim world, Zawiya is a religious institution historically associated to Sufism. The Zawiya is closely related to Christian Monasteries as they serve similar educational, social and religious functions.

crossed the sea: “I am not a loner; I am not a stranger. I am a citizen fastened with a belt; the knife is sharp, hurting my hands”. “The citizen” describes his country as the land of contradictions, where power transcends the law of justice. Sumptuous building and dilapidated huts standing side-to-side. Homes are dark and suffocating under a shinning sun. People are hungry in a prolific land.

I am telling the story of my beloved ones	ولا نحكي على حبابي . . . حالي يا مَگْوَاه
My heart is dreadfully hurt	خداتهم الغربة ف صنارة وسْبِيبَة
Alienation took caught them with a fishing	صار البحر جَبَّانّة وُالحُوتْ جاه عْشَاهْ
rod and a line	الشط بعيد. . . والبوغاز راه فين راه
The sea became a grave, the fish found its	فين غادي ؟
food	الدراع غْيَا . . . ولمواج گْلِيَبة
The shore is far … the strait is further away	لَهْوَاعَة خَادْ الثمن ودا المجداف معاه
Where are you heading?	المركب يغرق . . . والموت قريب
The arm is exhausted…the waves are	[…]
tumultuous	شهدو احبابي بالله
The ferryman [the trafficker] took the money	مـا أنـا وحدانـي مـا أنـا بـرانـي
and the oar	أنـا مـواطـن والسمطة عليـا
The boat is drowning…and death is close	والجنوي ماضي يجرح يديا
[…]	العمارات عالية لكواخ مردومين
Be witnesses, my beloved in God	لمسابح دافقة لفدادن محروقين
I am not a loner, I am not a foreigner	الدنيا غادية يا اهلي ب حال المسكين
I am a citizen, and the belt is on me	أرضي عاطية كنوزها مفتوحين
The knife is sharp, hurting my hand	لوحوش الضارية انيابها مَمْدُودِينْ

The buildings are high, the hut is demolished	شمسي ضاوية لبيوت مغموقين
The pools are flowing, the acres are burnt	بحوري عامرة وحنا جيعانين
Life is desperate life like a destitute	
Life is giving away its treasures	
The detrimental monsters are exposing their eyeteeth	
My sun is shining, homes are dark	
My beaches are full, and we are hungry	

Essamta can be seen as an elegy for Moroccan clandestine immigrants or *Harraga*. The Harraga (in English: the burners) is a neologism that refers to North and Sub-Saharan Africans crossing illegally the European borders in zodiacs and rickety boats. The act of *Hrig* (In English: burning) is a metaphor for "burning" borders and transgressing the law to reach the European Eldorado. It can also be an actual act of "burning" one's identity. If arrested by the destination's authorities, the Harraga burn their identification documents "as a sign of protest and an effort to stall extradition processes" (Darian-Smith, 2015, p. 364). The phenomenon of Hrig and Harraga attracted media and political attention in the 1990s, although its fostering factors started a decade ago. In the mid-1980, unemployment reached an unprecedented rate of 23.4 % among highly educated urban youth, with a staggering analphabetism of 50% of the total population (Empreador, 2009, as cited in Arab & Sempere Souvannavong, 2009). These problems were further exacerbated with persisting corruption, nepotism, and lack of political freedoms. The 80s was a continuation of the notorious years of leads (1970-1999), one of the darkest periods in the

post-colonial history of Morocco. This era was marked by major human rights infringement against dissidents and political activists. All these factors resulted in what Arab & Sempere Souvannavong (2009) *le mal de vivre* (in English: pain of life, desperation), a general feeling of hopelessness and pessimism among the younger the generation. In the popular culture[30], this feeling has turned into a culture of death, where death in the sea is preferred over humiliation in the homeland.

In Essamta, Nass El-Ghiwane agree with the above circumstances, but they differ in their interpretation on the act of *Hrig*. "burning" identification papers does not mean burning one's identity. The Harraga fled oppression not the homeland. They are of this world they carry within, but only justice can revive their dead souls.

O warders, open so we see the jailer	وَالسَّجَـانَــة حَلّوا يَا وينْ بِيبَانْ لســجـــان
O warders, ignite the lamp, so we see the light	والسجــانــة شعلو قنديل وِيْبَانْ النـُــورَانْ
O warders, so the boy comes out of the shrouds	والسجــانــة يخرج الولد من بين لكفـــــان
The embers die and the fire stops	تهبى لجمار وتزول عليه من صعود النيران
O oppressors, enough of torturing this world	وَالظَّلْمَانْة يكفى تعذيب ل هاد العـــالـــم
Enough of savagery, we are the sons of this world.	يكفـــى همــاج راه حـنـــا أولاد العــالـــم

The elite

The conceptualization of "the elite" in the songs of Nass El-Ghiwane does make the exception in what we would find in a typical populist discourse, regardless of its political

[30] We find a lot of references to death in the sea in the Ray songs, a popular genre in Algeria and west of Morocco.

affiliation. We read about a social entity that is the antithesis of the pure, authentic, and honest people. *Alli wa khali* [Build it and leave it] (1998) provides the most complete portrait of an elite figure. This song summarizes the personality of an elite individual, potentially a politician since it mentions “change” and “promises” in hedonism, greed, corruption, betrayal, and despicability.

Alli wa khalli (1998) is an open diatribe to any power abuser that continue to make fortune in detriment of the people. The language of this song is probably one of the most offensively explicit in the anthological register of Nass El-Ghiwane. The song starts by describing a wealthy, drunkard, profane individual, “a despicable thief that is not worthy of a shoe”. This song does not deviate much from the usual discussion of immorality and piety that characterizes the style of Nass El-Ghiwane. The novelty here is rather the invocation of death. At the end of song, death is invoked as the ineluctable fate of every oppressor who believes to be eternal. Death becomes here a victory of the oppressed over the oppressor. Death defeats the oppressors because it deprives them from worldly gains and pleasures. but then, how can death be the victory of the oppressed? The band alludes to an after-life trial that the oppressor cannot escape. For those who cannot find justice on earth, the death of the oppressor is the redeemer.

You build tall edifices; you leave it behind	تَبْنِـي وُتْعلِّـي تمشـي وتخلـي
Your mind is mediocre, O despicable one	عقلك مْدْنِّـي يا خايـب الحـالَـة
You build walls, you drink glasses	تبنـي الحيطـان تشـرب الكيسـان
You live in Villas, while other are in tents	تسكن فْ الفيلا وغيرك فْ نْـوَالَـة
You scoff at the poor, and advocate for change	تحـگر الفقيـر وتگول التَّغْيِيـرْ وُأنـتيَ شْفِيفِيـرْ مَا تْسْوَاشْ نْعَـالَـة

You are a little thieve, unworthy of a shoe	تـْـزْوَّرْ لـْـوْرَاقْ وُتْشْهْـدْ بالـنـفــاق
You forge papers and testify with hypocrisy	تــســئ الأداب وتـتـكـلـم ب جهـالـة
You are impolite and ignorant	أصـلـك بـخـيــل وشــانــك نْـعِـيــلْ
You are stingy and grounded	[…]
[…]	مــالــك آوا مـالـك آش طرى وجرى لك
What is wrong with you? What happened to	ظنيتي راسك خالد وانــت لــلــزوالــة
you?	مــادامـت لْ عـَــادْ ولا ورثــهــا شـَدَّادْ
You thought you were eternal, but you will	أخــرها لــقــبــر وُحـَــرُّ السُّـوَّالّــة
soon vanish	
It was neither eternal for ‘Ad[31] nor Shaddad[32]	
inherited it	
You end is a grave and a severe judgment	

Another type of justice that death can bring is equality, a principle that the corrupt elite dedicate their entire life to eclipse. In *Assayf Al-Batar* [The trenchant sword] (1981), Nass El-Ghiwane tell how death is a unique moment of humans’ existence when the destitute and the wealthy become equal. The song vividly depicts a narrative of funerals pertaining to two antithetical worlds and personas. The first tells the story of an extravagant funeral of wealthy man, resembling a tumultuous carnivalesque gathering of clergy and mourners. The mourning scene is described with a deriding tone, exposing the depth of human hypocrisy and greed. The

[31] In the Islamic tradition, ‘Ad is the name of the tribe of the Prophet Hud. ‘Ad constitutes the branch of “Lost Arabs” or العرب البائدة who according to the Quran, were decimated for their immoral conduct and rejection of monotheism.

[32] Antarah Ibn Shaddad Al-Absi was a pre-Islamic knight and poet, best known for being one of the authors of Al-Mu’allaqat (English: The hanging odes) one of the classic and primary masterpieces of the Arabic poetry and literature.

loyal relatives walking behind the coffin are already preoccupied with the defunct' assets. Here, Nass El-Ghiwane are employing this shocking image to emphasize two realities of life and death: Ephemerality of wealth and love. The wealthy man spent his life amassing fortune and acquiring property that he no longer owns. For his beloved ones, he is today no more than a transient memory and a share of inheritance.

The second scene is of a poor man funeral. Unlike the wealthy dead, no one came to bid him farewell, no one walked behind his coffin, except a clergyman who hastily uttered few verses for him. The defunct left nothing in this world but an old matt, a broken teapot, a rooster, and a blind mother. His mother was his guardian who, despite her blindness, remained loyal to him till the end. The song concludes with a frightening image of death: The poor and the rich are both lonely in the darkness of the grave, where they can finally be equal.

The rich man died my friends,	مـات الغنـي يـا حبابـي طلبـة وعـوام تـابعـاه
Clergymen and laymen are following his	شـي يقـرا عـند راســه شي شاد السبحة حــداه
coffin	تبعـولگنـازة يهـلـلـوا وريـح الـوارث شــاداه
Some are reciting verses at his head, others	لاغـاو لقسـام بالجملــة كلهــا يلغــي ب لغــاه
twiddling their rosaries	خلــى الديـور والـدواور خلــى ليشاشــرة معــاه
They followed the coffin screaming, attracted	خلــى لخيـول العـاتـقــة ديــك السربـات عارفاه
by the smell of inheritance	مدى من زين الدنيــــا ذهـب وفضـة صابغــاه
Each is thinking of their share	كان بايت ف التجــــارة وظـن المـوت ناسيــاه
He [the dead] left properties, lands, and	[…]
horses	كـلـهـا يگـول حبـيـبــي وريح النفاق سابقــاه
Countless joys of life from gold and silver	راس مالــه غيــر خرقــة حفرة . . وشبر ما سواه

He was bogged down in trade, thinking death	هـــا أنـــت گــول لـــه گول له يا خونــا ف الله
has forgotten him	مات المسكين يا حبابـــي حتى واحد ما مشا معاه
[…]	قرا طـالـب عـنـد راســه بــزز عليــه مــا قـراه
Everyone says, “O my dear”, but they are all	خلـــى الميـمـــة عميـــا علـى خيالــه حاضيــاه
hypocrites	عندها مقراج ذا النعيــرة غيــر الضرگـة ســاداه
Today, he only owns a rag, a pit, and an inch	عندها بـــــراد النونـــة وكيف الصرة صـــاراه
of the ground	عندها فـروج ل نحيـــرة غـيـر القنـب قـجـــاه
Tell everyone his story, O my brother in God	[…]
The poor man died my friends	كـــان مفـرش الحصيـرة واليـــوم هــي غطـــاه
No one followed his coffin	لاغـى الهموم بالجـمـلـــة والغـنـي ساكـن حـداه
The Clergyman reluctantly recited at his head	خويـا وظـلام القـــبـــر مـــع لميسـر ســـاواه
He left a blind mother watching his shadow	
She has an old teapot and a kettle	
She has a rooster strangled with a rope	
He slept on a mat, and now it is his shroud	
He was suffering, and the rich knew about it all	
The darkness of the grave made them both equal	

Conspiracy

The previous discussion of **the people** revealed how Nass El-Ghiwane view the people as both the author of their own misery and the victims of oppression. In *Ana ma 'yeet* [I am not tired] (2008), Nass El-Ghiwane accuse the elite of conspiring against the people and sowing discord and falsehood among them. This idea is not different from what we can read in the classic western populist discourse. Populism is essentially a permanent conflict between the elite and the people. In this Manichean war, the elite uses conspiracy and deceit to control the mass.

