Graduate School

FACULTY
OF SOCIAL
SCIENCES

In the Faculty of Social Sciences

Racialization and masculinities in a violent border regime

The case study of the 2022 Melilla fence jump through a translocational lens

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements of the degree of
Master of Arts
in Middle Eastern Studies

Author: Alba Planchart i Valencia
Advisor: Teresa Cappiali
Date: August 10th
Words: 20496

Abstract

On June 24th 2022, nearly two thousand people attempted to cross the border between Morocco and the Spanish enclave of Melilla, resulting in dozens of deaths and injuries. Scholars have suggested that these border crossings in the Mediterranean highlight the systemic border violence that is exercised towards migrants in the region to prevent presenting them as isolated or sporadic. To contribute to this field, this study examines the Melilla events through a translocational approach: it focuses on the local violence of that day and links it to transnational factors. Six interviews were conducted, which have been combined with field observations in the enclaves' fences, to examine how the case study of the Melilla fence jump illustrates modes of racialization and masculinities of the Moroccan-Spanish border. This paper showcases the need to situate local violent experiences such as the Melilla events within the broader context of border coloniality to identify the systemic roots of border violence.

Keywords: Melilla, border violence, racialization, masculinities, coloniality of borders

Acknowledgements

This research would have not been possible without the support of all my colleagues in the Master's Program in Middle Eastern Studies and other programs in Lund University. Marçal, Freya and Christoffer for proof-reading the paper and for their great advice. I would also like to thank my supervisor, Professor Teresa Cappiali, for her guidance and for sharing her knowledge, and my family, for all their support throughout my education. Lastly, I would like to thank all the participants for their activism and for sharing their experiences and perspectives, and all migrants that contest violent borders. It is only because of them and their daily resistance that this paper has been written.

Table of Contents

This was the deadliest day on record at the border between Morocco and Spain
(Africa Eye, 2022, min.1:05)

1. Introduction

In 2022, nearly a thousand people attempted to cross the fence that separates Morocco with the Spanish enclave of Melilla. They had been waiting in the forests nearby the border for months until the Moroccan police started sweeping operations, which forced them to approach the fences (Kassam, 2022). Once they got to the borderland, migrants were pressured towards the frontier, even though it was impossible for them to cross. They were stuck in between countries and were subjected to police brutality, including attacks with tear gas, leading to dozens of deaths -a number that is still today contested- and hundreds of injured (Walking Borders, 2022a). This event made it to the covers of most Spanish -as well as European- and Moroccan newspapers. Nonetheless, its presence in the media was not long-lived, and the event is now one of the many instances of attempted border crossing that have been observed in this area. The only information that has been published afterwards are reports conducted by some organizations that attempt to bring some light to this event or to contest the information that has been published so far. Since the Melilla events, other devastating incidents have added to the number of deaths on the borders between Morocco and Spain. According to the NGO Walking Borders, 951 people have died in their attempts to reach Spanish land in between January and June of 2023 (2023).

The consistent border crossing attempts from Morocco to Spain and the consequent human rights violations that they suppose, point to a systemic violence present in the border regime. This violence is not only present at the Moroccan-Spanish frontier, but also in other countries in the Mediterranean region. For instance, in March 2023, a total of seven shipwrecks were recorded off the Tunisian coast, in just one week, these shipwrecks killed more than 30 people, and dozens of others disappeared (El País, 2023). There appears to be a common trend throughout the Mediterranean region when it comes to migration, especially migration from or through Northern Africa to Europe. The broader context of migration dynamics and the violent nature of borders have been studied by a great number of scholars (De Genova, Tazzioli, and Álvarez-Velasco, 2016; Houdaïfa, 2019; Lahlou, 2018). A number of these authors point to the colonial origins of the current global border regime, which has instituted a classification system of migration which is both racialized and gendered (Deridder, Pelckmans and Ward, 2020; Jiménez-Alvarez, Espiñeira, and Gazzotti, 2021; Tyszler, 2019; Sahraoui and Tyszler, 2021; Kastner, 2021). This global framework of the

coloniality of borders is used in this paper to frame the analysis of the case study of the Melilla fence jump in 2022.

The information regarding the Melilla events of 2022, the narrative of what happened, and the number of deaths and injuries are still extremely contested and increasingly politicized; therefore, it is complicated to grasp the exact details of the event or indeed, the reasons behind it. To account for this challenge, this research juxtaposes the various narratives provided by different actors in the incident, such as NGOs and governmental organizations, and then frames them with the broader context of post-colonial border studies. Since it was not within the scope of this paper to obtain data from the migrants themselves, the study is primarily based on reports, newspapers, pre-existing literature and qualitative interviews conducted with organizations involved in the events and later fallout. Additionally, field observations conducted during two-months of fieldwork in Morocco are included in order to offer a deeper insight into the state of the borderland immediately after the events in June 2022, as well as to bring a more grounded perspective to the research based on first-hand experiences, emotions and sensations. This ethnographic work also included the participation of a Moroccan family that crosses the border daily, which also provided deeper insights on daily experiences of bordering. This combination of methods offers a deeper understanding of the enclave's border context and its systemic violence through the analysis of a particular case study.

As it has been mentioned, there is the tendency to describe border crossings such as the Melilla fence jump as isolated events, thus homogenizing, reducing and eventually rendering invisible the violence exercised in these events. However, the research in this paper suggests that violent events occur on a daily basis throughout the Southern Mediterranean, and these instances of violence are inherently located in that same border system; rooted in the colonial and social categorizations that have been established in the region for centuries. This thesis therefore analyzes local experiences and implements them in order to describe this systemic border-violence, focusing on two of the main factors at play in migration: racialization and gendered dynamics (Tyszler, 2019; Sahraoui and Tyszler, 2021). To conduct this analysis, the paper uses a translocational approach, a framework developed by Anthias (2013) that allows to focus on local intersections of social locations and relate them to global contexts. In this way, the paper contributes to border studies in the Northern African region by using the particularities of a local context to better understand the coloniality of the

current border regime. The research answers the following research question: how does the case study of the Melilla fence jump illustrate modes of racialization and gendering of the borders between Morocco and Spain?

2. Literature Review

2.1. A brief history of the enclaves' colonial past

In considering the role of Ceuta and Melilla as bordered locations, many authors point to the enclaves' colonial history (Tyszler, 2022; Soto Bermant, 2014; Saddiki, 2010). This colonial past is also regarded as the origin of the violence in the migratory control of the enclaves' borders: as the beginning of a racist order that attempts to safeguard "Spanish civilization" (Tyszler, 2022). Soto Bermant argues that the history of the enclaves themselves has been an essentially racialized one, noting that as this history has been documented primarily by white Christian historians, it has thus always been framed as an epic tale of good/Christian/white/european heroes against their bad/Muslim/non-white/African neighbors (2015a, p.455). Ceuta was conquered by the Portuguese in 1415 and came under Spanish rule in 1668, while Melilla was conquered in 1497 by the Spanish Empire directly. These territories continue to be under Spanish governance today, despite uprisings against the Spanish in both regions and even after Morocco gained independence from the 1912 established Protectorate (Sagnella, 2020). As a result, authors such as Tyszler refer to the enclaves as the "last European colonies in Africa" (2022, p.3). Ceuta and Melilla began as penal settlements, then growing into trading hubs before becoming military headquarters, during Spain's colonial project (Soto Bermant, 2014, p.111). In the context of migration, Tyszler notes that by1889, Ceuta had become a place of deportation and arrests - mainly towards the racialized population (2022, p.2). Similarly, Soto Bermant talks about the establishment of an "ethnocratic regime" where ethnicity determines(ed) exclusion (2015a, p.451). Both authors point to the *Ley de Extranjería*[1] as the turning point where Spanish borders started to become more closed, as fences around the enclaves started to be built and official documentation started to gain increasing importance for inclusion into the enclaves (Tyszler, 2015; Soto Bermant, 2015a).

The 1990s were a turning point for migration flows: The establishment of the Schengen area and the consequent "need" to strengthen European borders led to extended "security measures" at the borders (Bermant, 2014, p.111). Tougher physical and administrative boundaries met with increasing demographic pressures in the Middle East and

[1] *Ley de Extranjería* is the Migration Law approved by the Spanish state in 1985 to regulate migration flows. At the year of its establishment 82.5% of the Muslim population in Melilla was classified as illegal migrants who could be deported. This measure was later on overthrown due to protests and riots, For more information visit: Soto Bermant (2015a)

North Africa. Particularly intense pressure was felt by the region's labor markets. The excess in the labor force raised the unemployment rate in Morocco to 28% exacerbating desires for migration to Europe (Baldwin-Edwards, 2005). In this context, Lahlou (2005) talks about the increasing demographic pressure in sub-Saharan countries, as around 100,000 people are pushed to migrate to the north every year. New migration dynamics and the desire to protect Europe's external borders constitute the main argument the Spanish state has used since the 1990s to reinforce the fences in the enclaves and to generate a sort of "selective permeability": preventing most forms of migration to protect Europe's identity without hindering existing trade flows (Soto Bermant, 2014 p.113).

As Paddila states, there has never been a similar increase in the investment of border militarization with this level of sophistication (2021, p.185). However, irregular crossings have done nothing but increase in the past decades (Saddiki, 2010; El Qadim 2010). By the same token, Soto Bermant argues that it is not only people who move across these borders on a daily basis, but also commodities and capital, thus mobility has not diminished (2014, p.113). According to the literature, the early 2000s are seen as the period where the European Union started to be more interested in cooperating with Morocco (Cassarino, 2021, p.18) and in 2004, the first readmission agreement was accepted by the Kingdom (El Qadim, 2010, p.105). This increasing closure of frontiers forced migrants to find alternative routes for crossing, "jumping the fence" being the most common alternative identified by Tyszler (2020, p.160). According to the author, despite the attempt to reduce irregular crossings by opening asylum offices on Melilla's border, these offices are perceived to be inaccessible by Sub-Saharan migrants and only relatively accessible for Syrians and Palestinians, reflecting the racialized nature of formal border dynamics (Tyszler, 2015, p.54). Hence, the selective permeability that Soto Bermant recognizes in the enclaves (2014, p.113) is already present in the border itself as seen in the case of the asylum offices.

2.2. Being "illegal" in an "exceptional" territory

Ceuta and Melilla have been enclosed by Spain and the European Union within a framework of exceptionality and security. Nonetheless, Tyszler stresses that this exceptionalist rhetoric conceals institutional and systemic racism, along with the deadly consequences of migration policies (2022, p.3). Moreover, this exceptionalist rhetoric is one which hides the colonial origins of the border and legitimizes a violence rooted in racialized capitalism and colonial

imperialism (Deridder, Pelckmans and Ward, 2020, p.22). Furthermore, according to De Genova, Tazzioli, and Álvarez-Velasco, the use of expressions such as “refugee crisis” or “migrant crisis”, facilitates EU’s control over migration flows and legitimizes emergency measures and controversial policies, such as the construction of a six-meter-high fence in the enclaves (2016, p.20). Ceuta and Melilla are reported to be increasingly inhospitable for migrants, and indeed occupy this position strategically (Palmas, 2021, p.466): in the words of Palmas “these borderlands aim to be hostile cities” (loc.sit). Consequently, many authors have written about the exceptionally violent regime of the enclaves. Soto Bermant (2014; 2015) explains how Ceuta and Melilla establish local hierarchies based on the “threat” migrants’ pose in respect to Europe. For instance, Christians, seen more sympathetically by Europe, tend to work mainly for the state while Muslims, who through Islamophobic European discourse are often portrayed as hostile, work in construction or services. Tyszler (2015; 2022) describes how this discourse of exceptionality provides the Spanish and Moroccan states with a degree of impunity in their human rights violations, particularly in instances where migrants involved in fence-crossings are immediately returned to Morocco without being assessed as potential asylum-seekers.[2]

Palmas (2021) and Johnson (2013) argue, in the same way, that the enclaves’ regimes go against the Schengen policy of free movement: Entering them is no guarantee of going to mainland Spain since the provisional documents of asylum seekers are only valid in Ceuta and Melilla. Consequently, Palmas refers to them as a “dead end” or a “trap"; as territories in a constant state of emergency (Palmas, 2021). Likewise, Saddiki discusses the enclaves as “waiting rooms” that relegate migrants to a permanent state of temporariness and immobility (2010, p.14). These spaces, together with administrative practices, are the ideal conditions to create “illegal” subjects with differentiated access to rights (Jiménez-Álvarez, 202, p.416). “Illegality” has been recognized as a political identity that is naturalized mainly because it is regimented by the law (De Genova, 2002, pp.424). Hence, the inequalities and violence illegalization generates tends to be overlooked, as argued by scholars such as De Genova (ibid., pp.422-424).[3] Being “illegal” often turns migrants into the enemy of the state, and is the reason why migration from the "Global South” is often perceived as a threat in the

[2] These returns are known in Spain as devoluciones en caliente (hot returns) and have been denounced by many activists as an illegal practice in international law which goes against the principle of non-refoulement. See: Amnesty International, 2022.

[3] Taking into account the arguments made by these authors, this paper will understand illegalization as a political and administrative process. Therefore, it will not refer to migrants as “illegal”, but rather as “illegalized”.

"Global North" (Palidda, 2021, p.179). This threat, in turn, is one which is perceived as needing to be mitigated. In Palidda's words:

> The rich and dominant countries tend increasingly to entrench their borders in the face of supposed "new threats", among which – for the first time in history – migration is also considered as such (Palidda, 2021, p 184).

Sassen (1996) also states how undocumented migrants are portrayed as a threat because they represent an erosion of the states' sovereignty. It is in this context that three barbed wire fences have been built with an investment of 47 million euros in Melilla and 25 million in Ceuta between 2005 and 2013 and an exceptional number of border guards positioned on both sides of the fence (Tyszler, 2015, p.28). The act of jumping the fence, as it therefore becomes evident, is determined by body, gender, race, age and capital (Palmas, 2021). Moreover, as Deridder, Pelckmans and Ward maintain, representations of migrants as transiting and criminal is the ultimate argument for securitized policies against sub-Saharan migrants (2020, p.21). Tyszler that the racialization and illegalization "dehumanize" migrants (2019, p.46), an issue that has recently risen within international theory (Danewid, 2017, p.1675).

2.3. Security and the creation of vulnerability

There is a wide body of literature on the political relations between Northern Africa and Middle Eastern countries with Europe. Many authors point to the creation of the Schengen Area in the 1990s as the origin of the securitization of these borders (Deridder, Pelckmans, and Ward, 2020; Del Sarto, 2010; Johnson, 2013; Soto Bermant, 2015b; Norman, 2020). However, the early 2000s have been widely identified as setting the precedent for the contemporary restrictive migration policies in the Mediterranean (Bermant, 2015 p.14; Del Sarto, 2010, p.7; Deridder, Pelckmans, and Ward, 2020 p.13; El Qadim, 2010, p.4). Morocco, Libya and Tunisia were increasingly made subject of European attention (Del Sarto, 2010, p.7) and militarization reached a peak with the creation of Frontex (Deridder, Pelckmans, and Ward, 2020). According to Andersson, Frontex re-conceptualized the border and framed it within a "game of risk", which provided the "depoliticized language needed to make migrant boats an abstract threat" (2012, p.9). It is important to mention here that in 2005, three sub-Saharan migrants died over a 20-day period during which several attempts were made to jump Melilla's fences (Blanco, 2014). The Spanish and Moroccan state responses to these

events was to enhance security with higher walls, barbed wire and additional security patrols -including raids in the migrant camps close to the enclaves which have been moved further away from the borders (Norman, 2020; Tyszler, 2019). This period is recognized by Tyszler (2022, p.4) as the time when racialized processes were truly materialized at the border, and the “chase of the black man” began to characterize both Moroccan and European migration policies. The fences are therefore perceived by some authors as a constant demarcation of racialization, restriction and control (Johnson, 2013; Saddiki 2010).

