It is only gazouz : Muslims and champagne in the colonial Maghreb

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It Is Only Gazouz: Muslims and Champagne in the Colonial Maghreb

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Abstract: French authors in the nineteenth century assumed that before the colonial conquest of the Maghreb, all Muslims in the region had abstained from alcohol. As a consequence, they were both surprised at and fascinated by the alcohol consumption of the colonised Muslims in the Maghreb, which they interpreted as an irreversible break with Islam (i.e. turning drinkers into apostates) and a necessary consequence of the spread of French colonialism. Some French authors even tentatively interpreted alcohol-drinking Muslims as showing signs of assimilating French culture and thus – in the colonial worldview – advancing in civilisation, while others regretted both their loss of abstinence as well as their alleged taste for particularly strong forms of alcohol, such as absinthe.

This article will focus on the consumption of champagne. The French discourse on Muslim champagne drinkers focused on often ridiculed "justifications", allegedly reported to French settlers and travellers in the Maghreb, through which Muslims "explained" why the consumption of champagne – as it was only "gazouz", i.e. lemonade – did not constitute a transgression of one of the most visible of Islamic laws. These colonial descriptions of wine-abstaining, champagne-consuming Muslims offers an insight into how differences were created between coloniser and colonised, between civilised and primitive, and how the consumption of the same drink did not necessarily lead to a shared experience.

Keywords: Maghreb, alcohol, colonialism, religion, elites

In nineteenth century France, the hygienic consumption of alcoholic beverages was recommended by medical experts,[1] even though there were, of course, discussions about what amounts of alcohol could be considered healthy, what

1 The famous French doctor and chemist Louis Pasteur, for example, wrote in 1866 a book entitled "Study on Wine", in which he stated that "[...] wine can rightly be considered as the

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kinds of alcohol were more hygienic than others, and whether all groups of French society benefitted equally from its consumption: The opinion that people could – and maybe even should – completely forgo the consumption of alcohol for medical reasons was confined to the fringes of French society.[2] Moreover, the consumption of alcohol, especially that of wine and various *apéritifs*, was interpreted as forming an important part of French identity.[3] From the mid-nineteenth century, the belief in alcohol being at once hygienic and intrinsically French migrated with the settlers to the French colonies of the Maghreb, where different doctors recommended different alcoholic beverages to the settlers as best-suited to the new climate.[4]

French descriptions of the Muslim colonised in the Maghreb, whose religion prohibited the consumption of these drinks, often showed several layers of confusion when it came to the consumption of alcohol. One layer of confusion concerned the idea of abstinence *per se,* as practically all of the French authors analysed for this article were accustomed to understanding alcohol as being either harmless or actively healthy. From their perspective, the Muslim abstinence from alcohol was always something noteworthy and deeply peculiar, something that showed on an everyday level how different Muslims truly were from the French. A second layer was due to a lack of understanding of the differences between the ideology of abstinence and actual drinking practices. Many French authors writing about the Maghreb in the nineteenth and early twentieth century believed that the prohibition of alcohol in the Qur'an was so rigid that nobody who had ever consumed alcohol could be rightly considered a Muslim.[5] From this, they concluded that before the advent of the French in the Maghreb, Muslims had not consumed any alcohol and that alcohol consumption – which many of them personally witnessed and recorded in their travel accounts and ethnographical studies – was entirely due to French influence. These authors were seemingly unaware that certain alcoholic drinks, among them champagne, had been very

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healthiest, the most hygienic of beverages." Pasteur 1866: 56. All English translations are by the author. On this issue, see also: Prestwich 1988: 21.

2 On the French stance towards complete abstinence, see, for example: Prestwich 1988: 55–56; Guy 2002: 38; Prestwich 2003: 324.

3 On this issue, see, for example: Jansen 2001: 214; Guy 2010: 228.

4 See, for example: Bertherand 1875: 24; Bainier 1878: 283; Laveran 1896: 293–294.

5 The Islamic scientist Shahab Ahmed analysed in his 2016 book "What is Islam" the centuries-long tradition of Muslims drinking alcohol while keeping their religious identity, the "normalcy of wine-consumption", as he put it. For this quote, see: Ahmed 2016: 67. For his more general argument, see: Ibid, 57–73. For a deconstruction of the notion that no Muslims consumed alcohol before the period of colonisation, see also: Honchell 2015: 5–7.

popular among the elites in the Ottoman Empire,[6] including in precolonial Tunisia and Algeria, as well as in non-Ottoman Morocco.[7] Finally, a third layer of confusion consisted of some of the colonial authors taking obviously jocular comments by Muslims as to why they consumed alcohol to be literal rather than as expressions of humour, which will be discussed in detail in this article.

When nineteenth century French travellers and settlers in the Maghreb came across Muslim alcohol drinkers, they generally expressed a feeling of shock in their reports, as this did not conform with their expectations.[8] They interpreted this consumption as a religious anomaly and expected to be given an explanation for it. These individual explanations were then carefully recounted and recorded, with the understanding that they represented the opinions of much larger groups of the colonised Muslims. This mind-set can be seen in an 1899 travel report by René and Achille Garnier, for example, who described their encounter with a Moroccan man who asked them to share their cognac with him:

> We poured him a little [cognac] into a cup, but he wanted more, insisting that we fill it for him. We told him that cognac is a strong drink and that it is only taken in small doses; but to that he responded that, alcoholic beverages being forbidden by the Qur'an and being determined to commit a sin, he preferred, while sinning, to drink a full glass rather than a half glass! We were only three hours from Tangier: this Moroccan had rubbed himself up against civilisation; he had lost his faith![9]

The aforementioned layers of confusion in the descriptions of Muslim alcohol drinkers are encapsulated in this short anecdote. Moreover, the Garniers, expecting abstinence, equated drinking alcohol with "committing a sin", which they then further equated with both French influence and, more importantly, with a "loss of faith" in the Moroccan cognac-drinker.[10] This chain of equations shows

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6 Georgeon 2002: 15–17.

7 If we are to believe colonial sources, both political and religious elites in Morocco took to drinking champagne. The renowned French ethnologist Auguste Mouliéras, for example, described in his 1899 book about "Unknown Morocco" that a leader of a mosque in Ouezzane in Northern Morocco, enjoyed drinking champagne. Mouliéras 1899: 459. On the prevalence of champagne among the elites in the Ottoman Empire in the mid-nineteenth century, see also: Rösch 1839: 131–132.