The song calls the elite *Dajjala,* the Arabic word for charlatans or imposters. The elite are eloquent and skillful orators that transform lies to reality. They purposefully spread rumors and hoaxes to manipulate the people. They divide to conquer. Nass El-Ghiwane describe a serene and peaceful life before the interference of the elite. Because of them, the people are today hopeless, confused, and lost.

They talked, they lied and sugarcoated the reality	گـــــالـــــوا وزوقـــــوا وحلات ف حديثهم خرايف كثار
They altered and forged, who is even aware of that?	حـــــــرفـــــــوا وزوروا وشكـــــون يجـيـب لخـبـار
O how much did they do	آه مـــــــــــــدى دارو الـلـيـل
The plundered and distorted the words	يـا بـابـا الـلـيـل
They made our days dark	سلبـــوا وحرفـــوا لكـلام يومنـــا
They divided us,	رجعـــوه مظـــلام
they distributed us like sheep	وزعونـــا تـــوزاع لغنـــام ف صـفـوفـنـا دارو لـقسـام

We were happy, they made us sad	حالنـــا اللـــي كـــان فرحـــان عـلـــيـــه
They tortured us, the Charlatans!	كـــبـــو لـحـــــزان
O how much did they do!	مرتـــــوه القـــوم الدجالـــة
They bound our sublime night in heavy chains	آه مـــــــــــــــدى دارو الـلـيـــل يـــا بـابـا الـلـيـــل
They shortened our long days, the delayers!	ليلنـــــا اللـــي كـــان جليـــل كـتـفـــــوه
They manipulated our brains	بالسلاسـل ثـقـــال
They made our happy generation desperate and lost	يومنـــا اللـــي كـــان طويـــل گصـــروه قـــوم الـتـعـطـــال
	ف عقولنـــــا دارو لخـــــلال
	جيلنـــا اللـــي كـــن فـــرحان رجـــعـــوه
	يـــزور الحـــالـــة

Ignorance

The charlatanism of the elite can also be seen in their disdain of the folk wisdom. In *Hnin Arrouh* [the compassionate] (n.d.), Nass El-Ghiwane introduce the personage of "Mister educated", a parody of the intellectual fraud that claims knowledge and superiority over the laymen. This view is reminiscent of the western populist attitude toward the intellectual elite. We find that "Mister educated" or the pretentious expert to be the central character of the western populist rhetoric on common knowledge and folk wisdom. Saurette & Gunster (2011) conceptualize this idea as epistemological populism, or the belief that knowledge of "the common people", which they possess by virtue of their proximity to everyday life" is more

valuable and credible than the “rarified knowledge of the elites which reflects their alienation from everyday life” (p. 199). The authors distinguish several underlying assumptions in epistemological populism. First, layman first-hand experience is more valuable than theoretical or academic studies. These types of experiences become the primary if not the only legitimate source of knowledge. This implies that reliability of knowledge is tested through the intensity of emotions and unanimity of opinions. Finally, the main authority of epistemological populism is ”common sense”, which Saurette & Gunster (2011) describe as “the discussion-ending trump card”.

Nevertheless, it is not evident that epistemological populism is a constituent part of Nass El-Ghiwane’s populism. *Hnin Arrouh* does not inform about the general attitude of Nass El-Ghiwane toward experts’ knowledge. Instead, it can be seen as a reaction to some experts’ disregard and disdain to the wisdom of the common man, which also include the popular culture. The song essentially criticizes “Mister educated” for his arrogance and dismissal of the people and their mundane talks. The song also calls “Mister educated” the “slave of humiliation” and the “Master of charlatans”, which puts him in an implicit comparison with the “free” and “sincere” people. Nass El-Ghiwane use these pejorative sobriquets to allude at the sycophantic and misleading language of the corrupt elite. They speak eloquently but ambiguously to deceive the people. They are “slaves” in the guise of “Masters”, serving the oppressor while denigrating the oppressed.

Mister the educated, his eyes are blurred	سيدي القاري حرف ف عينه صار جلالة
And the arrogant says, his education is suffocating him	ويگول المغرور قرايته ضاقت به كلام الأحرار آش جابه لدلالة

The talk of the freeman is nothing like an auction	يا عبيد الحگرة كلامنا ليكم ما يليق […]
[…]	الصغير يحگر الناس يا مشين الحال
Only the mediocre person derides people, all you despicable one	ويغويك بجهله كثير شيخ الدجالة كلام الأحرار آش جابه لدلالة
And he deceives you by is ignorance, the Master of charlatans	يا عبيد الحگرة كلامنا ليكم نا يليق […]
O you slaves of oppression, you don't deserve our talk	ناس الشر كثار آوا ييه آوا ييه
The people of evil are several	آ يا مشين الحالة آوا ييه آوا ييه
O you despicable one!	

Others

Besides the corrupt elite, the category of "others" is quasi-non-existent in the philosophy of Nass El-Ghiwane. Despite the pride Nass El-Ghiwane take in their religious and cultural background, the boundaries of their human identity remain open to include those who qualify for being "people". "The people" are any group of humans undergoing the hardships of poverty, oppression, and colonialism. In this sense, Nass El-Ghiwane self-name world citizens in *hna wlad l'alam* [we are the children of the world] (1987), "bringing peace to the world from the land of peace".

We are the children of the world	احنـا ولاد الـعـالـم
Bringing peace, from the land of peace	جايبـيـن الســـــلام

Enough of war, the tears of the children dried	من أرض الســـلام
We are offering you a bouquet of roses	باراكا من لحـروب جفو دموع الصبيان
Our motto is peace	نهديكم بـاقة ورود شعارنــا بالســـــلام
From the land of peace	من أرض الســـلام
Enough of lying, let the truth prevail	خليونا من الكذوب خليو الحق يبـــــان

Hna wlad l'alam (1987) can also be seen as a call for equality among human beings. We find this idea to be clearly articulated in *Narjak Ana* [I am imploring you] (1977). The song revolves the question of racism and discrimination: "Black and white are the same… why the web is scoffing at the sieve". The latter is a traditional Moroccan proverb, deriding arrogant people who ignore the reality of human equality. The web and sieve are two humans, while having the same texture and used for similar purposes, still believe that they are different. Taken as a whole, the song explicitly denounces racism, which is based on ignorance and delusion rather than facts.

My heart hurts from the evil and the gossip in this world	مــن شــر الدنيــا گلبــي مــال كثرة البغض وگال .. . وما گال
Doomed is the ignorant and anxious one	اخســاره مــن نقصــه لفـهـــام وزاد ف عـــذابـــه تـــخـمـــام
Black and white are the same… Why the web is scoffing at the Sieve?	اكـحـــل وابيـض بـحـال بـحـال وعلاش الشبكة تعير فالغربال؟

The main dimension of Nass El-Ghiwane's philosophy of inclusion is the unity of destiny, which emphasizes a shared past and present of all oppressed people in the world. These

people are essentially united by their long history of colonialism and their destiny for revolution and liberation. *Eddam as-Sayel* [The flowing blood] (1992) reflects Nass El-Ghiwane's integration in the Pan-African movement that invigorated sentiments of solidarity and self-awareness among the liberated African nations. In this song, Africa epitomizes human suffering and the cruelty of colonial exploitation. Despite being "the mother of all countries", Africa is today a desert land, depleted of wealth and hope. Its people are dying from hunger and war, while the West is unscrupulously plundering its resources. The song depicts immigration as massive wave of deportation, orchestrated by the same West that is fabricating plagues of hunger and insecurity, and diseases among its children.

O the flowing blood	يا الدم السايل
O the faded rose	يا الورد الذابل
O the mother of all countries… O Africa	يا أم البلدان . . . يا افريقيا
What a calamity	واش هاد الحالة
Your fire is on	نارك شعالة
O the sun of hope… O Africa	يا شمس الأمل . . . يا افريقيا
Even your birds have escaped	حتى من طيرك هربان
Even your Lion has fled	حتى من لَيْثُكِ خَوْفَانْ
Your serenity is lost… O Africa	ضاع منك لامان . . . يا افريقيا
The West is plundering your wealth	فيك الغرب ينهب
Expulsing your children	في خيرك يحطب
With hunger and sorrow… O Africa	في أولادك يهرب
The days are calling… O Africa	ب الجوع ولحزان . . . يا افريقيا
Disease and torture	ليام تنادي . . . يا افرييقا

In the eyes of children… O Africa	المرض ولعذاب
	ف عيون الصبيان . . . يا افريقيا

Another dimension of Nass El-Ghiwane's philosophy of unity is their commitment to causes of justice beyond the Moroccan and African context. This can be seen in their unlimited support and solidarity with the Palestinian people. Throughout their musical career, Nass El-Ghiwane composed several songs commemorating their history of resistance and celebrating their on-going revolution and struggle for freedom. As its name reveals, *Sabra Wa Shatila* [Sabra and Shatila] (1983) tells the story of the notorious massacre of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanese refugee camp of Sabra and Shatila. On September 22, 1982, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) in coalition with its allies of the Lebanese Forces, a right-wing Maronite Christian militia, invaded the camps to eradicate the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) from the area. The exact death toll is still unknown, as mutilated bodies of victims had been buried in mass graves. An official estimation roughly ranges from 300 to 3000 victims (Malone, 1985, p. 374).

In *Shabra and Shatilla* (1982), Nass El-Ghiwane invoke atrocities of injustice and the betraying silence of the world. The opening of the song is reminiscent of Nass El-Ghiwane's style in depicting injustice as a chaotic world devoid of morality and meanings. It is a world where the murderer is awarded a prize for stealing the lives of innocents. The silence of the world is betraying and appalling, which Nass El-Ghiwane consider as flagrant consent for shattering the wretched souls.

