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## READING NOTES ON FRENCH COLONIAL MASSACRES IN ALGERIA

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*The French atrocities in Algeria have continued without interruption, at varying and rising degrees since 1830. There is no example in history of such relentlessness against a people, of such a resistance of this people, of such a martyrdom of innocents, guilty only of the fact of not being French! From the companions of Abdelkader smoked out in the caves, from the lime kilns of 1945 to the torture chambers and to the regrouping camps where lie, according to Mr Delouvrier himself, one million Algerians, it is an entire people which is enduring the torment of a slow death.*

(Hafid Keramane 1960: *La Pacification*<sup>f</sup>)

## 1. Introduction

The history of mankind abounds with massacres. The massacre is an episodic phenomenon occurring in all epochs of history; it still takes place in all corners of the globe.

In ancient times the massacre, in the same way as slavery, was considered a necessary confirmation of domination. It was the established norm. As history, particularly ancient, is generally written by the victors, the massacres committed in previous epochs (in Egypt, Athens, Rome etc.) are little written about. They are often described in euphemisms expurgating them of their cruel aspect and their painful dimension. Thus the destruction of entire towns and villages, the total annihilation of peoples and communities appear to the reader anodyne historical facts, banal and hence ‘acceptable’.

Although religions came with a mission to elevate mankind and awaken in him a spiritual quest, they have recognised the inevitability and ‘naturalness’ of armed conflict in the world. Consonant with this mission, most religions have codes of conduct in war that seek to contain the unfolding of man’s violence within boundaries respectful of the sacredness of human life and the dignity of man.

But human stupidity often triumphs in ethical questions, the ‘beast’, in the ignoble sense of the word, takes the place of man. The Middle Ages bear witness to many atrocious massacres committed against civilian populations in Europe and Asia by armies blessed by religious men.

In the modern era, scientific and technological progress worsened the phenomenon of massacre giving it a larger amplitude and scale. As the powder contributed ‘effectively’ to the elimination of the Indians in America, the atom allowed the invention of a new type of massacre, tested with ‘success’

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at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, almost instant in its direct effect on the affected population, and almost eternal in its long term effects which injure and damage generations to come.

Recent history is full of massacres committed in Afghanistan, in Central America, in Angola, in Argentina, in Burma, in Burundi, in Cambodia, in Cameroon, in the Caucasus, in Chad, in China, in Colombia, in the Congo, in Cyprus, in El Salvador, in Ethiopia, in Greece, in Guatemala, in Guinea, in Haiti, in India, in Indonesia, in Indo-China, in Iraq, in Ireland, in Kenya, in Laos, in Madagascar, in Malaysia, in Morocco, in Mexico, in Mozambique, in Palestine, in the Philippines, in Rwanda, in Sri Lanka, in Uganda, in Vietnam, in Zaire. And, of course, in Algeria both under French colonisation and after independence.

There is no doubt that comparative studies of these episodes – especially as regards the contexts of their occurrences, their nature, the identities of the human agencies involved, the dynamics of their unfolding and their multi-dimensional consequences – would uncover historical regularities that would deepen our understanding of these tragic historical failures and their causes and perhaps even help predict and prevent them in the future.

However, so far, these important comparative issues have raised little concern in the countries that have experienced these dislocating events.

In the case of Algeria, despite the large scale of these episodes, there has not even been research interest in documenting and studying the history of massacres in the 1830-1962 period, either from a French perspective or from that of the Algerian victims.

As a matter of fact, historical works, Algerian or French, dealing with this subject are rare and are only accessible to a small group of initiates. For the colonial period preceding the War of Liberation, one should note among others the remarkably precise works of Charles-Robert Ageron, Charles-André Julien and André Nouschi *et al.*, Henri Alleg *et al.*, as well as that of Boucif Mekhaled which deals with the massacres of 8 May 1945. Regarding the repression in the War of Liberation, the lack of historical treatise is more blatant. The majority of civilian massacres committed during this period are not documented even though merely the number of one and a half million victims, which represented a sixth of the population at the time, speaks volumes about the proportion of civilian casualties.

This work is partly motivated by the need to contribute to filling this gap. It also aims at importing some comparative insight into the current massacre campaign, of course, from Algerian history rather than other episodes of mass killing in the world.

These reading notes are not limited to a narrative account of representative examples of massacres in Algeria in the 1830-1962 period. First, section

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2 reviews the set of ideas, values and motivations that made up the French colonialist worldview. It is the ideology of colonialism that served as a powerful tool to derive policies antagonistic to victimised nations, devalue their beliefs and values, and justify aggressive acts, such as massacres, towards them.

Section 3 surveys the specific and detailed ways in which the massacres were executed as strategic and/or tactical instruments to achieve the military objectives of the colonial political programmes in the 1830-1962 period.

In section 4, the notes narrate a selection of massacre episodes chosen to cover the whole span. The order of the presentation is chronological. The 1830-1962 span is divided into eight periods, each one corresponding to a distinct French ruling order.

Section 5 will summarise the main points of this historical review.

## 2. French Colonial Logic

### 2.1. Introduction

*Civilisation, civilisation, pride of the Europeans and open grave of the innocents... You built your kingdom on corpses. Whatever you wish, whatever you do, you remain in error. In your sight tears well up and pain cries out. You are the force which surpasses the law. You are not a torch but a conflagration. All that you touch you consume.*

(René Maran<sup>A</sup> 1921: *Batonala, véritable roman nègre*)

Before discussing the instrumentality of the colonial massacres it is useful to specify their context, to situate them relative to the colonial logic which created the need for such an instrumentality. It is equally necessary to make a distinction between those (individuals, institutions or State) who thought out and legitimated these massacres and those who planned and executed them.

Those who carried out the colonial massacres simply relinquished feelings of responsibility for the welfare of their victims. Colonialist ideology and military socialisation and experience moulded individuals into agents whose personal values and conduct were in accord with those of the system. As will be illustrated later, some of the perpetrators even evolved along a path of destructiveness that ended in sadistic enjoyment of, and addiction to, the practice of mass murder as they executed more massacres. The occasional twinge of conscience was resolved by sheltering behind the obligation to duty, to carry out 'normal operations'.

<sup>A</sup> Colonial civil-servant of West-Indian origin.

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On the contrary, those who thought out the colonialist ideology and those who prescribed the massacres placed themselves, consciously or unconsciously, in a position of superiority, finding it legitimate to indulge in disposing of the life of others, who in their eyes exist to be subordinate to their needs, interests and desires. It is a narcissistic and arrogant sentiment, termed in the Quran '*al-istikbar*', that does not simply numb feelings of responsibility but turns evil-doing into good, and brings about a complete reversal of morality. It turns murder into a heroic mission and service to mankind.

This *istikbarian* disposition pervaded the circles of the French 'enlightened' philosophers, liberal ideologists and the political and intellectuals societies. As the secretary of the Valenciennes Society put it: '*To remain a great nation, to become one, a people must colonise...*'<sup>2</sup>

**2.2. Commercial Colonisation**

To become and remain big, a nation must necessarily possess an economic force. It is one of the principal motives of colonisation and one which endowed France with a huge source of raw materials, a reservoir of manpower and a gigantic market to sell its manufactured goods under profitable conditions.

In 1748, a little less than a century before the conquest of Algiers, Montesquieu already recognised in *De l'esprit des lois* (On the Spirit of the Laws), a basic text of the liberal doctrine in France which inspired the French Constitution of 1791, that colonisation allowed trade with others on unequal terms: 'The purpose of colonies is to trade, under the best conditions, that which one could not do with neighbouring peoples with whom the advantages are reciprocal.'<sup>3</sup>

The Algerian historian Mahfoud Bennoune underlines in his book, *The Making of Contemporary Algeria*,<sup>4</sup> the economic motives of colonisation.

From the outset the French conquerors intended to establish a colony in the north of Africa that could absorb a large number of idle men and women, whose main function would be to provide the metropolis with raw materials and to be used as an outlet for dumping French manufactured goods. The major motives underlying this colonial undertaking were revealed and formulated in the conclusions of the *Commission d'Afrique*, which was set up in 1833 by the French government and sent to Algeria to study the advantages and disadvantages of the colonisation of the country. Its report, contrary to what most French historians have tried to make us believe, concluded that the occupation of Algeria would be profitable economically, commercially, politically and militarily to France:

The economic calculations had belittled the value of colonies. The old nations must have outlets in order to alleviate the demographic pressures exerted on big cities and the use of the capital that has been concentrated there. To open new sources of production is, in effect, the surest means of neutralising this concen-

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tration without upsetting the social order... It is the surest way of preventing the seeds of hostility that are being sown among the working classes, not only against the government but also against society and against property.

This economic motivation would be explicitly reaffirmed later by the settler Eugène Étienne, deputy for Oran, when he said to the Assembly:

I must say that if there is one reason justifying the expenditure of money and the sacrifice of men in establishing our colonial domain, it is the idea, the hope that the French merchant will have the option of throwing away the over-production of French industry into the colonies. It is undeniable.<sup>5</sup>

### 2.3. Civilising Colonisation

Colonisation as a means of enriching a nation should however be clothed in a 'civilising mission' allowing consciences of certain sensitive souls to be saved.

Jules Ferry, 'one of the greatest theoreticians of colonisation, emphasised the importance of the colonies for the economic development of modern nations.'<sup>6</sup> He is also described as 'the doctrinarian' and 'the strategist' of 'the imperialism of the triumphant Republic.'<sup>7</sup> He affirmed, for example, that 'the "superior races" have both rights and duties with regard to the "inferior races" [...]. These rights and duties are those of civilisation with regard to barbarism.'<sup>8</sup>

This 'duty of civilisation' is also shared by the pacifist socialist Jean Jaurès. Although he did not always agree with the means used by France to civilise the 'Barbarians', he admitted that the 'interests [of France] give it a sort of right.'<sup>9</sup> This principle of subordinating rights to interests was not only the basis of French colonial policy in Algeria but would also shape French foreign policy towards an independent Algeria.

The dialectic between the 'duty to civilise others' and the right to protect French interests, which one finds in French socialist circles of the time, is expressed by Raoul Girardet in these terms:

Unable to find, strictly speaking, a systematic doctrine of overseas expansion, Fourier, Cabet and the majority of the first French socialists were favourable to the general principles of a new colonisation – 'conquest of the universe uncultivated by humanity' in the words of Cabet – [that would produce] an increase in wealth and that would be capable of promoting the institution of new forms of social organisation.<sup>10</sup>

### 2.4. From Colonisation to Colonialism

On the ground, the war chiefs were not always favourable to the methods advocated by the intellectuals and politicians back in France who sought

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both 'to civilise' and benefit from the colonial populations. General Bugeaud, for example, was very critical of the discourse of certain 'pacifists' who did not stick to the principle of colonisation by force. To show how inconsistent they can be, he said (on 4 September 1848):

They did not even want us to go to war but we did in spite of them. They wanted us to colonise the flowerpots on the terraces of Algiers. When the country was tamed, and conquered, contrary to their judgement and forecasts, their demands were so inflated that they asked us to do in two years the work of centuries.<sup>11</sup>

On another occasion, when defending Colonel Pelissier who had been accused of having wiped out whole tribes, General Bugeaud wrote to Marshall Soult, the War Minister, explaining the necessary stages of civilisation and asking him to:

give the public a more accurate idea of the necessity of rigorous actions to achieve the full submission of the country, without which there can be no colonisation, no administration, no civilisation. Before administering, civilising, and colonising, it is a must that populations should have accepted our law. A thousand examples have shown that they will accept it only through force, which proves powerless if it does not reach the persons and the interests.<sup>12</sup>

Little by little, the ideology of the 'civilising colonisation' as a generator of wealth would disappear thus giving way, under pressure from war chiefs and above all the rapidly expanding settler community, to a colonialism which negated the colonised.

'As we cannot civilise them we must send them far away' declared General de Rovigo. Convinced of the impossibility of succeeding in the 'civilising mission', he recommended cleansing Algeria of its populations, and uprooting and dispersing them:

like wild animals who keep away from the vicinity of inhabited places, they must recede to the desert as we progress with our settlements; they must stay forever in the sands of the Sahara.<sup>13</sup>

One of the ideologists of colonialism who best expressed the new dream of a French Algeria without Algerians was Henri de Sarrauton. In 1891, he summarised his extremist ideas as follows:

The indigenous people will never accept our European values. They will never ask for French naturalisation and, should you want to impose it, they will reject it with all their force. Their religion formally and explicitly forbids them to adopt our civil and political institutions because the Quran is at the same time their religious code, their civil code and their political code. What you call the benefits of French civilisation are, in their eyes, deeply horrific heresies. To assimilate the indigenous population, the influence of the Quran must be uprooted and the people converted to Christianity. However, experience shows that the Muslim never converts from his own free will. For centuries missionaries have wasted their time and effort trying to

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convert Muslim countries. Force must be used. Can we imagine then that the tolerant and freethinking French government sets up an inquisition as did King Ferdinand after the conquest of Grenada? Clearly it is impossible. Assimilation is therefore a fantasy. This people must be driven back, step by step, and be replaced gradually and systematically by a French population. This is the only way for Algeria to become truly French.<sup>14</sup>

As for Varin, he recommended, in *Algeria, Will she Become a Colony?*, the same method towards the indigenous people:

We must imperceptibly but relentlessly constrict their running ground and, with taxation, make their existence progressively so painful until they have only this viable alternative: either they revolt or become soldiers for France.<sup>15</sup>

According to Dr Bodichon, another theorist of the permanent settlement of the French in Algeria and author of two widely distributed books at the time, *Thoughts on Algeria* (1845) and *Algeria and Africa* (1847):

It matters little that France in her political conduct goes beyond the limits of common morality at times; the essential thing is that she establishes a lasting colony and that, later, she brings European civilisation to these barbaric countries. When a project which is to the advantage of all humanity is to be carried out, the shortest path is the best. Now, it is certain that the shortest path is terror. Without violating the laws of morality, or international jurisprudence, we can fight our African enemies by powder and fire, joined by famine, internal division, war between Arabs and Kabyles, between the tribes of the Tell and those of the Sahara, by brandy, corruption and disorganisation. That is the easiest thing in the world to do.<sup>16</sup>

Everyone agreed that settlement in Algeria would only succeed if it was supported by a depopulation-repopulation policy. 'The expropriation of the indigenous is the first condition, the unavoidable condition for French settlement on the ground,' wrote Raousset-Boulbon<sup>17</sup>. For General Bugeaud: 'Our settlers must be placed wherever there is good water and fertile land, without inquiring about the ownership of the land. They must be given the land and made its sole owners.'<sup>18</sup> As for Lamoricière he speaks the same language as General Bugeaud: 'We need European settlers. Only a Christian agricultural population allows us to hope that one day it will be possible for us to maintain our position.'<sup>19</sup> But General Bugeaud wanted that population to be vigorous to face the resistance of the natives:



General Lamoricière

Ah, if there were no Arabs in Africa, or if they resembled the effeminate Indians, I would have been the last one to advise my country to raise budgets for a colonisa-

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tion base with a military element. But the experience of this nation, [which is] so vigorous, so well prepared for war, so superior in this sense to the European masses that we could bring to this country, compels us absolutely to establish in front of it, next to it and in its midst the strongest possible population.<sup>20</sup>

This population will not necessarily be French but will come from all the Mediterranean countries, even from Switzerland. 'For seventy years, we have robbed, hunted and tracked down the Arabs in order to populate Algeria with Italians and Spanish,' said Anatole France ironically in 1905.<sup>21</sup>

In 1922, that is to say nearly a century after the conquest, believing the Algerian people had been vanquished and their resistance annihilated, some French voices claimed in a disconcerting euphoria:

We French are at home in Algeria. We have become masters by force because a conquest can only be achieved by force, and necessarily implies that there be the vanquishers and the vanquished. When the latter were beaten, we were able to organise the country, and this organisation itself confirms the superiority of the conqueror over the conquered, of the civilised man over the lower man. We are the legitimate owners of the country.<sup>22</sup>

**2.5. The Barbarian and the Civilised**

From the earliest years of colonisation the deceitful mask of the 'civilising mission' quickly fell as the 'barbarian' people soon showed themselves less barbaric than the theorists of colonisation had propagandised.

As regards education, Henri Alleg describes the shock of the troops landing in Algiers and finding themselves in an environment completely different from what they had imagined on leaving the French coast:

A most humiliating surprise, at a time when 40% of our compatriots are illiterate, one realises that 'nearly all the men can read and count [...], that in Algiers alone there are one hundred Quranic schools where children learn, alongside religious principles, reading, writing and arithmetic'. Hence, the soldiers who disembark are generally less educated than the 'savages' they have come to 'civilise'.<sup>23</sup>

The French troops' first operations were to destroy the cultural infrastructures, institutions and values which troubled their ego. Referring to the *razzias* in an exchange of letters with his friend General Lamoricière, Alexis de Tocqueville wrote: 'Since we have allowed this great violence that is the conquest, I believe that we must not back down before details which are absolutely necessary to consolidate our position.'<sup>24</sup> He describes the plundering carried out by the conquering army:

The Muslim society in Africa was not uncivilised but it was backward and imperfect. At the centre were a large number of religious foundations with charitable and educational aims. We misappropriated their revenue, reduced their number, let the schools run down and broke up the seminaries. Around us the lights went out, the

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recruitment of religious men and of lawyers stopped. It must be said that we left the Muslim society more miserable, more disorganized, more ignorant and more barbaric than it had been before our encounter.<sup>25</sup>

Unable to eliminate physically the people, French '*istidmar*' (destructive colonialism) left no stone unturned in destroying its cultural identity. Daniel Guérin states that:

In Algeria we tried to murder the soul of the country. It was conquered to establish a settlement which would be annexed to the metropolis. We almost inflicted on the natives the expeditious treatment which the American pioneer used against the Redskins. Originally it was the military, for example a certain General Bernard in 1833, who seriously considered 'driving back and exterminating the indigenous population'. It proved an impossible task. But, for our inability to make the natives disappear physically, we have tried to break them morally and spiritually.<sup>26</sup>

In the military field, the civilised-barbarian rhetoric, which was at the heart of the colonialist ideology, had a practical implication on the ground. Its inhuman representation of the enemy legitimated aggression as a moral imperative and cultural ideal. Alexis de Tocqueville, in his *Travail sur l'Algérie* of 1841, would make the Arab a human oddity, a special case justifying and making 'necessary' the violation of the basic rules of war:

In France I have often heard that men whom I respect, but do not agree with, dislike the burning of harvests, the emptying of silos and the seizing of unarmed men, women and children. In my opinion they are necessary evils to which everybody wanting to make war with the Arabs must submit.<sup>27</sup>

The troops would thus feel confronted, as François Maspéro remarked, by a new type of enemy distinguished by both an animosity and a bestiality:

The entire military stage of the colonisation rests on one major notion: the negation of the other. Even if the men who debark at Sidi Ferruch do not feel inspired by a particular mission to civilise, they arrive imbued with this inborn certitude, specifically French: they incarnate civilisation, because they are French. It is simple and simple-minded. As a result, whoever fires at them attacks civilisation. Their enemy is therefore not only a classic enemy, but also a savage.<sup>28</sup>

In order to galvanise the destructive capacity of their troops, the generals of the French Army always resorted to the bestialization of the enemy. Referring to the discourse of the bestiary of the colonial authorities to incite the extermination of the insurgents in May 1945, (cf. § 4.7) François Maspéro reminds us that this is no novelty, but an attitude with its roots in the first phase of the conquest:

The 'savagery' is therefore an old antiphon of the coloniser. It is one of the most commonly used words by the conquerors one hundred years earlier. Savagery, bestiality: hyenas (Saint-Arnaud), jackals (Bugeaud), wild beasts (Montagnac), a complete

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bestiary is used. The main point is to deny the quality of being human to those so qualified.<sup>29</sup>

With regards to war ethics, General Saint-Arnaud, for example, known for wreaking havoc in Kabylia and for giving the order to bury five hundred Algerians alive in a cave near Ténès (cf. § 4.2), was pleasantly surprised to notice streaks of humanity in the 'Barbarians'. He recounts how

a really strange event just happened. Abdelkader sent back all our prisoners without condition, without exchange. He told them: 'I have nothing to feed you with, I don't want to kill you, I will send you back.' A beautiful act for a barbarian. These unfortunates arrived today in Blida, in an understandable state of misery and suffering. At their head was the young lieutenant *d'état-major* Mirandole, caught in Mascara. He was enthusiastic about the Emir as were all the prisoners who had met him. It is true that all these poor people were almost all struck by a remarkable over-excitation of the brain.<sup>30</sup>

The contrast between the attitudes of the war chiefs, those of the 'civilizers' and those of the 'civilisable', is at times particularly striking. While some French generals were encouraging their troops to compete for collecting Arab ears by offering a generous bonus (cf. § 3.2), the head of the resistance, Emir Abdelkader, was giving strict instructions on the treatment of prisoners and

published in all the territories he controlled a decree which, it should clearly be stated, went against both the ethics of that time and the hatred prompted in Algerians by the invaders' exaction: 'Any Arab who brings alive a French soldier will receive eight *douros* as a reward [...]. Any Arab who has a French man in his possession is expected to treat him well and to bring him promptly, either to the Caliphe or the Emir himself. If the prisoner were to complain of bad treatment, the Arab would not have any reward.' Following this decision, an Algerian soldier, addressing Abdelkader, asked him: 'What reward for a living prisoner? — Eight *douros*. — And for a cut off-head? — Twenty five thrashings on the sole of the foot.'<sup>31</sup>

There were, of course, some French officers who had a humane concept of war such as Valée, Bosquet, Desvaux and Bandicour but the hard core of superior officers were always of the opinion that the end justified the most inhuman means. Indeed several names remain associated with the massacre of hundreds of thousands of Algerians. The most infamous being Bugeaud, Cavaignac, Lamoricière, Montagnac, Pélissier, Saint-Arnaud and Savary (the Duke of Rovigo).

The historical absurdity which consisted of using the argument of the 'civilising mission' to justify colonisation was not long in being pointed out by some French observers. As a matter of fact, in a report by a commission of inquiry appointed on 7 July 1833 by the King, to gather information on the situation in the colony, one can read the following: 'We have massacred people carrying safe-conduct passes; slaughtered entire populations on a

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suspicion, which were later found to be innocent,<sup>32</sup> and 'We have outdone the barbarity of the Barbarians we have come to civilise.'<sup>33</sup>

### **3. The Instrumentality of the Colonial Massacres in Algeria**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

In order to discuss the instrumentality of the colonial massacres, two periods will be considered: i) the period from 1830, the year of conquest, to 1871 which saw the last major insurrection, ii) the period of the War of Independence (1954-1962). This choice is motivated by the comparable intensity and extent of the massacres and counter-insurrectionary aspects of the campaigns in the two periods. It should be noted however that between these two periods the use of massacre subsided but did not cease which explains the rapid implementation, during the War of Independence, of the methods and means used earlier during the colonial 'pacification' period.

The massacres had several functions. They were used as:

- i) a means of wiping out the local population to make room for ever greater numbers of European colonists and for offering opportunities to property speculators;
- ii) an instrument of terror to weaken the Algerian populations in order to establish and consolidate absolute authority over them and guarantee their submission;
- iii) a tool of psychological warfare, in order to manipulate opinion,
- iv) a counter-insurgency instrument to destroy the political and physical connection between the armed resistance and the people;
- v) a means of reprisal to retribute the populations in the framework of what was called 'collective responsibility'. The conquering army took furious revenge against the civil population each time it suffered a setback at the hands of the armed resistance, often on a mere suspicion entire villages accused of having helped resistance fighters were wiped out.

#### **3.2. Instrumentality of the Massacres in the Period 1830–1871**

The French war chiefs used massacre as an instrument of 'pacification', that is to say to annihilate all resistance to the conqueror, from day one of the conquest of Algiers. Henri Alleg describes how the massacre in the conquest of Algeria had functions which were well-defined and worked out by the conquering army strategists.

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These are not isolated incidents, tragic accidents, 'mistakes' as we will say later on, of which we need only know the perpetrators so that they may be punished, but they are part of a willed and studied system, which will be expanded and perfected in spite of protests from those French that Saint-Arnaud, Pelissier and Montagnac call derisively 'philanthropists'. Terror, massacres and *razzias* shall constitute daily elements of the conquest strategy.<sup>34</sup>

This strategic option was not however an innovation. At the end of victorious military campaigns huge massacres of civilians had been perpetrated by French army columns at the Palatinate, under Louis XIV and under Hoche at Vendée. This practice was part of a military tradition where strategic rationality seeks the rapid and disproportionate death of the enemy (as both the foundation and objective of absolute military superiority) rather than the effective application of force against an adversary whose rationality and humanity is acknowledged and respected.<sup>35</sup>

From the earliest years of occupation French war chiefs used the execution of civilians on a massive scale in their anxiety for absolute domination of the whole territory, and to suffocate any local resistance which might slow down this domination. Officer Rozet had an unshakeable belief in the necessity 'to exterminate all the Berbers who live in the mountains of Beni-Menad, Chenoua, etc.'<sup>36</sup> in order to colonize effectively the Mitidja plain. Rozet's efficiency was well demonstrated throughout the Algerian territory. In 1994 François Maspéro estimates the loss of the Algerian population during the first quarter of the century at nearly a quarter (2 300 000 in 1856 as opposed to 3 000 000 in 1830).<sup>37</sup>

In his defence plea of General de Rovigo, the governor general of Algiers, who was accused of massacring thousands of unarmed Algerians, War Minister Girard asserted that:

We must decide to drive them far back, even to exterminate the indigenous population. Devastation, fire, spoiling of agriculture are perhaps the only means of solidly establishing our domination.<sup>38</sup>

Colonel L. François de Montagnac was very explicit in his *Letters from a Soldier* (Paris, 1885) about the necessity to rid the country of all pockets of resistance:

In my opinion everybody who does not accept our conditions must be eliminated. All must be taken, pillaged, with no distinction as to age or sex: grass should no longer grow where the French Army has passed.<sup>39</sup>

According to Alleg it was General Bugeaud who integrated the massacre of innocents as an instrument of terror into his war doctrine against the Algerian resistance:

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The terrible form the war has taken from its beginning is not only the expression of the cruelty of the expeditionary corps leaders and of the contempt they felt towards the 'Barbarians' they came to subdue but it also fits within a carefully set-up combat strategy. Lamoricière was the first to express the conclusions drawn from his experience. Bugeaud made it a doctrine and generalized its application to all military operations: the only way to defeat these elusive partisans is not to chase them but to starve them by destroying or confiscating crops and herds, slaughtering the largest number of inhabitants – fighters or not – and spreading everywhere such terror that they must ultimately surrender or disappear.<sup>40</sup>

It was therefore without embarrassment that General Bugeaud addressed the Chamber on 14th May 1840 before his departure for Algeria: 'We need a great invasion of Africa, one which resembles that of the Franks and that of the Goths.'<sup>41</sup> He added: 'Gentlemen, we do not make war with philanthropy. Who wants the end wants the means.'<sup>42</sup> It was also General Bugeaud who suggested the use of force as a remedy to the rebellion against injustice: 'We must be strong to bear the injustice towards the Arabs of which we cannot avoid being guilty.'<sup>43</sup>



General Bugeaud

General Bugeaud concluded that in facing Emir Abdelkader's mobile guerrilla strategy in Algeria, the French Army was making the same mistakes as against the Spanish *partides*: using columns of heavy infantry to inflict a decisive defeat (a Napoleonic War strategy). He prescribed instead the use of mobile columns. But the essence of his counter-insurgency strategy targeted the civilian population, a part of which supplied the insurrection with men, supplies and information on French troop movement. He prescribed the destruction of the popular base of the insurgents, and enshrined the principle that military action must be followed by political organization.<sup>44</sup> Massacre of the civilian population is therefore central to his strategy. General Bugeaud prescribes:

To conquer them their livelihood must be attacked. This cannot be done by simply rushing through; the territory of each tribe must be attacked; the villages destroyed, the fruit trees cut down, the harvests burned or dug up, the granaries emptied, the ravines, rocks and caves scoured to seize their women, children, old men, cattle and possessions. If only one or two ways are followed, one will only see the warriors. One will have more or less the advantage in combat, but will not strike at either the population as a whole or its wealth, and the result will be almost nil.<sup>45</sup>

On another occasion to justify the destruction of the Beni-Menacer tribe's villages and harvests, General Bugeaud wrote in his *Letter to Marshal Soult* (14 April 1842) that:

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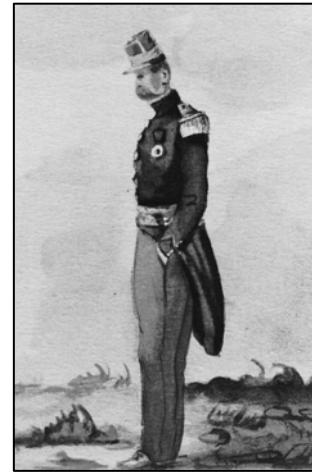
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Without doubt it is cruel and makes me sick; but there is no other means to reach and to subdue this extraordinary people. France must understand that it is an inevitable consequence of what she wanted; because one cannot go to war without envisaging the results, and these results can only be obtained by such means. If I had to take towns of the size of Vienna or Berlin, I would wage war in a manner to satisfy the philanthropists.<sup>46</sup>

Military entrepreneurs of colonization were not only interested in the massacres simply as a tactic in their counter-insurgency strategy. They were interested down to the smallest detail, that is to say in the massacre techniques and in the psycho-political reactions roused in the victimised population. The massacre was also a means of terrorising and demoralising the population, the know-how of producing a coercive submission and swinging it to the colonialist side. Colonel Montagnac, for example, learnedly discussed decapitation techniques and, in *Letter of a Soldier* (Paris, 1885), he asserted that:



Colonel Montagnac

A severed head produces a terror stronger than the death of fifty people. I have understood this for a long time and I assure you that none makes it out of my claws that has not undergone the delicate operation [...]. All the good military men that I have the honour of commanding are forewarned by myself that if they bring me an Arab alive they receive a thrashing with the flat side of a sword.. This is the way one should wage war against Arabs: kill all males who are more than fifteen years old, take all women and children and put them in ships and send them to the Marquise Islands or somewhere else. In one word, annihilate anything that does not crawl at our feet like dogs.<sup>47</sup>

The perpetration of planned and organised massacres by the French Army during the conquest of Algeria was echoed in the military authority's measures encouraging soldiers to increase the death toll and terror during massacres.

The 'harvest' of human ears, which can be compared to that of Indian scalps in America, was not only permitted but also rewarded. For a pair of Algerian ears, a price of ten francs was fixed and remained in use for a long time<sup>48</sup>. Several 'harvests' of barrels of ears were reported. In 1840, for example, Ben Gana, a feudal from South Constantine, who had joined forces with the French Army, sent an offering of 500 pairs of Arab ears to General Galbois. He was compensated with 50 000 francs and the *Légion d'Honneur*.<sup>49</sup>

Whereas the primordial instrumentality of the colonial massacres was prescribed by a counter-insurgency doctrine and the strategic principles of the French Army, there remains a proportion of the massacres which obeyed

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a subordinate instrumentality, an economic one, which was grafted onto the first.

The historians Noushi *et al.* emphasised the role of property speculators, deputies and friends of the authorities, who pushed the latter towards colonization. They had everything to gain in an enterprise which would increase their estate property in Algeria.

These tendencies have been used with precise intentions: to exterminate populations by destroying all their resources in order to make room for colonization, as did the Americans at the same epoch, with the Indians; suppressing all possibility of resistance by annihilating men themselves; speculating on this very destruction.<sup>50</sup>

General Bro's statement, in a letter to his brother in 1834, is very instructive about the degree of excitement experienced by the property speculators and land owners at the time.

You asked me what the progress with the colonisation is. I would reply that until now it is limited to property speculation. We are gambling on land as one gambles on the stock exchange with bonds, spirits or coffee. You will be surprised when I tell you that Blida was sold to thousands of colons before we conquered and occupied it. [...] The Mitidja plain is a marshland approximately twenty-five leagues long and twelve leagues wide (two leagues equals five miles) that has also been sold. All we have to do now is 'break arms and legs' to conquer the land of these tramps who spend their free-time flinging abuse at the poor soldiers who in turn spend their time and youth making money.<sup>51</sup>

Another aspect of the economic logic was the local colonialists' desire to maintain a certain financial autonomy thus guaranteeing independence vis-à-vis the central authority. This financial autonomy was to be assured by the expropriation of possessions and by taxes and fines extorted from the population. It was to this effect that 'one of the aims of extermination was also to benefit from that which had not been destroyed'.<sup>52</sup> Favrod explained the concern expressed by Marshall Soult on 13 August 1841 to alleviate the human and financial burdens of France, specifying that wisely limited colonisation 'is the first element of conservation; in a few years it can give us sufficient means to defend Algeria without expending more troops or money than is fitting'.<sup>53</sup> This was achieved by 'the colons bearing arms and becoming militias as soon as they had settled'.<sup>54</sup> The battalions of militia and other native auxiliaries of the army participated actively in the campaign of massacres against the civilian population.

It should also be noted that while in the beginning the massacres obeyed the colonialist imperative, certain French officers, as they developed psychologically towards sadism in the course of their destructive practices, committed massacres which had no relation to military-political aims but served only to gratify individual sadistic compulsions.

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General Savary (Duke of Rovigo), for example, recommended to his subordinates: 'Heads! Bring heads, heads, block burst water mains with the head of the first Bedouin you meet!'<sup>55</sup> Colonel Montagnac admitted that 'to chase away dark thoughts that besiege me, sometimes I have heads cut off.'<sup>56</sup> In *Letters from a Soldier*, he related:

[Of] the Algerian women we capture, some we keep as hostages and the rest are auctioned to the troops like animals. In the operations we have carried out during the last four months I have witnessed scenes that would melt the hardest heart, if one let oneself be moved! I witnessed it all with a frightening indifference. [...] Women and children caught on thick bush wood which they had to cross as they surrendered to us. We kill, we slaughter; the screaming of the terror-stricken and the dying blends with the sounds of the beasts.<sup>57</sup>

General Cavaignac, a man infamous for his *enfumage* (gasing) exterminations, spoke of his 'unpleasant job to which one becomes attached. A job so cruel one should feel nothing but remorse but nevertheless gives pleasure.'<sup>58</sup>

The massacre of a civilian population is, to borrow Joxe's expression, a 'strategy against nature', a 'strategopathology' or a 'strategic autism',<sup>59</sup> where the practitioners degenerate inexorably into psychological sadists.

### 3.3. Instrumentality of the Massacres in the Period 1954–1962

During the War of Liberation, a great number of the massacres of the populations were committed as a reprisal measure against ALN operations. Throughout the territory, above all in the countryside, the French Army systematically set up collective killings to avenge an attack on an army convoy or a military post. Witness statements describe how after each operation carried out by the *moudjahidines*, civilians, sometimes by the dozen, were shot at random, or burnt alive in front of their families. (cf. § 4.8 and 4.9)

However, the majority of the massacres committed during the War of Liberation stemmed from the same logic as that which prescribed the massacres at the beginning of the conquest. Bugeaud's counter-insurgency strategy found its continuation in the counter-revolutionary strategy of the War. In both cases the population was the major stake in the French Army's battle against the armed resistance.

As a matter of fact, French Army officers who had suffered a bitter defeat in Indochina progressively joined the troops engaged in the Algerian War. These included generals Baufre and Massu, and colonels Bigeard, Decournu, Godard, Jacquin, Lacheroy, Trinquier and Captain Léger. An analysis of their defeat in Indochina led them to theorise about the type of revolution they would meet in Algeria. Enriched by their experience in Vietnam and Indochina, they did not waste time in putting to work a counter-

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revolutionary strategy integrating the lessons learned from their previous defeats.

This strategy, which would prescribe massacre as a tactic, included this fundamental principle: sever the armed resistance from the population, 'separate the fish from the water' doctrine. The objectives were to deprive the resistance: (a) of the human resources within the population, and thus prevent the increase and renewal of the resistant troops, (b) of the logistical support given by the population in the form of food, shelter, financial contributions etc., (c) of its main source of intelligence and information.

