

Samia Henni

# Architecture of Counterrevolution

## The French Army in Northern Algeria



Samia Henni was born in Algiers, Algeria. She is an architect and an architectural historian and theorist who works at the intersection of architecture, planning, colonial practices, and military operations from the early nineteenth century up to the present. She received her Ph.D. in History and Theory of Architecture from the ETH Zurich (with distinction, ETH Medal). Henni is currently a Lecturer in History and Theory of Architecture at Princeton University's School of Architecture.

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# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1. Unveiling the First Camps</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2. Pacification or Counterrevolution?</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>3. Vichy's Ghost in Constantine</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>4. On General de Gaulle's Colonial Project</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>5. Toward Semi-urban Housing</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>6. Officers, Technocrats, and <i>Bidonvilles</i></b>	<b>149</b>
<b>7. From Permanent Camps to Villages</b>	<b>179</b>
<b>8. Mass Housing: More with Less</b>	<b>205</b>
<b>9. Erecting Fortress Rocher Noir</b>	<b>233</b>
<b>10. Game Not Entirely Over</b>	<b>277</b>
<b>Epilogue</b>	<b>291</b>
<b>Acknowledgments</b>	<b>297</b>
<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>300</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>304</b>
<b>Index</b>	<b>323</b>
<b>Illustration Credits</b>	<b>334</b>





## Introduction

Colonialism is not a positive force. On 23 February 2005, the French Fifth Republic (1958 to the present), under the presidency of Jacques Chirac, decreed law no. 2005-158 on the “Reconnaissance de la Nation et contribution nationale en faveur des Français rapatriés” (Recognition of the Nation and the National Contributions of the Repatriated French). Article 4 mandated that teachers must teach students about the “positive role” of French colonialism, particularly in North Africa (the French departments of Algeria, the French departments of the Algerian Sahara, and the French protectorates of Morocco and Tunisia), and to acknowledge the “sacrifices” of the French officers who had served in these territories. The second sentence of Article 4 read: “school programs recognize in particular the positive role of the French presence overseas, notably in North Africa, and concede to history and to the sacrifices of the combatants of the French army in these territories the eminent position to which they have the right.”<sup>1</sup>

With Article 4, the French authorities dictated the contents of history lessons; indoctrinated pupils studying in French schools; obligated teachers to shroud a number of infamous colonial massacres in silence; compelled teachers and pupils alike to praise French colonialism and imperialism; negated the violence of colonialism; reversed the work of historians and their ongoing debates; offended all those who had lived, or still live, under a colonial regime; overlooked the accountability and responsibility of the French colonial authorities; and celebrated the crimes that the French civil and military authorities committed, including the crimes of the French paramilitary terrorist group known as the Organisation de l’armée secrète (OAS, or Secret Army Organization, chapter 9). These were only a few of the consequences of this law. In the wake of an avalanche of national and international responses, protests, debates, and condemnations—which particularly centered on the events of the Algerian Revolution, or the Algerian War of Independence of November 1954 to July 1962—the French authorities removed, with some difficulty, the aforementioned sentence of Article 4 from law no. 2005-158 on 15 February 2006, one year after its institution.<sup>2</sup> But France’s intention—and that of other Western colonizers—to eulogize colonialism existed then and still exists today.

In contrast to the imposed amnesia of Article 4, this book examines a fragment of what the French authorities sought to hide. It illuminates a few of the myriad of “non-positive” (to paraphrase the French legislators)

characters and effects of French colonialism—including the key role the French army played—upon the territory and people of Algeria (France’s longest colonial presence in North Africa, which began in 1830) during the French war to keep Algeria under French rule. Indeed, even the term “war” was not formally recognized until thirty-seven years after the ceasefire in 1962, when on 18 October 1999, also under the presidency of Chirac, the French authorities finally approved the use of the official appellation *La Guerre d’Algérie* (“the Algerian War,” alternately translated as “the War for Algeria”) at French schools and in official terminology.<sup>3</sup> Before 1999, the French government euphemistically called the unnamed and undeclared war *Les opérations de maintien de l’ordre* (operations for the enforcement of law and order) or *Les évènements d’Algérie* (Algerian events).<sup>4</sup>

During this bloody and protracted armed conflict, the death toll of which is still disputed to this day,<sup>5</sup> the French civil and military authorities profoundly reorganized Algeria’s vast urban and rural territory, drastically transformed its built environments, and rapidly implanted new infrastructures and settlements across the country. In addition to the destructions of war, the colonial regime decreed a number of laws, orders, and directives for the evacuation of certain areas and the construction of spaces to allow the strict control of the Algerian population and the defense of the European population living in Algeria. The forced relocation and construction of settlements in rural and urban areas was a key factor in isolating the Algerian population from the influence of the revolutionary liberation fighters and in impeding the spread of the desire and the support for independence (or “contamination,” to use the French army’s technical term). This book focuses on these resulting constructions and seeks to portray the *modus operandi* of French colonial architecture during the Algerian Revolution, as well as that architecture’s roots, developments, scopes, actors, protocols, and design mechanisms. This study calls these multifaceted spatial operations the “architecture of counterrevolution.”

Algeria was technically considered a French territory, forming France’s Tenth Military Region and administered like other French metropolitan areas. The Algerian War of Independence was waged against the tumultuous backdrop of the Cold War. It was not only a war between French officers and the Algerian Armée de libération nationale (ALN, or National Liberation Army, the armed wing of the Algerian Front de libération nationale—FLN, or National Liberation Front); it was also a conflict between the French civil and military authorities, among French army officers, between the French Left and Right, between French communists and leftists, between French

Gaullists and right-wing parties, between the Eastern and Western blocs, and among Algerian elites. Following the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution, the United Nations General Assembly debated the “Algerian Question” a number of times before the members of the United Nations recognized Algeria’s right to self-determination in December 1960.

The French colonial war of anti-Algerian independence is widely regarded as the precursor of modern civil-military counterinsurgency operations and thereby of the rhetorical “Global War on Terror” of today. These theories, known as the *Guerre moderne* (modern warfare), were developed by French officers who had gained their practical experience during the Second World War (1939–1945) and during the Indochina War (1946–1954), which France lost. The officers secretly transferred these methods to North and South America during the 1960s.<sup>6</sup> Since the invasion of Iraq in 2003, however, the United States and other Western powers have overtly expressed their interest in French military practices in Algeria—notably the infamous urban warfare methods of the Battle of Algiers (1956–1957)—and in the ways in which the French army had created, learned from, integrated, and enforced counterrevolutionary measures. Under the aforementioned term “architecture of counterrevolution,” this book dissects the effects of these measures in transforming the Algerian territory and exposes the intrinsic relationships between military maneuvers, political ideologies, colonial doctrines, and architecture. It reveals the politico-socioeconomic meanings of laws, maps, structures, infrastructures, shelters, housing, and other buildings, and discloses how these groups (and their broad network of actors) embody what the psychiatrist and author Frantz Fanon—best known for his 1961 book *The Wretched of the Earth*—called in his rejected doctoral dissertation the “psychology of colonialism.”<sup>7</sup>

The Algerian Revolution provoked the downfall of the Fourth French Republic (1946–1958). During the eight years of the war, a number of French chief executives attempted to deal with the Algerian question: the Radical politician Pierre Mendès France and his Interior Minister the Socialist François Mitterrand, from June 1954 to February 1955; the Radical Edgar Faure, from February 1955 to January 1956; the Socialist Guy Mollet, from January 1956 to May 1957; the Radical Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury, from June 1957 to September 1957; the Radical Félix Guillard, from November 1957 to April 1958; and the Christian Democratic politician Pierre Pflimlin, for a few days after the first Generals’ Putsch in Algiers and the subsequent French political-military crisis of 13 May 1958. Deserving of special mention is General Charles de Gaulle, who served not only as Prime Minister, Minister

of Defense, and Minister of Algerian Affairs from June 1958 to January 1959 but also as the President of the French Fifth Republic for more than ten years, from January 1959 to April 1969.<sup>8</sup>

The French authorities appointed a sequence of eight chief executives to represent French interests in Algeria: the ethnologist Jacques Soustelle, Governor General of Algeria from January 1955 to January 1956; General Georges Catroux, Resident Minister in Algeria from January to February 1956; the syndicalist and Socialist Robert Lacoste, Resident Minister in Algeria from February 1956 to May 1958; the lawyer André Mutter, who acted as the last Resident Minister in Algeria; General Raoul Salan, Delegate General of the French Government in Algeria from June to December 1958, as well as Commander-in-Chief of the French Armed Forces in Algeria; the Inspector of Finances Paul Delouvrier, Delegate General of the French Government in Algeria from December 1958 to November 1960; Jean Morin, Delegate General in Algeria from November 1960 to March 1962; and finally Christian Fouchet, High Commissioner for the French Republic in Algeria from March to July 1962, when de Gaulle declared the independence of Algeria whilst nevertheless imposing a continued cooperation with France upon the country. All of these French civil or military men, representing either the left- or right-wing of the political spectrum, fought for the same cause: to ensure that Algeria was dominated by France and to protect French economic interests in Algeria. The aim of this study is therefore to explore the singular spatial strategies that buttressed the French colonial cause.

### **Intertwined Episodes**

The following chapters do not pretend to offer a comprehensive history of the ninety-four months of destruction and construction during France's war in Algeria; nor do they claim to provide an exhaustive description and analysis of the buildings that the French colonial authorities constructed or destructed in Algeria during the Algerian Revolution. Rather, the book seeks to probe France's colonial practices as embodied in juridical means, military operations, and design, and to highlight the roles that various officers, technocrats, architects, planners, and ethnologists played in the making of architecture (in the broad sense of the term) over the course of a bloody war of independence. It does so by unraveling the relations between the practices of the French colonial wars of the nineteenth century, the Vichy regime, and the Fourth and Fifth Republics. It also exposes the nexus of these French-designed systems and disentangles the links between these



relationships and the French war to keep Algeria under colonial rule and to protect France's interests in Algeria.

*Architecture of Counterrevolution: The French Army in Northern Algeria* is structured in ten episodes. Each one seeks to identify figures, protocols, and times involving a convergence of politico-military operations and planning policies. The episodes are guided and framed by a number of protagonists and antagonists who represented the French institutions and government, both civil and military. Each chapter examines an aspect of French colonial counterrevolutionary policies and architecture and suggests a reading of the psychology of French colonialism in colonized Algeria during what was a war of independence. It is therefore not concerned with any one Algerian city, any one practice, any one figure, or any one project. The book relies on particular biographies and specific situations of military character that the French authorities either created or responded to in order to control and obstruct the Algerian Revolution. These circumstances are interrelated, and they mirror a set of wider institutions, events, and strategies as defined by their semantic, spatial, and socioeconomic impacts.

The first three chapters cover the period from November 1954, which marked the onset of the Algerian Revolution, to May 1958, coinciding with the first Algiers Generals' Putsch and the collapse of the Fourth Republic. Chapter one, "Unveiling the First Camps," examines the genesis of the military-controlled camps called the *camps de regroupement*<sup>9</sup> by investigating the missions of the French ethnologist Germaine Tillion and the practices of the aforementioned ethnologist Jacques Soustelle in the Aurès Mountains of northeastern Algeria during the first months of the Algerian Revolution. It reveals that these camps were both extrajudicial and created immediately after the outbreak of the revolution. The second chapter, "Pacification or Counterrevolution?" explores the roots of the colonial doctrine of *Guerre moderne*, its theorists, and practitioners, including David Galula, Charles Lacheroy, and Roger Trinquier. It probes the sociospatial relationships between this type of warfare, the military policy of pacification, and the positions of the forefathers of "modern war," who include Marshals Thomas-Robert Bugeaud, Joseph Simon Gallieni, and Louis Lyautey. It also scrutinizes the missions of the officers of the Sections administratives spécialisées (SAS, or Specialized Administrative Sections) who supervised the construction of the camps and explores the policies and conditions in which these camps were built in a number of rural regions of Algeria. Episode three, "Vichy's Ghost in Constantine," focuses on the development of the *camps de regroupement* in the Algerian Department of Constantine during the tenure

of the former Vichy regime civil servant Maurice Papon. Papon was convicted in 1998 of crimes against humanity for his participation in the deportation of Jews in Bordeaux to concentration camps during the Second World War—a background that did not stop him from serving both as General Inspector of Administration in the Extraordinary Mission (civil and military) in Eastern Algeria and as Prefect of the Department of Constantine from 1956 to 1958. The chapter highlights the legacies between the French fascist regime and the French colonial regime.

The period between the return of General de Gaulle to power in May 1958 and the end of the mandate of Paul Delouvrier in November 1961 as Delegate General of the French Government in Algeria is examined in chapters four, five, six, seven, and eight. These chapters discuss the typologies of housing programs that the French technocrats conceived and planned for Algeria, as well as these programs' associations with postwar housing programs in France, their differences, and their objectives. Chapter four, "On General de Gaulle's Colonial Project," investigates the premises on which de Gaulle launched a colossal socioeconomic development plan called the Plan de Constantine (named after the eastern Algerian city) that included the construction of housing units for one million people. It also explores the typologies and effects of these dwellings during the War of Independence and the intentions and actors they involved. This episode also chronicles General de Gaulle's attempts to partly divert the scope of the armed conflict and surveys Delouvrier's assignments to transform the Algerian population. Chapter five, "Toward Semi-urban Housing," debates the controversy of a colonial "assimilationist" housing typology called *habitat semi-urbain* (semi-urban dwellings), which were specifically designed for Algerian people who were deemed neither urban nor rural. Chapter six, "Officers, Technocrats, and *Bidonvilles*," explores army officers' strategic clearances of the dense *bidonvilles* (shantytowns) in urban areas and reveals their counterrevolutionary tactics and targets in doing so. Episode seven, "From Permanent Camps to Villages," examines the transformation of permanent *camps de regroupement* into what the French authorities called "villages" in rural Algeria through Delouvrier's *Mille villages* (One Thousand Villages) program. Chapter eight, "Mass Housing: More with Less," scrutinizes French technocrats' and architects' regulation and construction of mass-housing projects in Algeria's urban areas and demonstrates how the construction of housing units was also a practice and enforcement of the counterrevolutionary policy of "winning hearts and minds." Parts of these episodes look at the role of specific French protagonists in Algeria, such as the former Minister of Reconstruction and Urban-

ism Eugène Claudius-Petit and the architect Marcel Lathuillière. These episodes seek to trace the frictions and legacies between four influential groups of European planners and architects in Algeria: those who served at the French Ministère de la reconstruction et de l'urbanisme (MRU, or Ministry of Reconstruction and Urbanism); those who worked for Le Corbusier in Paris, like Pierre-André Emery; those who collaborated with Fernand Pouillon in Algiers, like Alexis Daure; and those who graduated from or taught at the Institut d'urbanisme de l'université de Paris (IUUP, or Institute of Urbanism at Paris University) and/or the Institut d'urbanisme de l'université d'Alger (IUUA, or Institute of Urbanism at Algiers University).

The last two chapters of the book, “Erecting Fortress Rocher Noir” and “Game Not Entirely Over,” highlight the events around 1961 and the last months of the Algerian Revolution, including the second French Generals’ Putsch in Algiers and the creation of the aforementioned French terrorist group OAS. These two chapters illustrate how General de Gaulle attempted to protect French government in Algeria and its French civil servants and their families from the bloody terrorism of the OAS by designing and building a new city called Rocher Noir (Black Rock). Rocher Noir was to be located roughly 50 kilometers east of Algiers, near the Mediterranean Sea and the French air force base at Reghaia. These last episodes examine the mechanisms and circumstances behind the swift design and building of this fortified city in 1961 and how it was temporarily occupied by French civil servants, constantly protected by the French army, and eventually abandoned in 1964.

*Architecture of Counterrevolution: The French Army in Northern Algeria* provides only a piece of the complex puzzle (yet to be fully depicted) of how the territorial infrastructure and spatial operations of counterrevolution, or anticolonization, interlocked with the control, domination, and assimilation of the Algerian population. This institutionalized colonial violence was the outcome of the French form of republicanism guided by the values of its national slogan *liberté, égalité, fraternité* (liberty, equality, fraternity). General de Gaulle again inscribed this symbolic tripartite motto—the origins of which lie in the celebrated French Revolution—into the French constitution of his Fifth Republic in September 1958; precisely, that is, in the midst of the bloody French war to keep Algeria under French colonial rule.

Less than thirty years after the end of the colonial violence of the Algerian War of Independence, the Algerian population was afflicted by another period of blood-soaked violence when the Algerian Civil War of 1991 to 2002—known as the *décennie noir* (Black Decade)—broke out. The Algerian people, once again, were forced to live in constant fear and with the threat of death.

Bombs, shootings, military tanks, alarms, curfews, and everything else that an armed conflict entails again became part of the daily life of millions of people living in Algeria.

In 1998, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, a member of the FLN and a former soldier in the ALN who had served as Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1963 to 1979 in the three governments of Houari Boumedienne in independent Algeria, announced his intention to run for president in the elections scheduled for 1999. After all the other candidates withdrew from the election prior to the vote, denouncing fraud, Bouteflika was elected. He became nationally and internationally active, attempting to restore peace and security in Algeria with a “Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation,” and to rebuild the reputation of Algeria, which had shifted from being a symbol of revolution during the Algerian War of Independence to an emblem of violence and injustice and terror during the Algerian Civil War.