8 On the surprise expressed by French colonial authors, who expected to only encounter complete abstinence in Muslim regions and who were "shocked" when they observed Muslims drinking alcohol, see also my upcoming chapter: "The Same Drink?"

9 Garnier/Garnier 1899: 15–16.

10 While this idea of alcohol consumption as a non-atonable transgression of religion for Muslims was applied to various drinks, absinthe was seen to be the chief culprit. The French judge Jean Le Roy, for example, described in 1911 in an account of his travels through Kabylia with the telling subtitle "A Nation of Barbarians in a French Territory" the consequences of

that the Garniers, like many French observers, interpreted Islam as being so strict and severe that committing a sin immediately meant apostasy,[11] even though that was obviously not the interpretation of the Moroccan man himself!

This article argues that these layers of deep confusion can perhaps be best observed in anecdotes connected to Muslim champagne drinkers,[12] whose consumption was observed by French authors between the 1850s and the 1930s, a time during which champagne was commonly assumed to be one of the symbols of French civilisation.[13] The French reports often stated that the colonised Muslims who drank champagne called the drink "gazouz", a corruption and Arabisation of the French word "gazeuse", i.e. carbonated or sparkling,[14] a term that was usually applied by the colonised Muslims to various mineral waters and lemonades and in one case even beer.[15] Despite the potential ambiguity of the term, French reports always explicitly mentioned what specific substance the colonised Muslims referred to as "gazouz", and made it even clearer when the

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alcohol consumption for Muslims: "This [the prohibition of alcohol in the Qur'an] is very clear, and very energetic. Every believer must evidently see Satan grimace from the bottom of a glass of champagne or a glass of absinthe." It was his professional assessment as a legal scholar that Muslims broke a clear religious rule when drinking alcohol, that they committed a sin that they could not possibly undo. His vivid description betrayed his conviction that, in the Muslim worldview, their souls must have been lost to Satan after even one glass of absinthe. Le Roy 1911: 57.

11 It should be added here that not all French colonial authors agreed as to what happened to these "sinners" after they had "lost their faith", and that there was a strong debate on this issue. Some of the French writers believed that such "apostates" would necessarily turn to Christianity, while others believed that it was a more general break with religiosity and a path into secularism. Both of these interpretations, however, suggested that the consumption of alcohol might bring Muslims closer to France. For the different sides of this debate, see, for example: Vignon 1893: 481; Rouby 1895: 241.

12 While it would be instructive to consider colonial descriptions of the Muslim consumption of other drinks, such as beer, this is beyond the scope of this article. In my broader research, however, I include the colonial discourse around other drinks.

13 The importance of champagne as a "symbol of France" in the French national identity has been examined by the American historian Kolleen M. Guy in her 2003 book *When Champagne Became French*. Guy 2003: 5, 33–34.

14 The French doctor Alphonse Bertherand, for example, explained in a 1858 book on mineral water in Algeria that the Algerians called all mineral water "gazouz": "Today, these sources [natural mineral water sources in Algeria] are generally called *gazouz* by the Arabs, an obvious alteration of the [French] word *gazeuses*, which they have heard, for the first time, from the French." Bertherand 1858: 115. Emphasis in the original.

15 A report on colonised Muslims calling beer "gazouz" can be found in Pierre Pinaud's 1933 dissertation on "Alcoholism among the Arabs of Algeria" and will be discussed below. Pinaud 1933: 34.

colonised misappropriated the ostensibly innocent term to describe a, for them, forbidden alcoholic beverage.

This analysis of French colonial sources on the drinking habits of the colonised does not attempt to reconstruct what Muslims in the colonial Maghreb thought of champagne or even what and how much they consumed. Even in those cases where the French portrayed the voices of specific Muslims whose champagne consumption they described, they were more interested in exposing what they understood as deep hypocrisy than in impartially delivering information. This source material can, however, give a glimpse into colonial interactions and into French interpretations of difference, as well as present a case study of the moral judgements inherent in colonial descriptions of the everyday life of the colonised. Accordingly, the primary question of this article is concerned with the French framing of Muslim champagne consumption in the colonial Maghreb rather than with the actual champagne consumption itself: How did these colonial authors – all educated French men belonging to the middle and upper classes with either literary or academic ambitions – understand and interpret both the champagne drinking of the colonised and their explanations for their consumption?

In order to find answers to this question, this article will first examine colonial accounts of encounters with Muslim champagne drinkers. Specifically, this article will look at the groups among the Muslim colonised that were described by the French sources as drinking champagne and at the social contexts of champagne consumption that were mentioned in the source material. The second part of the article will focus on the aforementioned French expectation of a strict abstinence from alcohol among Muslims and thus of their conceptualisation of all Muslim champagne drinkers as breakers of Islamic norms (i.e. as potential apostates) and as copying French behaviour. The descriptions of Muslim champagne drinkers will be compared with explanations given by Muslims, as portrayed in the colonial source material, of how they circumvented the prohibition of alcohol with regards to champagne drinking. Answers to the leading question of this article will be found in French interpretations and classifications of these explanations – and in the different layers of profound confusion revealed by them.

1 A class of muslim champagne drinkers

According to the American historian Kolleen M. Guy, champagne had been "reserved for the wealthy" in France in the eighteenth century.[16] Even though

16 Guy 2003: 11.

its use spread during the nineteenth century, it remained the drink of choice of the bourgeois elite: the French upper and middle classes to which the French colonial authors studied in this article undoubtedly belonged. At the same time as it was being consumed by the bourgeois elite in France, champagne was also drunk by Muslims in the colonial Maghreb.