O world, in you the murderer is awarded a	يا عالم فيك القتال له جايزة
prize	وفيك الحگرة فايزة

Oppression is the winner	ومن كل ماضي أحكام
Days are full of sorrow	فيك ليام من لحزان حايزة
Like the seas, the children tears are flowing	ك لبحور دموع الصبيان دايزة
Their souls returned to God	ارواحهم سارت لله
They [souls] lived and vanished in darkness,	عاشت وفنات ف الظلام يا عالم
O world	[…]
[…]	الدنيـــا سكتـــــات لعدا دارت ما بغـــات
The world is silent, the enemies did whatever	الدنيـــا سكتـــــات الصهيون دارت ما بغات
they pleased	ف صبـــرا وشاتيـــلا المجـــزرة الكبـيـــرة
The world is silent, the Zionists did whatever	اطفـــــال تذبحـــات شيـــوخ و عيـــالات
they please	السوايـــع وقفـــات لـــــرواح تحصـــرات
Children, seniors, and women were	السوايـــع وقفـــات لكتـــــوب تـنهبـــات
slaughtered	ف صبـــرا وشاتيـــلا كثـــــراث لـقـتيـلـة
Time stopped, souls are strangled	
Time stopped, books are plundered	
In Sabra and Shatila, murder is countless	

Few years later, Nass El-Ghiwane release *Al-intifidah* [the uprising] (1992) to celebrate the First intifada of the Palestinian people. Intifidah (1987-1993) refers to continuous uprisings and riots against the IDF in the West Bank and Gaza, protesting the 1967 occupation and infringement of human rights. Unlike *Sabra wa Chatila* (1982), *Al-intifidah* (1992) is marked by a tone of hope and insurgency. The song is festive and enthusiastic in its applause of the revolution. The Palestinian rebels are compared to the miraculous *Tayran Ababil* flock of birds

in the Quran. In the Islamic belief, the birds defended the Holy cite of Kaaba by throwing stones of baked clay on the elephant army of Abraha, the king of Aksum (Modern day Eritrea). The hostile confrontation ended by the victory of the Holy Kaaba and its people, while Abraha and his colossal army were left “like chewed up stew” (Al-Fil, 105:5). In popular culture, the story of the elephant army is often invoked to remind of the ultimate triumph of the oppressed people, notwithstanding their semblant weakness. Nass El-Ghiwane project this story on the Palestinian context. For them, the stone of loner Palestinian child is more powerful than the lethal weapon of the occupant. Behind this image stands a meaning that Nass El-Ghiwane are conveying through this song: the perpetual conflict between justice and oppression.

O *Intifidah*, may you be internal	دومي يا الانتفاضة دومي
With your stones	بحجارك دومي
With your children	بصغارك دومي
Against the occupation armies	ضد جيوش الاحتلال
God is my witnesses, no one would be in my	الشهادة بالله غيرك ما يكون مَنْظُومِي
thoughts but you	ف ليلي ويومي
In my days and nights	سمايا وغيومي
In my skies and clouds	حجرة وطفل بيهم هجومي
With a stone and a child, I attack	. . . ضد الاستعمار
The occupation	. . . ف كل انتظار
In every waiting time	ضد جيوش الاحتلال
Against the occupation armies	علامي يرفرف
My flag is fluttering	مزوق بلوني
Illustrated with my color	مبعد حزوني

Taking my sadness away	من الفرح منعوني
Between the heaven and the earth	بين السما والأرض
Against the people of the elephant	طيري وحومي
With stones of backed clay	ضد أصحاب الفيل
Throw it on them, O *Tayr Ababil*	بحجارة من سجيل
The people of childhood	أرميهم يا طيور الأبابيل
On Jerusalem my singing	. . . شعب الطفولة
My felicity and sorrow	عل القدس منغومي
O *intifadah*, may you be enternal	هنايا وهمومي
	دومي دومي يا انتفاضة دومي

In this chapter, I analyzed the main themes surrounding the concept of populism in the poetry of Nass El-Ghiwane through the lenses of discourse analysis. These themes are the people, the elite, and others. Each theme yielded several sub-themes supporting its meaning. The next chapter I will summarize the findings in both the Moroccan and the Egyptian case and discuss how they contribute to our understanding of populism in postcolonial countries.

CHAPTER 6

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

In this chapter, I will discuss the main findings of the analysis of the songs of the duo Imam-Negm and Nass El-Ghiwane. I will then compare the features of populism mentioned in these songs, and the characteristics of inclusionary populism. Finally, I will demonstrate how the communicative styles deployed in the songs can be read through the lens of the Bakhtinian theory of official and unofficial culture (Bakhtin, 1984) and the mystic tradition of "trance".

Summary of the Findings

The people appear in different shapes in the poetry of Imam-Negm and Nass El-Ghiwane. Given commonalities in the geographic, cultural, religious, and ethnic heritage, this might come as a surprise to my readers. As a reminder, it is important to reiterate their descriptions in both artists' worlds. Who are the people in Imam-Negm and Nass El-Ghiwane songs? How do they differ? And most importantly, how do they relate to the typical "people" in Western literature?

Analysis of the songs of Imam-Negm and Nass El-Ghiwane demonstrate different conceptualizations of the meaning of the people, but their pure essence remains the same. Unlike how they are glorified in the songs of Imam-Negm, they are denigrated and blamed for their own misery in the chants of Nass El-Ghiwane. The people Nass El-Ghiwane invoke in their songs are unlike any "people" we see in the Western literature of populism or even in the fellow protest singers Imam and Negm.

The first common feature of the people in both works is morality. The way Imam-Negm describe their people is not quite different from their western counterparts. The people are inherently pure and moral. They personify every desirable human virtue: patience, purity,

loyalty, and authenticity. Their patience is reminiscent of their ancestors in the tales of Herodotus and the holy scripture: they inherited perseverance from the peasants that built the great pyramids of Cheops, and endurance from the slaves of Ramses II, the alleged Moses Pharaoh, another biblical villain figure that was defeated by God, in favor of the people of God. The people of Imam-Negm are even divinized, they are "god", and "when god speaks, everyone shall hear the voice of god" (Negm, 2007b). In this context, "the voice of god" symbolizes the absolute sovereignty of the people. Imam-Negm places beyond authority and establishment since they are the unique and legitimate source of sovereignty. Only the people are worthy of it, for their loyalty to the motherland. For this reason, Imam-Negm often call them "Welad El balad", of the "sons of the country/land", for they are made from the land. They are the living extension to Egypt, which Imam-Negm often calls as "Yamma" [O my mother] or "Baheya" [Radiant].

Unlike what is professed by western populism (namely the right-wing), nativism is not a *sine qua non* condition to belong to the land and the people [according to Negm and Imam). Instead, it is alliance, loyalty, and dedication to the cause of the people that make one worthy of the honor of belonging. In *Adi Masr* [This is Egypt] (n.d.) Negm Identifies Jamal Al-Din Al-Afghani, and Sulaiman Al-Halabi as "Egyptians", although none of them is ethnically Egyptian. Al-Afghani is Afghan, Al-Halabi is Syrian, but what they have in common is their love for Egypt and their long battle for its autonomy and freedom from colonialism.

The lightheartedness of the people is also celebrated in the songs of Imam-Negm. The people are destitute and poor, yet their approach to living does not match misery. They are merry and life loving. Their belief in Carpe Diem defines their daily celebration of life and love. Carpe Diem is not only their philosophy of life, but also their way to defeat the "elite", their eternal and ineluctable enemies.

With lightheadedness comes the paradox of malnutrition. Negm knows "his people" to the extent of invoking their quotidian diet. The people are weak, unhealthy, and emaciated by hunger. They are malnourished, for their meager meals consist of weevilly broad beans or *fool* in Negm's native language. Negm wittily uses the expression "vegetarian meat" to refer to broad beans. It is the "meat" of the poor, while the "real" meat is an exclusive right of the elite.

Nass El-Ghiwane follow a mystic approach in their conception of the people. Unexpectedly, their "people" are far from being pure and authentic like those of Negm and Imam. The view of morality is also opposed to the western logic of populism, which solely stands on the moral superiority of the people as compared to their elite adversaries. Instead, Nass El-Ghiwane severely castigate their own people for their sheer immorality and corruption. In their songs, the people are imbued in treachery and sins. They live in chaos and confusion, and defeat, for they deviated from the way of God. They are the authors of their own misery.

Nass El-Ghiwane continue to describe the chaotic world where the people live. But are they the only ones to blame for this desolation? The answer is no, according to Nass El-Ghiwane: the people are corrupted because they are oppressed. Thus, Nass El-Ghiwane place their audience in a quandary, a populist paradox that is hard to comprehend: the people are oppressed as a divine punishment for their sins, but they also went astray because of oppression. This bidirectional relationship between oppression and corruption is not found neither in the songs of Imam-Negm, nor in the western populist logic, be it left or right.

In their nostalgic invocation of a distant utopic past in the village, Nass El-Ghiwane lyrical tone remind of the agrarian myth, a major phenomenon in the western populist lamentations. According to Hofstadter (1955), the agrarian myth is the "belief that the most desirable form of community is found in rural, specifically agrarian, village life" (Christensen &

Levinson, 2014). The songs of Nass El-Ghiwane faithfully echo the values of the "myth" believers: integrity, solidarity, and honesty. They aggregate of the songs narrate a deep longing for a distant past life that no longer exists, nor could be re-lived in the future. The present is rather experienced in the urban dystopia, a world of hypocrisy, materialism, and immorality.

Nass El-Ghiwane invoke both internal and external migration to illustrate this concept. Internal migration refers to the band's farewell with their first homeland: the rustic world. In several songs, they describe the city as an infernal place where all dreams of serenity and peace are aborted. They vividly remember a happy past of solidarity, compassion, and authenticity. Their departure from rustic Eldorado was not a choice. Looking at the background and biographies of Nass El-Ghiwane's founding member, like Laarbi Batma, it was departure forced by nature (i.e., drought) and poverty, both of which were significantly exacerbated by the power of colonialism in the country. All in all, it was destiny rather than a choice.

External migration comes later in the work of Nass El-Ghiwane, when leaving the whole country, with its rural utopia and urban dystopia, becomes unavoidable. In songs like *Essamta* [The belt], Nass El-Ghiwane invoke the issue of clandestine immigration to Europe (i.e., *Hrig*), a negative phenomenon that struck the country in the early 90s. The song laments the absence of the emigrant. Forced by poverty and corruption, and burdened by poverty, the clandestine immigrant (i.e., *Harrag*) is one of the people who left their beloved ones to embrace uncertainty. Unlike earlier songs of Nass El-Ghiwane, *Essamta* pays tribute to those who lost their lives in the obscurity of the Mediterranean Sea and call to save those who are being pressured by the blatant inequality and injustice to leave the country.