In the wake of the constitutional amendment of 2009 that allowed the president to run for a third term, Bouteflika engineered to win the presidential election for the third time, surpassing (in 2012) Boumedienne as the longest-serving president of independent Algeria. At the time of writing this book, Bouteflika—sitting in a wheelchair—audaciously declared that he would run for a fourth term in spite of his ill health and his three terms in office. This re-re-re-election spawned large protests across the country, but they were immediately banned and brutally silenced.

This maintaining of the constant authority of the FLN in Algeria since the signing of the Evian Agreements in 1962 between the French government and the Algerian FLN merely contributes—among many other factors—to the prolongation of an imposed amnesia and the propagation of a partisan version of specific chapters in French and Algerian history during the War of Independence. Notable among these forgotten episodes are the constructions that were initiated and built during this armed conflict, in particular the *camps de regroupement* and de Gaulle’s Plan de Constantine, as well as their completion, abandonment, or transformation after Algerian independence. This book seeks to counteract this imposed amnesia and reveal the stories and histories of these spaces of conflict, to “reconnoiter” the psychology of colonialism, its repercussions, reverberations, influences, aspirations, and inspirations, also in the hope that it will stimulate further much-needed investigation.

## Methodology and Sources

Investigating French spatial strategies in Algeria during the War of Independence requires an approach to French colonial history that embraces the genealogies and roles of French civil and military authorities, French officials from France and from Algeria, French domestic and overseas policies, and French implicit and explicit protocols. Equally central to the book's research methodology is the scrutiny of French counterrevolutionary (counterinsurgency) warfare practices, theories, roots, developments, and dissemination. To represent Algerian voices, the study draws on conversations with Algerian liberation fighters, former inhabitants of the *camps de regroupement*, and memoirs and published sources. Finally, the book relies on a wide range of published sources and multi-archival research, particularly on textual and visual records produced by French colonial institutions.

The French archives of the French war to keep Algeria under colonial rule were partly opened to the public in 1992, thirty years after the 1962 ceasefire. The word “partly” is used here because a number of files remain classified, secret, and otherwise publicly inaccessible. Law no. 79-18 of 3 January 1979 denies access to all documents concerning the private lives of individuals or France's national security and defense for a period of sixty years.<sup>10</sup> This means that some dossiers will be opened to scientific research only in 2022. This manuscript—as well as the entire written history of the French war in Algeria—is thus based on the records that the French authorities have meticulously preselected, this selection, of course, representing only one side of the story.<sup>11</sup>

The majority of the inventories of the French National Archives related to Algeria under French rule and the Algerian Revolution that were consulted for this research are listed in the bibliography. These archives include the Service historique de l'armée de terre (SHAT, or Historic Service of Land Forces), the Service historique de l'armée de l'air (SHAA, or Historic Service of the Air Forces), both located in the Château de Vincennes in Paris; the Etablissement de communication et de production audiovisuelle de la défense (ECPAD, or Office of Communication and Audio-Visual Productions of Defense) at the Fort of Ivry in Paris; French National Archives in Fontainebleau, Paris, and Pierrefitte-sur-Seine. In addition to official records in France, Algerian national archives have also been consulted. However, because Algeria was administered by France, the majority of French governmental original archives are located in France.

A valuable addition to the French national civil and military archives are to be found in the personal archives of Paul Delouvrier and Charles de



Gaulle. The author consulted Delouvrier's archives at the Centre d'histoire de Sciences Po (CHSP, or Center of History of Sciences Po) in Paris, where the documents of his tenure as Governor General of the French Government in Algeria from 1958 to 1961 are available for consultation. Also in Paris, at the Foundation Charles de Gaulle in Rue Solférino (where de Gaulle had his office from 1947 to 1958), the author assessed the archival records of General de Gaulle.

In addition to these primary sources, a series of interviews was conducted from 2013 to 2015 with French people who had directly or indirectly participated in the War of Independence and/or its related architecture. This oral history includes conversations with the following figures:

- Algerian liberation fighters and former inhabitants of the *camps de regroupement* who have demanded to remain anonymous.
- Michel Cornaton (b. 1936), who was drafted into the French army in Algeria from 1959 to 1960. In 1967, Cornaton published *Les regroupements de la décolonisation en Algérie* (The Regrouping of Decolonization in Algeria),<sup>12</sup> and in 2010 he published *Pierre Bourdieu: une vie dédoublée* (Pierre Bourdieu: A Divided Life).<sup>13</sup> Cornaton also generously opened his private archives to the author.
- General Maurice Faivre (b. 1926), a French army officer who served in Constantine, Kabylia, and Reghaia from 1957 to 1962 and who was the author of *Les 1000 villages de Delouvrier: protection des populations musulmanes contre le FLN* (Delouvrier's 1,000 Villages: Protection of the Muslim Population from the FLN).<sup>14</sup>
- Gérard Bélorgey (1933–2015), who was a reserve officer in Algeria from 1955 to 1957 and who later served as the Head of Economic Affairs in Mostaganem, charged with the management of the budget of the *camps de regroupement*.
- René Mayer (1925–2015), a civil engineer who was born in Constantine and who was the Head of the Service of Habitat at the Public Works Department of the French General Delegation in Algeria during the execution of the Plan de Constantine; he was entrusted with de Gaulle's mass-housing programs.
- Josette Daure, who was the wife of Swiss architect Jean-Jacques Deluz and who later married French architect Alexis Daure, the latter of whom built a number of large-scale housing projects in Algeria from 1958 to 1964.

- Claire Bachelot, who was the spouse of Bernard Bachelot (1930–2011), the Algiers-based architect and manager of the construction site of Rocher Noir.

In contrast to research into architecture built in times of peace, research into architecture resulting from and forming part of the conduct of war and conflict predominately implies inquiries into the ethics, politics, and psychology of such designed spaces, buildings, territories, mechanisms, and their architects—in the sense of the originator, creator, instigator, and inventor. Thus, investigating the biographies of these individuals and deconstructing the histories of the formation of governmental, legislative, and bureaucratic mechanisms—which enabled these spaces to be planned and built in the first place—play a key role in this type of architectural research. It is not surprising that the fragmented declassified military archives do not include the maps or plans that may have served as the basis for the destruction, construction, or defense of a given area; nor do these sanitized sources offer any visual records that might represent the real nature of military spatial counterinsurgency operations or the damage and suffering they caused. Instead, the majority of the surveys, photographs, and films were commissioned to produce meticulous propaganda images and were used to blunt the rising national and international criticism of French civil and military policies in Algeria. To try and compensate for this, the research has also included delving into the vast collection of French military aerial photographs taken during the various regional reconnaissance missions during the war to locate the enemy or gauge military strategies.

In terms of published sources, the work on this book has also involved studying the various versions and accounts of the complex history of the Algerian War of Independence mainly in English and in French.<sup>15</sup> The majority of the literature focuses on the military, political, economic, anthropological, and social aspects and consequences of the war in Algeria, in France, and internationally. The literature on the spatial transformations, changes, policies, and impacts at various levels and in the different regions of Algeria is severely scarce, however. Since the end of the war in 1962, very little research has been conducted on the programs of destruction and construction during the Algerian War of Independence—even less so by architects and architecture historians. In addition, those rare studies that do exist focus on Algiers and disregard the rest of the vast territory of Algeria. Notable among the few publications that do consider the spaces and built environments of the Algerian War is *L'urbanisme et l'architecture d'Alger:*

*aperçu critique* (Urbanism and Architecture of Algiers: A Critical Overview), published in 1988 by the Swiss architect Jean-Jacques Deluz, who emigrated to Algiers in 1956 just after his graduation from the Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne. Deluz analyzed Algiers from 1945 to 1962, arguing in the introduction to his book that “so far, few studies have been devoted to Algeria’s architecture and urbanism during the period of the liberation war. This is not very surprising. It is due either to a guilty conscience or hostility on the French side, or painful sensitivity or an obscurantist will on the Algerian side.”<sup>16</sup> Deluz’s statement is still valid today.

Other significant works of scholarship—although they are not directly or exclusively centered on the war and its architectures—include Paul Rabinow’s *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment* (1989); David Prochaska’s *Making Algeria French: Colonialism in Bône, 1870–1920* (1990); Xavier Malvetti’s *Alger: méditerranée, soleil et modernité* (1992; Algiers: Mediterranean, Sunshine and Modernity); Zeynep Çelik’s *Urban Forms and Colonial Confrontations: Algiers under French Rule* (1997), in which Çelik dedicates a few pages to the *camps de regroupement*; Saïd Almi, *Urbanisme et colonisation: présence française en Algérie* (2002; Urbanism and Colonization: French Presence in Algeria); Jean-Louis Cohen, Nabila Oulebsir, and Youcef Kanoun’s book *Djazair, une année de l’Algérie en France* (2003; Djazair, A Year of Algeria in France); Nabila Oulebsir, *Les usages du patrimoine: monuments musées et politiques coloniales en Algérie 1830–1930* (2004; The Usages of Heritage: Museums Monuments and Colonial Policies in Algeria 1830–1930); and Zeynep Çelik, Julia Clancy-Smith, and Frances Terpak’s book *Walls of Algiers: Narratives of the City through Text and Image* (2009).<sup>17</sup> From this selected list (in chronological order) it is evident that authors have paid very little attention to the architecture and architects that served the wartime political-military purposes of keeping Algeria under French rule.

This book therefore endeavors to fill this gap and to distinguish historical questions that may also serve to help us understand our contemporary circumstances: to learn why and how the politico-military objectives and territorial operations converged; to determine the factors that caused architecture, colonial policies, and counterrevolutionary warfare strategies to intersect; and to examine the ways in which judicial measures and socio-economic conditions were created to build France’s architecture of counterrevolution in colonial Algeria.

Lastly, a note on translation and language. In this book, colonial terms and appellations were studiously avoided. To refer to the Algerian people, terms such as “indigenous,” “French subjects,” or “French Muslims” that

the French colonial authorities used were deliberately circumvented. All translations from French into English have been made by the author.

- 1 Law no. 2005-158 of 23 February 2005, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, no. 46 (24 February 2005), p. 3128, <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/eli/loi/2005/2/23/2005-158/jo/texte> (accessed on 4 March 2016).
- 2 On the history of the debates and the numerous opinions on Article 4, see for example Marianne Ellingsen Kvig, “Le débat sur l’article 4 de la loi du 23 février 2005: La bataille des mémoires coloniales” (Master’s thesis, University of Oslo, 2007).
- 3 Law no. 99-882 of 18 October 1999, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, no. 244 (20 October 1999), p. 15657, <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?dateTexte=&categorieLien=id&cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000578132&fastPos=1&fastReqId=1474782874&oldAction=rechExpTexteJorf> (accessed on 24 March 2016).
- 4 During the state of emergency declared in the wake of the December 2015 attacks in Paris, some members of the French government used the expression “Les événements d’Algérie” and not “La Guerre d’Algérie.”
- 5 Whereas Algerian historians have put the death toll at 1.5 million Algerian victims, French historians have said that around 400,000 people from both sides were killed. However, these figures are still disputed to this day.
- 6 This legacy will be discussed in depth in chapter 1.
- 7 Fanon’s rejected doctoral dissertation was published as a book in 1952 under the title *Peau noire, masques blancs* (*Black Skin, White Masks*) by Editions du Seuil. Fanon discusses the psychology of colonialism in the first chapter. See Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 8–27.
- 8 In addition to these Frenchmen, Georges Pompidou (1911–1974) played a major role in conducting secret negotiations with the Algerian FLN at the request of de Gaulle. Pompidou served as France’s Prime Minister from 1962 to 1968 and President from 1969 until his death. He therefore influenced French policies toward Algeria and its inhabitants both during and after Algerian independence.
- 9 The term *camps de regroupement* is difficult to translate, but it essentially means “resettlement camps.” The question of the translation of *camps de regroupement* will be addressed in chapter 1.
- 10 Law no. 79-18 of 3 January 1979, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, 5 January 1979, p. 43, <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?dateTexte=&categorieLien=id&cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000322519&fastPos=1&fastReqId=471257779&oldAction=rechExpTexteJorf> (accessed on 4 April 2016).
- 11 On the paradoxes of the opening of the French archives on the Algerian War of Independence, see for example Sarmant, “Les archives de la guerre d’Algérie,” 103–10.
- 12 The second edition of the book was released in 1998 under a different title: *Les camps de regroupement de la guerre d’Algérie*. See Cornaton, *Les regroupements de la décolonisation*; Cornaton, *Les camps de regroupement*.
- 13 Cornaton, *Pierre Bourdieu*.
- 14 Faivre, *Les 1000 villages de Delouvrier*.
- 15 Sarazin, who was a librarian at the National Library of Algiers until 1962, published an extensive bibliography that included the majority of the published literature (up to 2011) and unpublished dissertations (up to 2012) on the Algerian War of Independence in the French language. See Sarazin, *Bibliographie de la guerre d’Algérie*; Sarazin, *666 thèses et mémoires*.
- 16 Deluz, *L’urbanisme et l’architecture d’Alger*, 5.
- 17 This list is not complete. For a more comprehensive set of references, see this book’s bibliography.

# 1. Unveiling the First Camps

In 2003, Michel Rocard—French politician and member of the Socialist Party, who served as Prime Minister from 1988 to 1991 under President François Mitterrand—published a book titled *Rapport sur les camps de regroupement et autres textes sur la Guerre d'Algérie* (Report on the Regroupement Camps and Other Texts on the Algerian War). Rocard had originally written this report in 1959, forty-four years earlier, while serving as Inspector of Finances in French Algeria during the Algerian War of Independence (1954–1962). On 17 February 1959, more than four years after the onset of the Algerian Revolution on 1 November 1954 (All Saints' Day), Rocard submitted the confidential document to Paul Delouvrier, the newly appointed Delegate General of the French Government in Algeria. In this 1959 account, the twenty-eight-year-old Rocard denounced the outrageous conditions of the French colonial “*regroupement* camps in which a million villagers are parked, more than half of them children.”<sup>1</sup> The report was leaked to the media in France, who belatedly revealed the existence of the militarily controlled *camps de regroupement* (roughly translated as “regrouping camps”) in Algeria that until then had been kept secret from national and international public opinion. Among the reasons that prompted Rocard to publish his 1959 report on the camps over four decades later was (as he said) the alarming invasion of Iraq in 2003. Using the examples of the fiascos of the war in Algeria and the violence inflicted during the forced civilian relocations, Rocard attempted to demonstrate the impossibility of solving political problems by purely military means, as had occurred in colonial Algeria.<sup>2</sup>

The 1959 media scandal resulted in an unprecedented flood of photographs, figures, and descriptions documenting the forced resettlement of Algerian civilians on a massive scale. Alone the titles of the various articles—published simultaneously in both left- and right-wing French newspapers—are testimony to the alarming numbers involved and the precarious circumstances that the French army was inflicting upon Algerians: “Dans les camps d’Algérie des milliers d’enfants meurent” (In the Camps of Algeria, Thousands of Children Die); “Un million d’Algériens ‘regroupés’ par l’armée menacés de famine” (One Million Algerians “Regrouped” by the Army Threatened with Famine); “Un million d’Algériens dans les camps: c’est la guerre” (One Million Algerians in Camps: Such Is War); “Un million d’Algériens parkés dans des camps de ‘regroupement’” (One Million Algerians Parked in “*Regroupement*” Camps); “J’ai visité, près de Blida, les villages de regroupe-



ment” (I Have Visited, Near Blida, the *Regroupement* Villages), “Un million d’Algériens derrière les barbelés” (One Million Algerians behind Barbed Wire); “Algérie: un million de personnes déplacés” (Algeria: One Million People Displaced); “Un million d’Algériens de l’Atlas ont été rassemblés dans mille villages” (One Million Algerians from the Atlas Mountains Have Been Gathered in a Thousand Villages).<sup>3</sup> This figure of one million people—a unique and apparently preconceived number given by the French civil authorities—was in fact mere guesswork. In reality, the French army had lost count. As the Inspection générale des regroupements de population (IGRP, or General Inspection of the Population *Regroupement*) admitted, it was clear that “by 1959 we had found ourselves facing a very serious situation: it had become impossible to quantify even approximately the volume of the displaced rural populations that had occurred since 1954.”<sup>4</sup>

The exact numbers of camps that were constructed during the war, of persons who were forced to leave their homes, and of devastated villages are still disputed to this day. One estimate for 1960 counted 2,157,000 such forcibly relocated persons.<sup>5</sup> Another evaluation from 1961 considered that at least 2,350,000 people had been concentrated into military-controlled settlements, and that an additional 1,175,000 people had been coerced to leave their original homes due to constant and violent military operations, meaning that altogether over 3.5 million people had been forcibly displaced.<sup>6</sup> Another figure for 15 February 1962, just a few weeks before Algeria’s independence, reported that 3,740 *camps de regroupement* had been built in French Algeria since the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution in 1954 (figs. 1a, 1b).<sup>7</sup>

Prior to the media scandal of 1959, the forced relocation of the Algerian population went unreported in the French news on Algeria, and the camps were barely mentioned. In the aftermath of Algeria’s independence in 1962, most historians stated that the first *camps de regroupement* had been established in 1957. The aim of this chapter is to show that France’s first camps in Algeria were in fact created immediately after the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution, and that rather than representing the beginning of the forced relocation of the Algerian population the year 1957 simply saw the issuing of the first military instructions that regulated the construction of what were already existing camps. It also discusses the ways the French civil and military authorities attempted to hide the existence of these so-called *centre de regroupement*.