The constant reminder of “illegality” makes all immigrants and refugees become “suspects” who are trying to infiltrate Europe (De Genova, Tazzioli and Álvarez-Velasco, 2016, p.6). As a consequence, measures to combat these uncontrolled and undesired human mobilities are put into place, and migrants are often further excluded in these policy-making processes. According to Stock (2019, p.1481), such exclusion perpetuates segregation, marginalization and exploitation, placing migrants in a state of forced immobility which deprives them from any sense of self. Similarly, Mieth and Williams (2022) argue that these policies create vulnerability, making migrants more likely to seek increasingly dangerous routes to reach Europe. This argument is reinforced by Palmas , in his examination of necro-political functioning, where the author points to transnational migration policies as a cause of the growth of risk and mortality (2021, p. 459). Similarly, Palidda describes the closing of borders and the practice of letting migrants die as “thanatopolitics" (2021, p.185) . This argument is also defended by Derrider, Pecklemans and Ward who state that migration policies in the region have proven to be extremely lethal with thousands of deaths in the Saharan desert and the Mediterranean Sea (2020, p.20). Further, Sahraoui and Tyszler (2021) point to the racial and gendered aspects of this vulnerability, giving the example of how mobility for a pregnant woman is considered as a risk, and thus their transfer to Spanish mainland can be delayed against their will. Therefore, according to the two authors, there are bodies that cannot have a political status (ibid, p.10), another reminder of the deprivation of agency. In the same context, Kastner refers to migration as a deeply bodily experience, describing how migration experiences are gendered in the ways violence is suffered but also in how women use their own bodies for border-crossing (2021, p.374).

The "vulnerability"[4] of illegalized migrants, apart from being created through the deprivation of regular status, is reproduced through daily violence revealed in the ethnographic research conducted by Tyszler (2021, p.956). Similar experiences have been collected in Houdaïfa's collection (2019), which states that migration management within Morocco has always been through a security approach, leading migrants to live under inhumane conditions (Houdaïfa, 2019, p.13). In the 2022 GADEM report, it was stated that the Moroccan police forces were forcibly relocating black non-nationals to the south of the country, arresting many of them and raiding the camps near the fences (GADEM, 2022, p.9). The organization estimates that between June and October 2018, around 6,500 migrants were arrested and displaced and they denounced in the same report how the cooperation between Morocco and Spain perpetuated vulnerability of migrants (ibid., p.3). In the same sense, the Committee for the Protection of Rights of all Migrant Workers, in 2013, pointed to the violence of the migrant regime in Morocco and, more importantly, to the racial discrimination and racist representations of sub-Saharan migrants in the country (Jiménez-Alvarez, Espiñeira, and Gazzotti, 2021, p.901). Hence, there is a racial and gendered aspect of the violence that is exercised at the border. In the words of Tyszler: "in the context of the Moroccan-Spanish border, the security and militaristic discourse similarly refers to the dangerousness of black men (…), but also refers to their sexual practices towards women" (2019, p.62). Studying these aspects of border violence, she argues, will provide a deeper comprehension of the consequences of contemporary migration policies (ibid., p.63).

2.4. Externalization of borders and migration diplomacy

The migratory context in the Mediterranean has been described by Derrider, Pelckmans, and Ward (2020, pp.25-26) as a *migration-development-security nexus* to emphasize the role of risk in migratory politics. Actually, Lahlou points to how Europe has been invested in Morocco's development so that it can retain more migrants (2018, p.12). Migration has gained so much relevance that it is now a central feature of negotiations even in areas that are not historically linked to it (ibid., p.12). Furthermore, there are various scholars that follow the development nexus and argue for improving security, economic and social conditions in "countries of departure" (Lahlou, 2018, p.13; Saddiki, 2010, p.15). These dynamics are not exclusively taking place in Morocco but rather are expanded throughout Southern and

[4] The word vulnerability in this research is understood as the process of making migrants vulnerable through systemic discrimination. In this way, vulnerability is not conceived as an inherent quality of being a migrant but rather a consequence of the current discriminatory migration policies.

Eastern Mediterranean Countries (SEMC), where there is an increasing cooperation in migratory control (Wunderlich, 2010, p 4). Del Sarto uses the term “buffer zones” to describe the role of MENA countries in the Mediterranean to contain migration, in exchange for financial and technical support from the EU (2010, p.9). This is what Wunderlich refers to as an “externalization of borders”: the attempt to control migratory movements before they reach European borders (2010, p.3). One of the examples mentioned by many authors are readmission agreements, which facilitate repatriation of migrants and ease police collaboration (Harrami and Mouna, 2018; Wunderlich, 2010). Likewise, Harrami and Mouna’s research with different migration stakeholders shows how the EU is seen to be imposing its own policies in the south, thus migration can not be conceived as a matter of cooperation (2018, p.19). Nevertheless, the externalization theory can oftentimes diminish the proactive role of Morocco. As El Qadim states some European neighbors are not mere receptors of these policies but rather take their position as an opportunity to negotiate with the EU their own geopolitical and economic interests (2010, p.92).

Cassarino points to the need to move beyond “externalization” as the only analytical framework to examine border policies (2021, p.91). It is crucial to frame politics of migration as deterritorialized, beyond geography, in order to understand borders -and in this case the fences in the enclaves- as stages of movement (Johnson, 2013, p.76). In fact, in one of her articles, Tyszler established a relation between the externalization of borders and racialized and gendered vulnerability of people who seek mobility (2019, p.3), a field still today less explored. However, there is growing literature on how states in the so-called “Global South" such as Morocco are using migration as a bargaining tool in international relations, which conforms to some sort of “migration diplomacy" (Norman 2020, p.1161). Morocco has been said to be increasingly interested in West African countries which explains its recent liberalization policies (ibid., p.1168), while at the same time trying to stick to repressive measures to prevent border crossings in the North (Wunderlich, 2010, p 20). This double positioning is developed by Mseffer, who describes Morocco’s migration policy as “trompeuse" (misleading); even though Morocco is trying to please Europe with new humanitarian discourses, most measures of protection and accompaniment of immigrants are not enforced (2019, p.41). By the same token, Jiménez-Alvarez, Espiñeira and Gazzotti (2021, p.895) describe the adoption of Morocco’s latest migration policy, the National

Strategy on Immigration and Asylum (SNIA)[5], as a part of the country's political hybridization: formally aligning with human rights discourses but with enough legal flexibility to adapt their policies to its European and African foreign political interests.

Because of this relatively new context, some studies talk about an instrumentalization of asylum and migration policies in most SEMC countries that try to take advantage of the importance that the EU gives to migratory control (Özerim, 2018, p 166; Tittel-Mosser, 2018, p.353). A term that has been coined to describe Morocco's ability to put forth its interests is "reversed conditionality" (ibid., 2018, p.351). Some examples of this reversed conditionality would be the economic benefits the country has been receiving from various programs such as the Emergency Trust Fund For Africa, which dedicated 234 million euros between 2015 and 2021 to "support Morocco in the area of migration" (European Commission, 2023).[6] Similarly, readmission agreements have been points of contention (Cassarino, 2021, p.93) and have put Morocco in a stronger position to demand further EU funding (Tittel-Mosser, 2018, p.359)[7]. Therefore, even though Morocco's migration law included highly punitive responses to irregular migration, the new concrete asylum and migration legislation has still not been adopted (GADEM, 2022, p.2; Jiménez-Alvarez, Espiñeira, and Gazzotti, 2021, p.900).

2.5. Discussion of the literature

To provide a brief summary of the literature described above, there is a varied amount of scholars that refer to the border between Morocco and Spain from a political perspective. Some of them look at the fence as a result of the externalization of the European borders and the securitization processes it entails (Del Sarto, 2010; Deridder, Pelckmans, and Ward, 2020; Lahlou, 2018; Wunderlich, 2010), while El Qadim defends that the externalization framework, though palpable to some extent, it deprives Morocco and other Southern Mediterranean countries from agency (2010). Hence, there is an emerging literature that focuses on how Morocco has been using the presence of the enclaves and its strategic position as a "transit country" on the way to Europe to bargain with the Spanish state and the

[5] The new migration policy included an exceptional regularization process in 2014, extended UNHCR's ability to grant right of asylum and better integration laws. Nonetheless, there is great critique towards the enforcement of the SNIA. See: Jiménez-Alvarez, Espiñeira, and Gazzotti (2021); Lahlou (2018)

[6] Other examples of EU investment in Morocco and other neighboring countries are the Mobility Partnerships (which Morocco signed in 2013 and was linked to liberalization measures) and the MEDA program, which allocated 426 million euros to the country between 2000 and 2006, 27% of which was destined to fight poverty and deal with migration issues (El Qadim, 2018, p 99). For more information visit: EUR-Lex (2007)

[7] Readmission agreements are said to be contentious since the EU does not only look for the deportation of migrant nationals (in this case Moroccans) but also non-nationals that have gone through the North African country to reach Europe (See: Wunderlich, 2010).

European Union (Cassarino, 2021; Jiménez-Alvarez, Espiñeira, and Gazzotti, 2021; Norman, 2020; Özerim, 2018; Tittel-Mosser, 2018). On the other hand, there are some scholars who are focusing on the discursive aspects of borders and migration: illegalization of migrants (De Genova, 2002), the creation of a dangerous 'other', and the justification of controversial policies through the framework of "exceptionality" and crisis (Andersson, 2012; De Genova, Tazzioli and Álvarez-Velasco, 2016).

There is more contemporary literature that looks at the border through a more historical and sociological approach which are the base of this research. These authors emphasize the vulnerability of migrants through discourses, policies and various types of violence (Johnson, 2013; Palmas, 2021; Stock, 2019). They look at the different social aspects that determine someone's mobility i.e. race, class, gender, and try to link it to the colonial history of borders (Saddiki, 2010; Soto Bermant, 2015a, 2015b, 2014; Sahraoui and Tyszler; 2021; Tyszler, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019) and to the consequences of neoliberalism and neocolonial practices (Paddila, 2021). There are a small number of studies that focus on particular events, such as the Melilla fence jump, to explain abstract theoretical concepts e.g. "coloniality", "racialization", or "border masculinities". Locating these concepts to a concrete context is crucial to bridge the gap between academic theory and everyday experiences, as it can be seen in Tyszler's work (2022, 2021, 2020, 2019). Consequently, this research aims at understanding a contentious and violent border through a case study, and reflects on how that event illustrates modes of racialization and masculinities that could be applied to similar borders in the Mediterranean region. This paper, through a combination of qualitative methods, attempts to answer the following research question: How does the case study of the Melilla fence jump illustrate modes of racialization and gendering of the borders between Morocco and Spain?. The aim is not to provide new knowledge on this borderland, mainly due to the scope of this research and its limitations, but instead to use the perceptions and descriptions of the organizations to analyze the Melilla 2022 events and relate them to the theoretical framework explained in the following section.

3. Theory

This section defines different concepts that are used throughout the study. It firstly goes through various understandings of borders to move beyond their simple geographical conception and justifies the usage of *borderland* to describe this territory. Secondly, the concept of *coloniality of borders* is introduced in order to apply a historical approach to the enclaves, the border and its violence. Afterwards, the main theoretical framework is developed: *translocational theory*. This framework will enable the research to analyze the Melilla events through migration experiences and contextual identities and connect it to the global colonial order. These social identities are understood to be shaped by *racialization* and *masculinities*,[8] thus both concepts are defined at the end of this section.

3.1 Conceptualizing borders

To understand the creation of borders and their impact, this paper is grounded on border studies. Freedman conceives borders not only as something physical or geographical but as processes of "bordering" (2023, p.2), which highlights their historical, socio-economic, political and cultural origins and consequences. Gahman and Hjalmarson similarly argued that borders are not geographically fixed but rather fluid, flexible and active; borders comprise "processes, practices, discourses, symbols, institutions or networks through which power works" (2019, p.114). Following their argument, this essay understands bordering processes as "emplaced", meaning that the impact has to be analyzed as situated and relational (ibid., p.113). In the same line, Yuval-Davis, Wemyss and Cassidy view borders as spatial and virtual processes, dynamic, shifting and multi scalar, that shape individual and collective rights (2019, p.3), and Del Sarto states that borders themselves determine political communities and identities (2010, p.3). According to Yuval-Davis, Wemyss and Cassidy, borders are embedded in people's identities and senses of being (2019, p.21). Borders shape our understandings of particular local contexts, beyond the physical appearance of a frontier. Consequently, the authors refer to these spaces as *borderlands* (loc. sit). By considering borders as processes, practices and discourses, in constant change and present in multiple spheres of society, i.e. as borderlands, it is easier to understand the various dimensions in which violence can be exercised and how it can be determined by social locations.

[8] As it is stated further below, due to the space limitations of this paper, it has not been possible to include all gender aspects of borders, for instance gender based violence at the border or the impacts of gender expression and sexual orientation. Guided by the existing literature, this research focuses on the violence that was exercised over migrants and links it to the masculine characteristics of this borderland.

In Yuval-Davis, Wemyss and Cassidy words: “borders produce migration; without them there is only mobility” (2019, p.31). There is an undeniable power dimension within bordering processes. In fact, De Genova, Tazzioli and Álvarez-Velasco contend that classifying certain forms of mobility as “migration” can be already considered a mode of domination (2016, p.32). In this sense, Gahman and Hjalmarson define borders as “regulatory apparatuses” that mediate human relations and that are used to determine who matters and who does not (2019, p.108). This capability is mainly held by states and other institutions such as the European Union, who use coercive authority and the monopoly of violence to exercise power (ibid, p.114). Similarly, Del Sarto argues that borders are “institutions” that govern the politics of inclusion and exclusion and help to validate an authority’s monopoly of power (2013, p.3). These “institutions” rank mobile subjects according to their level of vulnerability (Freedman 2023, p 5), relegating certain migrants to different forms of subalternity (Miranda 2023, p.221). As Gahman and Hjalmarson state, borders are “artificial constructions unjustifiably inscribed upon land and bodies through violence” (2019, p.112). It is thus crucial to remark the power bordering processes have in structuring the relations between states, political economy and bodies -citizens or not- (ibid, pp.121-122), especially when analyzing cases such as the Melilla fence jump, to grasp all the dimensions of the violence that is exercised.

Describing borders as ongoing processes and as producers of institutional power is essential to understand the broad systemic context that makes the borderland that surrounds the enclaves a space of violence. Nonetheless, it is also needed to look at each specific case from an empirical perspective to incorporate everyday bordering practices and how that affects daily lives (Yuval-Davis, Wemyss and Cassidy, 2019, p.24). One of the main reasons is because border-related violence is not exercised equally on migrant subjects. Gahman and Hjalmarson point to racially-coded tools to suppress the right to mobility (2019, pp.121-122) and De Genova, Tazzioli and Álvarez-Velasco explain how these notions of difference are rooted in logics of class and race (2016, p.32). Additionally, Freedman emphasizes the role that gender and other social positions such as nationality, age and legal status play in these spaces (2023, p.3). Therefore, this paper uses Freedman’s proposition of a double approach to (2023, p.4): first, a theoretical perspective that points to the multi-sited nature of borders. In this case, coloniality is used as a framework to understand the borderland’s social hierarchies that are based on race and gender. Secondly, the theoretical framework will be then applied to

an empirical approach to the construction of borders, by analyzing the perspective of various actors that have been involved in the case study.