The elite

Negm draws a burlesque, negative portrait of the elite in Egypt. They are inherently malevolent and corrupt. They are lazy money-hunger "fat cats" (i.e., *Tanablah*) who do not mind selling their honor (i.e., Sharaf) for their materialistic ends. Also, the elite shock the mere people with their hedonistic moral conduct. Their behavior defies the norms and traditions of conservative Egypt. Even further: they are hedonistic to the extent of libertinage. Alongside the elite comes another sub-category "the elite servants" who are as corrupt as their masters, if not worse. They are what Negm describes as *Abd el-ma'moor* (i.e., literally the slave of the servant). "The elite servants" are not necessarily privileged like their masters, but they are blind executives of the will of the elite. Negm also call them "the dogs" for their "loyalty" to orders, even when they know they would torture their own people. These dogs are found everywhere in the government system, from the bureaucracy to the police and the media.

Negm devotes a substantial part of his songs to the servants of the elite in the media. He describes journalists as "clowns" (i.e., *Sha'laban*) and parrots (i.e., *Baghbaghan*) using all the means of distractions to keep the people oblivious of their reality. Negm defines three functions of the media in Egypt: diverting people's attention from serious issues, aggrandizing enemies, demoralizing the people, and defending the government. In songs like *Bayan Haam* [important communiqué] (1967), Negm exposes the entertainment industry in Egypt and how it is used by the government to palliate the reality, while indoctrinating the people with the grandiosity and presumed truthfulness of the president. Songs like *Important communiqué* were written during a crucial time of the history of Egypt, mainly between the 1967's Naksa[33] and the Camp David

[33] Also known as the six-days war, the Naksa denotes the defeat of the Egypt army and its Arab alliances in its war with Israel in 1967.

peace accords between Egypt and Israel in 1978. These songs accuse the media of demoralizing the people, and sowing hopelessness and fear from the enemy among the Egyptian people, while defending government policies even when they go against the people's general will.

The last sub-category of the elite in the songs of Negm are the nouveau riche or the "new elite". Negm defines this category as a segment of the people that escalated the social ladder in a significantly short time. The nouveau riche class emerged in Egypt as a by-product of *Infitah* (i.e., opening), an open-door economic policy favoring tax-incentivized foreign investments and open international trading over internal economic and social reforms. Negm was one of the strident opponents of this policy, which, in his opinion, further broadened the rift between the rich and the poor, and fostered a new "parasite class" (Imam, 1986). For Negm, the government and the nouveau riche are complicit in rendering Egypt a corrupt, unlivable place, where the poor becomes poorer, and the rich gets richer.

Nass El-Ghiwane's "elite" does not differ from the imagery of a corrupt class, found in both the western populist literature in general, as well as the songs of Negm-Imam in specific. Expectedly, the elite are a group of strikingly immoral individuals, living a hedonistic life to the detriment of the oppressed, miserable people. The elite appear to be in a perpetual Manichean conflict with the honest, yet helpless people. What makes the resolution of this conflict different from the expected scenario in a classic populist narrative is the duality of life and death, with death being the symbol of the ultimate victory of the people over the elite. Nass El-Ghiwane describe a life of inequality, and chaos, where the corrupt rich individual lives a lavish life, while the honest breadwinner struggles to earn their minimum necessities. In the world of Nass El-Ghiwane, death is the only moment when justice is served. It is the moment when the rich is

separated from their wealth and worldly possessions, and the poor can finally rest from the uncertainty of poverty and the injustice inflicted upon them.

The conflict

"The conflict" in the work of Negm follows the European view of the relationship between the people and the elite. The people and the elite are absolute enemies. The conflict between these two groups is eternal and ineluctable. In western literature, the resolution of this conflict of apocalyptic, with the elite being behind conspiracies jeopardizing the people's peace and existence. For instance, one of the populist theories that illustrates these meanings is Camus (2013)'s controversial Great Replacement theory. Embraced by far-right populism, this theory warns of a near-future demographic extinction of Europe's white population at the hands of an elitist conspiracy. The "replacement" refers to replacing the white population by non-white, non-Christian groups through European policy makers' systematic support of immigration and policies of diversity and inclusion.

Negm believes in a certain form of apocalypse, but the resolution is different. Unlike Camus's egregious end of white Europeans, it is the elite that is doomed to extinction in the songs of Negm. The day of apocalypse, of "the day of resurrection", is the long-awaited day of justice and redemption. Revolution is a prerequisite for salvation to happen and for destiny to adhere to the will of the people. Simultaneously, for the elite, revolution means the great apocalypse. The apocalypse generally means the end of the world, but in this song, it is not a detrimental event for everyone. It marks the end of the world of injustice, discrimination, and oppression. It is the end of the heydays of the elite and their exploitation of the people.

[O Egypt] ask on my behalf	واسأليلي

Every scholar in our country	كل عالم في بلدنا
Every tower, every minaret	كل برج وكل مادنه
Every friend among our friends	كل صاحب من صحابنا
Every child from our children	كل عيِّل من ولادنا
Whether anyone has seen a sign	حد فيهم شاف علامة
From the signs of **the day of resurrection**	من علامات القيامة
Before the coming of good omens	قبل ما تهل البشاير
On the 18th of January	يوم تمنتاشر يناير
When Egypt rose	لما قامت مصر قومه
While they thought it [she] was asleep	بعد ما ظنوها
Cursing hunger and humiliation	نومه
And injustice	تلعن الجوع والمذلة
And the government?	والمظالم
	والحكومة؟

Nass El-Ghiwane also preach apocalypse as the fatalistic end of the elite. Although they do not speak of a "happy resolution" like Negm does, they warn of a day where justice shall be served. In *Al-Qiyamah* [the day of resurrection] (2007), they lament those who are not "afraid of the day of resurrection", an expression frequently used in vernacular Moroccan Arabic to denote those who do not know the consequences of their misdeed in the afterlife. The apocalypse is thus a way to demonstrate the ephemerality of oppression and tyranny, and by contrast, the ultimate victory of justice and the redemption of those who suffered in this life.

O Allah, Allah, our Lord O Allah, Allah, the essence of mercy, Mohammad [the prophet] O Lord, people became tyrants, they do not fear the day of resurrection O Lord, the situation is uneasy, safety no longer exist […] O Lord, Rightness is extinguished, afraid like an ostrich O Lord, the hearts are blind, they cannot feel remorse.	الله الله الله يا مولانا الله الله عين الرحمة محمد الناس طغات ربي مولاي ما خافت قيامة الوقت حمات ربي مولاي ما تلات السلامة [..] الحق خمد ربي مولاي خايف كيف النعامة والقلوب اعمات ربي مولاي ما حسات بالندامة

Additionally, Nass El-Ghiwane hold a unique perspective of death, as the gateway to the day of resurrection. Death gets invoked as not only the moment of truth before God, but also exposes the precarious reality of the elite. In Assayf Al-Batar [The trenchant sword] (1981)[34], the trenchant sword is death, because it concludes the illusion of wealth and power, and brings both the rich and the poor on the same pedestal. It is the unique moment where both the rich elite and the poor people come to be equal. They are both powerless and alone in their shrouds. The rich cannot escape this reality by summoning all the wealth, possessions, serfs, and allies left behind.

[34] See chapter 5 for a detailed analysis of this song.

The poor, with their meager possessions and serious problems, are probably more serene today than their wealthy counterpart.

Table 2 *Summary of the comparative analysis of populism in Egypt and Morocco*

Country	The people	The elite	The conflict
Egypt	The concept of Ebn el balad (El Messiri, 1978) • Pride in origins • Not defined by ethnicity or nativism: Sulaiman El Halabi and Jamalu-din al Afghani. • Lightheartedness: Carpe Diem • Patience: The Peasant of Khufu and Ramses (O Egypt, 1970)	Loose morals • The elite media: Sycophant journalists and artists • Advancing the agenda of the elite • Distraction • Demoralization The sub-elite: nouveau riche: • Dumpster scavenger, fat cats	Eternal and ineluctable, ends by apocalypse and the victory of the people.
Morocco	Immoral, weak, and wretched! The people are the authors of their own misery.	Death is the moment of equality between	Death will bring justice and end the conflict.

	→ **Paradox:** People are the victims of oppression, immigration and alienation	the elite and the people. • The elite features: Ignorance charlatanism • Immorality is a common point between the elite and the people.	Eternal and unavoidable, won by determination, and faith in God.

Nass El-Ghiwane and Imam-Negm: An inclusionary populism

Initially coined by Filc (2010) in his work on the political right in Israel, inclusionary populism stands as the opposition of exclusionary populism, which build the concept of otherness based on nativism, ethnocentrism, and cultural values. On the other hand, the concept of "belonging" (to the people) in inclusionary populism revolves around loyalty to the people. The loyalty of an individual is estimated by their sacrifice for the homeland, the people's cause. The distinction between exclusionary and inclusionary populism is based on three dimensions: material (i.e., distribution of wealth), political (i.e., participation in political life) and symbolic (i.e, rhetorical definition of the people and the elite). For the purpose of this discussion, I will focus on the last dimension, since the work of Negm and Nass El-Ghiwane is all about defining the people and their enemies. According to Filc (2010) "symbolic inclusion takes place when the

excluded groups are symbolically included in the collective "we". Subordinate/excluded groups are symbolically included in the collective through the polysemic articulation of the signifier *people*" (p. 14).

As thoroughly explained in chapter 4, the definition of "Egyptness" in the songs of Negm transcends any considerations of race, ethnicity, religion, or national origin. For instance, in *Adi Masr* [This is Egypt] (n.d.), Negm describes a diverse and multicultural Egypt that has embraced a panoply of civilizations, ethnicities, and social classes throughout its history. The song honors "national" heroes who stood in the face of colonizers and founded the renaissance of Egypt, all of which were in reality "foreigners" in the nativist and ethnic senses of the term.

Another aspect of the inclusionary populism of Negm is the expression of support for international causes in his work. Some of these songs like *Guevara mat* [Guevara died], *Ellendi* [Salvador Allende][35] (1973), *Halwasa* [Hallucination] (n.d.), *Ho Chi Minh*[36] (n.d.), and *Satyagraha*[37] (1967), Negm commemorates several leaders and revolutionary figures from the Global South like Che Guevara, Salvador Allende, Ayatollah Khomeini, Ho Chi Minh, and the Mahatma Ghandi. In each of these songs, Negm establishes a comparison between Egypt and these "heroes" respective countries, thus serving as an inspiration for Egyptians to revolt and overthrow injustice. For instance, in *Halwasa* [Hallucination], Negm applauds the Khomeini's revolution in Iran, while calling Egyptians to expulse Americans, Zionists, and their agents from their homeland (referring to President El-Sadat) like Iranians led by Ayatollah Khomeini toppled the Shah Mohammad Reza and his allies. Negm does not only see the Iranian revolution as an

[35] Salvador Allende (1908-1973) is the 28th elected president in of Chile.
[36] Ho Chi Minh (1890-1969) was a Vietnamese revolutionary and the former President of North Vietnam.
[37] Satyagraha is a Hindi word referring to the pacific resistance policy of the Mahtma Ghandi against the British.

inspiration, but rather a revolution on behalf of all the oppressed Arab nation, including Egyptians.

