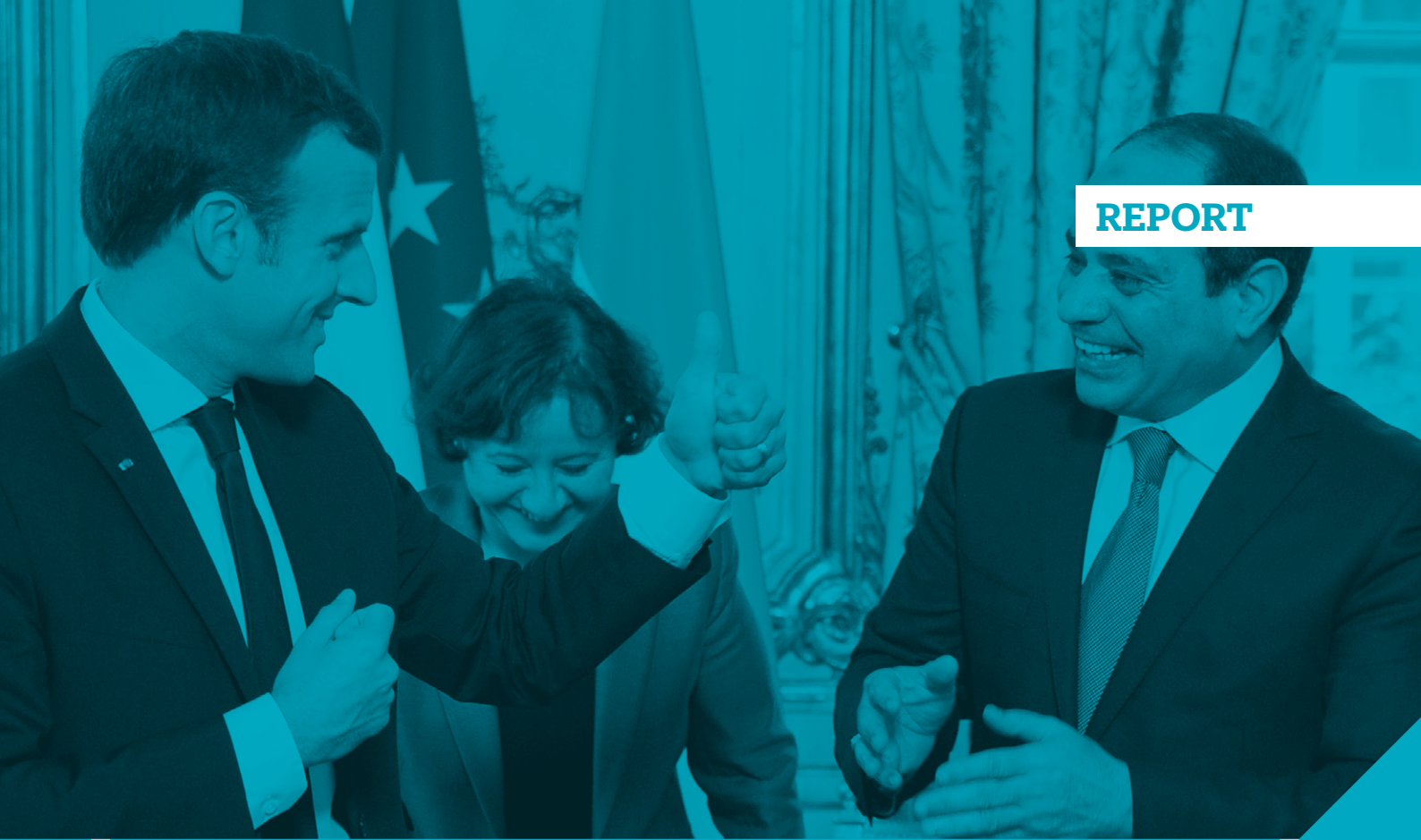




REPORT

The ‘Organized Hypocrisy’ of French Foreign Policy: The Military-Media Nexus

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Introduction

The death of former Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi on June 17th, 2019 – Egypt's first popularly elected president – serves as an occasion to re-assess a number of issues related to the unfolding of events in Egypt since 2011, including of course, his overthrow in a military coup, his subsequent arrest and detention in deplorable conditions – along with countless others – and ultimately his untimely demise. Although from time to time, Western governments raise the issue of human rights, justice, democracy and the rule of law in Egypt, the silence in the face of Morsi's overthrow, detention and death speaks volumes. It also raises a number of questions relating to the policies of Western states towards Egypt.

France, stands out in this regard, particularly as it relates to the nature of its security relationship with the Sisi regime, its sales of French-manufactured arms, and whether or not this policy orientation can be reconciled with political rhetoric in support of democracy and human rights. Since the 2013 coup against the Morsi presidency in Egypt, France has enhanced its security cooperation to unprecedented levels, including the sale of a wide range of arms and other military-related technologies, creating a financial windfall for French defence contractors while

simultaneously serving the policy objectives of those who set France's strategic agenda. This consolidation and overlapping of corporate (specifically security and defence oriented corporation) and state interests has also witnessed the rise of another important factor, namely, the role of media ownership, in what can be perhaps best described as the rise of a military-media complex.