In their quest to cut the umbilical connection between the resistance and the population, the officers of the Fourth and the Fifth Republics applied methods which differed little from those of their grandparents at the beginning of the conquest, even if new techniques were used. The French Army's strategy would rest on two pillars: on the one hand, a deterrent policy based on terror and repression and, on the other hand, a persuasive policy based on political and administrative control and social assistance to the population. For both military and civilian authorities, the control of the population required reactivating the old destruction-construction doctrine, which had been advocated by Bugeaud and was still termed 'pacification'<sup>60</sup>. General Allard did not tire of repeating: 'one must destroy to construct'<sup>61</sup>. The theorists of counter-insurgency applied three principles simultaneously: (a) destruction, (b) psycho-political action, (c) construction.<sup>62</sup> Accordingly,

an information brochure on the country's interior defence and the psychological war, approved on 3 November 1956 under the reference 12177/EM3/EGER-3-RFM/DR distributed by the Secretary of State to the armed ground forces, gives advice and examples. It explains that: 'to wage war here means that you are at the same time a technician of destruction and a pacifier'.<sup>63</sup>

Slimane Chikh classifies this doctrine, which would determine the psychological action systematized by Colonel Argoud, as part of what was called the 'protection-engagement-control' triptych<sup>64</sup>. For him

'protection' shows itself through regroupment operations which consist of displacing and uprooting a population, enclosing it in a fortified camp, surrounded with barbed wire, where control and close watch is kept, so that the difference between 'regroupments' and 'internment' appears very subtle.<sup>65</sup>

The special administrative sections (SAS), which were conceived to manage the hundreds of thousands of Algerians displaced from villages in areas won over by the resistance, and regrouped in centres fitted up by the French Army, are simply 'distant offsprings'<sup>66</sup> of the Arab offices set up by Trézé and Lamoricière and inspired by the sénatus-consulte of 1863 which had forecast the disappearance of tribes and the creation of territorial entities, 'douars', amongst which the Algerians would be distributed.<sup>67</sup>

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The second element of the triptych, that is to say ‘engagement’, consists of

controlling the population by Muslim leaders whose task would be to spot suspects and point them out to the administration. In plain language, it is a question of setting up, in the heart of the Muslim population, informers who would be appointed and paid.<sup>68</sup>

In fact the SAS, in addition to their role of isolating the resistance from the population and containing it within the prohibited zones, were instructed, as were all the urban administrative sections (SAU), to lead a psychological action within the population and to recruit Algerians to serve in the French Army either as self-defence groups or as mobile attack units. The officers in the administrative sections, with a zeal ‘in the tradition of the Arab offices’<sup>69</sup> according to Charles-Henri Favrod, achieved their mission of ‘making the population collaborate closely with the Army through information, self-defence and the formation of harkis – or auxiliary units – fighting alongside the regular troops’.<sup>70</sup>

Finally the third element in the triptych, ‘control’, consists of

subjecting the population to a constant surveillance, isolating them completely from the outside world, punishing, in an exemplary manner and in a public place, suspects or people mistaken for ‘rebellious criminals’, and even announcing collective sanctions in the case of undenounced crimes, according to the old principle of collective responsibility.<sup>71</sup>

With the principle of ‘collective responsibility’ the French Army would no longer content itself with punishing those guilty of ‘rebellious crimes’, or even suspects, but would extend its punishment to entire populations without discrimination. Indeed, as a military note printed in *Le Monde* emphasized, the principle of collective responsibility prescribes ‘resorting to collective sanctions of such a type that in the case of a crime, the population would be responsible and should pay for the sabotage by forced labour or fines, because they are always aware of what is going on.’<sup>72</sup>

The application of the principle of collective responsibility was debated down to the smallest detail by the officers of the French army. Even the number of Algerian suspects to slay for each European killed was discussed, as reported by a reservist in a testimony published in February 1957 by the *Committee of Spiritual Resistance*:

End of August, beginning of September 1956. At Tigzirt-sur-Mer during a reunion of officers and non-commissioned officers lieutenant Colonel D., commander of the sub-sector of Mizrana, discussed at length the number of suspects to be killed for one murdered European – three or four. Finally the number of three was adopted. A non-commissioned lieutenant protested against this measure but the lieutenant Colonel told him to be silent.<sup>73</sup>

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As for reprisal measures and collective sanctions aimed at terrorising the population, paralysing it with fear and destroying its capacity to resist, the French Army would be loyal to its previous methods: large destruction of dwellings, burning of forests and harvests, summary executions, torture, and mutilation. Only the techniques had progressed. Helicopters, and other motorised vehicles, replaced horses, toxic gases replaced smoke, and napalm replaced gun powder.

## 4. Examples of Colonial Massacres in Algeria

### 4.1. Introduction

The evolution of the extent and intensity of the colonial massacres can be divided into three phases. The first phase extends from 1832, when the first conquering troops disembarked, until what resembled the completion of the conquest (the ‘pacification’ of the country) at the end of the nineteenth century. This phase is characterised by an intense armed resistance throughout the country led by historic leaders, the most famous being Emir Abdelkader, Cheikh El-Mokrani, Cheikh Boumezrag, Cheikh El-Haddad and Cheikh Bou-Beghla. Another characteristic of this phase is the ferocious repression by the colonial power. The second stage covers the first half of the twentieth century and is distinguished by a reduction in the intensity of the armed resistance and the perpetration of massacres. Only a few spontaneous and isolated protests against military conscription are to be reported. This stage, however, saw one of the most shocking massacres that Algeria, and indeed humanity, has ever experienced, that of May 1945. The third phase is that of the War of Liberation (the Algerian Revolution 1954-1962) on a national scale, which saw a renewal in the intensity of the colonial massacres.

However, our narrative account of a sample of massacres will be divided into eight periods. We use divisions according to the political regime in order to show that all political regimes which came to power in France from 1830 to 1962, be they monarchist, imperialist or republican, opportunist or radical, left or right, instrumentalised massacres in Algeria for their own political goals. All these regimes had called for human rights principles, as stated in the *Declaration of Human and Citizen Rights* voted in 1789, but agreed to limit their application only to the ‘civilized white man’ and to exclude the ‘colonised Barbarian’. A declaration of the government of Marshall Soult, War Minister and defender of Colonel Pélissier, who had led the Ouled Riah extermination by *enfumage* (gasing) in 1845 (see § 4.2), illustrates this selective application of human rights: ‘I deplore what has happened. In Europe such an act would be horrible and detestable. In Africa it is the war itself.’<sup>74</sup>

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To the question ‘Was the France of enlightenment totally absent from the colonization of Algeria?’ François Maspéro replies in the negative, asserting that:

The young officers – Lamoricière and Cavaignac – had been pupils, sometimes disciples, of Auguste Comte at the Polytechnic. They led the perpetrators of the massacres; precisely because of their education, they had understood the importance of establishing the massacre as a system. As justification, they gave it the name of an ancestral practice of the enemy itself: the *razzia*. In *Si c'est un homme*, Primo Levi tells us that when this system raises the negation of the Other from isolated acts or the stage of unformulated dogma to the level of ‘major premise of a syllogism’, then nazi camps loom at the end of the logical chain.<sup>75</sup>

It is this very Polytechnic which educated, much later, ‘the mystical and bloodthirsty Colonel Antoine Argoud, number one theorist of the “revolutionary war”, a raving graduate of the Polytechnic, who tried out the application of his observed logic to the extremes of horror.’<sup>76</sup>

Argoud believed that ‘the population must be separated from the rebellion by a terror founded on justice. Me, sir, I do not torture. I set up expeditious tribunals. The suspects are either FLN or not FLN. Either I acquit or kill.’<sup>77</sup> Lentin relates how, in the L'Arba neighbourhood where Argoud was ‘sector commander’ in 1956-7, ‘every Sunday he was seen leaving for Algiers, because he would not miss on any account the high mass in Saint Augustin church. During the week he would display, in the little square that I cross today, bodies of Algerians ‘convicted of being fellagha’ summarily judged and shot in a nearby ravine, today overgrown with brush. The bodies of Algerians were sometimes attached to the doors of the houses, with a placard round the neck: he has paid.’<sup>78</sup>

#### 4.2. Under the Juillet Monarchy (1830 – 1848)

On 14 June 1830, during the reign of Charles X (the legitimist monarchy), who incarnated the régime de la Restauration, a 37 000 strong army disembarked at Sidi Fredj (Sidi-Ferruch). The conquering King had undertaken with Polignac the conquest of Algeria ‘to save the throne with a stunning military victory’.<sup>79</sup> After the landing ‘the capital city, Algiers, fell to French troops on 5 July 1830. [...] By 1831 Algiers had lost 30 000 inhabitants, who were either killed or exiled.’<sup>80</sup>

Charles X was deposed shortly after by the July 1830 Revolution which established the bourgeois (Orleanist) monarchy. His successor Louis-Philippe felt hampered by this ‘millstone’<sup>81</sup> and decided to ‘abandon Algeria to the military’<sup>82</sup>, which started a vast conquest ‘distinguished by violence that was unusual and rare in the modern history of colonialism’.<sup>83</sup>

Immediately after the fall of Algiers, the French Generals realized it was difficult to conquer an enormous country with limited manpower. They

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therefore considered using local human resources. Before his hurried return to France, General Bourmont had already thought over colonial policy and foresaw recruiting natives to serve in the French Army. On 23 August 1830, he wrote to the War Minister:

Intelligence carried out inside the country can speed up the division between them. Even now, we could find auxiliaries among them. In the mountains to the east of Algiers there is a sizeable group of people who give soldiers to African governments wanting to buy them over. The men who make up these groups are called *zouaves*. Two thousands of them have offered me their services; five hundred are already assembled in Algiers.<sup>84</sup>

It was General Clauzel who exploited the policy already praised by General Bourmont. He established the first auxiliary corps comprising natives of diverse ethnic origins:

To create this corps, Clauzel used Kabyles. Bourmont had already started to enrol them; these *Zouaoua* were soldiers by choice, brave and devoted. They had been employed by the *deys* of Algiers and the *beys* of Tunis for many years. He [Clauzel] accepted men of all origins: Turks, Coulouglis, workmen from the town and country, Arabs and Kabyles. These men provided valuable services to the *avant-garde* and the outposts. [...] On 1 October 1830 a new corps named *zouaves* was created by decree<sup>85</sup>

After the set-up of the *zouave* corps, the enactment of 17 November 1831 created the *spahis*,<sup>86</sup> followed by the native infantrymen, the *goumier* (informers) and *khialas* (cavalry). The *Légion étrangère* (German, Italian and Polish battalions) were an essential pillar of the conquering army.

To have an idea of the scale of this recruitment policy, it is useful to note that 'the occupation force for Africa at the beginning of 1832 numbered approximately 10 500 men [of which] half [only were] made up of regular soldiers from France'.<sup>87</sup>

The French Army was able to recruit in the heart of the local population, amongst those whom General Bugeaud described, in a letter to Marshall Soult, as Arabs who 'can only be governed by the military, by those who have vanquished them'.<sup>88</sup> This is to say those who always side with power and who, later, turned against Emir Abdelkader and fought him on the side of the French. General Clauzel wrote to his minister, on 22 February 1836, that:

The Arabs always say: 'If you are strong enough, if you can protect us against Abdelkader's cruelties, we will be with you; but if you do not support us, and you leave us to his will and fury, we will be



General Clauzel

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forced to follow him, to do what he wants, to attack you in the end'.<sup>89</sup>

During the first year of occupation the French troops advanced along the Algiers' coast, perpetrating a great number of massacres.

When General Clauzel attempted to occupy Blida its inhabitants resisted. The General ordered his men to loot it and massacre its defenders. He noted that when he arrived he found the city 'strewn with corpses which included old people, women, children and Jews. All had been defenceless'.<sup>90</sup>

In Médéa, the capital of the province of Titteri, 'the population had been frightened by the French power'<sup>91</sup> and 'was not only totally depopulated but also devastated. It was attacked and looted in 1830-31 and finally occupied in 1836'.<sup>92</sup> In a single morning, on 26 November 1830, the assaults of the companies of officer Rullière, under the orders of General Clauzel, led to 800 dead and 'a huge number of injured'.<sup>93</sup>

Elsewhere, on 6 April 1832, French troops under the orders of General Savary (Duke of Rovigo) perpetrated one of the most atrocious massacres of this period: the El-Oufia tribe massacre. The area of Algiers where this tribe had lived was named after De Rovigo. Alleg recounts how members of this tribe were taken by surprise, death striking with no distinction of sex or age:

On the night of 6 April 1832, an army detachment left Algiers, on orders from the Duc de Rovigo, and raided by surprise the unarmed Olyfia [El-Oufia] tribe whose members had been camping in their tents. The soldiers massacred indiscriminately all men, women and children on the spot. 12 000 people were reported dead.<sup>94</sup>



General Savary

In *L'Afrique française*, P. Christian gives a detailed description of events following the massacre:

At sunrise an army corps [...] surprised the tribe whose members were still sleeping in their tents, and slaughtered the unfortunate El-Oufia, none of whom even tried to defend himself. Anything living was doomed to die: no distinction was made, neither of age nor sex. On return from this shameful expedition, our cavalymen had heads spiked on their spears [...] All the cattle [...] were sold to the consul of Denmark; the rest of the booty, bloody remains from a dreadful carnage, was exposed in the Bab-Azoun outdoor market. One saw with horror women's bracelets still attached to severed wrists as well as ear rings hanging on pieces of flesh. The proceeds of this sale were split among the slaughterers, and the meeting of April 8 proclaimed the strong satisfaction of the General with the eagerness and cleverness his troops had shown, thereby sanctifying such an infamy. That evening, the police ordered Algiers' Moors to light up their shops.<sup>95</sup>

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*French Colonial Massacres*

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Bejaia was conquered in 1833 after a ferocious battle which 'lasted three days and, as usual, increased the ferocity of the soldiers. The entire population either perished or was exiled for ever.'<sup>96</sup>

In 1835 it was the turn of the city of Mascara, capital of Emir Abd-el-Kader. According to Mahfoud Bennoune<sup>97</sup>, the city was

completely destroyed by the bombardment of the French troops who thus avenged the crushing defeat inflicted upon them in the battle of Macta. When the Duc d'Orleans entered the city, he exclaimed:

What I saw then was the most hideous spectacle I have ever witnessed. I had never imagined what a sacked city, where numerous inhabitants have been massacred, would be like. The street that leads to the square was full of all kinds of debris; wooden beams covered with flecks of blood were still burning; everything was in disorder; not a single object remained untouched; the houses were in flame and a thousand Jews threw themselves at our feet begging for mercy: all that was left of a population which until yesterday numbered 10 000 souls.

Constantine met the same fate and fell in 1837, after a remarkable resistance since the first attack by the French troops in 1836. According to the previous source:<sup>98</sup>

While besieged, a large number of the inhabitants were forced to flee over the gorges of the Rhummel, but many of them fell into the abyss and crashed to the bottom.

I stood on the edge of the terrifying ravines and stared at the sloping peaks over which thousands of men and women, trusting the abyss more than the mercy of the French victors, sought to escape. Their means of salvation were ropes attached to the upper walls of the rocks. When these ropes broke, human masses could be seen rolling down this immense wall of rock. It was a veritable cascade of corpses.

This period also saw an innovation in massacre technique. Large human groups that fled the war and sought refuge in caves were eliminated, sometimes by *enfumage* (asphyxiation) and *emmurage* (immurement).

Following a strong concentration of troops, Bugeaud's columns wreaked havoc in the Chlef province. On 20 May 1842 they 'finished off the Beni Zeroual sheltering in their caves'.<sup>99</sup> On his return to Algiers, amazed by the fertility and richness of the Chlef valley, Bugeaud wrote to Marshall Soult: 'A good government, followed by a good agriculture would make this country one of the most beautiful countries in the world within half a century.'<sup>100</sup>

In 1844-45, during the repression of Cheikh Bou-Māza's insurrection, General Cavaignac gave the order to asphyxiate the Sbēha. Officer Canrobert, who participated in this operation wrote:

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We blew up the entrance of the cave with dynamite and stacked bundles of brush there. In the evening the fire was lit. The next day some Sbéha survivors presented themselves at the entrance of the cave asking our outposts for protection. Their companions, women and children, had died.<sup>101</sup>

General Cavaignac lauded the Sbéha massacre as a model of efficiency. General Bugeaud was engaged in a campaign in Chlef. Before leaving Algiers he had confided the command of operations to three of his lieutenants: Saint-Arnaud, Ladmirault and Pélissier and had left an order (on 14 June 1845) stipulating that: 'If these scoundrels retire to their caves, you must imitate Cavaignac at the Sbéha and gas them like foxes.'<sup>102</sup> Pélissier did imitate him. The Ouled Riah tribe had been expelled from its village by the fire-raiser detachments of Colonel Pélissier and sought refuge in the caves of Ghar el Frachich. Pélissier asphyxiated them unhesitatingly on 19 June, killing 760 people<sup>103</sup>; according to François Maspéro more than one thousand men, women and children died.<sup>104</sup>



General Cavaignac

Witnesses' accounts of the events are terrifying. For example, an officer, quoted in *L'Algérie passé et présent*, relates how: 'French soldiers, ordered to guard the entrances of the gased caves, shot dead those who tried to escape the massacre during the night.'<sup>105</sup> On 20 June, at dawn, between fifty and sixty survivors succeeded in escaping; the attempt to help the others was interrupted as Colonel Pélissier himself later reported: 'The environment was so nauseating, so offensive that, on the doctors' advice, the [rescue] operation was suspended.'<sup>106</sup>

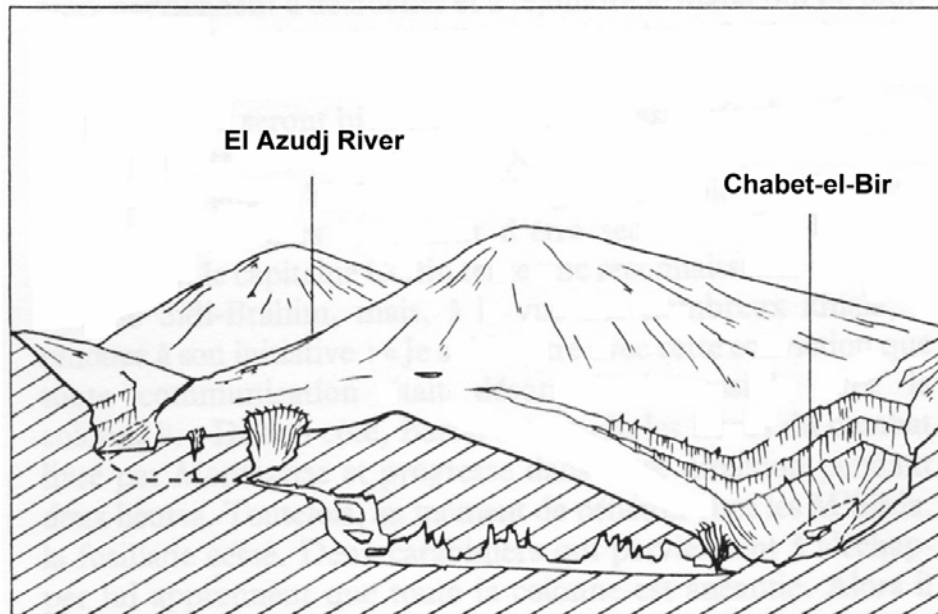
On 21 June Captain Valdan went with an engineer officer to inspect the cave. He discovered that:

On all sides the ground of the gallery was littered with corpses of men, women and children tangled with those of the herds. These wretched people had been pushed back by fire, by baked plaster caving in, by bullets of our infantrymen and by the shrapnel of our shells. Therefore they had taken refuge in the deepest part of the cave, face down, in search of a little fresh air to delay the fatal moment.<sup>107</sup>



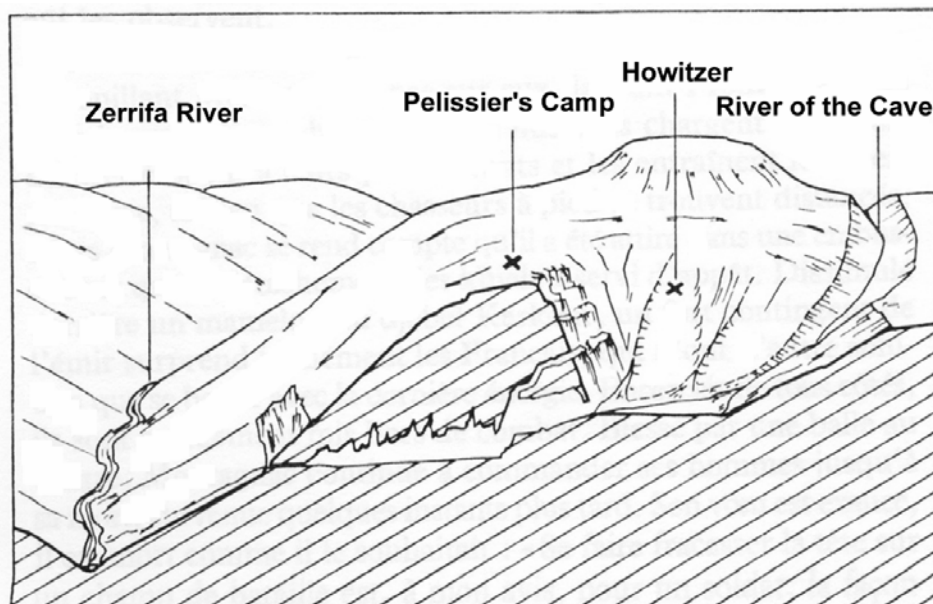
Colonel Pélissier

Another witness cited by Alleg describes the aftermath of the massacre in these terms:



**Massacre of the Sbéhas, 1844**

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**Massacre of Ouled Riah, June 1845**

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Which pen would be able to describe such a scene? To see in the middle of a moon lit night a unit of French troops busy keeping an infernal fire burning. Hearing the muffled groaning of men, women, children and animals, and the cracking of burned rocks collapsing [...] In the morning when we tried to clear the entrance of the caverns, we found bullocks, donkeys and sheep lying [...] Piled up beneath the animals we found men, women and children. I saw a dead man on his knees with his hand clenched on a bullock's horn. In front of him there was a woman holding her child in her arms. The man had suffocated in trying to protect his family from the rage of that animal. We counted 760 dead bodies.<sup>108</sup>

To answer his critics, Colonel Péliissier justified himself with exceptional cynicism stating that: 'The skin of just one of my drums is dearer than the life of all these wretches.'<sup>109</sup>

In General Azan's work *Conquête et Pacification de l'Algérie* published in 1932, a century after the conquest, one can read about Ouled Riah: 'The tribe let itself be nearly annihilated with a savage heroism.'<sup>110</sup> General Azan explained Péliissier's action by asserting that: 'An inspection of the caves showed that a violent attack on the hideout would have led to the loss of all who risked entering this labyrinth.'<sup>111</sup>

In a letter dated 14 July 1845 addressed to his Minister, Marshall Soult, Bugeaud took the entire responsibility for the massacre: 'Because Colonel Péliissier needs my fidelity, and out of my duty to you, I declare that I take full responsibility for this act. Before parting in the Ouarsenis, I had ordered the colonel to use this means as a last option.'<sup>112</sup> Following this justification the letter had a long dissertation on the methods of waging war. He sought to defend the methods which do not prolong suffering:

War and politics demand the use of all means, however powerful (I exclude poisoning, assassinating leaders, treachery, I am only talking about the use of open force) to arrive as quickly as possible at the goal. This is also in the interests of humanity, of the winners as well as the losers, because prolonged wars ruin nations and multiply victims due to the use of means lacking power. These undeniable principles having been stated, I wonder if the siege of caves by Colonel Péliissier is more cruel than the bombardment and famine with which we crush the whole population of cities at war in Europe? And at sea, do we not shell a ship to sink it or blow it up until it surrenders? Is that then more humane? All these things are identical: it is war with its unavoidable consequences. If the philanthropists do not want to see them, let them demonstrate their ability to give people and governments feelings of eternal peace.<sup>113</sup>

Still during the repression of Cheikh Bou-Māza's insurrection, General Saint-Arnaud outdid both General Cavaignac and Colonel Péliissier in savagery by inventing the technique of *l'emmurage* (immurement). On 8 August 1845 he found five hundred Algerians from Beni-Mādoun sheltering in a cave between Ténès and Mostaganem. They were refusing to give themselves up. General Saint-Arnaud ordered his soldiers to immure them alive. In a letter of 15 August 1845 he relates that:

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*French Colonial Massacres*

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I had all the exits hermetically sealed and made a huge cemetery. The earth will cover the corpses of these fanatics for ever. [...] My conscience is clear. I did my duty as a commander and would do the same again tomorrow. However, I took a dislike to Africa.<sup>114</sup>

The central region (l'Algérois) was not the only one to be affected by massacres as 'troops trained by Bugeaud and his successors, would surpass themselves in the expeditions launched against the Kabyles (in 1845 and 1847) and in the southern oases.'<sup>115</sup>

P. Gaffarel recounts the massacres in Kabylia:

The order had been given to prosecute a devastating war, and it was rigorously executed. [...] Our soldiers behaved ferociously [...]. Women and children were killed, houses burned, trees cut down at their roots, nothing was spared. Atrocious acts were committed. Almost all Kabyle women have silver bracelets on their arms and legs. We saw soldiers cutting off the four limbs of women to steal those bracelets, and it was not always dead bodies that were so mutilated.<sup>116</sup>

This period also saw the massive destruction of numerous towns and villages; this did not take place without civilian casualties. In 1842 General Sil-lègue burnt down the Amoucha villages<sup>117</sup> and General Saint-Arnaud brought about the destruction of a part of Blida the same year.<sup>118</sup> Two years later it was the turn of the Ben-Salem and Bel-Kassem Ou Kassi regions. In a letter to his brother, General Saint-Arnaud talks about the destruction of the latter:

The Nissa basin which leads to Bougie, which was only 15 leagues away from us, was wonderful. The beautiful orange trees that my vandalism is about to destroy! I wish I could send you this pretty forest to Noisy. Your wife would be so happy. Today I burnt the properties and villages of Ben-Salem and Bel-Kassem Ou Kassi.<sup>119</sup>

#### 4.3. Under the Second Republic (1848 – 1852)

The birth of the Second Republic coincided with important events in Algeria's colonial history. The preceding year, 1847, had seen the surrender of Cheikh Bou-Māza, on 13 April, and that of Emir Abdelkader on 23 December. It was therefore under the French Constitution of 1848, with a return to republican values, that Algeria was proclaimed an integral part of France. It was in this spirit that the French troops tried to extend their colonial domination over the whole of Algeria. To combat the continuing insurrections, the Second Republic was as ruthless as the bourgeois monarchy. From the east to the west, from the north to the south of Algeria, Algerian populations were massacred.

The massacre of the entire Zātcha tribe (between Biskra and Ouargla), in retaliation against the Aurès and Ziban insurrection led by Cheikh Bou Ziane, was the most striking massacre of this period. After a long siege, the

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assault on Zātcha was given on 26 November 1849 with a force of eight thousand men distributed among three brigades set up by General Herbillion, and commanded by Colonels Barral, Canrobert and Dumontet. The local inhabitants put up a fierce resistance so that to dislodge them from their houses, ‘mines had to be used, and the houses had to be blown up, one after the other, burying their defenders as they crumbled down.’<sup>120</sup>

Also of note in the work of Julien and that of Nouschi *et al.* were the massacres at Bou Saada, at Ouled Sidi-Chikh (South Oran), at Zouagha (north of Constantine), those of the Zouaoua tribe at Djurdjura, the Beni-Snousse people near Tlemcen, at the Qsur of Moghrar Tahtani and Fuqani in south Oran, that of the Aziz brotherhood in south Médéa, at Tifra in the Sebau, at Beni-Immel in the Guergour and at Nara, Oudjana, Oueldja and in other regions in the Aurès.

On 5 January 1850 the Nara villages were attacked by three light columns because they refused to pay the taxes. ‘The repression was severe: Nara’s defenders were killed or crushed under the ruins of their destroyed houses given over to fire.’<sup>121</sup> The assault ‘ended with the massacre of the whole population.’<sup>122</sup> Captain Bocher admitted, in his *Souvenirs*, that ‘there was a huge massacre suffered by the inhabitants.’<sup>123</sup>

The Oueldja massacre was perpetrated at the beginning of June 1850 and was the work of General Saint-Arnaud at the head of a column of four thousand men. ‘The foreign legion and the native infantrymen, preceded by sappers, violently entered the town, ransacked it and set it alight.’<sup>124</sup> The man behind the Oueldja massacre commented on this crime in one of his letters:

You can tell Rousset [lawyer at the royal court, childhood friend of Saint-Arnaud] that I destroyed and burned a lot, he is right to treat me as a Goth and a Vandal [...] The people of Oueldja (in the Aures) undoubtedly relied on their palm trees, walls and gardens and hence refused to pay the tax. As a pastime, they killed two of my soldiers of the 20<sup>th</sup>. That night, at 2:00 am, I ordered that the barricaded town be invested, and, at sunrise, while I was having the palm trees and gardens occupied, three battalions forced their way into the town where each house defended itself. I went by, burning everything and leaving fifty dead bodies in the streets of Oueldja [...] All that in a matter of two hours. The inhabitants of the oasis were terrified. They admit today, though a bit late, that they got what they deserved. Taxes will be paid.<sup>125</sup>



General Saint-Arnaud

In another letter written to his wife, General Saint-Arnaud talks of his intention to continue the massacres:

Dear Louise, I am bivouacking in a 40° heat, in the midst of twenty superb villages which have never quite surrendered [...] I have given them until tonight to pay taxes and fines I inflicted on them. If they don't comply, I will do as I did in Oueldja, I will send in three columns to burn everything.<sup>126</sup>

Other massacres were committed as part of repressive operations often against insurgents who protested against the fines, taxes, seizures of property and herds. Between 1848 and 1850 repressive operations targeted the localities of Beni-Zougzoug and Ouled Deffelten in the Ouarsenis, Beni-Menad, Hayman, Beni-Snous, Righa, and Beni-Hassan in the Titteri, Mzaïa in the suburbs of Bejaïa, Bou-Saada, Ouled-Feradj, Ouled-Soltan and Ouled-Sylem in the Ouarsenis, three tribes in Oran, Nememcha, Ouled-Younès in the Dhahra, Harakta and Segnia in the Hodhna and three tribes on the Moroccan border. Nouschi *et al.* draw attention to the fact that 'all these operations are not without massacres' and specify, on the basis of the *Tableau des établissements français en Algérie (1846-1849)*, that 'the sole collection of the *achour* [a form of tax] from a group of the Beni Snous on 27 September 1848 resulted in "forty among them were killed, four others and twenty-nine women were taken prisoner"'.<sup>127</sup>

This period also witnessed the Kabylia Campaign with General Saint-Arnaud's operations in Kabylia and the fight against Cheikh Bou-Baghla's insurrection which started in 1850. The acts of destruction were the more murderous when they were committed as surprise attacks. This was the case of Colonel Lourmel's light infantry attack on the night of 24 and 25 June 1850. Ordered by General Saint-Arnaud, Lourmel led a light column and swiftly surprised and burned down the Beni-Meraï villages north-west of Sétif (Little Kabylia). His aim was 'to proceed with devastation in order to obtain surrender'.<sup>128</sup> Sétif was vanquished on 8 July 1850.

Alleg describes the repression which fell on entire communities in Kabylia:

On orders of generals Camou and Bosquet, the insurgent areas were ravaged. 300 villages were burnt, thousands of olive trees were cut down, an irretrievable loss for a generation, as thirty years are needed for an olive tree to reach full production. And 'no distinction'! In that impulse, enemy tribes as well as obedient tribes were slaughtered. In a *douar* [(hamlet)], whose inhabitants were found sitting quietly at home, we chose, as a matter of principle, to shoot everybody.<sup>129</sup>

Saint-Arnaud admitted in 1851, during operations carried out in Little Kabylia, that: 'I left a huge fire in my wake. All the villages, approximately two hundred, were burnt, all the gardens pillaged, the olive trees cut down'.<sup>130</sup>

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According to Nouschi *et al.*, Saint-Arnaud committed ‘extermination raids throughout Little Kabylia where he never fought without an enormous superiority in strength’.<sup>131</sup> Between April and July 1851 several massacres took place: of Selloum (10 April), Beni-Mimoun and Ouled Askar (12 May), more than fifty villages of the Beni-Amran tribe (19 May), Beni-Foughal at Djidjelli (26 and 27 May), three villages of the Beni-Aïssa (9 June), three villages of the Djebala, those of the Ouled-Aïdoun and that of the Achacha (in July).

Regarding the Beni Amran massacre, in *Conquête et Pacification de l’Algérie*, General Azan recalls the events:

He [General Saint-Arnaud] attacked them on a heather covered plateau: he sent the riflemen and the spahis, commanded by Colonel Bouscarin, to turn them to the left, and ordered the native infantrymen to turn them to the right; on the canon signal the cavalry charged, whilst at the front the *zouaves* advanced vigorously. The Kabyles had to throw themselves to the right, into a steep sided ravine where they fell under the cavalry fire, who had dismounted and were killing a great number; they left 300 to 400 corpses on the ground. The column had only one dead and four injured.<sup>132</sup>

In 1851, many other areas were struck by massive destruction<sup>133</sup> in battles against Cheikh Bou-Beghla, who was to be killed in December 1854. Such was the case of six villages near El-Maïss in the Soumman (23 May), several Gheboula villages on the Bou-Sellam (1 June), the Ouzellaguen villages (25 June), a part of the Beni-Aïdel villages (3 July), and the Qalaa of Beni-Abbès in the Guergour (8 July).

On 17 November 1851, General Pélistier received a laudatory letter from his minister congratulating him on the results of the Kabylia campaign, and the ‘exploits’ of General Saint-Arnaud:

I can only congratulate you on the vigorous and truly brilliant direction you have given to this expedition (of Kabylia). [...] These forcefully led operations hit the rebels twice as hard, and did not give them time to regroup, forcing them to abandon their homes and wander in the mountains with their families, without shelter, in the most cruel weather. These operations cannot fail to produce rapidly favourable results. I have therefore only congratulations to send you on this expedition, and I ask you to let the troops under your command know of my satisfaction with their good performance and their untiring devotion.<sup>134</sup>

#### 4.4. Under the Second Empire (1852 – 1870)

For colonised Algeria, the Second Empire meant the accession to power of an emperor, Napoleon III, who declared himself the protector of an ‘Arabian Kingdom’. The Second Empire, however, saw no fundamental change compared with preceding regimes. In establishing its colonial authority, the Second Empire was to prove particularly murderous for the Algerian people.

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This regime started with the continuation of the Kabylia Campaign and the destruction of five villages and eleven hamlets of the Ouled-Aïdoun in the Oued-el-Kébir (1852).

In Greater Kabylia there was the blockade and prohibition of markets 'aimed at starving the country'<sup>135</sup> and that lasted for several years. General Randon believed that the best way for subjugating the Kabyles of Djurdjura was to establish a blockade around them, preventing the *Zouaoua* from coming to the markets.<sup>136</sup> In June and July 1854 the columns of Generals MacMahon and Camou wreaked massive destruction in the high Sebaou, notably in the Beni Yaya and the Beni Hidjer. In August and September 1856 some villages of Sebau and Babor were burnt down following their protest against the blockade.



General Randon

It must be stated that under the Second Empire even natural disasters, like famine and epidemic, were exploited to bring to an end popular resistance. Although the French Army had destroyed the structures of the Algerian State and annihilated the social organisations which could have come to the aid of the population by providing first aid and limiting the damage of the disasters, the French administration did not move to help the people hit by these scourges. Alleg describes well the administration's attitude at the time of the terrible famines which took place between 1887 and 1889:

The horrifying famines of 1867, 1868 and 1869 caused close to 500 000 victims. A commission of inquiry which went to the scene, in spite of Governor General MacMahon's opposition, noticed that the colonial administration had not even tried to organise the most urgent aid. But did it really mean to help the population? The starvation which helped depopulate the country was in fact an efficient ally.<sup>137</sup>

Cheikh Bou-Beghla's death at the end of 1854 did not bring to an end the popular resistance in Kabylia. It was brought about in 1857 by a campaign directed by Governor General Randon who used a 25 000 strong force and 'after every act of resistance replied by burning villages and harvests.'<sup>138</sup> During this campaign, several tribes suffered ferocious repression. Such was the case, for instance, of the Beni Ratén, the Beni Yenni and the Beni Mengillet. The villages of Aït el Hassen, Aït el Arba, Taourirt Mimoun, Taourirt el Hadjadj and Aguemoun were affected. Finally the famous resistance leader Lalla Fatma, her family and servants were taken on 12 July 1857.<sup>139</sup>

General Randon, who had been promoted to the rank of Marshall of France, announced to his troops at the end of the Kabylia operations, on

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15 July 1857: 'Soldiers, your mission is accomplished: the Kabylia of Djurdjura are subdued. There is no single tribe that does not obey our law [...].'<sup>140</sup>

But during this campaign even tribes which had been inclined to surrender were not spared, as in the case related by d'Hérison where the sole aim of the massacre was to appease an army Colonel's blood lust:

D'Hérison reports on such acts by General Youssouf, refusing, in these words, the surrender of a tribe: 'There is, on our left, this brave colonel who has not had anything yet. Let's leave this tribe for him to smash up, it will make him a bulletin, and after we will give them *amān* (protection).'<sup>141</sup>

Insurrections against the colonial forces were still active throughout Algeria, notably at Oued-el-Kebir, in the Aurès, at Belezma in the east (1858-1859), at the Beni-Snassen in Oran (1858-1859), and at Touat and Chaanba in the south (1860). These revolts were put down bloodily. In the campaign against the Ouled-Sidi-Cheikh insurrection, which spread rapidly from the Oran's Tell to the region of Constantine, nearly 100 000 men were used. According to Nouschi *et al.* 'only the resumption of extermination methods allowed the colonial power to restore its authority.'<sup>142</sup> This ruthless brutality went on to decimate the populations of the high plateau, in the east, Constantine and the Sétif region, in the centre, south Algiers, and in the west, south of Oran, notably at Ferdjona (1864), Nememcha and the Tebessa region (1864), and at El-Abiod-Sidi-Cheikh in Oran (1865).

