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Introduction: The Past that Europe Forgot

Looking at an official map of the European Union one may be struck by the little dots that lay scattered around the globe and which all indicate territories that form integral parts of today's EU. Grouped under the official heading 'Outermost regions of the EU', they make up France's Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Réunion, Martinique, Mayotte and the overseas Collectivity of St Martin; Portugal's Azores and Madeira; and Spain's Canary Islands. While not showing under the label 'outermost regions', Spain's contested enclaves (or colonies) in Moroccan North Africa, Ceuta and Melilla, should also be mentioned since they too are fully incorporated into the EU. In addition, 26 non-sovereign 'Overseas countries and territories' (OCTs) share the status of being associated with the EU through their constitutional ties with certain EU member states (Denmark, France, the Netherlands and the UK). Although the OCTs are not part of the EU, most of the inhabitants of these still not decolonized territories are nonetheless EU citizens and as such able to, for instance, vote in EU Parliament elections.

The territories in question are rarely dealt with in the vast literature on European integration.¹ Considering their ostensible insignificance this may come as no surprise. Scratching the surface though, it becomes apparent that many of these small territories carry big economic and geopolitical stakes, both for individual member states and for the EU

¹ For some notable exceptions, see e.g. Peter Gold, *Europe or Africa: A Contemporary Study of the Spanish North African Enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000); Karis Muller, "Concentric circles" at the periphery of the European Union', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Vol. 46, No. 3, 2000, pp. 322–35; Nic Maclellan and Jean Chesneaux, *After Moruroa: France in the South Pacific* (Melbourne: Ocean Press, 1998); and the contributions in Rebecca Adler-Nissen and Ulrik Pram Gad (eds), *European Integration and Postcolonial Sovereignty Games: The EU Overseas Countries and Territories* (London: Routledge, 2012).

as a whole. Besides their obvious utility as sites for naval bases and other military installations, the many island possessions in the oceans also provide sea borders and territorial waters that afford rights and access to current and future maritime resources (such as fish, oil and minerals).² Moreover, whereas Spain's North African possessions of Ceuta and Melilla serve as hubs in the EU's militarized quest to control migration from Africa, French Guiana has for decades offered the European Space Agency, which is closely affiliated with the EU, an ideal launching site for its rockets. 'Europe's Spaceport' is thus located in Kuouro, French Guiana.

Given, too, that the sheer existence of these territories is so fundamentally at odds with the EU's dominant self-understanding, one must also ask how such a strong and contradictory symbolism has managed to escape the attention of EU research. Indeed, since the founding of the current EU in 1957, the EU's treaties have always had a paragraph stipulating that only a 'European state' can acquire membership of the EU; and, to our knowledge, this paragraph has only been applied once, in the rejection of Morocco's bid for EU membership in 1986.³ In order to 'join Europe', therefore, the country in question first has to be European. But if this is so, what are we to make of those member states that continue to divide their location between continents – that is, those member states that are both European and African, both European and South American and so on?

In some sense this book sets out from this curiosity. We suspect that this negligence or disinclination of EU scholarship and the EU organization itself to acknowledge its overseas outposts can also be seen as synonymous with a disinclination to deal with the history and legacy of colonialism. For scholars and policy-makers to truly

² See Johan Galtung, *The European Community: A Superpower in the Making* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget and London: George Allen & Unwin, 1973), p. 64.

³ As Iver B. Neumann notes, when Morocco applied for membership in 1986, '[t]his application was dealt with in no uncertain terms; Rabat was simply told that the organization was open only to Europeans, and that was that. There was no room for ambiguity here, only unequivocal exclusion and marking of Morocco as clearly "non-European." 'European identity, EU expansion, and the integration/exclusion nexus', *Alternatives*, Vol. 23, No. 3, 1998, p. 400.

recognize these 'non-European' domains, this would presuppose a European Union ready to explain, debate and come to terms with the historical as well as current relationship between European colonialism and European integration. In other words, an inquiry into the whereabouts of today's forgotten outposts of EU-Europe inevitably takes us to an equally forgotten history of European integration. To date, this history has not been examined in any rigorous fashion.⁴