The 2015 deal struck between France and Egypt for the sale of Rafale fighter jets represents a case study par excellence of this phenomenon. The Rafale's manufacturer, France's Dassault Group, has increased its stake in the country's media landscape in recent years, including the acquisition of one of France's largest dailies, Le Figaro, through which they are able to push editorial lines that favour the company line.

Drawing on previous work examining the divergence between practice and rhetoric of Western states with regards to arms transfers, this report will examine French policy towards Egypt through the lens of 'Organized Hypocrisy' and explore the increasingly integrated corporate, military, media and state nexus in France and its relationship to France's policy orientation towards the Middle East, using Egypt as a case study.



President of France Emmanuel Macron President of Egypt Abdel Fattah al-Sisi gesture as they chat during their meeting following an official welcoming ceremony at the Elysee Palace in Paris, France on October 24, 2017. - Anadolu Agency

The Issue of Media Ownership

The issue of balanced media coverage has been routinely debated in journalistic and academic circles. Since the 1960s, a fairly extensive body of research has been produced, which examines issues of bias and unbalanced coverage (e.g. Galtung and Ruge 1965; Harrison and Palmer 1986). This state of affairs led media scholars Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky to propose in *Manufacturing Consent* (1988) a model analysing the functions of the American mass media.

Their work uncovered the existence of several layers within U.S. news media that filter out news in accordance with the interests of American corporations and powerful political entities. This model asserts that the concentration of media ownership means that mainstream media effectively propagates information designed to support elite interests (Herman and Chomsky, 1988: 303). Among the most significant "filters" is ownership, which regulates the flow of information according to particular interests and thus influences media choices (Herman, 1996: 115).

Ownership undeniably influences media standards in many ways. Academic Robert McChesney argues, "The most important source of altering the professional code comes from the owners. Their constant drumbeat for profit, their concern with minimizing costs and enhancing revenues, invariably influences the manner in which news is collected and reported" (McChesney, 2003: 306). "Budget-cutting mania on journalism arguably has been entirely negative", contends McChesney, "it has meant a relaxation or alteration, sometimes severe, of professional news standards" (ibid: 309).

The close relationship between media and large business conglomerates ultimately limits the media's ability to investigate issues, local and foreign, or to represent all points of view. So, instead of providing information and argument to the public sphere, the media became part of what German sociologist Jürgen Habermas conceptualised as "re-feudalization" of the public sphere; a situation which transforms the corporate media into mere manipulators of public opinion, whose function is to condition the public into the role of depoliticized onlookers and consumers, excluded from public discussion (Thompson, 1995: 74).

It is no secret that news media ownership in the United States has long been monopolised by few wealthy dynastic families. In their thorough investigation article about

Rupert Murdoch, New York Times journalists Jonathan Mahler and Jim Rutenberg reported that:

The Graham family owned The Washington Post for 80 years before selling it to Amazon's founder, Jeff Bezos. William R. Hearst III still presides over the Hearst Corporation, whose roots can be traced to his great-grandfather, the mining-baron-turned-United-States-senator George Hearst". The New York Times has been controlled by the Ochs-Sulzberger family for more than a century". The Murdoch empire is a relatively young one by comparison, but it would be hard to argue that there is a more powerful media family on earth." (Mahler & Rutenberg, 2019).

Similarly, the Murdoch family has gained enormous political clout not just in the United States, but also in other English-speaking nations (e.g. U.K. and Australia). Serge Halimi, the editorial director of *Le Monde diplomatique*, argues that media mogul Rupert Murdoch's media strategy, which consists of acquiring assets as dissimilar as Fox News, the Wall Street Journal, and the Sun in the UK, is not a random move. He aimed "to be a force to be reckoned with" (Halimi, 2015).

As a result of the commercialisation and deregulation of the media sector, the concentration of media ownership has intensified since the mid-1980s. Consequently, industrial conglomerates and the media underwent a process of convergence. Not only has media content integrated all platforms (computers, television, and mobile devices), pervading print, broadcast, and online media, but also big conglomerates have been frenetically acquiring multiple content production and distribution channels. In addition, mega-mergers have been taking place, and only a very small number of super-powerful corporations are currently dominating Global media (AT&T/Time Warner, Comcast, Verizon, Viacom, Disney/21st Century Fox, CBS, Fox, Sony Pictures) (Molla & Kafka, 2019).

Media Ownership in France

Heavy media concentration took place in Europe as well. Many European policymakers have frequently expressed concerns over the growth of large media conglomerates that are exercising unparalleled levels of political and commercial influence (EFJ, 2005: 4). Such worries are justified given the fact that the media sector plays a major role in influencing public attitudes and shaping worldviews, culture, and education.

