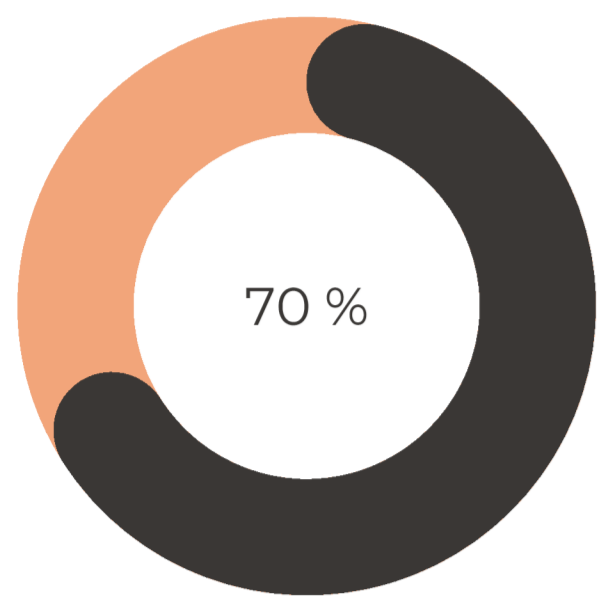




COLLECTIVE LAND PRIVATISATION IN MOROCCO: CONTEXT & BACKGROUND

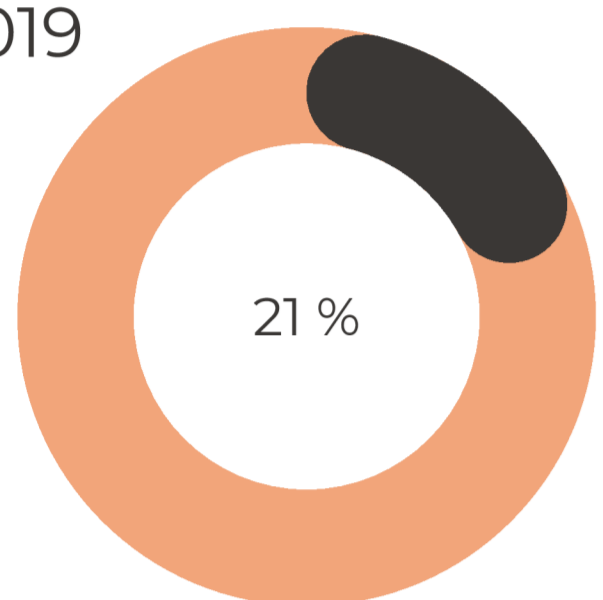
Share of collective lands in Morocco (estimated)

a) Before Protectorate



Source: Bouderbala, 2016

b) 2019



Source: Sammouni & Belghazi, 2020

1912 French and Spanish Protectorates over Morocco.

1919 1st colonial law regulating collective lands.

1956 Morocco's administrative independence from the French protectorate.

2010/11 Soulaliyates women's movement first mobilisations.
20th February Movement's social justice uprisings.

2019 Culmination of the so-called 'Privatisation (Melkisation) process': the latest 3 laws regulating collective lands are voted.

- Collective lands, such as Soulali lands, are a land management system practiced by Morocco's Indigenous and tribal communities, integrating aspects of communal and private property systems, to prioritise long-term socio-ecological benefits (Bouderbala, 1996).
- All the legal reforms of collective lands Statutes have been implemented to allow and accelerate their privatisation leading to communities' dispossession (Sammouni & Belghazi, 2020).
- The Soulaliyates women's movement mobilized for gender equality in land compensation, advocating for equal treatment between Soulali men and women (Berriane & Rignall, 2017; Ait Mous & Berriane, 2016).



How are other groups, affected by land dispossession, framing land (in)justice and their movements' identities?

THE DISCOURSE-POWER NEXUS AS A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is used to analyse the online written media coverage of Moroccan collective land issues from 2010 to 2021, focusing on the relationship between discourse and power (van Dijk, 2008). CDA's Historical Discourse Tracing incorporates the evolution of discourses over time to understand their material consequences.

- ⌚ This study re-evaluates the notion that Environmental Justice (EJ) movements' identity framing precedes their injustice framing, applying a Northern African perspective on Critical EJ studies (Taylor, 2000) and decolonial intersectionality (Salem, 2018).



INTERSECTIONAL MEDIA DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Media coverage on collective lands predominantly features the Soulaliyates women's movement from Morocco's northwestern regions, disproportionately described as 'successful' in terms of gender equality.

Intersectional media discourse analysis shows:

Reductive media coverage of an issue affecting >4000 communities across the country.

Other regional identities, e.g. Amazigh and/or Black Soulaliyates communities, are underrepresented in media discourses on collective lands, particularly when framed around land justice.

Identities of communities allying with the central power are rewarded with the discursive activation of their identities, materialising in resource distribution, including land:

E.g. the Black Army (17th century); Guich communities (until 19th century); Soulaliyates women advocating for gender equality (2010s).

Political mechanisms of identity activation

WHY?

Decolonial historical discourse tracing shows patterns of Identity Activation or Identity Erasure.

Political mechanisms of identity erasure

Identities of communities opposing central power are discursively misrepresented or erased, materialising in resource deprivation, including land:

E.g. the Black Army (late 18th century); dissident Amazigh communities of *Bled Siba* resisting colonisation (19-20th century); Soulaliyates communities demanding land justice amid accelerated dispossession (2010s).

RESEARCH GOAL & CONTRIBUTION

- ⌚ This decolonial-intersectional media analysis traces how political, socio-ecological, economic and legal mechanisms of identity activation and identity erasure, play a pivotal role in justifying land dispossession, reflecting broader patterns of environmental injustice and coloniality.

- ⌚ The study critiques the instrumentalisation of marginalised identities, and identities racialized in the particular context of Northern Africa, in dominant media discourses, calling for a deeper engagement with intersectional frameworks in rethinking the future of collective land policies.

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