This book embarks on correcting this predicament. However, it does not just set out to address a lacuna in studies of Europe and of European integration. The purpose of our study is to place the history of European integration on a new and solid foundation by recovering its colonial and geopolitical dimension. In so doing, we take issue with

⁴ So far there is no account that traces the bond between European integration and colonial Africa in its full historical extent. The works that come closest are the contributions in Marie-Thérèse Bitsch and Gérard Bossuat, *L'Europe unie et l'Afrique: De l'idée d'Eurafrrique à la convention de Lomé I* (Brussels: Bruylant, 2005), as well as Thomas Moser, *Europäische Integration, Dekolonisation, Eurafrika: Eine historische Analyse über die Entstehungsbedingungen der Eurafrikanischen Gemeinschaft von der Weltwirtschaftskrise bis zum Jaunde-Vertrag, 1929–1963* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2000). A recent German dissertation covers the economic aspects of the association to the EEC of African states in the 1960s; see Urban Vahsen, *Eurafrikanische Entwicklungskooperation: Die Assoziierungspolitik der EWG gegenüber dem subsaharischen Afrika in den 1960er Jahren* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2010); and a recent French one covers the French context of the 1950s, see Yves Montarsolo, *L'Eurafrrique – contrepoint de l'idée d'Europe: Le cas français de la fin de la deuxième guerre mondiale aux négociations des Traités de Rome* (Aix-en-Provence: Publications de l'Université de Provence, 2010). However, several scattered scholarly accounts cover specific parts, aspects and time frames of this history; see e.g. Gérard Bossuat, *L'Europe des Français, 1943–1959: La IVe République aux sources de l'Europe communautaire* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1996); Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Anne Deighton, 'Entente Neo-Coloniale? Ernest Bevin and the Proposals for an Anglo–French Third World Power', *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, Vol. 17, 2006, pp. 835–52; Pierre Guillen, 'Europe as a cure of French impotence? The Guy Mollet government and the negotiation of the Treaties of Rome', in Ennio Di Nolfo (ed.), *Power in Europe? II: Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy and the Origins of the EEC 1952–1957* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1992); John Kent, *The Internationalization of Colonialism: Britain, France, and Black Africa, 1939–1956* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); Guia Migani, *La France et l'Afrique sub-saharienne, 1957–1963: Histoire d'une décolonisation entre idéaux eurafricains et politique de puissance* (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2008). The first survey of writings about Eurafrika was published in Cameroon; see Max Liniger-Goumaz, *Eurafrique: Utopie ou réalité?* (Yaoundé: Editions CLE, 1972) and *Eurafrique* (Geneva: Les Éditions du temps, 1970). See also Ch. 5, note 16.

the dominant narrative of EU history, which has often been officially endorsed.

It is certainly not surprising that Brussels disseminates an image of EU history as grounded in a popular approbation of the organization's founding period after World War II as a time when European leaders, thanks to European integration, chose peace and cooperation over nationalist rivalry and imperial aspirations. We recognize this in the European Commission's promotion of various narratives concerning historical landmarks, founding fathers and an assortment of other historical tropes, all intended to conjure up an image of the EU's allegedly noble cause and benevolent historical purpose before today's EU citizenry.⁵ During the 2007 celebration of the 50th anniversary of the EU, this strategy was manifested with utmost clarity. The 2012 award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the EU of course only served to consolidate this image.

What is surprising, however, is the tacit correspondence between this official story and the assumptions that often guide EU scholarship. Research on the historical trajectory of European integration thus often fails to uphold a critical distance towards the type of 'Europeanism' underpinning Brussels' affirmative account of the origins of the EU, a distance that historians and social scientists have long since learnt to employ when scrutinizing the various nation-building and nationalist projects of late-nineteenth-century Europe. Such a critical attitude is called for also in the case of the EU, not because the EU is a nation state or can easily be compared to a nation state in the making, but because the EU in its quest for popular legitimacy makes use of similar methods and strategies as once did nation-building states. Historiography being one of the most powerful of these strategies, it becomes particularly important to examine the complicity of historians and EU researchers in establishing a selective and one-sided interpretation of the EU's past. In this context, we note a general tendency through which the

⁵ See e.g. Peo Hansen, *Europeans Only? Essays on Identity Politics and the European Union* (Umeå: Umeå University, 2000); Cris Shore, *Building Europe: The Cultural Politics of European Integration* (London: Routledge, 2000).

historical process of European integration is told as rather dissociated from processes of colonialism and decolonization, and designated as a non-colonial, a-colonial or sometimes even as an anti-colonial project.