In France, the privatization of the media sector scaled new heights in the 1980s, as the state monopoly over the radio and television ownership ended. Canal Plus was launched in 1984 and the state-owned television outlet TF1 was privatised a few years later. These developments, in terms of media and telecommunications deregulation and commercialisation, combined with economic globalisation in the early 1990s, paved the way for large French media and communications corporations, such as the Lagardere Group, Vivendi, and France Telecom to expand their worldwide media activities (Badillo, Bourgeois, & Lesourd, 2016: 81). This state of affairs has also set the stage for wealthy dynastic families to acquire an even greater stake in the media industry. In France, six of the ten richest people owned media groups in 2015, namely Bernard Arnault, Serge Dassault, Patrick Drahi, François-Henri Pinault, Vincent Bolloré, Xavier Niel (Halimi, 2015)

This situation dented the trust of the French public in the ethics and trustworthiness of their media. A survey was

undertaken in 2017 by Reuters-affiliated researchers Nic Newman and Richard Fletcher, in which they interviewed more than 18,000 respondents in nine countries (Germany, United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, Spain, Greece, United States, Australia, and France). The researchers found that only 33% of the interviewees in France have confidence in the media to provide them with the right information. This ranks France second to last, just ahead of Greece, among the nine European countries studied (Newman & Fletcher, 2017).

Such conditions have also alarmed civil society organisations and defenders of press freedom. The Interdisciplinary Laboratory for Public Policy Evaluation (LIEPP) and Reporters without Borders (RSF) conducted research in 2017, which revealed critical deficiencies in media ownership in France. It exposed how media ownership has become dangerously concentrated in the hands of a few billionaires. The findings highlighted several negative aspects, such as the lack of transparency in acquisitions, the opacity of shareholding structures that helps conceal the identity of the real owner(s), and an over-representation of the finance and insurance sectors in the ownership of media outlets (51%) in contrast to 18% owned by media companies. The document recommended the publication of a detailed "map" of media ownership that is updated in real time and is accessible to the public (Cagé, 2017).



The Dassault Rafale Aircraft (Mehmet Kaman -AA)

Case Study: *Le Figaro*

Le Figaro presents itself as a newspaper that stands editorially on the right of the political spectrum. It was founded in 1826 in Paris and is considered the oldest national newspaper in France. Currently, *Le Figaro* is the second largest newspaper in France. In 2018, the circulation of the paper was 278,000 copies and up to 150,000,000 online visits.

The Dassault Group purchased *Le Figaro* in June 2004, which has since caused controversy over the newspaper's editorial independence. The fact that Dassault is one of the most important French industrial groups, known for its fighter jets and weapons systems, gives weight to the critics' point of view. Statements by the group Chairman, Serge Dassault, to the effect that his business conglomerate must "own a daily newspaper or a weekly newspaper to express its opinion" (Benilde, 2003), raised many eyebrows at the time.

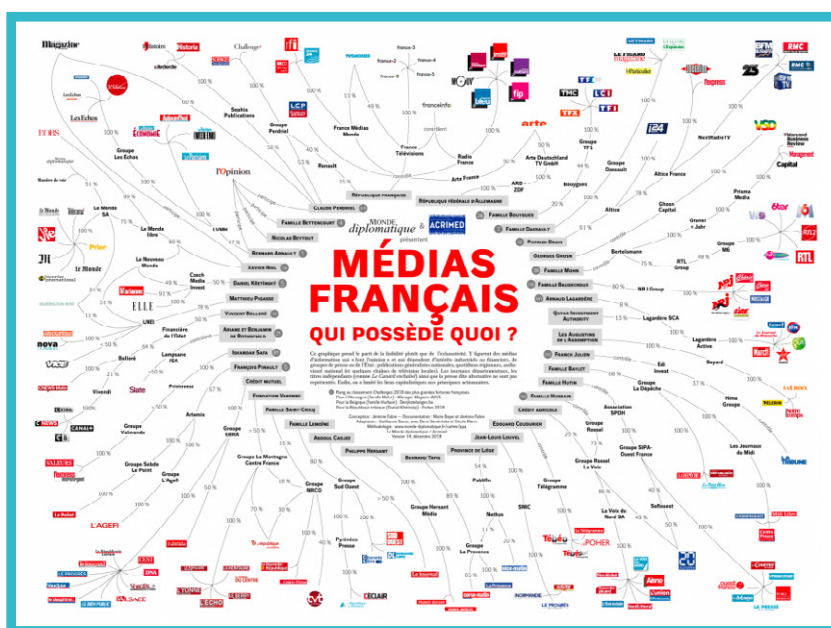
In the mid-2000s, the Dassault Group went on a frenzy to acquire a multitude of national, regional, and local newspapers and magazines. This was done via Socpresse, which was bought by Dassault in 2006. A few years later, the group divested from the regional and local press, causing deep scars in the journalistic profession, leading a few respectable newspapers to cease publishing, and pushing others, such as *Presse-Ocean*, to become tabloid oriented (Frisque, 2010: 965).

