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Albert Camus' Mediterranean: An Answer to "Murderous Identities"

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Abstract

Identities were "murderous" in Algeria, to borrow an expression from Amin Maalouf. However, through this process, Algeria won its independence. Albert Camus, a son of France and a child of Algeria, caught between his two mothers' identities, was torn apart and sometimes had to make choices ; he was blamed for his Franco-French vision of Algeria and, above all, in the crucial hours, for preferring his biological mother to his cultural one. In other words, Camus had a poor record in Algeria. And yet, there is something like a tuning fork vibrating in unison at the sound of "Camus" and "Algeria": it is Camus' Mediterranean, with its timeless and universal present, which takes its sense and essence from the "Algerian Mediterraneanness". It is a fact: Algeria allows us to understand Camus, but Camus also allows us to know Algeria. Questionable dark areas lie within either of them, but would not it be better if we imagined that Camus and Algeria could find together a world beyond the absurd and revolt, on a quest for universality that would not abolish identities which are still asserted but played down today?

Keywords

Albert Camus, the Mediterranean, Algeria, Greece, identities.

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Albert Camus' life started in 1913, 25 km south of Annaba, in Dréan. Camus is a man of his word, faithful and honest, as Christian Lapeyre shows, among others¹. Therefore, he was sincere when, in 1955, he wrote to Aziz Kessous: "My Algeria is hurting (...) and since August 20th, I have been on the verge of despair." And he added:

There is no reason either why nine million Arabs should live on their land like forgotten men: the dream of an Arab crowd forever cancelled, silent and enslaved, is crazy.²

Conversely, in 1958, he is supposed to have uttered these terrible words:

National independence is a purely passionate phrase. So far, there has never been an Algerian nation. Jews, Turks, Greeks, Italians, Berbers could as well be entitled to claim the leadership of this virtual nation.³

But he was aware of his own contradictions:

I have had a long affair with Algeria, which, no doubt, will never end and which will prevent me from being totally clear-sighted with regard to it.⁴

For, it is indeed an Algerian love affair, as he admits in his *Carnets*, in 1943, when he compared his feelings for France and for Algeria:

I have struck up a relationship with this country, which means I have grounds for loving it or hating it. On the contrary, for Algeria, it is an uncontrolled passion and an abandonment to the sensual delight of love. Question: is it possible to love a country like a woman?⁵

Dreaming of a multicultural and multi-religious Algeria, because he hated separations and the xenophobia they entailed or caused – as Benjamin Stora analysed him, calling him "a man of bridges"⁶ –, Camus, added Alice Kaplan, "thought that equality and justice could federate Berbers and Arabs, Jews and Europeans"⁷:

You must choose sides shout those full of hate. I have chosen. I have chosen

my country, I have chosen the Algeria of justice, where French people and Arabs will join freely.⁸

Camus expressed a deep contradiction during the years of the Algerian war: to be both Algerian and French at the same time:

I don't like Algeria in a way a serviceman or a colonist would. But can I love it differently from a Frenchman? What a large number of Arabs can't understand is the fact I love it like a Frenchman who loves Arabs and who wants them to feel at home in Algeria, without feeling as if I were a foreigner.⁹

Camus was manichean, and Boualem Sansal, who tried to explain Camus' honesty added:

On that specific matter, Algerians and French people are very similar.¹⁰

Then, if Camus is a man of his word, one can discuss with him – today obviously within the space and time of research – and reach either his “right side” or his “wrong side” which make up his simplicity or his complexity in the relationship he built up with his “double”, Algeria, a country of sunshine and shadow – according to the place he is in, whether it is Tipasa or Djemila – a land of contradictions... like him in actual fact!

Then the question which comes to mind is the following one: can his conception of the Mediterranean give an answer to the “murderous identities”, which did not leave him unharmed either, on a land which was to be violently fought over by the French occupant that had been there since 1830, on the one hand, and the young Algerian nation in the making and already on the move, on the other hand, between the Sahara desert and the Mediterranean?

Camus and murderous identities

The litigation between Camus and Algeria is still present, even if it is not as much used for political purposes as it used to be, on either side, except in France, as Benjamin Stora clearly showed at the “Marseille-Provence 2013” event in Aix-en-Provence.¹¹

Indeed Camus was about the only one to condemn the slaughters which

took place in Sétif and Guelma in 1945. It is a fact. However, he also wrote: “The French have to conquer Algeria a second time around”¹². It is easy to understand why he upset Kateb Yacine and why he is still controversial in Algeria and in France, sometimes rejected, sometimes used and instrumentalised.

The first colloquium on Camus in Algeria took place in Oran on June 12th 2005. However, the colloquium which was organised by Messaoud Belhassab in the Department of French Literature of the University 8 mai 1945 of Guelma on October 9th-10th 2013 – and where we gave the speech this article comes from – had a positive purpose, between Camusian studies and the geopolitical reception of Camus: to start writing the future with Camus, as long as one agrees to consider his work without the misunderstandings which are related to it. The argument of the symposium around “Camus and Algerian Letters” in Tipasa in 2006 already suggested “breaking the geopolitical deadlock where the debate had ended up and which was anachronistic” in order to “bring men closer to men whatever their diverging views”.

Facts must be used as the starting point because oblivion cannot help build the future. Understanding will. Intellectual understanding, if emotional understanding is not immediately available.

To start with, there was the big misunderstanding about *L'Étranger* which was interpreted as a fable of colonisation; as Pierre-Louis Rey wrote¹³, can French people see Arabs and when they see them at all, are they afraid of them? Then, as regards the 1954 troubles, there is an obvious unease in Camus' statements. Again, Pierre-Louis Rey wrote:

His strongest statements during the conflict were against blind terrorism on both sides. Although, during the troubles in Madagascar in 1947, he had been outraged at the French using the methods they had had to put up with under Gestapo rule, he did not immediately condemn torture in Algeria.

This is the reason why Pierre-Louis Rey went on:

He neither joined the proponents of French Algeria, ultimately resigned to Muslims integrating France, nor the militants campaigning for an independent country: in his view, the country was made up of two peoples who were meant to coexist in renewed confidence.

It was clear that this option, called “the federal option”, was not viable; the problem was that there could not be two peoples. So how could there be one single people without exclusion or submission for the other one?

Finally, there was this statement which sounds like a tragic *fatum* which he made in Stockholm in December 1957 during a conference at Uppsala University: “I believe in justice, but I shall defend my mother before I defend justice”¹⁴, the mother he had always looked at “with tears in his eyes”! “Crap” that Hubert Beuve-Méry, the director of *Le Monde*, believed Camus would say, not on content but on public disclosure of his own feelings. Camus thought that “the sea washes away everything”¹⁵; he was wrong. Algeria still remembers it and heals its wounds. Benjamin Stora clearly sums it up:

Deep ambivalence still lingers over Camus. On the one hand, he is the man who knows how to talk about Algeria, who knows its singularity and its sensuality; on the other hand, he is the man who was unable to give Algerians their rightful place because he was himself the prisoner of colonial stereotypes.¹⁶

However, beyond this statement, it is a complex issue to know what consistency there is in Camus’ position denouncing poverty in Kabylia in 1939 and in his position in 1957-1958; and again we agree with Benjamin Stora’s analysis:

Camus is universal because he speaks of man’s difficult fate and not of communities. (...) Being at the same time terribly Blackfoot and terribly Algerian, he is both close and distant, familiar and foreign to the Algerian land which tells the condition of modern man: a kind of exile at home, right there. The feeling of living with roots, and to be from neither here nor there.¹⁷

For Camus – as we saw – the answer is “an Algeria of justice, where French people and Arabs will join freely”¹⁸; it is also his rhetoric in his letter to Aziz Kessous:

I want to believe that peace will rise over our fields, our mountains, our shores and that then, at last, Arabs and French people, reconciled in freedom and

justice, will make the effort of forgetting the blood that separates them today.¹⁹

Louis Martinez said that Camus indeed, although he sided with Blackfeet, “could not but feel some leniency towards Algerian militants”²⁰.