We contend that this selective interpretation fulfils its foremost function as a myth, a foundational tale of pure origins, of an Immaculate Conception, which sets in place the main elements of a wishful and idealized European identity. Although not referring to the issue of colonialism per se, Mark Gilbert's point that EU studies has yet to cast off its dominant 'whiggish' approach to its subject matter is well taken.⁶ Too often, then, EU studies posits European integration as imbued with a progressive spirit and teleology, much like nationalist intellectuals' refusal in earlier periods to critically scrutinize the historical origins of national projects. There is a danger involved in this replacement of history by myth. We will then be educating students and the general public to think of the European project in the least European way thinkable – namely, as unrelated to one of Europe's major histories: the imperialist project.

European integration as a Eurafrican project

The aim of this study, in short, is to establish and analyse the relation of European integration and colonialism. More specifically, we seek to retrieve a political project and geopolitical constellation, long forgotten or suppressed, that in our view is indispensable for a proper understanding of the history of European integration and the interconnected histories of Africa and Europe in the twentieth century. The name of this constellation was *Eurafrica*, the story of which we recount in this book.

Many books have analysed Europe, the European Union and Africa as political, cultural and economic formations. Important works of more recent date have also charted the historical relations between

⁶ Mark Gilbert, 'Narrating the process: Questioning the progressive story of European integration', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 3, 2008, pp. 641–62.

Africa and Europe and demonstrated how they, having been inseparable parts of a single Mediterranean culture in antiquity, separated and settled as seemingly autonomous continental units with contrasting or even antithetical features, and all this through the slow and violent processes of crusading, exploration, conquest, slavery and colonization that made the peoples to the north appear as authors of progress, civilization and universal values, and those to the south as incarnations of ignorance, darkness and savagery. How Africa and Europe were discursively, politically and economically fashioned in this pattern is by now a fairly well researched topic.⁷

Few if any of these books, however, take notice of the Eurafrican project that consolidated colonial inequality in the mid-twentieth century and perpetuated it into the contemporary world order. This is where we make a contribution. We examine a complex twentieth-century history in which efforts to unify Europe systematically coincide with efforts to stabilize, reform and reinvent the colonial system in Africa. What to make of this strong correlation? As we show, Eurafrica, even as it was transformed from a geopolitical representation with utopian overtones in the 1920s into a political reality in the

⁷ A number of important works have contributed to the clarification of this issue, perhaps above all the works of Ali A. Mazrui and V. Y. Mudimbe – for Mazrui, see for instance *The African Condition: A Political Diagnosis* (London: Heinemann, 1980) and *Africa and Other Civilizations: Conquest and Counter-Conquest*, The Collected Essays of Ali A. Mazrui (Trenton: World Africa Press, 2002); and for Mudimbe, see *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988) and *The Idea of Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994). For other seminal contributions, see: Samir Amin, *Leurocentrisme: Critique d'une ideologie* (Paris: Anthropos, 1988); Martin Bernal, *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization*, Vol. 1: The Fabrication of Ancient Greece, 1785–1985 (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1987); James M. Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World*, Vol. 1: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History; Vol. 2: Eight Eurocentric Historians (New York: Guilford Press, 1993 and 2000); Basil Davidson, *Africa in History: Themes and Outlines* (London: Phoenix, 1991); Christopher Miller, *Theories of Africans: Francophone Literature and Anthropology in Africa* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990); Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, rev. edn (Cape Town: Pambazuka Press, 2012); Kwasi Wiredu, *Philosophy and an African Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Robert C. Young, *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990); and Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, *Rethinking Africa's Globalization*, Vol. 1: The Intellectual Challenges (Trenton: World Africa Press, 2003).