This French appellation, *centre de regroupement*, not only poses translation problems, involving as it did both the displacement and concentration

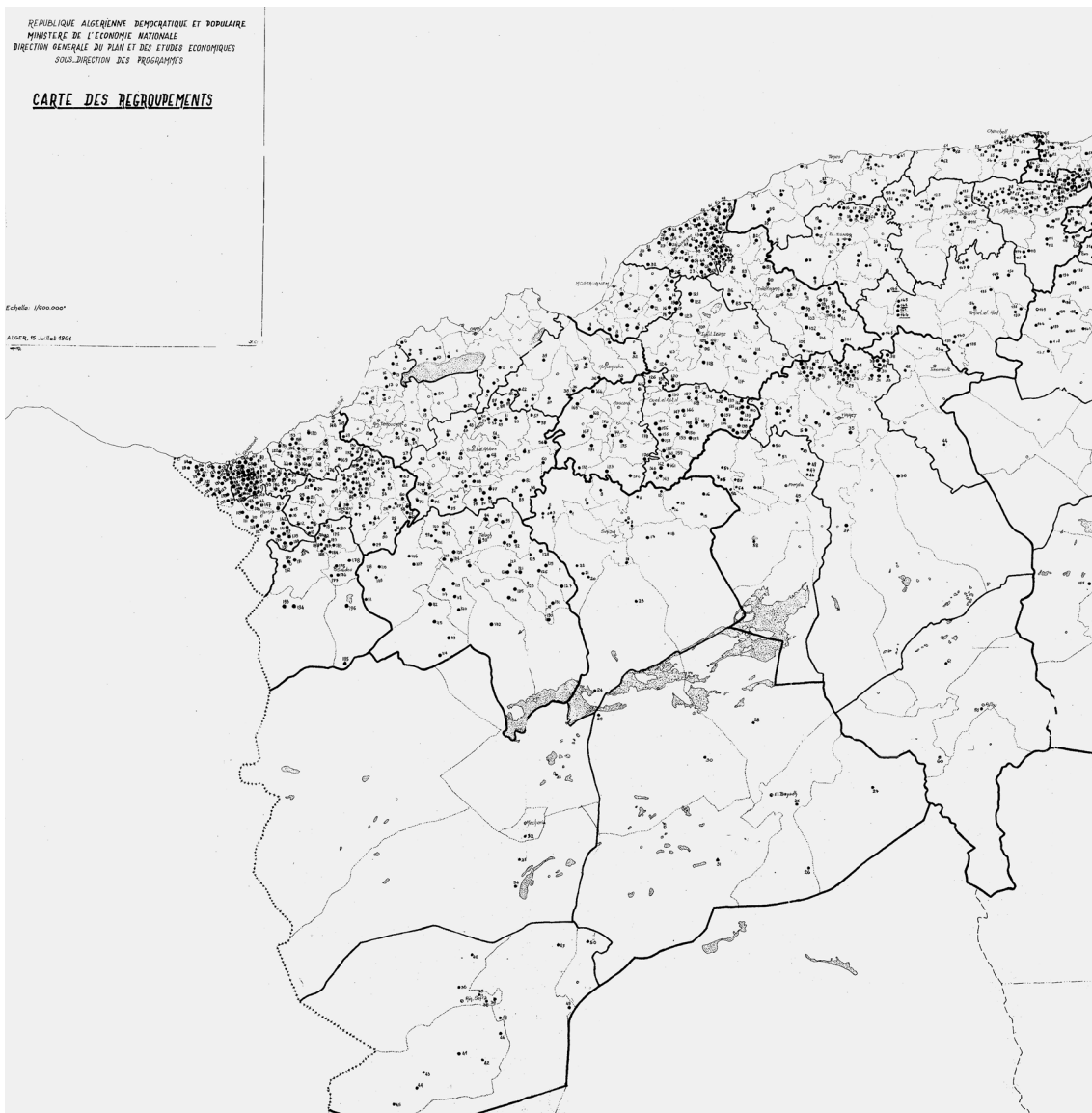
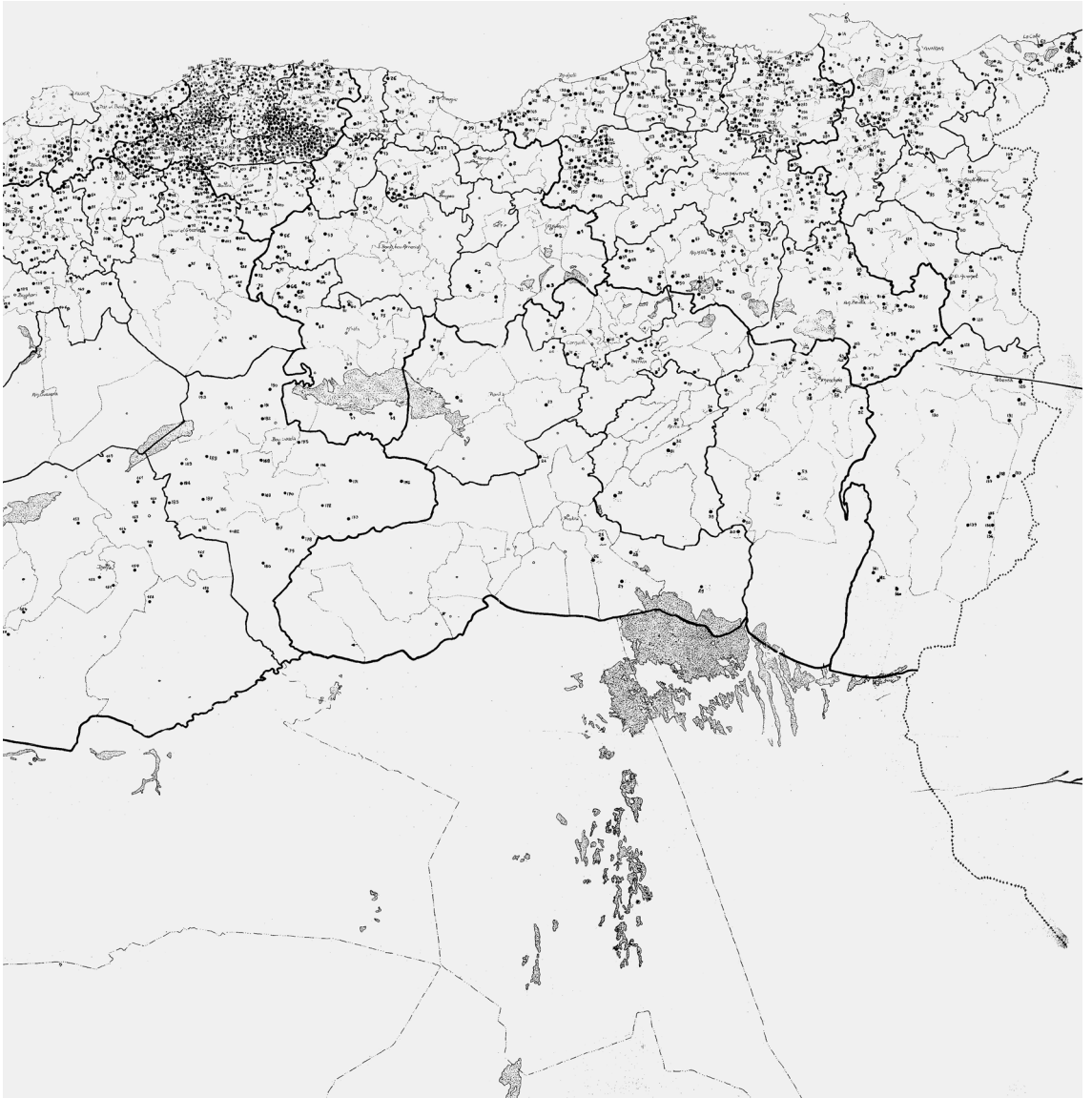


Fig. 1a Map of the *camps de regroupement* in Northern Algeria, 1962. The map was produced by the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria after Algeria gained its independence from France. Each point represents a *camp de regroupement* that the French army had created



of civilians in extrajudicial detention and within an enclosed and surveyed space, but it also entails precisely that which it is not. The terms “concentration” and “camp” were appositely circumvented in official military nomenclature and, as a result, by the majority of the French media and in the subsequent history books. In 1957, Maurice Papon, the General Inspector of Administration in the Extraordinary Mission in Eastern Algeria and the Prefect of the Department of Constantine—who was convicted in 1998 of crimes against humanity for his participation in the deportation of Jews in Bordeaux to concentration camps during the Second World War<sup>8</sup>—rigorously requested the immediate suppression of the word “camp” from all road signs in the Algerian department under his authority.<sup>9</sup> In Constantine (in eastern Algeria), where Papon was in charge of both the civil and military authorities, he banned any use of the word, ordering: “the term ‘camp’ will have to disappear from the terminology.”<sup>10</sup> For these reasons—and because the *centres* embodied the unequivocal characteristics of camps (as will be discussed shortly)—the euphemistic French expression *centre de regroupement* will be used in this book with the intention of reproducing the French voice verbatim. The term *regroupement* seems to have a purely military sense, however, in that it coincides with the meaning of “concentration.” According to one dictionary of the French language, *regroupement* is the action of “regrouping,” which means: “1. To group, to unite anew (what was dispersed): *To regroup officers of an army ...* 2. To group (dispersed elements), to gather. → To reassemble: *To regroup the populations.*”<sup>11</sup> “Concentration,” logically enough, is the action of concentrating, which means, according to the same dictionary, “to gather in a center. MILITARY: *The concentration of troops in an area of the territory.* → Grouping, roundup, regrouping. SPECIAL: *Camps de concentration.*”<sup>12</sup>

These camps were established for military purposes. As a response to the Algerian people’s demands for independence, the French army devastated villages and demarcated certain rural areas as zones of insecurity, which later were termed the “forbidden zones.”<sup>13</sup> These vast regions were not only considered geographically isolated but also—and most importantly—as epicenters of Algerian revolutionary activities, and thus they were to be emptied, controlled, and circulation within them banned. One of the most uncontrollable and infamous areas for the French authorities was the scattered settlements of the vast highlands of the Aurès Mountains in northeastern Algeria. The Aurès served as a testing ground for various civil-military counterrevolutionary operations, as will be discussed shortly. These strategies were designed to oversee the activities of the rural population

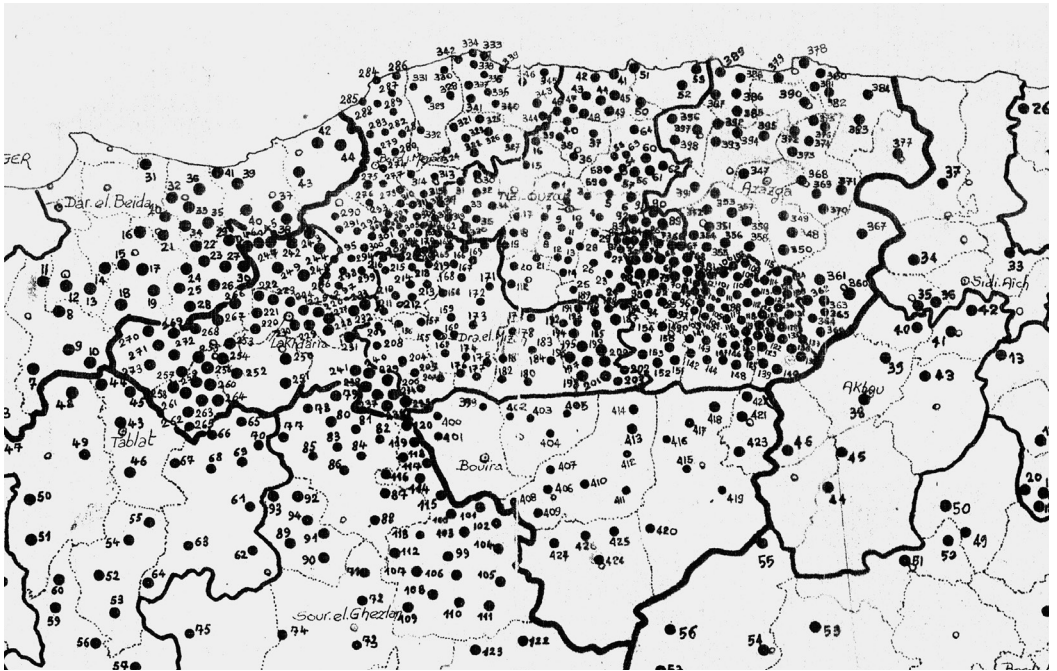


Fig. 1b Detail of the map of the *camps de regroupement* in Northern Algeria, 1962

and to impede the moral and material support of Algerian militants and liberation fighters who were determined to restore a proclaimed “sovereign Algerian state.”<sup>14</sup>

The explanations given by the French colonial authorities, however, were completely different. Jacques Soustelle, French ethnologist and Governor General of Algeria from 1955 to 1956, and his successor, Robert Lacoste, French politician and Resident Minister of Algeria from 1956 to 1958, both claimed that Algeria was hazardously underadministered and that the 1848 territorial departmentalization no longer matched the large population.<sup>15</sup> According to Lacoste, a new territorial reorganization was necessary to address the population’s urgent administrative needs.<sup>16</sup> He drew particular attention to the departments of the Hauts-Plateaux (where the Aurès is located), and where, as he argued, small rural populations occupied vast underdeveloped areas. As a result of this planned enhancement of the administration of French Algeria, from 1955 to 1958 the colonial regime created new regions, departments, districts, and municipalities. This administrative reorganization was coupled with the strategic designation of new regional centers designed to address pressing national-security issues and to facilitate regional communication and the enforcement of French regulations.<sup>17</sup>



Parallel to this civil territorial reorganization, a military territorial “zoning” was designed. The entire territory of Algeria was gradually permeated with modifiable infrastructures and hermetic cobwebs of checkpoints, watchtowers, military posts, border fortifications, minefields, and electric fences, all of which enabled constant counterrevolutionary military operations.<sup>18</sup> The French army progressively allocated particular areas of the territory of Algeria to one of three main military categories: *zones opérationnelles* (zones of operations), *zones de pacification* (pacification zones), and the *zones interdites* (forbidden zones, fig. 2).<sup>19</sup>

Within the zones of operations, officers were ordered to utilize any possible means to restore national security. In the militarily controlled zones of pacification, the army employed *action psychologique* (psychological actions) against civilians, who were coercively administered, supervised, and indoctrinated, as well as being induced to collaborate with the army.<sup>20</sup> And finally there were the forbidden zones, sectors designated to be cleared of any living beings—including animals—and consisting of free-fire areas for French military air and ground forces. The prohibited regions were frequently isolated places; they comprised not only immense woodlands and highlands but also vast, inhabited rural areas (such as the Aurès) from which Algerian civilian populations were relocated en masse to secure a “national-security” zone for the French army.<sup>21</sup>

These various territorial categories spawned frequent spatial misunderstandings and demarcation conflicts between the civil and military authorities involved. The French civilian administrative subdivisions consisted of departments, districts, and municipalities, while the systematic military *quadrillage* (grid system) was composed of zones, sectors, subsectors, quarters, and subquarters. The military grid system was intended to mesh with one of the aforementioned military objectives: operations, pacification, or the safeguarding of forbidden zones. The most unmistakable directive was to empty the forbidden zones, forcing civilians to leave their homes, villages, and arable lands. This military operation not only damaged countless existing villages and uprooted numerous Algerian peasants but also engendered the establishment of what the French army termed the *centres de regroupement* in Algeria under French colonial rule.<sup>22</sup>

With the issuing of the first centralized military policy of 1957,<sup>23</sup> under the command of General Raoul Salan, official documents stamped “secret” or “secret-confidential” or “top-secret” began to regulate the creation of the forbidden zones and to normalize the forced resettlement of the civilian populations; this was particularly the case with the construction of the

defensive perimeter known as the Morice Line. Named after French Minister of National Defense André Morice,<sup>24</sup> the Morice Line sealed off Algeria's eastern and western borders with neighboring Tunisia and Morocco in order to prevent human movement and material exchanges.<sup>25</sup> Running approximately 450 km along the border with Tunisia and 700 km along the border with Morocco, the Morice Line triggered a rapid and massive expansion of the camps. In 1958, the military Plan Challe fortified the Morice Line with additional electrified wire, minefields, barriers, and checkpoints—systematic counterrevolutionary measures that intensified the imposed evacuation of civilians from the forbidden zones. The number of the camps thus continued to increase throughout the course of the Algerian War of Independence.