The French colonial sources never clearly stated how widespread the custom of champagne drinking was among North African Muslims, but some authors depicted encounters with Muslim champagne drinkers as a relatively common occurrence – or at least one to be expected when invited by Muslim hosts. Maurice Wahl, for example, who would later became a history and geography teacher at the *Lycée d'Alger*, described in 1889 the changing manners of Algerian Muslims under French influence, by lamenting: "Our food, our wines, our liqueurs, alas, begin to appear in the well-chosen menus [of the colonised]; a great leader offering the diffa [i.e. entertaining guests] would think to be failing in the duties of hospitality if his guests did not drink champagne at his table."[17] Other voices insisted that champagne was not truly widespread among the colonised Muslims and that it was only a minority, a clearly limited social group, who took to drinking champagne. The novelist Georges Pradel, for example, stated in one of his books – which was published in instalments in the daily francophone Algerian newspaper *Le Matin* in 1904 – that: "Wine, champagne, is, of course, for the Catholics; as for the Mohammedans, in the Oriental countries, they find a way to arrange themselves [so that] champagne is turned into 'gazouze' and Mahomet does not have to veil his face. I have to say, however, that many Mohammedans very closely follow their religion, and do not use, [and] never accept the subterfuge of the 'gazouze'."[18]

Aside from this question of exact numbers, who were these colonised Muslims who "arranged themselves" with the "subterfuge of the 'gazouze'"? While the term "class" was hardly ever mentioned in this context – mainly due to the fact that many French authors wrongly assumed the traditional Maghreb to be an essentially classless society[19] – it becomes clear from the sources that most of those Muslims, whose champagne consumption was commented on, were wealthy, educated and Westernised. Wahl's "great leaders", for example, who insisted on offering champagne when entertaining their guests, clearly were all of these things – in other words, champagne was consumed by the North African bourgeoisie, who were, to all intents and purposes, the social

17 Wahl 1889: 291.

18 Pradel 1904: 2.

19 A similar discourse of "primitive", homogenous, classless traditional societies also exists on former British and French colonies in sub-Saharan Africa. See, for example: Lazreg 1988: 84.

equivalents of the French authors studied in this article.[20] In some cases, the Muslim champagne drinkers described in the source material belonged to an even higher class than the French authors themselves. The French doctor L. Raynaud, for example, reported in his 1902 article on "Alcohol and Alcoholism in Morocco" that large quantities of champagne were directly delivered to the *Maghzen*, the Moroccan palace.[21] Just like in France, the North African bourgeoisie seems to have made champagne their drink of choice, though the colonial sources suspected that this was less to do with enjoyment of the drink per se and more a consequence of being influenced by French ideals and wanting to show their sophistication by copying French drinking habits. It should be added that very few of the French authors portrayed colonised Muslims as starting to drink out of taste or personal choice – i.e. the reasons that led the French bourgeoisie to drink champagne.[22]

The historians François Georgeon and Rudi Matthee have analysed in independent articles how the French framing of alcohol in general, and of champagne in particular, as "one of the essential attributes of 'civilisation'"[23] and as a "marker of modernity"[24] encouraged its consumption among higher social classes in the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century.[25] It seems that a similar development took place in the colonial Maghreb, where champagne drinking was accepted by many educated, urban and wealthy Muslims to be a civilised and cultured habit[26] – in this, at least, they were in complete accordance with the French assessment of both drink and drinkers.

Based on the colonial source material, it is questionable whether champagne was consumed by many colonised North Africans outside these narrow circles. The price alone necessarily contributed to a certain exclusivity of

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20 This also applies for Libya, as can be seen in a 1912 publications by the famous French palaeontologist Léon Pervinquière, who reported drinking champagne disguised as "gazouz" with the kaymakam of Ghadames. Pervinquière 1912: 136.

21 Raynaud 1902: 223.

22 Hardly ever was the idea that Muslims simply enjoyed the taste of champagne even mentioned in the sources. One exception to this rule can be found in an article entitled "In Algiers", which was written by an author simply identified as "Mauprat" and published in 1926 in the journal *Annales Africaines*. This article referred to both the agreeable taste of champagne and the cordial atmosphere created by its consumption: "The diffa [feast] had been copious and watered with these sparkling liquids that the convivial Arabs qualify as 'gazouz' in order to reach an agreement, when they consume it, between their religious scruples and their gourmandise." Mauprat 1926: 634.

23 Georgeon 2002: 17.

24 Matthee 2014: 114.

25 Georgeon 2002: 15; Matthee 2014: 114.

26 See, for example: Thierry 1917: 58.

champagne. As late as 1933, Pierre Pinaud, for example, mentioned the high cost of champagne in Algeria in his medical dissertation on "Alcoholism among the Arabs of Algeria", stating that: "Champagne is also greatly appreciated, especially among the wealthy classes, given its high price." Pinaud further contextualised the champagne consumption of rich Muslims by recounting a personal experience of his: "We were once guests of a respectable caïd [local leader] who, at the end of the meal, offered us a bottle of Roederer [*Louis Roederer*, a famous French champagne house founded in the eighteenth century]. As we were amazed by this, he replied that champagne was not considered wine, but 'gazous' (lemonade, in Arabic), and thus [his] religion was safe. This is a very elegant way to interpret the Qur'an according to his pleasure."[27]

Pinaud not only described champagne as an expensive luxury item, but as a drink that was specifically consumed by the rich and "respectable" among the colonised, and that it was regularly, perhaps even exclusively, consumed in the company of European guests. The francophone Iranian doctor Emir Faradj Khan also explicitly connected champagne with both affiliation to a certain class and the company of Europeans in his 1904 medical dissertation on "Hygiene and Islam". In his dissertation he described the spread of alcoholism in Algeria, based on data provided to him by a Doctor Ruotte,[28] who had claimed that: "[...] the [Algerian] man of a higher class takes quite willingly, occasionally, a glass of champagne, which he sometimes baptises lemonade, but [only] when he is alone with Europeans."[29]

While only a small number of Francophone authors, such as Wahl, Pinaud and Khan, were explicit in connecting the drink to the habits of Westernised, upper class North Africans, most of the colonial evidence of French authors assuming that champagne drinking was a class-based habit among North African Muslims was circumstantial. Class, education and wealth were not generally mentioned in the colonial anecdotes on Muslim champagne drinkers, which instead used a vocabulary of haphazardness, describing apparently accidental encounters with – strangely transferable and universal – North African men, whom the French authors met while travelling or feasting. Like Wahl and Pinaud, colonial authors typically recounted their own experiences of taking part in often sumptuous meals, where both the Muslim hosts and the Muslim guests entertained alongside them were necessarily of a higher class, and where

27 Pinaud 1933: 21. On the high price of champagne, see also: Baudicour 1853: 574.

28 The identity of this doctor could not be established while conducting research for this article. However, a doctor Ruotte is mentioned as a military doctor in Constantine in the journal *L'Afrique Militaire* in January 1894. Anon 1894: 3.

29 Khan 1904: 42.

the French observers were clearly able to communicate with Muslim champagne drinkers, which implies, even if it was not explicitly mentioned in the sources, that their counterparts spoke French.