1950s, always marked the site where interests in European integration overlapped with colonial ambitions. According to the Eurafrican idea, European integration would come about only through a coordinated exploitation of Africa, and Africa could be efficiently exploited only if European states cooperated and combined their economic and political capacities.

Our study presents the origins and development of Eurafrica as a geopolitical conception in the interwar period, when it was strongly promoted by the Pan-European organization among many others. It goes on to demonstrate how Eurafrica was politically realized with the establishment in 1957 of the European Economic Community (EEC), today's EU. At the time of its foundation, the EEC comprised not just Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and West Germany, but also the colonial possessions of the member states. In official language they were called 'overseas countries and territories' or OCTs and they included, most importantly, Belgian Congo and French West and Equatorial Africa, whereas Algeria, which in this time was an integral part of metropolitan France, was formally integrated into the EEC yet excluded from certain provisions of the Treaty.

For the promoters of European integration, their community thus extended far beyond the European continent and constituted a new geopolitical sphere of influence. Colloquially as well as officially, the EEC negotiations referred to this sphere as Eurafrica, and one of the main intentions of the advocates of European integration was precisely to bring this entity into being. This would resolve primarily France's, but also Belgium's, increasingly untenable colonial problem. At the same time this aimed to consolidate European interests in a world order where its range of opportunities rapidly dwindled. 'Toward Eurafrica' ran the front-page headline of French daily *Le Monde* on 21 February 1957, the morning after the six European leaders had successfully concluded their negotiations in preparation of the Treaty of Rome.⁸ A couple of days later, French premier Guy Mollet climbed out of his

⁸ 'Première étape vers l'Eurafrrique', *Le Monde*, 21 February 1957.

aeroplane in Washington to pay an official visit to President Eisenhower, bringing with him the news that not only had Europeans decided to unite but also ‘an even greater unity was being born, Eurafrica.’⁹

As we shall demonstrate, the Eurafrican project was reducible neither to Europe nor to Africa, nor to any simple effort to bridge the gap between them. Rather, Eurafrica should be seen as the wider formation within which the relation of Europe and Africa was reconceived during the greater part of the twentieth century. Put differently, our study reasserts the importance of a forgotten historical causality that was constitutive both of the European integration project or the EU itself and of the foundation of postcolonial Africa. We say *re*-assert, because in its own present – from the 1920s to the 1950s – Eurafrica was loudly and repeatedly asserted. ‘When today rereading the articles and speeches of the principal political leaders in France,’ states the leading historian of French colonialism René Girault, ‘one is struck by the pervasiveness and intensity of the Eurafrican theme.’¹⁰

Depending on the context, Eurafrica was asserted now as a necessity, now as a possibility, now as a common European task, now as a utopian future, now as a strategic interest, now as an economic imperative, now as a peace project, now as the white man’s burden, now as Europe’s last chance, now as Africa’s only hope. Commentators, politicians and other moulders of public opinion who advocated the project tended to stress its epochal significance; Eurafrica was, quite simply, indispensable for Europe’s geopolitical and economic survival. Of course, not everyone agreed with this view. There was strong opposition from many sides and, needless to say, the Africans scarcely had a say. ‘At that time no one asked their opinion on the matter for they had no voice of their own,’ wrote Schofield Coryell in a 1962 issue of *Africa Today*.¹¹ But the

⁹ HAEU (Historical Archives of the European Union), EN 2735, ‘Statement given by Premier Guy Mollet on his arrival at the Washington Airport’.

¹⁰ René Girault, ‘Les indépendances des pays d’Afrique noire dans les relations internationales’, in Charles-Robert Ageron and Marc Michel (eds), *L’Afrique noire française: L’heure des indépendances* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2010), p. 549.

¹¹ Schofield Coryell, ‘French Africa and the Common Market’, *Africa Today*, Vol. 9, November 1962, p. 12.