Therefore, Camus’ critical reception is very much like the person it is about: it has its “wrong side” (« envers » in French) and its “right side” (« endroit »), its sun and its shadow, made up of respect and even of admiration, but also of reservations and condemnation, as Akram Belkaïd recalls²¹. Yasmina Khadra wrote:

My novel is an answer to my idol’s works, to Albert Camus. He only dealt with his Algeria, his childhood toy, his Blackfoot toy. He never went to the other side.²²

It is true that Camus’ ambiguity is not about Algeria but about Algerians! Camus’ Algerian man is not Kateb Yacine’s Algerian man, hence the “false and hollow sound” from Camus’ books mentioned by Kateb Yacine in an interview for the daily paper *El Moudjahid* in 1975. It is a hard job to find an Algerian in his novels; and when “Camus stages an Algerian character, the latter cannot manage to live”, Kateb Yacine added ironically: the only Algerian character in his novels “is killed because of a sunburn, gratuitously”. Lots of people agreed with this: Anouar Benmalek reproached him for not seeing “9/10th of the people of the country he lived in”; Selim Kheyammi, the editor of the *Quotidien d’Oran*, said:

It seems to me that Camus the writer, not the journalist, was totally part of – even irreparably – a European environment with European concerns, even if he was born and raised in this fractured territory named Algeria.

In *Algérie Actualité*, a weekly, in 1985, Mustapha Chelfi entitled his article: “Camus the foreigner, Albert the Algerian”. And Albert Memmi, in an article in *La Nef*, in 1957, applied the terminology he used in his *Portrait du Colonisateur*²³ to talk about him as Jeanyves Guérin recalled²⁴: he is a “humanist coloniser” who wants to improve a system but does not want to destroy it, contrary to Algerians.

However, one must be fair with him: « Misère de la Kabylie » shows

“how iniquitous the colonial administration is with these communities”, Jean-Yves Guérin wrote in his article « Algérie »²⁵; similarly the Setif and Guelma uprisings made Camus write the following comment in his paper *Combat* in 1945: you must “do justice to the Arab people of Algeria and free it from the colonial system. (...) The era of colonialism has ended”. He said it again in his *Chroniques algériennes* in 1958: “The times of colonialisms are over”. Nevertheless, Akram Belkaïd, an Algerian journalist and essayist, shows that, in Algeria, the younger generation is not as harsh and wants to turn the page of still smouldering passions:

In Algeria, Camus’ work is gradually getting out of the colonial prism. The civil war generation is rediscovering the man, beyond the Blackfoot.²⁶

Drawing on a text by Christiane Chaulet-Achour²⁷, he quotes in turn Youcef Zirem for whom understanding Camus’ greatness is an approach which goes hand in hand with democracy in Algeria, Salim Bachi²⁸, who is calling for a re-interpretation of Camus “without any ideological bias” and Maïssa Bey, who believes that today another interpretation is possible:

(...) an interpretation which is rid of prejudice and of the representations in which Camus was imprisoned after his statement – shortened and used as evidence against him – about ‘justice and his mother’, a statement which lots of Algerians could relate to, as more and more of them admit.

Jean-Yves Guérin sums up the present situation:

Today Algeria is a country of pluralism. And thanks to pluralism it has rediscovered Camus.²⁹

Therefore, according to specialists, today the question should be: once everything is levelled out, can Camus be really considered an Algerian? Opinions are divided and Maïssa Bey asks the following question: “What does to be Algerian mean?” Therefore, the wisest thing to do is to recognise the Algerian part of Camus, his “Algerian rooting”, as Christiane Chaulet-Achour wrote, and above all re-consider the man who was called too quickly a traitor by both sides, “the man who refused to be part of the system and who introduced a feeling of humanity into the political act”³⁰,

as Benjamin Stora developed.

It is easy to understand: Camus is locked in a contradictory binary logic from which we must extricate him to find some unity: how is it possible to reconcile in freedom and justice those who claim the same land? Benjamin Stora analysed this point:

At the intersection of two viewpoints - those who want to reclaim a land which was theirs originally, I mean the Muslim-Algerians and those who consider this land to be theirs from then on, the Algerian French community – Albert Camus gives what can be the position of an intellectual: never give up probity in the midst of passionate involvement, be lucid in the midst of sincere commitment.³¹

Could Algerians recognise themselves in his speech? A difficult issue, even if Camus' love was sincere:

I have loved this land where I was born passionately, I have drawn from it everything I am and never have I separated any of the characters who live there in my friendship, whatever their race. Although I have experienced and shared the miseries that abound there, it has remained the land of happiness, energy and creativity.³²

Those words caused Camus – as he left the rally where he uttered them – to be welcomed with the famous “Camus, get lost” from pro-French Algeria radicals, the same people who try to appropriate him today in the Algerianist circles of Provence!

Yet, to escape “murderous identities” without giving up French identity or Algerian belonging, does Camus not give a possible answer: to be Mediterranean, then along with the Other to be Mediterranean together: to be from the same sea/mother (in French « mer »/« mère »)?

However, it is necessary to explain what being Mediterranean meant for Camus, beyond belonging to a country whose shores are bathed by the Mediterranean... but as far as its interiors, the Beauce desert or the Sahara desert? On July 9th 1955, he wrote in *L'Express*:

The Franco-Arab community, although a blind policy has prevented it from being part of the institutions for a long time, already exists for me and for lots

of French people from Algeria. If I feel closer to an Arab peasant or a Kabyle shepherd than to a shopkeeper from the north of France, it's because a same sky, an overriding nature, a common destiny have been stronger, for lots of us, than the natural barriers or artificial ditches maintained by colonisation.³³

Would the notion of community be possible in the Mediterranean?