We all know very well	كلنا طبعا نعرف جداً
That the very awesome Khomeini	ان خمينى الجامد جداً
After the revolution	بعد الثورة
He [Khomeini] exposed [them]	وكشف العورة
And he said with a very clear voice	وقال بالصوت الواضح جداً
That the gang of [Menachem] Begin	ان مفيش لعصابه بيجن
Will have to oil	ولا بتروله
When the Athan is raised	لما حتدن
Also, we all know	كلنا برضك
That the very awesome Khomeini	نعرف جداً
Announced this	ان خمينى الجامد جداً
Tell me why?	اعلن هذا
Because the revolution of the people of Iran	قوللى لماذا
Is also the Arab people's revolution	قالك ثوره شعب ايران
And the future	ملك الشعب العربى كمان
Is not like the past	والمستقبل
Meaning that the dormant revenge	غير الفايت
Will be taken	يعنى التار العربى البيايت
From grandfather to father	يتاخد
	ابا عن جد

Nass El-Ghiwane take a similar approach to viewing “foreigners”. The band uses words like *Ennass* [People] or *Bani Al-Insan* [Sons of human] to denote the notion of the plebians and nations, regardless of their identity and geographic location. In their songs, the unity of the people is invoked as a remedy to all the wars, oppression and torments inflicted on them by the elite. These meanings can be found in several songs, including *Ya Bani Al-Insan* [O humans] (1973), *Lebtana* [the sheepskin] (1979), *Hna wlad El-ʻalam* [We are the children of the world] (1973), *Al-Ummah* [the nation] (n.d.). In *Ya Bani Al-Insan* for instance, questions of dividing conflicts among humans, namely Nass El-Ghiwane’s “common people” are asked. Nass El-Ghiwane are not looking for an answer. These are rather questions to raise awareness about the torn world of the people, and the need to put an end to their suffering.

I want to ask a question and say in the word	بغيت نوضع سؤال ونگول بلسان أهل الغيوان
of El-Ghiwane [the band]	يا بني إ نسان علاش احنا عديان ؟
O humans, why are we enemies?	لاش الكروب ... لاش الأحزان؟
Why the melancholy … why the distress?	لاش لكدوب . . . لاش البهتان ؟
Why the lies … why the slander?	لاش لحروب . . . لاش الطغيان ؟
Why the wars … why the oppression?	واحنا خاوا . . . احنا احباب . . . احنا جيران
For we are brothers … we are beloved [to	يا بني الإنسان
each other] … we are neighbors	يا بني الإنسان
O humans	
O humans	

Communication styles

Bakhtin's Carnival and Negm's Mouled

The Mouled can be defined as the equivalent of the carnival in the popular Egyptian culture. Named after the *mawled* of the prophet, or his birth, the mouled is an occasion of entertainment and festivities to celebrate the sacred birthday of the prophet Mohammad or one of his descendants (i.e., Ahulu lbayt), or to honor a Saint. The tradition of the mouled started in Egyptian by the Fatimids, but its origins date to pre-historical times in the form of festivals honoring the Nile and the deities of ancient Egypt. The Fatimid were the first dynasty in the Muslim world to celebrate the mouled, primarily for political reasons. It was a Fatimid political propaganda in the form of lavish festivals, to enforce the acceptance of their religious doctrine (i.e., Shiism) and political ruling among Egyptians (Yosri, 2018). Alongside the religious rituals, the Mouleds were known for their playful, secular aspect. For instance, popular music and dancing performances, local circuses, fireworks, puppetry, wrestling etc.

The separation between the religious and secular/folkloric aspects of the mouleds, as well as people "unusual" transgression of religious norms[38], makes the mouleds somehow comparable to Medieval Christian festivals, as described by Bakhtin. According to Bakhtin Carnivalesque theory (Bakhtin, 1984), the grotesque realism manifested in carnivals represents a second life that is carefree, humorous, and liberating, as opposed to a serious and even lugubrious "real life", fastened by rules and regulations. The humorous and playful side of the carnival is also a way to "laugh" at the authorities and their rules. These festivities is thus, according to Bakhtin, leads to the "creation of special forms of marketplace speech and gesture, frank and free, permitting no

[38] (McPherson, 1941)mentions that practices like gambling, tattooing, palmistry are widespread in mouleds, all of which are considered immoral and prohibited [Haram] in Islam.

distance between those who came in contact with each other and liberating from norms of etiquette and decency imposed at other times" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 10). This type of carnival speech is what Bakhtin calls "Market-place billingsgate": It is strident, vulgar, but frank and free from all kinds of euphemism and sugarcoating.

The songs of Imam-Negm can be included in this Bakhtinian framework of the official and unofficial culture, opposing the people to the elite. The songs are based on satire and mockery of the "official", including the government and its cultural allies from opinion leaders, media officials and artists. The Bakhtinian philosophy of Negm and Imam appears explicitly in *Sandook El Dunia* [the box of wonders] (1980) and *El-Hawi* [the snake charmer] (1968).

Panorma, Donia, Fonya	بانوراما دنيا فونيا
A modern box of wonder	صندوق الدنيا عصري
The picture is from America	الصورة من أميركا
And the sound is Egyptian	والصوت من جوه مصري
If you understand what I mean	لو تفهم كل قصدي
I will offer you my palace	أوهب لك كل قصري
I will write you my will	واكتب لك الوصية
On the wing of pigeons	على جناح الوصية
Come watch!	على جناح الحمام
Come watch!	واتفرج يا سلاملم
	واتفرج يا سلام

Sandooq El Donia [The box of wonders] (1980) emulates the language of an entertainer calling the attention of their audience. The song is a guessing game, structured in the form of a sequence of riddles to challenge and entertain the audience. Unlike a classic guessing game, Negm hides the answer within the lines of his song. The song is written as if there is a tacit contract between Negm and his audience. The "audience" is no other than the Egyptian people, those who are well-versed in the reality of their present and the corruption of their society and leaders. To convey the message, Negm uses parody and satire, which simultaneously covers and unveils the identity of his characters.

One of the remarkably puzzling "riddles" in *Sandooq El Donia* (1980) is called *Cima* [Cinema]. In this song, Negm exposes the immorality of the Egyptian Cinema[39], another industry that was fully nationalized by the government in 1966. *Cima* is not riddle in the literal sense of the term, but rather a confusing plot of a typical Egyptian movie as perceived by the author of the song. The plot is full of intricate romantic relationships, cheating, treason, and false heroes.

Come watch!	شوف عندك يا سلاملم
Come watch!	واتفرج يا سلام
Hocus-pocus Film	أفلام القرع كوسه
Presents an original movie	حتقدم فيلم خام
By the director of [bad] smells	من مخرج الروايح
The cause of [nasal] congestion	ومسبب الزكام
Based on a real story	عن قصه واقعية
Starring the lady [wife of producer]	من تشخيص المدام

[39] After the revolution, President Gamal Abdel-Nasser nationalized the Egyptian film industry (Golia, 2017). Private sector production companies were substituted by the Public Institution of Cinema (i.e., المؤسسة العامة للسينما)

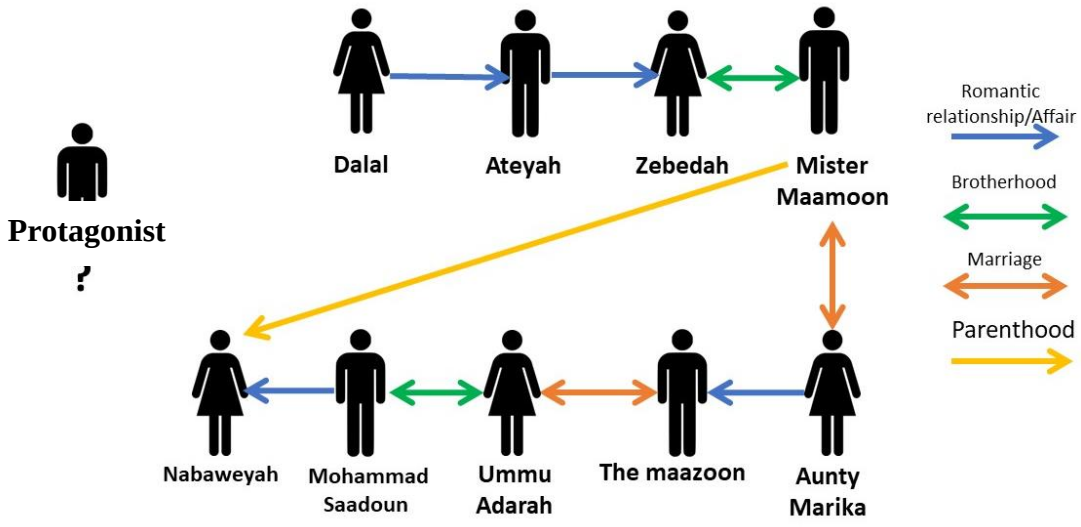
The movie won millions of awards	والفيلم لجل خاطرك
Come watch!	واخد مليون وسام
Come watch the Cinema!	واتفرج يا سلاملم
People are distracted and quiet	ع السيما يا سلام
The movie theater glitters with eyes	الناس ملهية وساكتة
The movie stinks	والصاله بتشغى عيون
And people can't find Lemon	والفيلم مطلع ريحه
	والناس مش لاقيه لمون
[plot of the movie]	
A guy basking in his youth	عيل فرحان بشبابه
Flooding his hair with soap	ومغرق شعره صابون
His problem…he can't have kids	مشكلته.. ما بيخلفشى
And his wife also cheats on him	ومراته كمان بتخون
Dalal [female's name] is dying for Ateyah	ودلال بتموت عطيه
[Male name]	وعطيه جدع مجنون
And this Atiya is not faithful	لابد ف زبيده التشه
Clinging to the fat Zebedah [female name]	أخت الأستاذ مأمون
Mister Maamoon's sister	جوز تانت ماريكا اللبوة
Who is married to aunty Marika the	اللي مرافقه المأذون
promiscuous	اللي مراته ام قداره
Who is hooking up[40] with the Maazoon[41]	أخت محمد سعدون

[40] The original word in Arabic is "Meraf'a" which in this context means having an extramarital affair with someone.
[41] In Egypt, the Maazoon is a person who is legally allowed to officiate a marriage.