In the aftermath of the media scandal of 1959, planning “technicians,” as the military officers called them, became directly involved in transforming the permanent camps into what the army termed “villages,” as well as in designing new settlements for the forcibly relocated populations. Under the authority of General Charles de Gaulle and in prompt reaction to the public outrage, Delouvrier<sup>26</sup> launched an emergency resettlement program dubbed the *Mille villages* (One Thousand Villages). Delouvrier ordered immediate improvements in the development of the camps' economic conditions. To this end, he established mobile teams comprised of a military officer and two skilled rural-planning professionals, which he called *équipes itinérantes d'aménagement rural* (mobile rural planning teams).<sup>27</sup> These were expected to study a) the future of the regrouping process; b) the economic viability of the camps; c) the legal status of the occupied lands; d) the administrative needs of the education and health-care sectors; e) the extent of immediate assistance that was required; and f) the military concerns of protection and self-defense.<sup>28</sup>

“Regrouping” civilians in controlled camps and later in surveyed villages was a military counterrevolutionary strategy that the French army was familiar with. Although the geopolitical circumstances of the armed conflict were dissimilar, during the First Indochina War (1946–1954)—which had ended in French withdrawal just before the beginning of the Algerian War—the French army had evacuated certain remote areas in French Indochina and created a strategic network of *villages fortifiés* (fortified villages),<sup>29</sup> a practice that subsequently served as the planning model for the US army's Agroville Program and the Strategic Hamlet Program in Vietnam during the Vietnam War (1955–1975).<sup>30</sup> Roger Trinquier, a colonel who served in both French Indochina and in French Algeria, argued in his book *La Guerre Moderne: A*

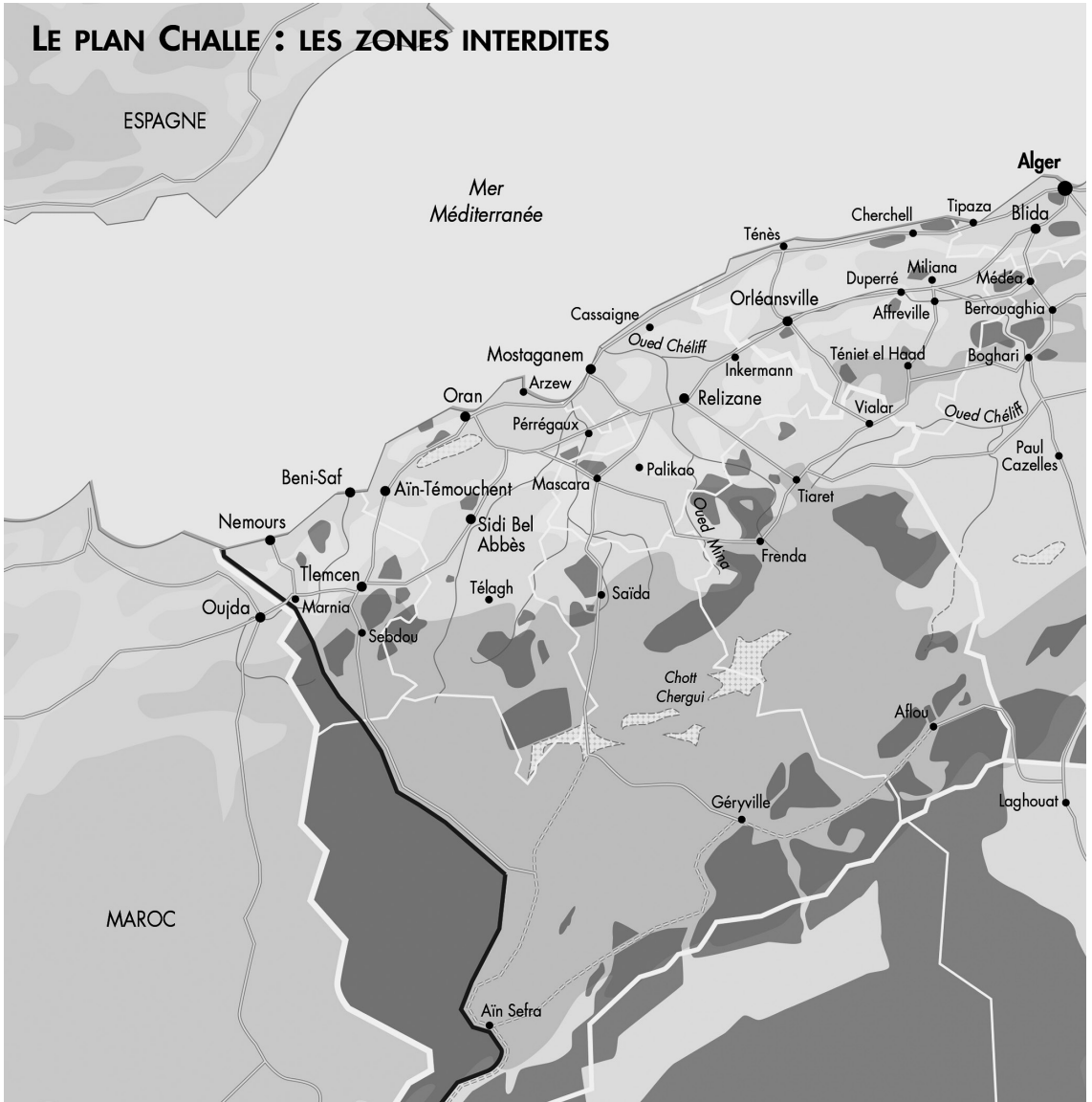
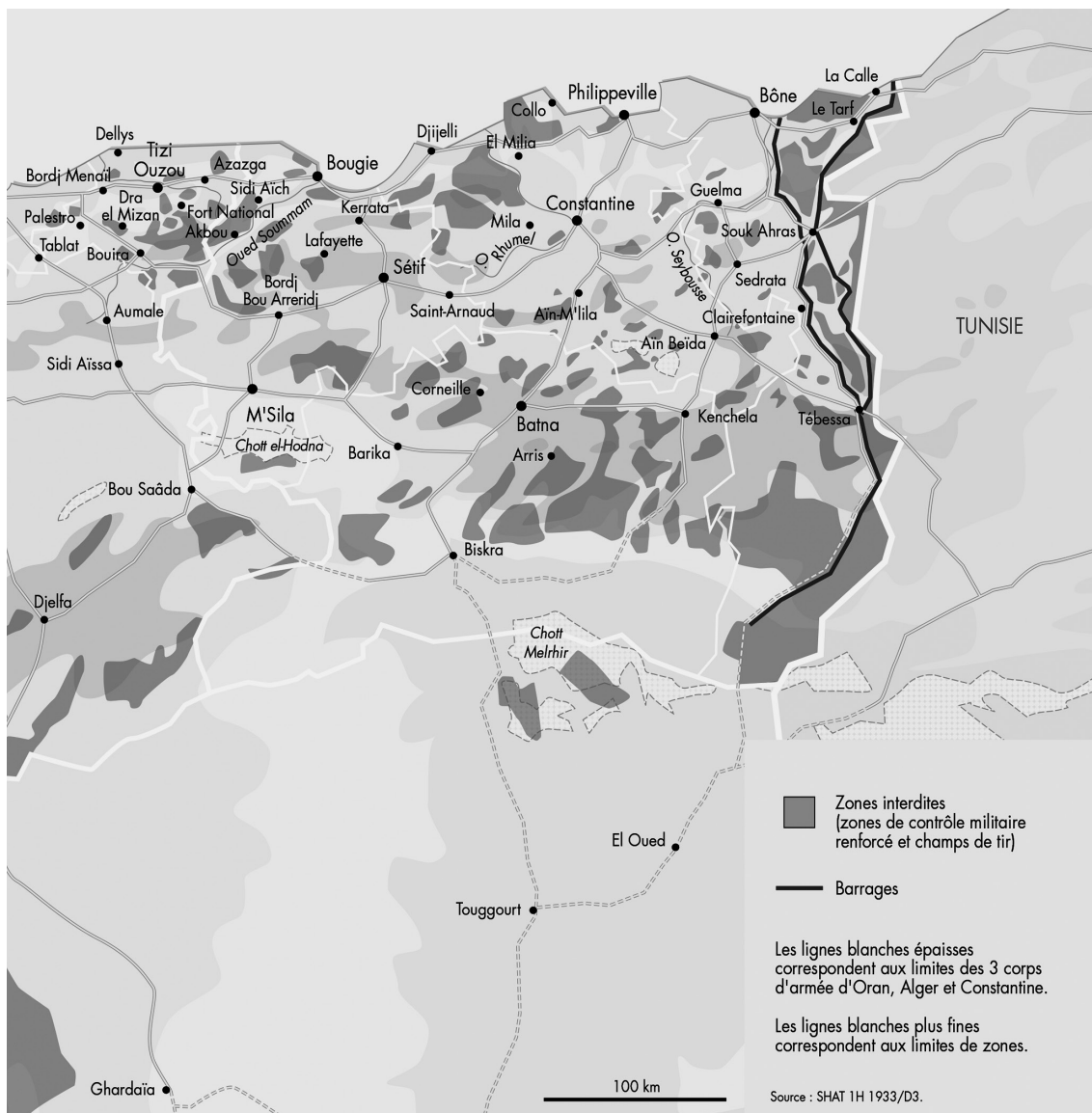


Fig. 2 Forbidden zones and the Plan Challe prior to July 1959





*French View on Counterinsurgency* that “in modern warfare, the enemy is far more difficult to identify. No physical frontier separates the two camps. The line of demarcation between friend and foe passes through the very heart of the nation.”<sup>31</sup> Accordingly, every individual was considered a suspect, and the battlefield was no longer restricted to simple territorial boundaries but rather encompassed the whole population. Everyone was regarded as both friend and foe, everywhere and at all times: everybody appeared to be a potential menace to French law and order.

Following this thinking, farmers, both in the Aurès and elsewhere in Algeria, were treated as potential terrorists<sup>32</sup> and thus from the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution were subject to continuous observation and control. As a result, the *camps de regroupement* were purposely designed and strategically located. The French colonial authorities frequently employed a strict gridiron plan in order to enable military surveillance and to facilitate the maintenance of law and order in the camps. The ideal sites for these grid plans were undoubtedly the plains, well away from the remote mountainous topography. A wide linear main street ran through the flat land to permit immediate access to the camps. Its central area accommodated a large square and military headquarters; the involuntarily relocated populations were distributed around the main entrance and the military posts. The small, closely built shelters differed according to the availability of financial resources and the construction materials that were assigned, as well as the predicted duration of the camps (this last point will be discussed later). The housing varied from standardized boxes built of durable material (in the best cases) to simple barracks of tents placed in a quadrangular formation determined by the grid (figs. 3–7). In an effort to fulfill the military objectives of the counterrevolutionary operations, the thousands of camps scattered across Algerian territory were monotonous. The *camps de regroupement* were often surrounded by barbed-wire fences and watchtowers housing armed guards ready to open fire.<sup>33</sup> Whereas the keyword for the Algerian revolutionaries was “dispersion,” for the French counterrevolutionaries it was “concentration.”

### **The Role of Ethnographic Studies**

The inhabitants of the Aurès, the Algerian Berber-speaking Shawiya people, were a constant source of unrest for the French authorities by reason of their enduring resistance to French colonization.<sup>34</sup> According to a military survey that was produced and circulated by the French army during the Algerian War of Independence on the physical, economic, and human geographies

of the vast rural region of the Aurès, the Shawiya population had rebelled against the French in 1849, from 1858 to 1859, in 1879, and again from 1916 to 1920. The army characterized the population in terms of its defiance toward any foreign conqueror or exterior authority; it also judged that the Aurès had always been the refuge of autonomous and seminomadic peasants who lived in dispersed and well-protected settlements.<sup>35</sup> The tough climate and the rugged topography made the region almost impenetrable to the French authorities. As the military analysis stated, both the inadequate communication systems and the poor territorial administration reinforced the rural tribal populace's predisposition to govern itself and to defend itself from any possible external aggressor.<sup>36</sup>

This military survey echoed prior civil ethnographic studies that French ethnologists had undertaken during the interwar period. In their dating, these studies can be specifically and sequentially linked to: 1) the institutionalization of the discipline of ethnology during the Third Republic, 2) the establishment of the Institut d'ethnologie (Institute of Ethnology) in Paris in 1925, and 3) the transformation, on the occasion of the Universal Exposition in Paris in 1937, of the Museum of Ethnography du Trocadéro into the Musée de l'Homme (Museum of Man), which was both an anthropology museum and a research center.<sup>37</sup> The fathers of these French institutions were the ethnologist Paul Rivet and sociologist Marcel Mauss, who both educated a number of prominent French ethnologists,<sup>38</sup> but this chapter will limit itself to two other central figures in terms of their role, agency, and explicit involvement in the forced displacement of Algerian civilians in the Aurès (and later across Algeria) during the very early stage of the Algerian War of Independence. The two ethnologists in question—both of whom participated in the Resistance during the Vichy regime of the Second World War—are the former concentration-camp deportee Germaine Tillion and the former intelligence and propaganda agent Jacques Soustelle.

At the end of November 1954, shortly after the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution, François Mitterrand<sup>39</sup> (then Minister of the Interior in the government of Pierre Mendès France) assigned Germaine Tillion (who had graduated from the Institute of Ethnology in 1932) a "special mission"<sup>40</sup> in the Aurès. The meeting at which the commission was given had been arranged at the urgent request of Louis Massignon, Tillion's ethnology professor and a Catholic academic of Islam, who also attended. Massignon's stated goal was "to make sure that the civilian population is not affected"<sup>41</sup> in Algeria. Choosing Tillion was no coincidence. She spoke the Shawi language, having spent time in the Aurès from 1934 to 1940 when she (together with her

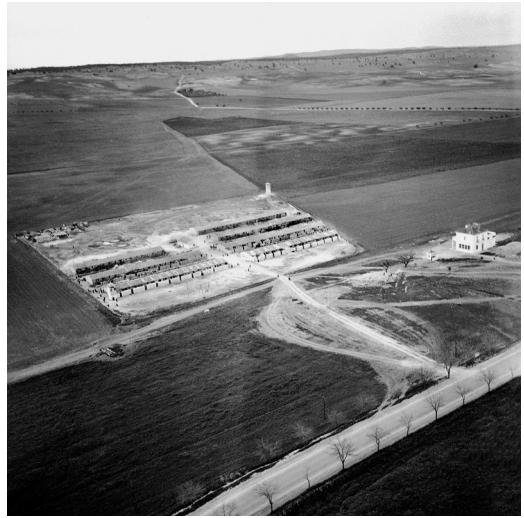


Fig. 3 *Camp de regroupement* in Taher El Achouet, Region of Constantine, Algeria, July 1957

Fig. 4 *Camp de regroupement* in Boulet, Region of Oran, Algeria, February 1958

Fig. 5 *Camp de regroupement* and its watchtower in Sahel, Algeria, June 1959

Fig. 6 *Camp de regroupement* in Taliouine, Valley of Oued Isser, Region of Algiers, Algeria, September 1959

Fig. 7 *Camp de regroupement* in Cheria and Sidi Madani, Algeria, May 1959

colleague, Thérèse Rivière) had been assigned to an ethnographic mission among the region's settled and seminomadic tribal populations.<sup>42</sup> This purportedly academic assignment had been initially commissioned by the Institute of Ethnology, with the financial support of the London International Institute of African Languages and Cultures (today the International African Institute), and later by the Paris Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS, or Paris National Center for Scientific Research). Tillion's dissertation was entitled *Morphologie d'une république berbère: les Ah-Abder-rahman, transhumants de l'Aurès méridional* (Morphology of a Berber Republic: The Ah-Abder-rahman, Transhumants of the Southern Aurès).<sup>43</sup>





In essence, French ethnographic academic studies served colonial purposes. According to Henri Labouret—former military officer in French West Africa, colonial administrator, member of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, and an ethnologist who was faithful to the “tradition of these governor-ethnologists”<sup>44</sup>—the objective of the wide-ranging sociological and ethnological enquiry into the Aurès consisted of:

Making an effective contribution to the methods of colonization; the knowledge of indigenous customs, beliefs, laws, and techniques; and enabling a more rational collaboration with the indigenous population on natural resources ... . In addition, we intend to create a collection of systematically collected objects using photographs, sketches, and films.<sup>45</sup>

Because the Institute of Ethnology depended on funding from the Ministère des colonies (Ministry of the Colonies), it is perhaps not surprising that the institute expected direct results from the ethnographic survey in order to both enlarge the collection of the Museum of Ethnography and at the same time assist the colonial *modus operandi* of territorial exploitation.<sup>46</sup> In other words, the Institute of Ethnology, the Museum of Ethnography, and later the Museum of Man, were all influenced and supervised by the Ministry of the Colonies, and in effect served the French colonial empire.

In 1940, Tillion returned to Paris and became an active member of the Réseau du musée de l’Homme (Network of the Museum of Man)—a movement

of French resistance to the Vichy regime and Nazi occupation—until her imprisonment in Fresnes in August 1942, followed by her deportation to Compiègne and then to the Ravensbrück women’s concentration camp in northern Germany in October 1943.<sup>47</sup> Despite the Vichy regime and Tillion’s own imprisonment, the Museum of Man (not to be confused with the Network of the Museum of Man) inaugurated an exhibition called *L’Aurès* in May 1943 that—somewhat surprisingly—ran until May 1946. The exhibition was organized by Tillion’s ethnologist colleague, Jacques Faublée, who displayed an impressive number of artifacts and photographs that Tillion and Rivière had amassed during their field research in the colonized mountains of the Aurès a few years earlier.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, while Labouret clearly stated the reasons for the ethnographic colonial expedition in the Aurès, the purpose of the *L’Aurès* exhibition remains obscure. The catalogue of the exhibition stated that in 1934, Paul Rivet, Director of the Museum of Man, “found it useful to commission an ethnographic mission in the Aurès ... whose inhabitants preserved elements of archaic civilization compared to the rest of Algeria.”<sup>49</sup>

Following the liberation of France by the Army of Africa, the Forces françaises libres (FFL, or Free French Forces) under the Algiers-based General Charles de Gaulle, and the allies, Tillion returned to Paris and dedicated several years to the investigation and denunciation of concentration-camp systems. She also became a member of the Commission internationale contre le régime concentrationnaire (CICRC, or International Commission on Concentration Camps); an observer for the Association nationale des déportées et internées de la Résistance (ADIR, or Association of Women Deported and Interned of the Resistance); and an ADIR delegate to the Commission nationale française contre le régime concentrationnaire (French National Commission on Concentration Regimes).<sup>50</sup> As a result, when Tillion returned to the Aurès at the end of 1954—the year that marked the beginning of what would become a long and bloody war—she was both abundantly equipped with ethnographic knowledge on the inhabitants of the Aurès and herself an eyewitnesses to concentration camps and the forced displacement of civilian populations.