European majority prevailed, marshalled by convinced Eurafricanists like France's prime minister Guy Mollet, Belgium's foreign minister Paul-Henri Spaak and West Germany's chancellor Konrad Adenauer, and the EEC was politically instituted as what *Business Week* in its report after the signing ceremonies in Rome described as a 'New deal for the dark continent'.¹²

In retrieving this once salient entity, we shift the terrain upon which scholarly analyses of the political, economic and ideological developments on the two continents have taken place up until now. Eurafrica delineates a geopolitical context that, once reconstructed, allows us to elucidate or answer a set of crucial historical and political questions, including, for instance, why the momentum for European integration accelerated during the 1950s, why Pan-Africanism never got off the ground in Africa after independence and why the agreements and treaties between the European Union and the African Union have been designed in their current forms. Of course, the history of Eurafrica does not furnish the only answers to these questions. But all answers remain incomplete until the history of Eurafrica is put back into the picture.

Europe as a global power

A short book cannot account for all the initiatives, organizations and controversies that surrounded the Eurafrican project. This will be the task of a forthcoming work, which will also contain a comprehensive assessment of how Eurafrica in its various conceptions conditioned European integration and African post-independence history. In the present book, we present the main lines of our historical argument substantiated by the documentation necessary to support it.

¹² 'New deal for the dark continent?'; *Business Week*, 20 April 1957; quoted in Karis Muller, 'Iconographie de l'Eurafrrique', in Marie-Thérèse Bitsch and Gérard Bossuat (eds), *L'Europe unie et l'Afrique: De l'idée d'Eurafrrique à la convention de Lomé I*, (Brussels: Bruylant, 2005), p. 29.

On a theoretical level, we argue that the history of Eurafrica indicates the necessity of perceiving Europe and Africa from the perspective of a theory of globality and international relations unconstrained by national, continental and Eurocentric categories. A couple of decades ago, Africa was written off as a stagnant and uneventful periphery, a black hole in the world wide web of the network society.¹³ Today, Africa is extolled as a booming 'continent of the future', to which states, international organizations and transnational companies rush to make profits or secure resources. The history of Eurafrica is essential in any effort to understand this 'new scramble for Africa' – how it can happen, which stakes are involved and which role the EU plays in it.

Indeed, since the folding of the Soviet Union and even more so since we have entered the twenty-first century, numerous calls and concrete attempts have been launched in order to have the EU assume a common foreign and security policy, a global mission and responsibility. The assumption is that this will be the first time in the history of the EU that the organization positions itself globally, as a major actor in foreign policy and international relations. According to this assumption, the EU was until recently a regionally anchored organization in the Cold War context, its role and function determined by the truly global superpowers, and it is only today, after the Cold War and end of the bipolar world order that the EU can ascend to a global level and speak with global authority. But if we move beyond the cold-war framework, we realize that the EU had a global and geopolitical rationale from the very start, and this rationale was coded as 'association', 'interdependence' and 'Eurafrica'. To understand what it might mean, then, for the EU to become a global power, we should look at how this worked out the last time European integration aspired to do the same. Similarly, an understanding of the current upheavals in North Africa and beyond, what started out as the so-called Arab

¹³ Manuel Castells, *End of Millenium*, Vol. 3 of *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), p. 73.

Spring, and a correct assessment of the EU's attitude and involvement in relation to such processes, presuppose an awareness about the fact that the EU, ever since its foundation, has been heavily invested in this region.

Eurafrica as method

The history of Eurafrica is important also because it undercuts one of the most pernicious features of the geographical and historiographic paradigms that originated in the West. No serious analyst has failed to register that there is a specific historiographical category that imposes itself apriori, as it were, on any description of Africa in the modern world order. This category presents Africa and Europe as poles in a binary constellation. No matter what content we inscribe in this dichotomy – an anti-colonial uprising, a film about a mixed-race love story, a wrecked vessel overcrowded by West African migrants – the binary form itself remains constant, preventing us from conceiving of Africa as anything else but, in Paul Zeleza's expression, 'a basket case of absences' that calls for European presence.¹⁴ A racist and colonial epistemology deeply ingrained in global ideology here forecloses any possibility for Africa to escape its fate as the weaker part of the dyad, while it also forbids Europeans to forego their civilizing mission. It compels Africans and Europeans alike to repeat a predictable script where Africans perform as victims or villains while European aid workers, diplomats, oilers, bankers and military personnel are waiting in the wings, ready to correct or eradicate anyone who seriously challenges the pattern of unequal complementarity in which the Afro-European relation is frozen.