3.1.1 Coloniality of borders

According to Tyszler, every border is anchored in a unique context, and the local dynamics of power and domination are what determine the repression exercised over migrant bodies (2020, p.158). Each context has different political and economic logics rooted in their own historicity. In this case, Morocco has its own colonial history as a former French and Spanish protectorate which have inevitably shaped the construction of the enclaves' borders. The populations under colonial rule were grouped according to categories of class, race, religion, ethnicity… and most of the land was divided accordingly. Additionally, Tyszler links the treatment between black slaves in Morocco to black migrants currently (2019b, p.52). Consequently, this paper follows Yuval-Davis, Wemyss and Cassidy's argument: the inequality inherent in colonialism is part of the biography of borders (2019, p.36). This colonial legacy can be framed as the *coloniality of the borders*. The main point of reference for this theory is Lugones and her work on "coloniality of gender", where she argued that the euro-centered colonial and modern system "subjects both women and men of color in all domains of existence" (2016a, p.3). The social classifications that were imposed during colonialism have permeated all aspects of social existence, including identities and self-perceptions (loc.sit), leading to current systems of domination that include bordering processes. These classifications have been identified by various scholars as the origin of the illegalization of migration (De Genova, Tazzioli and Álvarez-Velasco, 2016; Sahraoui and Tyszler, 2021; Jiménez-Alvarez, Espiñeira and Gazzotti, 2021).

The scope of coloniality of borders cannot be limited, however, to its socio-political and institutional side. Palidda points to global capitalism and neo-colonialism as the main causes for mass migrations and displacement (2021, p.183). The author states how the unequal distribution of wealth and the endless exploitation of natural and human resources causes more disasters and enhances vulnerability in populations of the Global South (loc.sit); an argument also supported by Yuval-Davis, Wemyss and Cassidy (2019, pp.13-14). Coloniality has an impact on the global political economy, thus bordering processes are influenced by global capitalism as well. For instance, Andersson exposes the speculative bubble that has been growing around securitization (2012, p.11), seen as well in the financial dimension of EU's external policies of migration (Zardo, 2022, p.585). According to Palmas ,

the increasing illegalization of migration is creating more business for all actors, including private and public sectors (2021, p.460). Consequently, borderlands become places for informal economies that increase vulnerability and reproduce colonial social classifications (Bermant, 2015b, p.272). Despite the importance of this point, due to the limited scope of this research, it will not be possible to analyze the borderland around the enclaves from an economic perspective. However, it is essential to mention the economic interests behind these fences in order to contribute to an interdisciplinary approach.

Coloniality is also present in the European responses in cases such as the Melilla 2022 events. There is the attempt to preserve local and global hierarchies that govern mobility (Yuval-Davis, Wemyss and Cassidy, 2019, p.18) and determine who is deportable and who is welcome (De Genova, 2002, p.438). On the other side of the spectrum, humanitarian responses can oftentimes be anchored in coloniality too. As it is shown by Sahraoui and Tyszler's research, the missionary members in the enclaves borderlands are said to act as "police of morals and intimacy", reminding of the civilizing mission and the need to "save the other" (2021, pp.2-3). Humanitarian organizations are also perceived to be a "band-aid solution" (Tyszler, 2021, p.958) as they attempt to mitigate mass migration at the border but do not address the origins of the issue. Consequently, they have been said to be another way of controlling migratory flows (loc.sit). There is a tendency of classifying certain migrants, mainly women and children, as pure victims of oppression and human trafficking, but they are not provided real protection in Morocco or Ceuta and Melilla (Tyszler, 2019a, p.12). Contrarily, these bodies are used to create a sense of crisis, a spectacle of illegal acts and vulnerable people in need (De Genova, Tazzioli, and Álvarez-Velasco, 2016, p.20). This emphasis on bodies de-contextualizes border-crossings and contributes to the cultural narrative of "European goodness" (Danewid, 2017, p.1681). Therefore, coloniality is a framework also needed to study humanitarian interventions in this borderland.

The border between Morocco and Spain is a product of historical processes but, as Miranda states, borders go through re-semantization processes, they can be re-contextualized, and transformed (2023, p.219). Therefore, applying the coloniality framework should be used to understand the inequalities present in the borderland and the systemic violence that is exercised on certain bodies, a violence that can change form depending on the local, regional and global context. Following Miranda's approach, bordering processes also encompass social relations, thus migrants have to position themselves from the perspective of movement

(2013, pp.224-225) i.e. their self-identifications and recognitions are mutable and situated and need to adapt to multiple places and temporalities. In the author's words: “their experiences can only be understood by considering how movement links different economic, social and cultural gendered hierarchies” (ibid., p.224). Therefore, when discussing borders, bordering and borderlands, it is crucial to understand how they all relate to identity formation and social relations.

3.1.2 Bordering and identities from a translocational lens

Coloniality contributes to the portrayal of migrants either as illegalized non-humans or as vulnerable victims in need. In both ways, agency is retrieved. Therefore, De Genova, Tazzioli, and Álvarez-Velasco argue for focusing on the autonomy and subjectivity of migrants themselves (2016, p.5). It is crucial to recognize from a theoretical perspective how victimization can be internalized, how these global hierarchies are naturalized and even prevent some people from responding to the violence they suffer (García 2016, p.215). To recognize subjectivity is to recognize politics of exclusion, historicity and the power structures that sustain inequalities i.e. to interpret social realities as relational and contextual (ibid., pp.211-212). Consequently, this paper takes what Anthias called a *translocational perspective*: focusing on a broad context of power -mainly coloniality- that creates social categorizations, which are malleable and in constant change (2013, p.130). A translocational lens does not focus on groups, in order to prevent essentialization, but rather focuses on social locations in relations of hierarchy (loc.sit). In other words, this essay uses a particular case study -the Melilla 2022 fence jump- to understand the legacies of colonial power structures that classify mobile bodies on the basis of racialization and gender binarisms.

Bordering delimits, on the basis of citizenship and legal status, which rights are granted to different groups, ensuring certain social categories remain at the lower stages of power hierarchies despite the constant changes state policies, borders or national identities might go through (Yuval-Davis, Wemyss and Cassidy, 2019, p.39). The removal of a legal status comes with a process of dehumanization and invisibilization, which contributes to the deprivation of agency aforementioned and locks migrants in a permanent state of immobility (Mieth and Williams, 2022; Sahraoui and Tyszler, 2021, p.6). Bordering gives meanings to the words “migrant”, “undocumented”, “illegal”, “refugees” and determines who fits where (De Genova, Tazzioli and Álvarez-Velasco, 2016, p.32), arguably on the basis of colonial classifications. These categories intersect with racialized and gendered identities which

demands a translocational approach to theory and methodology when studying borders. As pointed by Tyszler (2019b, p.42), the impacts of bordering on the intersections between race and gender relations is still understudied and only by analyzing them it will be possible to understand how relations of power and domination are constructed in borderlands (Miranda, 2023, p.216). Hence, this research focuses on the violence that results from bordering processes and situates them in a particular context, that is the enclaves borderlands (Anthias 2013, p.131).

3.2 Racialization in the borderland between Morocco and Spain

Race is understood in this research as a social construct. Lugones talks about the "invention of race" as a way to conceive humanity in biological terms and establish relations of superiority through domination (2016, p.2). This classification inevitably leads to the creation of racial subjects to be enslaved, exploited and dehumanized (Gahman and Hjalmarson, 2019, p.118). Actually, borderlands are spaces where "race" is further engraved into bodies since this is one of the criteria followed in order to determine who can live within this "imposed colonial borders" and who will be classified as the "other" (ibid, p.110). Therefore, the creation of race goes hand in hand with processes of othering (Pian, 2010, p.188) that present categories such as "migrant" (Gahman and Hjalmarson, 2019, p.116) or "race" as natural and self-evident. One of the strategies used to achieve this naturalization is to "dissimulate race" and turn migration into "cultural" or "religious" issues (De Genova, Tazzioli, and Álvarez-Velasco, 2016, p.37) and to place this differentiation in legal grounds with concepts such as "illegal" migrants (De Genova, 2002, p.427). In order to prevent this essentialization, this research uses *racialization* instead of race. In this way, it is acknowledged how racialized subjects are "constructed, classified and appraised in a plethora of ways, across an expanse of different geographies" (ibid, p.117).

Racialization can be rooted in coloniality (Deridder, Pelckmans, and Ward, 2020, p.12). However, Law points to the dangers of placing the origins of racism solely on the development of capitalism and modernity (2014, p.7). In the Mediterranean region, classifying people according to physical features was common in pre-modern societies even though processes of racialization became more violent during imperialism and colonialism (loc.sit). The author highlights how there has been a lack of attention towards the racial hierarchies that existed in the major religions of the region (ibid, p.7) and, more importantly,

how racism and slavery in the Mediterranean Muslim world remains remarkably understudied (ibid, p.13). There needs to be a non-western approach to contemporary racism that complements coloniality to understand current social hierarchies. For instance, Tyszler and Palmas point to how, for people that come from sub-Saharan countries, it is practically impossible to access asylum offices at the border, where most of the registered applications are by non-black migrants[9] (2015, p.51; 2021, p.462). This racialization cannot be understood only by using coloniality as a framework since sub-Saharan migrants experience systematic racism within Morocco as well (Law, 2014, p.65). The variety in migratory experiences depending on the color of one's skin needs a translocational approach to recognize the historical origins of racialization, such as slavery and colonial oppression.

3.3. Gender dynamics at the borderland

Lugones applies the idea of coloniality to gender, arguing that everyone is "dominated or victimized" in terms of race and gender (2016, p.4) -considering both concepts as social constructs, or "powerful fictions" (ibid., p.12). As it happened with racialization, processes of gendering have been naturalized and are currently embedded within all aspects of society (Pichardo, 2016, p.326). Institutions including state and borders are shaped by gender relations (Connell, 1998, p.7) and they contribute to the creation of subjectivities based on hetero-patriarchal binary oppositions: male/female, man/woman, masculine/feminine. If bordering processes are conceptualized as a product of coloniality and modern capitalism, they also need to be thought of as shaped by racialization and the hetero-patriarchal regime. Border-crossing can reinforce existing gender hierarchies (Miranda, 2022, p.220) and even create new variations of traditional masculinities (Connell, 1998, p.11) depending on the context. Consequently, the only way to grasp the power dynamics at the borderlands, is to look into migratory experiences, starting at particular cases and bring it to a broader transnational context (Miranda, 2023, p.223). The impact that gender dynamics can have on the way people cross borders is quite understudied (Freedman et al. 2023, p.1). Therefore, this paper includes a gender perspective to bordering processes to get a deeper understanding of the border violence (Tyszler, 2015, p.155).

[9] This research understands "race" as a social construct and thus the concept racialization is used (to frame it as a process). However, in this case, the term "non-black" is used in order to exemplify how physical features such as skin color determine the access a migrant has to asylum offices in the enclaves. This decision has been done following the research conducted by Tyszler (2015; 2019b) and Palmas (2021), where they remark the predominance of Syrians, Palestinians and "white migrants" in these spaces.

Due to the scope of the research, this essay mainly focuses on the masculine dynamics that were visible during the Melilla 2022 events and how they reflect border violence. The general understanding is that masculinity and femininity are relational and are socially and historically situated; they "come into existence as people act" (Connell, 1998, p.5; Tyszler, 2019b, p.43). Furthermore, masculinities are plural and complex, with varying definitions and performances (Connell, 1998, p.4). Nonetheless, there is an hegemonic form that is taken as the role-model and often imposed through violence (loc.sit). Hegemonic masculinity is based on the traditional conceptions of man, as a provider and defender but also as the dominant figure in social relations. Where there is a sense of failure to perform this role, sexual violence often appears to re-build masculinity (Tyszler 2019b, p.59). This is what Freedman et. al refer to as the hyper-masculinities that appear in borderlands (2023, p.4). The first hegemonic masculinity identified by Tyszler is the securitization and militarization of the fences, where the Spanish Guardia Civil and the Moroccan gendarme adopt roles of defenders of the border (2019b, p.43). Secondly, hyper-masculinities can also be found among migrants, who present themselves as soldiers when trying to cross the fences and who adopt dominant roles in the informal camps around the borders (ibid., p.51). Conversely, women are relegated to their "feminine" roles: they are turned into passive vulnerable beings in need of protection (Freedman et. al 2023, p.4) or they are sexualized and forced to engage in sexual relations to cross borders or to merely survive (Tyszler, 2019a, p.9).

To bring all the theory and concepts together, this essay uses the translocational framework developed by Anthias (2013, p.131) as a tool to analyze the intersections of racialization and masculinities in a particular context. This lens can help analyze social positions produced by the intersections of social structures, in this case masculinities and racialization, including a transnational approach that takes into consideration the broader social context and temporality (ibid., p.130). Since borders are understood as processes that shape migrants' subjectivities and thus affect their everyday experiences, this study uses a local-based lens by focusing on a particular event. This is why the concept borderlands is used to refer to the territories that surround the enclaves' fences (Yuval-Davis, Wemyss, and Cassidy, 2019, p.21). This temporal and contextual analysis allows the research to avoid "fixities of social positions" (loc.sit) and to understand how racial and gendered processes can be multiple, complex and changeable (Law, 2014; Connell, 1998). Nonetheless, the translocational theory also takes into account social patterns of domination and subordination (Anthias 2013, p.130). In this case, social hierarchies are assumed to be rooted in historical

social classifications (ibid., p.131) such as racial differentiations present in North-African societies (Law, 2014, p.161) and the colonial legacies that imperialism and colonial domination have had in institutions, socio-economic structures and bordering processes -a legacy that has been described as coloniality (Lugones, 2016, p.59). According to Anthias, this framework allows for an exploration of how social locations intersect while it recognizes the context, "the situated nature of claims and attributions and their production in complex shifting locales" (2013, p.131).

4. Methods

This essay explores how the case study of the Melilla fence jump illustrates the modes of racialization and gendering that occur at the borders between Morocco and Spain. The methodology used to analyze the research question are qualitative semi-structured interviews and field observations, conducted during the months of September and October 2022 and March 2023. The first time period corresponds to my internship at a think tank in Rabat, when the research process was designed and initial fieldwork was conducted, including a field trip to Ceuta's borderland. After a few months in the writing of this paper, I organized a second field trip in 2023 to collect more data and strengthen previous material. This section explains in detail the process of interviewing and other methodological choices. After, it goes through important ethical concerns and some limitations to consider.

4.1 Qualitative methods

The competing narratives on the Melilla events showcase how increasingly hard it is to gather truthful information on the border. Numbers from reports and surveys vary from organization to organization which, mixed with time and resource limitations, made any type of statistical research almost impossible. Therefore, it was considered necessary to conduct a qualitative analysis that included visiting the country after the events had happened, talking to organizations that work in the migration field, interacting with people that cross these fences and getting a personal perspective on the borderland itself. The interviews and observations have been contextualized and fact-checked with media sources and reports about the events: newspaper articles of that day, reports published by various organizations and the BBC documentary that includes interviews with some migrants that participated in the events. This last resource has also been used to complement the interviewees' descriptions of racialization and gender dynamics of migration processes. The main aim of this research process is to get a deep understanding of the Melilla events by looking into various sources, to be able to conduct an analysis of the racial and masculine violence.