Who is married to Omu Adarah The sister of Mohammad Saadoun Who is stringing Nabaweyah [female name] along The daughter of Mister Maamoon	واللي معلق نبويه بنت الأستاذ مأمون

The movie described in *Cima* is typical of the quality and storylines of the Egyptian cinema in the 1980s, known as *sinima al-muqawalat* (i.e., entrepreneur cinema). Entrepreneur cinema is considered as a direct outcome of the privatization and the infitah (open door) policy, which allowed the entry of entrepreneurs and businessmen to the cinema industry. Compared to earlier Egyptian cinema, al-muqwalat movies were known for their mediocre directing and low acting standards and budget, featuring second-rate actors. The genre of these movies was mainly action, with plots focusing on romance and gangster stories. The production of these movies was financed by international companies, mainly from the Arab Gulf, which aimed at providing entertainment and attracting a large audience for commercial purposes. For Negm, al-muqawalat cinema is another manifestation of the elite corruption in Egypt. It shows how the involvement of nouveau riche money in the film industry had led to a decline in the quality of Egyptian cinema. It also demonstrates a disrespect to the moral values of the Egyptian society. This idea can be seen in the twisted relationships and moral permissiveness depicted in *Cima*, which Negm satirically describes as the standard plot in commercial movies.

Figure 3 *Twisted relationships in Cima*



Nass El-Ghiwane's trance: Communicating under oppression.

What is "trance"? The word denotes complex meanings that are difficult to disentangle. Be it in psychology, popular culture, cultism or religion, the answer is not quite straightforward (Chlyeh, 1999). According to Vandenbroeck (1997) the origins of "trance" dates to ancient Greece. Qualified as "mania", this word referred to a sort of madness, frenzy, and convulsion, indicating an intense mood that leads to a total loss of one's sense. It is also an alteration of consciousness, that goes beyond any states of waking, sleeping, or dreaming. The state of Trance can be either spontaneous, emanating from "within", or provoked by external stimulants. Intense feelings of threat, anguish, or chronic anxiety can trigger a state of trance (Brochka, 2006, as mentioned in Syed, 2011).

In the Moroccan culture of Gnawa[42], trance (i.e., *Al-Hal*) is the possession of a human body by supernatural powers (i.e., *Mlouk*) provoked by rituals honoring these powers, including

[42] Gnawa is a Moroccan ethnic group originating from the Guinean and sub-saharan slaves brought to Morocco.

playing music on the instrument of *Sintir*[43]. Unlike "mania", the adepts of Gnawa qualify it as an exogenic state, bestowed on the "chosen" by their *Mlouk.* During this possession, the "possessed" (i.e., *Maskoun*) individual is first chosen by an abstract entity that "lives" in the individual's body for a lapse of time. During this process, the possessed is in complete submission and obedience to the orders of the possessing entity. "Obedience" or "submission" is expressed by uncontrollable violent gesticulations, jumping, unmeasured dancing pace (i.e., *Jedba*), and consumption of the possessing entity's favored food (i.e., unsalted bread and sweetened chicken). The ceremony ends with a sudden fall of the adept, and a slow regain of consciousness.

The relationship between *Al-Hal* and the songs of Nass El-Ghiwane is deeply entrenched in the cultural background of the band's members. It is, as meticulously described by Laarbi batma, one of the founding members of Nass El-Ghiwane, "the essence of his artistic soul". In his biography, Batma (1995) tells his initiation to the order of Gnawa in his childhood. According to the author, the phenomenon of *Jedba* and the mystic power of the Gnawa music, is a ritual he could never find a logical answer to remedy his perplexing:

> I was suffering from ophthalmia, which affects the eyes. So, my mother took me to the city and took me to many doctors, but that did not help. And on the day […] she met my uncle's wife, and she told her, "Why don't you take him to a Gnaoui teacher, so that he does him a seashell reading[44]"…and seashell reading is a Gnawi method. They say that they can see the unseen... It may be sorcery... But what happened to me at that time was

[43] Also known as Guembri, Gunbri or Hejhouj, Sintir is a north africam folk musical instrument used in the Gnawi music (Farmer, 1997, p. 36).
[44] A tradition of future and fortune telling used by the Gnawis in Morocco. This type of shells is scientifically known as Cypraea, according to the World Register of Marine Species: https://www.marinespecies.org/aphia.php?p=taxdetails&id=205978

real […] So my mother went to the Gnawi's hut and his wife received her […] and when I approached him, he started playing his instrument, the "Sintir"[45]. So I entered through the window, and then I had a frenzy of "*Jedba*"... My mother said I was doing movements and dances, which made her lose her senses from fright. And I spoke with a male voice, and I said, "I am beseeching the protection of God, Ô Master." How many times I heard these last words, on the nights I attended with the "Gnawa" sect... My mother, may God have mercy on her, was in awe at the strength that appeared on me at that moment during the "Jedba", and so on until I passed out […]. The Gnawi said, after looking at the seashells, take him and buy a rooster of seven colors... And the next day, the Gnawi came, which surprised my mother, then he slaughtered the rooster, placed it on my head, and dressed me in clothes of different colors... Seven colors like the colors of the rooster…black, red, yellow, green, white, blue and sky blue, then he prayed two rak'ahs[46] and took the rooster around the hut, because we were still living in the hut. After that he said to my mother, you must cook this rooster with sweet ingredients... like cinnamon, raisins, and sugar, and you must do this every year when the month of Sha`ban[47] comes...and he [your son] cannot quit this habit, except through a Gnawi Master, for a Master is the only one who can get him out of the Gnawi corral. Now, do I believe it or not? I find myself unable to answer... From what I saw, lived, and heard from a Gnawi, I find myself dazzled between the logistical and the unseen, and I only say, God knows best. And through the research that I did in what is called rational [brain] power, or traveling to other worlds or books on magic and brain experiments, I found that

[46] A rak'ah is a single iteration of movements in a Muslim prayer.
[47] The nineth month of the Hijri Muslim calendar

a person can perceive things with his [their] mind... but only God knows the unseen... (pp. 118-121)

In the songs of Nass El-Ghiwane, *Al-Hal* can be seen more than just a ritual provoked by the intense tunes of the *Sintir*. It is not a psycho-physical possession by a supernatural power either. It is rather a "possession" induced by the chaotic environment where the people survive. Like the possessed is "chosen" by their powerful *Mlouk*, and like their body becomes submissive to the caprices and orders of the supernatural, unseen entity, so is a helpless individual in the tight grip of oppression. The free-will of the oppressed is suppressed by the dictator, like the *Melk*[48] orchestrates the body of their possessed in frenetic, unmeasured dancing paces. This state of bewilderment and oppression is frequently found in the songs of Nass El-Ghiwane. For instance, *Ma bidi mandir* [There is nothing I can do] is an expression that the band uses repeatedly in *Ya Sah* [O friend] to show the helplessness and hopelessness of the people surviving oppression and torment:

O friend, I am inside the torment I unleashed the ballast, but the torment did not pass.	يَا صَاحْ رَانِي وْسْطْ الحَمْلَة وْرْخِيتْ الشَّمْلَة ومَا فَاتْ الحَمْلَة
O people, have pity on me O my beloved, this life is ephemeral My eyes shed so many tears	وَاوَوينْ أَوينْ شَاوْرُوا عْلِيـــــــــا وَاهْ وْلْفِـــي وْالدّنيـــا مَـا تْـــدُومْ بْكَاوْ حْتىَّ عياوبالدمع نْجَالِـــــــي حَالِي تْبْدْلْ حَالْـــه هــذَا أَحْـــوَال

[48] Singular of *Mlouk*

My state is worsening.	وُالعْدْيَانْ فْ جْنَابِي كُلّهَا يْشَالِـــــي
And My enemies are all agitating around me	شِي سَالْبْ عْقْلِي شِي عَاجْبُهْ الحَال
Some ransacking my consciousness, others	انا وسط الحملة و وحدي نلالي
are content with the situation	لا من مد لي يده و لا عني سال
I am inside in this torment, suffering alone	
No one reached out a hand, no one asked	
about me	
	شْفْتِـــي الحَالَــة يَــاعِينِـــي دْوي
O my Eye, you see my situation, utter a word	مَـــا بِيدِيّـــا مَـــا نْدِيْـــــــر
There is nothing I can do	آيَاي يَا عِينِي اَدْوِي
O my Eye, utter a word	وُالرَّحْمَـــة فْ الدّنْيَـــا قْلِيلَـــة
And mercy is rare in this life	مَـــا بِيدِيّـــا مَـــا نْدِيْـــــــر
There is nothing I can do	آيَايْ يَا عِينِي ادْوي
	كِيفْ نْوَالفْ يَا عَالَمْ كِيفْ نْوَالْفْ عِيشْتِـــي فِيـــكْ بْـــلاَ
O world, how can I adapt living in you	سْلـــــاَمْ
Without peace	آيَايْ يَا عِينِي ادْوي
O my Eye, utter a word	

In this chapter, I have discussed the main findings of my analysis of populist sentiments in the songs of the duo Imam-Negm and Nass El-Ghiwane, and how the expression of these sentiments is indicative of inclusionary populism. I have then compared the communication styles used in the Egyptian and Moroccan cases to convey these sentiments. The comparison

reveals a substantial difference in how these sentiments are expressed. In the case of Egypt, the duo Imam-Negm uses satire and irony to mock "the official culture" of the elite, which is reminiscent of the carnivalesque theory of Mikhail Bakhtin (1984). In the case of Morocco, Nass El-Ghiwane take another approach in their renouncement of injustice. The band adopts the mystic tradition of "trance" to depict the continuous struggle against oppression, which can be seen in the conflictual relationship between possessing power (i.e., the dictator) and the possessed body (i.e., the oppressed).

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

> After being in the 50s the scene of acts of strong resistance against the French occupant, Hay Mohammadi was ten years later the scene of violent confrontation with the police, stirred up by unemployment, police repression and a general feeling of exclusion. Nationalist fervor and social protest may well have given Hay Mohammadi a reputation of a "dangerous" district; the mix of many populations with different origins living together made it on the other hand a place where regional cultures have repressed themselves in a way both local and intensely amalgamated, unknowingly propitious and ahead of its time. The Hay's inhabitants also expressed a political awareness that did not dare say its name and unhoped-for artistic awakening. (El-Sayed, 2011)

With these words, Omar El-Sayed, one of the five founders of Nass El-Ghiwane, describes Hay Mohammadi, the birthplace of the band, where the first poems and tunes of resistance were composed. The Hay, as its inhabitants prefer to call it, was known as the emblem of diversity and revolution in mid-50s Morocco. The area was originally home to the first industrial zone in Morocco. Erected by the French authorities, the latter organized mass rural migration to provide cement and agri-food factories with laborers. the migration came from all Moroccan regions, resulting in a melting pot of cultures, traditions, ethnicities, and languages. El-Sayed (2011) states how the members of Nass El-Ghiwane represented this diversity and the main sources of the Moroccan identity: the Sahraoui, the Amazigh, the Arab, and the Sub-Saharan African cultures. The people of the Hay were also known for their fervor and loyalty to the nationalist cause. They were among the first to protest the exile of King Mohammad V by the

French authorities in 1953. After independence, the Hay became the scene of political protests and uprisings against the injustices of the post-independence regime.