Disclosing how this colonial binary at once enabled and corrupted the process of European integration and African decolonization may

¹⁴ Paul Zeleza, 'Africa: the changing meanings of "African" culture and identity', in Elisabeth Abiri and Håkan Thörn (eds), *Horizons: Perspectives on a Global Africa* (Gothenburg: Museion, Gothenburg University, 2005), p. 43.

in this context produce something of an estrangement effect. The usual way of critically historicizing the relation of Africa and Europe is to uncover the discursive operations at work in the ongoing fabrication of Africa and Europe as antithetical phenomena. While fully compatible with such anti-colonial, postcolonial or decolonial deconstructions of European colonial epistemologies, our own method is different. We rely on an analysis of sources that bespeak a history of European integration and Euro-African relations that empirically disproves the dominant historical narratives and accounts of Europe's and Africa's paths towards modernity and integration. Put simply, a refutation of the EU's image of itself and of its historical relation to Africa here emerges through the explicit and eloquent wealth of the historical archive itself, in which we can discern a history in which the European subject – anxious about its future geopolitical and economic viability – turns to its African object as a source of rejuvenation. As one analyst put it in 1957, the same year as the EEC was established: 'It is in Africa that Europe will be made.'¹⁵

But this is also why we must be careful not to misinterpret the archive. Our argument depends on a careful assessment of the prevalent political dispositions in the late 1950s when the Eurafrican project was realized. This also explains the organization of our book. In Chapter 2 we canvass the origins of Eurafrica in interwar debates on 'the crisis of Europe'. Europe's instability and perceived overpopulation in the immediate aftermath of World War I was seen here as a consequence of its lack of 'Lebensraum' and its contracted position between emerging imperial power blocs to the east and west. In this context, leading European politicians, scientists and intellectuals saw Africa as a remedy, the crux being that its possibilities in terms of territories and resources could be realized only by a 'union of all the colonising nations' merging their colonial possessions 'for the greater moral and material profit of all', as French colonialist Hubert Lyautey put it in 1931.¹⁶

¹⁵ Jean-Michel de Lattre, 'Les grands ensembles africains', *Politique étrangère*, Vol. 20, No. 5, 1955, p. 543.

¹⁶ Quoted in Patricia Morton, *Hybrid Modernities: Architecture and Representation at the 1931 Colonial Exposition, Paris* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2000), p. 314.

In Chapter 3 we continue to show how these perceptions and plans were revived and gradually operationalized after World War II and became a central concern in all efforts to integrate and promote close cooperation between the war-ravaged states in Western Europe, now even more starkly reminded of their declining standing in global geopolitics. Chapter 3 follows this development until the aborted European Defence Community in 1954.

Chapter 4 then takes its point of departure in the relaunch of European integration that began with the Messina Conference in 1955, which two years later led to the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC) and the realization of Eurafrica through the association to the Common Market of the member states' colonial territories. While we end our analysis with the successful realization of the Eurafrican association regime in the 1957 Treaty of Rome, we devote our concluding chapter to a broader discussion of the historical explanation and future implications of the Eurafrican enterprise.

In this way we combine a diachronic account or survey of the Eurafrican debates from the 1920s up to the 1950s (Chapters 2 and 3) with a synchronic analysis of the decisive years, 1955–1957 (Chapter 4), when Eurafrica emerged as a necessary condition for the founding of the EEC. As this is a controversial matter in EU scholarship, we closely scrutinize the negotiations leading to the signing of the Treaty of Rome. This is where the Eurafrican idea was orchestrated and became politically operative. With verified plausibility, we can thus argue that Eurafrica enabled the process of European integration and hence constitutes an occluded past of today's European Union. Or to be straight, the EU would not have come into existence at this point in time had it not been conceived as a Eurafrican enterprise in which colonialism was Europeanized.