Even in light of this volatile business strategy, Dassault retained ownership of *Le Figaro*, *Le Figaro Magazine*, *Madame Figaro Magazine*, and *Le Particulier*. This has provided Dassault with considerable political influence. Shortly after purchasing *Le Figaro*, Serge Dassault used the paper in many ways to promote the group's fighter jet (the Rafale), and criticize the Eurofighter, the direct competitor of the Rafale of Dassault Aviation (Rocco, 2006: 30-31). In 2004, the business mogul then instructed the editors to suppress an exclusive interview about a corruption scandal surrounding

the sale of military frigates to Taiwan (Mallaval, 2004).

Le Figaro went on to align itself with former President Nicholas Sarkozy to the extent that many media outlets, such as *Le Monde Diplomatique*, *Mediapart*, and *Le Canard enchaîné*, published many investigative pieces that showed that *Le Figaro* was acting as Sarkozy's mouthpiece. Such accusations were also relayed by the National Union of Journalists (SNJ) in 2008, which criticized the owner of *Le Figaro* and the newspaper's senior editors for unethical behaviour (Santi, 2008). The symbiotic relationship between Sarkozy and *Le Figaro* was further exposed when the French Presidency commissioned an opinion poll (favourable) and paid for it with taxpayers' money, subsequently making it available for free to *Le Figaro* to publish (Laurent, 2012).

Moreover, other worrying trends have been observed in the editorial line of this newspaper, namely the promotion of Islamophobia. According to research conducted on the representation of Islam in three national newspapers in France, *Le Figaro* included the highest percentage of anti-Islam articles. The research was based on the quantitative analysis of 887 press articles, which were published by *La Croix*, *Le Figaro* and *Humanité* between January 8, 2015 and February 8, 2015 (Gringhuis, 2016: 54).



Source: *Le Monde Diplomatique*

'Organized Hypocrisy': French Policy in Egypt

History Repeating Itself

Western 'interventionism' in the Middle East is rooted in a 'longue- durée' admixture of geopolitics and economics, civilizational outlooks and imperial competition. However, up until the modern period, the situation was perhaps best characterised as having reached a state of balance of power between Europe and, for a large portion of the early-modern period, the Ottoman Empire. With the coming of the European colonial age in the 19th century, and due to a confluence of reasons that are still hotly debated by historians, the balance began to rapidly shift in favour of Europe (and subsequently, the United States). This state of imbalance still characterizes the relationship between Western states and those that make up the modern Middle East.

In more recent times, the strategic contours of this relationship have made more explicit as they have been defined for our age. Subsequent to the oil shock of 1973-74 and the 1979 Iranian Revolution, the United States openly declared the region to be of 'vital interest'. In his State of the Union Address given on January 23rd, 1980, Former US President Jimmy Carter stated that:

An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an

assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.

The classification of the region as being of 'vital strategic interest' has resulted in an approach to the region by the United States and its European allies that prioritizes ensuring unfettered access to energy resources, developing markets for exports - particularly as it concerns military hardware - and the countering of any movement that is deemed to represent a possible threat to the established ways of doing business, whether through political violence or through the ballot box (Zenko, US Military Policy in the Middle East, 2018).

Whether in Algeria in 1992, Palestine in 2006, or Egypt in 2012, Western powers have consistently failed to support the outcomes of electoral processes they themselves were at the forefront of calling for when the results were counter to what was originally hoped for. In turn, this state of affairs comes with the highly problematic implication that the national sovereignty of states in the Middle East is, in the final, irrelevant if particular interests are deemed to be under threat.

Le Figaro and The Sale of Rafale Fighter Jets to Egypt

The case of *Le Figaro* is demonstrative of a wider trend that has been taking place throughout the world, namely, an opaque convergence between state, media and corporate interest. The implications of these developments are wide-ranging, however, one of the most significant is related to what amounts to the hypocritical position of many Western powers when it comes to policy towards Africa and the Middle East.

The case of French arms transfers to Egypt is particularly glaring in this regard and is demonstrative of the fact that,

since at least the end of the cold war, if not before, the same refrain has been repeated over and over again. Namely, the divergence between rhetoric and actual policy as it relates to authoritarian regimes in the Middle East and Africa. On the one hand, the dearth of democratic practices, rule of law, and respect for basic rights has generated an ongoing polemic in policy circles, media and academia that sees inherent cultural traits as being the reason behind what is deemed by the same circles as a lack of progress in these societies. On the other hand, those that decry the apparent lack of progressive outlooks often form part

of the corporate, political and intellectual elite that shape their countries respective foreign and defence policies that seem to prioritize a set of strategic objectives that stand in contradiction to their professed values.

The discipline of geography has provided a framework through which to better understand this observed dynamic. Deploying the concept of 'organized hypocrisy', critical geographers have sought to map the inconsistencies between a "geographic imaginary of a universal moral space where everyone, everywhere is governed by the same moral rules" and actual policy as a reflection of contradictory interests, obligations and incentives (Neumyer, E. & Perkins, R. the organized hypocrisy of ethical foreign policy, 2010).