4.1.1 The process of interviewing

This research uses qualitative interviews as the main source of data collection. This method places all participants' voices at the center of the research and uses the perceptions of different organizations to get a general overview of the borderland and its effects. I considered it important to get the visions of these associations firstly, due to the sometimes

contradictory narratives around the events. Secondly, to get closer insights on the events, since the organizations selected were involved in the Melilla fence jump of 2022 in various ways. Therefore, the unit of analysis of this research are organizations that participated in different ways in the case study. The data is generated in interviews in relation to the social and historical context in which the experiences described take place (Gerson and Damaske, 2020, p.1). Therefore, qualitative interviews have been considered as the best option to better understand the Melilla events. Later on, their responses have been analyzed following the translocational framework to emplace them in the context of racial and masculine borders. This research has used the strategies exposed by Gerson and Damaske in order to conduct the interviews: combining preparation before the interviews with flexibility and openness, developing a theoretically informed project design before-hand, selecting the participants accordingly, and, via semi-structured interviews, asking what, how and why regarding the research's main topic (2020, pp.2-3). It has been crucial to gather contradictory responses and to consider the distinctive explanations of same events to highlight concealing social forces (loc.sit) and how contested the migration narrative is. Six interviews in this research have been planned and conducted following these principles and strategies.

The first three interviews were conducted during the first field trip to Morocco. The earliest organization contacted was the National Council for Human Rights (CNDH), a government organization that investigated the Melilla fence jump in 2022 and published a report. The Moroccan Association for Human Rights (AMDH) was also contacted since they are well-known for defending migrants rights and fighting against racialization. They had also appeared on different media outlets to denounce the violence exercised in the fences in June 2022. A researcher from the European Institute of the Mediterranean was interviewed in Barcelona since their organization has conducted research on migratory flows and published an article on the Melilla fence jump. During the second fieldwork trip to Rabat in March 2023, I conducted two additional interviews in English and French to strengthen the previous material and collect further data. The interviews were with the following organizations: Fondation Orient Occident (FOO), who works for migrant integration and assisted some migrants that had been displaced after the fence jump, and the Antiracist Group for the defense and support of migrants (GADEM), who have been elaborating reports on various border-crossing attempts and have been providing legal assistance and other services to sub-saharan migrants. Lastly, an interview was held online with a Spanish organization, the Andalusian Association for Human Rights (APDHA), who also provided assistance from the

other side of the border and elaborated a report afterwards. The organization Walking Borders, which is present in the enclaves, was also contacted but the interview was not possible to conduct. Nonetheless, since they have done crucial work on this borderland, their reports have been used with the rest of the data.

As it has been argued during the review of the literature, there is a lack of focus on historical continuities and daily experiences, interactions and perceptions (Deridder, Pelckmans and Ward, 2020, p.10). This can lead to higher security risks for researchers (loc.sit) and to a deprivation of migrants' subjectivity (De Genova, Tazzioli, and Álvarez-Velasco, 2016, p.5). Focusing on subjectivity does not only imply looking into the personal but also to historical processes and sociopolitical and economic contexts. It requires examining daily experiences in relation to one's surroundings (García, 2016, p.211), considering the intersections of multiple social factors at play, in this case gender and race (Gerson and Damaske, 2020, p.13). Even though this project does not include first source interviews with migrants themselves -a decision explained in the ethics subsection- it does situate migrant subjects in a specific time and space, to gain a deeper understanding of the social relations of power that are produced and reproduced (Miranda, 2023, p.219) and the borderland as a whole. Since the narratives on the Melilla events have been very contested, the participants' answers are used to bring some light into the reports published and to include in this research the perspective of people who have been involved. Therefore, there has been a deductive process beforehand to identify appropriate groups and questions, as well as key concepts that have guided the study to gain an understanding of how the interviewees applied these theoretical concepts in their daily experiences. These early choices, however, have been changing throughout the research process, and interview guides have been adjusted along the way (Gerson and Damaske, 2020, p.27).

4.1.2 Sampling

In regards to sampling, I conducted initial research to know which organizations have been working on migration issues, which had taken part in the Melilla events in various ways and which were located in Rabat. The main reasons for this last aspect were, first, accessibility, since it was the city I was located in; secondly, because many of the institutions and national level organizations are based there; and lastly, because of security reasons: local organizations advised me not to go to Nador or other cities closer to Algeria due to higher surveillance and police control. The method of snow-ball sampling (Mason, 2017, p.78) has

been used in different stages of data collection: the think-tank Rabat Social Studies Institute (RSSI) where I was taking an internship allowed me to get in touch with different professors who helped build the research design and find appropriate organizations and people to contact. Likewise, RSSI put me in touch with the IEMED. The interviews with the CNDH, AMDH and the IEMED were carried out in October 2022, in English, French and Catalan respectively, but the limited time available prevented me from meeting with more respondents. During the second fieldwork trip, the rest of the organizations, FOO, GADEM and APDHA, were found thanks to previous research and they were contacted through their respective websites.

Some accessibility issues prevented me from getting in touch with more sources. Firstly, due to ethical concerns explained further below, migrants were not reached out for the interviews. Likewise, some governmental organizations such as the Spanish Embassy or bigger organizations like the International Organization of Migration refused to participate or did not have availability. Nonetheless, the small sample has enabled me to gain deeper insights on their experiences and perspectives, providing more personalized and localized data (ibid., p 15). In regards to the interview process, all the interviewees were asked for consent to participate and whether or not they wanted to remain anonymous. They were informed at the beginning about the research goals, the structure and the purpose of the interviews, and were given the chance to stop their participation at any time. After their informed consent was given, the conversations were recorded and consent was reaffirmed. The interviews conducted in English were later on transcribed through the online site Otter.ai and the rest of them were transcribed manually, keeping the original language. To facilitate the analysis, they were coded following the main themes of the research: the contemporary security approach to borders, border violence, the gender and racial components of the border, the coloniality of this borderland and the solidarity and activism that exists. These themes were identified through Otter.ai at first even though some were added manually while going through the transcriptions.

4.1.3 Field observations in “La Valla”

To understand the context of the enclaves’ fences, I went to the border on the Moroccan side to conduct observations. Some of the interviewees and people I met in Rabat and Tetouan pointed to the changes that the borderland has suffered since the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent Spanish and European changes in visa policies. Therefore, I believed it

necessary to visit that space, especially since it is rarely seen in Moroccan or Spanish media. I received help from a Moroccan family that lives in Tetouan who drove me to the border in Ceuta. We made a stop in the physical frontier, guarded by Moroccan Gendarmerie and border guards, and we drove around the fences that surround the enclave. These observations revealed interactions, processes, performances and routines that cannot be perceived in another way (Wästerfors, 2018, p.2) and are thus crucial to combine with the interview process. As Wästerfors argues (ibid., p.11), observations allow the research to go beyond simplistic and generalized descriptions of a phenomenon and can generate more detailed and personal insights on the social world i.e. my experience at the border can bring the personal and localized approach that was argued for in the theoretical framework and literature review. In this case, the tense and insecure environment would not have been possible to recognize otherwise. The visit at the borderland with Moroccan participants allowed me to experience emotions and perceptions that have influenced most of the research design; it has impacted the decision of focusing on migrants' experiences and everyday border violence instead of adopting a more policy-focused approach. Lastly, even though personal experiences and emotions might be considered as biases, I believe they have had an inevitable and valuable impact on this study and need to be acknowledged.

4.2 Ethical concerns and limitations

This research was planned following Mason's guidelines regarding ethics in qualitative interviewing: thinking about what and how questions are asked, what the researcher 'lets' the interviewees answer, whether confidentiality can be ensured and the power relations at play (2017, pp.92-93). Nonetheless, as the author points out, on-the-spot issues might appear and they demand contextual and fast decisions. It is therefore needed to have an active ethical perspective throughout the whole research process (ibid., p.97). The first issue to take into consideration is my positionality in the research. I am well aware of my privileges as a white, upper-middle class, European woman. My Spanish passport has enabled me to travel to Morocco back and forth and to get close to the border without being questioned. I also have material means within reach to easily contact the participants. In addition, there were some power imbalances with some of the interviewees and participants, which have been taken into account throughout the research process. In regards to the country's context, I had some sense of protection despite doing research in an authoritarian regime and I was aware that some of the respondents did not have the same sense of security. I also consider that my gender

expression and identification as a woman, as well as being young, is often perceived as unthreatening and has thus helped to get more interviews. Contrarily, this also can lead some of the interviewees who were older or in greater positions of power to not take me seriously as a researcher.

To overcome power imbalances I tried to make the interviewees feel secure and comfortable by creating a safe space and making clear the possibilities for confidentiality and anonymity mentioned above. Additionally, I tried to use the languages that the interviewees were more comfortable with: French, English, Spanish and Catalan, which make this study a cross-language research (Gerson and Damaske, 2020, p.12). It is important to consider that, despite the interviews not being translated during the transcriptions, some translation is needed to adapt the responses to the language of this study, which can lead to misinterpretations. I was not able to conduct interviews in Darija, Morocco's dialect, or Fusha, standard Arabic, due to my limited knowledge of the language and I acknowledge that the languages used with Moroccan organizations were colonial languages. However, using a second or third language on both sides, interviewer and interviewee, helped to create a looser, more informal environment and thus more comfortable. This language issue is also present in the literature used. I am aware of the predominance of books and papers written by white European authors, which can indicate power imbalances in knowledge production. This is due to my limited knowledge of non-European languages and due to the limited publications by Moroccan scholars, mainly because of (self)censorship and lower access to publication sites.

Continuing with the limitations of this study, migrants have not been interviewed due to their vulnerability in this context, the probable post-traumatic feelings of border-crossing and the greater power imbalances. Likewise, the lack of knowledge of the local languages and the difficult access to irregularized people were factors that influenced this decision. To compensate for it, the main focus of the research have been organizations that work hand-in-hand with migrants and have a deep understanding of their daily experiences. Similarly, I have used studies and articles that include declarations made by migrants who are trying to or have tried to cross the border as secondary sources. Lastly, due to the scope of this research, it has not been possible to focus on all the social aspects that might affect one's migratory experience. For instance, class, sexual orientation and gender expression are factors that influence border violence. Consequently, it would be crucial to complement this study with others that focus on these aspects to get a complete intersectional perspective

(Anthias, 2013, p.133). Further, the economic dimension of the Morocco-Spain border regime has not been included either because of length limitations but it would be interesting to conduct research on the fences' economic interests to better understand the dynamics between actors in the private sector and governments (De Genova, 2002, p.431).

5. Findings

This section contains the results of the interviews that were conducted, which have been triangulated among them to compare different narratives and to get their perspectives on the racialization and masculinities of the border. Additionally, their answers have been combined with fieldwork annotations from the visit to the fences. These findings have been organized in common themes according to the coding strategy described above, which were identified during the interviews transcriptions. Moreover, the results have been contextualized with different reports that organizations have published regarding the Melilla fence jump and media reports from various media outlets. The main aim is to acquire a narrative on the events based on diverse sources to conduct a better analysis on the "massacre"[10]. By combining qualitative methods, this research overcomes the separation between the academic, institutional and objective world and daily experiences, emotions and subjectivity. Lastly, all of the participants have given their explicit consent to take part in the interviewing process but their names have been kept anonymous due to ethical and security considerations.

5.1 The Melilla fence jump in 2022: What happened?

One of the main aims of this paper is to shed more light into the events beyond using reports or news articles and focus on the descriptions and perceptions of various organizations that were in the borderland that day or have been working during its aftermath. Therefore, the participants were asked about their own narratives and experiences. GADEM's respondent put the emphasis on the repressive environment on both sides of the fences, and she explained how some people died and many people were injured and did not receive any assistance. This argument is backed up by the press article published by The Guardian (Kassam, A., 2022), where they collected information from NGOs and migrants testimonies. This article points to the videos shared by AMDH, where migrants appear injured as border guards remain static (loc.sit). Similarly, the FOO worker stated that their organization provided medical assistance to some migrants who ended up being displaced to other parts of Morocco, mainly to Rabat and further south. Their organization found that some medical records had been erased, in addition to the graveyards that were reportedly built outside Nador to bury the deceased migrants (EFE, 2022).

[10] The interviewee from APDHA used this term to refer to the Melilla events of June 2022. This aligns with the vocabulary used by Elsa Tyszler in her 2022 article: Massacre raciste à la frontière de Melilla. Entre paroxysme de la guerre contre certain· e· s migrant· e· s et colonialité de la violence.

As a consequence of this systemic human rights violations, APDHA's member said that everyone has gotten used to shipwreck news and migrants being killed. Nonetheless, she described the Melilla events of 2022 as the worst tragedy on this border so far. Their organization, she continued, lived that day with extreme distress, wondering what would be the next violent thing that happens at the fences. According to her, great amounts of information were coming from media channels and activists that were in the enclaves and, contrarily, there was little to no information reported by the Spanish and Moroccan government, which complicated even more getting specific data. Up until this day, there is disagreement in the number of deaths and injured: the NGO Walking Borders pointed to at least 40 deaths in their report, and to 77 missing victims according to their interviews with migrants (Walking Borders, 2022, p.2); the AMDH reported 37 deaths following their investigations and testimonies collected (Morales, E. G., 2023); CNDH reported, however, 23 deaths, 79 injured migrants and 140 injured border guards, and categorized the events as an "attack on the fence" (CNDH, 2022). According to the CNDH's respondent, their report published after the events attempted to give objective information and to fight the "fake news" that media outlets and civil society organizations were spreading. However, GADEM, AMDH and APDHA argued that this report was biased and did not showcase the real number of deaths and injuries. These responses showcase how difficult it has been to determine exactly what happened and the extent of the violence exercised.

5.1.1 Systemic border violence and human rights violations

All the respondents emphasized the violence of the moment, but the CNDH highlighted the violence that "came from the migrants". Therefore, the participants were asked to further develop their conceptions of border violence, to better describe the events in this research and to know if they perceived it as something sporadic or systemic. The vice-president of the AMDH pointed to the restoration of the visa programs in the 1990s that left many migrants blocked in Morocco as a turning point for violations of their rights, thus she argued that border violence has been persistent and systemic ever since. The respondent from FOO also mentioned how this closing of borders led many migrants to more dangerous routes and to higher human rights violations. As she reported, due to the violence that is exercised in these fences and the increased militarization, migration flows have been redirected to the Atlantic, with the Canary Islands as their destination. This statement aligns with International Organization of Migration's report on the first quarter of 2023: more than 2,000 people have

arrived to Spain via the Western African Atlantic route, compared to the 1,889 people who reached Spain through the Mediterranean and 220 people who crossed to the enclaves (IOM, 2023). This new route, which is a consequence of the closure of borders, is, according to Walking Borders, one of the deadliest migration routes to reach Europe. In the first half of 2023, 778 victims were counted in the Canary Islands route (Walking Borders, 2023). Both APDHA and AMDH denounced the opacity when trying to gather information in the borderland, as it happened with the Melilla events. The first pointed to the Spanish Ministry of Interior, which only provides data regarding “regular” migration flows every 15 days and the latter highlighted the repression associations suffer and how difficult it is to identify what happens, who gets injured and who is arrested, and categorizes it as another branch of border violence.