This suggests that champagne drinking – as described in the colonial sources – was implicitly understood to be an upper class habit among the Muslim colonised; one that they happily shared with European guests. This clear equation of the habit with a certain class had a direct influence on the assessment of those who consumed champagne. As a consequence, French colonial authors described Muslim champagne drinkers in a markedly different way from Muslims who consumed other forms of alcohol and who did not belong to the upper classes. Most colonial publications commenting on Muslims drinking alcohol usually depicted one of three groups: poor working class men, who broke the religious regulations of their societies openly, often acknowledging that by doing so they "committed a sin";[30] former French soldiers, who had taken up the habit while in France's service;[31] and prostitutes.[32]

It should be pointed out here that Muslim prostitutes, the only colonised women in the Maghreb described as regularly consuming alcohol in the French source material, were usually depicted as favouring liquors over any other form of alcohol.[33] Female Muslim champagne drinkers were rarely mentioned by French observers, partly because Muslim women were perceived to be at once stricter adherents to the Qur'anic prohibitions of alcohol and less Westernised than Muslim men. In fact, the only reference to champagne-drinking Muslim women found during the research for this article was in a paper on "The Progress of Alcoholism in Morocco" given by Doctor P. Remlinger on the 13th of November 1912 at a meeting of the *Society of Exotic Pathology* in Paris. While reporting on the alcoholic preferences of different demographic groups, Remlinger claimed that champagne was a popular drink among Jewish and Muslim women in Morocco: "Jewish or Muslim, the women drink champagne and manzanilla (highly alcoholic

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30 See, for example, the quote by the Garniers on cognac mentioned in the introduction of this article. Garnier/Garnier 1899: 15–16. On the alcohol consumption of poor working class Muslims, see also: Vignon 1893: 410; Rouby 1895: 240.

31 On the dangers of introducing North African soldiers to alcohol, see, for example: Sabatier 1909: 33; Porot 1918: 380; Donnadieu 1940: 164.

32 Dr Henry Foley of the Pasteur Institute of Algeria, for example, summarised these groups in his 1938 article: "As in all countries of the world, alcoholism spread among the Algerian Natives with civilisation. If it is still unknown among the nomadic Arabs and, in general, among most of the inhabitants of the Sahara, its progress can be observed in the localities populated by Europeans, in the garrison towns, and, particularly, among the Natives who have lived in France or in the Tell, among the former military, the prostitutes." Foley 1938: 301.

33 See, for example: Duchesne 1853: 89–90; Mauran 1909: 112–113; Ceccaldi 1914: 115–116.

Spanish wine) and even more cognac, whiskey and gin."[34] Given the general lack of information on Muslim women consuming champagne, it is impossible to ascertain whether Remlinger's claim was factual or not.

In the context of these three groups,[35] France's influence was understood to be the main force inciting Muslims to drink alcohol; the process of colonisation itself was seen to be a corrupting force that provoked insanity, criminality and violence. However, while this same French influence was also described in the champagne consumption of Muslim North Africans, this deep sense of danger cannot be found in the descriptions of Muslim champagne drinkers. Consequently, the discourse around champagne consumption was not one of threat and moral decay, but harmless conviviality and cultured enjoyment mingled with amusement over the Muslim justifications for their consumption of champagne.

2 Overcoming prohibitions

The prohibition of alcohol in the Qur'an fascinated many French observers and, as mentioned above, they often assumed that drinking alcohol constituted an irreversible transgression of Islamic ideals; they believed that in Islam, "one drop of alcohol"[36] would turn a believer into a sinner, an apostate – and even into a secular person. The aforementioned Pierre Pinaud, for example, referred to this notion in his 1933 medical dissertation, in which he attributed this train of thought to Muslim alcohol consumers, while at the same time linking it to the high consumption of alcohol made by them: "The Arab's passion for alcohol must be immense in order for him to suppress his religious sentiment, and if he did not take such a considerable pleasure from the habit, he would otherwise be very careful not to break the Qur'anic law. From the moment that he decides to violate the sacred precepts, there are no half measures ... ; he must take full advantage of this foray into secular habits."[37]

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34 Remlinger 1912: 749.

35 The group of Muslim prostitutes was usually understood to be already morally corrupted, independent of France's influence. The alcohol consumption of prostitutes was seen to be a symptom of their moral decline, not of their contact with French civilisation. On the alcohol consumption of Muslim prostitutes, see, for example: Livet 1911: 66–67; Foley 1938: 301; Donnadieu 1940: 164; Porot/Gentile 1941: 126–127.

36 On this formulation of the Qur'an prohibiting even "one drop" of alcohol, see for example: Duchêne-Marullaz 1905: 65–66; Anon 1922: 38; Caillat 1924: 130.

37 Pinaud 1933: 11–12.

Based on such assumptions, the French gave much weight to the justification of drinking habits either given to them by their Muslim drinking partners or reported to them by their French acquaintances. In fact, most of the colonial sources on Muslim champagne consumption were very anecdotal and did little more than decorate the confusion discussed above, which surrounded Muslims breaking their religious rules, with reports of personal experiences in which the French observer was invariably depicted as more educated on Islamic matters than his Muslim counterpart.

These reported anecdotes usually conformed to the same pattern: discovery of champagne consumption, astonishment over having encountered what the French authors assumed to be an "apostate", followed by the justifications given by the Muslims, often culminating in a comment of open scorn aimed at the hypocrisy of the colonised.[38] This pattern cannot be found in the descriptions of other Muslim drinking habits, as similar justifications for alcohol consumption were not typically given when it came to wine, absinthe or other drinks. The various anecdotes around champagne-drinking Muslims were, in fact, so alike that it is doubtful whether they were truly based on the personal experiences of the authors or their acquaintances or whether they were just "humorous" stories that were told among settlers and travellers and appropriated by the French authors in search of local colour.

These various justifications have an underlying premise in common – the claim that Muslims imagined champagne to be inherently different from other forms of alcohol, both in its physical makeup and morally. Some of the French authors studied for this article were convinced that the Muslim consumers supposed champagne to not have any alcohol content at all, while others claimed that Muslims only pretended to believe in champagne being different, while in reality knowing that they were consuming a substance forbidden to them. Louis de Baudicour, who wrote extensively on France's potential colonial interests in North Africa and the Middle East, presented a unique opinion on this. He stated in 1853 that the Algerians had "taken the habit of drinking Champagne" because it was "less compromising than others [i.e.: other forms of alcohol] for their Muslim conscience".[39]

De Baudicour's strange notion that Algerian Muslims differentiated between champagne and other forms of alcohol – and believed champagne to be harmless and non-forbidden – might be based on his interpretation of the discussion in classical Islamic law of the distinction of ḫamr and nabīḏ. While the term

38 It should be added here that this anecdotal evidence was depicted as being the pure, undiluted "discourse of the colonised", yet these anecdotes should be interpreted as expressions of the colonial mind-set – as settler discourse made flesh.