In a study on arms transfers from leading Western nations, Neumyer and Perkins concluded that political leaders in these selected countries 'rhetorically embrace' international norms regarding democracy, the rule of law and human rights, while simultaneously "responding to domestic materialist imperatives" in a way that contradicts their supposed normative commitments (Neumyer & Perkins, 2010). Regarding the transfer of arms, their study concluded

that a commitment to a 'value-based' arms control policy is "largely a matter of symbolic politics", with countries unwilling to sacrifice particular interests in the name of advancing or protecting the freedoms of others (ibid.). A 2017 report published by the International Human Rights Federation (FIDH) titled, *Egypt: A Repression Made in France*, which details the close knit security tutelage between France and Egypt, is further indication that the relationship with Egypt is in fact consistent with French diplomatic practices in the region that bracket their professed concern for democracy and human rights, a notion supported by the French President Emmanuel Macron who himself has made it clear that France has no human rights lessons to teach Egypt (DW, 2017).

What the case of Le Figaro, Dassault and the arms sales to Egypt reveal, is that defining 'national interest' is not a straightforward as simply setting out policy objectives, and that receiving public buy-in is an important part of the process. In fact, this case is demonstrative of the rise of a sub-set of the traditional military-industrial complex, namely, the military-media complex.

Data Selection

Between February 2nd and September 2nd, 2015, Le Figaro – whose ownership details have already been outlined above – published numerous articles relating to Egypt. Using the LexisNexis system, keywords were drawn from articles relating primarily to Egypt's purchase of Rafale fighter aircraft from Dassault Aviation (the parent company of Le Figaro) and terrorism in Egypt. From February 2nd (the day France and Egypt signed a 5.2 billion Euro contract for 24 Dassault-manufactured Rafale fighter jets) to September 2nd, 2015, Le Figaro published 22 articles related to and employing the following key words: Rafale, Suez, and Islamic State/ISIS/Daesh.

Most significantly, a spike in reference to the Rafale was observed around the time of the contract signing, and then again in July when the first of jets on order were delivered. More consistent reference to 'Suez', Islamic State/ISIS/Daesh is also significant because they represent key elements of the discourse that the French government uses to publicly justify its continued cooperation with Egypt despite documented human rights abuses, some of them that have even involved the use of French-made equipment (Amnesty International, 2018).

France routinely deploys a discourse of human rights and democracy in its articulation of the values underlying its foreign policy. Considering that the current Egyptian president came to power by way of a military coup against the first popularly chosen president in Egyptian history raises obvious contradictions. Moreover, in the course of consolidating power, the Sisi-led regime violently cracked down on Morsi supporters, resulting in the deaths of thousands. Le Figaro's coverage of the issues mentioned above is illustrative of how media can be deployed in order to serve what is an increasing consolidation of media ownership and a convergence of state and corporate interests taking place around the world.

Throughout the articles selected, frequent reference was made to Rafale fighter jets in association with terrorism related content, demonstrating the legitimizing discourse used to justify continued arms sales and security cooperation with a regime that, in theory, is in massive contradiction to the professed values underlining French foreign policy rhetoric. Egypt, which is the throes of a counter-insurgency in the Sinai Peninsula against Daesh affiliated groups, is thus presented as a kind of forward front against the menace of terrorism and extremism that

the French themselves continue to face, albeit in different form.

Securing contracts for the sales of their fighter aircraft is, of course, in the interest of corporations such as Dassault. However, the deployment of an ostensibly free media as a means of influencing public opinion in favour of government policy from which the company stands to benefit is a blatant conflict of interest. This is the case

even more so in light of the criticism of media practices, ownership and freedoms in foreign countries, particularly those who are deemed to fall outside the pale of the enlightened Western-liberal democracies. Furthermore, the increasing consolidation of media ownership and the development of what effectively amounts to the creation of a military-media complex is an open secret in France, as shown above in the discussion on the ownership of Le Figaro.