Furthermore, AMDH interviewee talked about systemic migrant repression, mass arrests in the border and forced displacements to other parts of Morocco. In accordance, the UN Special Rapporteur on Racism stated in GADEM’s and Global Detention Project report of 2022 their concerns on “the displacement of sub-Saharan migrants to southern regions" which is “leading to increased human rights violations" (GADEM, 2022, p.4). AMDH’s vice-president also pointed to the hot returns that occur at the fences as a result of the collaboration between the Spanish Guardia Civil and the Moroccan Gendarme. She argued that this practice goes against the Geneva Convention since migrants are not even asked if they are asylum seekers. According to Walking Border’s report on the events, 470 people were illegally returned to Morocco only that day (Walking Borders, 2022, p.3). In fact, one of the migrants interviewed in the Africa Eye documentary denounced how Spanish police gave him to Moroccan guards, who ended up hitting him and taking him to a detention spot (Africa Eye, 2022, min.13:21). The CNDH respondent agreed that in the Melilla events of 2022, the Geneva Convention was not respected, migrants were blocked, and the necessary assistance was not provided, even though he pointed mainly at Spain as the main responsible actor. CNDH’s official report did in fact mention unjustified violence towards the migrants but it stated that the Commission did not find evidence that medical assistance failed to be provided (CNDH, 2022). Contrarily, migrants that talked to the BBC for the Africa Eye documentary stated that “the ambulance arrived late. They could have helped the injured but the security forces stopped the medics from helping us or treating our injuries" (2022, min.16:10).

5.1.2 Security approach and externalization of the border

Most of the respondents pointed to the current security approach to migration policies as the main reason for the systemic human rights violations. In this regard, the CNDH representative mentioned briefly the funds that Morocco receives from Europe as a part of this externalization. AMDH's vice-president specified that these funds, which Spain asks for from the European Union, are used for militarizing the borders, for security logistics, guards and gendarme and to reinforce the fences. In my trip to Ceuta's fence, I could observe a fence next to the sea, way before reaching the actual border, which turned into the triple fence that goes up the mountains (See Figures 1 and 2). Securitization processes could also be observed in the surroundings of the fences: border guards were hidden around the mountain and random controls were done in the roads nearby. Surveillance houses can be seen in the roads that lead to the cities close by and there is constant movement of border guards. The AMDH participant asserted that securitization can also be seen in the acts of the Moroccan gendarme, who displace migrants forcibly from the borderland to the center and south of Morocco, an argument also made by GADEM's members. This securitization can be also perceived in the restrictions for Moroccans to access the Spanish enclaves. As explained by the participant during the fieldwork trip, she could only cross the border to go to work; as a result, she had documentation with the information of her employer and she needed to have her passport stamped everyday, without the option of staying overnight in Spanish territory.

Migrants in Africa's Eye documentary explained how buses took migrants, severely injured, to other Moroccan cities. In one of the migrants' words: "one of us died on the bus; and they left them there" (Africa Eye, 2022, min.16:42). This idea is also supported by FOO, whose representative recognized an increasing security in the enclaves' fences, which can be perceived as a warning for potential border-crossers. Contrarily, the CNDH's declarations pointed to how some funds are directed to improve migrant conditions in the country.[11] Furthermore, he argued that Moroccan border guards would need more capacity reinforcements because of the "violent approach some migrants are considering" that makes security guards opt for a more "restrictive approach". Nonetheless, migrants explained to the BBC that they only brought sticks to climb up the fences and border guards answered with

[11] The interviewee mentioned the latest European investments in 2022, even though he did not specify any particular agreement. In the year 2022, the EU sent 346 million euros to Morocco, from which 238 came from the EU Emergency Trust Fund For Africa (European Comission, 2022). Even though the report on this investment mentions the goal of supporting Morocco's development projects e.g. equitable access to basic social services, democratic governance and inclusive employment opportunities, most money is granted to border management (with 44 million euros), institutions that deal with border management and irregular migration (with 30.4 million euros) and to support the actions of Moroccan border authorities (with 101.7 million euros). Therefore, as argued by the IEMED's researcher, EU development projects are mainly linked to border control and securitization.

sound and gas bombs, tear gas to cause panic, and suffocate them once they were stuck at the border (Africa Eye, 2022, min.10:38).

GADEM's respondent declared that the fences have always had high levels of surveillance to prevent these crossings, which prevents associations from accessing migrants and providing help. Nonetheless, she pointed out how the European investment these past years has helped Moroccan police to increase securitization.[12] The representative of the APDHA specified that the border started to be securitized when economic interest was developed and, with the arrival of more migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa, the racial violence emerged. She argued that the fences and the borderland are part of an economic lobby, concealed as a problem of security at the expense of migrant deaths and other human rights violations. She stated that many large Spanish corporations are continuously investing in the borders and this is one of the reasons why border policies keep changing, such as the height of the fences or the use of barbed wire.

From 2020, a new customs area is being built with higher security and increased presence of the border guards, as described by the Moroccan woman who accompanied me to the border (See Figure 3). Therefore, following APDHA's argument, there is an important economic dimension to the border, which accentuates violence and brutality, that has been barely investigated. In regards to border securitization, the IEMED's researcher also highlighted the informal economy that is present in the borderland: from daily transportation of goods, to human or drug trafficking. All of these activities also contribute to a sense of insecurity, further corruption and to the use of threatening discourses against migration. Additionally, he argued that the tendency of externalizing borders further south entails agreements with failed or unstable African states.[13] The issue, according to the IEMED's researcher, is that due to the instability and corruption of the region, it is even more complicated to be aware of human rights violations and to monitor the EU and Saharan countries agreements.

[12] See European Commission (2022) report for specific data on where the investments Emergency Trust Fund for Africa were destined in 2022.

[13] For context and clarification: According to the Migration Policy institute (MPI), most of the agreements the European Union has reached with Sub-Saharan countries remain informal, as joint texts agreed upon during interregional dialogues. These dialogues highlighted the role of readmissions, also mentioned by the IEMED's participant, but, in practice, returns to certain Sub-Saharan African countries are substantially lower than average. MPI's report, however, acknowledges the limitations of gathering data in this situation, especially due to the informal nature of these agreements, something that has been denounced by APDHA and AMDH's respondents as well. For more information on this report visit Slagter (2019).

5.2 Systemic border violence and racialization

Since the main goal of the interviews was to get the participants' perspective on the Melilla events and how they can reflect racial and gender dynamics, they were asked about if and how the criminalization of migration and the present police brutality can be linked to racial discrimination. For instance, one of GADEM's members argued that, even though there is an extended violence to everyone who tries to cross, the great majority of migrants are black people. Therefore, as argued by the second respondent, the border control is done on the basis of racialization. In her words: "it is clear that a certain population of the world cannot cross borders and move freely (…). The current border regime has risen as a way of legitimizing racial differentiation and discrimination". This racial differentiation, according to the FOO's responses, is not new and can be traced back to the slavery history of Morocco and, as GADEM's members argued, colonialism when it comes to Europe.

Correspondingly, the APDHA's representative described the current border regime as a "racist model". She explained how migrants from upper classes are not allowed to cross either and, as GADEM's respondent said, even people who have been regularized in Morocco and are still stranded in the country. Both of these organizations agreed on how all Sub-Saharan migrants are homogenized, which presents migration as a mere "racial" issue. Both pointed to how even the asylum offices in the enclaves are known for not letting black migrants in. However, the CNDH respondent did not mention racialization as a source of violence, nor is it mentioned in their published report (CNDH, 2022); he pointed instead to the lack of protection of asylum-seekers. Contrarily, the IEMED's researcher stated that the current migratory system throughout Europe has systematically excluded racialized populations in the continent, no matter if they come from the Maghreb or if they reside in Ukraine.

This racial discrimination that the interviewees mentioned can be perceived in the declarations that migrants who tried to cross the fence in June 2022 did for Africa Eye, the BBC. One of these migrants denounced how Moroccan police forces "started to shout at us and saying that they could do much worse, that we deserved more". According to this victim, "border guards said: you are not human, you are nothing, you are worthless". He highlighted how they started beating them up, putting their boots in migrants' faces and kicking them to see if they were dead (Africa Eye, 2022, min:15:23). This dehumanization that had been

denounced during the interviews by APDHA, GADEM and AMDH, who all pointed to its connection to racialization. The NGO Walking Borders also gathered testimonies of that "massacre" that went on the same line. For instance, one migrant argued that "If you cry, they'll keep hitting you. If you play dead, they'll let you, but if you cry, they won't let you." (Walking Borders, 2022b). Another migrant that talked to this organization pointed to the repeated violence that exists at the border: "Although it's not the first time that people are killed at the border… We are talking about this, but it is not the first time. There are people who have died, many, many, many." (loc.sit).

5.2.1 Racialization processes in Morocco

For many of the participants, the racial violence that was exercised in June 2022 cannot be understood by only looking at those events. It is essential to consider the existing racism in Morocco, which, according to the interviewees from APDHA, AMDH, GADEM and FOO, is often silenced and ignored. According to AMDH's vice-president, in the fences we see violence towards Muslim and Arab people but "the Melilla events of June 2022 prove that there is a specific violence towards people with black skin". According to her, there is a problem of negligence of African culture, which can be seen in the differences of treatment in Morocco between Sub-Saharan migrants, who are systematically discriminated against, and Europeans or Arabs. Both GADEM and FOO work with racialized migrants who report to their organizations daily racist comments and acts. This demonstrates, according to both respondents, a systematic exclusion of racialized people in the country, and the brutality employed in the borders is the culmination of such.

As pointed out by the AMDH respondent, racialized people are reported to not receive an equal treatment within the public system and they are under constant suspicion of not having proper documentation, leading to arbitrary identifications and arrests.[14] Therefore, they are further pushed to migrate and face the racist border regime. Consequently, according to GADEM's respondents, Sub-Saharan migrants are more easily portrayed as a threat and more violence is exercised, thus they become much more visible and vulnerable. For APDHA's representative, the fences are the clear representation of the systematic and institutional racism that both Morocco and Spain practice, the main example being how many

[14] In March 9th 2023, GADEM published an announcement which was later signed by various organizations, among them the AMDH, that denounced the racism, hate discourses and criminal migratory policies. In this document, they state that the public space in Morocco has been filled with a racist discourse towards sub-Saharan migrants, whose origins are found in the security approach to migration. The document also includes demands in regards to Moroccan migration policy and police/border guards operations. For further details see: GADEM (2023).

racialized migrants are prevented from entering the asylum offices. This can be seen in GADEM's 2015 report, where UNHCR data was collected to show ho, out of the 1,500 asylum petitions done in the first months of that year, almost all of them were done by Syrians and Palestinians, and none of them by Sub-Saharan migrants (GADEM, 2015, p.50). According to APDHA and GADEM's participants, this is just another example of the racialization of borders and systemic discrimination.

5.2.2 Criminalization of migration

According to most respondents, the racial and gendered violence exercised in the border is legitimized and concealed thanks to the systemic criminalization of migration. A slight example of this stance are the declarations of the CNDH member, who argued that migrants and refugees are perceived as a threat. Firstly, he contended that the socio-political "background" of these migrants and their desperation can lead to more violent attitudes. Secondly, he stated that constantly portraying migrants as threatening can lead them to accept that role and act in more "defensive ways" at the border. These ideas, however, contrast with the rest of the responses provided by the other participants. The interviewee from APDHA explained how she had spoken with Spanish Guardia Civil, coast-guards and other border guards and, according to her, they have always described migrants as people who collaborate and are never violent. She argued that militarizing the border means basically declaring war on any migrant that tries to cross it, and that the response migrants give -for instance, the use of sticks and other tools to cross the border and to defend themselves, as they explained in Africa Eye's documentary (2022, min.6:32) - is completely logical. This argument was also supported by GADEM's workers, including the second participant that joined halfway through the conversation. They both argued that police repression and the pressure of the moment create a "savage context", thus migrants' reactions are natural. Additionally, they highlighted the brutality present in the borderland and how police and military forces are well equipped to repress border crossings, which often results in migrants injured, much more than any forces of order.

5.3 Systemic border violence and masculinities

Continuing with APDHA's declarations, the border divides not only by racial profile but also by gender, and this can also be perceived in the Melilla events. She argued that since migrant groups are homogenized, there is a tendency to believe that migration is only masculine.

Secondly, while migrant men tend to be criminalized, migrant women are generally victimized and invisibilized. The invisibilization of women can be perceived in Africa Eye's documentary, where all migrant participants were men. Additionally, in the photos published by Walking Borders (2022a; 2022b) and various media outlets, all of them appear to be male bodies (EFE, 2022; Kassam, 2022; France24, 2022; Amnesty International, 2022). Even in the testimonies of the victims to Walking Borders, migrants refer to each other as brothers, always using male pronouns and adjectives (2022b). As some type of response to this invisibilization, both APDHA and GADEM explained how women have higher tendencies of crossing by boat and, therefore, less women are seen in cases such as the Melilla events, but they are easily found in cases of shipwrecks in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic.

In this regard, IOM's Missing Migrant Project exposed how the vast majority of recorded migrant women's deaths were due to drowning (IOM, 2018). Together with the FOO, all participants highlighted that migrant women exist and have their own migration projects but their freedom of movement gets highly limited by not acknowledging their experiences within migratory flows. The three associations have gathered testimonies of women who have suffered violence throughout their migration routes, a type of violence that is often dismissed or, contrarily, used to increase their vulnerability. According to the FOO, women go through sexual violence in the borderland, in the camps surrounding the enclaves and when they arrive to their country of destination.[15] Furthermore, they might engage in sex work or domestic work that ends up in exploitation in order to pay for their journey. The FOO's respondent also pointed to the vulnerability that carrying a child can suppose, which can lead to extortion and further exploitation.

The APDHA representative stated that the violence migrant women suffer is often invisible and the institutional, political and media focus is on the enclaves' borderland, where almost no women can be seen. Nonetheless, according to the IOM's reports on migration, even though all Mediterranean routes are included and studied, there is lack of reliable sex-disaggregated data, which perpetuates the invisibility of female migrant deaths (IOM, 2018). Nevertheless, the evidence the IOM has collected describes women as facing greater risks of death while migrating irregularly. In accordance with GADEM's statements, the fences are characterized by a "masculine confrontation between Spanish and Moroccan

[15] Elsa Tyszler's articles mentioned in the literature review include an in-depth study of the different violences that women go through in this borderlands: from attacks to their reproductive health, to extortion and sexual exploitation. For deeper insights visit: Tyszler (2022, 2021, 2020, 2019a, 2019b, 2015).

border guards and migrants"; thus the attempts of crossing remain majorly masculine, since women generally use other routes. Therefore, as argued by APDHA's respondent, the border brutality exercised over migrant bodies in this particular borderland is marked by a hegemonic masculinity that criminalizes racialized men. As a consequence of this "culture of war", following her words, the structural violence towards racialized migrant men is legitimized and naturalized, to the point in which the civil society accepts this brutality as part of the border regime. Therefore, both respondents agreed that border violence is racialized and gendered, which is mainly perceived in the polarization done between the criminalization of racialized migrant men and the victimization and invisibilization of racialized migrant women.

5.4 Global border regime

This research looks at a very particular case of border violence between a country of the MENA region in the Mediterranean and one European state and on the other side of the sea. However, the main aim is to look at the particularities of the case study and how the racialization and hegemonic masculinity can explain the violence present in the current Mediterranean border regime. Accordingly, all the interviewees were asked if the Melilla events could be framed into a broader global border regime. The IEMED's researcher pointed to a general tendency within the EU to migration policies based on contention, security, externalization and rejection, almost belligerent. This can be seen in the enclaves' fences but also in the Atlantic route to the Canary Islands, where five boats have gone missing in June 2023[16], in the other Mediterranean routes towards Greece, Malta and Italy and, on the terrestrial side, towards Turkey. The issue, he pointed out, is not only migration contention itself but the amount of people that die in the process: 5,000 people in the Mediterranean since 2014, according to the IOM. In this way, the APDHA's respondent explained how they have seen increasingly precarious boats coming from Argelia, which worsens their options of reaching land, and which adds to the increase of death reports coming from Tunisian coast as well (InfoMigrants, 2023). She stated that even though the countries of origin might change, the violence is persistent and, adding the IEMED respondent's answers, the brutality of the Moroccan Gendarmerie can also be seen among Tunisian, Libya or Algerian's police forces. This argument was also supported by the FOO's participant, who argued that the humanitarian needs never change, even if we see a shift in the countries of origin.