39 Baudicour 1853: 574.

ḫamr was used to describe wine in the Qur'an, nabīḏ denoted a drink made from fruit, most often from dates or raisins. The term nabīḏ encompasses completely non-alcoholic, lightly fermented and even highly fermented versions of the drink. While the other schools of law firmly prohibited ḫamr as well as all other forms of alcohol, including nabīḏ, through the process of deductive analogy, the Ḥanafī school of law argued that only ḫamr was explicitly forbidden in the Qur'an (i.e. wine from grapes). Consequently, they argued that some forms of nabīḏ should be allowed.[40] The specific Algerian champagne drinkers de Baudicour commented on in 1853 probably followed Mālikī law – in which all forms of alcohol were strictly prohibited. It is, however, possible that they still remembered earlier discussions surrounding the permissibility of nabīḏ transmitted through the generations and equated red wine with ḫamr, and champagne and other drinks with nabīḏ. Muslim champagne drinkers might have recounted these discussions in de Baudicour's presence, which might have influenced him in formulating his bizarre differentiation between alcohol on the one hand and the "less compromising" champagne on the other.

In the next section of this article, the anecdotal evidence provided by the colonial source material has been divided into two parts. The first part focuses on the most common Muslim justification for champagne consumption – the aforementioned claim that Muslims conceived champagne to be "gazouz", i.e. a lemonade or a sorbet. The second part analyses three other Muslim explanations: that the prohibition of alcohol only applied to red wine; that only the first drop of every glass of alcohol was prohibited to believers; and, finally, that champagne could be consumed without suffering spiritual penalties because of its medicinal properties.

3 Lemonades and sorbets

The first and most prominent of these justifications was the aforementioned theory that Muslims took champagne to be nothing more than a harmless sorbet or lemonade ("gazouz" in the texts[41]). This justification of the "gazouz" was widely reported and can be found in French texts ranging from the 1850s to the 1930s.[42] Charles Marcotte de Quivières, for example, who would later become

40 Honchell 2015: 6. See also: Tapper 1994: 219–220.

41 The French spelling of the Arabised version of "gazeuse" varies in the source material. I have chosen to keep the spelling of the authors in quotes and to use "gazouz" in the rest of the article.

42 For publications in the twentieth century describing the strategy of the "gazouz", see, for example: Millet 1913: 172; Thierry 1917: 58; Austruy 1925: 122; Mauprat 1926: 634–635.

the French *Directeur Général des Monnaies et Médailles*, described in 1855 the different dishes of a rather opulent meal that he was offered while travelling through Algeria, which ended with the following: "Then came the sorbets, coffee and Champagne. Yes, really, Champagne! A Moor, who spoke French explained to me – no doubt to soothe my scruples – that it was not wine, and that Mahomet, if he had known champagne, would have classed it under the category of sorbets."[43]

Marcotte de Quivières' quote shows that he had expected a complete abstinence from alcohol from the Muslim colonised he encountered while travelling through Algeria. The explanation of his hosts for their desertion of Muslim religious regulation with regards to champagne clearly appeared implausible to Marcotte de Quivières. He described another set of Muslim champagne drinkers in this same travel account, when recounting another dinner he attended, this time at the house of the French General Reveu.[44] In this home of a French settler, Marcotte de Quivières seemed to be reminded of his first encounter, as he wrote: "I found myself placed between two of these natives, and I served them Champagne, that they very skilfully swallowed. Decidedly I begin to think that Champagne is nothing other than a sorbet, and that it is us who are wrong."[45] Marcotte de Quivières was clearly amused by the "gazouz" explanation, which he implicitly portrayed as ridiculous by adding the descriptions of his own reactions.

In Marcotte de Quivières' account, the reason for the Muslim champagne consumption seems to be a genuine confusion about the properties of the drink. He gave his Muslim acquaintances the benefit of doubt and did not seem to suspect them to be purposefully deceitful, but this benevolent, if somewhat patronising, stance was not the one adopted by most French authors. 62 years later, for example, H. Thierry indicated in his medical dissertation on "Medical Practices and Superstitions of Moroccans" that a certain cunning was evident in the Muslim champagne consumption: "Alcoholism, on the other hand, almost unknown in areas remote from the cities, is something very common in the latter. *The Qur'an* forbids the use of wine and alcohol, therefore the educated ones bypass this difficulty by drinking champagne, which they call 'gazouz' and pretend to confuse with lemonade."[46]

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43 Marcotte de Quivières 1855: 15. Capitalisation in the original.

44 General Reveu headed the French army in the city of Miliana from the late 1840s onward. See, for example: Carron 1859: 22.

45 Marcotte de Quivières 1855: 126.

46 Thierry 1917: 58. Emphasis in the original.

In Thierry's account, this class of champagne-drinking, urban, educated Muslims were actively deceitful when alluding to champagne as "gazouz". These quotes of Marcotte de Quivières and Thierry show the two main stances in the colonial discourse on champagne-drinking Muslims: In the worldview of the French colonisers, the Muslim champagne drinkers either genuinely misjudged the situation (as all brands of champagne that are not otherwise marked contain alcohol[47]) without meaning to break with Islam (but breaking with it nonetheless), or they craftily circumvented their religious rules by only pretending to misjudge the alcoholic qualities of champagne. The reason for the Muslim champagne consumption was thus seen to be either ignorance or cunning. Apostasy, either accidental or intentional, was, however, understood to be the result in both cases.

While the French seemed to expect ignorance and misjudgements in the colonised North Africans, they were particularly interested in the second explanation, as those pretending to knowingly misjudge the situation were interpreted as distancing themselves from Islam. It should also be added that other interpretations between these two stances – such as, for example, the fact that some colonised Muslims disregarded the prohibition of alcohol without this influencing their overall faith in Islam – were not discussed in the colonial source material, which rarely, if ever, reflected the actual range of lived experiences and outlooks among the colonised.