In 1852 a massacre was perpetrated in Laghouat, which was bombarded for three hours. Gaffarel described the macabre scene:

When we had to bury the dead, they were so numerous that in some streets they were like barricades. We used forage ropes and horse harnesses; the men harnessed themselves onto them and we threw the bodies anywhere we could, especially into wells. A single well took 256 of them.<sup>143</sup>

And Alleg described the days following the Laghouat massacre:

For days, the city of the desert smelled of putrefying bodies. Clouds of crows and vultures flew over Laghouat, as over a big mass grave and the soldiers organized hunts to clear the sky of them.<sup>144</sup>

#### 4.5. Under the Third Republic (1871 – 1940)

This period saw the last large scale insurrections against the colonial forces, especially that of 1871 organised by Cheikh El-Haddad, the head of the Rahmánya religious brotherhood, Cheikh Mahieddine, the son of Abdelkader, Cheikh Mohamed Mokrani and his brother Cheikh Boumezrag. In 1871 the last armed insurgency on a national scale (until the War of Independence in 1954) started in Kabylia and spread quickly to all of the Constantine re-

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gion, the south, the Algiers region and to the Oran region at Ouled Sidi Cheikh. Among the factors which triggered the revolt, historians cite the forced enlistment of Algerian *mokhaznis* sent to the German war front during the war of 1870.<sup>145</sup> The weakening of the French troops by the war effort against Germany was also real motivation for organizing this insurrection.

The response of the Third Republic, still suffering from the military defeat inflicted by the Germans, the loss of Alsace and part of Lorraine, was particularly murderous. The repression of the 1871 revolt is described in these terms:

Once again fire devastates hundreds of villages. Shootings, summary executions and forced evacuations depopulate entire regions, but the settlers find that the 'lesson' is still insufficient. A Constantine newspaper, *Le Seybouse*, expresses their opinion: 'Terror must hover over the hideouts of the assassins and arsonists. The repression must be such that it becomes a sinister legend, for all the tribes, hence guaranteeing the security of the emigrants.'<sup>146</sup>

The 1871 repression targeted particularly the Hanencha, the Medjana, Tebessa, Ouled-Sidi-Cheikh, Greater Kabylia, the Rahmaniya, the Qalaa of the Beni-Abbes, M'Sila, Bou-Saada, Bou-Taleb and the Beni-Menaçer at Aïn-Telemsil.<sup>147</sup> It was followed by a huge campaign of land expropriation. The decade 1871-1881 was to be the most prosperous in terms of colonization.

The Third Republic also crushed the 1881 insurrection which took place in both the Saïda region and the south Oran region. It was organized and led by Cheikh Bou-Amama. Several revolts occurred later in protests against the forced conscription of young Algerians to fight for France in the First World War.

In 1908 the law to extend obligatory military conscription to Algerians was adopted but it was only in early 1911 that the decrees ordering obligatory military service were published. This measure provoked a population exodus towards Turkey and Syria. In the autumn of 1910 there was an exodus from the Constantine region. In 1911, in the region of Tlemcen, 'five hundred Muslim families left Algeria to escape the conscription project.'<sup>148</sup> In the Aurès the mothers protested shouting: 'We are ready to give you anything you ask for, our money, our harvests; but we prefer to die here and now rather than give our children.'<sup>149</sup> In Oued-el-Abdi the populations repeated: 'We do not want to give our children to the French authorities to be used as cannon fodder by the enemy.'<sup>150</sup> An Algerian intellectual from Tolga, cited by Ageron, wrote to an Italian personality complaining of 'the savagery of the French': 'They enlist our children into the army and send them to their death. They are pushed to the front row in scuffles and assaults against their will. It is as if they buy beasts of burden at the market.'<sup>151</sup>

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Most of the massacres perpetrated during the 1914-1918 period occurred in repressive operations against insurgent regions and tribes protesting against the forced conscription of young Algerians into French military units engaged in various fronts in the First World War. Of the 176 000 Algerians who were dispatched,<sup>152</sup> 25 711 died on the battlefield or were reported missing, and 72 035 were injured, of which 8 779 were mutilated.<sup>153</sup> In addition 119 000 Algerians were sent to France as manpower.<sup>154</sup>

In 1914 the Beni-Chougrane revolt (Oran region) was subdued by a force of 15 000 soldiers. A bloody repression struck notably two *douars* of Beni-Chougrane.<sup>155</sup> In 1915 the revolt of the Sahara tribes was put down.<sup>156</sup> The repression of the Touareg took place, following a protest led by Si Mohamed El Abed in the Hoggar, in 1917.<sup>157</sup>

In 1916-1917 the repression of insurrections in several regions in the Aurès, notably Barika, Bélezma and Khenchela, were particularly bloody. The repression involved the air force which bombed the djebels of Bosdaan and Mestaona, and a 14 000 strong force. This force included a brigade withdrawn from the German front as well as Senegalese and Algerian *zouave* battalions.<sup>158</sup> Ageron describes the events of that year, which would remain for the Chaouia peasants 'the year of the Blacks'<sup>159</sup>:

This small revolt of the deserters and the absentees, which affected the poorest *douars* [hamlets], remained with no leader or direction and hence was easily put down. Under what conditions was it done? The Ministry only heard about police rounds. The collective memory of Muslim Algerians remembers the 'Bélezma horrors, the action of the Black Senegalese who burned, raped and killed.'<sup>160</sup>

Four years later on 28 December 1920, a conservative member of parliament explained before the *Chambre bleu horizon* what had been the action of his regiment during that repression: 'We burned villages without either rhyme or reason although we knew that the children of the inhabitants were at the [German] front.'<sup>161</sup>

The forced enlistment was repeated once again during the Second World War when in 1939 114 000 Algerian fighters were dispatched to various fronts.<sup>162</sup> A large number of them failed to come back or returned to Algeria disabled.

#### 4.6. Under the Pétain and de Gaulle Regimes (1940 – 1945)

There was no divergence in the Algerian policy of the Vichy government, under Prime Minister Pétain, and that of Free France, represented by General de Gaulle. On the one hand Marshall Pétain, who tried in vain to establish a dialogue with the nationalist Algerian movement through Messali el-Hadj, announced on 11 October 1941 that 'the new regime's priority will be to defend national unity, that is to say a close union of overseas France and

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the metropolis.<sup>163</sup> On the other hand, General de Gaulle could not rid himself of the imperial idea which, according to Girardet, 'is more forcibly affirmed with *France libre* because the colonial administrators and officers make up an important fraction of the handful of French who had rallied behind de Gaulle's cause from the outset.'<sup>164</sup> Girardet also asserts that 'the Empire Defence Council, created on 27 October 1940 "to maintain the territories' allegiance to France, and to watch over internal and external security", was one of the first institutional structures set up by *France libre*.'<sup>165</sup>

To claim that *France libre* had promised Algerian nationalists their independence as soon as France would be liberated contradicts de Gaulle's resolution when he urged General Henry Martin, at the end of his visit to Algeria in 1944, to refasten Algeria's ties to the mother state. He admitted to him that 'it is a question of preventing North Africa slipping through our fingers while we save France.'<sup>166</sup> As Raymond Aron said, in October 1945, France's most urgent task was 'to safeguard French Algeria, "failing which our country would fall several degrees down on the scale of nations".'<sup>167</sup> At the beginning of the conquest, several decades earlier, another liberal thinker, Alexis de Toqueville, did not believe that 'France could imagine abandoning Algeria. To abandon it would be, in the world's eyes, a declaration of France's decline.'<sup>168</sup>

The participation of Algeria's Muslim population in the war effort to liberate France should be, for *France libre*, a tribute of gratitude. René Cassin, a jurist, had the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted in 1948, later became the President of the European Court of Human Rights, and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize towards the end of his life. Speaking of 'the prodigious rise of the colonies' he asserted that 'the Empire's population could never better repay their debt of gratitude towards France than by forming the armies destined to save the mother country'.<sup>169</sup> It was this frame of mind which explains General de Gaulle's attitude towards the May 1945 uprising in Algeria and his implicit approval of the massacres that followed.

So it was that between 1943 and 1945 one hundred and forty thousand Algerian fighters were sent, against their will, to the front lines of the most murderous of combats, to liberate France.<sup>170</sup> Twelve thousand were killed.

#### **4.7. Under the Provisional Government of the Republic (1945–1947)**

Even after the end of World War II the colonial authorities in Algeria continued enlisting Algerians of fighting age, against their free will. They were sent to remote regions of the globe to participate in wars in which they were in no way concerned. Divisions of young Algerians were thus sent to die in the Crimea, in various French colonies and, from 1946, in Indochina.<sup>171</sup>

The most important massacres Algeria saw in the post war years remain undoubtedly those of 8 May 1945, shortly after the Allies victory over the

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nazis. The magnitude and extent of these massacres makes them amongst the most atrocious in recent history. The 8 May, the day the world celebrates victory over inhumanity, remains a day of mourning for Algerians.

After the Allies victory Algerian independentists expected the French authorities to resolve the problem of Algeria's independence. They had hoped that the participation of tens of thousands of young Algerians on the Allies side would be rewarded. However, these militants were soon to be disappointed because, at the end of the world conflict, discussing Algeria's independence was out of the question.

On 8 May, Armistice Day, the ensuing frustration led to demonstrations in the majority of Algerian cities and towns. The demonstrators marched with banners, shouting 'Down with fascism and colonialism'. In Setif the police fired on Algerian demonstrators who reacted by attacking the police and Europeans.<sup>172</sup> It was the beginning of an uprising in several towns and villages in the Constantine region: Sétif, Chevreul, El-Ouricia, Lafayette, Mansouriah, Tamsout, Béni Siar, Kherrata, Amouchas, Aïn Magranem, Périgotville, Aïn Abessa, Saint-Arnaud, Sillègue, Djidjelli, Annaba, Guelma, Millésimo, Petit, Villars, Héliopolis, Oued Zénati, Gounod, Lapaine, Aïn Amara, Bordj Sabath, Constantine, Fedj M'Zala, El Arrouch, El Coll, Jemmapes, Philippeville, Aïn Regada, Hammam Meskoutine, Medjez el Bab, Roknia, El Milia, El Ouassah, Robertville, Khenchla, Biskra, and Batna. The unrest spread throughout the territory including Blida and Berrouaghia in the region of Algiers, and Sidi-bel-Abbès in the region of Oran.<sup>173</sup> These riots led to 'one hundred and two Europeans or moderate Muslims dead, one hundred and ten injured, one hundred and thirty-five houses looted and nineteen set alight.'<sup>174</sup> The European victims had 'in the majority of cases the corpses terribly mutilated.'<sup>175</sup>

Facing this situation, the order to repress the demonstrators quickly came from the highest levels of the Fourth Republic. General de Gaulle sent a telegram to Governor General Chataigneau:

Would you publicly reaffirm the will of victorious France of not permitting any interference with French sovereignty over Algeria. Would you take all necessary measures to put down all anti-French movements by a minority of agitators. Would you reaffirm that France still trusts the majority of the French Muslims of Algeria.<sup>176</sup>

In the 8 June edition of a major colonialist newspaper, *L'Echo d'Alger*, Benscher wrote on the events in Sétif: 'When your house is burning, when the ship is sinking you call neither the insurer nor the dancing teacher. For the house it is time for the fireman, for the ship the lifeboatman. For North Africa it is time for the policeman.'<sup>177</sup>

So on 10 May 1945 a ferocious repression led by General Duval was launched. It lasted until June. This repression was particularly murderous in

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Guelma, Sétif and Kherrata and their surroundings. The death toll was forty-five thousand victims according to Algerian sources, between five and six thousand according to the French general government, and eighty thousand according to the Arab League. Jacques Jurquet called these massacres a 'colonial genocide'.<sup>178</sup>

On his return from a visit to massacre sites in the Sétif and Kherrata regions, the editor of the newspaper *Liberté*, Roger Esplaas, was upset by the 'ruthless character of the blind and ferocious repression' and declared that 'the area north of Sétif is no more than a huge cemetery'.<sup>179</sup>

The authorities employed overwhelming force in the repression; 'as soon as the slightest agitation and the first insurgent attacks were announced, tanks, artillery, air force and marines went into action'.<sup>180</sup> 'It was the communist minister Tillon who signed the order for the air force to bombard the *douars* [hamlets] suspected of supplying or welcoming the rioters'.<sup>181</sup>

Starting from 8 May the local authorities in the regions concerned by the unrest officially set up European militias to carry out 'Arab hunting'. This was the case at Guelma, Fedj M'Zala, El-Eulma (Saint-Arnaud) and Annaba (Bône). The settlers in the countryside were armed by the military. Compared to that of the regular army the 'repression carried out by civilian self-defence groups and militias had been very bloody'.<sup>182</sup> With regard to the militias, Ferhat Abbas wrote:

The settlers, supported by the police and the army, engaged in indescribable violence unworthy of a world which claims to be civilised. The youth, which formed the cadres of AML, paid a high price. At Sétif, Perigotville (Aïn el Kebira), Kherrata, Oued Marsa, Guelma, and Bône the settlers grouped into militias and appeased their hatred; they shot dead thousands of young people after inflicting upon them the worst of tortures. Arab hunting, as in de Rovigo and Saint-Arnaud times, reappeared in force.<sup>183</sup>

In addition to the regular troops and the racist European settlers, the repression forces included the *Légion étrangère* and Senegalese and Moroccan *tabors*. Ageron states:

Repression was ruthless and commensurate with the fear and hatred felt by the Europeans who took part in the operations. The army engaged about ten thousand men, légionnaires, Moroccan tabors and infantrymen, most of the latter from Senegal. The air force intervened: eighteen aeroplanes bombed forty-four *meshtas* populated with about 3000 inhabitants each and the Duguay-Trouin cruiser bombed the Babor foothills from the Aokas bay.<sup>184</sup>

The repression forces also included Italian and Maltese *zouaves*. Brahim Mohamed Tahar, head of the *Parti du Peuple Algérien* section at Guelma, survived the massacres in his town and has been called 'the man who leapt

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from the lorry of death' since. He recalls how even Italians participated in the mass killings:

I saw trucks leaving the city and every ten to fifteen minutes I was hearing gun fire. That lasted for two months; the militiamen were gathering people from everyplace to kill them. Executions were carried out mainly at Kaf El-Boumba and at the Hadj-M'Barak quarry. It was Arab hunting. There were dead people all around Guelma. The settlers, who were all Maltese and Italians, the Senegalese, the *tabors* and the Italian prisoners armed by the settlers killed children, women and the elderly who could not flee to the mountains.<sup>185</sup>

Djemal Chérif, quoted by Henri Alleg, described how even the newborn were not spared: 'Légionnaires held infants by the feet, whirled them round and hurled them at stone walls, their flesh scattering over the rocks.'<sup>186</sup>

Harachaoui Ahmed and his sister Aldjia, survivors of the El-Eulma massacres and later among the first *mujahidin* in the War of Liberation, recounted in a statement published in the weekly review *Révolution Africaine* how:

All our family was massacred, there were ten deaths in the bosom of our family, the légionnaires were not satisfied with killing our mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters... [Aldjia added:] They went as far as shooting at me while I was carrying my two year old son; two bullets fired at point blank range - one of them proved fatal for my baby who died from his injuries. The second bullet pierced my left breast. Two days later I was taken to hospital and, thanks to God, I survived.<sup>187</sup>

In the same edition of *Révolution Africaine*, witnesses from Beni-Aziz said:

The inhabitants of our area will always remember Ali Boustila's four year old son killed by a soldier's gun and the six-month old baby Boudraa also killed by a soldier who had already killed the mother. Yes, we will never forget the dozens of near relatives arrested and burnt alive at El-Matamer.<sup>188</sup>

Abdellah Aïssaoui from Héliopolis, born in 1909, injured during the Second World War and recently demobilised at the time of the events, miraculously escaped death and related his experience in the daily newspaper *El mujahid*:

On 11 May, during the night, we started exhuming the dead bodies. There was an infernal heat and the bodies were decomposing quickly. The military and the militiamen were taking them to the furnace to burn them. The ashes were then recuperated and scattered into nature. Worse than that, I saw soldiers betting on pregnant women as to whether they were carrying male or female babies and then disembowel them.<sup>189</sup>

At Kaf El-Boumba, men, women and the elderly were arrested, led to specified places of execution and shot en masse. Cheikh Khaled Ali, aged thirty-five in 1945, was arrested and imprisoned during the events, and wit-

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nessed the Kaf El-Boumba executions and the subsequent incineration of the corpses. This survivor recalls:

I saw the French disembark handcuffed people, put them on the road, spray them with petrol before burning them alive. A commission of inquiry was set up. But to hide their crimes, the killers committed even more hideous ones. Indeed, they took the dead bodies and threw them in lime furnaces. The operation lasted a whole week.<sup>190</sup>

The Algerian writer Kateb Yacine confided that he and his whole family were traumatised by the atrocity and horror of the repression: ‘The repression was atrocious. People were pulled out of their homes to be burned.’<sup>191</sup> He remembers that:

It was in Sétif in 1945 that my humanitarianism was confronted for the first time by the most awful scenes. I was sixteen. I will never forget the shock that I felt before this ruthless butchery which caused the death of thousands of Muslims. There and then my nationalism was cemented. There were certainly other contributory factors, political and economic alienation, for example. But it was above all this denial of all that we had been taught that opened my eyes.<sup>192</sup>

Saci Benhamla, who lived five hundred meters away from the Héliopolis lime furnaces, remains haunted by the ‘blue smoke of the corpses, the unbearable smell of burning flesh and the continual toing and froing of lorries.’<sup>193</sup>

In *Les Echos de la Soumman* the Kherrata massacres were described as follows:

The people were massacred without warning or mercy ..., the Kherrata gorges were filled with dead bodies. People were thrown dead or alive in the deep crevasses... Thousands of people were assassinated in this way, the smell of native blood had awakened the bloody instinct of colonialism. For many months, Kherrata lived in a state of siege: the inhabitants were subjected to all kinds of torture, the *douars* [hamlets] burnt, the crops burnt... It is there where the executioners learned the art of murdering what is human in man.<sup>194</sup>

Still in Kherrata ‘a group of witnesses gave the names of people shot, sprinkled with petrol and burned alive, or mutilated and then thrown into the bottom of a ravine.’<sup>195</sup> At Guelma, ‘bodies were heaped up in front of the church parvis, sprinkled with petrol and burned in the presence of hundreds of Muslims who were forced to spectate.’<sup>196</sup> The sub-prefect Achiary

ordered to arrest Algerian suspects, by trucks, once the fighting ceased. Hundreds amongst them, particularly those who had been incarcerated in the city’s prison, were shot dead in reprisal, after a parody of trial, at the lime furnaces of Héliopolis and Millesimo [...] At Chevreul [Arbaoun/Beni-Aziz] extra-judicial executions of suspects are thought to have equally been committed.[...] These collective revenge acts had the look of a racist hash settlement.<sup>197</sup>

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Those political figures accountable<sup>198</sup> for the massacres included Governor General Yves Chataigneau, Prefects André Lestrade-Carbonnel (of Constantine from June 1944 to August 1945), Louis Périllier (of Constantine until June 1944, and of Alger from June 1944), René Petitbon (of Constantine from August 1945) and the sub-prefects Butterlin of Sétif, André Achiary of Guelma, Albert Byr of Bejaia, and those of other sub-prefectorates of the region. Those officers militarily responsible included Marshal Alphonse Juin, Admiral Pierre Ronarc'h, Vice-admiral Jean Amanrich, Generals Pierre André, Jean Breuillac, Rymond Duval, Henry Martin, Jean-Baptiste Moraglia, Paul Pelletier, Paul Tubert, Pierre Weiss, Colonels Georges Bourdila, Jacques Hoppenot, Camille Monniot, Michel Puvis de Chavannes and Louis Serres. These State officials, political leaders and military officers were never prosecuted for the criminal acts committed under their authority. In the same way, no judicial or punitive measures were taken against the militia leaders whose names are however well-known: Fontaneau, Colombo, Barral, Faje, Fillon, Mazulla at Setif; Sacoman, Pradeille, Fabre, Rechtenwald, Labres at El-Eulma (saint-Arnaud); Culet, Daniel, the Vigliano brothers, the Gallia brothers at Bordj-Bou-Arreidj; Gremona Paupol and Antoine, Grima Loulou, Paoulo known as Malta, Alfred Luset father and son, Ernst Colin, Schemoul at Guelma etc.

All attempts to investigate the events of May 1945 were stifled at the highest political level, on General de Gaulle's orders who in his *Mémoires de Guerre* 'hardly alluded to this "beginning of the insurrection" and was silent about the repression: Didn't he forbid General Tubert, the communist Mayor of Algiers, to inquire into this drama?'<sup>199</sup>

On 18 July the socialist Home Secretary, Adrian Tixier, announced at the provisional consultative Assembly of Paris that the victims numbered approximately fifteen hundred.



8 May 1945, the gorges of Kherrata, peasants taken as prisoners

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The repression of May 1945, the massacres and huge numbers of arrests, followed by thousands of sentences, of which about one hundred were death sentences, roused and sharpened the political consciousness of Algerians. Yacine Kateb recounted the profound transformation which took place within the Algerian soul:

At school, in Sétif, I had learned about the French Revolution. I identified with it, it was my passion... And then there was the 8 May, the demonstration, the repression... I was sixteen, I was arrested and I stayed in a sort of concentration camp for several months. It was extraordinary there; for the first time I really met my people, I understood what they were enduring, I learnt that fraternity which was, in my books, exactly the spirit of the Revolution. But it was no longer books, it was no longer France. It was Algeria, my people, my country in the flesh... Merely for making me discover that, I can say that I am grateful to the French. Even if they had no idea of the effect it had on me, they carved it in my flesh.<sup>200</sup>

In another source, in his novel *Nedjma*,<sup>201</sup> we read his impressions at the conclusion of these bloody events and his determination to continue, or rather to begin, the struggle:

I felt the strength of ideas.  
I went away with tracts.  
I buried them in the river.  
I drew a plan in the sand,  
A plan for a future demonstration.  
Give me this river and I will fight,  
I will fight with sand and water.  
With cold water and hot sand. I will fight.  
I have decided. I saw far ahead. Very far.

Another schoolboy, Houari Boukharouba (alias Houari Boumédiène), who witnessed the massacres when he was only thirteen year old said, twenty years later as head of the Algerian independent state: 'That day I aged prematurely. The adolescent that I was became a man. That day the world rocked.'<sup>202</sup> In *La Guerre d'Algérie* Henri Alleg remarked that 'the world rocked at the same time for hundreds of thousands of young Algerians. In the horror of the massacres perpetrated before their eyes they already perceived, confusedly, that to conquer the liberty of their people they, in turn, would one day have to enter the fiery furnace.'<sup>203</sup>

Historians would later say 'the Algerian War started, in truth, in May 1945.'<sup>204</sup>

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When a colonisation claims to be justified by the will to extend the application of the Declaration of human rights overseas and yet violates so seriously these same principles, it confers on such acts a particularly hypocritical character, one of double talk. Moreover these acts took place at a time the colonising metropolis was rejoicing at having triumphed over an occupation which had brought with it a racist regime wherein both the German nazis and Vichyists proclaimed abolishing the 1789 Revolution and reintroducing discretionary punishment, principally torture. But in Algeria racism and torture were given free rein at the time of France's deliverance. In Algeria one can do as one likes to the 'Arabs', who take the place of Jews. We send in other colonial troops against them, for example the infantrymen known as the Senegalese – this term designates all soldiers recruited in the south Sahara, except Madagascar, whatever the country of origin. This method was repeatedly used from Madagascar to Vietnam and until the Algerian War. Even the words used at this time had a sinister resonance. Armed French civilians at Sétif and Guelma are not uneasy calling themselves 'militia' when, in France, this word meant the French auxiliaries of the nazis. Finally, and this is the crucial point, one must consider the motivation of the violence exactly as one considers it with regard to the Resistance against the nazis. Can one equate the violence for the preservation of a *status quo* where a conquering minority dominates another people as it pleases with that pertinent to the right of this people to choose its own destiny? Let it be repeated: the right of each people to govern itself was among the aims of the Allies War and in more shrouded terms it remains in the Founding Charter of the United Nations (26 June 1945). To equate them would be, in May 1945, to put on an equal footing the right of the French Resistance to resist, and consequently use violence against the opponent, and that of the nazis and Vichyists to assume the right to terrorise by another violence.

In all the colonial massacres of this period what is in question is the right of subjugated peoples to claim by all means equality and self-determination. In short, the right to rebel against oppression, 'the most sacred duty' as said La Fayette in July 1789. If one considers what certain advocates of colonisation term universalism as brought by France, there is a painful and flagrant contradiction.<sup>205</sup>

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**4.8. Under the Fourth Republic (1947 – 1958)**

When too many droughts burn the hearts  
 When hunger twists too many bowels  
 When we shed too many tears  
 When we stifle too many dreams  
 It's like adding logs to the wood-pile  
 In the end, it may take a twig, a slave  
 To light in God's sky and the heart of men  
 The most enormous fire.

Mouloud Mammeri<sup>206</sup>

Two years after the May 1945 massacres that General de Gaulle had ordered, approved and assumed, the Fourth Republic was born. During this period, the General's position on the Algerian situation would not change an iota. On 18 August 1947, as a rejection of the Algerian statute elaborated by the Fourth Republic, he declared that:

Sovereignty of France means that, first of all, we should not question in any form, from within or without, the fact that Algeria is our domain. It also means that there is no matter concerning Algeria about which the French public authorities, be they executive, legislative or judicial, would abrogate their right and duty to make the ultimate decision.<sup>207</sup>

The General was one war late because following the 1945 events, as was mentioned in the preceding section, the 1954 revolution had already been born. Six years after the advent of the Fourth Republic, the world would have confirmation of this reality.

As regards the Algerian policy of France, the statements made by French officials do not change from one government to another. When the Algerian revolution started, the Home Secretary, François Mitterand, condemned on 5 November 1954 the Aurès insurrection in terms similar to those used by de Gaulle in 1947: 'Algeria is France; from Flanders to the Congo, one law, one nation, one parliament. It is the Constitution and it is our will... The only negotiation is war.'<sup>208</sup>

For that 'negotiation' to achieve quick results, it was necessary for the French army to gather all the available means. The NATO forces were there to support it. Hence, from November 1954 to March 1955, the French troops stationed in Algeria increased from 50 000 to 80 000 men. In May 1955, the number would increase to 100 000, and in April 1956 that number went up to 250 000 troops with 40 000 reserves. Already in January 1955, in the Aurès region alone, the cradle of the revolution, military operations were conducted by 5 000 troops with air and tank support.

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From the beginning, the Fourth Republic, whose policies would be maintained and indeed reinforced by the Fifth Republic, did not hesitate in using the most extensive and most violent means to crush the rebellion: ‘battles against the ALN maquis, bombing of villages, arrests, transfer of populations from their villages to less scattered areas.’<sup>209</sup> The French political and military authorities had also decided to do away with the laws and basic rules of war morality. As underlined by Hafid Keramane: ‘Depraved French soldiers and civilians tirelessly inscribed the bloodiest and most shameful pages in the history of the twentieth century.’<sup>210</sup>

The most serious violations of human rights were tolerated, indeed ordered. The entire spectrum of abuses were committed in this war, as recalls historian Slimane Chikh:

The arbitrary arrests, the summary executions meant to be exemplary, the assassinations disguised as escape attempts, suicides, or simply disappearances, the bombings of *douars* [hamlets] and villages, the usage of napalm and gas, and finally, the practice which provoked the most indignation, and which constitutes the most degrading side of violence: torture.<sup>211</sup>

Under the Fourth Republic (and also the Fifth), there was a large number of isolated massacres which took the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of innocent people. But it is worth noting that the majority of the massacres committed during this period, which received very little coverage in the media, were part of the all out war decided by the French authorities to nip in the bud any possible popular insurrection. This was euphemistically termed ‘pacification’.

Before citing some examples of these isolated massacres, it is useful to say a few words regarding the political doctrine of ‘pacification’, the legal framework in which it was conducted, the agents who executed it and the means used to achieve it. This will be followed by a presentation of a sample of massacres committed as part of it during regrouping, combing operations, shelling and other acts of retaliation.

*4.8.1. Doctrine of ‘Pacification’*

‘Pacification’ is defined by Hafid Kéramane as ‘the integration of souls by napalm and scorched earth.’<sup>212</sup> Referring to the repressive operations against the population in his collection of testimonies entitled *La Pacification*, he says that:

It was never a question of isolated cases, nor even waves of repression spaced out in time. We are talking about a daily system, cynical and perfected in theory as in practice. We are talking about annihilating, destroying, driving crazy and debasing the Algerian defenceless population, because the combatants, the organisers, as a matter of course do not fall so easily into enemy hands. We are talking about crushing, once and for all, a ‘rebellious’ Algeria in both her physical and moral being.<sup>213</sup>

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A few French soldiers have commented on ‘pacification’. Jean Muller was a young reservist killed in an ambush in October 1956. In one of his letters published in *Témoignage Chrétien*, he gives evidence of the exactions he witnessed: ‘The words ‘pacification’ and ‘re-establishing confidence’ are, without doubt, only for the history books [...] We are far from the pacification that we were recalled for. We despair to see to what point human nature can fall.’<sup>214</sup>

Noël Favrelire, a sergeant in the 8<sup>th</sup> regiment of paratroopers, wrote in *Résistance algérienne*: ‘I was recalled with those of the 53/1 to pacify, so they said. As a matter of fact, instead of pacification we took part in a genuine war of extermination. I can give a thousand examples to back up my words.’<sup>215</sup>

#### 4.8.2. ‘Pacification’ Laws

In order facilitate and accelerate the ‘pacification’ a legislative arsenal was set up. Following the law on the state of emergency in the Algerian territory, voted by parliament five months after the start of the War of Liberation, on 31 March 1955, Guy Mollet, elected on a program of immediate peace, made a *volte-face* and from the beginning of 1956 asked parliament to grant his government, notably Robert Lacoste, ‘special powers to wage a total war’ in Algeria.<sup>216</sup> The *loi d’exception* was voted on 12 March 1956 to this effect. This law granting ‘special powers’ was followed by another law, on 19 July 1957, extending its jurisdiction to France. It was adopted by a large parliamentary majority; Benjamin Stora recounts:

Robert Lacoste, appointed Resident Minister for Algeria on 9 February 1956 by Guy Mollet, brought in a bill at the National Assembly ‘authorizing the government to put in action in Algeria a programme of economic expansion, of social progress and administrative reform, enabling it to take exceptional measures with the view to re-establishing order, protecting people and goods, and safeguarding the territory’.

By the decrees of March and April, which allowed reinforced military action and the recall of available men, Algeria was divided into three Army corps, each being partitioned into pacification zones, operating zones and prohibited zones. In the operation zones, the aim was to ‘crush the rebels’. In the pacification zones protection of the European and Muslim populations was foreseen, with the Army endeavouring to compete with the sub-administration. The prohibited zones would be evacuated, and the population assembled would be in resident camps taken care of by the Army.

Parliament voted massively, by 455 votes against 76, in favour of this ‘special powers’ law, which notably suspended the majority of guarantees of individual liberty in Algeria.<sup>217</sup>

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To manage the 'pacification' in its different aspects, there were various agents present on the ground: the various branches of the regular army, the auxiliary army, the parallel armies, such as that of the Bellounis, trained by or with the backing of the French authorities to counter the ALN. They had a well defined role. For example, the combing operations were performed by the task forces (paratroopers, légionnaires, Senegalese infantrymen, etc.), whereas covering was given to the contingent, with the support of the territorial units and the auxiliary army.<sup>218</sup> The latter included the *barkis*, *mogharzis*, self-defence militias, and the mechanized groups of rural protection (Groupes Mécanisés de la Protection Rurale) also called *goumiers*.

Among the principal agents of the 'pacification', the perpetrators of the massacres, the paras stood out for their necromaniac behaviour. The para concept of war is not about the efficient infliction of pain and death but is rather a diseased inclination towards gratuitous destruction.

In *The War without a Name: France in Algeria, 1954-1962*, John Talbott provides the portrait of a para, and gives an informative description. He stresses the fact that 'the para officers believed that they belonged to a "militant sect"'.<sup>219</sup>

In *La Guerre d'Algérie*, Henri Alleg also describes the 'para spirit' as being tormented and mentions how the paratroopers are narcissistic and consider themselves superhuman:

In the officers' mess, or on the ground among the elite troops - professional soldiers, légionnaires and paratroopers - they are constantly faced with the reflection of their own image. A 'superhuman race' indifferent to common prejudices, courageous and cruel, 'as hard as leather, as resistant as steel', full of contempt for the common servicemen, workers, employees, farmers, and the students who dream only of demob and the comfort and mediocrity of the daily life they have left. For us lads, it's something else! 'My fortune: my glory! My domain: combat!' proclaims a poster inviting youths to join the parachutists. In the barracks one can still read this 'paratroopers' prayer' from the Second World War and still widely displayed:

Give me, my God, that which you have left,  
 Give me that which you are never asked for,  
 Give me that which people refuse to take from you,  
 I do not ask you for wealth  
 Neither success nor even health...  
 I want insecurity and restlessness  
 I want torment and combat,  
 And that you should give them to me, my God,  
 For ever...

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And give us also, Lord, men who obey without asking too many questions! 'The men fought well because they believe in themselves and in their commanders. It is enough', wrote Marcel Bigeard in one of his orders of the day.<sup>220</sup>

The second category of 'pacification' agents was recruited from the urban and rural militias, and trained and armed by Lacoste from 1956. As *Resistance Algérienne* pointed out:

In response to the United Nations General Assembly's wish, the French government has just decided to create urban militias in Algeria. Enough blood split, UNO said, Lacoste's reply: let us set up militias. Cease-fire, UNO advises, Lacoste shouts: let us arm civilians. The United Nations recommended that the two sides make contact to agree a democratic and peaceful solution. Lacoste decrees that, from now on, every European would be armed and can shoot at anyone he suspects. It was thought that savage repression, iniquitous, verging on genocide must be fought against by the authorities. Lacoste replies: let us hunt the Algerians. And symbolically, he gives civilian powers to the military and military powers to the civilians. The circle is closed. In the middle is the Algerian, unarmed, starving, hunted, upset, beaten, lynched and soon killed because he is suspect. Today in Algeria, there is not one Frenchman who is not authorised, indeed invited, to use a gun. One month after the call for peace by the United Nations, there is not one Frenchman in Algeria who does not have the permission, the duty to discover, to create, to follow suspects.

One month after the vote on the final motion of the United Nations General Assembly, not one European in Algeria is a stranger to the most appalling extermination venture of modern times. A democratic solution? Agreed concedes Lacoste, let us start by doing away with the Algerians. For that we will arm civilians and let them get on with it. [...]

It is said that the creation of militias will lighten the Army's burden. It will free the units whose task is to protect the Tunisian and Moroccan borders. An army six hundred thousand men strong. Practically the total of the Air Force and the marines. An enormous, expeditious police force with a dumbfounding honours list, and including the former torturers of the Moroccan and Tunisian people. Territorial units one hundred thousand men strong. The army must be unburdened. Let us create urban militias. The fact remains that the criminal and hysterical frenzy of Lacoste won the day, even among clear-sighted Frenchmen. The truth is that the creation of these militias has in its justification its own contradiction. The French Army's tasks are infinite. As soon as it is given the objective to gag the Algerian mouth, the door of the future always closes. Especially if analysing, understanding, and measuring the depth and density of the Algerian revolution is forbidden: district leaders, air-raid wardens, street leaders, building leaders, floor leaders... Today vertical controlling adds to surface covering.