Camus' Greek Mediterranean

Michel de Jaeghere sums up Camus' relationship to the Mediterranean from his quotation "I didn't start with heartbreak but with fullness"³⁴:

The incomparable light of an Algeria which looks like, when he writes about it, the garden of Eden, with its fragrant hills, flowered by tamaris and wormwood, the fragile snow of almond trees; the eager blaze of the sun 'at the time when cicadas are silent', the hot ruins upright along the Mediterranean, with their pinewood coloured columns, their sarcophagi lost in the middle of terebinth trees, their carved stones that the sea keeps caressing; the sweetness of summer evenings; the nights spent with eyes wide open under a star-spangled sky.³⁵

For example in *La Mort heureuse*, Camus wrote:

From the perfectly-curved bay, down below, a kind of impulse blew through the herbs and the sun, and brought to the doorstep pine trees and cypresses, dusty olive-trees and eucalyptus. According to seasons, in the heart of this offering would flower white wild roses and mimosas, or this honeysuckle whose scent rose from the wall of the house into the summer night. White linen and red roofs, smiles from the sea under the sky which hung uncreased across the horizon, the House in front of the World pointed its large windows at this feast of colours and lights. But, in the distance, a skyline delineated by a purple range met the bay by a leap forward into the sea and showed this elation in its faraway outline.³⁶

Or in *Noces à Tipasa*:

Standing in the light breeze, in the sun warming only one side of our faces, we watch the light falling from the sky, the unrippled sea, and the smile of its brilliant teeth. Before entering the kingdom of the ruins, we are, for the last

time, spectators. A few steps into the ruins, we are assailed by the scent of the absinths. Their grey wool blankets the ruins as far as the eye can see. Their essence ferments in the heat and, down from the earth and up to the sky, a full-bodied liquor covers the whole world and makes the sky waver. We walk towards love and desire. We seek no lessons, nor the bitter philosophy expected of greatness. Apart from the sun, the kisses and the wild fragrances, everything seems futile.³⁷

Let's also consider *Le Premier Homme*:

It was never hot enough to go swimming but it was hot enough to walk barefoot in the closest waves, while the others had a nap and the light which gradually became softer made the sky even wider, so wide that he could feel tears in his eyes as well as squeal with delight and thankfulness at the same time for the lovely life.³⁸

This was a short description – by Camus himself – of his Mediterranean. He actually put it into a ten-word list as an answer to a journalist: “the world, pain, the earth, the mother, the desert, honour, poverty, summer, the sea”.

When Camus wrote *Noctes*, between 1936 and 1938, the Algerian nature, whose profusion and violence caused an overflowing pleasure in him, reflected the conscience of his mortal condition. It has been said that in Camus' writings, pleasure followed preparatory asceticism, hence the contrast between simple descriptions in which things are just named and others full of sensations, the alliance of lucidity and lyricism from an existentialist viewpoint; at the end, in a kind of personification of nature and objectification of “I”, the human being is absorbed by the world, opposite to anthropocentric Christian tradition, as Michèle Monte shows³⁹.

In Camus, Mediterranean landscape is not a state-of-mind landscape; the approach is deeper, more ontological. Only physical contact must emerge from the text. In this regard, the description of Chenoua, in « Retour à Tipasa », is eloquent: a very compact continuity between the sky, the mountain and the water which ends up in a wider continuity between nature at large and man, who is absorbed by it:

I wanted to see again the Chenoua, that solid, heavy mountain cut out of a single block of stone, which borders the bay of Tipasa to the west before dropping down into the sea itself. It is seen from a distance, long before arriving, a light, blue haze still confused with the sky. But gradually it is condensed, as you advance toward it, until it takes on the colour of the surrounding waters, a huge motionless wave whose amazing leap upward has been brutally solidified above the sea calmed all at once.⁴⁰

When dealing with Camus' rhetoric, Michèle Monte speaks of the 'uncluttered and vibrant celebration of a paradoxical osmosis between a scenery which exceeds man and a man getting rid of his discursive 'superiority' to welcome this excess'⁴¹. Yet, in *Le Mythe de Sisyphe*, Camus wrote:

A work of art is the result of intelligence giving up reasoning on the concrete world. It is the triumph of the carnal. (...) A real work of art is always attainable.⁴²

Actually, Camus sees in Algeria a Mediterranean under the sign of timelessness and universality, in the context of his reflection on the world and on man. And this Mediterranean was definitely meant to be Greek!

It is the famous « pensée de midi » advocating moderation, "an affirmation of contradiction and of the heroic decision of sticking to it and surviving it", opposed to the « pensée de minuit » embodied by the Judaeo-Christian faith of darkness, as he explained in his *Carnets*. We know that Camus opposed "German dreams and Mediterranean tradition", the words he used in *L'Homme Révolté*; the Mediterranean is the place where you understand human nature, and Camus was influenced by Nietzsche, nostalgic for "a pre-socratic Greece, Greece which was at the foundation of European thought", Greece "where intelligence was the sister of hard light" as Jean-Pierre Ivaldi recalled⁴³ by quoting him. Camus praises the Greek genius of moderation : *gnôthiseauton* "know thyself" and *médenagan* "nothing too much", at the same time:

Man can master in him everything necessary. He must repair everything which needs repairing in the Creation. (...) We will choose Ithaca, the faithful land, the bold and frugal thought, lucid action, the generosity of the man who

knows. In the light, the world remains our first and last love.⁴⁴

He shows the gap and the loss of balance between the Mediterranean, on the one hand, and Europe, under the influence of a Christian ascetical ideal, on the other hand:

Thrown into vile Europe where, deprived of beauty and friendship, the proudest race is dying, we, Mediterraneans, still live on the same light. Right in the middle of the European night, the solar thought, the double-faced civilisation, is waiting for its dawn. But it already lights the way of the real mastership.⁴⁵

Jean-Pierre Ivaldi speaks of “Camus’ hellenism” which results in his “yearning for the sacred” and in his “worship of beauty”:

Thereby he made the legacy of Homer’s Greeks his. There had been an uninterrupted chain up to him from the Presocratics, not to mention Nietzsche or Jean Grenier.⁴⁶

Greece has even an obsessing presence in his mind; for example, when the war of independence raged in Algeria, Camus wrote:

With ignorance recognized, fanaticism rejected, the limits of the world and of man, the face of the loved one, beauty at last, this is where we will reach the Greeks.⁴⁷

Unequivocally, the Mediterranean calls for Greek nuptials in Camus: of the land and the sea, on the one hand, but also of Camus with the land and with the sea, on the other hand, within a kind of Dionysian-like mystery, as numerous excerpts show:

The sand-dunes in front of the sea – the warm early dawn and the naked bodies in front of the first waves, still black and bitter. The water is heavy to bear. The body reimmerses in it and runs across the beach in the first rays of sun. Every summer morning on the beaches seems to be the first one in the world. Every summer evening takes on the face of a solemn end of the world. (...) They are unforgettable nuptials.⁴⁸

In the first morning of the world, the earth must have come into being in a similar light. (...) O light! That is the cry of all characters in ancient drama when placed in front of their destiny. (...) In the middle of winter, I learnt at last that there was an invincible summer within me.⁴⁹

Jean-Pierre Ivaldi commented:

L'Envers et l'Endroit, *Noctes*, and up to a certain extent *L'Étranger*, make an inventory of Camus, at the confluence of a poor and simple man's happiness and the first Greek philosophers'atticism.⁵⁰

The foreword to *L'Envers et l'Endroit* clearly shows the approach followed by Camus' thought, shared between "the dialogue with the gods, those of the Peloponnese, and the dialogue with men, in deep poverty" also said Jean-Pierre Ivaldi⁵¹; it's the Mediterranean and Europe. Greek to the core, Camus even sees in the Mediterranean the tragic dimension that ancient Greeks found in it; in other words beauty sheds light on despair in a tragic way:

The Mediterranean has its solar tragedy which is not the tragedy of the mists. Some evenings, at the foot of the mountains, the night falls over the perfect curb of a little bay, and from the silent waters an anxious fullness rises."⁵²

If you transfer this « pensée de midi » to Algeria, you get this famous excerpt written in 1937:

At Springtime, Tipasa is inhabited by the gods and the gods speak in the sun and amidst the smell of absinths, the silverclad sea, the off-white blue sea, the ruins covered in flowers and the light boiling hard in the clusters of stones."⁵³

It is indeed the native land of Algeria which creates this effect, but it is a Mediterranean sea whose essence is Greek!