We have already given some hints as to why this history has been consigned to oblivion and, in what follows, we will delve further into this crucial explanatory undertaking. But as a starting point we should highlight some dominant perspectives that have served to perpetuate Eurafrica's seeming insignificance. First of all we note

that in existing scholarship the history of the EU is usually bent to fit Eurocentric presuppositions, and that European and African history are mostly conceived as insular continental narratives. We also note that, in a different body of scholarship, the history of colonialism is typically told as a history of the colonial systems of various separate imperial or nation states. If world history and global processes are cut up and edited by such devices, Eurafrica drops out of the picture, as it belonged to a geopolitical constellation that cannot be mapped by way of continental or national categories. But the historical erasure or misrecognition of Eurafrica also has to do with the fact that the Eurafrican project does not fit a couple of dominant historiographical paradigms, in which the postwar relation between Europe and Africa is either refracted through what Matthew Connelly has called 'the Cold War lens' or told as a narrative structured around a presumed historical rupture of 'decolonization'.¹⁷

In relation to these perspectives our book proposes a new theoretical departure in the area of European integration as well as in the area of the history of colonialism. As such, our pursuit dispenses with, first, the notion that European colonialism and the EU–African relationship can be construed as the sum total of Europe's national colonial histories. Second, it dispenses with the notion that Europe and Africa can be studied as separate continental units. Rather, we propose a third option, in which the Eurafrican unit serves as our primary frame of analysis – that is, the mindset and institutional energy that developed from the interwar period and onward perceived of Europe as inseparable from a Eurafrican totality. Again, there was no Europe to begin with, unless it was also Eurafrica. By retrieving the history of Eurafrica, we can also extract a new critical concept for the humanities and social sciences in a global age. Eurafrica is of vital importance in the areas of European studies, African studies, EU studies, Globalization studies, Mediterranean studies, studies of colonialism and postcolonial studies

¹⁷ See Matthew Connelly, 'Taking off the Cold War Lens: Visions of North-South conflict during the Algerian War for Independence', *American Historical Review*, Vol. 105, No. 3, 2000, pp. 739–69.

precisely because it evinces a forgotten reality lying at their mutual juncture.

As we shall argue in our concluding chapter, the effort to realize Eurafrica comes across as a transition phase or mediatory formation, through which the European states adapted themselves and rescaled their imperial ambitions so as to fit the postwar geopolitical situation. For the European states that entered into the EEC in 1957, Eurafrica was in this sense an arrangement that allowed them to posit their presence and interests in Africa as a new relationship of mutual association, formally accommodating the demands of the anti-colonial movements, while at the same time never really stepping out of their roles as patrons and tutors. For the African states that in the same year of 1957 began liberating themselves, Eurafrica allowed the political elites of the emerging sovereign states to enter a compromise with their former colonial masters, and this through arrangements from which both partners would profit at the cost of the majority of Africans for whom decolonization did not seem to happen or turned out to be 'a non-event', as Achille Mbembe puts it.¹⁸

If the history of Eurafrica is put back into the picture, we understand why decolonization did not signify the rupture with the past that it is usually described as. In the larger part of Africa, the postcolonial state moved into structures already set up by the colonial government, modelled itself on the routines of the colonial administration, and continued to conduct economic activities and trade according to old patterns. In this context, the Eurafrican programme also turned out to be an efficient antidote to Pan-Africanism and all the other independently organized African integration and regionalization schemes. This may even be said to have been the true historical function of the EEC's association agreement: to adjust international relations, economic extraction and means of production to a world order with nominally independent African states, while retaining control of the continent's

¹⁸ Achille Mbembe, *Sortir de la grande nuit: Essai sur l'Afrique décolonisée* (Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2010), p. 58.

resources. Having fulfilled this task, Eurafrika disappeared from the political agenda by the mid-1960s, as the EEC and various other international organizations by then provided more efficient and less costly means through which European interventions in African affairs could continue, but now in the guise of development, aid and diplomatic counselling.

Thus, if Eurafrika's life in international politics was a short one, and if this should be taken as a sign that the politics of colonial association devised by the EEC proved to be a failure when all countries previously under European sovereignty embraced decolonization, it must be added that this failure was a truly successful one, the consequences of which are still with us today.