Two thousand applications were registered in 48 hours. The Europeans of Algeria responded immediately to Lacoste's call to murder. In future every European must record Algerian survivors in his sector. Information, 'rapid response' to terrorism, detection of suspects, liquidation of fugitives, reinforcing of police services. Certainly, the Army's burden must be lightened. Today, vertical combing operations are added to surface combing operations. Planned murder is added to craft murder. Stop the flow of blood was the advise of the United Nations. Lacoste answers: The best way to do so is that there be no more blood to spill. The Algerian people is entrusted to the gentle care of the urban militias after it had been handed over to

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Massu's hordes. In deciding to create these militias, Lacoste intimates clearly he wants no interference in HIS war. He confirms the existence of infinite rottenness. To be sure, he is now a prisoner, but what pleasure to lose everyone with oneself.<sup>221</sup>

The other 'pacification' agents are the auxiliaries who were counter-mobilised by terror into the French Army using French counter-revolutionary strategy. The terror-inducted Algerians made up most of the auxiliaries. However, there were certainly some members who, living in miserable conditions, succumbed to the temptation of a financial reward. There were others who joined the French ranks by political choice based on a firm conviction due either to a proximity to the French culture or, considering the forces at play, to the inability to conceive of anything other than a French Algeria. There were, finally, some members who joined in a brutal reaction to the hardship they, or members of their families, had suffered at the hands of members of the Armée de Libération Nationale (ALN). The latter two categories were the most zealous when it came to repressing entire populations and inflicting collective punishments.



Training Centre of Algerian auxiliaries of the French Army (*Harkis*)

In November 1954 the first *harka* (a mobile auxiliary group) was set up at Arris in the Aurès by Jean Servier, the sociologist and specialist in the Berber culture. But, doubting their loyalty to the French Army, the recruitment of auxiliaries was limited until 1957 when General Salan decided to increase it. He thus resumed his predecessors' tradition who since 1830 had resorted to using auxiliary groups to manage the conquest and the pacification (cf. § 4.2). The recruitment of *harkis* quickly spread over all Algeria, and even to

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the metropolis where a *barki* group was set up in Paris to control the immigrant Algerian community.

Under General Salan the total of soldiers and Muslim auxiliaries 'went from 38 000 men in January 1957 to 103 000 in December 1958, thus exceeding the maximum manpower of the ALN at the beginning of 1958 (60 000 to 90 000). [...] General Challe doubled [under the Fifth Republic] the number of soldiers and Muslim auxiliaries which increased from 103 000 in December 1958 to 210 000 in April 1960. But from January 1961 onwards, when the negotiations with the FLN were initiated, they were progressively reduced to 160 000 in January 1962, among which 20 000 career soldiers, 20 000 conscripts, 30 000 *barkis*, 20 000 *mogħaznis*, and 60 000 self-defence members.'<sup>222</sup>

Just like the paratroopers, the auxiliaries were known for their inhumane methods of executing their victims. Throat cutting was their speciality as recorded by many witnesses. A survivor of the Iflissen massacre relates:

Some of the 'black' perpetrators of these massacres had most likely darkened their skin with make-up, but the women and few men that were present at Iflissen remember particularly well this monster of torture that had black skin. This 'Sahari', they say 'an Arab from the Sahara', committed many murders, which to their eyes were made more repugnant because he cut the throat of his victims.<sup>223</sup>

The auxiliaries took great pleasure in making victims' relatives witness all the massacres. A survivor of the Iflissen massacre recounts that:

They slaughtered my brother with a knife, like a sheep. They did it in front of everybody. It was not done secretly; it is in front of everybody, and everybody saw it. They were not Algerians from here, but from elsewhere. And it was not a Frenchman who did it, it was definitely an Arab.<sup>224</sup>

Another survivor testifies how:

They came from Tizirt, [...] truckloads of black military personnel; they were different from the military based in the village. When they came, they looked for people, they took those they found. At Ighil Boussouil, men were under the ash-tree next to the mosque; they were all rounded up and killed, while women were forced to witness the slaughter.<sup>225</sup>

The predisposition of the members of this auxiliary army to massacre is often fuelled by their quest for recognition by their French officers, and a crazy race for promotion and medals. Said Ferdi's testimony - he was forced to join the French army at the tender age of 12 - describes the case of this sergeant who forced an innocent man out of his house to kill him, thereby earning the praise of his captain.

I went out with half a section to watch over a road that leads out of the village. We had left the base at 9 p.m. Twenty minutes later, we were settled. We waited remain-

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ing still for two hours. An hour and a half later, when silence was at its thickest, the chief suddenly decided to visit a nearby house. Four infantrymen and myself accompanied him, and while walking, he whispered that somebody had entered the house. I knew that was impossible as visibility was less than twenty meters. However, word of the chief being as sacred as the Bible, we knew better than to argue with him. As we reached the house, he ordered three infantrymen to surround it, and started knocking at the door. Nobody answered, but the chief insisted. Minutes later, the voice of a man behind the door asked us what we wanted. The chief answered that it was a simple ID check. He opened the door, half-asleep, wearing a simple night-shirt, but was ordered by the chief to get dressed and return. When he came back, the chief took him to the road, and shot him with a burst of automatic pistol. The chief had two grenades that he had recovered from a previous operation against the FLN. He then told us that this man had these two grenades on him. On return at the base, the chief presented his report to the captain; he told him that a guerrilla officer had taken the road leading to the mountains. He also said that the man had the two grenades on him, which he gave to the captain. The captain praised him for his work, and, later on, presented him with a citation for his bravery. All the infantrymen were part of this plot because of their fear of the chief, and also simply because their chief could get them a citation or a promotion. [...] Those crimes were committed almost everywhere for the same reasons. I learned about it from other recruits after the war had ended. It was mostly the doing of the *barkis*, rather than the regular army. Again, was this pacification?<sup>226</sup>

*4.8.4. Means of 'Pacification'*

To carry out the 'pacification' policy, the main criterion in the choice of methods to use was the effectiveness in applying the strategic principles and tactical methods of the counter-revolutionary war, drawn up by the French Army strategists (§ 3.3).

As the War of Liberation in Algeria spread, the French Army enlarged its range of repressive methods against the civilian population. It used combing operations, aerial bombardment with conventional bombs and with napalm, collective murder: machine-gunning or throat-cutting, bombing public places, and blowing up houses. Hafid Kéramane emphasises how the more the French forces realised their failure, the more they turned towards a total war:

The sight of daily bombardments, gigantic combing operations, fires in the forest, downpours of tracts beating down on the *douars* [hamlets], women, children and the elderly hunted down by French soldiers, houses destroyed, and human corpses shot through by machine-gun bullets lying dead at the side of animal corpses suffering the same end, all such scenes have become commonplace in the 'prohibited zones'. The enemy has completely failed in its objective to isolate the FLN from the population in these zones. It is as a result of this failure, so serious in her eyes, that France has chosen total war, that is the systematic extermination of all that lives.<sup>227</sup>

The French Army had recourse to non-conventional weapons of mass destruction, for example gas and toxic smoke. According to sub-officer 'D' a special company was formed for this purpose:

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In a suburb of Algiers there is a company 'Z' composed primarily of non-commissioned conscript career officers. They are instructed in the use of gas at the special arms school in Bourges. Initially divided among the troop corps, the elements of the 'Z' company were later regrouped in Algiers at the end of 1956.

Their role is to participate in operations in which the rebels are caught in caves. The team of technicians is sent in with gas grenades and protective clothing. Dozens of grenades are thrown into the cave opening. After a rather long wait a suspect is sent inside: if he is shot it means the rebels are still alive. More grenades are thrown in, the wait can be very long depending on the state and depth of the cave. Finally, men in protective clothing will go and take an 'inventory' of the interior.<sup>228</sup>

Even bacteriological arms were used, even though to a lesser extent, as reports Hafid Kéramane in *La Pacification*:

On 4 May 1957 in Guetna *douar* [hamlet], in the commune of Malherbe in the Ain-Témouchent district of the Oran département, a doctor – a lieutenant in the French Army – infected twenty-two babies (fifteen boys and seven girls) with a deadly virus. They died soon after: Ould Zenachi Ali (aged two), Ould Abdelkader Mohammed (aged two), Ould Dérouch Ali (aged five), Ould Mimoun Abdelkader (aged two), Bent Lazaoui Khadra (aged 3), Ould Miloud Djilali (aged 18 months), Ould Abdelah B. Hadni (aged 15 months), Ould Ali Mohammed (aged 19 months), Bent Kouider Halima (aged 3), Ould Okacha Boumediène (aged 2), Ould Zenaki Youcef (aged 1), Ould Miloud Atria (aged 2), Ould Riah Mustapha (aged 3), Ould Habib Benaïssa (aged 18 months), Ould Habib Kaddour (aged 18 months), Bent El Hadj Chérifa (aged 1), Ould Zenaki Abdelkader (aged 2), Ould Habib Abdelkader (aged 2), Ould Habib Miloud (aged 2), Bent Mohammed Fatima (aged 2), Bent Boumed Halima (aged 18 months), Bent Djelloul Halima (aged 18 months).<sup>229</sup>

The means of 'pacification' also included the inhumane treatment inflicted by French soldiers on arrested civilians, suspect or otherwise, as is pointed out in the following examples.

At Tizi-Hibel, *El Moudjahid* reported that:

All the men, most of whom were elderly, were forced to walk along a mined road. Many of them, including Madène Ramadane, a sixty-three year old retired school-teacher, were blown to shreds.<sup>230</sup>

At El Asnam (Chlef), victims were stacked up in a sort of 'cage for suspects':

It is a hole dug in the ground, five to six meters deep, four meters wide and eight to ten meters long. The top is latticed with barbed wire, with an open space allowing the suspects to be forced down a ladder into the hole. Depending upon the results of local operations, the number of inmates varies between ten and sixty. There is no protection against the sun or bad weather. During the day the suspects are engaged in various occupations, in the evening they return to the hole.<sup>231</sup>

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French war methods: Algerians are crammed into a hole with barbed wire

In the Soummam Valley a young French reservist states that:

Three suspects were arrested, buried up to the neck, having themselves dug the hole, in full sunshine. A bowl of water is placed fifty centimetres from their lips. They can only drink if they talk. They are left several days like that (approximately two). Not having spoken two are killed. The third talks but is killed afterwards.<sup>232</sup>

At Palestro (Lakhdaria), suspects were confined in wine cellars in the Marie farm, two kilometres from the town centre:

The suspects were confined in concrete wine cellars, access to which was through a small hole. The confined men were only permitted to leave the cellar once a day. At the beginning of August, there were several cases of death by suffocation due to the number of men confined and the heat.<sup>233</sup>

Robert Bonnaud relates, in his testimony published by the revue *Esprit* in April 1957, the atrocious scene of throat-cutting of a wretched victim during an interrogation:



Two Algerians are buried before their execution

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The European trained personnel of the GMPR who directed the ‘cleansing’ stood out particularly. They persisted in kicking his injuries until the wretched man suffocated from pain. They joked abominably during the taking of photographs. [...], redoubling their brutality on the pretext of interrogation.

Finally, taking out the kitchen knife, they sharpened it slowly and deliberately on a rock in the sight of the condemned.

The execution was slow and clumsy, hacking the neck and avoiding the carotid artery. Pompous and historic words were not lacking after the slaughter: ‘another one who died as he lived...’

Caring that cap it all, a ‘Mas 36’ bullet at point-blank range crushed the face transforming it into something unspeakably vile that is beyond words even in the vocabulary of horror.<sup>234</sup>



Sahara desert, Algerians put in chain

In his letter to the President of the Republic published on 2 September 1958 in the northern newspaper *Liberté*, and reprinted by *Libération* on 8 September 1958, Paul Lefebvre, a young soldier who spent eleven months in Algeria, relates the massacre of thirty civilians arrested as suspects:

Last 24 July [1958], three days before my departure on leave, I had to watch, with clenched fists, an atrocious scene: thirty-one Algerians had been arrested in a farm situated twenty kilometres from the Chemora village. They were taken to a camp and, after interrogation, divided into small groups to be massacred in various places on the orders and example of Captain Tornade. They were buried under the football ground which was turned into a true mass grave.<sup>235</sup>

ALN fighters taken prisoners during combat were equally subjected to the most terrible treatment, flagrantly violating the treaties, signed by France, on the conduct to adopt vis-à-vis prisoners of war. Evidence given by sev-

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eral French soldiers is overwhelming. This reservist talks about the ‘forced-labour in the forest’, an efficient method for liquidating a detainee:

On 31 October seven *fellagha* were taken prisoner. After leading them through town under escort, they were returned to the battalion that had taken them: this battalion has been ordered to carry out ‘forced-labour in the forest’.<sup>236</sup>

Leulliete, for his part, reports that:

Our section had four prisoners, moreover uninteresting as they were more cumbersome than useful. A silent prisoner is a lost man. Even if he knows nothing, it is better for him to tell no matter what, than to be quiet. These four have persuaded us so well that they really have nothing to tell that they have condemned themselves. And at noon, because we believe them, after they have dug their grave in the shingle of a river, we execute them purely and simply with a bullet in the head.<sup>237</sup>

In *Esprit* of May 1958, Georges Fogel makes a long statement about torture in which he says:

The prisoners who were too ‘damaged’ were executed and became ‘rebel prisoners killed during an escape attempt’. [...] There were real attacks on human dignity with policemen subjecting prisoners to abjections to the point of trying to turn men into beasts. I saw prisoners forced to fight each other; they were told that the winner would not be interrogated that day, or that the loser would be killed the same evening. I saw men who were forced to submit to sexual relations with dogs and other things even more unspeakable.<sup>238</sup>

Detainees in the residence centre in Arcole (Oran) testify, in a collective letter sent in March 1957 to the Council President and the resident minister, about the serious exactions committed against them:

To give you an idea of the collective torture that takes place, it is sufficient to point out that from two hundred and fifty-six prisoners, forty were taken away from the camp, many of them in a very serious state. Nine of them have never come back and we are still unaware of their fate: Kerbouche Rabah (medical doctor), Houidek Mesbah (imam, serious condition), Abrassène Slimane (member of the Arabic teaching profession, serious condition), Bourenane Ali, Aouati Brahim (former deputy mayor of Constantine), Semar Larbi (former town-councillor of Bône), Bounab Mostafa (post office clerk), Roula Rabia, Bounazza Kaddour (former town-councillor of Souk Ahras). In addition, at least one hundred prisoners have serious marks from the blows received, the most serious cases being those of: Memchaoui Mohammed, Belkheir Moussa, Basta Omar, Rabehi Abdelkader, Kerkouche Boubakeur, Ould Aïssa Belkacem, Nedjahi Ferhat, Bouchama Abderrahmane, Bouchit Mohamed, Soualmi Zidane, Boughalem Mohamed.<sup>239</sup>

The war wounded were not spared the cruel treatment of the French Army. One reservist testifies:

On 5 October, in the Nemours sector, a unit combs a djebel where the air force has just taken to task a column of ‘rebels’. The djebel is deserted, not a single gun shot.

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Behind a bush we find an injured man. [...] He is in uniform, he is unarmed and he speaks French. We ask for the commander's orders by radio. What must be done? The reply: 'Send him to Morocco.' The boys understood [...] a burst of gunfire. For the sake of security a last bullet is shot in his head. We move on.<sup>240</sup>

The procedures put into action in the 'pacification' also include the state of siege, the prohibition of markets and blockades intended to starve the population. These methods, already used by the French Army at the beginning of the conquest, especially in Kabylia, (see § 4.4) were reactivated, again in Kabylia, in the form of 'hunger blackmail'. Henri Alleg points out:

We pacify. In the Azazga sector in Kabylia, the military authority decided a few weeks ago to blockade the civilian population by barbed-wire roadblocks. The aim is to starve them until they decide to vote for the *djemaas*<sup>B</sup> which means to 'collaborate' and to organize to fight the *maquisards* [guerrillas]. On 17 December [1956] they have not yet surrendered, we learn.

The mixed commune of Djurdjura, whose county town is Michelet, is also on the way to pacification. Its one hundred and twenty villages count 85 000 inhabitants crushed by misery. To put an end to the activities of the *maquisards*, win over the people, and encourage denunciations, it has been decided:

1. The blockade: suppression of all movement, all food supplies, all money orders.
2. Shooting on sight: anyone leaving his or her home will be in danger of death.<sup>241</sup>

*4.8.5. Regroupings*

The policy of regrouping was a key element of the 'pacification' and perpetuated the cantonment of tribes dating from the time of the conquest. According to Henri Alleg, it is nothing short of 'wheels of a tentacular repressive mechanism which watches over, surrounds and hems in the whole country, by torture rendered commonplace, to the summary executions, "forced labour in the forest", to entire villages wiped off the map.'<sup>242</sup> As M'hamed Yousfi explains, this policy was not established immediately after the start of the War of Liberation:

At the start of the insurrection, on 1 November 1954, pretending to ignore the fact that it was a revolution for independence, the reaction of the French authorities was strong and brutal. In retaliation, the paratroopers who were brought back from Indochina were deployed in the Aures-Nememchas, Kabylia, and, later on, all over the country. The French army destroyed entire villages. The problem of relocation did not need to be solved at the beginning of the war. It was simple – those who survived the massacres were rare.<sup>243</sup>

<sup>B</sup> Local councils in centres and hamlets of mixed communes. The members are elected but the French administrator has all the civil, judiciary and administrative powers which he exercises through a caïd.

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It was only implemented when the French authorities were convinced that the war had roots and ramifications within the general population. Once the laws for exceptional powers were adopted, regrouping centres were created in the Aures, and, subsequently, throughout the country, and 'as the revolution evolved, so did the centres of shame. Humiliation and contempt by the SAS for the Algerians were increasing daily.'<sup>244</sup>

The aim of these regroupings was to control tightly the rural zones, and 'to starve these populations by uprooting them from their homes, their ancestral land, and to deprive them of any contact with the guerrilla forces.'<sup>245</sup>

Once planned and put into action, the regrouping policy affected a large portion of the Algerian population. According to the French authorities, the number of relocated people in May 1959 was about one million people, one ninth of the total population. However, 'that number had reached, at the end of 1960 and at the beginning of 1961, two million people, that is over more than one fifth of the Algerian population.'<sup>246</sup> Michel Cornaton stated that 'one third of the civilian population was directly affected by this upheaval [the population displacement]. The rest of the population was indirectly affected.'<sup>247</sup>

By machine-gunning and bombing, the French authorities forced entire populations to leave their villages. 'The civilian populations were regrouped under the threat of tank and military truck incursions, and when needed an air strike, so that terrorised they would hastily join the regrouping centres surrounded by barbed wire where a new and inhumane life was awaiting them.'<sup>248</sup>

*El Moudjahid* of 1 February 1958 describes the 1957 regrouping of a population of 600 000 inhabitants in the Constantine region:

On 3 May 1957 in Constantine the French General staff proclaimed a 'prohibited zone' in North Constantine, in the districts of Djidjelli, El-Milia, Collo and part of that of the Philippeville (Jemmapes). Paratrooper General Sauvagnac, who set up his headquarters in El-Milia, was placed at the head of this zone with 600 000 inhabitants. The French army gave itself the task of transferring the populations to 'regrouping camps' at Catinat, Aïn-Kercha, El-Hanser, etc.

Two large-scale combing operations were organised to encircle the population and ensure its evacuation. Tracts were written and distributed to even the smallest *mechtas*; they were solemn publications, a type of ultimatum on the theme: 'to the inhabitants of Djidjelli, etc.— the moment of decision has come — you must opt for France or for the rebels — if you choose the former, you have one week to join the regrouping camps — there follows a list of camps — if not, terrible missiles will crash down on you...'

The first combing operation took place on 3 June 1957 in Collo and El-Milia while the second on 17 June targeted Taher and Djidjelli.

The combing operation at Collo and El-Milia lasted seventeen days and 50 000 French soldiers were involved. In spite of careful preparation the combing proved

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as disappointing as the previous ones. The able-bodied men had fled and the French Army could only encircle old men, women and children. It is this section of the population that it tried directing toward the 'regrouping camps'.

In spite of the brutality of the enemy troops, the destruction and exemplary executions, the transfer of these defenceless populations met insurmountable problems and did not have the anticipated results. [...]

In July 1957, the day following the failed transfer operation, the tracts reappeared. This time the French General staff uttered its last threats announcing to the population who insisted on staying in the *douar* [hamlet] that the 'wrath of God' was about to fall on them. The 'wrath of God' did not keep them waiting. It took the form of intensive daily bombardments, some of which used napalm and gas. Each *douar* [hamlet] was subjected to three daily bombardments, each lasting an hour and involving seventeen to thirty-five aeroplanes on average.<sup>249</sup>

Elsewhere, the anonymous testimony of a 17-year old young man, published in the newspaper *El Mondjabid* of 5 January 1961, describes the force used on his hamlet so that they would leave and settle in the camps set up by the French authorities:

I was born in X... the oldest of three brothers and two sisters; the oldest is 12 years old, and the youngest 22 months. My father, who inherited nothing from his parents who had been dispossessed by Hernandez – a colonist in the region – died on 19 April 1958 in the Bessombourg concentration camp, after a seven-month detention. [...]

One day, at the end of autumn, the head of the SAS, accompanied by many soldiers, comes to the *douar*. We are all assembled. A European in civilian clothes and speaking Arabic gives a long speech about the war. 'Why are you helping the *fellagas*? Don't you see that you are feeding them so that they can kill the soldier who is teaching your kids and protecting you?' [...]

The head of the SAS returns to the *douar* always surrounded by French soldiers. 'You see that the *fellagas* have burned your harvest. Soon, they will cut the throats of your women.' We know that the French soldiers were the ones starting the fires in the bushes. Many women and kids had witnessed those incidents. 'Your only choice is to come and settle next to the base of...' [...]

Nine days later at dawn a deafening noise wakes us up. Explosions are heard far from the village, then closer and closer... The French air force is bombing the *douar*. Men, women and children, frightened, come out of their homes and disperse all around. Many people fell struck down. I can still recall the faces of women full of tears, and leaning on bloodied bodies. A few steps away from me, my younger brother is screaming with pain. I get closer. His shoulder blade is shattered. He has stopped moving. A moment later he dies. My mother, her young daughter in her arms, is not even crying. At 7 a.m., a convoy of French soldiers enters the *douar*, or whatever is left of it. Moving in pairs, the soldiers spray petrol on the walls of the huts, and strike matches. Soon, the whole village is engulfed in flames.

Afterwards, the soldiers assemble the survivors using rifle butts. The 960 survivors form a long column surrounded by soldiers. We walk over muddy roads for a long time. It is cold and raining. When we pass near other farms, the Europeans watch us. Many farmers laugh, while others cover their faces with their hands.

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At sunset, we stop in an area surrounded with [electrified] barbed wire. A child, exhausted, leans on the wire to rest. His body jumps, and he falls dead.<sup>250</sup>

There was, therefore, no alternative other than to be annihilated with one's home. One could not even escape from the village when one suspected an operation of forced relocation. The following testimony of Saïd Ferdi shows how relentless the French forces were against those wishing to escape their fate and avoid regrouping. This testimony also shows how the traditional expeditious methods used by the generals who had led the conquest were re-invented:

One morning, we went to a *douar* to surround and to assemble its inhabitants. However, the population had escaped the night before. In the deserted *douar*, we found only an old man, handicapped and mutilated in the war. I will always remember his image. As we entered his house, we found him lying on a rug his clothes decorated with all the medals he had been awarded during the two World Wars. A 60-year old regimental sergeant-major, he had served for 30 years, and we spotted the *légion d'honneur* among his medals. He had been awarded the highest distinctions, on top of decorations and medals for injuries in battle. The infantrymen started interrogating him about the whereabouts of the villagers. He then answered that they had fled many days ago to avoid the regrouping camps.

— So, where did they go? the chief asked.

— I do not know, and they did not tell me where they intended to seek refuge.

— You're lying, bastard! Tell me the truth!

— I do not know. The villagers know that if you come to the village, I am incapable of moving, and therefore they are afraid I would not keep silent under torture.

— Stop telling me stories! Tell me where they went!

— I swear on these decorations that I know nothing

After he uttered those words, the regimental sergeant violently tore the medals from the old man's chest and threw them on the ground, telling him that he was going to see if he really did not know where his *fellagas* comrades went. He hit him brutally with a cane. Blood started spewing from the fragile head, the head of an old servant of France. With so many handicaps, the old man fainted after few blows. When the officer kept asking the same question, the old man invariably answered:

— Give me back my medals. I want to die with them on my chest!

He died with a bullet in the head.

We then moved on. The mountain was 800 metres away from the village. While walking, an infantryman tried to get rid of a branch that stuck to his clothes, when he found out that he was in fact dragging the entire shrub. He traced his steps back and discovered a hole wide enough to let a man slip through. He tried to find out how deep the hole was, but without success. He then decided to inform the section leader of his discovery. At first glance, it seemed to be a petty find. However, not to let anything go unchecked, he ordered that one of the infantrymen be dropped into the hole and inspect it. Those holes, numerous in Algeria, particularly in the *douars*, would serve as storage for grain and wheat. In general, the cavity would be built as follows: a narrow opening wide enough to let a man pass through, followed by a

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large anfractuosity for storing the grain. One is let in with a rope attached to the belt, and he is hauled back out with the help of a second person outside the hole. One infantryman descended in that fashion, a gun in his hand. When he was 2 metres down, we heard a muffled noise. He had just received the discharge of a hunting rifle in the buttocks.

— Lift me up, lift me up! he screamed.

A little later, the section settled around the cavity, checking for any possible escape. The captain called in a team of specialists, which arrived minutes later by helicopter. They were carrying gas masks and huge cylinders. They dumped two or three of those cylinders in the hole, spread sheets along the edges along with special plates. An hour later, one of them descended in the hole only to come out a few minutes later and screaming crazily:

— It's full of people in there!

We started digging around the hole, and after more than an hours work, we ended in a huge cave where we found 90 bodies, dead by gas asphyxiation, all of them inhabitants of the *douar*, including old men and few-month old babies. One gun: the hunting rifle. This is again an example of this pacification enterprise.<sup>251</sup>



A guerrilla hiding place

Displaced populations left their homes in total distress to start a long walk, often many tens of kilometres, in dreadful conditions. It was a walk which would lead them to the *regroupment* camps which were often no more than an open piece of land surrounded by barbed wire. M'hamed Yousfi relates the long and complicated journey of the displaced people:

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Surprised by combing operations, usually carried out at dawn, or by their villages being bombarded, the inhabitants did not have time to take food and a few belongings (blankets or *barnous*). They had to walk in the open air without food or sleep.

Those who were lucky to have escaped death ended their odyssey exhausted, after a forced march of thirty, fifty and sometimes eighty kilometres, in a spot where nothing had been provided except barbed wire. To add to their misery was the harshness of the climate. Most of the farmers (and above all the children) rarely survived.<sup>252</sup>



Aurès Mountains, 1957, forced march to a *centre de regroupement* (strategic hamlet)

Once in the *regroupement* camps the displaced people would lead a nightmarish life. M'hamed Yousfi emphasises that 'the misery of the regrouped people was so big that several newspapers, at the time, termed it genocide.'<sup>253</sup>

In the *regroupement* camps, the displaced populations 'survived somehow or other, piled up in barracks or under canvas tents. Several networks of booby-trapped barbed wire surrounded these spaces, not to protect the inhabitants, but to prevent them from escaping.'<sup>254</sup>

Living conditions were precarious, unadapted to the climate and 'certain centres were in flooded areas (a basin) where the water had carried away women and children.'<sup>255</sup> The hygiene situation was critical, due to a lack of water, food was very insufficient, medical care practically non-existent.

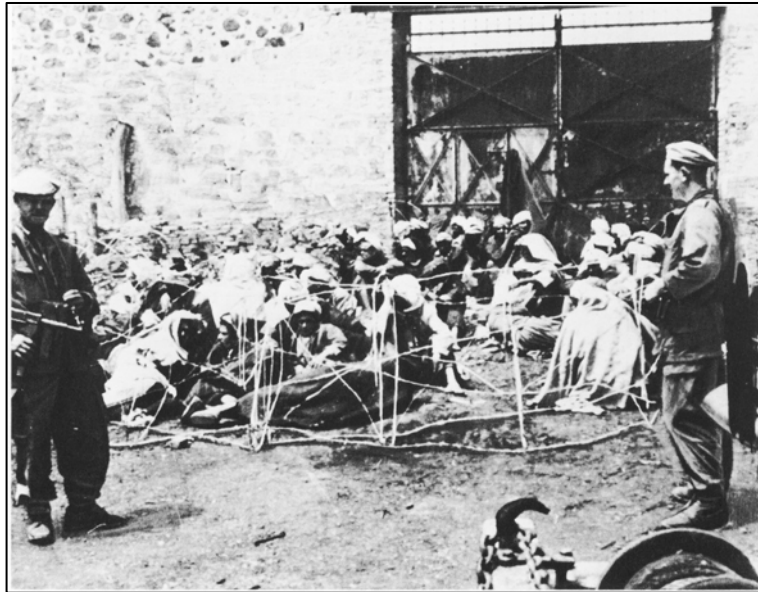
In the M'sila region, for example, where five thousand people lived in a *regroupement* centre

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After the raid and before 'questioning'



'Pacified' and regrouped in a strategic hamlet



Young girls on their own in the camp

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Each individual had only half a litre of water per day. Owing to the heat, in this high plateau area, and dehydration of the human body, a minimum of two litres of water is necessary; not counting the water essential for hygiene. The lack of this liquid and the sweating provoked by the heat undoubtedly cause illness, such as diarrhoea. Without treatment, the majority were doomed to a certain death.<sup>256</sup>

In the 'village-camps' where sustenance was a 'crucial problem', there was 'just what was necessary not to die of starvation.'<sup>257</sup> At Ighzer Amokrane, where approximately six thousand people had been forcibly displaced, Commander Florentin said in a report that in the camp 'food relief was about 900 grams of semolina per person per month; little children were not entitled to it.'<sup>258</sup>

Pastor Beaumont also testifies to the precarious food situation:

In the centre I saw five children literally die of hunger. A woman holding her dying son said to me. 'He is going to die!' A nurse, usually a native, said in tears: 'Nothing can be done...' These children were completely rachitic; the tibia and fibula could be seen under the skin. This state of affairs is the result of a huge displacement of people which allowed the French Army to carry out the war against the 'rebels'.<sup>259</sup>



Sorting center

In July 1959 the regrouping camp at Bessombourg was visited by Pierre Macaigne, a journalist from *Le Figaro*. This is what he wrote about the food shortage:

There are one hundred and twenty-three tents crowded under the pine trees, fifty-seven *gourbis* with thatched roofs and forty-seven solid houses. Cramped in fifteen to a tent since June 1957, these waifs live in an indescribable human blend. I was curious to go inside a tent. It is clean. But under the canvas a musky heat prevails which is well beyond forty degrees centigrade. It is sufficient to say that life is un-



tenable therein. At Bessombourg there are eighteen hundred children. The population is at present fed by semolina alone. Each of the regrouped receives 120 grams of semolina per day. Milk is distributed twice a week with half a litre per child. There has been no distribution of fats for eight months. In an attempt to alleviate this distress the Red Cross was able to send 100 litres of oil. But what is 100 litres when it must be shared out between 2474 people? Other figures were given to me on the spot. No distribution of sugar for one year. No distribution of chick peas for one year. No distribution of soap for one year...<sup>260</sup>

The malnutrition problem was so critical that, according to Michel Cornaton, certain soldiers still endowed with humanity ‘to aid those regrouped, had taken salary advances to obviate the most urgent cases.’<sup>261</sup> Unfortunately these sensitive souls were only a tiny minority in the heart of the army. Generally the SAS soldiers, not content with starving the regrouped populations, often went to the non-displaced people to seize foodstuffs leaving them only the strict minimum, which was insufficient, on the pretext of depriving the rebel forces of supplies.<sup>262</sup>

In these camps, which Said Ferdi called ‘nests of ants’, ‘physical resistance [of the detainees] was reduced and all types of epidemic rapidly propagated.’<sup>263</sup> In addition, the malnutrition ‘weakened the health of everyone, particularly children: the influenza, for example, that caused havoc in 1960-1961; we saw six children die during one single night.’<sup>264</sup> One learns elsewhere that ‘an empirical law was recorded: when a *regroupment* reaches one thousand people, a child dies every second day’ because of malnutrition and epidemic.<sup>265</sup>

But malnutrition and epidemic were not the only banes to which the regrouped populations were subjected. They were also the object of the worst exactions on the part of French soldiers, auxiliaries and collaborators recruited in the camps, all of whom ‘imposed their dictatorship over the silent majority.’<sup>266</sup> Nobody was spared, even women were affected, as this statement shows:

The SAS leader notices the beautiful and gentle Badra, the wife of Abdel who had joined the ALN in March 1958. ‘You, my dove, your place is not here. My bed sheets need bleaching.’ We never saw her again. It was only later, in the *maquis*, that a *mokhazni* deserter informed me that a new born baby had been found in the dustbin at the SAS leader’s home and that Badra, now insane, had returned to her family.<sup>267</sup>

The displaced populations were sometimes tempted to flee the hell of the regroupment camps and return to their places of origin, categorised as ‘prohibited zones’ by the Army. The repression in these cases of escape was often dreadful. M’hamed Yousfi asserts that it was the evasion of several families from regroupment camps in North Constantine, in the El-Col region and in Little Kabylia that ‘accounts for the new combing operations carried out in November 1959 and May 1960 code-named “Pierres précieuses”’; in

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July 1959 and in March 1960 (code-named operation “Jumelles” by General M. Challe).<sup>268</sup>

*4.8.5. Combing Operations*

Another pillar of the ‘pacification’ policy was the combing operation which was, as Henri Alleg points out,<sup>269</sup> all the tougher because the population was deemed ‘*complicit and responsable*’. Combing is described by Hafid Kéramane as follows:

The combing operation lasts on average two to five days; sizeable numbers of effectives are employed, for instance two divisions for the ‘cleansing’ of seven to eight *douars* representing a population varying between five and ten thousand inhabitants. [...] Encircling the *douars* and searching them house by house, the French Army takes its revenge on the civilians as it burns, loots, executes. The repetition of similar exactions leads the people to flee and shelter in the mountains far from their *douars* of origin.<sup>270</sup>

The following testimony describes, in detail, the entirety of the exactions (terror, brutality, torture, mass execution, vandalism, looting etc.) regularly carried out during the combing operations:

January 1956 was a very eventful month. It was, in fact, in that month that the French authorities decided to hit the revolutionary organisation in the village hard. On the evening of 11 January 1956 a hundred soldiers, known as ‘red berets’ or ‘leopards’, came to settle in the village. On their arrival everything appeared normal and nothing foreshadowed a drama was going to follow. Troop movements had become an everyday event so nobody was particularly suspicious that evening. However, the ‘leopards’ had not come on a simple visit, but to accomplish a well-defined mission. They spent the night at the police station. The next day was particularly cold, the streets were empty, except for a few soldiers who strolled around reassuring, by a smile or a kind word, the few inhabitants who had ventured out that morning. But, during the night of the 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>, they carried out the worst act of savagery that one could possibly imagine.

At nightfall, they entered houses, climbing walls with ladders, they woke up the men they were looking for and took them away, even in night-gowns, assuring the families that it was simply an ID check. They were guided by Arabs inhabitants of the village. During the night they made a tour of numerous houses and assembled about one hundred particularly well-known people. The following morning on leaving their homes, the inhabitants met soldiers who ordered them to return and stay put for forty-eight hours. They installed a curfew for two days. During these long hours of waiting, everyone asked each other what was happening; some people did not even know that some inhabitants had been abducted. After these two days of anguish, the result was a dozen shops belonging to the ‘disappeared’ looted, and several families had lost four or five of their own leaving only women and children. When the curfew was lifted the people were faced with a terrible sight: the dead lying abandoned on the pavements, covered with torture marks, shop doors had been smashed, children were crying in the streets looking for their father or brother. This was the awful result on this 15 January. Eighty-five kidnapped were counted, and apart from a dozen found dead in the streets, the others were never heard of again.