### **The Genesis of the First Camps**

When Minister of the Interior Mitterrand agreed to receive Louis Massignon and Germaine Tillion in his office in Paris (on 24 November 1954) and to assign Tillion with a “special mission” in the Aurès, he emphasized the intention of the military commander of the Department of Constantine

(among the Aurès Mountains) to displace the civilian population.<sup>51</sup> The day after the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution on 1 November 1954, an emergency meeting had been held in the Aurès region between civilian and military authorities. The meeting included Jacques Chevallier, Secretary of State for War in France and Mayor of Algiers,<sup>52</sup> and General Paul Chérière, Commander-in-Chief of French Algeria, French Tenth Military Region, and together the participants agreed to mobilize all the human and material resources needed to end the unrest and to launch a plan in the Aurès that would include both offensive and defensive operations.<sup>53</sup> Speaking to the National Assembly on 12 November 1954, Pierre Mendès France—President of the Council of Ministers from June 1954 to February 1955 and signer of the Geneva Accords in July 1954 that withdrew French troops from Indochina—explicitly declared that “there is no compromise when it comes to defending the internal peace of the nation, the unity, the integrity of the Republic. The departments of Algeria are part of the French Republic. They have been irrevocably French for a long time.”<sup>54</sup> Mitterrand—who had resigned from the previous government a year earlier following the arrest of Morocco’s King Hassan II and his father by the French authorities—continued in the same tenor later that same day by insisting that the French government had acted quickly and honorably following the outbreak of the revolution on All Saints’ Day two weeks earlier. He proclaimed:

In three days, everything was put in place. Someone asked: Is it to maintain order? Not only that, but to affirm French power and to stress our drive. It was not only to repress and move on to military counteroffensives in order to reclaim a territory that was not lost! It was to affirm the worried population that at any time, at any moment, they would be defended.<sup>55</sup>

In order to satisfy the French *colons* (colonists or colonial settlers) and to defend and maintain French interests in Algeria, the French government increased the number of military officers and multiplied the punitive expeditions in French Algeria. The colonial government also sent a special military unit to the Aurès called the 18e Régiment d’infanterie parachutiste de choc (The 18th Shock Infantry Parachute Regiment), commanded by Colonel Paul Ducourneau, who had recently returned from the war that France had lost in its other essential overseas colony, Indochina. While there, Colonel Ducourneau had learned from the military tactics of both the French counterrevolutionary combatants and their revolutionary enemies,

the Vietminh. Thus, as the British historian Alistair Horne argues, “with Ducourneau the school of Indochina arrived in Algeria.”<sup>56</sup>

In November 1954, the French military air force dropped thousands of warning leaflets on two main valleys in the Aurès, urging the inhabitants to evacuate the region within two days if they wanted to escape the upcoming bombardment, which duly took place, constituting the war’s first aerial bombing and first forced displacement of the civilian population.<sup>57</sup> The Algiers-based French newspapers announced this involuntary dislocation on 27 November 1954, reporting that “half of the population of fourteen villages in the north of the Aurès have left their homes.”<sup>58</sup> During Mitterrand’s official visit to Algeria (including the Aurès) from 27 to 30 November 1954, however, he publically declared in unambiguous terms that the French government had no intention of affecting or attacking the civilian population. The Interior Minister announced that civilians should not suffer from the presence of “terrorists” among them, and accordingly it was their perceived duty to help the French government lest they become the first victims.<sup>59</sup> He also proclaimed that while his government would avoid anything that might be viewed as a state of war, in the name of justice the government would relentlessly pursue any revolutionary elements.<sup>60</sup>

Although as yet unwritten and unregulated, this publically stated intention was hurriedly applied in the Aurès in December 1954, by which time Tillion had already arrived in the mountains. The military resorted to a growing number of attacks, rakings, reprisals, repressions, controls, checks, and punishments against the civilian population, including the operations “Véronique”, which included the bombing of caves,<sup>61</sup> and “Orange Amère” (Bitter Orange) and “Violette,” which respectively comprised food blockades and imposed resettlements.<sup>62</sup> As a result, commencing from the very earliest days of the French war against the Algerian independence fighters, Algerian civilians were forced away from their homes, villages, and lands, all minus any form of legal consensus on the part of the authorities.

If Algeria was indeed France, a French territory, as the Radical Mendès France and the Socialist Mitterrand (among many others) claimed, these military operations were thus extrajudicial in nature. According to the Geneva Convention of 1949, an “armed conflict not of an international character”<sup>63</sup> should have been declared in the French colonized territory of Algeria, and therefore its respective signed provisions should have been adhered to. If Algeria was not France, since it was a colonized territory, then a state of war should have been declared. Neither of these two cases was asserted by the French authorities in Algeria under French rule, however;



instead, the French government avoided the slightest reference to an armed conflict. As it was, this state of nonwar, including the resulting coerced relocation of civilians (as will be shortly discussed), did not respect the norms of international law. In addition, from November 1954 to April 1955, the French government failed to issue either written instructions or a legislative bill of any kind. Only in April 1955 did it formally declare an official *état d'urgence* (state of emergency), thus allowing the imposition of forbidden zones and prohibiting the free movement of civilians.<sup>64</sup> Prior to this date, France's actions involved the practice of war without acknowledging the state of war, and hence these actions lacked any legal legitimacy. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross, France only admitted to the existence of a "non-international armed conflict" eighteen months after the beginning of the war, when the struggle had already been extended to a greater part of the territory of Algeria.<sup>65</sup> By this point, Article 3 of the Geneva Convention (which specifies the minimum provisions of the two parties in this kind of conflict) should have been applied.<sup>66</sup>

France unlawfully avoided declaring a war on its colonized territory, most likely because if Algeria were to have been regarded as a French department it would have been deemed a civil war. Instead, this unspoken war was euphemistically called (as mentioned in the introduction) either *Les opérations de maintien de l'ordre* (the enforcement of law and order) or *Les événements d'Algérie* (the Algerian events). France was therefore waging an undeclared war. Perhaps, because the war was indeed acknowledged in 1999 by the French National Assembly and formally called *La guerre d'Algérie* (the Algerian War),<sup>67</sup> the pre-1999 undeclared war can be retrospectively regarded as a French civil war.

### **Germaine Tillion's Account**

In her 1997 interview with the biographer and journalist Jean Lacouture, Germaine Tillion recounted her 1954 findings on the extreme poverty and alarming socioeconomic situation of the Shawiya population of the Aurès at the onset of the unspoken war.<sup>68</sup> When Lacouture questioned her on why she had only begun to publically report on French activities in Algeria in 1956, two years after her initial witnessing of events, she told him that she had been unaware of what had been actually occurring on the ground at the time and that she had been informed by her Algerian friends of the existence of brutal interrogation techniques only in 1955. She explained that she had been very concerned about what she called the *clochardisation* (causing someone to become homeless, or pauperization) of the Algerian population, and

therefore she had attempted to prevent this by establishing *centres sociaux* (social centers) in Algiers in 1955. She also asserted that she had commenced a committed struggle against the use of torture at the various detention camps in 1957, the year that the military assumed control of both the civil administrative and police forces.<sup>69</sup> Tillion did not mention the extrajudicial forced relocation of civilians in the Aurès, however; nor did she report on the displacement of civilians in the Aurès or refer to the *regroupement* of Shawiya families in the Aurès who had been evacuated from the bombarded region where she had stayed from December 1954 to February 1955.<sup>70</sup> Although her ethnology professor had solicited her knowledge on the Aurès and her experience ostensibly in order to protect the population (as mentioned above), this very population was in fact gravely affected before, during, and after Tillion's "special mission" in the Aurès.

In 1967, five years after the end of the Algerian War of Independence, Tillion wrote the foreword to author Michel Cornaton's *Les regroupements de la décolonisation en Algérie* (The Regroupement of Decolonization in Algeria),<sup>71</sup> in which she denounced not the establishment of the *centres de regroupement* by the French army during the war in colonized Algeria but the centers' continued persistence after Algerian independence, which was very much at odds with the main argument made by Cornaton in his book. In 1998, while a bloody civil war was taking place among Algerians in Algeria, Cornaton published the second edition of his book. Without altering the contents, he changed the title to *Les camps de regroupement de la guerre d'Algérie* (Regrouping Camps of the Algerian War),<sup>72</sup> and he inserted an additional preface titled "Trente ans après" (Thirty Years Later) in which he reported three decades later how Germaine Tillion had responded in 1967 when he had asked her to write the foreword to his first edition. She argued at that time that the book's timing was bad, both too late and too early: too late, because it was being released after the war; and too early, because the war would be inevitably passed over in silence for a period of twenty or thirty years, as she said had occurred with the Nazi concentration camps. She argued that it was "a law of history: silence lasts for one generation."<sup>73</sup> Although her argument can be debated, she and many others<sup>74</sup> who witnessed the camps in the Aurès (and elsewhere in Algeria) conformed to this postulated rule. What is surprising, however, is that this deliberate amnesia has persisted for far longer than a generation (both in France and in Algeria)<sup>75</sup>—a situation that has inevitably made the subject a taboo one, representing a volatile time bomb.

When the coauthor of *La traversée du mal* (The Crossing of Evil) posed Tillion the question whether one could think of her as having been both the eye and the pen of human consciousness in the Aurès, she replied, “I have never considered myself a witness ... a witness who would have protested in the press if I had observed any bullying of the civilian population.”<sup>76</sup> Tillion’s minimization of the extrajudicial camps and forced displacement of civilians was not unique. With the exception of a few individuals,<sup>77</sup> a remarkable number of French civilian and military representatives, serving both simultaneously with each other and successively, acted and reacted dreadfully and pitilessly.<sup>78</sup> While some chose to simply cast themselves as passive nonwitnesses, others consciously and actively framed the exceptionally oppressive policies that aimed to preserve Algeria under French rule and to secure French economic interests in Algeria, as was the case of the newly appointed Governor General of Algeria, Tillion’s colleague the ethnologist Jacques Soustelle.

### **Jacques Soustelle’s Eminent Qualifications**

At the end of January 1955, just before the downfall of his government, Mendès France nominated Jacques Soustelle Governor General of Algeria. Like Tillion, Soustelle was a former student of the Institute of Ethnology in Paris. He had originally been inspired and supported by the aforementioned Paul Rivet to investigate the pre-Columbian civilizations of Mexico, where he traveled in 1932 with his wife Georgette, who was also an ethnologist.<sup>79</sup> In 1937, he published a doctoral dissertation titled *La famille Otomi-Pame du Mexique central* (The Otomi-Pame Family of Central Mexico).<sup>80</sup> Back in Paris, he was appointed deputy director of the Museum of Man in 1938, where he met Tillion when she briefly returned from the Aurès. Again spurred on by Rivet, Soustelle joined the Comité de vigilance des intellectuels antifascistes (Vigilance Committee of Antifascist Intellectuals) and became one of its main leaders.

On the eve of the Second World War, Soustelle returned to Mexico to try and thwart what was an increasingly successful Nazi propaganda offensive. He was put in charge of intelligence and counterpropaganda, and he and the British Minister of Information created the Inter-Allied Propaganda Committee.<sup>81</sup> Opposed (like Tillion) to both the Armistice of 22 June 1940 and the Vichy regime, he attempted to join the Free French Forces (commanded by General de Gaulle first in London and then in Algiers), which had assumed the mantle of being the legitimate government of France in exile. De Gaulle solicited Soustelle to form a committee of support among French

and pro-French people in Mexico; soon after, he was offered the position of Commissioner of Propaganda in Mexico. In December 1940, the leftist Soustelle personally met General de Gaulle in London, while the Network of the Museum of Man resistance group (which Tillion would soon be involved in) was about to be established in Paris. Following a series of successes, Soustelle was requested to continue his propaganda missions—not only in Mexico but throughout Central America. In Bogotá, Colombia, he met his ethnology professor and the former Director of the Museum of Man, Paul Rivet, who informed him about the forming of the Network of the Museum of Man, of which Rivet was a member.<sup>82</sup> Soustelle partially financed these large-scale political assignments thanks to his strange wins in the Mexican lottery.<sup>83</sup>

In 1942, his intelligence undertakings and propaganda activities in Mexico and Central America converted the formerly leftist Soustelle into what French historian Roland Denis calls “an ultra of Gaullism.”<sup>84</sup> He joined the Comité national français (CNF, or French National Committee) in London and was appointed director of its information services bureau; that is, the chief of the Free French Secret Service. His role included negotiations with the British government and the supervision of anti-Vichy publications and the news press, as well as radio broadcasts on the BBC, Radio Brazzaville, and Radio Beirut.<sup>85</sup> In November 1943, Soustelle became the head of the Direction générale des services spéciaux (DGSS, or General Directorate of Special Services in Algiers), which had emerged from the fusion of the Bureau central de renseignement et d’action (BCRA, or Central Office of Intelligence and Action) with the Service de renseignement (SR, or Intelligence Service).<sup>86</sup> Together with the allies, Soustelle was responsible for creating and spreading Resistance-related activities in Free France and within the Army of Africa; he was also expected to provide services in Japanese-occupied French Indochina.<sup>87</sup>

In August 1944, Paris was liberated, at which point de Gaulle, Soustelle, and the DGSS settled in the *Métropole* (France). In October, Soustelle replaced the letters “SS” of the DGSS with “ER,” thus constituting the new appellation DGER, or Direction générale des études et recherches (General Directorate for Studies and Research). Without changing its fundamental methods, Soustelle continued to head the intelligence and secret services at the new DGER until April 1945, when he was appointed (for a short time) Commissaire de la République (Prefect) of Bordeaux. As a result, as of 1944 the Gaullist ethnologist Jacques Soustelle was considered to be “one of the

most powerful men of the soon-to-be established regime. And also one of the most mysterious.”<sup>88</sup>

From the end of the Second World War in 1945 to the beginning of the Algerian War of Independence in 1954, Soustelle served first as Minister of Information and then as Minister of Overseas France, responsible for France’s vast overseas colonial territories. Soustelle also continued to serve General de Gaulle as the first Secretary General of the general’s political party, the *Rassemblement du peuple français* (RPF, or French People’s Rally), which de Gaulle had founded in 1947 following his resignation from the presidency of the Provisional French Government and the proclamation of the Fourth Republic.

By the end of January 1955, two months after the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution and a few days before the fall of Mendès France, Mitterrand met Soustelle and proposed, on behalf of the Prime Minister, his nomination as Governor General of French Algeria. While Mitterrand revealed that the insecurity and rebellion in the Aurès were indeed worrisome, he recalled that “Algeria is France,”<sup>89</sup> and thus an urgent plan of reforms was necessary to keep Algeria under French rule. Soustelle informed General de Gaulle of the offer and then formally accepted it. Soustelle and Mitterrand then set about outlining a series of reform programs that were essentially based on the 1947 Statute of Algeria,<sup>90</sup> with Mitterrand prioritizing grand plans for voting rights, employment, and education for Algerians, coupled with an expansion of infrastructure, the creation of public institutions in rural areas, and the integration of Algeria’s police forces into those of the *Métropole*.<sup>91</sup>

Upon his arrival in French Algeria in February 1955, Soustelle undertook a strategic fact-finding trip to the Aurès to personally inspect the situation on the ground. Undoubtedly, his dual background in ethnology and propaganda led him to seek direct contact (with the assistance of an interpreter) with the Shawiya population. The conclusions that he quickly drew were that terrorism was already deeply rooted in the region, that potential informers would not dare to collaborate, and that an efficient intelligence system should therefore be installed immediately.<sup>92</sup> He also realized that the protracted underadministration of the region, the alarming misery of the colonized population, and the insufficiency and inadequacy of the French military forces for the mountainous terrain—forces that he felt to be inappropriately modern and sophisticated for the geographical circumstances, which demanded more rugged armed units—made the revolt far more serious than the government of France appreciated. For Soustelle, this situation was a result of the accumulated French errors of the past, such as the suppression

of the Bureaux arabes (Arab Bureaus) and the cessation of the recruitment of remunerated administrators to the region.<sup>93</sup>

During this initial encounter with the Aurès and (as Soustelle put it) its “non-Arab populations, who remained attached to the most archaic customs,”<sup>94</sup> he would appear to have witnessed the existence of the first extrajudicial French camps of the Algerian War of Independence. While describing his initial impressions and observations on the Aurès, he reported that “some villages, such as Ichmoul and particularly Yabous, were depopulated, and some inhabitants had gone to the mountains, but many had been evacuated to Arris and Touffana, where they lived under harsh conditions despite the emergency food and health assistance organized by the administration.”<sup>95</sup>

Despite his own remarks on the clearance of hamlets and the evacuation of the Algerian population, in his first speech in Algiers on 23 February 1955, shortly after his visit to the Aurès, Soustelle advocated that France had made its choice to stay, whatever happened in Algeria, and that this choice was now called *intégration* (integration).<sup>96</sup> In contrast to the French colonial doctrines of assimilation and association, Soustelle’s integration considered Algeria to be a French province. This integration policy included several elements: a) the recognition of Algeria’s original physiognomy and particular personality, in terms of culture, language, and religion; b) the total fusion of its economy, industry, and currency into that of the *Métropole*; and c) the absolute political equality of rights and duties.<sup>97</sup> This “choice,” although still colonial, appears to have been too drastic for many French military officers and civil servants, who strongly believed in the French colonial *mission civilisatrice* (civilizing mission) in Africa—a system that did not acknowledge non-French values but rather imposed French customs on the colonized population. In addition, it is widely accepted that “the majority of the ‘pieds-noirs’ [black feet] were quite attached to Vichy conservatism.”<sup>98</sup> As a result, Soustelle enjoyed little encouragement in his integration endeavors.

