

# FROM ACTIVISM TO MIGRATION

## Nonreligious strategies among former Muslims

BY DR. LENA RICHTER

### INTRODUCTION

Nonreligion is rising across the whole Arab region. This is also the case for Morocco, where nonreligious ideas have become more widespread, especially among the urban and tech-savvy youth. While nonreligious views are becoming more visible, the legal and societal situation is often restrictive.

### PROBLEM STATEMENT

In an environment, where the expectation is to be religious and where being nonreligious remains to a certain extent taboo, the nonreligious minority embraces different strategies to navigate their surroundings.

### METHODOLOGY

In my research I make use of an anthropological, intersectional, longterm, and comparative approach.

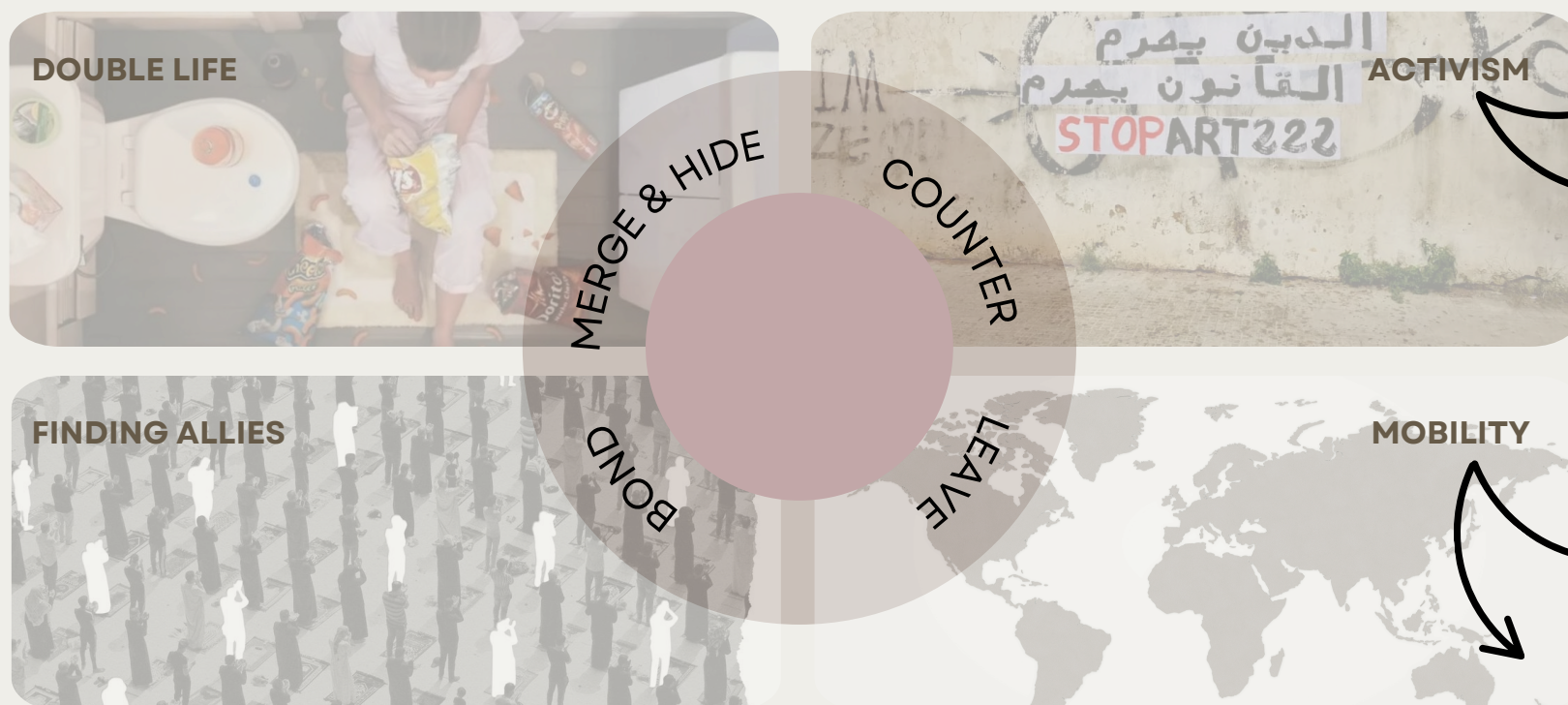
### RESULTS & PUBLICATIONS



## NONRELIGIOUS RESPONSES

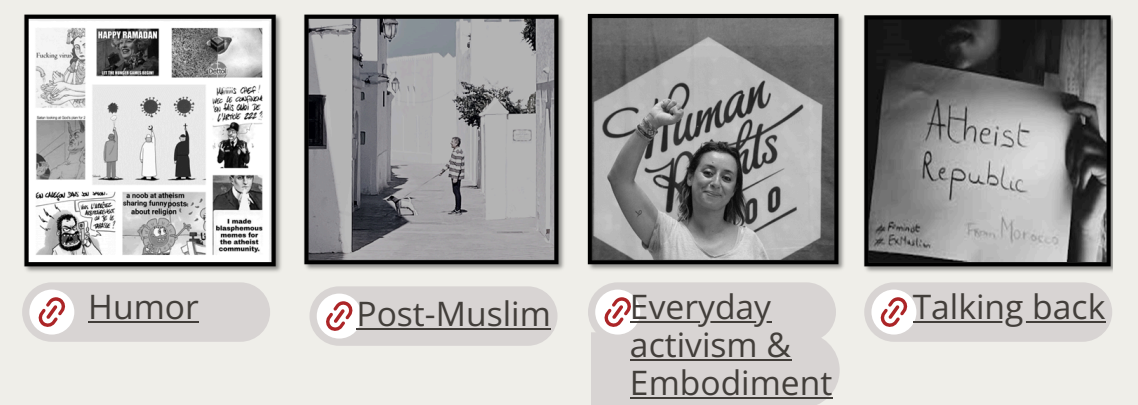
### TOWARDS A RELIGIOUS ENVIRONMENT

Nonreligious responses vary among individuals and depend on intersectional factors. They might also change with time and can be combined. The focus of my PhD research has been the activist response. Handling a broad understanding of activism as everyday acts of normalising nonreligion, I looked at the micro-politics of lived nonreligion. In my current research, I shed light on a different response, namely mobility.