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It was a decisive event, not only in its volume but above all in the attitude of the population. The division became extremely clear between the small minority favourable to the French, and the great majority wanting to avenge the disappeared, who rallied to the revolutionaries.<sup>271</sup>

Mouloud Feraoun describes the combing of the Beni-Raten, near Fort-National, carried out on 17 March. He relates how a dozen villages were surrounded and an identity checking operation was launched. He evokes the case of five men from Tizi Rached, put on one side for an 'in depth' interrogation, and how 'the next morning, Sunday, they were found in the road near the village. Shot, mutilated, naked, robbed.'<sup>272</sup>

Jean Muller testifies to a combing operation in the Tablat region:

On the 3 and 4 September, we left with two companies (200 men) for the Mezrana *douar*, to the west of Seriet, with Captain C and sub-Lieutenant R. At six o'clock in the morning, a company killed five Arabs two hundred metres away from our camp, after the lieutenant commanding our company had refused the work be carried out by our company. Then, the same company shot on sight all those who tried to flee on our arrival. A child had a machine-gun bullet pass through his thigh. We rounded up all the men (forty-nine) and took them to Tablat. We saw the 3<sup>rd</sup> company set fire to five *meshtas* belonging to heads of tribes who had not come to the summoning of the administration of Tablat. We saw the same company set the forest alight. [...] Women and children wailed when they saw our column.<sup>273</sup>

Women did not escape the destructive madness of the repression forces during combing operations. Indeed, quite the contrary, they constituted a favourite target of sadistic acts by French soldiers, as well as auxiliaries and legionaries, as the three following statements show.

The testimony of a *maquisard*, which appeared in *El Monjabid*, on 20 July 1959, indicates how the hatred of the Arab pushed the French soldiers to disembowel a pregnant woman and to 'play' with the foetus. This practice is similar to another, very frequent at the time, which consisted of betting on the sex of the foetus before killing the mother:

It was during the summer of 1956. We had a neighbour who was pregnant. I was at her home when French soldiers on a combing operation burst into her house. I managed to hide but I saw the whole scene... They took the woman and cut open her stomach. They pulled out the foetus and played with it, like a ball. They threw it to one another: 'This is what we do with an Arab, a dirty Arab' they said. I saw it all with my own eyes. I was not yet fifteen.<sup>274</sup>

A reservist doctor of the French Army, relates certain dirty 'entertainment' preferred by the legionaries:

In a *meshta*, still occupied by the civilian population, two daughters of a Muslim who was away and we are sure belongs to the FLN, are arrested. The two girls, aged approximately sixteen and eighteen, are handed over to a company of legionaries as entertainment for the night, in the morning they are massacred.<sup>275</sup>

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Camille Lacoste-Dujardin, for her part, cites this testimony which recounts the fate of women unlucky enough to fall into the hands of the *gommier* commandos and the *barkis*:

When the lorry arrived, the women knew that they would all be taken to the same house, they looked at them, they chose, they took one and went into the house next door. [...] There were about fifteen women that had the same fate at Issenajène. Everyone knew about it, because the soldiers came to choose women, particularly young ones, and at Ighil Boussouil as well.<sup>276</sup>

To avoid the worst, mothers excelled in the art of camouflage in order to make their daughters look repulsive to the soldiers who invaded their houses, as this testimony points out:

As my sister was only just thirteen, my mother dressed her in a dirty old dress, a dirty scarf on her head, she left her like that on purpose. The soldiers came, they did this to the little one [took her by the chin and turned her head to see her better], then my mother said: 'leave her, she is ill, leave her, she is ill.' The soldier punched my mother and broke one of her teeth, but they didn't take my sister. We then quickly married her to a cousin.<sup>277</sup>

When women were not raped on the spot, often in the presence of near relatives (husbands, children etc.), they were taken to camps where they were abused. Inevitably, these humiliations leave the women with physical, and above all, indelible psychic scars, as Camille Lacoste-Dujardin emphasises:

There are other women who have become ill because the soldiers took them for the whole night. One of them has been ill ever since, she was at Tizi-Ouzou hospital, but she hasn't been well since. [...] The war has made the women ill, they are all upset, they are all deranged, they have all experienced too much misery. All the time they sing like this [laments]. And there are many who are a little mad; when they are not feeling good they spend a little time in hospital, and then they come back, but from time to time they are still a little mad.<sup>278</sup>

The French Army, and notably its information services, proved very efficient in disinformation about the crimes and massacres committed during the combing operations. They were masters of masking the records and the daily information bulletins. For instance:

On 15 August 1956 in the Saraf *douar*, ninety-five rebels are said to have been killed, three hunting rifles were recovered. Faced with this disproportion, the official account notes forty-five killed, instead of the ninety-five given in the first version. According to a police lieutenant at least two hundred were killed that day. The list of the victims' identities includes women and children. [...] A policeman's report: List of rebels killed; then identity — a child aged three among them.<sup>279</sup>

The following testimony illustrates clearly how the French soldiers got rid of embarrassing cases and 'masked' crimes committed in cold blood against innocents:

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An infantryman assigned to house searching during a clear-up operation found himself in front of a well-dressed man. He discovered a sum of money on him and took it. The victim started to protest. The infantryman threatened him with a bullet in the head if he said anything about the event, and for good measure gouged his eye with a butt of his rifle. The man, understanding the danger in protesting, kept quiet and several minutes later went to find the section leader to explain the mishap. The section leader, realising the seriousness of the injury, and fearing the consequences of his negligence if the victim lodged a complaint, (the victim belonged to the administration and was only there on short leave) ordered him to be shot. Then he informed the captain that he had just shot a fugitive. So, by this simple method the crime was masked. Unfortunately, it was not an isolated case, similar acts occurred quite often. It was one of the ways of pacifying the people, by employing the most ignoble and inhuman methods possible.<sup>280</sup>

The statements of the teacher Henri Munier, of El-Flaye, are revealing about the falsification, by the press, of events that took place in the Beni Oughlis *douar* and other *douars* in the Soummam Valley:

At the beginning of February [1956], at the Ikedjane *douar*: during a combing operation carried out by airborne légionnaire paratroopers, twenty-two civilians were killed. In the local press the next day: twenty-two fellagas killed! 27 March, a helicopter operation led by the colonial infantry at Semaoun. No engagement with the *maquis*, but six civilians killed, among them Hadj Aballache, an eminent man aged seventy. [...] In May, a patrol carrying out a search in Tasga, near Vieux-Marché, found a pile of blankets in a house. The men, relatives of M. Sahli, an administrative delegate at the Algerian Assembly, are shot and the block of houses is shelled. [...] 23 May, an engagement near Djenane. The *maquisards* withdrew without apparent loss. In retaliation the security forces attacked the neighbouring villages, notably Aït-Soula and Sidi-Yahia (partially set on fire) and Tazerout. Sixty-five peasants, including one woman, were lined up along the roadside between Djenane and Semaoun and machine-gunned to death. In the press the following day: thirty-nine fellagas killed in Djenane.<sup>281</sup>

But beyond this disinformation of public opinion, certain massacres committed during raids were not unknown to the French authorities, at the highest level, and metropolitan public opinion, as the following telegram and letters show.

Already in May 1955 Hemana Dhiab and Mostefa Fadli, *djemaâ* presidents in the Aurès, sent a telegram to Edgar Faure, the Council President, complaining about the criminal acts against the people of their *douars*:

Respectfully draw your attention, on behalf of the populations of Ouled Fadhel and Ouled Amor-Ben-Fadhel, Aïn El Kseur commune, moved and indignant by summary execution 14 unarmed people, aged 40 to 65, by soldiers, in front of their homes, all irreproachable farmers. Great anxiety among the said population who live in complete insecurity.<sup>282</sup>

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The letter from sixteen inhabitants of El Afiss *douar* in Constantine, sent to the director of a Parisian newspaper on 15 April 1956 bears witness to the atrocities committed against the inhabitants of this *douar*:

We are the inhabitants of a torched *douar* who write to you to recount the atrocities and misfortunes that have fallen on a poor, starving and defenceless people. [...]

Twenty of us were taken away as 'suspects' (most of us are old people of seventy, and children between fifteen and seventeen years old), we have left behind us only piles of ashes, huge devastation, our wives and children weeping and shouting. Briefly, they took us to the Lamy barracks where we suffered the most dreadful torture, the most atrocious bondage. After they had tied our hands and feet, they stabbed our flesh with sharp knives, lighters were lit and put in our ears, the fire burned us atrociously. One of our unfortunate comrades, an old man of seventy, had to undergo three operations last year following the torture. Two others had their necks pierced by knife wounds, they spent only one night with us in prison in agonising pain. After awful groaning, they breathed their last, weltering in a pool of blood. [...] We were twenty, and now we are only ten men, or rather ten half-alive men. Six are dead and four without news. Until now their families do not know if they are still alive or they are in the eternal night.

Signed by: Mrs Rabha bent Fedjri, Mrs Khachouni, Mrs Messaouda Chedli, Miss fatima Mecheri, Mr Ahmed Chedli, Mr Brahim Chedli, Mr Hocine Khachouni, Mr Abdallah Khachouni, Mr Lakhdar Khachouni, Mr Ali Khachouni, Mr Boulares Chaoui, Mr Ahmed Chaoui, Mr Hamadi Chaoui, Mr Belkacem Ben Ali, Mr Mohamed Abdi, Mr Ali Abdi.<sup>283</sup>

Imalayène Tahar, former county councillor, in his letter to the Resident Minister Lacoste, dated 10 December 1956, draws the latter's attention to the disinformation kept up by the army services around the massacre of innocents, and informs him as to what really happened during an operation at Chercell:

On 30 November 1956, the newspapers informed us that nine fugitives had been killed at Chercell the previous day. It was my duty to make extensive inquiries and to give you the results of my investigation. During the day of 29 November 1956, the town of Chercell was on a state of alert from half past six in the morning until one o'clock in the afternoon, approximately. Three territorial guards went to Mr Saadoun Allel's property, situated in the suburbs of Chercell, about six hundred metres from the agglomeration. The brothers Saadoun Hocine (26 years old), Noureddine (18 years old) and their cousin Saadoun Hamoud (28 years old) were taken out of their father's house. They were taken one kilometre away and killed in cold blood. Other territorial guards went to the [house of] market gardener, Riad Abdelkader, where they killed two of his workers. A worker and a local council employee, a father of five children and a decorated soldier, were also killed on their way to their workplaces. Finally, one other worker was injured. The names of the territorial guards responsible for this slaughter are known to everyone. As for their irreparable acts, they seem to show a hate of anything Arab that is so deep I find it impossible to qualify. After this butchery, the population of Chercell is crushed, the Muslims weep for their dead. How can we not fear that such crimes, attributable to those entrusted with keeping order, will not change these traditionally peaceful people into rebels?<sup>284</sup>

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#### 4.8.6. Shelling

'Pacification' is also blind shelling of villages and destruction of forests by gas and napalm, causing havoc in human lives and considerable damage to the environment. *El Moudjahid* on 20 August 1957 describes a typical bombardment:

At the beginning of each mass attack against a 'rotten zone' shelling by heavy artillery and the air force is carried out. The colonial army installs batteries at the periphery of a previously demarcated area and targets villages and hamlets. After an intensive pounding using napalm bombs, the soldiers penetrate the burning *douar*.

It is then that the French barbarity is unleashed. The houses spared the bombing are ransacked, the savings of the inhabitants are stolen, women are raped in front of their husbands, their fathers, their brothers. Women are also often taken to military posts where they are handed over to the Senegalese infantrymen and légionnaires before they are killed.

Entire villages, such as those in the region of Aït-Sedka (five), of Camp-Du-Maréchal and Haussonvilliers (seventeen) and of Beni-Douala (one hundred), were razed by French hordes and abandoned by their inhabitants.

Perpetual exodus, utter destitution, and the rigours of a mountain climate decimated the population.<sup>285</sup>

The French air force played a vital role in the War of Algeria. Heavily equipped with transport, reconnaissance and bombing aircrafts, often provided by NATO forces, notably the USA, it did not fail in its mission to 'pacify by fire'. Citizens still alive who lived through this 'pacification' remember how: 'Aeroplanes dropped drums of gas and everything. So, everything burned. All the forest was burned because they said: "we wage war inside", so they burned everything, everything, and now there is not much left.'<sup>286</sup>

In a letter which appeared in the French press in April 1957, a French soldier gives a vivid image of the work of the air force: 'The aeroplanes received the order to fire at anything that moved... The aeroplanes machine-gunned all afternoon. After their sorties the valley is left a cemetery. One cannot move one step without meeting a corpse.'<sup>287</sup>

Air bombing, and the tragic scenes of massacres they have brought about, are immortalised in popular songs in the areas affected by the calamities, as in this lament of Agouni-Zidoud sung by women and reported by Camille Dujardin:

Poor civilians, the majority died in hiding, because many men were forced to escape and hide; they were unarmed, they were not soldiers, they were only hiding. Only the *mujahidin* had weapons because they were soldiers. The war is soldier against soldier, but those were not armed. Sometimes an aeroplane flies by, it sees people walking along a road, they don't care if they are soldiers or not, they drop bombs... and they, they only wanted to hide, the poor things. Because he who left home [who

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took to the *maquis*] he knows that he must die or kill a soldier. But what can a civilian do? He avoids dying, he cannot do any harm, but the harm is done to him.<sup>288</sup>

Or in this feminine prose version from the same region of Agouni-Zidoud, again reported by Camille Dujardin:

Agouni-Zidoud, it's the first attack. Yes, the first. The forest is dense, there are many *maquis*. Above all, it goes up to the mountain. There used to be a beautiful forest, there used to be many trees in the *maquis*. Nearly everyone inside died, by bombs and gas: the first time everyone was burned. Everyone hid inside with a man from Iguer n'Salem. They used to meet there to learn how to start and, with aeroplanes, with boats, they shelled everything, nobody came out alive. They went to Taoudoucht, they surrounded it. And in the forest near Imsounen too, they went round overhead like this, and then the plane shelled them in the middle. Because someone had said the *fellagas* were inside. People did not know, they did not even know how to shoot, they knew nothing. So, the plane bombarded everything, they killed everyone inside. All those inside died, Faroudja's husband, Idir, Fatma's husband too, that of X and Mohand X, they died inside, and all of those from the hamlet. Only my brother and my cousin are alive because my brother had not gone from home.

But it is not like this that war is waged, not like this!<sup>289</sup>



1959, Oran, French F47 on a bombing mission

Said Ferdi, in his novel-testimony *A child in the War*, gives an account of the atrocities involved in a typical shelling operation of an inhabitant zone:

The shelling lasted the whole morning. As soon as the aeroplanes were short of bombs, four others came to take over. [...] At the end of the afternoon the aeroplanes came in larger numbers. Shelling became very intense then stopped so that we could attempt a new assault. [...] At daylight [the next day] we combed the zone. The command group came in the second line. We went forward about fifty metres then stopped, time for the front section to salvage weapons and documents from

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the dead. When we arrived at the first houses, I saw terrible things. About twenty bodies of men, women, children and elderly people were scattered over the ground, burnt, torn to shreds by shells and bullets. About a dozen old people, a few women and children still alive were at the side.<sup>290</sup>

Recounting the same shelling operation followed by the large combing, Said Ferdi describes the way the infantrymen treated the corpses burned by napalm:

Our captain put the two sections in two lines with the command group between. We started to walk and covered about one kilometre. The ground was strewn with bodies of *fellaga*, but above all civilians who had fled their *douars* on seeing the arrival of the French army, and had sheltered in the mountains not thinking that they would be surrounded. I was terribly shocked to see the infantrymen pounce on the bodies to tear off possessions, rings, watches, wallets, caps or boots, of the exceptional ones that wore them. Even more revolting was when they sometimes disembowelled a corpse with a bayonet. And in the burned bodies, softened by napalm, they drove in pieces of wood picked up from the floor. The few injured that we came across were finished off with a round of gun-fire. It was hardly possible to count the number of dead *fellaga*, with the exception of a few recognisable by their fatigues, they were indistinguishable from the civilians, all the bodies were burned and torn in shreds. I was dumbfounded to see so many dead, I cannot understand how such a slaughter was possible.<sup>291</sup>

#### 4.8.7. Retaliation

The reprisals are the application, on the ground, of the collective responsibility mentioned earlier. As Henri Alleg observes,<sup>292</sup> the deadly intensity of the retaliation, which became systematic since the beginning of the War of Liberation and often were masked by the euphemism ‘control operations’, is commensurate with the blows of the guerrilla operations led by the ALN and its *fidaiyūn*: ambush, assassination attempt etc. Thus, when it is ‘beaten, the colonialist army takes revenge, multiplying summary executions and collective massacres.’<sup>293</sup>

The following statements, reported by Hafid Keramane and Henri Alleg, give some idea about the retaliation operations carried out by the French Army. They span a one year period, from March 1956 to March 1957. On 4 March 1956 ‘After the death of a non-commissioned officer in Tebessa, a company of *légionnaires* lashed out in the Algerian neighbourhoods killing sixty-four people with machine-guns and bayonets; fire destroyed hundreds of homes and shops.’<sup>294</sup> On 24 March 1956, in Oued Zenati:

At the end of the afternoon a soldier is seriously injured by terrorists. Reaction: a round-up. All the Muslims living in the neighbourhood where the attack took place are brought to the police station where they pass the night; six of them are chosen and killed. The population is warned that for the next attack: thirty Muslims will pay with their lives.

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The day after these events six Muslims from the region who had been arrested one week previously as suspects were released by the police as no charge was found against them. They were taken on by the military and their corpses were discovered on Monday 26 June in a place called the 'Aïn-Arco mine'. On Tuesday, the local newspaper *La dépêche de Constantine* stated that six rebels were killed at Aïn-Arco mine in an engagement.<sup>295</sup>

On 29 March 1956, in Constantine:

At about 9.30 in the morning the Police Chief Superintendent Sanmarcelli is killed by a terrorist. At approximately eleven o'clock the victim's son shoots at any Arab he meets. Two Muslims are killed outright and six others seriously injured (two died later).

In the afternoon and evening there is an enormous round-up. Approximately fifteen thousand people are gathered and brought to the *Esplanade du Coudiat* where lies the central police station.

Taking advantage of this situation, some members of the security services (police auxiliaries according to the people) break doors, smash shop windows (approximately three hundred) and seize all that seems of value.

The mosques at Sidi-Abdelminnène and Sidi-Bounoughref are desecrated.

Lastly thirteen people are killed, five under the Sidi-Rached bridge and eight on the road to Kroubs. None of them appear to have been involved in terrorist activity.<sup>296</sup>

'A raid into the Arab neighbourhood took place in Constantine on 22 April [1956] after an attack which led to the death of a paratrooper. His friends returned to the barracks, took their guns and went on a punitive expedition.'<sup>297</sup> Early May 1956, near Batna, 'following an ambush in which two soldiers had been killed, fifteen suspects were interrogated and tortured. Fourteen out of the fifteen were shot,'<sup>298</sup> whereas near Tebessa, 'following an assassination attempt, the friends of an injured soldier go into an Arab district, fire their guns at the civilian population and throw grenades into the houses.'<sup>299</sup> On 11 May 1956, near El Hanser (north of Constantine), 'a unit passes a *meshta*; two or three shots are fired at the soldiers. An order is given to wipe out everything: at least seventy-nine people, men, women and children are killed.'<sup>300</sup> On 19 May 1956,

the day after an ambush near Palestro, an operation including several units is launched. An alpine hunter recounts: 'We were unleashed in a repressive operation. *Meshtas* burn, bursts of gun-fire bang, the explosion of grenades is muffled by the walls of houses. How many rebels are among the victims?' Ouled-Djerrah, the village close to where the patrol was ambushed, is wiped out, fifty men killed immediately, and many others afterwards.<sup>301</sup>

On 2 June 1956, near Nemours:

An ambush leaves fourteen dead in the Mobile Group for Rural Protection (GMPR) of Tounane. Friends of the victims are let to torture dozens of suspects. Then the

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battalion comes into action and burns three or four villages situated in the direction the ALN unit had taken. As for more distant villages (which could not be visited the same day), they were shot at by four fighter planes and pounded by rockets. The officers were, however, agreed that the gang was already far away in the countryside.<sup>302</sup>

Late July 1956, near Biskra, 'toll of a punitive expedition organised by the Senegalese: twenty six to thirty dead and forty injured amongst the civilian population.'<sup>303</sup> 'The Senegalese troops, who had been fired at, devastated the Mozabian neighbourhood, killing thirty five people and an undetermined number of others in a neighbouring palm grove.'<sup>304</sup> On 18 October 1956, 'an escort lorry of the Nedromah administration explodes on a mine: seven are killed. Several hours later eight Algerians are executed at the same place, and their bodies are left on show for nearly a month, as an example.'<sup>305</sup> Early October 1956:

One evening three lorries from the Road Department were stopped on a mountain road by an armed group and pushed into a ravine, after the drivers had been let free. The following day, the battalion commander gave an order to the sector lieutenant to fire on a village of his choice. The lieutenant then aimed his 60 mortar at a village where the military were rather badly received and fired several shots. Toll: unknown, all that is known is that there reportedly was a woman cut in two. The soldiers of the company were utterly disgusted, even though they had seen and done other terrible acts.<sup>306</sup>

On 27 October 1956:

[Commander] Azzedine organizes a deadly ambush against the 6<sup>th</sup> RI [Infantry Regiment] detachment near Tablat: 'The following day we were far away but, in retaliation, aeroplanes bombarded the sector, crushing the El Tlata market of Diour, during market time, and destroying several villages. Civilians paid a high price for the Oum-Zoublia ambush.'<sup>307</sup>

On 29 October 1956:

The 3<sup>rd</sup> company left on 'forced labour on the woods' with twenty suspects. They killed them at the Bécart passage, the site of an earlier ambush which had cost the lives of thirteen members of the 2/117<sup>th</sup> RI. They were finished off with a bullet in the head and left where they fell, without burial. The police were informed of the death of twenty 'fugitives' who had been killed. In the end the commander said: 'Now your comrades of the 2/117<sup>th</sup> RI are avenged. It is the Arabs who killed your friends. Anyway, if it was not these ones, they have paid for the others.'<sup>308</sup>

In November 1956:

An SAS captain said to the Ouadhias: 'We will stay in Kabylia, if necessary without the Kabyle people!' In November 1956 'pacification' was practised on the Ouadhias. The *maquisards* killed an SAS officer, Lieutenant Jacote, and injured his young wife. Nobody had warned this army missionary who, incidentally, came and went unarmed. The population was therefore considered an accessory. It will pay. With a trembling hand, the writer Mouloud Feraoun [who would be assassinated on 15

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March 1962 by the OAS, see § 4.9] wrote, in his Journal, what he had just learned from his teaching colleagues: 'The *douar* was combed. The first village was completely emptied of its inhabitants. In the other villages all the men had been caught. They were confined together for two weeks. Eighty had been killed in small groups each evening. Graves were prepared in advance. After two weeks we noticed that more than a hundred others had disappeared. We think that they were shut in *gourbis* full of straw and burned. No *gourbi*, no haystack still has remained in the fields. The women stayed in the village, in their homes. They were ordered to leave their doors open and to stay one to a room. The *douar* was thus transformed into a military brothel in the countryside (BMC) where companies of alpine hunters and other *légionnaires* were let loose. One hundred and fifty young girls took refuge in the convent and with the monks... Of others, we can find no trace.<sup>309</sup>

On 7 December 1956, Mohammed Bouchenafa, former delegate to the Algerian Assembly and County Councillor for Algiers, sent a letter to the Resident Minister Lacoste in which he recounted:

Last Saturday 23 [November 1956], eight French soldiers were killed and nine injured in an ambush near Berrouaghia. The same day an operation was carried out in the area by troops stationed at Berrouaghia. Scores of *fellahs* were indiscriminately imprisoned. The following day, Sunday, six of them were summarily executed a few hundred metres from the town of Barrouaghia. In addition, the troops tore peaceful Muslims from their homes and killed them in the same manner in nearby ravines. So it was that on this bloody Sunday fourteen Muslims picked at random were summarily executed by conscripts in a bitter mockery of 'pacification'. [...]

On Monday 8 November, other events as serious and as painful occurred in another part of the Médéa district. That day, at about eight o'clock in the evening, two military lorries (Dodge) stopped between Oued-Chir douar, of the Sidi-Nadji municipal centre, and Tiara *douar* (joint commune of Tablat). Twelve young Muslims aged between eighteen and twenty got down from the first vehicle. From the second lorry soldiers, who were inside, opened fire on them. Seven of the poor youths were killed, five were able to escape the massacre. The victims were from the north of the region between Blida and Maison-Carrée. Representing the Muslim population of the Médéa district, I must, Mr. Minister, bring this to your attention. An inquiry will determine the tragic and deplorable truth. These events are not, unfortunately, isolated and exceptional excesses. In many regions of Algeria, we hear of similar and sometimes more atrocious executions.<sup>310</sup>

On 15 December 1956, in Médéa,

Following an assassination attempt in which a *spahi* was killed, the troop was authorized, if not encouraged, to indulge in blind and bloody retaliation against the civilian population. [...] Men, women and children were massacred. Police dogs were let loose on the injured who had not been totally crushed by automatic machine guns.<sup>311</sup>

On 28 February 1957, 'a convoy of the 22<sup>nd</sup> RI was ambushed in the mountains south of Dupleix by a group from Wilaya 4, led by Captain Si Slimane Sihqa. Twenty-eight were killed.<sup>312</sup> A young soldier recounts the massacre that followed in the first week of March:

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1 March. [...] It is one o'clock in the morning. [...] Aeroplanes machine-gunned all afternoon and killed two Arabs, who were desperately waving their turbans, four hundred metres away from us. The aeroplanes had been ordered to fire on anything that moves. It augments the list of rebels killed. [...] This evening a fighter plane is prowling around and launches a rocket now and again. [...]

Two o'clock in the afternoon. [...] The attack has continued since this morning. It is a blood-bath. This evening the *fellaga* went by with their injured. At dawn they came to avert us. The Air Force has joined in and despite our explicit instructions to avoid T, they machine-gunned and bombarded the village. A man has just arrived, his father, his brothers are dead, half of T is destroyed and the dead cannot be counted. Twenty past three, the Colonel has just arrived by helicopter. A quarter to six, since these last words, many things have happened. The lieutenant admitted that the Air Force made a mistake in attacking T. (seventeen dead, more injured)...

T. no longer exists. It has been reduced to a blazing inferno. [...] At ten past midnight the patrol left, the valley is a cemetery. One cannot move one hundred metres without meeting a corpse or someone hanged; the *meshtas* burn. No prisoners: they were killed on the spot. [...] 4 March. Noon, the operation continues. [...] Because of the executions, life in the mess has become impossible. I am the only one not to accept the execution of prisoners. And still, they were not tortured here. B. has not stopped torturing and executing for forty-eight hours.<sup>313</sup>

'According to the statement cited by Laurent Casanova, and taken up by Léon Feix (advisor to the French Union and member of the French Communist Party political office) in a letter to Guy Mollet: "The officers estimate at 1000 the dead in this repression. They told us not to disclose this number; the official number of deaths in this operation is 60".'<sup>314</sup>

In mid-March 1957, forty-three Algerians from the *Arch* (community) of Béni-Smaïl were asphyxiated. *Résistance Algérienne* of 10 to 20 June 1957 reports on the massacre:

France, a party to the Geneva Conventions, violates them systematically and continually, 'article by article', if one can so put it. Let us take Article 33, for example, which stipulates that 'no protected person can be punished for a crime that he has not personally committed. Collective punishment as well as all types of intimidation or terrorism are forbidden. Looting is forbidden. Acts of retaliation against protected people and their possessions are forbidden'.

The article which reproduces, with slight alterations, the proposal of the International Committee of the Red Cross, originates from Article 50 of the Hague Regulations: 'No collective punishment, financial or otherwise, can be decreed against populations on the grounds of individual acts for which they cannot be considered jointly responsible.'

The facts cited below are a pale reflection of the sanctions and ill-treatment suffered by innocent and defenceless Algerians, in contempt of the most basic humanitarian principles, for acts which they had not perpetrated.

On the afternoon of 13 March 1957 an enemy military vehicle exploded on a mine placed by members of the Algerian National Liberation Army. Immediately one hundred Algerians were arrested and taken to the military headquarters at Ain-Isser. Children, aged between twelve and fifteen, and old people were among these

arrested. During the combing operation carried out the following morning, French soldiers burnt down the *khaymas* [tents], after looting them and destroying everything that could not be transported. Two hundred and fifty new people were taken to the military headquarters: men, women, the elderly and even babies (one had been born two days previously). Several men were later transferred to the police station, the others were crammed into wine cellars on a farm taken over by the army. The affair is well-known in Algeria. That night, tear-gas grenades were thrown into the cellars resulting in the death by asphyxiation of forty-three civilians. The corpses were given to jackals in a nearby forest.

Here is an example of the activities of the French army and militia in Algeria. Irrefutable: dates, places, names and ages of the victims; details are given here. They make tragically clear the 'generous and civilising mission' of France in our martyred homeland. Entire generations will remember.

A list of victims by year of birth and number of dependants who all belong to the *Arch* of Béni-Smaïl (Sebdou Bureau):

- Idaïssa *douar*: Bouhmidî Aïssa Ould Ahmed (1907, 6), Bouhmidî Nouar Ould Slimane (1908, 5), Youbi Abdelbaki Ould Mohammed (1907, 5), Youbi Kouider Ould Mohammed (1945, 0), Bouhmidî Mohammed Ould Aïssa (1897, 4), Farah Youcef Ould Mohammed (1943, 0), Youbi El Abid Ould Nouar (1897, 4), Youbi M'hammed Ould Aïssa (1941, 0), Bouhmidî Hbib Ould Mohammed (1907, 5), Abdellaoui Kouider Ould Chikh (1917, 2), Abdellaoui Mohammed Ould Kouider (1942, 0), S.N.P. Chikh Ould Rim (1927, 0).
- Ouled Sidi Abdallah *douar*: Belouatek Miloud Ould Mohammed (1927, 5), Belouatek Djilali Ould Mohammed (1917, 4), Belouatek Youcef Ould Abderrahmane (1931, 1), Belouatek Abderrahmane Ould Abderrahmane (1939, 1), Belouatek Aïssa Ould Abderrahmane (1941, 1), Aïssaoui Abdelkader Ould Djilali (1927, 2).
- Ouled Madah *douar*: Hmadouche Klifa Ould Embarek (1917, 5), Boufir Taieb Ould Mohammed (1922, 3), Bougrara Boumediene Ould Mohammed (1932, 2), Mokhtar Mohammed Ould Bachir (1927, 2), Maqchich Abdelkader Ould Mohammed (1897, 6), Taji Mohammed Ould Boudjemaâ (1922, 7), Fathi Miloud Ould Boubeker (1887, 0), Kort Mohammed Ould Abdellah (1897, 6), Boufir Taieb Ould Mohammed (1935, 3), Bougrara Boumediene Ould Mohammed (1925, 2), Mokhtar Mohammed Ould Bachir (1930, 2), Maqchich Abdelkader Ould Mohammed (1860, 6), Taji Mohammed Ould Mohammed (1935, 7), Fathi Boubeker Ould Kouider (1870, 0), Fathi Miloud Ould Boubeker (1915, 0).
- Ouled Chadli *douar*: Tayebi Abdelkader Ould Youssef (1943, 6).
- Ouled Amar *douar*: Hadjadj Benaouda Ould Benmrah (1941, 7).
- Lamoricière *douar*: Mahmoudi Moqaddem Ould Menouar (1942, 4).
- Ouled Maqrane *douar*: Ayad Boumediene Ould Bouazza (1927, 4), Maqrane Benabdallah Ould Kaddour (1937, 0).
- Houabda *douar*: Belouafi Ould Menouar (1887, 0), Boubeker Ahmed Ould Mohammed (1922, 5).
- Ouled Sidi Cheikh *douar*: Dairi Cheikh Ould Slimane (1902, 5), Dairi Mohammed Ould Cheikh (1932, 1), Toumi Mohammed Ould Youcef (1935, 5), Hssini Ahmed Ould Youcef (1943, 0).
- Yacif *douar*: Bougrari Youcef Ould Mohammed (1945, 0), Sabri Boumediene Ould Mohammed (1937, 4), Bougrara Mohammed Ould Taieb (1941, 0), Amiri Mohammed Ould Bouziane (1912, 6), Amiri Youcef Ould Mohammed (1939, 0).<sup>315</sup>

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*4.8.8. 20 August 1955*

Less than one year after the start of the revolution, events took place in North Constantine which would prove decisive in the course of the war. This uprising, the work of Lakhdar Ben Tobbal under orders from Youcef Zighout, was the first operation, on a large scale, involving the population alongside ALN combatants.

According to the FLN, 'the operation was launched in retaliation for "the civilian victims of pacification and the denial of the combatant status to those condemned to death".'<sup>316</sup>

The Algerian historian and militant Mahfoud Kaddache considers that:

The 20 August operation was methodically thought out and prepared in the greatest secrecy by the leaders of the North Constantine ALN, on the initiative of their leader Zighout Youcef. The objective was the involvement of the rural masses at the side of the ALN *mujahidin*, in attacks directed against military posts, settlements and French settlers. [In order to] loosen the encircling of the Aurès, and induce the French forces to disperse and make their displacement more difficult.<sup>317</sup>

Thirty-six settlement centres in Constantine, Skikda (Philippeville) and in the neighbouring mining town of El Halia were attacked by the population flanked by ALN officers. A hundred and twenty-three dead were counted, of which seventy-one were European.<sup>318</sup> These attacks were brutal and without discrimination; women and children were also killed.

The French authority's response was indiscriminate and disproportionate. It was 'appalling, in line with that of 1945,'<sup>319</sup> and one of the first large scale applications of 'the principle of collective responsibility to defenceless populations.'<sup>320</sup> In a repeat of 1945, 'private militias were formed on orders of the mayor of Philippeville, Benquet-Crevaux, whose passionate speeches were as many calls for murder.'<sup>321</sup>

In Skikda, the very town whose mayor is Benquet-Crevaux, 'Muslim prisoners, who had been left in the stadium for their own protection, were liquidated by machine-gun. Prefect Dupuch did his utmost to save them as the Europeans were insulting him.'<sup>322</sup> Despite Dupuch's efforts, 'who managed to save entire lorries of hunted muslims from a certain death,'<sup>323</sup> the number of victims was still fifteen hundred 'of which a large majority were killed and buried in a mass grave.'<sup>324</sup> The death toll at Skikda was two thousand casualties according to other authors.<sup>325</sup>

At Zafzaf *meshta*, 'the Algerians who were in the streets and cafés were killed without exception.'<sup>326</sup> At El Khroub, Charles Ageron, citing a report by one of the officers responsible at the time, described how:

Sixty suspects were arrested the night following the repelled attacks on El Khroub. 'They were executed the next morning between 6.30 and 9.30.' The site of the burial

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of the corpses was levelled by bulldozer, and the ground filled in, in 1958: 'the bodies are henceforth at a depth of 2.5 to 3 metres.'<sup>327</sup>

The official death toll of the repressions is 1273 dead, but this figure seems very far from the truth. Following 'a methodical census'<sup>328</sup> and 'in a scrupulous enquiry carried out by the FLN.'<sup>329</sup> the number of victims is in the region of 12 000. This 'figure has never been seriously contradicted'.<sup>330</sup> Other ALN sources estimate the global figure to be 20 000.<sup>331</sup>

The massacres of 20 August had serious consequences. Without doubt they accelerated the population's adhesion to the revolution because they reminded the waviness of their situation and of reality of the war. According to Droz, the main consequence of the massacres

resides surely in the definitive separation, at least in that part of Algeria, of the two communities, henceforward unshakeably set one against the other. A genuine psychosis pushes the European population to demand, and even carry out, the most extreme solutions and the Muslim population to flee their devastated *douars* and join the ALN *maquis*.<sup>332</sup>

The thousands of victims of the August 55 events dug a 'ditch of blood between the Algerians and the colonizers that was henceforth impassable.'<sup>333</sup>

*4.8.9. Battle of Algiers*

Early on, terrorist acts in Algiers targeted Algerians suspected of belonging to or sympathizing with the FLN. From 1955 activist groups started forming. 'Their members were recruited essentially from European circles (bar owners, trades people, employees, etc.) but they are in contact with the Mitidja colons and with discreet moneylenders, which means they lack neither money, nor arms, nor vehicles nor passes. [...] They benefit from police complicity and press discretion.'<sup>334</sup>

Amongst these 'ultra' groups can be named the Committee of French Renaissance (CRF), the French North African Union (UNFA), and above all, the Resistance Organization of French Algeria (ORAF) 'created in March 1956 under the direction of the Kovacs, Castille and Fechoz, with connections to Parisian political figures, including Soustelle.'<sup>335</sup>

On 22 June 1956 the 'ultras' started blowing up 'shops and businesses belonging to Algerians suspected of contributing financially to the FLN.'<sup>336</sup> During the night of 30 June to 1 July 1956, at Place Lavignerie, 'they exploded the UDMA (*Union Démocratique du Manifeste Algérien*) headquarters at the time of a meeting between leaders and militants of the UGTA (*Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens*) who were preparing the 5 July strike.'<sup>337</sup> The official casualty figure was seventeen Algerian workers seriously injured.<sup>338</sup> 'The police rushed to arrest all those present [militant workers who were members

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of the brand new labour union (UGTA - the General Union of Algerian Workers)] even though the press complacently repeats the claim of an explosion due to a gas leak.<sup>339</sup>

The ORAF attacked with a very powerful bomb the heart of the Kasbah, at 3 rue de Thèbes, on 10 August 1956 shortly after midnight. The target was the home of a FLN *fidai*. 'Fifty-seven dead Algerians, including women and children, were pulled from the rubble.'<sup>340</sup> Henri Alleg talks about the 'destruction of several buildings, leaving at least sixteen dead, of which nine children, and thirty-seven injured.'<sup>341</sup> Other casualty figures gave seventy Algerians killed by the explosion including children.<sup>342</sup>

Unable to put forward, once again, the 'gas leak' thesis as explanation, *Le Monde* put forward the hypothesis of a "hazardous handling" of explosives by "inexperienced FLN terrorists" in a clandestine depot.<sup>343</sup>

Henri Alleg describes the atmosphere prevailing in the Kasbah following this terrorist act: 'Emotion is deep, blending with outbursts of solidarity, protest strikes, but also the beginning of panic. FLN leaders must hold impromptu meetings in order to calm and reassure the population.'<sup>344</sup> Lentin points out that it needed 'all the authority of several FLN leaders, including Yacef Saadi, to prevent blind outbursts of violence against Europeans chosen at random.'<sup>345</sup> Lentin adds, however, that during the evening, 'groups of *fidaiyyin* attacked European bars, police stations and army lorries with grenades.'<sup>346</sup>

It was, in effect, the rue de Thèbes massacre, the execution of Ben Mohamed Zabana and Abdelkader Ferradj on 19 June 1956, followed by other executions in Algiers, Oran and Constantine prisons (as a result of the application of the law of 17 March, signed by the then Justice Minister François Mitterand, sentencing to death FLN members captured while carrying arms) which radicalised the ALN in Algiers and prompted it to adopt similar reprisal methods.