Parallel to his political program, Soustelle counted on two key figures for assistance: Commander Vincent Monteil, Chief of the Military Cabinet and a scholar of Islam (who would resign in June 1955 in protest over the use of torture by the police in Algeria),<sup>99</sup> and Tillion, who had just returned to Algiers from the Aurès in February 1955. Immediately after her return, Tillion demanded to meet Soustelle—the former deputy director of the Museum of Man and now Governor General of Algeria—to recount her ethnographic experiences in the Aurès and to offer the ostensible expertise she had gained

there. Soustelle duly met Tillion; the same day she was offered a position on his cabinet, which she accepted.<sup>100</sup>

### **The Law of the State of Emergency**

Despite the downfall of Mendès France, the newly formed government of the Radical Edgar Faure, established on 23 February 1955, did not replace Soustelle and the recently assigned members of his cabinet (now including Tillion) in Algeria under French colonial rule. Instead, the new leadership created a legal status that from then on was constantly adapted and upgraded throughout the course of the Algerian War of Independence. On 3 April 1955, the French National Assembly and the Council of the French Republic approved law no. 55-385, which permitted an *état d'urgence* to be declared.<sup>101</sup> Under the law, a state of emergency could be decreed in all or parts of the metropolitan territory of France, French Algeria, or any other overseas French departments in cases of imminent danger resulting from serious breaches of public order or any events that by their very nature and severity heralded a public calamity.<sup>102</sup> The law treated the territory of France and colonized Algeria alike; the same legislation was applicable both in colonial Algeria and in France. The territories on which a state of emergency could be imposed simply needed to be designated by an official decree signed by the Council of Ministers after consulting a report on the specific situation written by the Minister of the Interior.

The first territories to be placed under a state of emergency were located neither in metropolitan France nor in a French colony or protectorate but in French colonial Algeria. On 6 April 1955, a state of emergency was imposed on the arrondissements of Batna (the Aurès) and Tizi-Ouzou, as well as the municipality of Tebessa, under decree no. 55-386.<sup>103</sup> The law itself was promptly followed by a number of augmentations. On 23 April 1955, in decree no. 55-440 the Ministry of Justice listed all the potential crimes and offenses that compulsorily fell within the law of the state of emergency. On 10 May, decree no. 55-493 stipulated the composition of the competent members of the consultative and territorial commissions authorized to consider the withdrawal of specific indictments.<sup>104</sup> On 19 May, the number of areas placed under a state of emergency on 6 April was extended by decree no. 55-544 to include the Department of Constantine and the municipalities of Marina, Sebdou, Biskra, and El Oued.<sup>105</sup> On 7 August 1955, law no. 55-1080 extended the state of emergency by a further six months and regulated military jurisdiction in French Algeria.<sup>106</sup>



During the course of August 1955, three additional laws were signed in Paris. First, decree no. 55-1109 of 18 August established special financial compensation to military officers who served (according to the text of the bill) in certain territories of French North Africa where the state of emergency had been declared.<sup>107</sup> A second decree, no. 55-1120 of 20 August, founded a *tribunal de cassation* (court of appeals) for the French armed forces serving in the administrative districts under a state of emergency in French colonial Algeria.<sup>108</sup> Finally, the state of emergency was extended and enforced across the entire territory of Algeria on 28 August by decree no. 55-1147.<sup>109</sup> Therefore, what had originally been purported to be an exceptional and extraordinary situation was rapidly transformed into a generalized rule. Moreover, in addition to colonial civil rulership, French Algeria became the domain of the French army, which having just lost the Indochina War was determined to use any means necessary not to be defeated in the unspoken war in Algeria.

Article 5 of the state of emergency law of 3 April 1955 empowered the prefects of the affected departments to:

- 1) Prohibit the movement of people or vehicles in certain places and at specific times that will be set by decree; 2) to institute, by decree, the zones of protection or security in which the residence of persons will be regulated; and 3) to prohibit the sojourn, in part or the entirety of the department, of any persons who seek to hinder in any way whatsoever the actions of the public authorities.<sup>110</sup>

Article 6, meanwhile, authorized the Minister of the Interior (and in French Algeria the Governor General, Jacques Soustelle at the time) to impose sentences of *assignation à résidence* (house arrest) on anyone residing in a defined territory or locality in which a state of emergency had been declared whose activity might threaten public security and order. Article 6 also stated, however, that the administrative authority was obliged to take all necessary measures to ensure the subsistence of the persons subjected to house arrest, including their families; it also specified that “under no circumstances will the home confinement result in the creation of camps in which the persons referred to in the preceding paragraph would be under detention.”<sup>111</sup>

Whereas the Fourth Republic assigned itself a lawful form regulating the residence and movement of civilians and controlling their activities (and for arresting certain persons), in the territories where a state of emergency had been declared the creation and construction of detention camps was unquestionably banned. Sylvie Thénault, historian and author of *Violence*



*ordinaire dans l'Algérie coloniale: camps, internements, assignations à résidence* (Ordinary Violence in Colonial Algeria: Camps, Internments, and House Arrests), pointed out in 2012 that this categorical ban on camps derived from two essential facts. The first was that certain elected members of the French Assembly had themselves been victims of similar legislation by the Vichy regime in France during the Second World War. And second was a renewed series of polemics provoked by the comparison between Nazi concentration camps and the gulags in the Soviet Union, including an article in the right-wing daily *Le Figaro*, written by a former deportee and founder of the aforementioned CICRC.<sup>112</sup>

With the existence of Article 5 of the law of the state of emergency, the prefects of the French departments in Algeria were authorized to decree the demarcation of two opposite types of zones: zones of security, in which every single movement was administered and controlled; and zones of insecurity, which later would be termed *zones interdites* (forbidden zones), in which not a single movement was authorized or tolerated. In addition, even without a decree the circulation of certain persons in the zones of security could likewise be prohibited. In contrast, Article 6 permitted the Minister of the Interior and the Governor General of Algeria to place certain persons under house arrest, although, again, they were not allowed to detain them in camps. Article 13 even legislated punishments for violations of the provisions of Articles 5 and 6 with imprisonment of eight days to two months and/or a fine of 5,000 to 200,000 old French francs. Contrary to what these articles would lead one to believe, however, both detention and regrouping camps proliferated all over French colonial Algeria, multiplying until the end of the Algerian Revolution due to the series of military operations that occurred under the pretext of pacification.

Although detention camps were explicitly outlawed, the enforcement of the law of the state of emergency in the territory of Algeria resulted in the creation of an alarming number of different kinds of detention camps, all of them termed “centers.” The Algerian anticolonial fighters, or revolutionaries, who were subjected to house arrest—whom the authorities referred to as rebels and who were distinct from the relocated populations—were forcibly transferred to one of the various *centres de détention administrative* (administrative detention centers). Their appellations varied according to their military functions: *centre d'hébergement* (accommodation center), *centre de rassemblement* (rallying center), *centre de tri et de transit* (sorting and transit center), *centre d'interrogatoire* (interrogation center), *centre d'orientation* (orientation center), *centre d'éducation* (education center), and

*centre de rééducation* (rehabilitation center).<sup>113</sup> In most of these camps, the military *action psychologique* program of brainwashing was systematically applied; in others, cruel methods of torture and execution were extensively practiced. The number of detainees reached its peak in April 1959, with eleven thousand people held in the accommodation centers alone.<sup>114</sup>

In contrast to the detention centers, people not placed under house arrest—in other words, non-rebels: potential suspects and members of the population who happened to live in the zones of insecurity (and who later were called the “regrouped”) and were forced to abandon the forbidden zones—were evacuated into another type of militarily controlled camps: the *centres de regroupement*.

- 1 Rocard, *Rapport*, 13.
- 2 Ibid., 9.
- 3 Archives du Service historique de l'armée de terre (hereafter SHAT), SHAT 1 H 2485 D 2, Newspaper clippings, 1959.
- 4 SHAT 1 H 2030. J. Florentin, Bataillon's Chief of General Inspection of the Population, Regroupement: les regroupements des populations en Algérie, Algiers, 11 December 1960, p. 13.
- 5 Bourdieu and Sayad, *Le déracinement*, 13.
- 6 Cornaton, *Les camps de regroupement*, 122–23.
- 7 Ibid., 121.
- 8 See Golsan, *The Papon Affair*.
- 9 Interview with Michel Cornaton on 18 May 2013.
- 10 Cited in Ageron, “Une dimension de la guerre d'Algérie,” 236.
- 11 “Regroupement, Regrouper,” *Le nouveau Petit Robert*, 2143.
- 12 “Concentration,” *ibid.*, 482.
- 13 Cornaton, *Les camps de regroupement*, 60–61.
- 14 Harbi, *Les archives de la révolution algérienne*, 102. The manifesto was issued on 31 October 1954, the day before the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution.
- 15 In 1848, the Second Republic incorporated Algeria into France (departmentalization) as the three departments of Algiers, Oran, and Constantine. A colonial policy to populate Algeria began to take shape.
- 16 Decree no. 56-641 of 28 June 1956, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, 3 July 1956, pp. 6143–45, [https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo\\_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000687488&pageCourante=06143](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000687488&pageCourante=06143) (accessed on 2 September 2014). Lacoste was initially Resident Minister in Algeria from 9 February 1956 to 13 June 1957 and then Minister of Algeria from 13 June 1957 to 14 May 1958.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 See for example Jauffret and Vaisse, *Militaires et guérillas*; Villatoux, *La défense en surface*; Voisin, *Algérie 1956–1962*.
- 19 In 1959, the *zones interdites* became *zones de contrôle militaire renforcé*. See Kessel, *Guerre d'Algérie*, 234–35.
- 20 Villatoux, *Guerre et action psychologique*.
- 21 See for example Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies*, 164; Stora, *Algeria, 1830–2000*, 46; Feraoun, *Journal, 1955–1962*, xx–xxi.
- 22 Another consequence of the forbidden zones was the internal migration of the Algerian populations; i.e., those who were able to escape from the atrocities of the war in rural areas

- and managed to reach urban areas such as Algiers and Oran. As a result, the number of the *bidonvilles* (slums) tremendously increased during the Algerian War of Independence (chapter 6).
- 23 Cornaton, *Les camps de regroupement*, 60–63.
  - 24 André Morice served as Minister of National Defense from June to November 1957 in the government of Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury.
  - 25 Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, 230.
  - 26 After his experience in Algeria, Paul Delouvrier was appointed General Delegate of the Metropolitan Region of Paris from 1961 to 1969, and then Prefect and Deputy Director of the *aménagement du territoire* (territorial development) from 1966 to 1969. Delouvrier is considered to be the father of the *villes nouvelles* (new towns) in France (chapter 8).
  - 27 SHAT 1 H 2030 D 1. Paul Delouvrier, Directive no. 3.444 CC, Regroupement de Populations, 24 April 1959.
  - 28 *Ibid.*, pp. 2–3.
  - 29 Villatoux, *La défense en surface*, 41–47.
  - 30 On the Agroville Program and the Strategic Hamlet Program, see for example Zasloff, “Rural Resettlement”; Leahy and U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, *Why Did the Strategic Hamlet Program Fail?*
  - 31 Trinquier, *La Guerre Moderne*, 26. The term “modern warfare” will be discussed in chapter 2.
  - 32 François Mitterrand, then Minister of the Interior, used this term in his speech during his official visit to the Aurès in November 1954, a few days after the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution. See the transcript of his speech under <http://fresques.ina.fr/independances/impression/fiche-media/Indepe00211/allocation-de-monsieur-mitterrand-et-interview-du-caid-de-m-chouneche-1.html> (accessed on 1 October 2014).
  - 33 As part the budget of the first phase of the construction of the *centre de regroupement*, both watchtowers and barbed wire are often included. See SHAT 1 H 4394. ZEA and 27th DIA, Etat-Major, Fifth Bureau, Notes à l’attention des Commandants de Secteur, Regroupement de populations, Tizi Ouzou, 17 June 1959, p. 4. In addition, published aerial photographs visibly show the watchtowers and barbed wire. See for example de Planhol, *Nouveaux Villages Algérois*, 101.
  - 34 On the history of the Shawiya, or Chaoui people, see for example Khaldoun, *Histoire des Berbères*, originally published in Arabic in the fourteenth century (1375–1379); Tillion, *Il était une fois l’ethnographie*.
  - 35 SHAT 1H 2872 D2. Etudes sur l’économie, la démographie et la géographie des Aurès (1948–59): présentation des Aurès, 1957 [date of the statistics].
  - 36 *Ibid.*
  - 37 On the Museum of Man, see for example Conklin, “Civil Society, Science, and Empire”; Jolly, “Marcel Griaule, ethnologue.” On the 1937 Universal Exposition, called the Exposition internationale des arts et techniques dans la vie moderne (International Exhibition of Arts and Techniques in Modern Life), see for example Lemoine, *Paris 1937*.
  - 38 This includes Thérèse Rivière, who traveled to the Aurès with Germaine Tillion, and her brother Georges-Henri Rivière, who served as Deputy Director of the Museum of Man, and then as Director of the Musée des Arts et des Traditions Populaires, which also opened in 1937.
  - 39 During the Algerian War of Independence, the Socialist François Mitterrand served as the Minister of the Interior from June 1954 to February 1955 and then as Minister of Justice from February 1956 to June 1957. In 1958, he opposed General de Gaulle’s return to power. Mitterrand served as President of France from 1981 to 1995.
  - 40 On Tillion’s mission, see Lacouture, *Le témoignage*, 232–42.
  - 41 *Ibid.*, 234.
  - 42 On the housing studies that resulted from Rivière’s expedition, see for example Çelic, *Urban Forms*, 88–97.

- 43 Association Germaine Tillion, see <http://www.germaine-tillion.org/a-la-rencontre-de-germaine-tillion/chronologie/> (accessed on 5 September 2014).
- 44 Deschamps, "Nécrologie," 291.
- 45 Cited in Colonna, *Aurès/Algérie 1935–1936*, 130.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 Sacriste, *Des ethnologues dans la guerre d'indépendance algérienne*, 35–72. While writing this manuscript, Fabien Sacriste was in the course of writing his doctoral dissertation, entitled *Les camps de "regroupement": une histoire de l'État colonial et de la société rurale pendant la guerre d'indépendance algérienne (1954–1962)* under the supervision of Jacques Cantier and Guy Pervillé.
- 48 During their mission in the Aurès, Thérèse Rivière brought 857 objects and Germaine Tillion 130 from Algeria to France. See Fonds d'archives privées Thérèse Rivière (1901–1970) at the Archives of the Musée du quai Branly in Paris.
- 49 Musée du quai Branly, Archives privées: fonds Thérèse Rivière – Musée de l'Homme (Paris), QUAIBR75\_00000119. Musée de l'Homme, Catalogue des collections de l'Aurès, 1943.
- 50 For a complete chronology of the biography of Germaine Tillion, see <http://www.germaine-tillion.org/a-la-rencontre-de-germaine-tillion/chronologie/>.
- 51 Lacouture, *Le témoignage*, 235.
- 52 Jacques Chevallier served as Secretary of State for War from June 1954 to January 1955 and as Mayor of Algiers from May 1953 to May 1958. He is also known for his campaign against Algiers's *bidonville* and for the housing projects tendered to French architect Fernand Pouillon and many others.
- 53 Bouchène et al., *Histoire de l'Algérie*, 512–13.
- 54 Speech of Pierre Mendès France, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, at the National Assembly on 12 November 1954, see [http://genepi.blog.lemonde.fr/files/2012/11/1.12\\_Algerie\\_-\\_discours-Mendes-France\\_nov.1954.pdf](http://genepi.blog.lemonde.fr/files/2012/11/1.12_Algerie_-_discours-Mendes-France_nov.1954.pdf) (accessed on 18 September 2014).
- 55 Speech of François Mitterrand, Minister of the Interior, at the National Assembly on 12 November 1954, see *ibid.*
- 56 Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, 102–3.
- 57 Bouchène et al., *Histoire de l'Algérie*, 480. For the very first days of the Algerian War, see for example Courrière, *La guerre d'Algérie (1954–1957)*, 259–317; Jeanson and Jeanson, *L'Algérie hors la loi*, 181–214.
- 58 Cited in Bouchène et al., *Histoire de l'Algérie*, 513.
- 59 Mitterrand's official speech during his visit to Algeria, 1 December 1954, Office National de Radiodiffusion Télévision Française, <http://www.ina.fr/video/I04167343> (accessed on 22 September 2014).
- 60 Ibid.
- 61 Jeanson and Jeanson, *L'Algérie hors la loi*, 190.
- 62 Bouchène et al., *Histoire de l'Algérie*, 512–13.
- 63 Article 3, "Conflicts Not of an International Character," *Convention (IV) Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War*, Geneva, 12 August 1949, see <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Treaty.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=AE2D398352C5B028C12563CD002D6B5C> (accessed on 24 September 2014).
- 64 Klose, *Human Rights*, 103.
- 65 Perret and Bugnion, *De Budapest à Saigon*, 187.
- 66 Article 3, "Conflicts not of an International Character."
- 67 Law no. 99-882 of 18 October 1999, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, no. 244 (20 October 1999), p. 15647, [https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo\\_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000578132&oldAction=rechExpTexteJorf](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000578132&oldAction=rechExpTexteJorf) (accessed on 24 September 2014).
- 68 Tillion and Lacouture, *La Traversée du mal*, 85–125.
- 69 Ibid. On the *clochardisation*, see Germaine Tillion, *L'Algérie en 1957*.
- 70 In her writings, biographies, radio, television, and published interviews, Tillion did not mention the reasons of her long silence on the existence of the camps. Instead, she spoke about her fight against the use of torture in Algeria during the War of Independence.