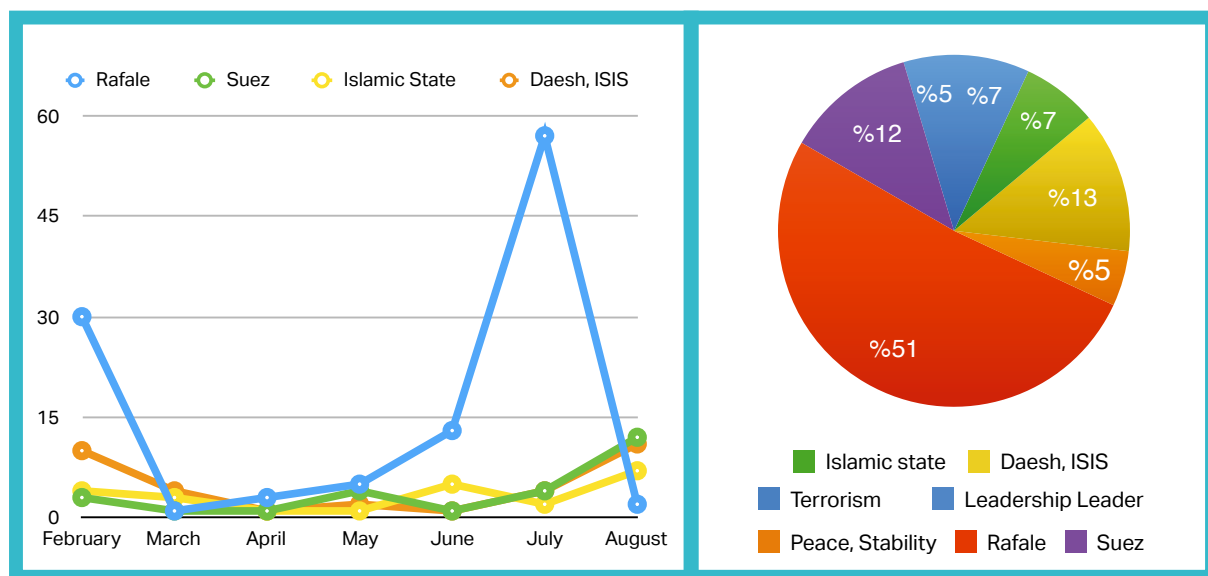


Figure 1: Frequency of Key Words in Selected Articles

French Foreign Policy and Arms Exportation

France, as former colonial power in the Middle East and North Africa, has a long history of interventionism in the region. France, in particular, historically viewed (or at least justified) its colonial interventions through the paradigm of Mission Civilisatrice, a concept that arguably still persists in the guise of a largely rhetorical support for democracy and human rights. Following the collapse of the European Empires in the decades after the Second World War, former European imperial powers often adopted relationships with their former colonies and protectorates that can best be described as clientelistic. The nature of these relationships, which have endured until today, ensure secure export markets for European goods and the maintenance of political regimes that do not challenge what are deemed as the fundamental interests of the former colonial powers.

French foreign policy, particularly as it relates to the Middle East and Africa, largely follows this formula to a "T".

From within a realist paradigm, geopolitics provides a lens that makes these relationships comprehensible. However, specific policies often contradict not only the apparent values underlying the French worldview, but are also potentially in violation of both European and French legal obligations. These legal obligations are, in theory, supposed to prevent and/or sanction the transfer of goods that are susceptible to being used for imposing the death penalty, torture or inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment (French Army Ministry, 2018). In April 2014, less than a year before the Rafale deal was signed, France – along with sixteen other members of the EU – ratified the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), considered by the French government as a major advance for international human rights, which calls on its signatories to the rights of man at the heart of any decision to export arms (French Army Ministry, 2018).



EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Catherine Ashton at a 2013 meeting of the EU Foreign Affairs Council in Brussels on Egypt. - Dursun Aydemir - AA

Despite the fact that widespread violations from the Egyptian state have been well documented (Amnesty International, 2018; Fidh, 2018), the transfer of military technology from France to Egypt has continued unabated, and is in fact higher than at any other time in history (see: Annex II). A report commissioned by four French and Egyptian human rights groups found that French arms sales to Egypt have increased, despite a 2013 European Union declaration that member states had suspended export licences to Egypt for equipment that could be used for domestic oppression (France 24, 2018). Furthermore, this is in spite of the fact that French-procured equipment has been reportedly used for crackdowns by the Egyptian security forces, as mentioned above (Amnesty International, 2018).

According to French policy, arms exports are supposed to respect the letter of the treaties to which they are signatories. At the same time, however, they are also meant to not only stimulate French industry, but also to serve to advance French interests and strategic objectives (French Army Ministry, 2018). There are clear contradictions between these areas of concern, with the latter more often than not, trumping the former, re-enforcing the notion that the former are largely a matter of symbolic politics at best, or simply a tool meant primarily to advance strategic interests and increase corporate profits.

Additionally, according to the French Army Ministry (2018), arms exports are also meant to enhance the sovereignty of the receiving states and respond to their 'legitimate needs' to re-enforce their security. The Rafale deal with Egypt raises a number of concerns in these regards as well. Firstly, the fact that French weapons sales to Egypt were suspended during former Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi's one year rule, only to be restarted shortly after the coup led by current President Sisi, should not be lost in the discussion regarding the enhancement of sovereignty. If state sovereignty and the ability to enhance security was genuinely a priority in and of itself, and not only as long as it agrees with particular French interests, why were arms transfers suspended to the Morsi government? Secondly, while Egypt undoubtedly faces a number of serious security concerns – some of which were arguably exacerbated by the fallout from the coup – there remain serious concerns about how and against whom French manufactured arms are being deployed. It is thus difficult to come to any other conclusion other than that perceived security concerns, domestic political considerations and strategic interests completely trump concerns about democracy, rights and respect for sovereignty.