It is interesting to mention that Camus' Algeria is more a symbolical space than a Mediterranean reality: indeed, compared with Tipasa which embodies the Mediterranean, "the right side" and life – inhabited by the gods –, Djemila embodied Europe, "the wrong side" and death – deserted by the same Greek gods who could also become night gods

instead of day gods:

There are places where the mind dies so that a truth which is its very denial can be born.⁵⁴

As a result Algeria becomes a country of symbols, both positive and negative. Guillaume Zeller, trying to understand Camus' idea of an « Algérie intérieure », wrote:

Algeria was first the place of the original grace before becoming the tragic obsession of a man who is watching his country slip away.⁵⁵

The Mediterranean Algeria of Camus actually rests on the four elements from the presocratic hylozoist philosophies: the panting waters, the hot rock, the 'hard blue' sky, and the fire from the sky, both invigorating and consuming. As early as *Rivages* review, he sets up "a thought inspired by the game of the sun and the sea"; Guillaume Zeller wrote:

Algeria is the indicator of Camus' reflections and anguish. The beauty, the greatness and the eternity of his sceneries make injustice, mediocrity and the fleetingness which is typical of human condition all the more unbearable.⁵⁶

Michel Onfray speaks of "the Tipasa sun, still Greek"⁵⁷. And, when Camus discovered Kabylia's poverty which "somehow casts a doubt on the beauty of the world"⁵⁸, it is clear that, by denouncing the dysfunctional colonial system – and not its nature –, he saw in Algeria Greece in rags:

When you start climbing the first slopes of Kabylia and you see those small villages clustered around natural spots, those men draped in white wool, those country-lanes bordered by olive-trees, fig-trees or cactuses, and at last this simplicity of life and scenery like the harmony between man and his land, you can't help thinking of Greece.⁵⁹

Again, he wrote in « L'Été à Alger »:

For twenty centuries, man has endeavoured to make Greek insolence and naivety decent (...). Today, and beyond this story, young people running across

beaches along the Mediterranean relate to the magnificent gestures of Delos' athletes.⁶⁰

When referring to the premises of the “nuptials of man and the land” or of “the happy weariness of a nuptial day with the world”, Tipasa, he clearly describes a timeless and universal Mediterranean superimposed on Algerian scenery; Camus refers to Dionysus, Demeter and Eleusis.

The Mediterranean bearing Greek colours on an Algerian sketch is essentially a philosophic place, that of “the nuptials of the land and the sky, of the sea and the sun, of the heat and silence, of the present and eternity” as Jacques Darriulat wrote⁶¹. Opposed to “Exile”, it is again: “The kingdom (...) in the secret of an everlasting present”. Furthermore, Camus equated his personal problem with Odysseus' destiny; given the choice by Calypso “between immortality and his native country”, Odysseus rejected immortality: “he chooses the land and dies with it”⁶² Think of Mersault in *La Mort heureuse*: irresistibly he feels like lying on the clay and covering himself with mud to be in full contact with the world. *La Peste* exemplifies the idea too: novelist Maïssa Bey commented on the novel:

In 19.., the imprecise date when the narrator sets the story he tells, Oran is Thebes, struck by pestilence because of a murder whose perpetrator is none other than Oedipus. It is Athens, mentioned by Thucydides, the historian, in 430 BC. It is Constantinople, in the reign of Justinian. It is Crete, in Homer's *Iliad*.⁶³

In 1939, Camus was to travel from the image to the idea, since he had planned to go to Greece, but the war stopped him from doing it. And “the sacred exhilaration” he yearned for he found in 1955, “possessed” by it “throughout the twenty days of his trip” through Greece, as Roger Grenier⁶⁴ wrote relying on numerous notes written by Camus between 1951 and 1958: according to Roger Grenier, he was engaged on “his first journey to the country of gods and philosophers”. In the 1950s, Camus wrote:

By blood, Spain is my second home country. I have a country, the French language. It is because I love my country that I feel European. My heart feels Greek.⁶⁵

Very simply, and one must never forget it, Algeria represents the Mediterranean because it is his mother's land; it is in this sense that the Mediterranean can be a mothering earth, a real motherland! Jean-François Mattei points out how Camus understands Mediterranean proximity:

It is the nuptials of man and the world that Mediterranean culture celebrates, and that Europeans, and more particularly mainland French citizens, have betrayed. According to Camus, such a love of the world explains why the French people of Algeria and the Arabs could get on well, in spite of their differences in religion, culture and standard of living. They all shared, under the same sun, a world that men in modern cities were lacking. For all the inhabitants of Algeria, whoever they believe in, God or Allah, or even if they are agnostics like Camus, it is the same sunlight that rolls down the hill to get lost in the Mitidja plain.⁶⁶

He added that “it does not take much for the unmixed joy of life to come and light up a simple house”, as expressed in an excerpt from *L'Emvers et l'Endroit*:

This garden, on the other side of the window, I can only see its walls. And the thin foliage through which the light cascades. Further up, there is more foliage. Further up again, there is the sun. But of all the exhilaration in the air that one can feel outside, of all the joy spread over the world, I only see the shadows of branches playing on my white curtains. Five sunbeams also, which patiently pour a smell of dry weeds into the room. A breeze and the shadows come alive on the curtains. Supposing a cloud covers then uncovers the sun, from the shadow will emerge the bright yellow of this vase of mimosas. That is enough: a single faint light and here I am filled with joy, which is both confusing and dizzying. It is just a January afternoon that brings me face to face with the wrong side of the world.⁶⁷

And then he commented upon it:

Finding a meaning in life, for « la pensée de midi », means turning the world upside down and inside out and discovering that man has become one with oneself. Man and the world, ‘humanity and simplicity’ Camus wrote, suddenly fall within the framework, not of the political sufferings of history but of a

window where, at a glance, the whole world is here for us to share.⁶⁸

But it is Algeria without Algerians, even though Camus rubbed shoulders with Kabyles and Arabs – and not only with French people – but on football grounds and in the street, and even though, in the 1930s he took an interest in social and economic issues in Algeria⁶⁹ or even in the poor white community's xenophobia at work towards Arabs but also Spaniards, Italians and Jews! Anyway, Michael Walzer made a relevant study of his "Mediterranean culture" and he considers it to be "an ancient imaginary world made up of 'restraint' and harmony which never was the world of Camus' people, nor of the Algerian Arabs"⁷⁰. Where are the Algerians?