### NORMALISING NONRELIGION

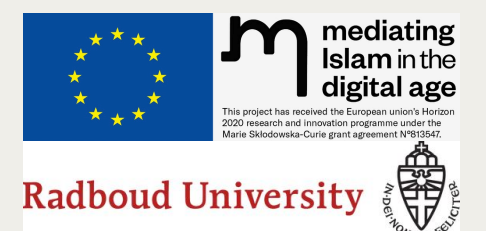
BY SUBTLE FORMS OF ACTIVISM



but also: [@activism fatigue](#)

### PREVIOUS (PHD) RESEARCH

- Supervised by:
- Prof. Karin Van Nieuwkerk (Radboud University)
  - Dr. Araceli González Vázquez (IMF-CSIC)



### CURRENT (POSTDOCTORAL) RESEARCH

- Supervised by:
- Prof. Milena Belloni (MIGLOBA; University of Antwerp)
  - Prof. Lauren Wagner (GTD; Maastricht University)



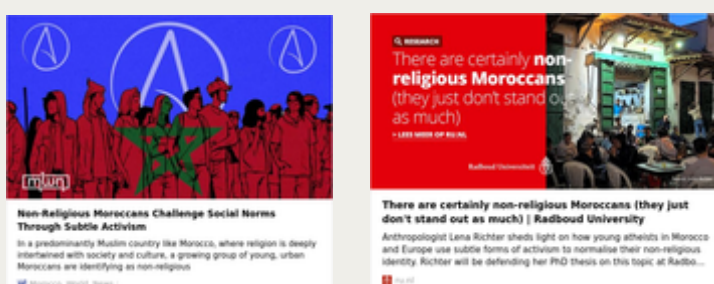
### EU'S 'SECULAR' CITIES— SPACES FOR NONRELIGIOUS PEOPLE ON THE MOVE?

Theme: Citizens' Wellbeing and European Identity

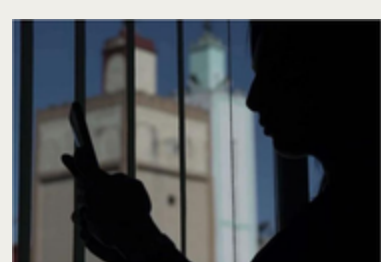
Many atheists and agnostics in Morocco and beyond no longer want to lead a double life or get tired of engaging in activism. Instead—or in addition—they develop aspirations to move abroad. In some cases, they even face (threats of) violence and have to leave the country. Sometimes aspirations are only temporal and local, such as spending Ramadan in a more liberal city or in Morocco's neighbouring country, Spain. In other cases, aspirations are more long-term. Mobility is influenced not only by being nonreligious but also by work and study aspirations, as well as other forms of discrimination.

### OUTREACH

Read or listen more about my research here!



[in English]



[in Arabic]



[in Dutch]



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