[16] Walking Borders reported to the Spanish newspaper El Mundo that 5 boats still remain missing with 266 people on board, Moroccan and sub-Saharan. This news report opened by stating that 89 people have died in 15 days while trying to reach the Canary Islands. One of these shipwrecks raised concern due to the incoordination between Spanish and Moroccan coastguards. (See: Ortiz, 2023).

The participants also pointed to the securitization and externalization of borders as main components of the current border regime in the Mediterranean and Sub Saharan Africa. GADEM's spokesperson denounced the historical colonial legacies that contribute to the immobilization of migrants and to further violence. This violence, she continued, is much more visible when it is physical, such as in Turkey or in the enclaves, but she highlighted how letting people die in the ocean should also be considered part of this border violence. This externalization is also seen in the importance of readmissions that the EU gives in most development agreements, as the IEMED's interviewee stressed (Slagter, 2019). He also denounced the high percentage of asylum denials and how Schengen creates systematic problems with European external borders, especially in their visa systems. The FOO's participant explained how Moroccan people are increasingly concerned due to the current lack of visa-permits, which drives many people to try and cross without documentation and thus enhances the chances of attempting to jump the fences.

This concern could be perceived during the fieldwork trip, when the family that accompanied me to the border continuously asked whether or not I carried my passport with me and how they whispered when describing their experiences. Likewise, the participant carried with her her work permit even though she was not going to cross the borders, in order to have some justification when approaching the fences. Actually, she showed it to the border guards when they questioned our presence at the border (See Figure 4). Moreover, The AMDH's vice-president gave the example of women who transport products across the border and face daily discrimination and sexual harassment, which points to the systemic racial and gendered violence portrayed by the Melilla events. She explained how the French Ambassador said that unless Morocco accepts readmissions, no more visas will be given, which connects to the IEMED's declarations. In response to this closure of borders, the CNDH representative argued for global agreements that make recommendations instead of binding agreements, since sovereignty was described as "immovable".[17] Nonetheless, the AMDH stated that, as long as the EU keeps focusing their investments in border guards, improving the situation will be impossible regardless of any international convention. In her words: "Europe is very aware of the situation, but they want to stop migration by all means; in the end, migration is constructed and reconstructed by Europe".

[17] The participant from CNDH was mainly arguing for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Nonetheless, the participants from GADEM, APDHA, and AMDH saw it as vague and non-effective in Morocco, since it is a non-binding agreement. These latter interviewees argued further for more concrete reforms in migration policy in Morocco in order to tackle systemic border violence.

5.4.1 The "exceptionality" narrative and legitimization of violence

One of the arguments often used to justify the violence in these fences, according to the literature review, is the exceptionality of this borderland, as the only land border between Africa and Europe. The existence of the triple fences, the "no man's land" in between the Moroccan and the Spanish fence and the high level of border guards and military equipment, all of it observed during the fieldwork, are just a representation of this exceptionality. Accordingly, the participants were asked to reflect on how the supposed exceptionality can "cause" racial and gendered violence. The IEMED's researcher pointed to the enclaves as the main problem. He argued that Spain keeps occupying these territories for pure nationalism and, in exchange, they need to make great concessions. This idea was shared by the APDHA's interviewee, who stated that if the enclaves are considered occupied spaces -a language often used by the Moroccan government-, Spain has the need to defend "its territory" by any means. The IEMED's respondent asserted that this borderland is an exceptional territory where the state is increasingly legitimized to exercise more violence without any response from Europe. The APDHA's worker stated that this invention of the "exceptionality" rhetoric allows both Spanish and Moroccan governments to systematically violate human rights. In her view, the enclaves hold economic and symbolic power: 1) they are military enclaves that have been historically useful for Spain and Europe, thus they hold nationalistic value, 2) many companies have been making profit due to their economic regime and the border-making business. Following the IEMED's representative words: "the fence is the extreme representation of the uneven, obscure and colonial relations that exist between Spain and Morocco".

5.4.2 The source of violence: coloniality of borders?

Since the historical legacies were mentioned, together with the European role in defining borders, the participants were asked about the colonial heritage of the enclaves and whether it can be understood as a source of border violence. The IEMED's researcher argued that borders are still based on old rigid conceptions of identities such as race, ethnicity or religion that are used to control movements. Therefore, the discrimination that could be seen in the Melilla events can be traced back to historical conceptions of borders. Likewise, he considered it important to describe the enclaves as occupied territories that represent colonization as a fortification of the Spanish identity. In his words, the border is "arbitrary, artificial and imposed, and, as a result, it generates violence towards those who are not

welcome". When talking with the Moroccan family during the fieldwork trip, they explained how their family, as well as the rest of the Moroccan population, uses the concepts of "red passport" to refer to those who can more easily cross to the enclaves, in contrast with those who have only a "green passport". Therefore, their freedom of movement, as they acknowledged, is determined by the color of their documentation.

APDHA's interviewee defined the fences as the most tangible symbol that represents the "othering" of those who are not "white" as Europeans. On this topic, GADEM's members stated that by using the concept of "coloniality of borders" we might be able to point to the origins of this racism. According to them, our current colonial and capitalist system only allows certain types of migration, mainly when it is useful for economic purposes -which AMDH's vice-president defined as selective migration- and always prioritizes states' sovereignty over freedom of movement or migrants' human rights. Moreover, in the AMDH's interviewee's perspective, this coloniality can be seen in EU's agreements with countries of origin, especially Sub-Saharan states, which are often damaged by colonialism and do not have strong democratic systems to carry out development programs. This aligns with IEMED's researcher's declarations on how the attempted collaboration between the EU and Sub-Saharan and north African countries are always done following European standards, and thus end up failing due to this eurocentrism.

6. Analysis

The findings from the last section have provided this research with a more detailed view of the Melilla "massacre" in 2022. The different perspectives, combined with field notes, reports, migrants declarations and news reports have provided deeper insights on the violence that occurred that day and the possible sources of this origin. Consequently, in this section, findings of the research process are analyzed through a translocational lens. According to Anthias (2013, p 130) and as stated in the theory section, this lens can help analyze the outcomes that are produced through the intersections of social structures and processes, with a special focus on the border social context and temporality. Consequently, using a temporal and contextual analysis helps to understand racial and gender dynamics as processes instead of fixed social positions and to locate their outcomes on the local -the borderland- and the transnational level -the global border regime. Firstly, the violence exercised during the Melilla events is contrasted with the conceptions of racialization and hyper-masculinities described in the theory section, to focus on the social locations of this particular context. Secondly, the findings are framed within a broader context, that is the coloniality of this border as an attempt to find the roots of this violence and understand its perpetration. This section ends with a general redefinition of these fences as socially constructed and in constant change, as representations of power that impose social hierarchies and determine who has the right to pass through them. The final aim of this section is to argue for a deeper analysis on local violent events at the borders in the Mediterranean region in order to understand existing social hierarchies and frame them in the global border regime that affects everyday migrant experiences.

6.1 Social locations at the local level: the enclaves' borderland

The first part of this analysis is focused on answering one of the sub research questions: how are the social locations of the borderland determined by racialization and hegemonic masculinities. The responses from the participants, combined with the field observations and migrants' declarations in media outlets are interpreted through a local lens first, in order to understand the racial and gendered processes that shape migration experiences in this borderland. Even though the method is the same, Anthias argued that race and gender involve distinctive discourses and practices, bodies are disciplined through different ways and the categorization tends to differ (2013, p 129). In fact, the existence of separate categories allows the control or repression in particular environments, times and spaces (ibid., p.130).

Therefore, firstly the racialization conception described in the theory section is applied to the findings. Afterwards, the same is done with the concept of hyper-masculinities. Nonetheless, Anthias also recognized how these social categories intersect and are embodied in concrete contexts. Therefore, the final and concluding argument of the research combines both aspects of social locations to acknowledge this intersection and frame it into the global context.

6.1.1 Social locations by racial classification

As it can be seen in the findings, through the declarations of GADEM, APDHA and AMDH, border control is done on the basis of racialization. In the words of Gahman and Hjalmarson, this means that the classification done following the invention of race has been naturalized and embedded in bordering processes. As it was stated by the AMDH, Muslim and Arab people also suffer from systemic discrimination in the border but the Melilla massacre of June 2022 exposed the particular violence that is directed to racialized people. The main example given in this research is the exclusion of black migrants from the enclaves' asylum offices in contrast to Syrians and Palestinians (Tyszler, 2015, p 54) This case study is therefore a clear example of Lugones' conception of race, as an invention to organize humanity in biological terms and establish hierarchical locations (2016, p.2). Consequently, as the AMDH and FOO participants asserted, there is the need within the Moroccan population to distance themselves from the rest of Africa in order to locate themselves higher in these racialized hierarchies, which can thus lead to daily racist acts. This can be conceived as one of the reasons why Moroccan authorities participate in border control, together with the economic incentives they receive, and exercise this violence specifically towards racialized migrants coming from Sub-Saharan countries.

This research points constantly to the need to focus on specific places and time to understand broader context, for instance racialization. In this regard, the Melilla events fully represent how borderlands can be spaces where the invention of race is further engraved into bodies (in this case mobile bodies), since it is the main criteria to define who is let in and who is let out and who will be the victim of border violence (Gahman and Hjalmarson, 2019, p.110). This racialization is not only determined by the color of the skin or ethnicity: the main example is the Moroccan family that participated in the fieldwork who explained how their freedom of movement across the border is determined by the color of their passports, regardless of their origins, race, ethnicity or family roots. As APDHA's interviewee stated, the fences are the greatest symbol of "othering" processes, which are rooted in the colonial

origins of the border (Soto Bermant, 2015a, 2015b, 2014) and the slavery history of Morocco as argued by AMDH and FOO. These "othering" processes, which are essentially rooted in racialization (Pian, 2010, p.188) are in constant evolution, thus research on borderlands, specifically in the Mediterranean, needs to be constantly updated. As argued by the APDHA's respondent, the border's securitization started when economic interests developed in the region. As a consequence, the racial discrimination started to be enforced through physical violence. Therefore, following the arguments made by the IEMED's researcher, "othering" processes in the borderlands are extremely influenced by the social, historical, political and economic context of the area.

Racialization determines the border violence that mobile bodies suffer, as it is reflected in the Melilla events. The examples given by the interviewees of violence specific from this context are hot returns, mass arrests in the border, forced displacements, physical and psychological violence and sometimes even death. In the case of the Melilla events, all of these acts of violence occurred even though there has not been an agreement on the actual numbers, for instance with the use of tear gas, gas bombs or batons as showcased in the documentary. This racialized classifications might end up with a dehumanization of those in the lower steps of the hierarchies. APDHA, GADEM and AMDH all pointed to a dehumanization of Sub-Saharan migrants in the enclaves borderlands, and the migrants themselves declared that some border guards told them they were worthless and non-human. By presenting racialized migration as non-human, it is inevitably essentialized and homogenized and migration ends up being a mere racial issue, as argued by GADEM and APDHA. Therefore, only by looking into particular contexts understanding race as a process, thus by using racialization as a frame, this border violence can be further studied and the heterogeneity of migratory flows can be more easily acknowledged (De Genova, 2002, p.117).

This racial-based violence, however, is legitimized through the systemic discourse that criminalizes migration. The declarations of the CNDH member who pointed to the violence that came from the migrants, which has been also used in the organization's report, are evidence of how the homogenization of migrants in groups and their consequent dehumanization makes it much easier to portray them as a criminal or dangerous group. Even outside the borderland, as pointed out by the FOO and GADEM, racialized migrants are under constant suspicion and targets of arbitrary identifications and arrests. Therefore, if race

is naturalized and understood as self-evident (Gahman and Hjalmarson, 2019, p.116), and racialized migrants are posed as a danger for a country, this criminalization is very easily naturalized as well. The violence that is exercised at the border, consequently, ends up legitimized and perceived as necessary (Deridder, Pelckmans and Ward, 2020, p 22). In the words of GADEM's respondents: "the current border regime has risen as a way of legitimizing racial differentiation and discrimination". Nonetheless, most of the organizations interviewed are working daily to point to systemic causes of the violence such as racialization processes. For instance, both the APDHA, AMDH and GADEM have stated, contrary to the declarations of CNDH, that the militarization of borders is a declaration of war to any migrant that tries to cross it; therefore, the potential "violence" that might come from migrants sides is perceived as logical and inevitable in these extreme and brutal contexts.

6.1.2 Masculinities in the borderland

The Melilla events demonstrate how the social relations that appear in the borderland between Spain and Morocco are gendered. Bordering processes are determined by gender and thus affect the way in which women migrate and and how they act in these spaces. As it can be seen in the images from the BBC documentary and in all participants' declarations, the fences are a male-dominated space. Women are much more likely to use alternative routes, mainly sea routes such as the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. Consequently, the subjectivity that is created in the borderland of the "violent migrant that jumps the fences to cross the frontier illegally" is racialized and gendered (Connell, 1998, p.7): as GADEM members argued, the image that is portrayed is always a "black man". This homogenization of migratory experiences makes it extremely complicated to disclose the power dynamics of the borders (Miranda, 2023, p.223), for instance any sexual or gender-based violence that women might suffer on their journey (Tyszler, 2019, p.62). Likewise, since the border crossings in the fences are so visible, as argued by GADEM members, all migration from Morocco to Spain is reduced to this method of crossing, which essentially erases women from migration flows. However, as all respondents argued, women have their own migratory projects which are inevitably determined by existing patriarchal hierarchies: going from the sexual and gendered violence they suffer during their journeys, as exposed by Tyslzer, to the increased vulnerability that sea routes suppose, gender relations are clearly embedded in bordering processes (2019, p.3).

The focus on migrant men is also an example of the gendered criminalization of migration, in addition to its racial aspect developed in the previous section. As most of the interviewees have argued, there exists a binary distinction between migrant men and migrant women, corresponding to the patriarchal oppositions stated in the theory section (Connell, 1998, p.7): the masculine is categorized as criminal and the feminine as vulnerable/victimized. Therefore, as it is demonstrated in the Melilla "massacre", all the focus is brought upon men in land borders whereas the alternative routes generally used by women are turned invisible. Migrant women are turned into passive and vulnerable beings in need of protection (Freedman et. al 2023, p.4), and their migratory experiences are never covered, as it can be seen in this particular case studies and the predominance of male bodies everywhere. The work of Elsa Tyszler shows how when the attention is brought upon female bodies, once they have been categorized into this gendered binaries, it is always shaped by coloniality: white women often adopt a "savior" role, patronizing and, in the end, violent (2021, p.965). Therefore, either because of their invisibilization or their vulnerability, migrant women are often deprived of any agency and presented as victims of migrant men.