Actually it would be wrong to say that they are totally absent but they are not totally present either, at least not for themselves: there is always a kind of swaying between "the right side" and "the wrong side"; he thinks as much of the paradise peopled by Greek gods as he remembers the poverty of Kabylia:

Yes there is beauty and there are the humiliated. However difficult it is, I would like never to be unfaithful to either of them⁷¹.

Therefore, Rosa Llorens had some harsh words directed to Camus' humanism and made a historical and political interpretation of *L'Étranger* which is without any concessions; she gave the following title to one of her articles: "*L'Étranger* by Camus: universal humanism or Blackfoot solipsism?"⁷² And she concluded her study of *L'Étranger* and *La Peste* with a harsh statement:

Camus only insisted on Meursault's metaphysical strangeness in order to make us forget about the political strangeness of the French people of Algeria.

According to her, Camus was not more concerned about Arabs in *La Peste*, after the massacres of Setif and Guelma, than he was before in *L'Étranger*.

In fact, for Benjamin Stora, Camus "is attached to a common Mediterranean history, made of various layers of mixed Algerian and

European influences” which, in turn, made him feel like “writing a story made up of ‘many voices’ and going back and forth”⁷³.

Therefore it is necessary to go beyond the colonial dislocation which overlapped with the Mediterranean and try to find the latter again. But is there nothing more of interest to see in Camus than a Greek Mediterranean grafted to Algeria? Unfortunately, the question may be only rhetorical!

A missed opportunity with a plural Mediterranean?

In order to have a cultural dialogue which goes beyond “murderous identities”, it is necessary to relate to a more pragmatic vision that Camus had of the Mediterranean at one point. Less Greek, less idealistic, it is actually the Mediterranean that Camus partly joined before he tipped over into the « pensée de midi ». Indeed, along with Emmanuel Roblès, Jean Sénac, Jean Grenier and Gabriel Audisio, he joined publisher Edmond Charlot and *Rivages* review, within the movement called « École d’Alger » which was opposed to the Algerianist movement led by Louis Bertrand and Robert Randau, deeply-rooted in a Latin and colonial Mediterranean. Emmanuel Roblès wrote at the time:

All of us were anticolonialists, die-hard pacifists and Mediterranean activists, I mean that for us there was a Mediterranean unity and we made Fernand Benoit’s definition ours when he said that positive similarities are the law of the Mediterranean and that what divides is just a matter of nuances in similarities.⁷⁴

Indeed, when Jean Grenier taught his students at Algiers’ Lycée about the Mediterranean, the Mediterranean spirit was a trendy concept, and in April 1936, Paul Valéry went to Algiers to give a lecture which he entitled: “Impressions by a Mediterranean”. In 1937, in the wake of it, Edmond Charlot, the founder of the collection « Méditerranéennes » published *Inspirations Méditerranéennes*, six short stories by Jean Grenier, Camus’ philosophy teacher; Paul Valéry had allowed him to re-use the title of his 1934 lecture. It is no wonder that at 20, in 1933, Camus expressed his passion for the Mediterranean in verse in the manner of Valéry:

Mediterranean, oh! Mediterranean. / Alone, naked, without secrets, your sons are awaiting death. / Death will give them back to you pure, at last... / Within you the worlds are more polished and humanized.

In the 1930s, through Jean Ballard and *Les Cahiers du Sud*, a new type of Mediterranean was taking shape. The striking point about this review is its connection with Islam, as shown in a special issue entitled « L'Islam et l'Occident », published in 1935. To all those who think that civilisation is summed up in the « miracle grec » and the « génie latin », *Les Cahiers du Sud* gave another answer in the building of a common heritage, in the name of “The Mediterranean Man”. Ballard and his closest fellow contributors’ intention was to build bridges between the Northern and the Southern shores of the Mediterranean – but also between the West and the East – and by all means to strengthen the existing ties between intellectuals from either shore, so that the Mediterranean could be again the meeting point it used to be in some privileged spheres. You need only to cast a glance at the list of permanent or temporary contributors to *Les Cahiers du Sud* in those days to see how important it was for Jean Ballard to have a permanent openness with regard to the East: specialists of the Arab world, Lebanese Georges Schéhadé, Egyptian poet Arsène Yergath whose works were published in *Les Cahiers du Sud* between 1934 and 1938, Gaston Zananiri, an Egyptian too but who was educated in the West and who published an essay entitled *L'Esprit méditerranéen dans le Proche-Orient*, in Marseille in 1939.

Open to every novelty, especially in literature and poetry, which was deeply ingrained in the adventures of modernity, the review quickly enjoyed great national and international prestige, as early as the 1930s. But it always remained a Southern review, which shaped the world and culture from the South.

In the 1930s, the links that Jean Ballard established with Algiers connected him to small groups of intellectuals who were trying to give a new dimension to the Mediterranean region, one of whom was Gabriel Audisio - who, in 1935, refused to take part in the Convention of the « Académie Méditerranéenne » whose ideas were too close to the Algerianists’ and who wrote harsh criticism in Jean Ballard’s *Les Cahiers du Sud*.

I couldn't help noting that it was made up of a vast majority of people for whom the Mediterranean spirit constitutes the synthesis of conservative reaction and Mussolinian sympathies... The Mediterranean condemns racisms; it is the carnal negation of all racisms, and with them, of all the regimes that father them inevitably.

Gabriel Audisio summarised the spirit of tolerance that was the basis of *Les Cabiers du Sud* in the following excerpt:

We have been too much led to believe that humanism and latinity were at one. It is a breach of trust. This is not the way I imagine what the Mediterranean brought to the establishment of the notion of Man, neither for race, nor society, nor nations. When you think of humanism, you think of a universal value: a movement which goes from Man to Man, which is made for Man. (...) As far as I am concerned, I am a citizen of this Mediterranean providing my fellow-citizens are all the people of the sea, including Jews, Arabs, Berbers and Blacks; I am dedicated to Mediterranean humanism providing it not only takes into account Roman order, Greek miracle and Christianity but also the civilising additions from Egypt, Persia, the Phenician, Hebrew and Muslim East.⁷⁵

Born to a Piedmontese father, a mother from Nice and a Romanian grandfather who was born in Marseilles, he lived in Algiers and Paris and after spending some time with the Algerianists, he parted with them; he reproached them for erasing one thousand years of Muslim civilisation, and he, too, reckoned that the "Mediterranean Man" should be larger than that of the Greco-Latin heritage. In his novel *Héliotrope*, published in 1928, he started building the idea of a "Mediterranean Homeland". So, in 1935, he wrote:

There is no doubt in my mind that the Mediterranean is a continent, not an inner lake.(...) And I'd like to point out that for the people of that sea, there is just one homeland, that very sea, the Mediterranean, and that that continent is a homeland. (...) If France is my nation, if Marseilles is my city, my homeland is the sea, the Mediterranean, from start to finish.⁷⁶

In 1936, in *Sel de la Mer*, he added:

I would like to make myself understood though. In my mind, I neither mean to eliminate Rome, Latin civilisation and their historic roles nor to exclude them from the Mediterranean. I just want to protest against misusing them, against the excessive place they have been given. (...) To this shrivelling latinity, I oppose all that has made Mediterranean civilisation: Greece, Egypt, Judas, Carthage, Christ, Islam. And, to be honest, the real latinity itself! (...) The great secret of the Mediterranean is the conciliation of the East and the West.⁷⁷

For Audisio, the “Mediterranean man” is a mix of all the cultures from the Mediterranean:

In Algeria, there’s Trajan’s Arch and SidibouMedine mosque. (...) The truth may be in-between.⁷⁸

Therefore, Algeria is a province of the Mediterranean which takes part in the interweaving of cultures.

