In the interwar period, French economic planners attempted to modernize Algerian agriculture in order to create a "EurAfrican" market and create a new form of Mediterranean economic exchange. As the Mediterranean became a sight for development initiatives, colonial officials in Algeria sought to standardize a number of crops historically associated with the Mediterranean, such as olive oil, wine, and citrus. This talk explores how the quest for economic modernization participated in a disavowal of colonial histories by invoking a mythologized Mediterranean space. For example, the restoration of California missions - a symbol of violence and settler colonialism - adopted a "Mediterranean revival" style for gardens and architecture. At the same time, French planners in North Africa explicitly viewed California as a model for territorial and economic expansion. Under the rubric of Mediterranean development, the state of Israel also embarked on agricultural exchanges with Algeria in the 1950s. Local vernaculars of Mediterranean identity and their representations of the natural environment thus served to naturalize the historical process of settler colonialism.

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