These two stances can sometimes be found in one publication, as, for example, in Pinaud's 1933 dissertation, who, as mentioned above, referred to the "subterfuge of the 'gazouz'" when recounting his personal experiences with upper-class, Muslim, champagne drinkers.[48] In this same dissertation, he insisted that champagne was not the only alcoholic drink whose consumption could be trivialised as that of only "gazouz": "The Arabs have a higher consumption of beer as they do not consider it to be an alcoholic beverage, and many of those who, out of respect for the Qur'an, do not use wine, anisette or other [forms of] alcohol, drink beer without a second thought. When we try to undeceive them, they willingly respond, like the caïd of whom we have already spoken: 'Gazous! Gazous!'"[49]

This notion of beer passing as "gazouz" was not found in other colonial sources, but Pinaud's vocabulary is telling, independent of the truth of his claim. He mentioned his trying to "undeceive" Muslim beer consumers, thereby

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47 Modern champagne contains on average just over 12% alcohol. The only brand of champagne that was named in the sources studied for this article, *Roederer*, contains 12% alcohol.

48 Pinaud 1933: 21.

49 Pinaud 1933: 34.

revealing his impression that these Muslims truly believed that beer had no alcohol content, and thus placing them in the category of the merely misinformed. He went on to describe the following scene: "It is common, in the bars and the cafés of the major cities of Algeria, to witness the following spectacle: two Arabs come in, sit at a table, order a crate of 12 bottles [of beer], and play dominoes (their favourite game) until everything is emptied."[50]

The context therefore shows that these beer-drinking Muslims were not the upper-class champagne consumers he described in his first "gazouz" anecdote.[51] The misinformed beer-drinkers were clearly working-class men. Revealingly, he did not attempt to "undeceive" the caïd, who had offered him a bottle of *Roederer* at his feast. In Pinaud's case – which may or may not be representative of the wider French understanding of the situation – the question of which category (misinformed or cunning) Muslim alcohol consumers fell into seems to at least partly have been based on class.

There were, however, also instances where Europeans adopted this strategy and encouraged Muslims to drink champagne by telling them that champagne was not wine, but only a harmless "gazouz".[52] A fictional example of this can be found in the 1894 novel "Marius" by the aforementioned Georges Pradel, which was published in instalments in the *Picturesque Journal*. In this novel, the main character, Tontonel, encouraged a Muslim to drink champagne, by saying: "You can drink, Haffiz-Ahmed, you can drink without fear. This is not forbidden by the Prophet, this is 'Gazouze'."[53] Tontonel adapted, in this passage, both the vocabulary (calling champagne "Gazouze") and the alleged justification from the Muslim colonised, in order to induce or even seduce Haffiz-Ahmed to consume champagne. In this context, the coloniser was the cunning and deceitful one, tricking his Muslim companion into apostasy and the break with Islam that champagne drinking so often clearly represented in the French discourse.

4 Circumventing the Qur'an

While the "gazouz" strategy was the one most often discussed in the colonial sources, there were also other justifications that Muslims allegedly gave for their breaking of Qur'anic rules. One of them was that champagne had not existed at

50 Pinaud 1933: 34.
51 Pinaud 1933: 21.
52 See for example: Pervinquière 1912: 136.
53 Pradel 1894: 102.

the time of Muḥammad[54] and that it was consequently not explicitly prohibited in the Qur'an.[55] In a 1912 travel account, for example, the well-known French playwright Eugène Brieux reported that his (possibly imaginary) young Arab companion said about champagne: "Oh! No, exclaimed the young Arab, it is not wine, it is *gazouss* (sparkling water). Moreover, champagne was not invented during the time of Mahomet, and therefore the Prophet could not forbid it to us!"[56]

Many French reports stated that some of the alcohol-consuming, colonised Muslims believed, or at least pretended to believe, that the Qur'an only banned the consumption of red wine.[57] Those anecdotes focusing on this justification claimed that, as the colour red was perceived to define alcoholic content, many Muslims saw the golden-coloured champagne to be entirely non-alcoholic. The French doctor Émile-Louis Bertherand, for example, mentioned this justification for the consumption of champagne in his 1855 book "Medicine and Hygiene of the Arabs". In this book, Bertherand conformed with many of the already discussed tropes on Muslim alcohol consumption by stating that the initially beneficial message of the Qur'an had been "distorted" by his Muslim contemporaries "to the point of turning it into an absurd code". Bertherand added that the prohibition of alcohol, which was "of an exaggerated severity and against nature", led to:

> An excess, opposite to that which they wanted to achieve. They decided to prevent abuse, and they [consequently] prohibited the use [of alcohol] in an absolute manner; it was to provoke debauchery and to force [Muslims] to hypocritically evade the rigorous text of the law. Contradictions are inherent to the human mind. Thus the Turks all drink wine, without the slightest scruple. Theologians, they say, mean by wine an intoxicating red liquor, but they do not designate under that name white wines, the various compounds of eau-de-vie, champagne, etc.[58]

Bertherand's choice of vocabulary – describing the circumvention as outright "hypocritical" – shows that he clearly believed the actions of these "Turks"[59] to

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54 On this point, see also the above discussed anecdote by Marcotte de Quivières. Marcotte de Quivières 1855: 15.

55 For champagne, see: Millet 1913: 172. This argument was also made for other alcoholic drinks, such as absinthe. See, for example: Blakesley 1859: 99; Galland 1882: 15.

56 Brieux 1912: 46. Emphasis in the original.

57 For example: Thierry-Mieg 1861: 357–358; Alix 1869: 87; Certeux/Carnoy 1884: 179; Campou 1887: 26–27; Millet 1913: 172. The same argument was also made for other forms of alcohol, for example for palm wine: Lallemand 1892: 170.

58 Bertherand 1855: 283.

59 It is unclear, who exactly Bertherand meant with this reference to "Turks". As Bertherand's book solely focused on Algeria, it appears that he referred to the situation in the Ottoman Empire, as most of the Turks had left Algeria after the French military conquest of 1830. It is,

be deliberate cunning and not a misinterpretation. This was, in fact, the general tone of the anecdotes concerning this justification of the colour red influencing the alcoholic content of a drink. The French military historian and colonial officer Corneille Trumelet, for example, exclaimed in 1885: "Some Arab leaders have no qualms about drinking champagne, on the pretext that the first requirement of wine is [that] of being red."[60] Like Bertherand, Trumelet clearly did not believe that the Muslim bourgeoisie, who had taken to drinking champagne, was merely misinformed, as he openly defined this justification of champagne drinkers as a "pretext".