Actually, the same figure haunts Camus and Audisio: Odysseus. Gérard Crespo sees in Audisio’s Odysseus⁷⁹ the human synthesis of the Mediterranean homeland, the symbol of a manly race which shaped itself in the heritage of Punic, Greek, Arabic, Latin, Berber... ancestry⁸⁰; and, in 1954, Audisio asked the following question:

Twenty cities claimed to be Homer’s birthplace, why would his birthplace not be here, in Algiers? It is here on the wharf of the El Djefna mole that I saw Odysseus for the first time. Young and handsome, he was wearing the white tunic of a merchant seaman coming back home on board a cargo ship.⁸¹

But Camus was to turn Odysseus into a revolted man, the embodiment of human condition.

When Camus was secretary general to the “Maison de la Culture” in Algiers, at Belcourt, in 1937, they published a bulletin that Camus called *Jeune Méditerranée*, after Gabriel Audisio’s book *Jeunesse de la Méditerranée*, Audisio having a strong influence on the young generation of intellectuals from the city of Algiers. In a conference delivered on February 8th 1937 and published in the first issue of *Jeune Méditerranée*, Camus announced:

The « Maison de la Culture » standing before you means to serve Mediterranean culture. (...) An international basin crossed by all types of currents, of all countries the Mediterranean is perhaps the only one which meets great Eastern thought. For it is not classical and orderly, it is diffuse and unruly, like those Arabic districts or those harbours from Genoa to Tunisia. This triumphant taste for life, this sense of crush and boredom, those deserted squares at midday in Spain, the siesta, here is the true Mediterranean, it is to the East that it is close. Not to the Latin West.⁸²

He rejected the “mystic of latinity in the way it was exploited by fascist propaganda”, in the name of an internationalist culture and he suggested a Mediterranean culture in which “Spaniards, Italians and Arabs [would] exalt their common genius”; his distrust of Rome was constant, as shown in a passage from *L'Exil d'Hélène*, in 1948, in which he spoke of “Roman conquerors whom we were taught to admire, out of incomparable infamy, by the authors of our textbooks”. In August 1937, *Les Cahiers du Sud*, quoted Albert Camus' conference at length and more particularly the following passage:

There is a constant misunderstanding. The whole mistake comes from the fact that we confuse the Mediterranean and latinity, the latinity that Mauras and his like try to annex. (...) This is not the Mediterranean that our “Maison” claims. It is not the real one. That one is the abstract and conventional Mediterranean embodied by Rome and Romans. The Mediterranean is elsewhere. It is the very negation of Rome and of Roman genius. Our task is to rehabilitate the Mediterranean, to take it back from those who claim it so unfairly.

Then again:

North Africa is one of the only countries where the East and the West live together. At this confluence, there is no difference in the way a Spaniard or an Italian from Algiers' wharf, or the Arabs around them live. The most essential thing in the Mediterranean genius may spring from this meeting, unique in history and geography, which was born between East and West. (In this respect, we must refer to Audisio.)

In this manifesto, Camus is definitely upfront with the symbolical balance of power which exists around the representations of the

Mediterranean, and he added: “We are here with the Mediterranean against Rome.” It is indeed the western part of the Mediterranean that Camus targeted even if he added a comment directed at Greece, which was synonymous with the East for him:

The Mediterranean spirit consists in keeping alive the legacy of a common origin, the East, between Mediterranean Europe and Africa.

Generally speaking, Camus shared the same conception of the Mediterranean as Audisio, but never were his words as heartfelt as Audisio's when the latter wrote:

I am looking for the resurrection of Carthage and for the anti-Rome, a Phenician moon is showing me the way to the Lotus island.⁸³

Or again:

There is no doubt in my mind that the Mediterranean is a liquid continent whose edges are solidified and that this continent is a homeland.⁸⁴

In 1938, Camus met Audisio in Edmond Charlot's bookshop called « Les Vraies Richesses » in Algiers; and *Noces* was to be published by Charlot in the same year, an exaltation of a land bathed in sunlight and sea water. Another vision of the Mediterranean developed around Edmond Charlot, as Emmanuel Roblès recalled:

Charlot published the charming series « Méditerranéennes » including *L'Envers et l'Endroit* by Camus; *Santa Cruz* by Jean Grenier; *L'Annonciation à la Licorne* by René Jean Clôt; *À la Vue de la Méditerranée* by Claude de Fréminville; *Amour d'Alger* by Gabriel Audisio, a trailblazer for us since he had already published *Jeunesse de la Méditerranée* and *Sel de la Mer* with Gallimard, two books which meant a lot to us.⁸⁵

Thanks to Edmond Charlot, *L'Envers et l'Endroit* could be published and it was the second book of the collection « Méditerranéennes ». In December 1938, when *Rivages* review was first published, with Camus and Audisio as members of the drafting committee, Camus outlined the

dominating features of Mediterranean culture, speaking of “a thought which was inspired by the sun playing with the sea”; it was the starting point for the name given to the major character in *L'Étranger*: Mersol (*ie.* Season) which was in the manuscript and which was to become Meursault.

But this speech in favour of a plural Mediterranean was to come to an end very quickly, as Camus developed his « pensée de midi » rooted in Nietzsche and Hellenism. And twenty years later, the end of the colonial era favoured a new vision of the Mediterranean taking the opposite shore into account; from then on, a fresh look was taken at the Mediterranean; Louis Gardet was to be a pioneer in the process – not Camus – by founding the *Études Méditerranéennes* review in 1957. Seeing that Mediterranean culture is always equated to Greco-Latin culture as the source of Western humanism of the modern age, Gardet wrote:

Sometimes we talked about “Mediterranean culture”, and the expression is indeed acceptable. But let us make no mistake: what is meant here is Greco-Latin culture (secular) as the source of Western humanism of the modern age. (...) I will then say that there is not only one but there are several Mediterranean cultures. (...) And far more than that, the existing religious cultures are all rooted in a common or related Semitic source. It is not a question of uniting them artificially, which, sooner or later, could only bring about animosities and deadly fights. Being aware of how complex and vital it is, as well as the necessary interpenetrations, could be a means of mutual understanding and development.⁸⁶

The vision of “the two shores of the Mediterranean” started to emerge as a historical model against a Mediterranean which would be completely divided with the arrival of Islam. Louis Gardet defined another use of the past: he established a link with Greek and Latin heritage on the one hand, and Jewish and Muslim heritage on the other hand:

Here, the past must be an indication of the future for us. (...) It should be necessary to eradicate all cultural gaps between the East and the West. Will the outer perimeters of the Mediterranean be a closed border or an open crossing point and a link? (...) *Études Méditerranéennes* will pay considerable attention to the cultural life of riparian peoples around the Mediterranean.⁸⁷

Caught between Algerianists, like Robert Randau, who were turned towards a Latin Mediterranean with the continuous presence of the Algerian land meant to be farmed by the French colonist, and the « École d'Alger » reshaped by Camus into a “North African School of Letters” turned towards a Greco-Latin Mediterranean with the continuous presence of the sea and the coast, where is Algeria? A colonial speech on the one hand, a humanist and universalist speech on the other hand. The latter was not specific enough for a new Algeria. It was the failure of the idea of “Mediterraneanness” for Algerian Algeria.