Lentin asserts that this radicalization was decided at the highest level of the FLN in Algiers:

Faced with this 'ultra' attack, the CEE [Co-ordination and Execution Committee of the FLN<sup>C</sup>] has decided to respond, in turn, to the bomb with a bomb, and to attacks on Muslim civilians by attacks against European civilians.<sup>347</sup>

So it was that on 30 September 1956 two bombs exploded in cafés in central Algiers: the Milk Bar and the Cafétéria. There were sixty injured, two of whom later died from their injuries. These bomb attacks were followed by

<sup>C</sup> The supreme authority comprising five members: Larbi Ben M'hidi, Abane Ramadane, Krim Belkacem, Ben Youssef Ben Khedda and Saad Dahlab, who had been designated by the Soummam Congress at the end of August 1956.

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those at the Hotel Aletti, Glières Square, and then, on 14 January 1957, on the premises of Radio-Algiers.

The decision to resort to bomb attacks in public places raised moral problems and questions of strategic and tactical order, as well as issues of revolutionary efficiency. Lentin reports that:

Two members of the CEE told me, separately, that only after a closely argued debate, lengthy hesitations and troubled consciences, was this radical decision, which raised not only moral questions but also problems of revolutionary efficiency, in that underground members of the FLN living in European neighbourhoods risked being victims of attacks by their own *fidaïyin*, was taken. The decisive argument which tipped the balance in favour of this radical decision was pressure from the *maquisards* in the mountains, who said that innocent Algerians by the hundred, if not the thousand, were massacred by French Air Force bombardments of villages and *douars*. The combatants in the front line could not understand why certain leaders, safe in their calm sectors, refused to open a front in the towns. If the CCE wished to establish its supreme leadership of the entire insurrection, it could only defer to this request.<sup>348</sup>

After his arrest in February 1957, Larbi Ben M'hidi, who had been in charge of supervising the armed group action during the Battle of Algiers, was interrogated about the use of bomb attacks against civilians. Lentin reports the dialogue Ben M'hidi had with the French officers, which he describes as 'an exchange of automatic gun fire':

On 28 February 1957 the most dynamic leader [of the autonomous zone of Algiers], Ben M'hidi, nicknamed 'the carburettor', fell into the hands of the colonels, some of whom questioned him personally.

— Don't you find it a little unmanly to transport terrorist bombs which kill innocents in women's shopping bags, beach bags or baskets?

Putting his head between his shoulders, a typical gesture of Ben M'hidi, he retorted:

— Don't you find it a lot more unmanly to throw, from high in the sky, as you do, on defenceless *douars*, your napalm and terrorist bombs which kill ten times more innocents. Obviously if we had aeroplanes it would be more convenient. Give me your bombers and I'll give you my baskets.<sup>349</sup>

Early in 1957 the Battle of Algiers started with its combing operations, extra-judiciary internments, individual and collective summary executions, rape and torture. On 7 January 1957, 8000 paratroopers, invested with a police mission, penetrated the town.<sup>350</sup> They 'settled in the old palaces, schools and on the highest terraces transformed into watchtowers and block-houses.'<sup>351</sup>

Robert Lacoste entrusted the 'pacification' of Algiers to General Jacques Massu, commander of the 10<sup>th</sup> parachute division, who

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has sizeable contingents of 'red berets' (colonial paratroopers), 'green berets' (paratroopers of the *Légion étrangère*), 'blue berets' (1<sup>st</sup> regiment of the hunter paratroopers), the '*casquettes*' of Bigeard's 3<sup>rd</sup> RCP and the Muslim *barkis*. The whole conglomeration of Algiers is progressively controlled and watched over, neighbourhood by neighbourhood, block of flats by block of flats, house by house, by Colonel Trinquier's DPU (Urban Protection Detachments) which use both regular army units and local reservists called up to serve in the UT (Territorial Units).<sup>352</sup>

Claude Lecerf, a 'Bigeard boy', in the words of Henri Alleg, talks about a former holiday camp at Bouzaréah, turned into a concentration camp for the victims of the frequent combing operations in Algiers:

Day and night, the urban combing operations bring new prisoners. Above the holiday camp they have set up an interrogation centre. Torture is carried out on a permanent basis; the use of electricity, the bathtub, repeated blows. Some soldiers are assigned to operating the magneto, others to hitting. Many victims leave the centre in a coma. Some others are dead. Soldiers load the bodies onto a GMC or a jeep, transport them and bury them in a discreet corner of the countryside: mass graves. [...]<sup>353</sup>



*Ratonnade in Algiers*

The Battle of Algiers lasted nearly all of 1957 and ended with the arrest of Yacef Saadi and the death of Ali La Pointe. It counted many victims. Lentin reports that:

In ten months 80 000 Algerians aged between fifteen and forty were taken for interrogation, 30 000 were put under 'house arrest', several thousand were tortured, 5000 'disappeared', dead as a result of brutality or summarily executed. The 10<sup>th</sup> paratrooper division dishonoured the French Army, but won the Battle of Algiers.<sup>354</sup>

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Lentin also noted that even when the Battle of Algiers was over, this town continued to be a theatre for exactions against the population:

Order reigns in Algiers, it is the order that reigned in Warsaw. Methods do not change, neither do the lies. When Aïssat Idir, the union leader, is assassinated, military and civil authorities pretend his death is accidental. They said he set alight his straw mattress with a cigarette and burned to death in his bed. But he never smoked. Algiers of the Algerians, Algiers white with anger, Algiers 'capital of pain' counts its dead, treats its wounded, supports its imprisoned, thinks of its revenge. In its lanes congested by uniforms, Massu's paratroopers and Captain Sirvent's *zouaves* lay down the law. Spurned as they are, they are less detested than the turncoats and the mercenaries whom Godard has organised into a special units allowed to commit all kinds of exactions, provided they 'maintain the peace by any means' and they be able, when the opportunity arises, 'to bring a lot more people' for psychological operations.<sup>355</sup>

*4.8.10. Mellouza Massacre*

The Mellouza massacre was perpetrated by Algerians against other Algerians. It was an extreme manifestation of the hasty justice put in place by the ALN to cope with French infiltration of their troops. Indeed, in the absence of previously established norms to regulate so called 'war justice' and moderate its perverse effects, thousands of Algerians, above all the *musabilines* (civilians who gave the ALN information and logistic support) and the new recruits across the country, were wiped out on a mere suspicion, in often appalling circumstances: with side-arms in front of parents and children etc. Many of the executed were victims of score settling.

The *douar* of Beni-Illemane in Kabylia is not far from the Mellouza locality. Mellouza was largely loyal to the Mouvement National Algérien (MNA), a rival party of the FLN whose armed wing was controlled by the French military. The Armée Nationale du Peuple Algérien (ANPA) led ostensibly by 'Brigadier-General Bellounis' but under the effective command of French General Parlange was active in Mellouza<sup>356</sup>.

The ALN troops, led by Colonel Mohammedi Saïd, commander of the wilaya (military district) N° 3, surrounded the *douar* on 28 May 1957 and attacked it. They killed about three hundred people (315 and 374 according to other sources), including women and children; there were 150 injured victims. According to Pierre Montagnon, 'the survivors lost their sanity from the horror they experienced.'<sup>357</sup>

The FLN claimed for a long time that the French army was responsible for the massacre but the culpability of the ALN in this atrocity is not disputed today. Ferhat Abbas imputes the responsibility of this massacre to Colonel Amirouche whom he qualifies as 'a courageous combatant lacking psychological sense.'<sup>358</sup>

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#### 4.8.11. *Eight Days Strike*

The July 1957 strike is the second major event, after that of August 1955, which showed the world the close connection between the FLN/ALN and the people, and their solidarity in the cause of liberating their country. This strike, of great political significance, aimed, according to *El Moudjahid*, to 'show in a more decisive fashion the Algerian people's adhesion to the FLN, as its sole representative, and by this demonstration give an unquestionable authority to our UN delegates to convince the rare diplomats, from some foreign countries, who are still hesitant or have illusions about France's policy.'<sup>359</sup>

The Algerian historian, Mahfoud Kaddache, gave an account of the unfolding of the strike:

The strike has been observed in several towns (Algiers, Oran, Constantine, Bône...) and in several villages. But it is in the capital that it appeared with most vigour. [...] The strike is almost general. [...] On the third day the workers were dragged from their homes by soldiers; nearly all those from the Casbah were transported to their workplaces in army lorries. Compulsory and partial resumption, and passive resistance and repression distinguish the last days. [...]

In addition to the soldiers and police, a new security service, 'The Urban Protection Force', has been set up and put in charge of hunting down the suspects that all the inhabitants of Algiers had become. In various neighbourhoods in Algiers, and the surrounding district, sorting and transition centres were opened in schools, shops, cafés and Turkish baths to deal with the arrested.

Torture speeds up the investigations and thousands of people are sent to prison and residence centres in the south. The population has paid heavily for this strike and the support given to the FLN.

All families are affected; most of them have one or more members killed or arrested, sent to prison or to a camp.<sup>360</sup>

#### 4.8.12. *The Shelling of Sakiet-Sidi-Youssef*

On 8 February 1958 the French Army violated Tunisian territory and bombarded, from the air, the border village of Sakiet-Sidi-Youssef which was sheltering a number of Algerian refugee families.

The massacre took place following incidents which had occurred the previous day. On 7 February 1958 a French Army fighter plane was attacked from an ALN base on Tunisian soil near the border. The following day shots were aimed at reconnaissance patrols. French pilots were forbidden to retort on Tunisian soil but decided to defy this prohibition. 'Eleven B 26s, six Corsairs and eight Mistrals attacked the FLN base in Sakiet-Sidi-Youssef. But around the base lies a civilian village; it is the latter which was hit. Seventy-five dead and more than eighty injured.'<sup>361</sup>

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The moment was badly chosen for this blind and indiscriminate response because 'that same day Red Cross delegates had visited a nearby village, Sakiet [Sidi-Youssef], to set up an infirmary and a school. Red Cross lorries were hit and there were civilian victims including women and children.'<sup>362</sup>

On 9 February 1958, a few hours after the attack, the French Command broadcast a communiqué which claimed the partial (50%) 'destruction of a rebel camp'. However, 'journalists, film makers, Tunisian, French, foreigners rushed to the scene. They were able to verify the assertions [in the communiqué]. What did they see? The village untroubled in the morning was three-quarters in ruins.'<sup>363</sup>

One week after the carnage at Sakiet-Sidi-Youssef, the newspaper *El Moudjahid* published this report:

On a farm near the site where the dead were assembled, a haunting sight awaits the visitor. Apart from a customs official, they are all civilians: village tradesmen, local farmers who had come to the market. The victims are of all ages: the old, adolescents, women, children, and several middle-aged men. Some young victims are covered in white shrouds, others still wear their everyday clothes: 'Kashabiya' of the countrymen, aprons of the schoolchildren. Several shapeless masses are enveloped in squares of material, the blood seeping out; these are the corpses of the victims blown to shreds and of which the scattered pieces had to be collected together. Further away there is a robust man who must have been hit by a heavy machine gun bullet head on. He is there stretched out with a ten centimetre hole in his forehead through which his brain has seeped out. On his right, there are small, sandalled feet which peek out from under a grey cover; the child cannot be more than six.

Near a pillar in the shed, two raised planks support a shapeless heap from which fragments of blackened material break loose. On lifting the shroud one steps back in horror. What was a human being is now a pile of charcoal. Only one clear blob in this charred mass: the teeth yellowed by the fire which completely blackened the lips, the cheeks, the nose, the eyelids. [...]

After the funeral prayer, the corpses are transported to the cemetery. [...] Instead of a grave, seven trenches each more than twenty meters long were necessary to bury all the victims.

This, in its tragic reality, is the picture of Sakiet-Sidi-Youssef village after the French air force carried out its murderous raid on 8 February 1958.<sup>364</sup>

The turn of events, and above all the international community's condemnation of the criminal act, put Gaillard's government and the Governor General, Robert Lacoste, in an embarrassing position, all the more because they had not been previously informed of the air attack. General Salan approved of the attack. Subsequently, Lacoste did the same.

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#### 4.9. Under the Fifth Republic (1959 – 1962)

*Weapons stir up in our heart of hearts the filth of the worst instincts. They announce murder, feed hate, let loose greed. They have crushed the weak, exalted the unworthy, propped up tyranny. Without respite, they destroy order, ransack hope, put prophets to death.*

(General Charles de Gaulle 1932)<sup>365</sup>



General Charles de Gaulle

The Algerian conflict caused the fall of the Fourth Republic and brought General de Gaulle to power, once again, in May 1958. He had a new constitution approved, which laid the foundation of the Fifth Republic, and was elected president of the Republic on 21 December 1958.

From the start of the War of Liberation General de Gaulle realised that this would be the last battle leading the Algerian people towards political independence. At the beginning of 1955 he told close confidants that ‘Algeria will be free’ and ‘emancipated’.<sup>366</sup> In October 1956 he declared to Prince Hassan of Morocco that ‘Algeria will be independent whether we like it or not. The main thing is how. The fact is already written in history. It all depends on how.’<sup>367</sup>

But between May 1958 and June 1962 General de Gaulle had, in the words of Daniel Guérin, ‘a disastrous delay of four years’ during which Algerians would be ‘slaughtered daily like sheep, by the so-called French, before the horrified eyes of the world.’<sup>368</sup> As his offer of the ‘peace of the braves’ had been rejected by the FLN, de Gaulle decided to intensify the war, waiting for a long period – terrifying for the Algerian people – for that which was not to be found: ‘a third force’ to prepare the ‘*partir pour mieux rester*’ (leaving for staying better). It is from this viewpoint that ‘General de Gaulle ordered the army to deal the most severe blows to the ALN to force it to negotiate on the conditions set by France.’<sup>369</sup> It is to this effect that General Challe, famous for the diabolical plan bearing his name, took over from Salan in December 1958 and ‘was given six months to present a victory report.’<sup>370</sup>

On the ground, the arrival of de Gaulle at the head of the French State changed nothing in the nature of the war waged in Algeria. If anything, it intensified and, as the Algerian historian Mahfoud Kaddache points out, ‘General de Gaulle tried everything so that the military solution triumphed; by multiplying attacks against the *maquis*.’<sup>371</sup> General de Gaulle strengthened the ‘pacification’ policy of Algeria by allocating it yet more resources. According to the historian and French army officer Pierre Montagnon, 1959 is

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‘the great year for French Algeria’ and that of ‘all out pacification’.<sup>372</sup> For Lentin ‘1959 is that of ever greater plunge into war.’<sup>373</sup>

Commanding a 500 000 strong force General Challe ‘launched [large-scale combined] operations against the ALN *maquis* in 1959. His “hunter commandos” obtained convincing results.’<sup>374</sup> From 1959 to 1960 several major operations were launched: ‘Couronnes’ in the region of Oran (March 1959), ‘Courroie’ in the region of Algiers (April-June 1959), ‘Etincelle’ in the Hodna (July 1959), ‘Jumelle’ in Greater Kabylia (July 1959), ‘Pierres précieuses’ in Little Kabylia (Autumn 1959), ‘Turquoise’, ‘Emeraude’, ‘Topaze’ in North-Constantine (October 1959), ‘Matraque’ in the Ouarsenis (March 1960), ‘Prométhée I et II’ in the Atlas (April 1960) and ‘Ariège’ in the Aurès (Summer 1960).

General Challe also used other methods to achieve the ‘best results’ as Kessel and Pirelli stress:

The French Army realised that for the Challe plan to succeed an ample ‘intelligence’ was imperative. What *Le Monde* calls ‘questioning without consideration’ is in fact operational torture, perfected in 1956. As information does not come to us, we will look for it. Destruction of villages, killing of civilians, torture would mark Algeria in 1959 on an ever larger scale.<sup>375</sup>

In the quest for intelligence, the most radical methods were to be used. Before deserting his section and changing side over to the ALN, disgusted by the irregular methods used by the French Army, officer cadet X of the 60 D2 sent to General de Gaulle a letter where he states that:

All these massive and painful arrests within the population group that is more or less suspect had a systematic goal [...]: dehumanisation and information hunting. ‘[...] Taking at random the most suspect. If he refuses to talk, a new barbaric method is used to get rid of him. It consists of taking a helicopter up to 300 metre altitude and throwing him to get smashed against the rocks...’<sup>376</sup>

It is the same ‘pacification’ policy which prescribed that ‘on the pretext that the farmers, indeed the civilians, were a source of support to the rebellion, shepherds and *fellahs* were tortured and slaughtered. Most of the isolated *gourbis* were torched and the inhabitants who had managed to escape were at the mercy of military operations and combing operations.’<sup>377</sup>

The Jumelle operation, launched in July 1959 to ‘pacify’ Kabylia, was executed by more than twenty thousand heavily armed men. On 3 August 1959, *El Moudjabid* gave an account of three months of repression, from mid-April to mid-July 1959: collective massacres, various humiliations, torture, rape, summary executions, civilians burned alive, mutilation, throat-cutting, dismembering, hanging, machine-gunning, shelling of villages, mortar fire on inhabited houses, houses set on fire, and machine-gunning of herds etc. The following list is a short extract:

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— At Ouled Meddah two civilians are executed for refusing to enlist as *goumiers*.

— In the Menaâ Chir, Ouled Abdi, Tkout and Chenaoura *douars* the enemy arrested more than one hundred and fifty Algerians, aged between sixteen and twenty-eight, and led them to Arris where they were forced to enrol in the *Harka*.

— Near Tizi-Ouzou the enemy threw civilian prisoners from the top of a cliff.

— At Agouni Arrous women and children had their hair cropped short and were gathered together in the square for three to four days without food or drink.

— Still in Agouni Arrous, in order for lorries to progress along mined tracks in the *douars* the enemy forced the population to open up the way. Those who refused were killed on the spot.

— Summary executions by *douar*. The number of victims is in brackets: Ouled Meddah (2), Ouled Yahia (7), Tachechate (14), Ben Batta (5), Trioual (3), Tassafat Guezra (3), Felix Faure (an entire family), Ighram (6), Toudja (7), Ait- Khalfoun (15), Al Melhem (4), Timimoun (several), Cheurfa (2), Adhbagh (5), Agou Guessad (3), Boukrane (13).<sup>378</sup>

In an anonymous *Lettre de Kabylie*, sent to Me Jacques Vergès and published in *Les Temps Modernes*, in December 1959, the inhabitants of a Kabylia village recount the atrocities and the cruel methods used to extort information they suffered at the hands of the military during a crackdown:

They made us leave our homes at five o'clock in the morning; they smashed our doors open and it was bad luck for those who hesitated to come out. After being summoned by sub-machine-guns with fingers on the trigger, we were assembled in the square with kicks and shoves to speed up the gathering. Children of seven and eight had the same ill-treatment. I did not know what exactly they were going to do with us. One of us had only a shirt on his back. After searching the houses, which took barely half an hour, we were all (children and elderly aged eighty-five included) led to a small village next to ours. We were led to an old house belonging to a retired schoolmaster, the room was too small to hold us. A sergeant-major enters, his eyes shining like a big game animal with beasts to devour in front of him. Then the questioning starts and with each question a punch a blow, and, when the victim is on the ground, a kick. Five or six victims were questioned with little success. The same sergeant-major returns to the room, in a shameless fury, and says to us: 'I'll give you ten minutes to talk, tell us the name of the *fellagas*, the arms' depots and the shelters; he who talks will be evacuated to Algiers together with his family.' Once the ten minutes are over, the horrible scene starts: iron bars are ready, a big fire, made from furniture found in the house, is lit, the electric battery is in place. The bloodthirsty sergeant-major returns and makes a fourteen year old youth, Mohamed Ouramdane, stand up to undress him; it's easy, a paratrooper's dagger is good for everything, shirt and trousers are cut from top to bottom. His hands and feet are tied behind his back and he is laid down on his stomach with one piece of wood under the chest and another one under the thighs. The cries of pain start. Four paratroopers surround their victim, one with a razor in his hand, another the electricity, the third the red-hot iron bars while the fourth has an axe in his hand. Each has a turn to do his shameful work. Poor Mohamed Ouramdane loses consciousness. He is taken by two people and put in the corner of the courtyard in a lamentable state, hideous to see. During this time several paratroopers return to the room ordering us to hand

over watches, bracelets or other valuables in good condition; hard luck for he who hides one of such objects.

The bloodthirsty one returns, and makes another man stand up. A. Mohamed Saïd is aged forty and father of five children, two of whom are with us in the room (8 and 10 year old). Within one minute, I see the unfortunate Mohamed Saïd naked and lying on his stomach, as was done to the first. The cries of pain start. We and the children cannot hold back our tears as each of the four inhuman butchers does his work. Blood runs from his ears, his fists and legs. An axe-blow on the head, hot iron bar on the body and the electricity take their turn. After about forty minutes the cries of pain are heard above all else – they are prolonged groanings. Several minutes later they bring Mohamed Saïd into the middle of the room, in a wheelbarrow, like a rag. It is dreadful to see – but we all believed we were in the next world. The bloodthirsty one tells us ‘you see, you have a quarter of an hour to talk, if not you will take it in turns to receive the same as him.’ The fifteen minutes over, he takes another one, K. Saïd aged thirty-five and father of four, one of whom is seven year old child is among us. He is put in the same position as the first two victims. The carnage begins, cries, pleas - nothing helps. Blood is running everywhere, and there is the smell of burnt flesh. His right eye is torn out, his teeth are broken, his head is covered in axe blows; his cries die down as he names the wife of the *katiba* leader. Two paratroopers lift him up by the arm and support him, a *barnus* is put on his back, the rest of his body is completely naked and dreadful to see. He is taken to look for this woman. The woman is Mrs B. Aldja, approximately thirty years old and mother of four young children. She is seven months pregnant. She is found in the house with other women, as some of these paratroopers have a taste for doing horrible and unbelievable things: rape, theft and all types of massacre. They tear a two year old child from her arm and throw him to the ground. Blows start raining down on the poor woman, a single slash of a dagger and her clothes are at her feet. Two other paratroopers take her, each by an arm, after she is confronted with Saïd. They are taken naked to the house of death. Saïd is put on one side and it is poor Aldja who takes his place. The torture begins, cries of pain, groans. The lieutenant arrives, finds the poor woman in this state, stops the scene and asks the captain in the control-room for information and tells him she is pregnant. Two minutes later I see the poor Aldja free but the scene continues as they retake poor Saïd, Aldja’s denouncer, who is lying on the ground hardly moving. The man with the razor approaches him, pulls out a big knife and in one stroke opens his throat from his jaw to his chest, a terrible sight, we were all shaken to the bottom of our souls. The bloodthirsty executioner returns anew, makes A. K. Kaci (aged approximately sixteen) stand up in the presence of his father, handicapped with one leg but unable to show any sign of protest. I cannot explain the state we were in. Poor Kaci once placed as the others, his cries of pain are heard, we could not hold back our tears. After barely a quarter of an hour, no more cries, water is poured on him to reanimate him, but it is too late, death has done its work. It was five o’clock, the four executioners returned to the room, one of them stated: ‘We are appointed to do this work and we will deal with everyone.’ They order the men to stand up; we believed they would suffer the same fate as the earlier ones, but as night was approaching they put the two dead in a wheelbarrow and had them tipped onto a rubbish tip at the end of the village. The lieutenant returns and says we could return to our homes once the paratroopers would be one kilometre away from the village on the way to their headquarters. It was awful when the parents and families of the victims met to pick up the poor mutilated bodies, awful to see as they covered the bodies with sheets and buried them as the night fell. The combing operation lasted a fortnight in our area, Ait-Yahia (in Kabylia). In all the villages, the tortures were more or less the same – plunging the

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bodies into boiling salted water up to the waist, and after several days of savage torture the victims had their throat cut. At Koukou, fifteen victims were slaughtered; at Ziri thirteen were slaughtered after they were tortured; at Gougaf nine were slaughtered; at Boutchour eleven victims had the same fate; at Tazeld seven and at Tifigout six. I cannot enumerate what happened during their presence. If the International Red Cross went to the villages where there are still survivors and enquired, they would be able to gather information about acts unworthy of all free, civilized human life; all types of atrocity that the commandos and paratroopers carried out on the population. In this combing operation, all the animals, donkeys, mules and horses were shot dead: eighty-seven in our region alone. No people worthy of a modern civilization whether of Christian, Muslim or Jewish belief, could accept this unlimited savagery on the mainly Kabyle population. We always suffer this savagery when these inhuman paratroopers who spread horror and terror come. God's punishment awaits them.<sup>379</sup>

'Pacification' under de Gaulle was synonymous with excess as regards terror, and beyond measure concerning repression. Algerians, especially those of the countryside, 'had become sub-human and foreigners in their own country. To the moral and economic oppression and domination of colonialism must be added the ill-treatment of the army which intervenes, in its turn, to make their life infernal and unbearable.'<sup>380</sup>

It was in the spirit of 'pacification' in its Gaullian version that the search for land mines, for example, was given to Algerian civilians, sometimes to children,<sup>381</sup> and that the corpses of Algerian victims were booby-trapped with grenades so as to massacre the families of the victims. A witness relates:

After each incident the French left a company on the spot, while the rest of the soldiers rejoined their bases, so as to arrest civilians living in the *maquis*. A few hours later, usually at night, the civilians left their hideouts with picks and shovels to bury the dead; sometimes they fell into the company hands and sometimes they managed to escape. This tactic exposed, the French changed the system and before departing they booby-trapped the corpses with grenades. Scores of civilians were victim of this strategy.<sup>382</sup>

It was in the spirit of this 'pacification', Fifth Republic version, that on 22 March 1959 112 Algerian civilians were massacred by the French Army in the *douar* of Terchioui, near Mac-Mahon (in the Constantine region). The victims, mainly women and children, sheltering in a cave were gassed to death. *El Moudjahid* on 25 May 1959 relates the events of this carnage, strikingly similar to the *enfumades* at the very beginning of the conquest:

It was following a combing operation carried out on 24 March 1959 in the Ouled-Fatima *douar*, by a French unit composed of GMPR and members of the seventh RTA stationed at Batna, Mac-Mahon, Barika, N'gaous and Corneille, that a number of civilians had to shelter in a cave in Terchioui.

The cave was surrounded until 25 March and, on that day, at ten o'clock in the morning, Colonel Colvaville, commander of the seventh *Régiment des Tirailleurs Algériens* [Regiment of Algerian Infantrymen], gave the order to destroy the cave and

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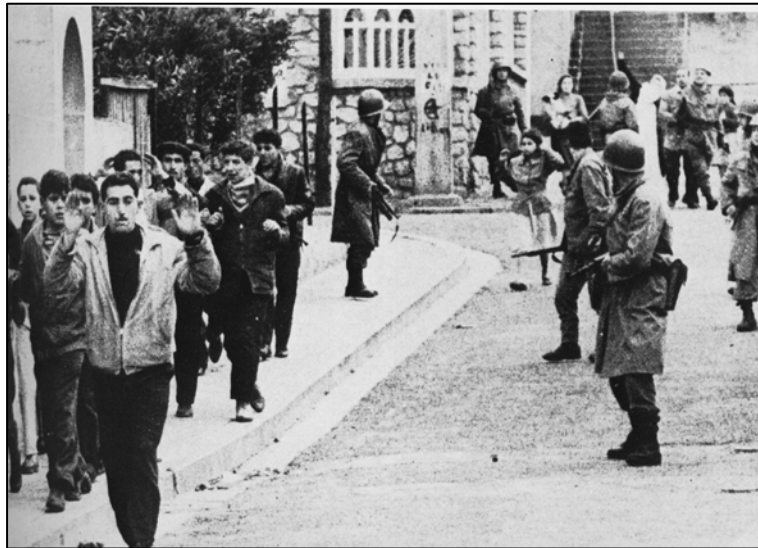
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annihilate its occupants. To prevent anyone leaving, the cave's entrance was dynamited. The massacre, which lasted until 4 p.m., was carried out using asphyxiating grenades and blasts of toxic gas.

In addition to Colonel Colvaille the following French officers participated in this disgraceful slaughter: Major Adon of the 7<sup>th</sup> RTA, Captain Riette of the GMPR, Captain Bougofa of the 7<sup>th</sup> RTA, Major Gabriel of the SAS at Mac-Mahon and captains Jacquot Lucien and Bernard of the SAS.<sup>383</sup>

#### 4.9.1. December 1960 Demonstrations

The December 1960 demonstrations were a strong political signal reiterating the Algerian people's support for the FLN/ALN. The population took to the streets of the capital, but also in the east and west of the country, to demonstrate peacefully and brandish the Algerian flag. The demonstrations were brutally put down.



Algiers, during the December 1960 demonstrations

Several days after the bloody events of 11 December a young demonstrator said: 'We had many more dead than the official communiqués claim. We claim that the events of the last few days resulted in the death of two hundred and eighty-seven Muslims.'<sup>384</sup>

In the east of the country the demonstrations on 12 December were fronted by 'women and children who were the targets of shooting from both the *légionnaires* and General de Gaulle's security service, which was in Annaba.'<sup>385</sup> The same occurred in the west as 'many dead and injured were counted among the demonstrators.'<sup>386</sup>

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In *Les otages de la Liberté* M'hamed Yousfi gives an example of executions carried out by French forces on unarmed demonstrators:

During the historic events of December 1960 the drama was marked by assassinations of children by paratroopers and 'pieds-noirs' [European settlers]. As in the case of young Farid Maghraoui from Diar El-Mahçoul, aged ten, who was killed in a cowardly manner by a burst of sub-machine-gun fire in the back. Covered in blood, little Farid fell to the ground, involuntarily getting himself rolled up in the green and white flag with a red crescent and star which he had just torn from an officer's hands.<sup>387</sup>

After the carnage the Turkish baths were transformed into provisional clinics to treat the injured who had been fortunate not to have fallen into the hands of French rescuers. Indeed, 'the ambulances which ceaselessly ploughed through the town's streets, were busy carrying and rescuing Europeans first and foremost. As for the Muslim dead and injured, most of them were rescued by fellow Muslims. Those who had the misfortune of being picked up by ambulancemen (Europeans) were 'finished off' on their arrival at hospital.'<sup>388</sup>

The demonstrations led to victims on both sides. According to delegate General Morin, the official figure for the repression is sixty-one dead (six Europeans and fifty-five Muslims) and twenty-five injured, most of whom were Muslim. But, according to other sources, the figure was much higher. The newspaper *El Moudjahid* gives the figure of two hundred dead and the same number of injured for the Belcourt neighbourhood, in Algiers, alone.<sup>389</sup>

Lentin states that the official figures 'are below the reality. Muslim sources announce 500 dead. A French official questions the number of fifty-five deaths for the whole of Algiers: "In the *Cité des Deux cents colonnes*, at Climat de France, alone there were sixty dead".<sup>390</sup>

And Lentin adds: 'Six Europeans killed on one side, hundreds of Muslims on the other. The disproportion is significant. Decimation is one sided. The life of an Arab is not worth that of a Frenchman, and the policeman's trigger is only cocked when an Arab is at the end of the barrel.'<sup>391</sup>

#### 4.9.2. Demonstrations against Dividing up the Territory

The dividing up of Algeria was one of the last illusions pursued by General de Gaulle. At the opening of the Evian Conference, on 20 May 1961, questions on the status of the Sahara and the organisation of a referendum on self-determination were the main obstacles to its progress and led to its adjournment. Negotiations succeeded only ten months later with the signing of the Evian Agreement on 18 March 1962.

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On 5 July 1961, anniversary of the Fall of Algiers in 1830, demonstrations against the dividing up of Algeria were organised by the FLN. Ferhat Abbas summoned the Algerian people and set the tone: 'You will protest loudly that you will not tolerate any division of the national territory, the Sahara is an integral part of Algeria.'<sup>392</sup>



5 July 1961, Algiers, a young demonstrator

The strike was nationwide and fifty-six districts out of seventy-five responded to the call.<sup>393</sup> Yves Courrière emphasizes that the strike was '90% effective. For the first time the FLN revealed its presence in the heart of the crowd by organising a body of officials responsible for maintaining strict order. But in the evening of the demonstration the government delegation announced: "In Algeria the demonstrations against

partition have left eighty dead and two hundred and sixty-six injured."<sup>394</sup> Henri Alleg gives a total of 95 dead and 425 injured.<sup>395</sup>

#### *4.9.3. Repression of October 1961 in Paris*

This massacre was the work of Paris Chief of Police, Maurice Papon. He ordered his men to subdue the tens of thousands of Algerian demonstrators who had taken to the streets of Paris on October 17<sup>th</sup> 1961 in answer to the call of the FLN Federation in France, to demand independence for Algeria and to protest against the discriminatory measures decided by the Chief of Police. The outcome was a massacre with a death toll of about 300. Scores of demonstrators were assassinated and then thrown into the Seine River.

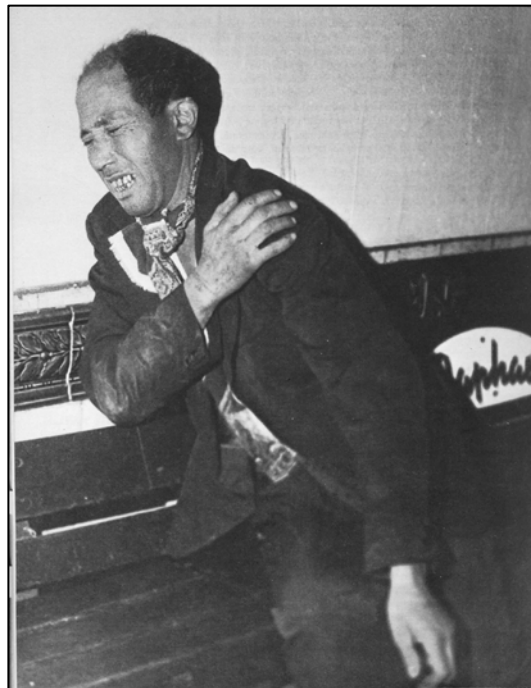
The story of the massacre can be reconstructed from several testimonies which help understanding what really happened that night.