According to Connell, femininity and masculinity are relational, socially and historically situated (1998, p.5). Consequently, the feminine roles that are attributed to migrant women appear during different stages of their migratory journey, as it happens to the masculine roles attributed to migrant men. An example portrayed by the Melilla events of existing gender binaries are the declarations of migrants that refer to each other as "brothers", always using masculine pronouns and adjectives (Walking Borders, 2022b) which further invisibilizes feminine experiences at the border. Moreover, these gender relations are accentuated in violent situations where there is a sense of failure to perform gender roles (Freedman et. al 2023, p.4) and hyper-masculinities appear in the borderland. In the case of the Melilla fence jump, GADEM, APDHA and AMDH respondents categorized it as a masculine confrontation between Moroccan and Spanish border guards and migrant men. As it was stated by APDHA's respondent and as it can be seen in Tyszler's work, there exists a culture of war in the fences determined by a hegemonic masculinity that turns migrant men into soldiers who end up adopting dominant roles during their whole migratory journey (2020, p.161).

Most respondents argued that it is this hegemonic masculinity mixed with racialization that criminalizes migrant men and justifies, by creating this culture of war, the

violence that is exercised. The case study of the Melilla fence jump exemplifies the two types of border masculinity that Tyszler identified (2019b, p.43): Firstly, the brutality exercised by border guards and police officers towards migrants and how migrant men respond themselves with masculine acts of defense. Secondly, the securitization and militarization of borders has been clearly identified during field observations, which contributes to the creation of the violent borderland to prevent “criminal black men" from crossing the borders. Any attempt to cross these fences such as the Melilla events is perceived by security forces as an attack and thus requires extreme physical force to prevent it. All in all, this particular context creates a specific type of hegemonic masculinities that come into play and result in criminalization of migration and systemic border violence.

6.2 Social locations in a broad context of power: Coloniality of Ceuta and Melilla

The intersections of these social locations, following the translocational frame, need to be situated in broader dimensions of context and time (Anthias, 2013, p.127). Therefore, this research has focused on the colonial origins of the borderland, as of the migration regime of the Mediterranean region, and its historical legacies, understood as coloniality of borders. GADEM’s respondents argued that by focusing on the coloniality of these borders, it might be possible to understand the origins of racial and gendered violence. This links to Miranda’s argument on the need to consider how human mobility links to various economic, social and cultural hierarchies (2013, p.224). This framework allows us to comprehend how bordering processes, which are determined by colonial legacies, construct, shape and reshape migrants' subjectivities. As Anthias argued, social locations are embedded in relations of hierarchy, such as racial and gendered hierarchies, that belong to broader landscapes of power (2013, p.130), in this case, the coloniality of the borderland.

The first context that needs to be taken into account, which essentially shapes the local dynamics of power and domination (Tyszler, 2019b, p.52) is the racism present in Morocco and its link to black slavery in the country. Even though due to the scope of this research it has not been possible to dig deeper on Morocco’s slavery history, most of the respondents pointed to the systemic exclusion of racialized people in the country and, specifically, the declarations of AMDH’s vice-president on Morocco’s negligence of African culture, points to the internalization of racialized hierarchies even at the institutional level. The separation that is made between Moroccan or Arab culture and African culture is an example of how the social classifications imposed during colonialism have permeated current

societies (Lugones, 2016a, p.3). Additionally, the discrimination that racialized migrants suffer in the asylum offices, as stated in the literature review (Tyszler, 2015, p 54) and denounced by some interviewees, is an example of how the inequalities developed during colonial times, based on racial hierarchies, are part of the biography of borders (Yuval-Davis, Wemyss and Cassidy, 2019, p.36).

Accordingly, the context of Ceuta and Melilla also needs to be framed within its colonial origins. As it has been stated by APDHA, GADEM and AMDH, the existence of these fences between Europe and Africa represent the historical colonial legacies of the borderland. The fences are perceived to be the clear representation of colonial social classifications which generate the illegalization of migration and the violence it entails (De Genova, Tazzioli and Álvarez-Velasco, 2016; Sahraoui and Tyszler, 2021; Jiménez-Alvarez, Espiñeira and Gazzotti, 2021). The responses from IEMED and APDHA evidenced the need to understand the enclaves as the main point of contention. The enclaves are supposed to be part of the Spanish identity, thus European, and anything that falls out of this conception is considered "the other". Therefore, the fences that surround them are the epitome of othering processes; they separate people according to social locations. The nationalist feeling coming from Spain in regards to the fences further "justifies" the violence that is exercised, since there is the "need to protect them from foreign invasion". Either the nationalist discourse on the Spanish side or the discourse of an occupied territory on the Moroccan side, both contribute to the exceptionality rhetoric that legitimizes systemic human rights violations. Consequently, the brutality of the Melilla fence jump can be traced back to the colonial origins of the enclaves and the fences' role of protecting the Spanish identity in front of "the others".

6.2.1 Coloniality of border regime

The scope of coloniality cannot be limited to a particular space, nonetheless. Following the translocational theory, transnational factors need to be taken into account when analyzing the intersections of social categorizations. In this particular case study, the interviewees pointed to the colonial relations that exist between the European Union and the countries in Northern and sub Saharan Africa as one of the origins of the systemic border violence against migrants. As argued by the respondents, the EU tendency in migration policy is based on contention, security and externalization throughout the whole Mediterranean, including Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Turkey. Consequently, a

similar violence to the once experienced in Ceuta and Melilla's fences can be perceived in these territories as well. Therefore, the border regime that has risen in this area is based on securitization and criminalization of migration (De Genova, Tazzioli and Álvarez-Velasco, 2016) which contributes to the creation of the racialized and gendered social locations in various contexts. In other words, European migration policies towards Southern Mediterranean countries systematically prevent certain human mobilities, a categorization that is rooted in colonial categorizations of "race" and "gender".

Readmission agreements were categorized by the IEMED and AMDH's respondent as one of the main points of contention in current migration politics and as one of the main evidences of colonial legacies. Additionally, it is a clear example of how migration is instrumentalized and migratory flows and policies can change depending on interests or social, political or economic contexts. The externalization of borders that has been argued to lead to border violence and discrimination starts off, as declared by the participants, with the lack of visas that are granted or restrictive agreements with transit and origin countries. The unequal distribution of wealth, mostly originated during colonialism, has made more vulnerable populations in the so-called Global South (Palidda, 2021, p.183) and thus affects the uneven relations that exist with European countries. Development programs (European Commission, 2023) are often not carried out at their fullest due to the lack of democratic institutions and they are systematically linked to migration policies. Consequently, the racialized and gendered discrimination that exists in borders such as Ceuta and Melilla is institutionalized and naturalized. The only migration that is then allowed through the fences is the one that can be useful for those with higher bargaining power: as stated by GADEM and AMDH participants, we currently see a process of selective migration, meaning that only migrants that can economically contribute to Spain's or Europe's economies are allowed through the fences e.g. temporary workers. Therefore, the current border regime between Spain and Morocco can be said to prioritize economic and political interests before humans' right to mobility.

6.2.2 Coloniality and global capitalism

Additionally, the respondents from AMDH, GADEM, APDHA and in some ways, CNDH, all pointed to the global context in order to find the causes of mass migrations and displacement. This aligns with Palidda's argument on how unequal distribution of wealth and the exploitation of natural and human resources of the "Global South" (2021, p.183), which

can be traced back to colonialism (Yuval-Davis, Wemyss and Cassidy, 2019, pp.13-14), increases vulnerability and the need to look for opportunities somewhere else. Therefore, coloniality is not only present in the sociopolitical context of the borders in the Mediterranean, but also in the economic system of countries of transit and origin, affecting migratory routes along the way. This economic dimension of coloniality is harder to witness in local contexts thus including transnational factors is needed in order to gain a deeper understanding of the root causes of migration and its illegalization. Nonetheless, specific events such as the Melilla massacre can showcase the impacts that global capitalism and neoliberalism have on borders between the "Global North" and the "Global South". Further research would be needed to complete this information but most respondents declared that EU funds are essentially always destined towards militarization of borders. Furthermore, APDHA's member argued how the fences are part of an economic lobby, where Spanish big corporations continue to invest and make profit out of systemic border violence. As explained by Andersson, there is a speculative bubble growing around the securitization business (2012, p.11) and the fences around Ceuta and Melilla are potentially one of the best case studies to exemplify it.

The case study of Melilla also points to the informal economy that emerges in those spaces where illegalization of migration is taken to the extreme. According to Palmas, it is this illegalization and criminalization that enhance business for all actors, including informal economies (2012, p.460) which eventually increase vulnerability and reproduce colonial social classifications (Bermant, 2015b). IEMED's researcher, in this sense, pointed to the informality of the border and how it contributes to the vicious cycle of "illegalized" border crossings: if there are no legal ways to cross but the necessity and/or desire to move is still there, illegalized ways will be find to cross the fences, sometimes leading to group crossings such as the Melilla fence jump of 2022. These alternative routes end up being much more violent, for instance when jumping the fences and facing border guards, and deadly, such as the sea routes in the Atlantic or the Mediterranean (IOM, 2023). Consequently, as argued by APDHA's respondent, migrants end up paying huge amounts of money to cross, which contributes to the informal economy of the borderland and to greater senses of insecurity. There is thus an increase of threatening discourses against migrants in the enclaves and throughout Europe, who are presented as "illegal people", which contributes to their criminalization. Therefore, the need to securitize borders appears and further investment is done, mainly by the European Union and private actors, and the cycle starts again.

Nonetheless, what the responses of most of the interviewees have shown is that the origins of these crossings and the impact of securitization are barely mentioned when cases like the Melilla “massacre” occur. As a consequence, it is more common to present these events as sporadic and isolated and border violence is seldom presented as something systemic and rooted in the current border regime.

7. Final remarks and future research

This research has aimed to answer the following research question: How does the case study of the Melilla fence jump illustrate modes of racialization and gendering of the borders between Morocco and Spain?. The literature review has demonstrated the little research that is done on specific border crossings. Hence, this research has shown how local contexts can be used to understand broader migration dynamics. This has been done by focusing on the racialization and gendered dynamics that could be seen during the Melilla fence jump, since some articles, books and studies that were reviewed pointed to these social factors as determining during border crossings. Therefore, this research has focused on how the current border system, which shapes migrants' everyday experiences, is rooted in colonial conceptions of race and gender hierarchies. In other words, it has proven the need to link local contexts to transnational factors. To achieve this, interviews were conducted with various actors in order to understand the various narratives that exist around the Melilla events of 2022. Additionally, field notes were taken during the research trip to the fences, which have provided great insights on the structure of the border, its securitization and the insecure and informal environment around the borderland. All of these findings have been analyzed using a translocational framework: focusing on the specific border violence that was exercised during the events and linking it to systemic racialization and gender processes, rooted in the colonial origins of the borderland.

The findings and analysis of this research have shown how the borderland that surrounds the enclaves is socially constructed and reconstructed according to different contexts, needs and interests. As it has been explained by most interviewees, fieldwork participants and backed by the literature review, this borderland has been increasingly securitized as the relations between Spain, or even the EU, and Morocco have been developing (Deridder, Pelckmans, and Ward, 2020; Del Sarto, 2010). The fences built are in constant change, for instance with the installation of the barbed wire, and new systems of surveillance are constantly updated. These processes inevitably change migrants' ability to cross these borders, reduce the "legalized" options for crossing and thus increase their vulnerability. Therefore, this borderland is a great example of processes of bordering, shifting and dynamic, which shape individual and collective rights (Yuval-Davis, Wemyss and Cassidy, 2019, p.3). The changing nature of the borderland, however, depends on who holds the power to do so, who has the power to regulate human relations and to determine which

type of mobility is considered “migration” (De Genova, Tazzioli and Álvarez-Velasco, 2016, p.32). In this case, this capability is held by the states on both sides of the fences, Spain and Morocco, but also the European Union and other private actors that finance this border. The ultimate representation of this power is demonstrated through the violence that border guards on both sides exercise on migrants' bodies, such as in the case of the Melilla fence jump in 2022, when more than 30 migrants were killed according to the associations interviewed.

The various narratives that surround the Melilla massacre, as some scholars and civil society associations call it, is also an example of the power struggle that this border supposes. There is no clear data on how many people were killed, how many were injured and how many disappeared. Likewise, the criminalization discourse, as shown by CNDH and exposed by the rest of the interviewees, was predominant in the aftermath, which demonstrates how the borderland is also a result of practices and discourses (Gahman and Hjalmarson, 2019, p.114). Hence, the Melilla events show how borders are artificial constructions which are inscribed upon land and bodies through violence (ibid., p.112), violence that is exercised not only on the borders themselves but also throughout the whole migration journey. As migrants statements and interviewees' declarations demonstrate, before crossing the fences brutality was also exercised over migrants who were camping in nearby forests close to the enclave. In addition, many migrants have denounced further violence once they were arrested and, as disclosed by some of the organizations interviewed, many migrants were forcibly displaced to other parts of Morocco.

On this matter, this research has argued for the need to link these local violences to systemic racial and gendered hierarchies that exist in the border to understand the origins of this brutality. The declarations of the interviewees, the articles and documentaries on the events and the literature reviewed for the paper evidence how black migrant men, who were the main victims of the Melilla “massacre”, are the main target of criminalization and illegalization of migration in this particular border, and they are the ones who suffer the physical border violence. Black migrant women are also dehumanized but in different ways: they are invisibilized and deprived from any agency, often forced into the sea migratory routes and they are framed as mere victims of their male migrant counterparts. Therefore, this paper shows how the brutality of the Melilla events is the result of systemic racial and gendered hierarchies that determine who is allowed to cross and who is not. These

discriminatory hierarchies are embedded in this borderland and perpetuated through the securitization and militarization of these fences.

These social locations, racialized and gendered, are also determined by transnational factors. As it has been argued in previous sections, the relations between Europe and Morocco, as well as with other African states, are all influenced by coloniality and thus affect migratory experiences. Likewise, the global political economy is also shaped by colonial legacies and contributes to the unequal distribution of wealth, leading to greater needs for migrating especially in the Global South. In this neoliberal context, economic gains prevail over the protection of human rights, which can explain the speculative bubble that emerged in these fences at the expense of human mobility and migrants rights. Nonetheless, the scope of this research has not allowed for a deeper study on these transnational factors. Consequently, it would be crucial to investigate the economic interests behind these fences and their actual impact on migrants' journeys and border brutality. Additionally, this research has not been able to include the class category, which is identified by the interviewees and Anthias (2013, p.125) as a determining factor in migration studies. Lastly, I encourage further investigation on border violence in the Northern African region, including the shipwrecks in the Mediterranean, from a translocational approach to dig deeper on the coloniality of the Mediterranean borders and to understand racial and gendered categorizations as embedded in bordering processes.

8. Bibliography

Africa Eye (2022). Death on the border. BBC [online video] Retrieved from: https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0dbnttd

Amnesty International (2022). Morocco: "They beat him in the head, to check if he was dead": Evidence of crimes under international law by Morocco and Spain at the Melilla border. Amnesty International. Retrieved from: https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde29/6249/2022/en/

Amnesty International (2022). ¿Qué son las devoluciones en caliente? 7 claves para entenderlas. Amnistía Internacional: España. Available at: https://www.es.amnesty.org/en-que-estamos/blog/historia/articulo/que-son-las-devoluciones-en-caliente-7-claves-para-comprenderlo/

Andersson, R. (2012). A game of risk: Boat migration and the business of bordering Europe (Respond to this article at http://www. therai. org. uk/at/debate). Anthropology Today, 28(6), 7-11.

Anthias, F. (2013). Hierarchies of social location, class and intersectionality: Towards a translocational frame. International sociology, 28(1), 121-138.