Both the idea that champagne had not been specifically prohibited in the Qur'an and the definition of alcohol as red wine only, were seen to present moral loopholes that the colonised Muslims gratefully slipped through. However, as in the discourse around "gazouz", some French sources were strangely disapproving of this strategy – not because alcohol drinking was seen to be immoral, but because the strategy was seen to break with Islam without openly admitting it. That is, the strategy of the "gazouz" allowed Muslims to commit a sin which turned them into apostates – without any consequences. The journalist and historian François Bournand, for example, wrote in 1893 a book entitled "Tunisia and Tunisians", in which he recounted that Tunisians were very "devout", "[...] but they have [made] a compromise with the paradise of Mahomet. Despite the great number of their genuflections, they do not hesitate to eat pork and drink alcohol. A native (an official, at that), whom I had seen drinking champagne and whom I had asked if the prophet had not prohibited it, replied laughingly that Mahomet had only prohibited red wines."[61]

Bournand condemned this strategy as a form of hypocrisy, implying, through his vocabulary of "compromise", that Muslims were only outwardly pious and mentioning the conspiratorial laughter of this Muslim champagne drinker, while at the same time displaying his "superior" understanding of both science (the actual alcohol content of champagne) and Islam (Muḥammad's prohibition of all alcohol). Like so many other French observers, Bournand seemed to be almost disappointed that the Muslim champagne drinkers he encountered found a way of enjoying aspects of French civilisation – such as the more easily available French alcohol – while also retaining their religious

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however, also possible that he described in this passage the drinking habits of those Turkish families who remained in Algeria and who often were vocal proponents of the resistance against the French colonisation of Algeria.

60 Trumelet 1885: 216, FN 2.

61 Bournand 1893: 50–53.

identity. To Bournand, this "official" could no longer call himself a Muslim, and he judged it as hypocritical that this Muslim champagne drinker did not interpret the situation in the same way.

Closely connected to this strategy was another justification that Muslims allegedly gave to French observers – the claim that only the first drop of alcohol of each glass was prohibited in Islam.[62] French authors reported conversations with champagne-drinking Muslims, who claimed that, as long as they did not drink that first drop, they could consume alcohol without being condemned by their religion for it. A book entitled "The Renaissance in Morocco", published in 1922 by the *General Residence of the French Republic in Morocco*, described this justification for champagne drinking, while simultaneously proposing that Muslims started to drink stronger forms of alcohol, beginning with champagne, thus effectively turning champagne into a gateway drug. The book remains somewhat unclear on the question of whether this gradual alcoholisation of Moroccans was seen to be positive (as it showed a growing acceptance of French civilisation) or negative (as it created colonised masses suffering from alcoholism). The *General Residence* claimed that Muslims: "[...] end up drinking champagne first, then non-sparkling wine, in secret and among friends, so as not to raise a scandal, and provided that before drinking it, one shakes off with contempt the drops from the fingertip previously dipped into the glass and declares the formulation from the Qoran: 'One drop only of this liquor may be cursed!'"[63]

The journal *The Courier of Tlemcen* published on the 3rd of February 1893 a short article on Muslim food regulations, in which the allegedly Muslim author described a fifth strategy open to Muslims who sought to circumvent the strict alcohol prohibitions in the Qur'an. The author, only described as "Aladin", stated:

> I already knew, at this time, the different ways of my coreligionists, of finding compromises, and also the art of making lawful everything that pleased them by taking it under the form of *doua* (remedy), such as absinthe to chase away the dark thoughts, rum and cognac to become fearless, and finally champagne, this dear Gazouze, which is the delight of even our greatest marabouts, and this, despite the formal prohibition in the *Koran* [...].[64]

62 This justification was also given in the context of other forms of alcohol. See, for example: Caillat 1924: 129–130.

63 Anon 1922: 38. It should be noted that this "formulation" cannot, in fact, be found in the Qur'an.

64 Aladin 1893: 1. Emphasis in the original.

It is questionable whether this article was truly written by an Algerian Muslim, as the author chose to only call himself "Aladin" – an Arab name extremely accessible to European authors, thanks to the popularity of "The Thousand and One Nights". The author's authenticity is further discredited by the fact that the goal of the article seems to have been to highlight that he was a Muslim, "no longer imbued with the prejudices" of Islam,[65] while at the same time disapproving of the breaking of Islamic rules prevalent among Muslims. Independent of the author's identity, it remains clear that the author condemned both the general "compromises", and, more specifically, the idea that alcohol could be taken for medicinal purposes. It is interesting in this context that while he gave the attributed remedial effects of absinthe, rum and cognac, he did not specify the medical properties of champagne, instead calling it "gazouz" and claiming that even North African saints drank it. As the claim that Muslims drank champagne because of its medicinal properties could not be found in any other colonial source, this justification for champagne drinking seems to have been used in a very limited way, if at all.

5 Colonisers and colonised

The colonial descriptions of Muslim champagne drinkers paralleled the general discourse on Muslim alcohol consumption insofar as almost all accounts were based on the notion that alcohol had been introduced into the region by France and that the champagne consumption of Muslims was thus linked to the progress of French civilisation.[66] As such, the rising alcohol consumption of Muslims seemed inescapable – champagne drinking was a necessary evil in France's *mission civilisatrice*. A Captain F. Ceccaldi, for example, described in his 1914 book "In the Land of Powder" his military experiences in Western Morocco, and described the consumption of champagne by a Moroccan courier, who had been morally corrupted in his service for France:

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65 Aladin 1893: 1.

66 In this context, the French observers remained mostly unaware of the many local forms of alcohol that had been consumed by the Muslims before the violent conquest of the region, and also of the fact that some North Africans had imported alcohol from Europe for centuries. There are also exceptions to this rule. The aforementioned doctor L. Raynaud, for example, wrote in 1902 an article on "Alcohol and Alcoholism in Morocco", in which he stated that "a number of indigenous spirits" had been reported in "Mohammedan countries". Raynaud 1902: 211.