A new generation of writers, focused on Algeria, strove to lay the stress on the acknowledgment of Otherness, around Emmanuel Roblès, the editor of « Méditerranée » collection at Éditions du Seuil in Paris. All communities included, those writers depicted visions of interlinking and interpenetration, deprived of egocentrism and ethnocentricity. They advocated a universalist humanism and rejected any form of inequality or of religious or ethnic segregation, which did not prevent Mouloud Feraoun from addressing Roblès bitterly: “You have told us what we are like. Now it is our turn to tell you what we are like.” Crespo summarised the evolution as follows:

Audisio and Camus' « eternal Méditerranéen » no longer matched post-war Algerian concerns; the counter-myth was *L'Éternel Jugurtha* which Jean Amrouche published in *L'Arche* review⁸⁸ in 1946: ‘Jugurtha represented the North-African whose historical fate could be full of significance from a mythological point of view. He was the embodiment of the African man before Roman colonisation who resisted the coloniser.’⁸⁹

And Jean Amrouche, talking about himself and his like, concluded: “Cultural hybrids are monsters. Monsters with no future”⁹⁰ – which was supported by José Lenzini's personal story:

It was Kateb Yacine's feeling, as was the case for many other Algerians. As I was asking him how he felt about Camus, I got the answer through a brief letter in a broken handwriting: ‘Some pages are very beautiful but the Algerians are absent, if not left out, like in *L'Étranger*. (...) Just compare him to Faulkner: Faulkner speaks the slang spoken by the Blacks in the south of the USA. (...) It makes the difference between the writer and the moralist.’ His

opinion is quite harsh... nevertheless Camus did not seem to have escaped the prevailing culture in which the secular civilisation wears ties and three-piece suits.⁹¹

Let us get back to Camus. Pulling the Mediterranean out of Latin exclusiveness was a good thing. But Camus' Eastern Mediterranean was exclusively Greek! It is logical indeed since Camus resorted to German thought; Hölderlin, who inspired Camus a lot, called Greece "The Oriental"; Heidegger, commenting on Hölderlin in 1959, as Roger Grenier recalled⁹², added: "Greece, the Oriental, is the great beginning whose coming unfolds, still, on the mode of what is possible." Camus is clear: there is no hint of Algeria in such an analysis as follows:

We do not claim a taste for reasoning or abstract thought in the Mediterranean, but it is its life - courtyards, cypresses, chilli pepper strings – Aeschylus and not Euripides – Doric Apollos and not the sabre-rattling of Rome – sun-drenched sceneries and not stage sets.⁹³

Therefore, the Mediterranean "homeland" as imagined by Gabriel Audisio in the 1930s, then by Jean Ballard in the 1950s, was not developed by Camus.

In 1957, Gabriel Audisio opened his arms again and asked "the writers family, lots of whom were Arabs or Berbers"⁹⁴, to use the French language, a catalyst for the harmonious fusion of Eastern and Western cultures. He had done his best twenty years before. As for Camus, in a naïve way, he still believed in a brotherhood of Algerian writers! In 1959, in a tribute to Roblès which was published in *Simoun* review in Oran, he concluded with "an appeal to a warm communion in Mediterranean culture addressed to all Algerian writers, brothers under the sun" in spite of the Algerian troubles! It is too late, far too late; for twenty years, Camus had not participated in the building of a plural Mediterranean, and he was still out of it if, when he talked of "Mediterranean culture", he was still thinking of his Greek Mediterranean.

A Mediterranean... Undoubtedly Camus was one. But the problem is the meaning of his own "Mediterranean", with three possible answers: the Latin one (or Roman) – colonialist -, the Greek one – idealistic and

timeless –, and the plural one – putting together all the cultures from all Mediterranean shores – which was in fact the only one in which French and Algerian people could have accepted dialogue (which is possible today). Sébastien Lapaque gave the following definition of Camus' way of being Mediterranean:

Camus is Mediterranean. It is an obvious fact: he likes sea bathing, beautiful women, old stones, anise and olives, having a drink in a sidewalk café, having lunch in the sun and bachelor outings.⁹⁵

With Camus, we are given the choice between the colonial postcard and – right out of a melting pot of a kingdom he described as “fed on sky and sea”, in front of the steaming Mediterranean in the sun⁹⁶ – metaphysical reflection:

A civilisation will last only to the extent that, all nations being abolished, its unity and greatness will come from a spiritual principle.⁹⁷

This is exactly “the confrontation between metaphysics and existence”⁹⁸ which Jean-Pierre Ivaldi talked about. However, as Guillaume Zeller wrote:

(...) Camus' Algeria, magnificent and tragic, remains one of the most beautiful characters of his entire work. He developed a real love story with it which has lost none of its intensity, although nearly all the protagonists are gone today.⁹⁹

Now, if we need a conclusion, we may say that it is in « L'Été à Alger » that the Mediterranean looks the most Algerian. There, definitely, Camus is less Greek! Indeed, Roger Grenier wrote:

Natural happiness, or even plain happiness, such is the impression we get from the description of Algiers and of its inhabitants in « L'Été à Alger ». (...) The people of Algiers neither have a sense of sin nor of eternity. They only know the present and a futureless joy of living.¹⁰⁰

As for Algeria, it is probably its real self when it is not related to any ancient past, as is the case in his « Petit Guide pour des villes sans passé » or in « Les Amandiers »¹⁰¹. But eventually, we may say that what is the

most Mediterranean and the most sharable in Camus is, above all and after all, his devotion to his mother: “You must not neglect your mother.”¹⁰² And indeed, Jean-François Mattéi recalled that in 2006, Algerian President Bouteflika saw in a son preferring his mother to anything else, in the case of Camus, “a deeply Algerian sentiment”¹⁰³.

The Mediterranean really offered – and still offers – an opening between its two shores, in spite of inevitable obstacles! But we must make no mistake about which Mediterranean. What we must remember about Camus lies in this sentence which sounds like “Given a second chance”:

Problems must be posed according to the future, without pondering endlessly upon your past mistakes.¹⁰⁴

Because you must believe in the Mediterranean, as Camus did in 1937:

In the same way as the Mediterranean sun is the same for all men, the effort made by human intelligence must be a common heritage and not a source of conflicts and murders. Is a new Mediterranean culture which would be compatible with our social ideal feasible? Yes, it is. But it is up to us and to you to do it.¹⁰⁵

It was a different speech from what Camus later developed through his «pensée de midi». Among the other people who voiced the same ideal¹⁰⁶, Thierry Fabre wrote for example:

A creative Mediterranean is a way to resist occidentalism. (...) A “Modernity-Mediterranean” is trying to emerge. (...) The time has come to look at this new dawn.¹⁰⁷

And Mohamed Kacimi added:

Has the time not come yet for every one of us to say: the sea, my Mediterranean, it is me mingling with the Other, it is me who can't survive without the Other.¹⁰⁸

Yet The Koran is not against the idea; it reads: “We have created, from water, all living beings.” (XXXI, 30)

Undoubtedly, we can find in Camus some pages describing “a Mediterranean way of being in the world”, to reconcile him with Algerians and above all to build effective relationships between the French and the Algerian nations. It is the Mediterranean, “the sea in the middle of the lands” etymologically speaking, but also called *Al-Babr Al-Abyad Al-Muttawasit*, “the white sea in the middle” which can play the role of a *medium*.