⁴ See : Decree n° 2011-978 of August 16th, 2011 ; Council Regulation (CE) n° 1236/2005 of Jun3 27th 2005 reported in Rapport au Parlement 2015 sur les exportations d'armement, <https://www.defense.gouv.fr/content/download/536160/9221135/RAP%202018%20-%20Exportations%20armement%20de%20la%20France.pdf>

⁴ The ATT was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2013, marking the first adoption of a major arms control treaty since 1996 and the first universal juridical instrument designed to regulate conventional arms trade and combat illegal trafficking

⁶ See: Neumayer, E. & Perkins, R. The organized hypocrisy of ethical foreign policy: human rights, democracy and Western arms sales. (2010). *Geoforum* (41), 247-256.ex

Conclusion

All things considered, the case of Le Figaro, Dassault, and the sale of Rafale fighter aircraft to Egypt underlines the increasingly complex convergence corporate, media and state interests, referred to in this report as the 'media-military complex'. The continued divergence between actual policy and rhetoric, in the case of French relations with Egypt, was explored through the lens of 'Organized Hypocrisy', which provides an explanatory framework for understanding the institutionalization of these contradictions.

Rather than reflecting an outlook concerned with democracy, the rule of law, and respect for sovereignty and human rights, French policy – along with other Western states – in the Middle East in particular, will continue to revolve around what have been determined to be key strategic interests – namely, secure energy access, export markets for key industries, and countering any resistance to the unfettered pursuit of the former. In terms of messaging

and public perception, media has a crucial role to play in either providing an honest check on these interests, or, as the case of Le Figaro demonstrates, in egregiously advancing them in what is a clear conflict of interest. In this understanding, the foreign policy practices of France and other Western states, particularly in the Middle East are unlikely to change, despite consistent rhetorical support for democracy and rights.

There is one final point of hypocrisy that this case points towards, namely, the consistent criticism by both Western media and state institutions of media practices and ownership in non-Western states. There are of course legitimate concerns and points of critique to be made. However, as the case of Le Figaro illustrates, the very concerns that are raised are in fact taking place in their own back yards. Corporate, and ostensibly 'free' media in the West should not be assumed to be the hallmark, let alone the only example of how journalism can work.



French President Emmanuel Macron attends a meeting with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi at Al Ittihadiyah Palace in Cairo, Egypt on January 28, 2019. - Dursun Aydemir - AA

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Annex I

Key World Descriptions

Key Words	Description
Rafale	The Rafale is a French twin-engine, canard delta wing, multirole fighter aircraft built by Dassault Aviation. To date, 175 Rafale aircraft have been built at a value of US\$62.7 billion. While France supplied €9.8 million worth of military technology and equipment in 2011, that figure leapt to over €1.3 billion in 2016. In fact, in the five years between 2012 to 2016, France has supplied more arms than it had in the previous 20 years. Egypt became France's third biggest client over the period 2006-2015, in terms of orders. From 2008 to 2012 and 2013 to 2017, Egypt's arms imports increased by 215%. Le Figaro frequently refers to the sale of Rafale fighter aircraft to Egypt as a 'milestone for French aviation industry' The sale of the jets are most often associated with the notion of fighting terrorism and maintaining stability in Egypt.
Suez	It is a strategic international navigation canal linking between the Mediterranean sea at Port Said and the Red Sea at Suez. The unique geographical position of the Suez Canal makes it of special importance to the world and to Egypt.
Daesh, Isis, Islamic State	Daesh is a terrorist organization with a particularly violent ideology that claims religious authority over all Muslims. The specter of Daesh/ISIS terrorism is often invoked as a justification for the increased economic and security ties between France and Egypt.

Annex II

Trajectory of French Arms Exports

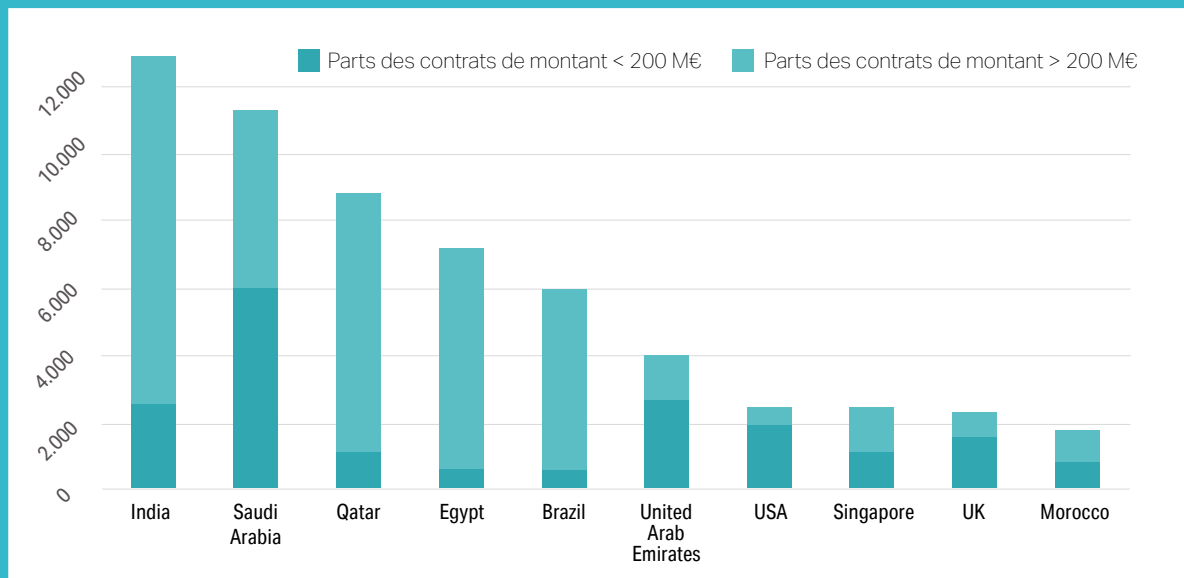
With an annual turnover of \$16.5bn (double that including the state and private security markets), the French defence industry provides 160,000 jobs, without counting subcontractors; 40,000 of those are directly export-related, in companies relatively hard to relocate, and spread all over the country. The domestic industry can satisfy most of France's defence procurement needs (with the notable exception of drones) and receives a constant stream of public contracts, worth around \$12bn a year. Two-thirds goes to the five big groups: Airbus, DCNS, Thales, Safran and Dassault, which account for three-quarters of total turnover and over 80% of exports (7). The industry also benefits from French government emphasis on nuclear