> In the evening, a few bottles of champagne, bought from 'Mother Jeanne' and from the tobacconist, were distributed to our wounded. Our friend the courier, to whom – by the way – the principles of the Qur'an seemed to be completely alien, took part in it [i.e. in the consumption]. And, hiding from the goumiers [Moroccan soldiers in the French army], he smacked his tongue with comic satisfaction, blinking his mischievous grey eyes. This lout knew alcohol.[67]

After this gleeful description of the champagne consumption of this courier and a subsequent reference to the absinthe consumption of other Moroccan Muslims, Ceccaldi added: "Coincidentally, is it not demonstrated that civilisation will always start with the instilling in the conquered the vices of the conquerors? Pernod and his imitators penetrate the country with our vanguards – that was all that the Moroccans needed!"[68] Ceccaldi proposed the bold theory that the adoption of the "vices of the conquerors", was a necessary step in both the military conquest and, subsequently, the process of civilisation for any conquered region. In Ceccaldi's worldview certain brands of alcohol played a crucial role in this "civilisation through vices". If it was believed that the brands that Ceccaldi mentioned – i.e. absinthe from *Pernod Fils* and similar distilleries – "civilised" the lower classes, who consumed them in the bars and cafés of the Maghrebi cities, was it also believed that luxury champagne brands like the aforementioned *Roederer* civilised the Muslim elites who consumed them?

The depictions of Muslim champagne drinkers differed from the wider discourse on Muslim alcohol consumers in the colonial Maghreb in two significant ways. On the one hand, champagne was consumed by a social group that was not described in the discourse concerning other alcoholic drinks, while, on the other hand, Muslims were portrayed as believing, or pretending to believe, that champagne was non-alcoholic. The French colonial discourse around champagne was thus intrinsically bound to concepts of class and civilisation. Champagne was seen to be a perfect illustration of the "fact" that even those Muslims on the road to civilisation (i.e. educated urban men) misunderstood the world. They not only misunderstood basic science but were also ignorant about their own religion.

This should be seen in the wider context of French authors using alcohol drinking not only to differentiate the colonisers from the colonised, but also to

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67 Ceccaldi 1914: 76. The champagne consumption of former soldiers was also described by other sources. Benjamin Gastineau, for example, wrote in 1861 a book entitled: "Women and Customs of Algeria", in which he described the hidden, but excessive, champagne consumption of a former *capitaine des chasseurs*. This man was a "great hypocrite" in his eyes because he "drinks pure water like a camel" in his own village and pretended to be very religious. Gastineau 1861: 69.

68 Ceccaldi 1914: 77.

distinguish different groups of colonised Muslims. The French explorer Charles Cornet, for example, wrote in 1914 a book on the "Conquest of the Moroccan South", in which he stated: "True Muslims accuse the blue men [the Tuareg] of giving in to the delights of the capital, instead of fighting the enemy of [their] religion; they accuse them of drinking wine, champagne, despite the Koran that prohibits alcohol and despite Ramadan that imposes fasting [...]."[69] By calling those who adhered to the prohibition of alcohol and kept the fast during Ramadan "true Muslims", Cornet implied that those drinking champagne were "false" Muslims, i.e. apostates – a notion implicitly shared by many of the French authors introduced in this article.

Finally, it should be observed that the concept of niyya, intention, in Mālikī Islam is significant in the context of Muslim champagne consumption, i.e. the idea that intent is an integral part of an action.[70] For instance, if somebody prays without intending to pray, the prayer is invalid; similarly, if somebody commits a crime, without having had the intent to do so or even without having known that the action was illegal, the person is not fully guilty. In the colonial source material, most Muslims who drank champagne and justified their consumption with one of the strategies discussed above were depicted as knowing, deep down, that they had committed a sin: Their framing of champagne as "gazouz" for example, was regularly framed as nothing more than a "subterfuge" or a "pretext". From the point of view of the French observers, Muslim champagne drinkers could clearly never claim to not have intended to consume alcohol with these dishonest strategies. To other Muslims, however, all of these justifications for the consumption of champagne could be interpreted as displaying a lack of intent to commit a sin. The French colonisers only saw hypocrisy, but the concept of niyya might have given these Muslim champagne drinkers plausible deniability in the eyes of fellow Muslims.

6 Conclusions

The common tone of the colonial sources commenting on Muslims drinking champagne was one of amusement and open ridicule, without understanding, however, that many of the comments that they reported in their publications had clearly been meant as jokes. The French observers mocked the "ignorant"

69 Cornet 1914: 31.

70 On niyya see, for example: Forte 1985: 56; Powers 2004; Dols 2007: 96.

colonised Muslims – even though champagne was only consumed by the educated bourgeoisie – for their misunderstanding of the alcoholic nature of champagne, and focused strongly on the absurdity of the justifications given by Muslims for their consumption and the wavering of faith of the consumers. By doing so, the French authors denied that the Muslim champagne consumers truly belonged to the same social group that consumed champagne in France, i.e. the same social group that the French authors studied for this article also belonged to. Muslim champagne drinkers were described as part of an educated, urban and Westernised elite, yet their alleged explanations for their champagne consumption instantly separated them from the French bourgeoisie. In the nineteenth century and beyond, champagne was the drink of choice not only of the European bourgeoisie but of an almost global bourgeois elite,[71] yet the focus on the absurdity of the many champagne strategies allowed the French authors to deride the North African upper classes for their consumption of the same drink.

The French sources framed these strategies as either misunderstandings or a cunning form of hypocrisy, both of which they interpreted as a clear break with Islam. These colonial anecdotes give us an insight into the colonial mind-set and into contemporary notions about Islam. The way the French authors framed both the consumption of champagne, and the justifications given as to why drinking champagne as a Muslim was acceptable, shows that they viewed Islam as, above all, incredibly strict. It was clearly not the opinion of the Muslim champagne drinkers, but the colonial authors seemed to be very convinced of the aforementioned idea that "one drop of alcohol" turned a Muslim into an apostate. For them, the introduction of champagne into the diet of the colonised symbolised a "sin" committed by Muslims and thus an unalterable turning away from Islam. The amusement about the justifications given in the anecdotes seems to be based on French authors, with their "superior" knowledge of Islam, knowing that these Muslim champagne drinkers were no longer Muslims, even if they did not acknowledge this transformation themselves. Additionally, these "gazouz" anecdotes also seem to hide a certain disappointment in the French authors that these Muslims consumed alcohol relatively openly, without, however, explicitly declaring themselves non-Muslims and publicly turning to France and Christianity.

These colonial anecdotes do not provide an insight into the mind-sets of the colonised. If we are to take anything about the colonised from these colonial anecdotes it is that the Muslim champagne consumption showed that great

71 See, for example: Guy 2003: 11, 38.

variety existed in religious identity in the Maghreb.[72] This circumventing of set religious rules by the colonised, through these often playful justifications, shows a pragmatism and a resourcefulness that the twenty-first century discourse on Muslims seldom portrays or even seems to be aware of.

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72 On how some Muslims were able to combine alcohol drinking with their Muslim identity, see: Ahmed 2016: 121.

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