Albert Camus once wrote that you must imagine Sisyphus happy¹⁰⁹; therefore he could have written that you must imagine Mediterranean People happy.

¹ In order to understand what follows better, it's necessary to mention that “murderous identities” is the English translation of *Les Identités meurtrières* which is the original French title of Maalouf's essay (Paris, Grasset, 1988) entitled *In the Name of Identity* in the English version. Our article is based on this particular concept.

² Christian Lapeyre, « Camus ou la fidélité », *Albert Camus & la pensée de Midi*, dir. Jean-François Mattéi, les Editions Ovadia, 2010, p. 120-121.

³ Albert Camus, « Lettre à un militant algérien », *Communauté algérienne*, n°1, octobre 1955. *Actuelles III, Chroniques algériennes, 1939-1958*, Paris, Gallimard, 1958.

⁴ Albert Camus, « Crise en Algérie », *Combat*, 13-14 mai 1945. *Actuelles III, Chroniques algériennes, 1939-1958*, Paris, Gallimard, 1958.

⁵ Albert Camus, « Petit guide pour des villes sans passé », *L'Été*, Paris, Gallimard, 1954.

⁶ Albert Camus, *Carnets II, janvier 1942-mars 1951*, Paris, Gallimard, 1964.

⁷ Benjamin Stora, « Un pont sur la Méditerranée », an interview by Agnès Gayraud, *Philosophie magazine* hors-série, « Albert Camus. La pensée révoltée », 2013, p. 60-62.

⁸ Alice Kaplan, « Vu de New-York et d'Alger », an interview by Sven Ortoli, *Philosophie magazine* hors-série, « Albert Camus. La pensée révoltée », 2013, p. 58-59.

⁹ Albert Camus, « Appel pour une trêve civile en Algérie », *L'Express*, 22 janvier 1956. *Actuelles III, Chroniques algériennes, 1939-1958*, Paris, Gallimard, 1958.

¹⁰ Albert Camus, an interview by Robert Mallet, *Figaro littéraire*, 1958.

¹¹ Boualem Sansal, « Entre deux feux », an interview by Martin Legros, *Philosophie magazine* hors-série, « Albert Camus. La pensée révoltée », 2013, p. 52-54.

¹² Benjamin Stora et Jean-Baptiste Périet, *Camus brûlant*, Paris, Stock, 2013. Read

also : Marion Cocquet, « Camus brûle-t-il ? », *Le Point* hors-série, « Albert Camus. La revanche », octobre-novembre 2013, p. 77-79.

¹³ Albert Camus, « Crise en Algérie », *Combat*, 13-14 mai 1945. *Actuelles III, Chroniques algériennes, 1939-1958*, Paris, Gallimard, 1958.

¹⁴ Pierre-Louis Rey, « L'homme fragmenté », *Télérama* hors-série, « Camus, le dernier des Justes », 2013, p. 6-19.

¹⁵ Albert Camus, as reported in *Le Monde*, 14 décembre 1957.

¹⁶ Albert Camus, in a letter to Jean Grenier, juin 1958.

¹⁷ Benjamin Stora, « L'emblème d'une Algérie plurielle », an interview by Akram Belkaïd, *Télérama* hors-série, « Camus, le dernier des Justes », 2013, p. 26-29.

¹⁸ *Ibidem.*

¹⁹ Albert Camus, « Appel pour une trêve civile en Algérie », *L'Express*, 22 janvier 1956. *Actuelles III, Chroniques algériennes, 1939-1958*, Paris, Gallimard, 1958.

²⁰ Albert Camus, « Lettre à un militant algérien », *Communauté algérienne*, n°1, octobre 1955. *Actuelles III, Chroniques algériennes, 1939-1958*, Paris, Gallimard, 1958.

²¹ Louis Martinez, « Camus dans Paris », *Albert Camus & la pensée de Midi*, dir. Jean-François Mattéi, Éditions Ovadia, 2010, p. 77-99.

²² Akram Belkaïd, « Le temps de l'apaisement », *Télérama* hors-Série, « Camus, le dernier des Justes », 2013, p. 22-24.

²³ Yasmina Khadra, *Le Parisien*, octobre 2008. He talks about his book *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*, Julliard, 2008. Read also : « On peut se tromper sans perdre de son assurance », *Le Point* hors-série, « Albert Camus. La revanche », octobre-novembre 2013, p. 84.

²⁴ Albert Memmi, *Portrait du colonisateur*, Paris, Gallimard, 1957.

²⁵ Jean-Yves Guérin, *Dictionnaire Camus*, Paris, Robert Laffont, Bouquins, 2013. Quoted in « Lexique », *Le Monde* hors-série, « Albert Camus (1913-1960). La révolte et la liberté », septembre-novembre 2013, p. 108-119.

²⁶ *Ibidem.*

²⁷ Akram Belkaïd, « Le temps de l'apaisement », *Télérama* hors-Série, « Camus, le dernier des Justes », 2013, p. 22-24.

²⁸ Christiane Chaulet-Achour, « Des écrivains d'Algérie lisent Camus », Colloquium « Camus et les Lettres algériennes », Tipasa-Alger, 2006.

²⁹ Read for example Salim Bachi, « Pour un jeune Algérien, *L'Étranger* est forcément un choc », *Le Point* hors-série, « Albert Camus. La revanche », octobre-novembre 2013, p. 83.

³⁰ Jean-Yves Guérin, « À chacun son Camus », an interview by Franck Nouchi, *Le Monde* hors-série, « Albert Camus (1913-1960). La révolte et la liberté », septembre-novembre 2013, p. 65-69.

³¹ Benjamin Stora, « L'emblème d'une Algérie plurielle », an interview by Akram

Belkaïd, *Télérama* hors-série, « Camus, le dernier des Justes », 2013, p. 26-29.

³² *Ibidem.*

³³ Albert Camus, « Appel pour une trêve civile en Algérie », *L'Express*, 22 janvier 1956. *Actuelles III, Chroniques algériennes, 1939-1958*, Paris, Gallimard, 1958.

³⁴ Albert Camus, « Terrorisme et répression », *L'Express*, 9 juillet 1955, *Actuelles III, Chroniques algériennes, 1939-1958*, Paris, Gallimard, 1958.

³⁵ Albert Camus, « Trois interviews », *Actuelles I, Chroniques 1944-1948*, Paris, Gallimard, 1950.

³⁶ Michel de Jaeghere, « Éditorial », *Le Figaro* hors-série, « Camus. L'écriture. La révolte. La nostalgie », 2013, p. 3.

³⁷ Albert Camus, *La Mort heureuse*, written between 1936 and 1938, Paris, Gallimard, 1971.

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