deterrence; besides orders for equipment, it also provides generous R&D loans for future weapons.

Largely because of some very good clients in the Middle East, France is a net exporter of arms, which contributed to reducing the overall deficit by five to eight points a year in 2008-13, according to a study by the defence ministry and McKinsey & Company. The first export sales of Rafale fighters to Egypt and Qatar made 2015 a spectacular year, with \$17.5bn of contracts, double the 2014 figure and four times 2012. If the Rafale deal with India goes through, 2016 should be another record year.

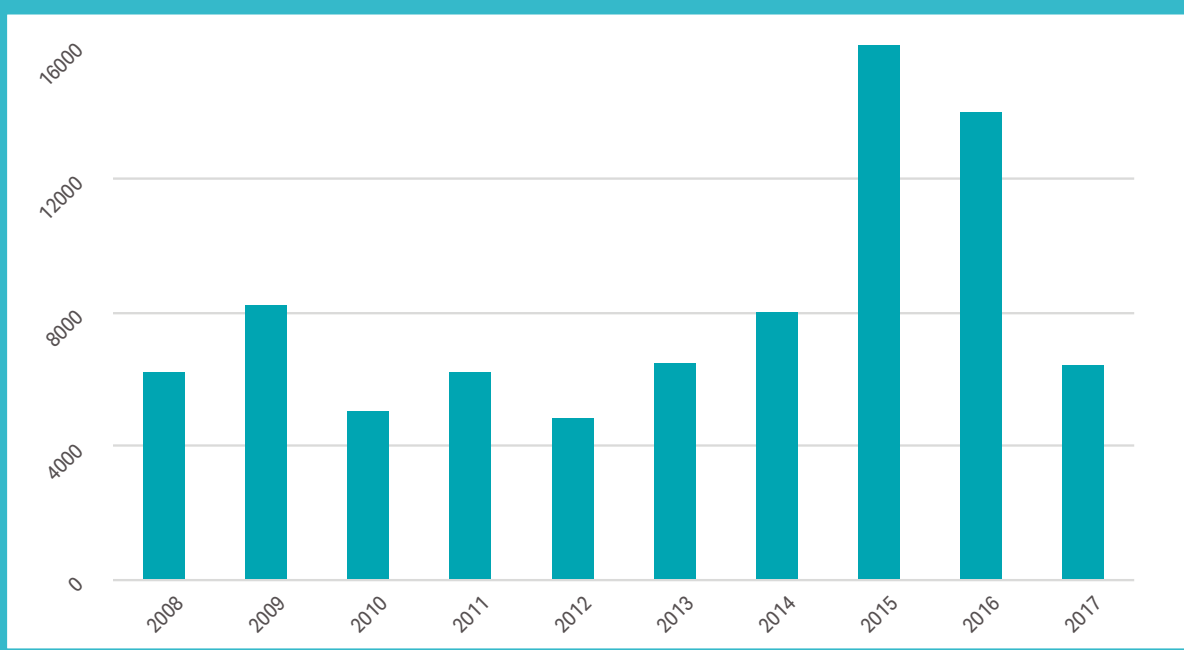
Source: Leymarie, P. (April 2016). *The arms boom*. *Le Monde Diplomatique*. Retrieved from: <https://mondediplo.com/2016/04/09arms>

The main customers of France over the period 2008 -2017 (in € million)



Source: MINISTÈRE DES ARMÉES. Rapport au Parlement 2018 sur les exportations d'armement de la France

Evolution of French order intake 2008-2017 (in € million)



Source: MINISTÈRE DES ARMÉES. Rapport au Parlement 2018 sur les exportations d'armement de la France