When I was deciding on a topic for my dissertation, I wanted my work to commemorate the struggle of the people for freedom in my country and the Global South. I have chosen to go back in history to decipher the unspoken, to tell the story of those who were brave enough to have a voice when it was not possible to have one. As a communication scholar, I wanted to study the communication strategies of the voiceless. How people communicated under fear was my main question. The Hay was the starting point. I was somehow familiar with its story, and I know its value in the history of independence. But the Hay is a paradox. Although it is known for its outspoken people, it was home of one of the most sinister prisons in the contemporary history of Morocco. Derb Moulay Cherif was a clandestine detention center in the Hay, known for arbitrarily arresting and torturing Moroccan activists during the years of lead (1960s-1980s). The first time I knew about the existence of Derb Moulay Cherif and other clandestine prisons in Morocco was in my teenage years, in the beginning of the 2000s. In 2004, the equity and reconciliation commission was created in Morocco to investigate cases of human rights violations, forced disappearances and arbitrary arrests during the years of lead. I still remember the public hearings of the victims and their families aired on National TV, but most importantly, their courage while facing the fear of the obscure past.

Going back to the Hay, I was wondering how such a mystical place can be both a place of obscurity and hope. The hope came from the song of Nass El-Ghiwane, the first band to challenge in vernacular the feelings of fear and alienation that a lot of Moroccan experienced in the years of lead. I was mainly interested in the way they could still convey these meanings under the threat of arrest. The idea of this dissertation came from that question. Aware of the

circumstances in which Nass El-Ghiwane evolved, I knew that they had something worth telling the world about. I took it as a mission to study their words, although I am not the first to engage in such an endeavor.

For my comparative purpose, I had to find at least another case. The experience of Nass El-Ghiwane has its own idiosyncrasies, but their cause represents the struggle of postcolonial nations. I thought that a comparative study is suitable in this case because it might reveal an underlying pattern of communication strategies where all oppressed nations find a way to defeat silence. I did not have to look further away to find Sheikh Imam Eissa and Ahmad Fouad Negm in Egypt. With Nass El-Ghiwane, they had a lot in common. At the surface level, they emerged around the same period (1960s), shared elements of their geographic and ethnic identity, and both witnessed the decolonization process under authoritarian regimes. On a deeper level, the duo Imam-Negm share with Nass El-Ghiwane more than geography and culture. They represented the people of their time and used music to speak in their voice. the intricacies of the 1960s's Egypt were similar to the unstable political situation in Morocco. Egypt was dealing with the resolution of political parties, the shutdown of the opposition, and the drastic defeat of the 1967's six-days war. Morocco, on the other hand, was a newly independent country threatened by political polarization, weak economy, and several military coups against the monarchy. Under these circumstances, and in the absence of a strong democracy, heavy-handed censorship and violence becomes the only solution to maintain power. That was the case for Egypt and Morocco.

Then the idea of this dissertation spontaneously came in. I wanted to draw a connection between Egypt and Morocco through their populist communication styles. Structurally speaking, populist communication in this context follows the ideational approach of (Mudde, 2004). Its

main elements are the people, the elite, others, and the permanent conflict between these entities. on the communicational level, it looks at populism as a language that "that champions 'the people', denounces elites, and transcends common ideological categories. Populism views "the people" as the central actor of politics and demonizes the elite in its different manifestations" (Waisbord, 2018, p. 222). The questions I sought to answer revolve around the way these two musical bands spoke the populist language and adopted a populist rhetoric in their discourse to the people through music. The main question concerns the populist discourse, and how the latter is constructed through artistic media under dictatorships, and how it differs from the traditional populist discourse we find in democratic countries?

Main contribution

Besides analyzing how populism sentiment is expressed through resistance music in the North African political context, the main contribution of this study is to reveal the factors that led to the emanation of populism in this part of the world. When compared to the Western context, it can be inferred that the historical and political factors that contributed to sparking populist sentiments in North Africa are not the same. In the West, researchers enumerate several causes of populism in modern history, mainly the postwar wave of immigration from old colonies and the immigration policies that followed. In North Africa, populism is a response to the lack of democracy, a call for giving a voice to voiceless people. It was originally a nationalist sentiment that was induced by colonialism, which later evolved into populism when the local elite filled the political and economic void left by the colonialists. The continuous struggle of North African populism against injustice, since colonial times, makes it essentially inclusive. Unlike the right-wing Western populism, its conceptualization of "the people" is not based on nativist or ethnic

considerations. It recognizes “the people” as any entity engaged in the struggle against injustice and oppression, while seeing “the elite” as the oppressors.

The first wave of immigration from former African colonies to Europe lasted from the end of World War II to the 1970s oil crisis. After the WWII, Europe enjoyed a period of economic prosperity and industrial revolution, described as “the greatest production boom in history” (Messina, 2023, p. 131). The economic boom was also accompanied by a shortage in domestic labor, which led European governments to “import” workforce from old colonies in Africa and Asia, as well as less developed countries from South and Eastern Europe. Messina (2023) estimates that the first wave alone resulted in around thirty million workers entering Europe.

The second wave of immigration is characterized by the economic recession that followed the 1973 oil crisis[49] and the migration of the families and dependents of workers, contributing to a feeling of threat among Westerners (Messina, 2023). The threat emanated from the emergence of foreign communities in Europe, whose traditions and values were sometimes considered to be opposed to the values of the host countries. The visibility of these communities, especially those from African and Muslim origins, created a sentiment of apprehension among nativists who saw an attempt to alter the demographic and cultural structure of the Western society.

The third wave immigration started from the late 1980s and continues until today. This wave is characterized by a surge in illegal immigration and asylum seeking from countries in the Global South and Eastern Europe. The growing feeling of threat in the Western society was

[49] The 1973 oil crisis refers to the embargo imposed by Arab countries, members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), against Europe and the United States for their support of Israel during the Arab-Israeli war of 1973.

exacerbated by the terrorist attacks that hit Europe between 2000 and 2010, as well as the refugee crisis in 2015 and 2016. Muslim immigrants were particularly blamed for the attacks, given that most of the perpetrators were immigrants from Muslim origins. The question of immigration became both a source of social anxiety and a priority in political and governmental agendas. Right-wing populist political parties, who are known for adopting anti-immigration views and agendas, have significantly benefitted from this situation. Researchers find a strong correlation between individual's opinion on the question of immigration and right-wing voting (Berman, 2021).

In North Africa, colonialism and its lasting political and social repercussions after independence are behind the eruption of populist sentiment in the region. In Morocco, the difficult encounter with European modernity and the attempt of the later to enforce European values on the Moroccan society induced a fierce resistance against the new colonizers. For many Moroccans, modernity meant eradication of one's roots and dissociation with the past. The "roots" were not seen from a demographic or geographic perspective, but rather a religious one. Despite tribalist and ethnic divisions, Islam represented a unifying factor for Moroccans in the face of Christian Europe. The European intervention was thus seen as an attempt to Christianize the country and efface its Muslim identity. For this reason, any collaboration with European or sympathy with their foreign culture was considered an act of treason and blasphemy. The example of the proteges or the protected demonstrates how proximity to Europeans can lead to ostracization from the rest of the Moroccan society. The proteges were a class of local merchants, translators, and brokers who worked closely with European embassies in Morocco. This group was later granted "protection" from taxes and the local legal system for their role in facilitating the European penetration in the country. Some of the protected people were also

granted citizenship of the country they served. For the majority of Moroccans, the protected people were local agents who paved the way for Europeans to colonize the country. They were also accused of blasphemy and treason, for they adopted a foreign lifestyle and betrayed their religion and their people. The case of the protected shows how colonialism significantly unearthed a feeling of unity in a society that has a long history of tribalism and social division. For the first time, there were a collective consciousness of being "Moroccan" or belonging to a one nation, in the face of foreign threat coming from the West. It can be said that the idea of nationalism was crystalized in Morocco during colonization.

After independence in 1956, Moroccan nationalists faced a new challenge of dealing with the colonial legacy. The colonial authority left a political and economic void that would soon be filled with the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie consisted in educated Moroccans who were appointed at decision-making positions in the post-independence government, as well as a mercantilist class who took over the economy. As Bouaziz (2022) notes, the reaction of Moroccan nationalists to their exclusion from the newly established government increased hostility toward the post-colonial elite. The author describes the emergence of leftist national radicalism, calling for a democratic regime that priorities the people and the nation, and prosecutes agents of colonialism and "traitors" among the elite. The discourse of national radicalism in post-colonial Morocco looks at the new political scene from a populist perspective: It venerates the people and their long-held struggle against colonialism, while accusing the elite and the regime of corruption and treason. This post-independence political crisis can be considered as the catalyst of a wave of populism among Moroccan nationalists. It was the first difficult encounter between "the people", constituted by nationalists and the average Moroccans

that fought against the French, and "the elite", represented by a part of the intelligentsia and the mercantilists that ascended to power at the eve of independence.

In Egypt, both colonialism and foreign interference played a role in igniting nationalist and populist sentiments. The Urabi revolution (1919) was the first instance where the nationalist sentiment was translated in the motto: "Egypt for Egyptians". The revolution was instigated by the Turco-Circassian control of the Egyptian army and the European interference in the economic and domestic affairs. In addition, the World War I's effect on economy and the forced integration of Egyptian nationals in the British army provoked massive uprisings in rural and urban areas. Egyptians became thus one mass in the face of the British occupation, regardless of their social class or religion.

Another pivotal point in the making of populist sentiment in Egypt is the 1952 revolution. The revolution was sparked by Egyptians' dissatisfaction with the rule of the aristocratic elite and their involvement with foreign powers. Unlike the Urabi revolution, the conflict was internal and class-based, between the "people", represented by the proletariat and the farmers, and the "elite" or the monarchy and the upper class. The revolution was culminated by the emergence of the ideology of Nasserism, named after the second president of the newly founded Egyptian republic, Gamal Abdel Nasser. Nasserism draws from a multitude the predominant political ideologies of its time, such as socialism and anti-imperialism. It can be qualified as a populist ideology, featuring the ineluctable conflict between the people and the elite. The concept of "the people" in Nasserism transcends native Egyptians to all Arabs in the North African and Middle Eastern region. It promotes the idea of unity of all Arabs across what it calls "the Arab homeland". Nasserism continued to be a strong ideology in the Egypt and the Arab world until the defeat of the coalition of Arab armies against Israel in 1967 (known also as *Naksah*).

Nevertheless, the heritage of Nasserism is still present the Arab world. The idea of a geographically and ethnically united region was revived during the uprisings of the Arab Spring in 2011, indicating that populist ideals still resonate with the aspirations of the people in the Arab world**.**

In the two cases, I found strong indicators of **inclusionary populism**, which, unlike the nativist, exclusionary populism, calls for egalitarianism among all the people, regardless of their origins. As mentioned in the discussion, inclusionary populism has three dimensions: material, which concerns distribution of wealth and resources, political, dealing with the possibility of "others" to participate in the political life, and finally symbolic, dealing with the way the people and the elite are defined. Since this dissertation focuses on the discursive aspect of populism, I applied the last dimension on the work of Nass El-Ghiwane and the duo Imam-Negm. Symbolic inclusion happens when "the excluded groups are symbolically included in the collective "we". Subordinate/excluded groups are symbolically included in the collective through the polysemic articulation of the signifier people" (Filc, 2010, p. 14).