Samia Messaoudi, for example, describes the massacre as follows:

It was thirty years ago, on 17 October 1961. In Paris Algerians, our parents, our elders, were peacefully demonstrating against the curfew imposed on them by Maurice Papon, Chief of Police. They were responding to a call from the FLN leaders. Women, children, men of all ages, came from the shanty towns of Nanterre and from the suburbs of Gennevilliers, Saint-Denis, Levallois-Perret, and Clichy, all marching on the main boulevards of Paris: dignity was the watchword. Soon after dusk, the repressive actions started. The police attacked with clubs and opened fire. The demonstrators did not have time to leave the gateways of the metro. They were rounded up, mauled and transported in police buses (CRS). Throughout the night the Algerians were subjected to violence and hatred. The next morning bodies were found floating in the Seine River. The police headquarters officially announced two dead and fifteen injured. In reality, it is difficult to know exactly the number of dead and missing. Investigations lead one to believe that there were approximately two hundred. [...] By evening of Tuesday 17 October 1961, 11 538 Algerians had been taken into custody for questioning within four hours. The biggest raid since 'Black Thursday' in 1942 was over. They were assembled, by force, in the Coubertin Stadium and in the Sport Palace. One is reminded of Vel'd'hiv': 'Doesn't it remind you of something?' asks the French magazine *France Observateur* in a photo caption.<sup>396</sup>

Daniel Guérin in *Quand l'Algérie s'insurgeait (1954-1962): Un Anticolonialiste Témoigne* (When Algeria Rebelled: An Anti-Colonialist Testifies) relates that:

On the evening of 17 October 1961, at approximately six o'clock, a crowd of about 30 000 working-class Arabs from shanty towns and nearby suburbs, headed by unarmed women and children, marched with a deeply moving calm and courage towards the centre of the capital. The police showed such barbaric conduct outclassing even its earlier performances. The demonstrators were arrested *en masse*, rounded up like cattle and put in temporary concentration camps. During the night, out of the Parisians' sight, scores of them were loaded into buses and thrown into the Seine River. A number of them drowned. It is estimated that 250 Algerians died by drowning that night.<sup>397</sup>



17 October 1961, in the Paris *Métro* after the demonstration

Jean-Paul Monferran indicates that the next day following the massacre, 18 October 1961, one could read in the press:

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We know then that on 17 October, starting at 6 p.m., tens of thousands of Algerians peacefully demonstrated in *costume du Dimanche* [they put on their Sunday clothes], almost joyfully... We know that they did not have any weapons and that they wanted only to show their solidarity with the FLN freedom fighters: 'FLN to Power', 'Algeria for Algerians' or 'Free Ben Bella'. We know that around 9.30 p.m. police chief Papon deployed a real manhunt operation in the streets of Paris and its suburbs: gun shots in the Champs-Élysées, in La Concorde, in l'Opéra, in the main boulevards and especially in front of the Rex cinema; roadblocks on bridges, especially that of Neuilly, from which the police drowned demonstrators, fractured their skulls, and shot them down... men, women and children... The State crime did not happen, but the 'toll' repressing an 'act of war by the FLN' deserved an official communiqué: 11 538 Algerians arrested in the evening.<sup>398</sup>

The testimony of François Maspéro is clear about the selective nature of the repressive action targeting the Algerians:

From the 17 [October] I can still hear a sound, the sound of rifle butts hitting skulls. And silence all around: life continues, people hurrying about. I can still see myself at the bottom of Saint-Michel Boulevard in the midst of hundreds Algerians. There is a 'white' who owns the night club *El Djazair*. All the Algerian residents I know in the area are here. I discover that they all belong to the FLN; they had always kept it to themselves. We start marching. There is an expression of happiness on faces, as if the people are meeting for the first time and have something to tell each other, something which did not need saying. It lasts scarcely a minute, maybe just the time to shout 'Long live Algeria' or 'Not the whites'. A group of policemen attacks, their clubs like wood-cutters. One of my friends screams 'Murderer', he is immediately surrounded, but an officer orders: 'Not the whites'. Then the charge surges back leaving people on the ground, blood on faces, on clothes, on hands; they had protected their heads. When the ambulances arrive the police charge again with weapon butts to arrest the wounded. It wasn't until much later that they were evacuated.<sup>399</sup>

Historian Pierre Vidal-Naquet gives the following account:

On the evening of 17 October 1961, the board of the Maurice Audin Committee met in my house. Jacques Panijel was very upset when he arrived because, living near l'Etoile, he had seen how the Algerian demonstrators had been received by the police at the metro station. The next day L'Humanité and Liberté were the only newspapers that protested. During the days that followed we learned dreadful things. We collected the testimony of a priest from Gennevilliers, one of the first to say that Algerians had been thrown into the Seine River. We prepared a file which was published by *Verité-Liberté*. Jacques Panijel produced the film: *Octobre à Paris* [October in Paris] in which he interviews the actual victims who survived the police aggression. We learned from a policeman that fifty Algerians had been beaten to death in the courtyard of the police headquarters, under the watchful eye of Maurice Papon. This is what I knew at that time.<sup>400</sup>

Mohamed Chelli was present during the demonstration. He relates how 'the policemen hit the demonstrators with clubs, their fists and their feet. We heard gun shots. My wife was wounded.'<sup>401</sup> François Lefort, fifteen years old at the time, was at the window of his flat in Neuilly Avenue. He remembers that 'there were inanimate bodies lying on the ground near the bridge. [The

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*French Colonial Massacres*

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policemen] were handling and taking them away. There were gun shots and my mother asked me to get away from the balcony.<sup>402</sup> As for Claude Toulouse, who was a policeman at the time, he reported that 'on the morning of the 18 [October] I was assigned to the Police-Secours, a rescue unit. I took the bus to the Coubertin stadium [...]. There was blood everywhere: open wounds, broken limbs.<sup>403</sup> Doctor Henri Carpentier, then a medical doctor at the Poissonnière community clinic, witnessed that:

I crossed the roadblocks explaining to the police that I wanted to treat the injured. An officer took me to a porch of a door where human bodies were piled up and said: 'If you have time to waste, help yourself, take a client, choose.'<sup>404</sup>

Decades later, Dr Carpentier remembers that:

On the evening of the 17 [October] I was at the community clinic in Bonne-Nouvelle Boulevard. At the entrance to the Rex cinema I saw a pile of human bodies about one and a half metres high. I got closer and pulled a foot that had been moving, but how many feet were there in that pile... I pulled the body that was moving, and took him for treatment... It was a very old man.<sup>405</sup>

Cardiologist Bernard Morin recounts how in October 1961 an Algerian friend, whose brother had been a victim, came to see him:

He told me that his brother had been killed by the police and asked me to go to the Institute of Legal Medicine, which I did. Once there, they asserted that my friend's brother had been shot because he was trying to escape; but the corpse that I saw was of a man beaten and tortured to death, with appalling hematomas, multiple ecchymosis in the cervical area, wounds in the abdomen and in the genital parts. The wounds did not correspond to the escape thesis. That is the testimony I gave at the trial which took place later.<sup>406</sup>

Philippe Bernard tries to reconstruct the facts of the event and asserts that:

On the evening of 17 October thirty thousand men, women and children from nearby shanty towns marched in the Opéra, Etoile and Odéon districts. The police violently suppressed the unarmed demonstrators who showed no resistance. Hands in the air, the Algerians were clubbed, thrown to the ground and loaded into RATP buses under the indifferent gaze of Parisians. Murders by drowning in the Seine River were committed. The photographs taken by Elie Kagan, the only ones testifying to that tragic night, show bloodied faces, and men with their hands on their heads lined up at the Concorde metro station as well as abandoned corpses.<sup>407</sup>

On 18 October 1961 *Libération* newspaper wrote: 'The police buses are full of bloody and moaning victims, the arms and legs of unconscious men sticking out of the windows.'<sup>408</sup> A group of policemen affiliated to a trade union known as *Republican Policemen*, whose members prefer to remain anonymous, rebelled and wanted to make these massacres known to the general public. Their communiqué states that:

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At one end of the Neuilly bridge there were groups of policemen, at the other end there were special forces (CRS) slowly closing in. All the Algerians caught in this huge trap were knocked unconscious then systematically pushed into the Seine River. At least one hundred people suffered this treatment... At the Austerlitz metro station, blood was running in streams, human bodies in tatters were lying on the steps. This massacre was supported and encouraged by the leadership of M. Soreau, General Controller of the 5th District... The small courtyard, known as the Courtyard of Isolation, which separates the barracks of *la cité* from the headquarters building, was transformed into a real mass grave. The torturers pushed dozens of their victims into the Seine River, which runs few metres away, to prevent them from being examined by the medical coroner, but not before they had stripped the victims of their watches and money. Mister Papon, Chief of Police, and Mister Legay, General Director of the municipal police, witnessed these horrible scenes. At the Grand-Court du 14-Août, more than one thousand Algerians were the subject of intense clubbing, which night time made even more bloody.<sup>409</sup>

More than thirty years later, M. Potzer, a retired policeman who was a member of the *Republican Policemen* group, confided in a British television team:

We were a group of trade unionists, communists and members of the Human Rights League. We wrote a text and printed 6000 copies which were sent to all the newspapers. [...] The most horrible was the massacre that took place at the Isolation courtyard inside the police headquarters. The ground was stained with blood, people were killed, there were terrible screams. At the time of the massacre the Chief of Police, Mr Papon, was in his office on the second floor. The events unfolded in the courtyard beneath his window and there were horrible screams; he knew what was happening. He could not have been unaware. All the more since the corpses had to be transported and thrown into the Seine River and then they had to clean up.<sup>410</sup>

On 18 October two hundred and twenty nine intellectuals, including Aragon, Jean-Paul Sartre, Pierre Boulez and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, signed a manifesto in which they declared:

With a courage and a dignity deserving admiration, the Algerian workers from the Parisian region came to demonstrate against the ever increasing repression to which they are subjected and against the discriminatory regime that the government wants to impose on them. An unleashing of police violence reaction was the response to their peaceful demonstration: once again, Algerians have died because they wanted to be free.

By being passive, the French people would be the accomplices of the racist fury unfolding in Paris, which takes us back to the dark days of the Nazi occupation: between the Algerians piled up at the Sport Palace waiting to be deported and the Jews assembled in Drancy before deportation, we refuse to see the difference.

To stop this scandal, moral disapproval is not enough. The signatories of the document called insistently upon all parties, unions and democratic organizations not only to demand that the shameful measures be abrogated, but to demonstrate their solidarity with the Algerian workers by inviting their members to oppose immediately the repetition of such violence.<sup>411</sup>

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The responsibility of the Paris Chief of Police Maurice Papon, acting under the authority of the Home Secretary Roger Frey, for the massacre is unquestionable. Historian Pierre Vidal-Naquet indicates that ‘what is particularly serious in this matter is that there was direct incitement by Papon to beat up and ultimately to kill. There is no doubt about it.’<sup>412</sup>

Historian Jean-Luc Einaudi, author of the *Bataille de Paris: 17 October 1961*, also finds that the responsibility of Papon is

direct, personal and overwhelming. Maurice Papon, the Chief of Police for Paris and the Seine Department, was responsible for the action of the police force: in his position he was totally aware of the progress of the operation. There are enough testimonies to prove that the victims of October 1961 (drowned, shot, beaten to death, shattered skulls) were a result of a co-ordinated action by the police. There were killings on the 17<sup>th</sup>, and again on the 18<sup>th</sup>, outside the demonstration, in the Sport Palace, in the courtyard of the police headquarters and in the Pierre-de-Coubertin stadium.<sup>413</sup>

Philippe Bernard reminds us in *Le Monde* that ‘the “Algerian” career of the man [Maurice Papon] begins from October 1945 with his appointment as deputy director of Algeria in the Home Office. Chief of Police of Constantine between 1945 and 1951, Maurice Papon returns to this function five years later, in the middle of the War of Algeria’ He adds, citing Jean-Luc Einaudi, ‘under his authority extra-judicial executions and the use of torture were practised by the military and the police.’

A few days before the events, Papon had told his policemen to shoot first if they felt threatened, which indicates premeditation of the crimes committed:

You will be protected, I give you my word. In fact, when you inform the headquarters that a North African has been shot dead, the boss who goes to the scene has everything to ensure that the North African will be armed, because in the present climate there must be no mistake.<sup>414</sup>

Two and a half months after the massacre, on New Year’s Day 1962, Maurice Papon offered his good wishes to the police by declaring:

You know, particularly after 17 October, that your moral interests have been defended with success, since the intent of the opponents of the police to set up a commission of inquiry has failed.<sup>415</sup>

But Papon did not act in this way without the guaranteed support of the political authority. He covered up for his men as long as his superiors covered up for him. It is the Home Secretary Roger Frey who rejected all the evidence collected which implicated the Parisian police in the massacre. As a reply to Claudius Petit, member of the majority in the assembly at the time, who said ‘the hideous beast of racism is on loose’, Frey made a now famous

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comment: 'Until now, I haven't seen the start of the beginning of the shadow of an evidence.'<sup>416</sup> Frey would not have so acted if he had not been sure of Prime Minister Michel Debré's support, and especially the support of the President of the Republic, Charles de Gaulle, who, sixteen years earlier, had hushed up all investigations into the massacres of May 1945.

Despite the testimonies that are available today, an investigation is needed, the truth needs to be stated and the responsibilities taken on because until today,

Officially nothing happened in Paris on 17 October 1961. The murder of hundreds of Algerians by the French police, acting on orders of Police Chief Papon, and the State crime committed on the pretext of repressing an 'act of war' by the FLN did not occur. Thirty-six years later the massacre is still secret: despite hundreds of corroborating testimonies, despite a large number of news investigations, despite films and history books on the subject... Therefore who is aware that, on that evening men, women and children wearing the colours of the prohibited green and white Algerian flag and peacefully marching along major thoroughfares of the capital, were savagely attacked, trampled, beaten and drowned by the dozen in the Seine River, killed in police buses and police stations...? Still today - to crown the horror - we do not know how many of them died: 200, 300, or 400? There has not been, and there cannot be, an official 'toll' of a State crime which did not, officially, take place.<sup>417</sup>

The official casualty figure is two dead but the corpses of Algerians are carried along by the Seine River, their hands tied behind their backs, their legs tied together, most of them showing signs of beating. Forty bodies are registered at the Institute for legal Medicine at dates in early November 1961. The Home Office admits that there were only 6 dead during the demonstrations. Sixty judicial investigations are opened but the authorities will use the current judicial system to reject the parliamentary investigation requested by Gaston Defferre. Today, on the basis of all the complaints that have been assembled, the FLN estimates there were 200 dead and 400 missing.

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### Chronology

Source: MRAP, Mouvement Contre le Racisme et pour l'Amitié entre les Peuples (tr. Movement against Racism and for Friendship among People), on the Internet.

**March 1958:** Maurice Papon assumes his functions as Chief of Police of Paris.

**August-October 1961:** 11 policemen victims of assassination attempts by the FLN in Paris and its suburbs.

**5 October 1961:** The Chief of Police of Paris implements a curfew on the Muslim population, between 9:30 p.m. and 5:30 a.m., in the Capital and its suburbs. He warns the French Muslims against any gatherings.

**10 October 1961:** As a reaction to the curfew, FLN leaders adopt the idea of a demonstration in Paris.

**16 October 1961:** The order to demonstrate is communicated to the leaders of regions targeted by the curfew; the instructions are transmitted the same day to the French Muslims in the Paris region: to converge along the main boulevards, towards l'Opéra Square; to demonstrate peacefully. It is the first time that an Algerian demonstration is organized in the Capital (the others were organized by metropolitan associations).

**17 October at noon:** Demonstrators confused about the time of the event are arrested by the police, which then learns about the planned demonstration. Quickly, orders come from the police headquarters to major police stations to take control of all the targeted City sectors.

**17 October at 8:00 p.m.:** The demonstration begins; 20 000 demonstrators march peacefully along the main boulevards; at the forefront, young women make 'you-you' sounds of joy. On their arrival at l'Opéra, a limited number of policemen are waiting for them; the group takes the opposite direction; there is no hostile shouting.

**17 October at 9:40 p.m.:** The group advances along the main boulevards arriving close to the Richelieu Drouot crossroad; police buses start following them.

**17 October at 9:50 p.m.:** A gun shot is heard, followed by others. Seven people among the demonstrators are hit, creating a panic. The police force, supported by two battalions of CRS (i.e. special forces), attacks. On the adjacent streets, policemen continue pursuing demonstrators trying to disperse. The CRS assemble a group of demonstrators by the Rex cinema. All of the collected testimonies mention the use of brutality.

**In the evening of 17 October.** The repression hits Pont de Neuilly, Courbevoie, and Pont Saint Michel. Within four hours, 11 538 Algerians have been taken in for questioning.

**18 October.** 2000 Algerians have been transferred to the *Pierre de Coubertin* stadium, 7000 to the Sport Palace. (Thursday 16 and Friday 17 July 1942, 12 884 foreign Jews were arrested in Paris and assembled in the Velodrome d'Hiver.).

**18 October.** Other demonstration attempts are reprimanded, policemen and CRS open fire, men fall down. 1500 persons are arrested and join the sorting centers. There is an increase in arrests around the suburbs: in Nanterre (2 dead, 6 injured according to official figures), Courbevoie, and Colombes.

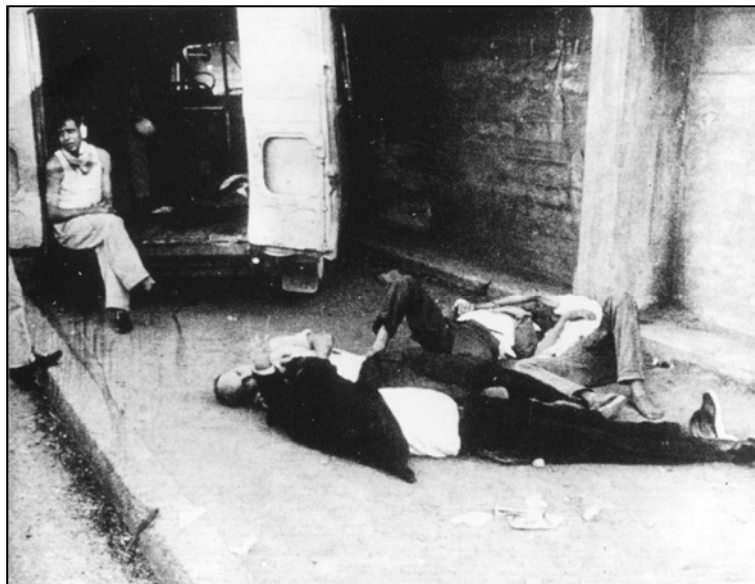
**19 October.** A last raid is justified by the police headquarters on the grounds of a suspected threat 'Commando Operation'. 421 persons are arrested in the suburbs and shanty towns. According to the testimonies, beatings were systematic. Between 17 and 19 October, 14 094 persons are imprisoned.

**20 October.** 1000 women and 550 children are arrested and assembled in gymnasiums, social centres and reception centres. Between 18 and 20 October, 1500 demonstration coordinators are deported to Algeria.

*4.9.3. OAS Massacres*

The massacres perpetrated in the large towns by the Secret Army Organization (OAS), a paramilitary organisation of French settlers staunchly opposed to independence, were a bloody response to the negotiations conducted by the French government and the FLN and, later on, to the ceasefire concluded between the two parties. Militiamen supervised by army officers who had rebelled against the authority in Paris wreaked havoc in the heart of the civilian population. This was part of the 'scorched earth' policy practised from the announcement of the cease-fire (Spring 1961) to the departure of the last settler (Summer 1962).

The political intent of most acts of indiscriminate terror is to impose the law of a minority on a majority. Accordingly, the OAS' actions had 'as an aim, and early result, to extend 'the waves of fear', [to] create a psychosis of dread [and to create] in the perpetrators feelings of pride and omnipotence: the right of life and death'.<sup>418</sup> Algerians residing in large towns with a sizeable European population, in particular Oran and Algiers, lived through long months of terror. 'In Algiers and Oran ten to fifty Algerians are killed by the OAS every day.'<sup>419</sup> Towns in the metropolis were not be spared.



Algiers, OAS attack leaves four Algerians dead on the pavement

In Oran the watchword 'Arab hunting' was launched by the OAS in mid-1961. The 'hunting' campaign ended only in June 1962 when Colonel Du-four ordered 'the OAS commandos to stop the destruction of Oran'.<sup>420</sup>

Algiers underwent 'practices more cruel than gelatine explosives, whose detonations punctuate everyday existence: machine-gunning of moorish ca-

fés is followed, from mid-January 1962, by shooting from cars at facades and even at anonymous passers-by. There is also the abduction of the injured from hospitals, or that of prisoners followed by their execution to the point that, in order to escape the “justice” of the OAS, the FLN detainees were transferred to France.<sup>421</sup>

On 1 November 1961, the seventh anniversary of the beginning of the War of Liberation, the FLN organised an Independence Day. About one hundred Algerians were killed that day.<sup>422</sup> On 26 February 1962 ten Algerians were assassinated in less than one hour in the streets of Algiers.<sup>423</sup> On 15 March 1962 six members of social centres, including the Algerian writer Mouloud Feraoun, were assassinated.<sup>424</sup> On 19 March 1962 at the Place du Gouvernement in Algiers ‘mortar shells were launched by the OAS into a Muslim crowd killing twenty-four people and injuring fifty-nine.’<sup>425</sup> On 20 March 1962 four Algerians, arrested following an FLN attack, were killed by ‘Delta commandos’ in their cell at the Hussein-Dey police station where they were detained.<sup>426</sup> The same day ten Algerians died and sixteen were injured in a shooting in Oran.<sup>427</sup> On 21 March 1962 eleven attacks are committed against Algerians.<sup>428</sup> On 26 March 1962 ten Algerians were assassinated during a *ratonnade* at Belcourt.<sup>429</sup> On 3 April 1962 OAS massacres increased in perversion. After the ‘corpses of Muslims killed by strangulation and wrapped in bags bearing the initials OAS’<sup>430</sup>, and ‘the massacre of four seasons tradesmen, the murder of florists and housewives’<sup>431</sup> the OAS proceeded to finish off the ill and injured Algerians by machine-gunning them in their hospital beds. Nine Algerian patients were assassinated in the Beau-Fraisier clinic in the suburbs of Algiers.<sup>432</sup> On 23 April 1962 several groups of Algerians were attacked by OAS commandos and machine-gunned.<sup>433</sup> On 24 April 1962 the OAS attacked Dr Jean-Marie Larribère’s clinic in Oran.<sup>434</sup> On 2 May 1962 an OAS booby-trapped car exploded at Algiers port in the middle of a crowd of one thousand Algerian dockers who were waiting for work. The explosion left sixty-two dead and one hundred and ten seriously injured.<sup>435</sup> On 10 May 1962, as part of ‘*Opération Fatma*’, ‘Delta commando’ marksmen shoot down Algerian charwomen on their way to their European employers.<sup>436</sup>

It is difficult to evaluate with precision the total death toll of massacres perpetrated by the OAS. Pierre Miquel asserts that ‘in less than one year the OAS had killed 2360 people and injured 5418 others.’<sup>437</sup> The American journalist Paul Hénissard estimates that ‘for the period up to Salan’s arrest on 20 April 1962 there were 1622 deaths of which 239 were Europeans and 5148 injured of which 1062 were Europeans, all of which were attributable to 12 299 gelatine explosions, 2546 individual attacks and 510 collective attacks.’<sup>438</sup> The number of attacks is phenomenal. Bernard Droz points out that ‘on certain days one could count an attack every fifteen minutes.’<sup>439</sup> In the final evaluation of all the massacres committed by the AOS the Algerians

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constitute the majority of victims. In the first five months of 1962 they represented 'more than 89% of registered deaths.'<sup>440</sup>

*4.9.4. Massacres of the Harkis*

The story of the *harkis* constitutes the sad epilogue of the Algerian tragedy whose acts have gone on for too long. These Algerians had, for one reason or another, chosen to side with the French and had served with full devotion, and often with some zeal, the interest of the French army. Most of them have committed the worst atrocities against the civilian population. But most of them were abandoned to their fate from the advent of Algeria's independence.

In March 1962, the French administration had estimated at approximately 260 000 the number of Algerians threatened because of their behaviour during the war (including military career officers, military personnel, *harkis*, *mok-baznis*, GMC, guards of self-defence groups, veterans and civil servants who were engaged within the Constantine Plan). However, by counting their families, the total number of this segment of the population reached one million people.<sup>441</sup>

But for the French authorities, these were after all only Algerians, and 'everything happens as if the *Comité des Affaires Algériennes* had put the elimination of the French Muslims in the "gains and losses" of the Evian Agreement.'<sup>442</sup> In France, the desire was to repatriate the minimum number of those who had fought under and for the tricolour flag. Tens of thousands had been left behind, not because of a lack of logistical means of transport within a short time, but rather for a reason of principle: 'It was considered undesirable to receive the families of the harkis in France (instructions were given to this effect).'<sup>443</sup> 'To be clear, Louis Joxe, the Minister for Algerian Affairs, wanted to stop "some initiatives, taken in Algeria, to organize the emigration to, and settlement in, France of Muslim families wishing to leave Algerian territory". [Joxe] demanded that the senior officers "search for the promoters, and their accomplices, of these enterprises to take the appropriate sanctions". Louis Joxe specified that "the auxiliary troops arriving in France outside the general repatriation plan will be, as a rule, sent back to Algeria".'<sup>444</sup>

Thus only a small fraction (a few tens of thousands) were able to benefit from repatriation with the French forces, and even the lucky ones who succeeded in embarking for France, quickly discovered a life which was not at all rosy. They were condemned to live there in misery and exclusion, parked in transit camps outside towns, which became in time permanent residences surrounded by barbed wire resembling the SAS regroupment camps in Algeria. Even today, some forty years after their settlement on French soil, this 900 000 strong community is still considered as second-class citizens, as are

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their children and grandchildren who suffer social handicaps such as more than 80% unemployment and with less than 10% success at baccalaureate level.<sup>445</sup> In his book *Coup d'État permanent* François Mitterand resumed well the *harkis'* situation in France: 'What shame could outdo that which we all attain before the fate of hundreds of thousands of Algerians who no longer have a homeland because they choose ours?'<sup>446</sup>

Our indifference towards them is undoubtedly one of the most painful manifestations of the incapacity of the French collective memory to look its colonial past in the face, and to take on the consequent responsibilities for those who made a choice whose the terrible consequences were predictable.<sup>447</sup>

As the French forces left in 1962, the *harki* community suffered the violent manifestation of hate accumulated by the population over many years. This community was to be subjected to the excesses of extra-judicial treatments, outside the framework of legal institutions, and which did not differentiate as to the nature of the crime committed. This treatment touched not only the *harkis* themselves, but also their families, who were unjustly punished for crimes they had not committed.

In some regions of Algeria, the population engaged in the practice of a cruel retributive justice which went against the basic rules of law and led to all kinds of excess, as was the case in the purges which followed insurrections and revolutions in other continents or in post-War France itself. According to some French historians, the victims of this savage justice were subjected to the worst of cruelties. Algerians were castrated, scorched alive, boiled, cut into pieces, pulled apart or run over by lorries. Entire families were exterminated, women raped and infants had their throats cut.<sup>448</sup>

Some of the testimonies point to a direct implication of the ALN in some massacres. According to a report issued by the Akbou County Chief, who was Muslim, in the period between 27 July and 12 September 1962,

the ALN arrested and killed civilians or veterans [who had served in the ranks of the French army]. In this region of the Bibans, which is populated by Kabyls and where the Beaufre 2<sup>nd</sup> motorized division had begun very early the process of 'pacification', 750 people, who were considered friends of France, had been grouped together by the ALN in 'interrogation centres', tortured and massacred. Harkis clothed in women's garments, mutilated and maimed were thrown alive into quicklime. The repression resumed on 15 April with summary executions at the end of October. The villages which had been the first to ally themselves to France were decimated. At the beginning of 1963 calm returned, but other executions were registered that same year. *Harkis* were affected to mine removal on the Maurice Line.<sup>449</sup>

The estimates of the death toll of these massacres range from 30 000 to 150 000 victims.<sup>450</sup> They were perpetrated in a spirit of retribution and not justice. They were facilitated by the following three factors:

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a) *Lack of necessary level of awareness* of the population. It was the duty of the FLN Political Commissioners to prepare the management of justice and right as important issues of the post-independence period. The population should have been made aware of the destructiveness of retributive measures outside judicial investigation and fair trials.

b) *Carelessness* of the regular ALN forces and the passive complicity of some border troops who were hostile to the clauses of the Evian Agreement concerning the *harkis*, as well as to promises of forgiveness and reassuring declarations made by some FLN leaders.

To give credit to the thesis of the premeditated and planned character of the *harkis*' massacre, at the highest level of FLN political authority, some French historians refer to a 'very confidential' directive of 'restricted distribution' which was issued by the Provisional Command of the Algerian Revolution (from its headquarters) in Tunis. This directive had allegedly given instructions on the attitude to adopt vis-à-vis the *harkis* and the conduct to be followed inside Algerian territory during the transition period which extended from 19 March up to independence. It allegedly asked the militants to:

Remain very prudent for the time being, do not take any action to avoid any reaction from the French army.

The French army will not be able to intervene or take action in any way in the aftermath of the declaration of independence. It is only after that date that we shall effectively take care of the *harkis*.

In order to prepare for this subsequent operation, we will seek, at all levels, to establish a complete list of the *harkis*, to gather the maximum information concerning them and their families and to monitor closely their movements.<sup>451</sup>

In their reading of this directive, which was allegedly found by French services in two different places in Algeria and Morocco, and in order to support the thesis of a deliberate and planned massacre, the expression 'take care of the *harkis*' was evidently not interpreted to mean an act of judging them, but rather that of finishing them off.

c) *Over-zealousness* of the new recruits who had joined the ALN shortly before the proclamation of the cease-fire. They were later referred to as the 'Martians', in reference to March 1962. To 'prove themselves' and advertise their 'nationalistic credentials', these combatants of the 25th hour engaged in all kinds of exactions against innocents. Thus, as Maurice Faivre insisted, the organized massacres of the *harkis* were most often committed 'by resistance fighters of 19 March, and by militants in rural areas who had come out of their hiding and pushed the population to redeem itself for its wait-and-see policy of the war years.'<sup>452</sup>

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Pierre Miquel also attributed the massacres of civilians committed in the early hours of independence to these over-zealous guerrillas supervised by military officials who belonged to the external ALN: 'The anarchy which prevailed before the ALN controlled the country was largely responsible for the first executions perpetrated by the 'March fighters', the famous 'Martiens', burning with patriotic zeal. The local chiefs who often were not combatants of the interior had also imposed their law on 'liberated' populations.'<sup>453</sup>

*Lack of awareness, carelessness and over-zealousness* explain better the Algerian reality than the theory of the 'scapegoat which purifies the people of their mistakes' used to explain the massacres of the *barkis* as serving the purpose of 'cleansing' the Algerian people of its guilt for its wait-and-see position adopted during the war.

### Testimony<sup>454</sup>

*Kaci was seventeen years old in 1962; his wife Nouara was ten at the time. They recount the massacre to Alain de Sédouy on a TV channel on 13 June 1993.*

**Alain de Sédouy:** How did you experience the end of the war? The Evian Agreement is signed, reconciliation seems to be going well, and suddenly things swing toward horror?

**Kaci:** I believe that the leaders of the Algerian government, the first ones, lied to the people by saying that the past was the past, that there would be no reprisals, that all would be for the best, and that we would rebuild Algeria. That is why the *barkis* left their military uniforms and became civilians. That is why the massacres took place. Everybody believed the political discourse of the time, on both sides moreover. In fact the tragedy happened a few months afterwards. There was a settling of scores, which the Algerian government itself, being only a provisional government, had perhaps not foreseen. The massacre was after all carried out by villagers themselves, that is between civilians.

**Alain de Sédouy:** Did elements from the ALN participate, or did they let it happen?

**Kaci:** The ALN replaced the French army in the military barracks. All this was done in front of their eyes, they did not move. In our neighbourhood, they did not participate, it was only the villagers. It all started with chants, in the streets, in the town, *barkis* were rejected. Yes, it was stones being thrown by children on the roofs of houses, later it was verbal provocation. It started like that, with hate, a hate that had been hidden before coming out in the open. Thus we felt uneasy, we did not feel at home, we had to leave Algeria.

**Alain de Sédouy:** And you madam, did you have the same feelings?

**Nouara:** Yes, because the men had to flee otherwise they came to look for them in the evening to cut their throats. The women, therefore, gathered in groups to sleep together with their neighbours, with the family, it was horrible...

**Alain de Sédouy:** You mean women were not spared?

**Nouara:** No.

**Alain de Sédouy:** What feelings did you have of being on the wrong side in the war?

**Nouara:** No, I believe it was absolute injustice, because the Beni Dracene had worked more on the side of the FLN. Later they swung to the French side and they were right in that because of various problems. Now, I think the mistake was to have said, I will become Algerian again. It was something that should not have been done. Once they (the *barkis*) had chosen their side, they should have left directly (for France).

*Kaci interjecting, remembers that Colonel André came with trucks to take them away, even with their sheep and goats.*

**Alain de Sédouy:** Then why was it the neighbouring villagers who carried out all this revenge?

**Kaci:** Oh, you know, it was a sort of settling of scores. The guerrillas of the last hour told them:

'Kill a *barké*, that would be good for the nation. Many were merchants, there were quite a few who were not honest, in fact, there were those who have denounced.

**Alain de Sédouy:** There is something difficult to understand, it's the savagery of these score settlements. It is horrifying. How can one explain it? When peoples' eyes are gouged, when salt is spread inside wounds, atrocious things were done.

**Kaci:** In fact, it is inexplicable. I hear it said that some witnesses were later sorry and in fact they gained nothing. For some it was to make space for themselves, people from other villagers came to occupy our land.

**Alain de Sédouy:** Madam, when you witnessed all this, when one is young, one is marked forever.

**Nouara:** I used to ask myself many questions. I used to say my God it is true that France did commit evil, as in all wars. They killed, they conducted searches, but this atrocity of making pockets in a human body, of lighting a huge fire and making them dance in it with naked feet; it was unimaginable, it was horrifying, but it was real and we saw it. It would have been better to fire a shot in their heads rather than to make them suffer like that for hours and hours...

**Alain de Sédouy:** Can you explain exactly how it happened... so that people can understand?

**Kaci:** They used to come by the hundred, with axes, wooden clubs and knives. Yes by the hundred, men and women. They searched houses and committed full-scale atrocities. France never did that. In the Beni Dracene village it continued during the months of August and September.

**Alain de Sédouy:** How many were killed?

**Kaci:** In our village there were thirty-three dead, men between nineteen and forty-five years old. There was a lot of 'settling of scores' between families that had nothing to do with the War of Algeria. You stole my sheep once, you took my blanket... I'll give you a stupid example. My father used to have a dresser that a carpenter had made for him, this dresser was always in our home. With the arrival of Independence, someone came to take it. He opened it saying: 'It's mine, I'm taking it...' He liked it, he said, it's mine. It was at that moment that my father left for France. He did not witness the massacres.

**Alain de Sédouy:** And you, madam?

**Nouara:** When people began fleeing because the FLN came to look for them at night, my father went up to a village a little further away (to Amoucha) where his brother had a small shop. He moved us there to be safer. Then one evening he saw a group getting out of a car. They brought him two loaves of bread saying: 'Keep these loaves for us, we'll come and pick them up later.' It was only a pretext. Well, that evening he was lucky, they didn't come back. The next evening between 10 and 11 p.m. it started again. My father said yes, and then he began thinking it over. So he closed the shop and went to sleep in the woods. The next day there was a colleague of my father whom 'they' had beaten. The poor man had been beaten up all night by about a dozen of them. He came to tell my father: 'You'd better escape. Last night "they" enquired about you.' My father began preparations to flee. It was not easy because we lived in the middle of the village and there were always a lot of people around. There were groups who wandered around outside of the house. My father and a cousin looked left and right and then threw themselves out of the window. My mother then said to my father: 'Take your shirt, you will need it.' My father replied: 'No, I won't take anything, this shirt may perhaps end up consumed by the earth.' They left; we never had any news from them. For us they were dead. People said: 'We met them there, we saw their belongings in the forest, we buried them. Anyway, everything.' We then cried and screamed, we thought they were dead. Six months later, we heard someone in the family saying: 'We have received a letter from France.' My uncle says: 'Don't say anything, it is he [my father] who has written it. He has gone to France, he was lucky, he came out of it.' Nevertheless, it was not good for us; there was killing. When there is a soldier who dies, they kill in revenge.

**Alain de Sédouy:** When you assess the entire journey, do you feel it was positive or not?

**Kaci:** Yes, I think we must thank our parents for having brought us here and for having chosen France.

**Nouara:** Of course, I think a bit about the country (Algeria) and if the country were good, I would go on holiday to Beni Dracene. But unfortunately, nothing is going well. It is a pity, because it is a beautiful country. Otherwise I am completely French, it is as if I was born here.

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## 5. Conclusion

*If there were one day to be another Nuremberg Trial, we would all be condemned: Oradour<sup>D</sup>, we do the same every day [in Algeria].*

(Corporal R. 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion foreign paratroopers)<sup>455</sup>

These *Reading Notes* attempted to retrace the history of the French colonial massacres in Algeria. They sought to delineate the ideological climate which bred this type of crimes and to bring to the fore their political and military functions.