- 71 Cornaton, *Les camps de regroupement*, 7–10.
- 72 When I asked Michel Cornaton about the reasons why he changed the title, he replied that it had taken him so many years to admit that the so-called *centres de regroupements* were the French camps of the Algerian War of Independence. Interview with Michel Cornaton on 18 May 2013.
- 73 Cornaton, *Les camps de regroupement*, I.
- 74 These individuals include the famous French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, whose accounts during the Algerian War of Independence deserve an entire book in themselves.
- 75 Cornaton, *Les camps de regroupement*, i–xiv.
- 76 Tillion and Lacouture, *La Traversée du mal*, 93.
- 77 A small number of authors alerted the public about the atrocities of the war and dared to denounce torture during the very first months of the war. See for instance Claude Bourdet, “Votre Gestapo d’Algérie,” *France-Observateur*, 13 January 1955; François Mauriac, “La Question,” *L’Express*, 15 January 1955.
- 78 Such as the ethnologist Jean Servier, who manipulated historical tribal conflicts in the Aurès and armed one tribe in order to fight against the other. These armed Algerians, called *Harki*, collaborated with the French army. See for example Boulhaïs, *Des harkis berbères*; Sacriste, *Des ethnologues dans la guerre d’indépendance algérienne*, 215–30.
- 79 Ullmann, *Jacques Soustelle*, 17–23.
- 80 Soustelle, *La famille Otomo-Pame*.
- 81 Niblo, *Mexico in the 1940s*, 315.
- 82 Roland, “Jacques Soustelle,” 147; Ullmann, *Jacques Soustelle*, 67.
- 83 Ullmann, *Jacques Soustelle, le mal aimé*, 60–70.
- 84 Roland, “Jacques Soustelle,” 149.
- 85 Soustelle, *Vingt-huit ans de Gaullisme*, 22–23.
- 86 *Ibid.*, 25.
- 87 Faure, “Bref historique,” 70–81.
- 88 Ullmann, *Jacques Soustelle*, 129. In 1960, Jacques Soustelle supported the French paramilitary Organisation armée secrète (OAS, or the Secret Army Organization, chapter 9) to illegally fight Algerian independence; in other words, against de Gaulle’s politics in Algeria. By this point Soustelle had become an anti-Gaullist.
- 89 *Ibid.*, 188.
- 90 *Ibid.*, 185–88.
- 91 Evans, *Algeria*, 131.
- 92 Soustelle, *Aimée et souffrante Algérie*, 24.
- 93 *Ibid.*, 26. Soustelle restored the Bureaux arabes by creating what he called the Sections administratives spécialisées (SAS, or Specialized Administrative Sections) in 1955, which were then used for systematic psychological actions against the civilian population. The SAS will be discussed in chapter 2. On the Bureaux arabes, see for example Yacono, *Les bureaux arabes*.
- 94 Soustelle, *Aimée et souffrante Algérie*, 26–27. The term “archaic” had been used in the catalogue of the 1943 Museum of Man exhibition *L’Aurès*, as well as by Soustelle himself in 1956.
- 95 *Ibid.*, 24.
- 96 Jeanson and Jeanson, *L’Algérie hors la loi*, 193.
- 97 Soustelle, *L’espérance Trahie*, 25.
- 98 Lacouture, *Le témoignage*, 239. The term *pièdes-noirs* (black feet) refers to French, European, and Jewish populations who settled in colonized French Algeria and then “immigrated” to France, or rather “were repatriated” (to use the vocabulary of the French authorities) after Algeria was granted its independence in 1962.
- 99 Evans, *Algeria*, 139.
- 100 Lacouture, *Le témoignage*, 240–41.
- 101 The state of emergency is not to be mistaken for a state of siege; in other words, a state of war. The French government considered Algeria to be a French department, and therefore any reference to a state of war was avoided.

- 102 Law no. 55-385 of 3 April 1955, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, no. 0085 (7 April 1955), p. 3479, <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?dateTexte=&categorieLien=id&cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000695350&fastPos=1&fastReqId=693754904&oldAction=rechExpTexteJorf> (accessed on 28 September 2014). The law instituted the state of emergency and declared its application in French Algerian Departments for a period of six months. The law stated that in case of the dissolution of the government, the state of emergency was no longer in force.
- 103 Decree no. 55-386 of 6 April 1955, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, 7 April 1955, pp. 3481–82, [https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo\\_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000686047](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000686047) (accessed on 30 September 2014).
- 104 Decree no. 55-493 of 10 May 1955, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, 11 May 1955, p. 4651, [https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo\\_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000507758](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000507758) (accessed on 30 September 2014).
- 105 Decree no. 55-544 of 19 May 1955, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, 20 May 1955, p. 5005, [https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo\\_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000869184](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000869184) (accessed on 30 September 2014).
- 106 Law no. 55-1080 of 7 August 1955, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, 14 August 1955, pp. 8170–71, [https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo\\_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000879821](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000879821) (accessed on 30 September 2014).
- 107 Decree no. 55-1109 of 18 August 1955, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, 19 August 1955, p. 8334, [https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo\\_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000300491](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000300491) (accessed on 30 September 2014).
- 108 Decree no. 55-1120 of 20 August 1955, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, 21 August 1955, p. 8411, [https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo\\_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000300714](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000300714) (accessed on 30 September 2014).
- 109 Decree no. 55-1147 of 28 August 1955, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, 30 August 1955, p. 8640, [https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo\\_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000299713](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000299713) (accessed on 30 September 2014).
- 110 Law no. 55-385 of 3 April 1955.
- 111 Article 6, Law no. 55-385 of 3 April 1955. Other articles of this law authorized the strict control and the censorship of the media, publications, cinemas, and theaters (chapter 2).
- 112 Thénault, *Violence ordinaire*, 276.
- 113 SHAT 1 H 2573 D 1. Centres d'hébergement, de rassemblement, de regroupement, de triage et transit, d'éducation et de rééducation; action psychologique dans ces centres et rapports d'inspection. On the differences between some of the mentioned camps, see Thénault, *Violence ordinaire*, 274–301.
- 114 *Ibid.*, 284.

## 2. Pacification or Counterrevolution?

On 6 April 1955, the law on the state of emergency of three days earlier was promptly enforced across the vastness of the Aurès Mountains. On 12 April, the military cabinet of the Governor General of Algeria, Jacques Soustelle, distributed a memo titled “La pacification de l’Aurès” (The Pacification of the Aurès) specifying that “the recovery of the situation in the areas where the state of emergency is enforced will be achieved by means of the policy of pacification.”<sup>1</sup> The term *pacification* (literally “peacemaking,” although the reality entails something else entirely) was not a new term in the glossary of the French army. Pacification had been employed in the nineteenth century during the long years of the wars of the French colonization of Algeria, as well as in other territories in Africa and Southeast Asia (such as Tonkin and Madagascar); but the French monarchy had also used the same word during the sixteenth century, for instance during the European wars of religion.<sup>2</sup> Although the expression itself remained largely unchanged, the policies, methods, and technologies of pacification were considerably reorganized and had been gradually upgraded to match the conditions of the twentieth century, especially following the end of the Second World War and the beginning of the Cold War.

During the Algerian War of Independence, the Bureau psychologique (Psychological Bureau) of the Joint High Command released a military *Guide pratique de pacification* (Practical Guidelines for Pacification) addressed to the French commanders of companies, batteries, squadrons, and subdistricts in French colonial Algeria, and designed to instruct the officers under their authority. The text on the different methods used to forge the instruments of pacification reported that “it means making clear to every soldier that he must provide, in addition to a purely military action, a psychological action that is no less important and that is exerted by human contacts.”<sup>3</sup> This recommendation meant that pacification encompassed targeting the Algerian population for both military and sociopsychological actions, and that every soldier should become, according to the guidelines, “an agent of pacification.”

Another military document drawn up in 1957, a meticulous study entitled *Etude sur les problèmes et les méthodes de pacification en Algérie* (A Survey on the Problems and Methods of Pacification in Algeria), asserted that pacification should more energetically promote three activities: direct contact with the population, the initiation of construction sites, and the spread of



education.<sup>4</sup> The military survey (which, claimed to be a self-critical analysis aimed at perfecting the methods of French pacification in colonial Algeria) was based on an in-depth questionnaire filled out by French soldiers who were serving in French colonial Algeria and who had directly experienced both the shortcomings and strengths of the methods of pacification.

However, these methods of pacification had in fact taken on perverse forms of civil-military operations, influenced by a number of French officers, who having already served in two previous wars (the Second World War of 1939 to 1945 and the First Indochina War of 1946 to 1954) were now serving in a third, namely the Algerian War of Independence. These officers were notorious theorists and advocates of the doctrine of the *Guerre moderne*—also known as the *Guerre révolutionnaire* (revolutionary warfare). Its counterpart, the *Guerre contre-révolutionnaire* (counterrevolutionary warfare, known today as counterinsurgency) was France's war of pacification waged in Algeria, which would later become known as the “dirty war.”<sup>5</sup> Among the leading theorists and practitioners of counterrevolutionary operations in colonial Algeria, some of whom were also well known for their roles in the brutal Battle of Algiers, were Colonels Marcel Bigeard, David Galula, Yves Godard, Charles Lacheroy, and Roger Trinquier, and Generals Paul Aussaresses, Jacques Massu, and Raoul Salan. Salan was France's most decorated soldier at the time, and in February 1961 he founded the paramilitary extremist group the Organisation de l'armée secrète (OAS, or Secret Army Organization), which violently opposed Algerian independence. The French journalist Marie-Monique Robin masterfully interviewed those officers who were still alive in 2003. The interviews formed the basis for her book *Les escadrons de la mort: l'école française* (The Death Squads: The French School), also used in her documentary film with the same title. The film and book detail both the methods of war applied by the protagonists and the export of these methods to the Americas, notably to Argentina, Chile, and the United States of America.<sup>6</sup>

On 2 July 1957, Colonel Lacheroy, head of the Services de l'information et de l'action psychologique (Services of Psychological Action and Intelligence) at the French Ministry of National Defense, delivered a lecture to an audience of two thousand officers in the auditorium of the Sorbonne in Paris entitled “La guerre révolutionnaire et l'arme psychologique” (Revolutionary Warfare and Psychological Weaponry). The colonel (who was later sent to Constantine and then Algiers) drew particular attention to the radically distinct character of this type of warfare, which consisted of “total warfare.” He argued that it was:



... total, because not only does it mobilize in this effort all of the industrial, commercial, and agricultural powers of a country, but it also takes up in the war effort all women and children and elderly men, all who think, all who live, all who breathe, with all their forces of love, all their forces of enthusiasm, all their forces of hate, and it throws them into war. This is the new reality. Total war, because it takes the souls as well as the bodies and it yields them to the obedience of the war effort.<sup>7</sup>

Following the same line of thought, Colonel Trinquier, who himself both recommended and encouraged the use of torture, claimed in his 1961 book *La Guerre moderne* that

... the *sine qua non* of victory in *modern warfare* is the unconditional support of a population. According to Mao Tse-tung, it is as essential to the combatant as water to the fish. Such support may be spontaneous, although that is quite rare and probably a temporary condition. If it doesn't exist, it must be secured by every possible means, the most effective of which is *terrorism*.<sup>8</sup>

Colonel Galula is well known to English-speaking military strategists and readers, since he published two manuals in English (*Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* in 1964 and *Pacification in Algeria, 1956–1958* in 1963) as a research associate at Harvard University's Center for International Affairs from 1962 to 1967. He noted that "pacification would be achieved if we could gradually compromise the population in the eyes of the rebels."<sup>9</sup> Colonel Galula's 1964 monograph on the theory and practice of counterrevolutionary warfare influenced US military thinking and practice, including as late as 2006 in the Department of the US Army's field manual FM 3-24, entitled *Counterinsurgency*, which was addressed to US soldiers fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. As noted in its foreword, the manual was meant to fill a doctrinal gap of twenty years.<sup>10</sup> Colonel Galula's thinking was frequently cited in the manual's second chapter, "Unity of Effort: Integrating Civilian and Military Activities," notably his argument that in this type of war "the soldier must be prepared to become ... a social worker, a civil engineer, a schoolteacher, a nurse, a boy scout. But only for as long as he cannot be replaced, for it is better to entrust civilian tasks to civilians."<sup>11</sup> In colonial Algeria, the soldier was not in fact replaced, as will be discussed shortly.

### Counterrevolutionary Operations in the Aurès

In an attempt to wage a counterrevolutionary war in the Aurès, the French army conceived a set of systematic practices. As described in the 1955 military instruction “La pacification de l’Aurès,” these undertakings were of a profoundly varying character. They included the organization of an extensive network of administrators and military officers who had previously operated in the *Affaires indigènes* (AI, or Indigenous Affairs) in the French Protectorate of Morocco; the application of significantly in-depth political and administrative actions; and the capture and destruction of “rebel” groups, or the prevention of them doing harm. This last military directive expressed the specific characteristics of pacification in three distinct, yet interrelated, operations:

- 1) *Action humaine*: the use of population-based actions, by becoming acquainted with the people, supervising them, regaining their confidence, and obtaining their profound support;
- 2) *Action constructive*: the use of constructive actions that would consist of building new connecting roads, infrastructure, and additional administrative centers and military posts, and organizing better living conditions in the Aurès;
- 3) *Action de protection*: the use of protective actions that were meant to create a permanent environment of insecurity for the “rebels” by a) the use of intelligence, human contacts, and ambush; b) the presence and action of military forces and police controls based on intelligence and political actions; c) the progressive arming of the population in order to enable its self-defense; d) the distancing of “suspects”; and e) the use of traditional armed fighting against the “rebels.”<sup>12</sup>

The term “rebels” in one sense alluded to revolutionaries—fighters for the liberation of the colonized population and territory; armed or unarmed individuals claiming Algeria’s independence from France; and violent or nonviolent anticolonial militants. The word “suspects,” by contrast, indicated (as deliberately defined in the military directive) those people “who provide any personal, voluntary, and effective assistance to the rebels.”<sup>13</sup> To this end, any person—a family member, neighbor, friend, colleague, or anyone else—who dared to feed, treat, dress, lodge, hide, or even speak with a revolutionary was automatically considered a suspect and would immediately be “distanced” from the rest of the population.

The same military directive, however, stated that during the *éloignement* (distancing) of suspects, “no collective sanctions of a deportation character are acceptable.”<sup>14</sup> However, since there was no apparent regulation to distinguish suspects from nonsuspects, the entire Algerian population became a potential object of suspicion—an enemy who needed to be converted into an unconditional nonsuspect. According to Colonel Trinquier, “since it is the population that is at stake, the struggle will assume two aspects: political—direct action on the population; and military—the struggle against the armed forces of the aggressor.”<sup>15</sup> This was a political aspect, imposed upon the civilian population and policed and monitored by the army. The same thinking was expressed in a further military directive of December 1959 entitled “Instructions pour la pacification en Algérie” (Instructions for Pacification in Algeria), five years after the outbreak of the war and one and a half years after the return of General de Gaulle to power. The directive argued that “the population is the challenge of the adversary as well as of the law-enforcement officials. [The population] is the key to the problem, because success will belong to those who engage the population in their actions.”<sup>16</sup>

In the Aurès, the original role of the French civil authorities was to contribute to the pacification missions of their military counterparts and to elaborate on general or particular political aspects of those missions. This situation changed when Governor General Soustelle decided on a drastic course of action in April 1955. With the intention of incorporating military operations into civil programs, Soustelle called for “the creation of one single command for the entirety of South Constantine,”<sup>17</sup> where the state of emergency was being enforced. Soustelle’s categorical demand was immediately endorsed. The exceptional powers granted under the state of emergency were thus to be exercised not by a civilian administrator, as would be usual in a state of nonwar, but rather by a military officer. Similarly to the state of emergency that was first enforced in the Aurès and later throughout the entirety of Algeria, this tight civil-military cooperation, headed by a military officer, was, according to Soustelle, first “tested in the Aurès” and then gradually applied across large portions of Algeria from 1956 to 1958 under the banner of the *Etat-Major mixte* (Civil-Military General Staff).<sup>18</sup> The system reached its peak in May 1958, with General Salan serving as commander of both the civil and military forces, as Delegate General of the Government in Algeria, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces in Algeria, and as Commander of the Tenth Military Region (i.e., Algeria under French colonial rule).

By the end of April 1955, President of the Council of Ministers Edgar Faure had signed an interministerial agreement in which he appointed General Gaston Parlange as Chief of the Commandement civil et militaire des Aurès-Nementchas (CCMAN, or Civil and Military Commander-in-Chief of the Aurès-Nementchas).<sup>19</sup> Prior to his arrival in Algeria, General Parlange had been in charge of the Indigenous Affairs in the Protectorate of Morocco. Importantly, he was also trained in the colonial doctrines and methods of Marshal Louis Lyautey.<sup>20</sup> Subsequently, in August 1956, General Parlange became Prefect of Batna, and then in November 1959 the head of the Inspection générale des regroupements de population (IGRP, or General Inspection of the Regrouping of the Population), a military institution whose mandate was to inspect the progress of the *regroupement* of the civilian population being undertaken by military officers.