Baldwin-Edwards, M. (2005). Migration in the middle east and mediterranean: a paper prepared for the policy analysis and research programme of the global commission on international migration. University Research Institute for Urban Environment and Human Resources, Mediterranean Migration Observatory.

Bermant, L. S. (2015a). A tale of two cities: the production of difference in a Mediterranean border enclave. Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale, 23(4), 450-464.

Bermant, L. S. (2015b). The myth of resistance: Rethinking the "Informal" economy in a Mediterranean border enclave. Journal of Borderlands Studies, 30(2), 263-278.

Bermant, L. S (2014). Consuming Europe: the moral significance of mobility and exchange at the Spanish–Moroccan border of Melilla. The Journal of North African Studies, 19(1), 110-129.

Blanco, J. C. (2014). Los asaltos a las vallas de Ceuta y Melilla de 2005. El País. Available at: https://blogs.elpais.com/fondo-de-armario/2014/03/la-valla.html

Carbado, D. W., et al. (2013). INTERSECTIONALITY: Mapping the Movements of a Theory 1. Du Bois review: social science research on race, 10(2), 303-312.

Cassarino, J. P. (2021). The Instrumentalization of Migration in the Euro-Mediterranean Area: Between Past and Present. Studies, 42(4), 606-624.

Connell, R. W. (1998). Masculinities and globalization. Men and masculinities, 1(1), 3-23.

CNDH. (2022). Unprecedented Confrontations at the Melilla Crossing : Preliminary report of the Fact-Finding Commission. Conseil National des Droits de l'Homme.

Danewid, I. (2017). White innocence in the Black Mediterranean: Hospitality and the erasure of history. Third World Quarterly, 38(7), 1674-1689.

De Genova, N., Tazzioli, M., & Álvarez-Velasco, S. (2016). Europe/crisis: New keywords of "the crisis" in and of "Europe". Near Futures Online, 1, 1-16.

De Genova, N. P. (2002). Migrant "illegality" and deportability in everyday life. Annual review of anthropology, 31(1), 419-447.

Del Sarto, R. A. (2010). Borderlands: The Middle East and North Africa as the EU's southern buffer zone. Mediterranean Frontiers: Borders, Conflicts and Memory in a Transnational World, 149-167.

Deridder, M., Pelckmans, L., & Ward, E. (2020). Reversing the gaze: West Africa performing the EU migration-development-security nexus. Introduction. Anthropologie & développement, (51), 9-32.

EFE. (2022) Entierros en Nador de muertos en la tragedia de Melilla. El Faro de Ceuta. Retrieved from: https://elfarodeceuta.es/entierros-muertos-tragedia-melilla/

El País (2022) Dos naufragios frente a las costas de Túnez causan la muerte de al menos 29 migrantes. El País. Retrieved from: https://elpais.com/internacional/2023-03-26/dos-naufragios-frente-a-las-costas-de-tunez-causan-la-muerte-de-al-menos-29-migrantes.html

EUR-Lex (2007). Programa MEDA. europa.eu Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/ES/legal-content/summary/meda-programme.html

European Commission (2023). EU migration support in Morocco - EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, North of Africa window. European Commission. Retrieved from: https://trust-fund-for-africa.europa.eu/system/files/2023-03/EU_support_migration_morocco_Kostas.pdf

European Commission (2022). EU Support on Migration in Morocco: EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa North of Africa window. European Commission. Retrieved from: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_18_6793

El Qadim, N. (2010). La politique migratoire européenne vue du Maroc: contraintes et opportunités 1. Politique européenne, (2), 91-118.

France24 (2022). Spain calls deadly migrant rush an 'attack' on its territory. France 24. Retrieved from: https://www.france24.com/en/africa/20220625-18-migrants-die-in-mass-attempt-to-enter-spain-s-enclave-melilla-in-marocco

Freedman, J et. al. (2023). Introduction. In: Freedman, J et. al. (2023) (Eds.). The Gender of Borders: Embodied Narratives of Migration, Violence and Agency (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003229346

GADEM. (2023). Le racisme n'est pas une opinion, ça constitute un crime. Non aux discourses de haine et aux politiques migratoires criminelles. GADEM. Retrieved from:

https://www.gadem-asso.org/communique-le-racisme-nest-pas-une-opinion-ca-constitue-un-crime/

GADEM (2022). Submission to the Universal periodic review. 41st session of the UPR working group: issues related to migration-related detention and border enforcement measures. Global Detention Project & GADEM.

Gahman, L., & Hjalmarson, E. (2019). Border imperialism, racial capitalism, and geographies of deracination. ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies, 18(1), 107-129.

García, E. D. C. (2016). Subjetividad y racismo: la mirada de las/los otros y sus efectos. In: Da Silva, E. (2015). Tejiendo de otro modo: Feminismo, epistemología y apuestas descoloniales en Abya Yala. Revista de Estudos e Pesquisas sobre as Américas, 9(2), 211-223 Gerson, K., & Damaske, S. (2020). The science and art of interviewing. Oxford University Press.

Harrami, N., & Mouna, K. (2018). Migratory Management in Morocco–What Do the Stakeholders Think? (No. 20). MEDRESET Working Paper.

Houdaïfa, H. (2019). Une impasse jusqu'à nouvel ordre. In: Houdaïfa, H. (2019). Migrations au Maroc: l'impasse?. En toutes lettres.

InfoMigrants. (2023). En Tunisie, les garde-côtes repêchent 13 corps de migrants au large de Sfax. InfoMigrants. Retrieved from: https://www.infomigrants.net/fr/post/50373/en-tunisie-les-gardecotes-repechent-13-corps-de-migrants-au-large-de-sfax

IOM (2023). DTM Europe — Mixed Migration Flows to Europe, Quarterly Overview (Jan - Mar 2023). International Organization for Migration, Europe. Retrieved from: https://dtm.iom.int/datasets/europe-mixed-migration-flows-europe-quarterly-overview-jan-mar-2023

IOM (2018). UN Migration Agency: Lack Of Data Perpetuates Invisibility of Migrant Women's Deaths. International Organization for Migration. Retrieved from: https://www.iom.int/news/un-migration-agency-lack-data-perpetuates-invisibility-migrant-womens-deaths

Jiménez-Álvarez, M. G. (2021). Adolescent mobilities and border regimes in the western Mediterranean. In Handbook on Human Security, Borders and Migration (pp. 412-420). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Jiménez-Alvarez, M. G., Espiñeira, K., & Gazzotti, L. (2021). Migration policy and international human rights frameworks in Morocco: Tensions and contradictions. The Journal of North African Studies, 26(5), 893-911.

Johnson, H. L. (2013). The other side of the fence: Reconceptualizing the "camp" and migration zones at the borders of Spain. International Political Sociology, 7(1), 75-91.

Kassam, A. (2022). Calls for investigation over deaths in Moroccan-Spanish border crossing- The Guardian. Retrieved from: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/26/calls-investigation-deaths-moroccan-spanish-border-melilla-enclave-crossing

Kastner, K. (2021). African women on the road to Europe: violence and resilience in border zones. In Handbook on Human Security, Borders and Migration (pp. 373-383). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Lahlou, M. (2018). Migration dynamics in play in Morocco: Trafficking and political relationships and their implications at the regional level. Middle East and North Africa Regional Architecture Working Papers, (26).

Lahlou, M. (2005). Migrations irrégulières transméditerranéennes et relations Maroc–Union européenne. In XXV International Population Conference, Tours, France, July 18 (Vol. 23, p. 2005).

Law, I. (2014). Mediterranean Racisms: Connections and complexities in the racialization of the Mediterranean region. Springer.

Lugones, M. (2016). Colonialidad y género. In: Da Silva, E. (2015). Tejiendo de otro modo: Feminismo, epistemología y apuestas descoloniales en Abya Yala. Revista de Estudos e Pesquisas sobre as Américas, 9(2), 57-75

Lugones, M. (2016). The coloniality of gender (pp. 13-33). Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Mason, J. (2017). Qualitative researching. SAGE.

Mieth, C., & Williams, G. (2022). Beyond (Non)-Instrumentalization: Migration and Dignity within a Kantian Framework. Ethical Theory and Moral Practice, 1-16.

Miranda, A. (2023). Conclusion – Interconnections and multiple positioning at the borders. In: Freedman, J et. al. (2023) (Eds.). The Gender of Borders: Embodied Narratives of Migration, Violence and Agency (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003229346

Morales, E. G. (2023). Aniversario de la masacre de Melilla: un año de mentiras e impunidad. Público. Retrieved from: https://www.publico.es/sociedad/aniversario-masacre-melilla-ano-mentiras-e-impunidad.html

Mseffer, D. Z. (2019). Les petits combattants. In: Houdaïfa, H. (2019). Migrations au Maroc: l'impasse?. En toutes lettres.

Norman, K. P. (2020). Migration diplomacy and policy liberalization in Morocco and Turkey. International Migration Review, 54(4), 1158-1183.

Ortiz, A. M. (2023). Aumenta la llegada de migrantes a Canarias en las últimas semanas. El Mundo. Retrieved from: https://www.elmundo.es/espana/2023/07/03/64a1b31321efa0d27a8b45aa.html

Özerim, M. G. (2018). Stretching, opening or sealing the borders: Turkish foreign policy conceptions and their impact on migration, asylum and visa policies. Journal of Balkan and near eastern studies, 20(2), 165-182.

Palidda, S. (2021). Major changes in migrations and borders after the revolution of globalized liberalism. In Handbook on Human Security, Borders and Migration (pp. 177-188). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Palmas, L. Q. (2021). Frontera Sur: Behind and beyond the fences of Ceuta and Melilla. Ethnography, 22(4), 451-473.

Pian, A. (2010). La migration empêchée et la survie économique: services et échanges sexuels des Sénégalaises au Maroc. Cahiers du genre, (2), 183-202.

Pichardo, O. C. (2016). Hacia la construcción de un feminismo descolonizado. In: Da Silva, E. (2015). Tejiendo de otro modo: Feminismo, epistemología y apuestas descoloniales en Abya Yala. Revista de Estudos e Pesquisas sobre as Américas, 9(2), 325-335

Saddiki, S. (2010). Ceuta and Melilla fences: A EU multidimensional border?. In University of Fez, Center of International Studies (Rabat), Morocco, Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Theory vs. Policy.

Sagnella, A. (2020). En los pliegues del Mediterráneo: Ceuta y Melilla. Revista Uruguaya de Antropología y Etnografía, 5(2), 31-49.

Sahraoui, N., & Tyszler, E. (2021). Tracing colonial maternalism within the gendered morals of humanitarianism: experiences of migrant women at the Moroccan-Spanish border. Frontiers in Human Dynamics, 3, 642326.

Sassen, S. (2006). Territory, authority, rights : from medieval to global assemblages. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Sassen, S. (1996). Losing Control: Sovereignty inan Age of Globalization.

Slagter, J. (2019). An “Informal” Turn in the European Union’s Migrant Returns Policy towards Sub-Saharan Africa. Migration Policy Institute. Retrieved from: https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/eu-migrant-returns-policy-towards-sub-saharan-africa

Stock, I. (2019). Time, migration and forced immobility: Sub-Saharan African migrants in Morocco. Bristol University Press.

Tittel-Mosser, F. (2018). Reversed Conditionality in EU External Migration Policy: The Case of Morocco. Journal of Contemporary European Research, 14(4), 349-363.

Tyszler, E. (2022) Massacre raciste à la frontière de Melilla. Entre paroxysme de la guerre contre certain· e· s migrant· e· s et colonialité de la violence. Contretemps.

Tyszler, E. (2021). Humanitarianism and black female bodies: violence and intimacy at the Moroccan–Spanish border. The Journal of North African Studies, 26(5), 954-972.

Tyszler, E. (2020). Masculinités et féminités à la frontière maroco-espagnole. Miroirs d’un contrôle migratoire racialisé et genré. Anthropologie & développement, (51), 155-170.

Tyszler, E. (2019)a. From controlling mobilities to control over women’s bodies: Gendered effects of EU border externalization in Morocco. Comparative Migration Studies, 7(1), 1-20.

Tyszler, E. (2019)b. The Performative Effects of the European War on Migrants. Masculinities and Femininities at the Moroccan-Spanish Border. Gender a výzkum, 20(1), 40-66.

Tyszler, E. (2015). Ceuta y Melilla. Centros de selección a cielo abierto a las puertas de África. AMDH Nador, APDHA, La Cimade, GADEM, Migreurop & SOS Racismo.

UN General Assembly. (2021). Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. United Nations. Retrieved from: https://www.iom.int/global-compact-migration

Walking Borders (2023). Report - Right to life: first semester 2023. Walking Borders. Retrieved from: https://caminandofronteras.org/en/monitoreo/right-to-life-first-semester-2023/

Walking Borders (2022a). Informe - Víctimas de la frontera Nador-Melilla el 24/06/2022. Retrieved from: https://caminandofronteras.org/monitoreo/victimas-de-la-frontera-nador-melilla/

Walking Borders (2022b). Voces por la justicia. Walking borders. Retrieved from: https://caminandofronteras.org/monitoreo/victimas-de-la-frontera-nador-melilla/

Wästerfors, D. (2018). Observations. In: Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2011). The Sage handbook of qualitative research. sage, pp 314-326.

Wunderlich, D. (2010). Differentiation and policy convergence against long odds: Lessons from implementing EU migration policy in Morocco. Mediterranean Politics, 15(2), 249-272.

Yuval-Davis, N., Wemyss, G., & Cassidy, K. (2019). Bordering. John Wiley & Sons.

Zardo, F. (2022). The EU Trust Fund for Africa: Geopolitical space making through migration policy instruments. Geopolitics, 27(2), 584-603.

9. Appendix

9.1 Figure 1

Planchart, A. (2022). Fences surrounding the Moroccan coast that leads to Ceuta, Spanish territory. [Photograph]. Author's own collection.

Photograph taken on the way to the frontier between Morocco and the Spanish enclave of Ceuta. This double fence with barbed wire follows the Moroccan coast until Spanish territory in order to prevent people crossing by swimming. The fence and the wire continue all the way down to the sea.

9.2 Figure 2

Planchart, A. (2022). View of the borderland surrounding Ceuta from the Moroccan side of the mountains. [Photograph]. Author's own collection.

View from one of the roads that goes up the mountains that surround Ceuta (still Moroccan territory). On the left side, the first fence can be seen going up in the mountain. Down in the valley, the second fence (double), reportedly Spanish, can be perceived. The territory in the middle was described as "no man's land" by the family that accompanied me to the border. It was also in this mountain where Moroccan border guards could be seen spreaded out to prevent migrants from camping in the forests.

9.3 Figure 3

Planchart, A. (2022). New customs area under construction. [Photograph]. Author's own collection.

According to the family, this is the new customs area that is being built from 2020, which entails more border guards and higher security around the border with Ceuta. In the back, the small enclave can be seen.

9.4 Figure 4

Planchart, A. (2022). Checkpoint between Morocco and Spain. [Photograph]. Author's own collection.

Photo taken out of a video filmed at the border between Ceuta and Morocco. The blue fences are where the cars are supposed to go through to reach Spain. All vehicles are checked, especially since there used to be people who hid inside them to cross without documentation. The white cabin on the right side is the passage through which people go. There, their documentation is required (often it is just the working permit with the employer information on it) and their passports are stamped. According to the participant that works in Ceuta but lives in Tetouan, the first thing you see when you cross on foot is the European Union flag. On the left side, trucks from Moroccan Gendarmerie and border guards can be seen, but they are also parked on the road that leads to the frontier. Lastly, the first buildings of Ceuta can be perceived behind the checkpoint.