The massacres committed by the French army were perpetrated in a period where the logic of force and power surpassed that of justice and law. The colonialist ideology was based on the negation of the Other: the native. It aimed at his physical elimination and, later on, when it clearly appeared that this task was not realistic the targets were his economic deprivation as well as his moral and cultural destruction.

The paper then reviewed briefly the strategic, tactical and retributive instrumentalities that underlay the massacres. It showed that the colonial massacres were not senseless actions. Their use as a colonial instrument, during the different stages of colonisation, was conscientiously studied and planned, and their diverse functions defined with accuracy: as a counter-insurgency tactic, as a punitive measure, and as a depopulating and land grabbing instrument.

The sample of testimonies presented in this work gave a glimpse into the spread and amplitude of these massacres, which occurred during a sombre period in Algeria's recent history. The Algerian people suffered all kinds of killing and destruction under French colonisation.

It must be noted though, that faced with this France of domination, of exploitation and of terror, another France of freedom, equality and brotherhood tried, since the conquest of Algiers, to make its voice heard. Unfortunately, the report of firearms and the din of capitalists and settlers often drowned this voice. But that France, loyal and true to its declared principles with respect to the human being, was increasingly evident as colonial France climbed the scale of barbarism. With its soldiers and officers, its intellectuals and historians, its lawyers, its journalists and writers, its men of the church, its doctors, its simple citizens 'the bag carriers', the France of freedom had a role far from negligible, in the triumph of the Algerian people's cause, and in the destruction of the 'French Algeria' myth.

<sup>D</sup> Oradour-sur-Glane, a parish in Haute-Vienne in France where the entire population (642 persons) was massacred by the German SS on 10 June 1944.

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This paper did not address the issue of understanding in specific detail the ways in which the massacres Algeria is currently experiencing are related to the genocidal massacres that dislocated Algeria for the past century.

In other words, are there historical connections between the massacres of yesterday and those of today? Are there analogies between them, regarding their nature and form, their geographic spread and amplitude, their target populations, their methods and means, the social distribution of their spread and amplitude? Are there similarities between them, with regard to their instigators, perpetrators, intents, instrumentality and stakes? In which way can the doctrine of 'eradication' be related to that of 'pacification'?

To answer all these questions, one needs a careful theoretical grounding of the historical framework and parameters, and of the comparative study. In addition, one must, of course, wait for the results of national and international investigations concerning the current massacres in order to have enough accurate and reliable data that permits the elaboration of a well-grounded comparison. It is hoped that this research programme will draw the attention it deserves from Algerian historians.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Hafid Keramane, *La Pacification* (Lausanne: La Cité, 1960), p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Raoul Girardet, *L'Idée coloniale en France de 1871 à 1962* (Paris: La Table Ronde, 1972), p. 65.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>4</sup> Mahfoud Bennoune, *The Making of Contemporary Algeria 1830-1987* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 35.

<sup>5</sup> Charles-Henri Favrod, *Le FLN et l'Algérie* (Paris: Plon, 1962), p. 35.

<sup>6</sup> Mahfoud Bennoune, op. cit., p. 35. On the commercial conception of Jules Ferry see also Raoul Girardet, op. cit., pp. 82-83 and Charles-Henri Favrod, op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>7</sup> Raoul Girardet, op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 83.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 163.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., pp. 40-41.

<sup>11</sup> Charles-Henri Favrod, op. cit., p. 60.

<sup>12</sup> Henri Alleg, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, vol. 1 (Paris: Temps Actuels, 1981), p. 69.

<sup>13</sup> Charles-Henri Favrod, op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>14</sup> Henri de Sarrauton, *La question algérienne* (Oran: 1891), cited by Jacques Borgé and Nicolas Viasnoff, *Archives de l'Algérie* (Paris: Éditions Michèle Trinckvel, 1995), p. 21.

<sup>15</sup> Charles-Henri Favrod, op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>20</sup> Cited in the *Manifeste du Peuple algérien*, dated 10 February 1943, in *La Guerre d'Algérie by les documents*, [under the direction of] Jean-Claude Jauffret, Service historique de l'armée de terre (Paris: 1990), p. 32.

<sup>21</sup> Charles-Henri Favrod, op. cit., p. 27.

<sup>22</sup> Extracted from *L'Afrique Latine*, May 1922, reproduced in the *Manifeste du Peuple algérien*, dated 10 February 1943, in Jean-Claude Jauffret, op. cit., p. 34.

<sup>23</sup> Henri Alleg, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, vol. 1, p. 61.

<sup>24</sup> Yves Benot, *Massacres coloniaux 1944-1950: La IV<sup>ème</sup> République et la mise au pas des colonies françaises* (Paris: La Découverte, 1995), p. xi.

<sup>25</sup> Benjamin Stora, *Histoire de l'Algérie coloniale 1830-1954* (Paris: La Découverte, 1991), p. 28.

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<sup>26</sup> Daniel Guérin, *Quand l'Algérie s'insurgeait 1954-1962: Un anticolonialiste témoigne* (Claix [France]: La Pensée sauvage, 1979), p. 21.

<sup>27</sup> Yves Benot, op. cit., p. xi.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., pp. viii-ix.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., pp. ix-x. Curiously and unhappily, it is the same discourse of bestialization which would be used several decades later in an independent Algeria by Algerians, such as Boudjedra, with the aim of eliminating their political opponents, as shown by Moussa Aït-Embarek in *L'Algérie en Murmure* (Hoggar, Genève 1996).

<sup>30</sup> Henri Alleg, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, vol. 1, p. 69.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 70.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 63.

<sup>33</sup> Benjamin Stora, op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>34</sup> Henri Alleg, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, vol. 1, p. 64.

<sup>35</sup> It is the same rationality that is behind the massacre of American Indians, the use of the atomic bomb and the nuclear dissuasion strategy.

<sup>36</sup> Yves Lacoste, André Nouschi and André Prenant, *L'Algérie: passé et présent. Le cadre et les étapes de la constitution de l'Algérie actuelle* (Paris: Editions Sociales, 1960), p. 255.

<sup>37</sup> Yves Benot, op. cit., p. viii.

<sup>38</sup> Henri Alleg, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, vol. 1, p. 62.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 64, and Yves Lacoste, André Nouschi and André Prenant, op. cit., p. 306.

<sup>40</sup> Henri Alleg, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, vol. 1, p. 70.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 66.

<sup>42</sup> Smaïl Aouli, Ramdane Redjala and Philippe Zoummeroff, *Abd el-Kader* (Paris: Fayard, 1994), p. 292.

<sup>43</sup> Charles-Henri Favrod, op. cit., p. 14.

<sup>44</sup> The 'constructive occupation', the use of the Arab Office to administer the conquered population after destruction.

<sup>45</sup> John Ellis, *From the Barrell of a gun: A history of guerrilla, revolutionary and counter-insurgency warfare from the Romans to the present* (London: Greenhill Book, 1995), p. 137. [This book cites it with the following reference: *Par l'épée et par la charrue: écrits et discours de Bugeaud*, ed. by General Paul Azan (Paris: Presses Universitaires Françaises, 1948), p. 16.]

<sup>46</sup> General Paul Azan, *Conquête et pacification de l'Algérie* (Paris: Librairie de France, 1931), p. 278. See also Yves Lacoste, André Nouschi and André Prenant, op. cit., p. 271.

<sup>47</sup> Henri Alleg, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, vol. 1, p. 67.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 68, and Smaïl Aouli, Ramdane Redjala and Philippe Zoummeroff, p. 289.

<sup>50</sup> Yves Lacoste, André Nouschi and André Prenant, op. cit., p. 305.

<sup>51</sup> Charles-Henri Favrod, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

<sup>52</sup> Yves Lacoste, André Nouschi and André Prenant, op. cit., p. 306.

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<sup>53</sup> Charles-Henri Favrod, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> P. Christian, *L'Afrique française, l'empire du Maroc et les déserts du Sahara: Histoire nationale des conquêtes, victoire et nouvelles découvertes des Français depuis la prise d'Alger jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris: 1845-1846), cited by Henri Alleg, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, vol. 1, p. 64.

<sup>56</sup> Yves Lacoste, André Nouschi and André Prenant, op. cit., p. 306.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., pp. 306-307 and Mahfoud Bennoune, op. cit., p. 40.

<sup>58</sup> Mostefa Lacheraf, *L'Algérie: Nation et société*, Cahiers libres 71-72 (Paris: François Maspéro, 1976), p. 226.

<sup>59</sup> Alain Joxe, 'Histoire d'un massacre: Sept lectures stratégiques d'Hiroshima', *La Pensée*, no. 302 (p. 29).

<sup>60</sup> Yves Courrière, *La Guerre d'Algérie en images* (Paris: Fayard, 1972), p. 103, and Pierre Miquel, *La Guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Fayard, 1993), p. 295.

<sup>61</sup> Henri Alleg, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 393.

<sup>62</sup> Abder-Rahmane Derradji, *The Algerian Guerrilla Campaign: Strategy and Tactics*, doctoral thesis, University of Reading (UK: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1996).

<sup>63</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 393.

<sup>64</sup> Slimane Chikh, *L'Algérie en armes ou le temps des certitudes*, Economica, OPU (Paris/Alger: 1981), p. 202.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Philippe Lucas and Jean-Claude Vatin, *L'Algérie des anthropologues* (Paris: Maspéro, 1982), p. 115.

<sup>67</sup> Jean Morizot, *L'Aurès ou le mythe de la montagne rebelle* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1991), p. 160.

<sup>68</sup> Slimane Chikh, op. cit., p. 202.

<sup>69</sup> Charles-Henri Favrod, op. cit., p. 137.

<sup>70</sup> Yves Courrière, op. cit., p. 109.

<sup>71</sup> Slimane Chikh, op. cit., p. 202.

<sup>72</sup> Military note cited in an article in *Le Monde* of 31 March 1960 by Alain Jacob, in Slimane Chikh, op. cit., pp. 202-203.

<sup>73</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., p. 200, and Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 164.

<sup>74</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 69.

<sup>75</sup> Yves Benot, op. cit., p. xi-xii.

<sup>76</sup> Albert-Paul Lentin, *L'Algérie entre deux mondes: Le dernier quart d'heure* (Paris: Julliard, 1963), p. 168.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., pp. 168-169.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p. 169.

<sup>79</sup> Yves Benot, op. cit., p. vii.

<sup>80</sup> Mahfoud Bennoune, op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>81</sup> Yves Benot, op. cit., p. vii.

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<sup>82</sup> Marc Michel, Une Guerre interminable, in *L'Algérie des Français*, presentation by Charles-Robert Ageron, p. 40, Série Points, Collection L'Histoire, (Paris: Seuil, 1993).

<sup>83</sup> Mahfoud Bennoune, op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>84</sup> General Paul Azan, op. cit., pp. 24-25.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 53.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 315.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 137.

<sup>90</sup> Mahfoud Bennoune, op. cit., p. 37.

<sup>91</sup> General Paul Azan, op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>92</sup> Mahfoud Bennoune, op. cit., p. 37.

<sup>93</sup> General Paul Azan, op. cit., p. 38.

<sup>94</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 64.

<sup>95</sup> P. Christian, op. cit., pp. 143-144, cited by Yves Lacoste, André Nouschi and André Prenant, op. cit., pp. 255-356, and by Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 64.

<sup>96</sup> Mahfoud Bennoune, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> General Paul Azan, op. cit., p. 280.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Mahfoud Bennoune, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>102</sup> Yves Lacoste, André Nouschi and André Prenant, op. cit., p. 305.

<sup>103</sup> For more details look up the work of Smaïl Aouli, Ramdane Redjala and Philippe Zoummeroff, op. cit.

<sup>104</sup> Yves Benot, p. ix.

<sup>105</sup> Yves Lacoste, André Nouschi and André Prenant, op. cit., p. 304.

<sup>106</sup> Smaïl Aouli, Ramdane Redjala and Philippe Zoummeroff, op. cit., p. 356.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 66-67.

<sup>109</sup> Yves Benot, op. cit., p. ix, and Smaïl Aouli, Ramdane Redjala and Philippe Zoummeroff, op. cit., p. 356.

<sup>110</sup> General Paul Azan, op. cit., p. 339.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., p. 340.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>114</sup> Part of the letter is reproduced in Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 67.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Maurice Faivre, *Un Village de Harkis: des Babors au pays drouais* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1994), p. 37.

<sup>118</sup> Mostafa Lacheraf, 'Psychologie d'une conquête', *Cahiers Internationaux* (1956).

<sup>119</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 66.

<sup>120</sup> General Paul Azan, op. cit., p. 410.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., p. 412.

<sup>122</sup> Jean Morizot, op. cit., p. 142.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., p. 144.

<sup>124</sup> General Paul Azan, op. cit., p. 414.

<sup>125</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 66.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Yves Lacoste, André Nouschi and André Prenant, op. cit., p. 311.

<sup>128</sup> General Paul Azan, op. cit., p. 413.

<sup>129</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 77.

<sup>130</sup> Yves Lacoste, André Nouschi and André Prenant, op. cit., p. 312.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., p. 311.

<sup>132</sup> General Paul Azan, op. cit., p. 416.

<sup>133</sup> Yves Lacoste, André Nouschi and André Prenant, op. cit., p. 312.

<sup>134</sup> General Paul Azan, op. cit., p. 419.

<sup>135</sup> Yves Lacoste, André Nouschi and André Prenant, op. cit., p. 312.

<sup>136</sup> General Paul Azan, op. cit., p. 426.

<sup>137</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 80.

<sup>138</sup> Yves Lacoste, André Nouschi and André Prenant, op. cit., p. 313.

<sup>139</sup> General Paul Azan, op. cit., p. 473.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., p. 473.

<sup>141</sup> Yves Lacoste, André Nouschi and André Prenant, op. cit., p. 313.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., p. 315.

<sup>143</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 80.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Yves Lacoste, André Nouschi and André Prenant, op. cit., p. 337.

<sup>146</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 83.

<sup>147</sup> Yves Lacoste, André Nouschi and André Prenant, op. cit., p. 341.

<sup>148</sup> Benjamin Stora, op. cit., p. 123.

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<sup>149</sup> Jean Morizot, op. cit., p. 169

<sup>150</sup> Charles-Robert Ageron, *L'Algérie algérienne de Napoléon III à de Gaulle* (Paris: Sindbad, 1980), p. 107.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., p. 106.

<sup>152</sup> Maurice Faivre, op. cit., p. 115.

<sup>153</sup> Charles-Robert Ageron, *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*, vol 2: *De l'insurrection de 1871 au déclenchement de la guerre de libération 1954* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1979), p. 261.

<sup>154</sup> Benjamin Stora, op. cit., p. 44.

<sup>155</sup> Charles-Robert Ageron, *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*, op. cit., p. 255.

<sup>156</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 83.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Charles-Robert Ageron, *L'Algérie algérienne de Napoléon III à de Gaulle*, op. cit., pp. 97-122.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., p. 101.

<sup>160</sup> Charles-Robert Ageron, *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*, op. cit., p. 259.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Maurice Faivre, op. cit., p. 115.

<sup>163</sup> Raoul Girardet, op. cit., p. 282.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., pp. 283-284.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., p. 283.

<sup>166</sup> Charles-Robert Ageron, *L'Algérie algérienne de Napoléon III à de Gaulle*, op. cit., p. 243.

<sup>167</sup> Yves Benot, op. cit., p. xiii.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., p. viii.

<sup>169</sup> Raoul Girardet, op. cit., p. 284.

<sup>170</sup> Maurice Faivre, op. cit., p. 115.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Benjamin Stora, op. cit., p. 91.

<sup>173</sup> Jean-Claude Jauffret, op. cit., pp. 206-214.

<sup>174</sup> Maurice Faivre, op. cit., p. 101.

<sup>175</sup> Charles-Robert Ageron, *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*, op. cit., p. 574.

<sup>176</sup> *Écho d'Oran*, no. 25 768 of Saturday 12 May 1945, cited by Boucif Mekhaled, *Chroniques d'un massacre: 8 Mai 1945 Sétif, Guelma, Kherrata* (Paris: Coédition Au nom de la mémoire-Syros, 1995), p. 183.

<sup>177</sup> Slimane Chikh, op. cit., p. 194.

<sup>178</sup> Jacques Jurquet, *La Révolution nationale algérienne et le PCF*, 4 vols (Paris: Éditions du Centenaire, 1972-1984), cited by Boucif Mekhaled, op. cit., p. 185.

<sup>179</sup> Boucif Mekhaled, op. cit., p. 184.

<sup>180</sup> Boucif Mekhaled, op. cit., p. 183.

<sup>181</sup> Marcel-Edmond Naegelen, *Mission en Algérie* (Paris: Flammarion, 1962), p. 23.

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<sup>182</sup> Charles-Robert Ageron, *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*, op. cit., p. 574.

<sup>183</sup> Ferhat Abbas, *La Nuit coloniale* (Paris: Éditions Julliard, 1962), cited by Boucif Mekhaled, op. cit., p. 195.

<sup>184</sup> Charles-Robert Ageron, *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*, op. cit., p. 574.

<sup>185</sup> Interview with Braham Mohamed Tahar, at Guelma on 16 August 1984, cited by Boucif Mekhaled, op. cit., p. 192.

<sup>186</sup> Interview with Djemal Chérif, cited by Boucif Mekhaled, op. cit., p. 185.

<sup>187</sup> *Révolution africaine*, no. 1106, 9-15 May, 1985. Quoted by Boucif Mekhaled, op. cit., p. 186.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., p. 187.

<sup>189</sup> Testimony in *El Moudjahid* Newspaper, no. 6184 (8 May 1985), Supplément spécial, p. iii, quoted by Boucif Mekhaled, op. cit., p. 187.

<sup>190</sup> Testimony in *El Djeich* Magazine, no. 263, (April 1985), quoted by Boucif Mekhaled, op. cit., p. 187.

<sup>191</sup> Interview of 21 July 1984, quoted by Boucif Mekhaled, op. cit., p. 187.

<sup>192</sup> Charles-Henri Favrod, op. cit., p. 102.

<sup>193</sup> Testimony in *Algérie-Actualité*, no. 1021, quoted by Boucif Mekhaled, op. cit., pp. 187-188.

<sup>194</sup> *Les Échos de la Soumman*, no. 9, (May 1985), quoted by Boucif Mekhaled, op. cit., p. 188.

<sup>195</sup> In les Archives du CNEH, Alger, 1ère boîte A2742, cited by Boucif Mekhaled, op. cit., p. 189.

<sup>196</sup> In *L'Algérien en Europe* Magazine, no. 340 (20 May 1981), cited by Boucif Mekhaled, op. cit., p. 192.

<sup>197</sup> Charles-Robert Ageron, *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*, op. cit., p. 574.

<sup>198</sup> See for example the report issued by the *Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre* Jean-Charles Jauffret, op. cit., pp. 507-524.

<sup>199</sup> Charles-Robert Ageron, *L'Algérie algérienne de Napoléon III à de Gaulle*, op. cit., pp. 243-244.

<sup>200</sup> Yves Benot, op. cit., p. i.

<sup>201</sup> Kateb Yacine, *Nedjma* (Paris: Seuil), cited by Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 269.

<sup>202</sup> Ania Francos and J.-P. Sereni, *Un Algérien nommé Boumédienne* (Paris: Stock, 1976), cited by Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 269.

<sup>203</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 269.

<sup>204</sup> Bernard Droz and Évelyne Lever, *Histoire de la guerre d'Algérie 1954-1962* (Paris: Seuil, 1982), p. 33.

<sup>205</sup> Yves Benot, op. cit., pp. 33-34.

<sup>206</sup> Yves Courrière, op. cit., p. 1.

<sup>207</sup> Raoul Girardet, op. cit., p. 339.

<sup>208</sup> Charles-Henri Favrod, op. cit., p. 313.

<sup>209</sup> Slimane Chikh, op. cit., p. 184.

<sup>210</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>211</sup> Slimane Chikh, op. cit., p. 187.

<sup>212</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., p. 8.

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<sup>213</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., pp. 202-203.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., p. 211.

<sup>216</sup> Albert-Paul Lentin, op. cit., p. 194.

<sup>217</sup> Benjamin Stora, *La Politique des camps d'internement*, in *L'Algérie des Français*, op. cit., p. 301.

<sup>218</sup> Alain-Gérard Slama, *La Guerre d'Algérie: Histoire d'une déchirure* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996), p. 61.

<sup>219</sup> John Talbott, *The War Without a Name: France in Algeria, 1954-1962* (London: Faber and Faber, 1981), p. 68.

<sup>220</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 317. For the prayer see also John Talbott, Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> Frantz Fanon, *Les Damnés de la terre* (Paris: La Découverte, 1987), pp. 63-65.

<sup>222</sup> Guy Pervillé, *Guerre d'Algérie: L'abandon des barkis*, in *L'Algérie des Français*, op. cit., pp. 304-305.

<sup>223</sup> Camille Lacoste-Dujardin, *Opération 'Oiseau bleu': Des Kabyles, des ethnologues et la guerre en Algérie* (Paris: La Découverte, 1997), p. 157.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid., p. 156.

<sup>226</sup> Saïd Ferdi, *Un Enfant in la guerre* (Paris : Seuil, 1981), pp. 132-133.

<sup>227</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., p. 241.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid., p. 174.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., pp. 176-177.

<sup>230</sup> *El Moudjabid*, no. 9, 20 August 1957, quoted by Hafid Keramane, op. cit., p. 178.

<sup>231</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 161.

<sup>232</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., p. 191.

<sup>233</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 161.

<sup>234</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., pp. 208 and 209.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid., p. 210.

<sup>236</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 166.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid., vol. 2, p. 167.

<sup>238</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., p. 208.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid., pp. 46 and 47.

<sup>240</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 167.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 387-390.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid., vol. 3, p. 213.

<sup>243</sup> M'hamed Yousfi, *Les Otages de la liberté: Quelques aspects des dessous de la guerre d'Algérie* (Alger: Editions Mimouni, 1990), pp. 64-65.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid., p. 64.

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- <sup>247</sup> Michel Cornaton, *Les regroupements de la décolonisation en Algérie* (Les Editions Ouvrières), cited by M'hamed Yousfi, op. cit., p. 69.
- <sup>248</sup> M'hamed Yousfi, op. cit., p. 64.
- <sup>249</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., pp. 243-246.
- <sup>250</sup> Patrick Kessel and Giovanni Pirelli, op. cit., pp. 302-304.
- <sup>251</sup> Saïd Ferdi, op. cit., pp. 130-132.
- <sup>252</sup> M'hamed Yousfi, op. cit., p. 66.
- <sup>253</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>254</sup> Saïd Ferdi, op. cit., p. 128.
- <sup>255</sup> M'hamed Yousfi, op. cit., p. 67.
- <sup>256</sup> Ibid., p. 68.
- <sup>257</sup> Camille Lacoste-Dujardin, op. cit., p. 152.
- <sup>258</sup> M'hamed Yousfi, op. cit., p. 70.
- <sup>259</sup> Ibid., p. 71.
- <sup>260</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., p. 265.
- <sup>261</sup> M'hamed Yousfi, op. cit., p. 71.
- <sup>262</sup> Camille Lacoste-Dujardin, op. cit., p. 153.
- <sup>263</sup> Saïd Ferdi, op. cit., p. 129.
- <sup>264</sup> Camille Lacoste-Dujardin, op. cit., p. 152.
- <sup>265</sup> Patrick Kessel and Giovanni Pirelli, op. cit., p. 306.
- <sup>266</sup> Saïd Ferdi, op. cit., p. 128.
- <sup>267</sup> Patrick Kessel and Giovanni Pirelli, op. cit., p. 305.
- <sup>268</sup> M'hamed Yousfi, op. cit., p. 69.
- <sup>269</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 159.
- <sup>270</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., p. 243.
- <sup>271</sup> Saïd Ferdi, op. cit., pp. 23-25.
- <sup>272</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 160.
- <sup>273</sup> Ibid., pp. 159-160.
- <sup>274</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., p. 23.
- <sup>275</sup> Ibid., p. 194.
- <sup>276</sup> Camille Lacoste-Dujardin, op. cit., p. 158.
- <sup>277</sup> Ibid., p. 159.
- <sup>278</sup> Ibid., pp. 159-160.

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<sup>280</sup> Saïd Ferdi, op. cit., p. 129.

<sup>281</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 160.

<sup>282</sup> Patrick Kessel and Giovanni Pirelli, op. cit., p. 37.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid., pp. 38-39.

<sup>284</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 392-393.

<sup>285</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., p. 177.

<sup>286</sup> Camille Lacoste-Dujardin, op. cit., p. 161.

<sup>287</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., p. 234.

<sup>288</sup> Camille Lacoste-Dujardin, op. cit., p. 152.

<sup>289</sup> Camille Lacoste-Dujardin, *Histoire et Représentations de la guerre aux Iflissen lebabar*, in *La guerre d'Algérie et les Algériens 1954-1962*, [under the direction of] Charles-Robert Ageron (Paris: Armand Colin, 1997), p. 90.

<sup>290</sup> Saïd Ferdi, op. cit., pp. 63-64.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid., pp. 66-67.

<sup>292</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 164.

<sup>293</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., p. 177.

<sup>294</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 164.

<sup>295</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., p. 197.

<sup>296</sup> Ibid., p. 198.

<sup>297</sup> Ibid., pp. 191-193.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid., p. 191.

<sup>299</sup> Ibid., pp. 191-193.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid., pp. 191-193, and Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 164.

<sup>301</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 164.

<sup>302</sup> Ibid., p.165.

<sup>303</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., pp. 191-193.

<sup>304</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 164.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid.

<sup>306</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., pp. 196-197.

<sup>307</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 165.

<sup>308</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., p. 205, and Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 162.

<sup>309</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 387.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid., p. 392.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid., p. 391.

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<sup>312</sup> Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>313</sup> Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>314</sup> Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>315</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., pp. 180-182.

<sup>316</sup> Daniel Guérin, op. cit., p. 72.

<sup>317</sup> Mahfoud Kaddache, 'Les tournants de la guerre de libération au niveau des masses populaires', in *La guerre d'Algérie et les Algériens 1954-1962*, op. cit., pp. 53-54.

<sup>318</sup> Bernard Droz and Évelyne Lever, op. cit., p. 76.

<sup>319</sup> Ibid.

<sup>320</sup> Ibid.

<sup>321</sup> Bernard Droz and Évelyne Lever, op. cit., pp. 76-77.

<sup>322</sup> Pierre Miquel, op. cit., p. 204.

<sup>323</sup> Bernard Droz and Évelyne Lever, op. cit., pp. 76-77.

<sup>324</sup> Mahfoud Kaddache, op. cit., p. 65.

<sup>325</sup> Daniel Guérin, op. cit., p. 72.

<sup>326</sup> Mahfoud Kaddache, op. cit., p. 65.

<sup>327</sup> Charles-Robert Ageron, 'L'insurrection du 20 août 1955 in le Nord-Constantinois. De la résistance armée à la guerre du peuple', in *La guerre d'Algérie et les Algériens 1954-1962*, op. cit., p. 39.

<sup>328</sup> Daniel Guérin, op. cit., p. 72.

<sup>329</sup> Bernard Droz and Évelyne Lever, op. cit., pp. 76-77.

<sup>330</sup> Ibid.

<sup>331</sup> M'hamed Yousfi, op. cit., p. 101.

<sup>332</sup> Bernard Droz and Évelyne Lever, op. cit., p. 77.

<sup>333</sup> Daniel Guérin, op. cit., p. 72.

<sup>334</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 185.

<sup>335</sup> Albert-Paul Lentin, op. cit., pp. 122-123.

<sup>336</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 185.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid.

<sup>338</sup> Albert-Paul Lentin, op. cit., pp. 122-123.

<sup>339</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 185.

<sup>340</sup> Albert-Paul Lentin, op. cit., pp. 122-123.

<sup>341</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 185.

<sup>342</sup> Daniel Guérin, op. cit., pp. 108-109 and Alain-Gérard Slama, op. cit., p. 61.

<sup>343</sup> Albert-Paul Lentin, op. cit., pp. 122-123.

<sup>344</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 185..

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<sup>345</sup> Albert-Paul Lentin, op. cit., pp. 122-123.

<sup>346</sup> Ibid.

<sup>347</sup> Ibid., p. 123

<sup>348</sup> Albert-Paul Lentin, op. cit., pp. 123-124.

<sup>349</sup> Ibid., pp. 127-128.

<sup>350</sup> Benjamin Stora, *Histoire de la guerre d'Algérie 1954-1962* (Paris: La Découverte, 1993), p. 24.

<sup>351</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 463.

<sup>352</sup> Albert-Paul Lentin, op. cit., p. 126.

<sup>353</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 463.

<sup>354</sup> Albert-Paul Lentin, op. cit., p. 131.

<sup>355</sup> Ibid., pp. 131-132.

<sup>356</sup> See Chems Ed Din, *L'Affaire Bellounis*, (Paris: L'Aube, 1998), and M. Faivre, 'Services secrets et "troisième force": Le Front Algérien d'Action Démocratique (FAAD) 1960-1962', in Ministère de la Défense, Centre d'Etudes d'Histoire de la Défense, *Il n'est point de secrets que le temps ne révèle*, Lavauzelle, Paris 1998.

<sup>357</sup> Pierre Montagnon, *La Guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Pygmalion/Gérard Watelet, 1984), p. 242.

<sup>358</sup> Quoted by Pierre Montagnon, op. cit., p. 242.

<sup>359</sup> *El Moudjahid* (1 February 1958).

<sup>360</sup> Mahfoud Kaddache, op. cit., p. 61.

<sup>361</sup> Yves Courrière, op. cit., p. 121.

<sup>362</sup> Pierre Miquel, op. cit., p. 332.

<sup>363</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., pp. 235-236.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid., pp. 237-238.

<sup>365</sup> Albert-Paul Lentin, op. cit., p. 84.

<sup>366</sup> Charles-Robert Ageron, *L'Algérie algérienne de Napoléon III à de Gaulle*, op. cit., p. 245.

<sup>367</sup> Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>368</sup> Daniel Guérin, op. cit., pp. 178-179.

<sup>369</sup> Benjamin Stora, *Histoire de la guerre d'Algérie 1954-1962*, op. cit., p. 53.

<sup>370</sup> Guy Pervillé, op. cit., p. 304.

<sup>371</sup> Mahfoud Kaddache, op. cit., p. 57.

<sup>372</sup> Pierre Montagnon, op. cit., p. 141.

<sup>373</sup> Albert-Paul Lentin, op. cit., p. 211.

<sup>374</sup> Benjamin Stora, *Histoire de la guerre d'Algérie 1954-1962*, op. cit., p. 53.

<sup>375</sup> Patrick Kessel and Giovanni Pirelli, op. cit., p. 386.

<sup>376</sup> M'hamed Yousfi, op. cit., p. 72, quoting Benali Boukort, *Le souffle du Dabra*.

<sup>377</sup> M'hamed Yousfi, op. cit., p. 67.

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<sup>379</sup> Patrick Kessel and Giovanni Pirelli, op. cit., pp. 386-388.

<sup>380</sup> M'hamed Yousfi, op. cit., p. 64.

<sup>381</sup> Slimane Chikh, op. cit., p. 203.

<sup>382</sup> Saïd Ferdi, op. cit., p. 124.

<sup>383</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., pp. 182-183.

<sup>384</sup> M'hamed Yousfi, op. cit., p. 93.

<sup>385</sup> Ibid., p. 99.

<sup>386</sup> Ibid.

<sup>387</sup> Ibid., p. 100.

<sup>388</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

<sup>389</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>390</sup> Albert-Paul Lentin, op. cit., p. 151.

<sup>391</sup> Ibid., p. 153.

<sup>392</sup> Yves Courrière, op. cit., p. 239.

<sup>393</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 354.

<sup>394</sup> Yves Courrière, op. cit., pp. 239-240.

<sup>395</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 354.

<sup>396</sup> In *Ras l'front*, no. 16 (November 1993), *La Résistible ascension du Front de la Haine*, (Paris: Editions Syllepse, 1996).

<sup>397</sup> Daniel Guérin, op. cit., p. 170.

<sup>398</sup> Jean-Paul Monferran, in an article on 17 Octobre 97 entitled '17 octobre 1961, en plein Paris, un crime d'Etat contre des Algériens'.

<sup>399</sup> Cited by Samia Messaoudi, in *Ras l'front*, no. 16, op. cit.

<sup>400</sup> Pierre Vidal-Naquet, 'L'encouragement direct de Papon', *L'Humanité* (17 October 1997).

<sup>401</sup> *L'Humanité*, (17 October 1998).

<sup>402</sup> Ibid.

<sup>403</sup> Ibid.

<sup>404</sup> Ibid.

<sup>405</sup> Anne Tristan, *Le Silence du fleuve*, Association Au nom de la mémoire (Paris: Syros, 1991), cited in Brigitte Stora, 'Paris, 17 octobre 1961: 200 Algériens massacrés', *L'Événement du Jeudi* (from 18 to 24 September 1997).

<sup>406</sup> Bernard Morin, 'Le cadavre d'un homme battu à mort', *L'Humanité* (17 October 1997).

<sup>407</sup> Philippe Bernard, *Le Monde* (17 October 1997).

<sup>408</sup> Cited in Brigitte Stora, op. cit.

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<sup>410</sup> Cited in Brigitte Stora, op. cit.

<sup>411</sup> Daniel Guérin, op. cit., pp. 170-171.

<sup>412</sup> Pierre Vidal-Naquet, op. cit.

<sup>413</sup> Interview with Ariane Chemin, *Le Monde* (17 October).

<sup>414</sup> Cited by Philippe Bernard in *Le Monde* (17 October).

<sup>415</sup> Cited in Brigitte Stora, op. cit.

<sup>416</sup> Pierre Vidal-Naquet, op. cit.

<sup>417</sup> Jean-Paul Monferran, op. cit.

<sup>418</sup> Anne-Marie Duranton-Crabol, *Le Temps de l'OAS* (Paris: Editions Complexe, 1995), p. 116.

<sup>419</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 410.

<sup>420</sup> Charles-Henri Favrod, op. cit., p. 347.

<sup>421</sup> Anne-Marie Duranton-Crabol, op. cit., p. 149.

<sup>422</sup> Charles-Henri Favrod, op. cit., p. 343.

<sup>423</sup> Ibid., p. 345.

<sup>424</sup> Slimane Chikh, op. cit., p. 210.

<sup>425</sup> Yves Courrière, op. cit., p. 260.

<sup>426</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 406.

<sup>427</sup> Ibid.

<sup>428</sup> Bernard Droz and Évelyne Lever, op. cit., p. 332.

<sup>429</sup> Pierre Miquel, op. cit., p. 502, and Bernard Droz and Évelyne Lever, op. cit., p. 334.

<sup>430</sup> Anne-Marie Duranton-Crabol, op. cit., p. 150.

<sup>431</sup> Bernard Droz and Évelyne Lever, op. cit., p. 334.

<sup>432</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 408.

<sup>433</sup> Bernard Droz and Évelyne Lever, op. cit., p. 337.

<sup>434</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 408.

<sup>435</sup> Favrod, op. cit., Daniel Guérin, op. cit., p. 178, Slimane Chikh, op. cit., p. 210, Bernard Droz and Évelyne Lever, op. cit., p. 337, and Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 408.

<sup>436</sup> Henri Alleg, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 409.

<sup>437</sup> Pierre Miquel, op. cit., p. 504.

<sup>438</sup> Anne-Marie Duranton-Crabol, op. cit., p. 144.

<sup>439</sup> Bernard Droz and Évelyne Lever, op. cit., p. 337.

<sup>440</sup> Anne-Marie Duranton-Crabol, op. cit., p. 147.

<sup>441</sup> Pierre Miquel, op. cit., p. 507.

<sup>442</sup> Maurice Faivre, op. cit., p. 188.

<sup>443</sup> Pierre Miquel, op. cit., p. 507.

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<sup>444</sup> Patrick Girard, 'Les sans-papiers de la mémoire collective. La face cachée de la guerre d'Algérie', *L'Événement du Jeudi* (from 9 to 15 October 1997).

<sup>445</sup> Lakhdar Belaïd, 'Le Scandale Harki. La révolte des parias de la République', *L'Événement du Jeudi* (from 9 to 15 October 1997).

<sup>446</sup> Patrick Girard, op. cit.

<sup>447</sup> Ibid.

<sup>448</sup> Maurice Faivre, op. cit., p. 184.

<sup>449</sup> Pierre Miquel, op. cit., p. 508.

<sup>450</sup> Ibid.

<sup>451</sup> Maurice Faivre, op. cit., p. 182.

<sup>452</sup> Ibid., pp. 183-184.

<sup>453</sup> Pierre Miquel, op. cit., p. 508.

<sup>454</sup> Maurice Faivre, op. cit., pp. 200-203.

<sup>455</sup> Hafid Keramane, op. cit., p. 199.

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