In the Egyptian case, the findings show that the expression of populist sentiments in the songs of the duo Imam-Negm follows the pattern of a traditional populist discourse. The songs draw the boundaries between the people and the elite based on the question of morality. Negm calls the people "Awalad El Balad" (i.e., in English the sons of the country) aiming that the people and the motherland are one and indivisible. The people are a continuity to the motherland, but their belonging to it is not determined by nativism. In this sense, Negm describes an inclusionary populism, where the individual is defined by their loyalty and faithfulness to the motherland and the cause of the "people". Religion, ethnicity, and race are not the defining factors of "Egyptness". Negm gives several examples of individuals who were "real Egyptians"

without even being born or raised on the soil of Egypt. These individuals, according to Negm, played a significant role in the renaissance and the liberation of Egypt from foreign offensive. On the economic level, the people are poor are destitute as result of the greed of the elite. Deprived of all means of a decent life, the people still exhibit a positive attitude toward the future. Unlike what we learn from western populism, the apocalypse is the redemption day for the people. It is the day where justice shall be served, and where all the people shall be liberated from the injustices and immorality of the elite.

On the other hand, the elite is inherently immoral and corrupt. Their immorality can be seen in their shocking and antithetical behavior to the conservative Egyptian society. They are hedonistic and self-serving, living a life of libertinage and indecency. Unlike the "real Egyptians", the elite has no sense of dignity or self-respect. The style of Negm in describing the elite is very explicit, to the extent of calling President Anwar El-Sadat immoral by name. Under the category of the elite comes their subordinates, which Negm calls the elite's dogs. The elite servants include the police, the prosecutors, the journalists, and anyone who works against the people to preserve the interests of the elite and the status quo. Among these groups, Negm focuses on the journalists and the media as the elite's tool to dominate the people. Negm summarizes the role of the media in three functions: distraction, demoralization, and defending the government. Distraction refers to the media's strategies in manipulating public opinion and diverting its attention from issues that matter. Demoralization is also a type of manipulation that the media use in times of war. For Negm, it consists of aggrandizing the enemy and sowing the seeds of helplessness and surrender among the people. Finally, Negm believes that the media is the mouthpiece of the government. It exists to defend its policies and justifies its errors, no matter how detrimental they are to the people.

Negm talks about another sub-category of the elite, and probably the most despised among the elite servants: The nouveau riche, or the people that metamorphosed into a pseudo-elite. They are as Negm call them the "dumpster scavengers" or the sycophants who climbed the ladder of social class swiftly and inconspicuously. The nouveau riche were originally "people" with decent origins, who somehow become rich for unknown reasons. Negm explicitly accuses the government of being behind the emergence of this parasitic class (Imam, 1986), as a result for its open market policy. The open market policy or *infitah* incentivized local and foreign investment through tax breaks and reduced importation fees (Zaalouk, 1989). Negm despises this class not for its greed for amassing wealth, but also for its blatant corruption that hurts the people and the economy. It is a parasitic because it causes the shrinking of the middle class and making the life of the people tougher than it used to be.

"Others" hold a special place in the songs of Imam-Negm. "Others" are simply other people that live beyond the territory of Egypt. Although not "Egyptian", the happen to share the same struggle for freedom and animosity toward the elite. Negm witnessed several events that destabilized the world, such us the Iranian revolution, the Vietnam war, and the death of the Chilean President Salvador Allende and the Marxist revolutionary Che Guevara. The way Negm writes about these events reveal a great sympathy and concern toward the cause of the people around the world. For instance, he writes that "Iran is life Egypt" and that "they have what we have" in reference to the friendship between Mohammad Reda Shah and the Egyptian President Anwar El Sadat, and the similarities between their style of governance. In a nutshell, the people are one and indivisible entity in the songs of Imam-Negm, separated by the elite through physical borders and injustice.

Nass El-Ghiwane follow a different approach in defining the people. The people are not as glorified as they are in the Western literature of populism. Shockingly, they are quite the opposite. They are wretched and weak, but most importantly corrupt and oblivious. Nass El-Ghiwane attribute a religious explanation to the wretchedness and corruption of the people. They are who they are because they deviated from the path of God. They are imbued in immorality and rarely conscious of their misdeeds and sins. They are miserable, but they are the own writer of their misery. Nevertheless, Nass El-Ghiwane's verdict on the people is not definitive. Throughout their songs, they pose the question of whether the people are sinners because they are the victims of oppression and injustice. Under tyranny, the people have no agency to differentiate between right and wrong. They live in chaos, lost in a turbulence of immorality that they themselves did not create. The paradox that Nass El-Ghiwane describes lead to imagine immorality like a disease inflicted on the people by their sovereign. In such a paradox, the people are sinners and guilty of making their own misery, but at the same time lost, innocent and helpless.

Unlike their conceptualization of the "people", Nass El-Ghiwane hold the same view of the elite that we find in the western literature. This means that they also define the elite as corrupt, immoral, and unscrupulous and despicable. They call them *Dajjala* (i.e., Charlatans) using hoaxes and lies to dupe the people, for they are eloquent orators. Also, the elite conspire against the people to tear their unity and homogeneity apart. But the elite are not as invincible and mighty as they seem. Nass El-Ghiwane mention how death is the unique moment where the elite's reality is unveiled. It is the moment of equality between the wealthy and the poor. Both become bare before the reality of the death. The shroud symbolizes the only property that the dead bring with them to the afterlife. The death is the ultimate judge who disrobes the dead from

the wealth, the prestige, and the privilege they once enjoyed in their life. For the poor who had no possessions in their life, death can be a relief, a moment where justice is finally served.

As for "Others", they are the same "Others" we saw in the songs of Negm. Nass El-Ghiwane embrace all the "wretched of the earth" as their own people. Notwithstanding their striking pride in their religion and culture (which we read throughout their songs), they still consider the suffering and the struggle of other nations as their own. Nass El-Ghiwane protest war and conflicts everywhere, calling themselves "the children of the world, bringing peace, from the land of peace".

Negm's Carnivalesque and Nass El-Ghiwane's trance.

The songs of Negm and Nass El-Ghiwane adopt different discursive strategies in expressing populist sentiments. The style of Negm is based on satire and derision, while the approach of Nass El-Ghiwane in inspired by mysticism. In most of his songs, Negm uses humor to trace the boundaries between the elite and the people. While he glorified the people, he does not refrain from humiliating the elite and drawing a rather denigrating caricature of their being. Taken together, Negm's songs are an opportunity to critic the regime and the upper class through laughter and derision. In this sense, Negm reminds of the Bakhtinian's *Carnivalesque*, or when the humor becomes a liberating force from the authorities. In his renown book *Rabelais and his world*, Bakhtin states how the carnival has always represented a carefree, and playful "second life", as opposed to the serious "real life" with all its imposed etiquettes. In this "second life", Bakhtin contends that speech becomes a form of a "marketplace billingsgate". It is a crude, free speech, devoid of any responsibility to honor social obligations.

On the other hand, the songs of Nass El-Ghiwane are inspired by the concept of *Al-Hal*. In the Moroccan culture, *Al-Hal* can be described as the state that results from the possession of a human body by supernatural powers. Someone is said to be affected by *Al-Hal* when they engage in unconscious, frenetic movements of dance, catalyzed by the rhythm and tunes of a traditional African instruments called the *Sintir*. Looking at the content of the songs of Nass El-Ghiwane, they appear like telling the story of a body trapped in the chaos and the frenzy of *Al-Hal*. The individual or the body is possessed, but not by supernatural powers or demons. They are rather possessed by the oppression and tyranny inflicted upon them. These meanings are found throughout their songs. they are often depicted by a melancholic, desperate individual, trapped in a turbulence of chaos, unable to find their way out.

Limitations and future directions

The first limitation of this work is the absence of a performative-musical analysis of the songs of Imam-Negm and Nass El-Ghiwane. As outlined in the literature review, music is rich in its capacity of meaning-making. As Blacking (1995), music is tightly connected to the social and political context it expresses. Furthermore, it can be considered as an autonomous communication system, comparable to language and signs (Cross & Woodruff, 2009). For this reason, I see my inability to read an analysis music as a major shortcoming of this work. In this work I am using songs and lyrics interchangeably. However, one cannot really talk about a "songs analysis" because it does not include the musical and vocal component of the song. Including music would have enriched this analysis in many ways. Music coupled with words could potentially inform about the intended affective impact on the audience. Words alone can be misleading, especially when the intention is drawing a humoristic or satirical portrait. I have done the "musical analysis" intuitively, as I had to listen to every song several times before

engaging in the textual analysis. With knowledge of music, I believe that this work is missing a significant portion of the meanings the authors of the songs wished to convey.

The second limitation concerns the nature of the populism represented by these songs. Given the ethnic and cultural complexity of the region of North Africa, this work does not intend to make any sweeping generalizations. The artists discussed in this dissertation aligns with inclusionary populism, but this does make every populist movement in North Africa an inclusive one. It is important to remind that postcolonialism has also yielded nativist ideologies in the region, that can be classified in the right-wing spectrum. Contrary to the idea of harmony and homogeneity professed in the studied songs, the ethnic richness of North Africa was behind several internal conflicts, based on nativism. The Kabyle case in Algeria falls in this category. The Kabyles are one of the oldest indigenous ethnic groups in North Africa. After Algeria's independence in 1962, the Kabyle question was raised, concerning both geography and culture. The great Kabyle region became a hotbed of upheavals and riots, demanding the restoration of Amazigh language and culture as a national heritage (Roberts, 1982). The riots were provoked by the marginalization and ban of Amazigh language-related culture event, and the government enforcement of the policy of Arabization in the educational system. But what has started as demands of cultural recognition has later developed in a movement of liberation and self-determination. Today, the Kabyle movement has a government-in-exile in France called MAC-Anavad, aspiring for an autonomous Kabyle republic in North Africa. The new discourse of the MAC-Anavad is centered around the indignity and nativism of the Kabyle people as the first people to inhibit North Africa, qualifying the Arabo-Islamic heritage as essentially colonial. For Harris (2020), the nativist rhetoric of the MAC-Anavad, mostly its anti-Arab and anti-Islamic aspect, has attracted the attention and the support of right-wing leaders in France. The Kabyle

movement is thus a case proving that right-wing western populism and populism in the Global South can find ways to overlap. For this reason, I believe that further comparative studies should engage with similar cases to investigate the circumstances under which the nativist rhetoric evolves in postcolonial countries.

As I am concluding this dissertation, I recall the words of the one of the founders of comparative political communication studies, Jay Blumler (1942-2021) describing his long journey is establishing this field, and how it evolved afterwards: “the comparative boat, which Michael Gurevitch and I pushed into the political communication seas in 1975, has by now transformed into something like a fleet of ocean liners!” (p. xx). I hope that by completing this dissertation, I have in my turn contributed in broadening the capacity of this fleet, at least with a small boat!

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