According to Soustelle, Parlange's previous involvement in the pacification of Morocco, his comprehensive knowledge of Berber language and society, his responsive authority, and his friendly character all made him the best candidate for the restoration of civil-military law and order in the Aurès.<sup>21</sup> His twofold mission particularly included the direct participation of both military officers and civilian administrators serving under his command in "the development of educational and social services, health-care assistance, and the launching of construction sites for public works in order to address unemployment, poverty, and underemployment."<sup>22</sup> This civil-military directive was officially endorsed in a signed covenant by Edgar Faure, Faure's Minister of the Interior, Maurice Bourguès-Maunoury,<sup>23</sup> and Faure's Minister of National Defense and Armed Forces, General Pierre Koenig.

### **The Genealogy of Pacification**

These types of socioeconomic missions, spatial commissions, and political assignments, all of them seemingly nonmilitary in nature, had already formed an integral part of Marshal Lyautey's military "colonial school" in the nineteenth century. In his first influential article, "Du rôle social de l'officier dans le service militaire universel" (On the Social Role of the Officer in the Universal Military Service), from 1891, Lyautey criticized the rigidity and inadequacy of French military education. He claimed that French military schools should provide "a fruitful conception of the modern role of the officer in order to become the educator of the entire nation."<sup>24</sup> He also argued that it was necessary to transform the deleterious facets of war into beneficial opportunities, and thereby to "display, during the course of

military service, not only violent and sterile fatigue, but also the broader field of social action.”<sup>25</sup>

Marshal Lyautey’s renown has often centered on his published letters and military colonial techniques, as well as on the spatial planning proposals and principles that he developed in Morocco together with the French architect and town planner Henri Prost during Lyautey’s mandate as the first Resident General in the newly designated Protectorate of Morocco from 1912 to 1924.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, Lyautey’s methods had in fact progressively developed prior to the French colonization of Morocco. His colonial mindset originated from his previous military experiences and was informed by influential French military officers and colonial administrators, including Marshal Joseph Simon Gallieni in French colonial Indochina and Marshal Thomas-Robert Bugeaud in French colonial Algeria.

Lyautey graduated from the *Ecole spéciale militaire* of Saint-Cyr in 1875; two years later he was promoted to lieutenant. Immediately after his promotion, he traveled to French colonial Algeria, where he spent his promotion leave and wrote his unpublished “Notes d’Algérie.” Based on a lottery draw, he was assigned to the cavalry in the Second Hussars Regiment, with which he returned to Algeria from 1880 to 1882. There he learned the Arabic language and wrote his unpublished “Lettres d’Algérie.”<sup>27</sup> His years in the French colonial departments of Algeria (the northern territory was annexed in 1848) providing him with learning about the strong Algerian resistance that the French army faced, in particular as embodied in Marshal Bugeaud’s bloody battle against El Emir Abd El Kader and his forces, which led to Bugeaud becoming Governor General of Algeria. In 1841, Bugeaud established the *Direction des affaires arabes* (Bureau of Arab Affairs),<sup>28</sup> which was directly subordinated to the military authorities. The permanent role of this office was “to ensure a lasting pacification of tribes by means of a fair and orderly administration, in order to pave the way for our colonization; to ensure our trade, through the enforcement of public security; and to ensure the protection of all legitimate interests and advances in the well-being of the indigenous population.”<sup>29</sup>

Following his first colonial experiences in French colonial Algeria, Lyautey was promoted to captain and sent first to Italy and then back to France. In 1894, at the age of forty, he was assigned to the general staff of the French troops in Indochina, where he fought alongside Colonel Gallieni in the Tonkin. When Gallieni became Governor General of Madagascar in 1897, he asked Lyautey to follow him and assigned him to important positions in the

processes of pacification and organization on the island, after which Lyautey was promoted to lieutenant colonel. In his second key essay, “Du rôle colonial de l’armée” (On the Colonial Role of the Army)—which he wrote during his sabbatical year in Paris and published in 1900—the newly promoted Colonel Lyautey discussed his brand of the art of colonial warfare and the military strategies of pacification. According to Lyautey, the preeminent means for achieving pacification—as his tutor Gallieni had claimed in 1898, now quoted in Lyautey’s article—was “to employ a combined action of power and politics.”<sup>30</sup> Lyautey followed Gallieni’s causality: “Whenever incidents of war require one of our colonial officers to act against a village or an inhabited center, he should not lose sight of its primary attention once the subjugation of the inhabitants is obtained, which is to rebuild the village, create a market, and establish a school.”<sup>31</sup>

This French colonial school of warfare—developed by Bugeaud in French colonial Algeria, refined by Gallieni in the French colony of Madagascar, transmitted by Lyautey to the French Protectorate of Morocco,<sup>32</sup> re-engineered by Soustelle in French colonial Algeria, applied by Parlange in the Aurès in 1955, extensively practiced and theorized by Trinquier and Galula (among many others), and exported to the rest of the world—promoted the assumption of a number of sociospatial practices and psychopolitical functions by the military forces. In line with this thinking, the duties of French officers in French colonial Algeria also included rebuilding a village that a defeated civilian population (France’s enemy) was destined to live in even after having destroyed the people’s original home in the first place. Therefore, in one sense the enemy in Algeria under French rule in 1954 comprised the totality of the population, while, at the same time, “modern warfare” (as coined by Trinquier) encompassed various political and psychological actions. To this end, Trinquier claimed that “the control of the masses through a tight organization, often through several parallel organizations, is the master weapon of *modern warfare*.”<sup>33</sup>

According to General Parlange, who was one of the first builders of *camps de regroupement* in Algeria during the War of Independence—or of the spaces that were supposed to replace the destroyed villages, as Lyautey claimed—the camps were refugee centers, as he for instance argued in 1960 when he was head of the aforementioned IGRP. Parlange wrote that it was in the Aurès that the revolution had begun, and it was there where it had to end; he therefore claimed that “due to a significant lessening of troops, I was led to create the first refugee center in 1955 in the mountains.”<sup>34</sup>

“Centers” were created in French colonial Algeria in defiance of the categorical ban on creating camps in the law on the state of emergency of 3 April 1955. In addition, these refugees were neither criminals (as the term was defined by the decree of 23 April 1955) nor rebels (as was mentioned in Jacques Soustelle’s military cabinet’s directive) nor Hors-La-Loi (HLL, or “outside the law”) as some in the French media at the time called the members of the Armée de libération nationale (ALN, or National Liberation Army). These refugees—that is, France’s enemy—were intrinsically potential suspects: men, women, and children who happened to live in the villages that the French authorities designated as zones of insecurity and that later became forbidden zones. These zones were systematically evacuated and their residents forcibly relocated into militarily controlled camps, the *centres de regroupement*. The French army called the civilians who were forced to live in the camps *les regroupés* (the regrouped). The IGRP argued that “the creation of the *regroupement* is the most effective means for removing the population from the influence of the rebels,” and it went on to claim that “the *regroupement* policy is one of the masterpieces of the pacification maneuver.”<sup>35</sup>

The terms *pacification*, *regroupement*, and *center* belong to what Roland Barthes—French literary theorist, linguist, and semiotician—has called *écriture cosmétique* (cosmetic writing), whose scope was not to communicate, but rather to intimidate. In the chapter titled “Grammaire africaine” (African Grammar) in his 1957 book *Mythologies*, Barthes argued that the official terminology the French representatives used during the Algerian War belonged to this semantic category, a mask that was designed to divert attention from the nature of the war and cover the real facts with a “noise” of language. According to Barthes, this grammar was both ideologically burdened and politically loaded. In this context, he defined the term “war” as follows:

War. The aim is to deny the thing. For there are two ways: either to name it as little as possible (the most common method), or to give it the meanings of its own antonym (a more devious method, which is the basis for almost all of the mystifications of bourgeois language). *War* is then used in the sense of *peace* and *pacification* in the sense of *war*.<sup>36</sup>



### The *Bâtisseurs* of the Camps

Central to the French military doctrine of pacification during the war in colonial Algeria—and thereby to the construction of the *camps de regroupement*—were the Sections administratives spécialisées (SAS, or Specialized Administrative Sections, fig. 8). These extraordinary army units were deployed in rural areas in order to carry out both military and civilian assignments. In one sense, the SAS officers' military missions entailed the gathering of intelligence, the diffusion of propagandistic information, the ensuring of law and order, and the direct control of the civilian population. By contrast, their civil functions were to provide social, economic, educational, sanitary, and medical facilities, as well as to organize and build the militarily controlled camps called the *centres de regroupement*. Similar units also subsequently served in urban areas in order to cope with the alarming numbers of *bidonvilles* (slums; literally “can-towns”) in addition to accomplishing most of the aforementioned civil-military responsibilities; these divisions were named the Sections administratives urbaines (SAU, or Urban Administrative Section, fig. 9). By the end of 1961, twenty SAUs existed in the urban neighborhoods inhabited by the Algerian population (including in the Casbah of Algiers), and more than seven hundred SASs were spread across the vastness of Algeria's countryside and the immense Sahara.<sup>37</sup>

On 22 July 1955, General Parlange reported the first results of his pacification efforts in the Aurès under the state of emergency, conveying the news that “the materiel conquest must be accompanied by the conquest of souls. ... To win the souls, it is first and foremost necessary to increase the contacts with the population. It is necessary to speak a simple, stripped language; to speak the same language.”<sup>38</sup> Following Parlange's report and the widening of the state of emergency to cover the entire territory of French colonial Algeria by the decree of 28 August 1955 after the Battle of Philippeville (today Skikda) on 20 August 1955, Soustelle founded the Service de l'action administrative et économique (SAAE, or Service of Administrative and Economic Action) on 5 September 1955. The SAAE's objectives were to promote the claims of *l'Algérie française* (French Algeria): to study, restore, and enforce efficient administrative and economic organizations of the territory and of the civilian population in the huge and remote areas of Algeria, considered to be fertile terrain for revolutionaries. Simultaneously, the SAAE elaborated “programs that will tend to promote the pacification and revitalization of certain zones and to control the execution of these programs.”<sup>39</sup>

One of these programs was the foundation on 26 September 1955 of another in a long line of French institutions, the Affaires algériennes (AA, or



Fig. 8 SAS of the French 3rd and 4th Regiment of Artillery, Region of Constantine, Algeria, April 1959  
Fig. 9 French Resident Minister of the French Government in Algeria, Robert Lacoste, visiting the SAU of Bardo, Region of Constantine, Algeria, June 1957

Algerian Affairs). The aim of the AA was to establish, organize, and coordinate the undertakings and missions of the SASs. The AA was directly attached to and commanded by the military cabinet of the Governor General of Algeria, as were the SASs and later the SAUs. As a result, SAS military officers were legally authorized by decree no. 55-1271 to assume the powers usually entrusted to “administrators of civil services in accordance with the individual decision of the Governor General of Algeria.”<sup>40</sup> To this end (and in addition to policing the everyday lives of the civilian population), SAS officers now managed the evacuation of the Algerian population and monitored the construction of the *campes de regroupement* despite their almost nonexistent technical knowledge. Officers who had been trained to wage war now found themselves managing construction sites with an almost total lack of social, economic, climatic, geologic, geographic, or architectural acquaintance with the territories or the populations they were supposed to oversee. Thus, to rectify this deficiency and to give them an intimate knowledge of the Algerian people, SAS officers received special training in administrative, legislative, geographic, economic, agricultural, religious, traditional, historical, sociological, and public-health features of the Algerian Arabic and Berber populations. In this context, Germaine Tillion delivered two lectures, titled “Structure sociale algérienne” (Algerian Social Structure) and “Le prolétariat citadin et paysan—La femme algérienne” (Urban and Rural Proletariat—The Algerian Woman);<sup>41</sup> regrettably, the transcripts of these lectures are untraceable amongst the archival governmental records.<sup>42</sup>

In an attempt to supervise a majority of the population, every SAS extended its various operations over a maximum of ten to fifteen thousand people, which was considered to correspond to the population of two to three Algerian villages. The chief of the SAS was expected (or was trained) to have the ability to speak the local language—either the Arabic or Berber languages—of the geographic area in which he was put in charge. In most of the SAS units, the team members included one to three subofficers, a secretary, an interpreter, a radio operator, one or two nurses, and often an auxiliary medical officer. All SASs possessed their own protective forces, called *Meghzen*, which comprised around thirty (and up to fifty) Algerian men who in one way or another were compelled to serve in the French army.<sup>43</sup>

In October 2005, fifty years after the establishment of the SASs, the military Centre de doctrine d'emploi des forces (CDEF, or Center of Doctrine for the Employment of the Forces) under the French Ministry of Defense released a thick study called *Les sections administratives spécialisées en Algérie: un outil pour la stabilisation* (Specialized Administrative Sections

in Algeria: An Instrument for Stabilization). The military survey was based on selected literature on the SASs and on a number of interviews with former SAS officers. It was intended to document and spread French experiences in colonial Algeria during the War of Independence, and in particular to provide guidance for the “stabilization” of local populations that French troops who were “in charge of similar assignments in Bosnia, Afghanistan, and soon in Kosovo”<sup>44</sup> would enforce. As asserted in these military guidelines, the SASs were the direct heirs of the nineteenth-century *Bureaux arabes* (Arab Bureaus) in colonial Algeria, of the twentieth-century Indigenous Affairs in Morocco, and of the greatest of the French military colonial officers, notably Bugeaud and Lyautey. The manual made no mention of the *camps de regroupement*, however, nor of the special roles that SAS officers played in the politico-military policy of the mass resettlement of the civilian population. Instead, it dedicated less than a page to the *villages de regroupement*, under the pretense that these were part of the economic activities of the SAS within the Plan de Constantine launched by General de Gaulle in October 1958.<sup>45</sup> The CDEF’s survey also praised (on the same page) the SAS officers’ construction work on their defensive bastions, called *bordj*<sup>46</sup> (which the populations were concentrated around) as well as other buildings, including strategically positioned military posts, schools, health-care centers, post offices, and dwellings intended for educators and military officers who served in the SAS.

### **SAS Officers’ Reports**

Contrary to this assessment, French military archival documents provide evidence that the SAS officers were actually responsible not only for evacuating existing villages for military reasons but also for supervising the construction of the *camps de regroupement*. One piece of evidence may be found in the various factsheets on the *camps de regroupement* drafted in August 1958 by the SAS chiefs of the Department of Bône (today Annaba) in response to a telegram from the General Commander of the Zone of Eastern Constantine (ZEC) asking for accurate data on the camps. The majority of these archival records contain the name, the date of creation, and the geographic location of the so-called *centre*. They also detailed the exact numbers of the populations who were forced to settle in the camps; the conditions of shelter; the hygienic circumstances; the medical control of health care; the existing schooling facilities; the means of subsistence; the possibilities of employment of the labor force; the monthly needs of semolina, wheat, and barley; and clothing and food requirements such as oil, condensed milk, sugar, and coffee.<sup>47</sup> In Bône, some of the camps had already been previously created since 1955,

while others were in the process being created at the time the handout was prepared. The figures for the evacuated populations, as well as the effective conditions of the erected shelters, varied enormously from camp to camp and from SAS to SAS. For instance, in the *regroupement* area managed by the SAS of Bordj-M'raou, which monitored the daily lives of 1,346 people, the majority of the huts were made of straw and merely had one main opening; only five people, whom the SAS considered to be “traders,” were able to build houses of enduring materials with a thatched roof.<sup>48</sup> According to another SAS (of Hammam-Zaid), which administered fifty-nine families—that is, 415 people, including seventy children under the age of five and 138 teenagers from ages five to fifteen—the houses were very rudimentary. Only five shacks were built *en dur* (of lasting construction materials) and covered with tiles; the other shelters were of a limited size (of roughly 7 by 4 meters); these were meant to house families comprising an average of seven people.

The chief of this SAS stated that a much larger program of *regroupement* of around two thousand people was being studied and that a rough approximation of the figures could be gleaned by multiplying the number of this *regroupement* by a factor of five, since the people led the same kind of lives and had similar family structures.<sup>49</sup> Meanwhile, the housing and living conditions of the inhabitants of the ongoing *regroupement* under the SAS of Gounod in the Arrondissement of Guelma, according to its chief on 1 September 1958, were very precarious: most of the people were “piled into the ruins of damaged barracks or housed in tents—some families have been resettled in ‘improved huts,’ whose construction was carried out as long as the municipality provided the credits for it.”<sup>50</sup> He requested an additional credit for the construction of a *cit  de regroupement* (regrouping estate).

In another larger *camp de regroupement* called Herbillon, which held three thousand people, families were distributed in either huts or tents. Fifty families were soon to be transferred to one of the fifty newly built rural dwellings named (as the document stated) *une cit  d’habitat rural de 50 logements* (a rural housing settlement of fifty dwellings), and an additional *cit  de regroupement* of a hundred metal-framed dwellings had been initiated so that within the next two months one hundred families would again be relocated.<sup>51</sup> Contrary to this situation, as specified in the survey on the circumstances of the *centres* in the municipality of Mondovi, in the previous two years, although “many families were invited to leave their habitual place of residence in the mountains, nothing was planned or officially organized to receive them.”<sup>52</sup> The survey described the disastrous hygienic conditions and the distress of certain families who were constrained to rent courtyard floors,

as in the case of 132 people who were compelled to argue over 120 square meters. And to complete this wide range of states of affairs of a handful of SASs in what was merely one department, a tiny part of the *regroupement* of Barral presented an exceptional situation in which 145 families out of two thousand people were lodged in a series of dwellings that were purpose-built by the civilian governmental institution, the Commissariat à la reconstruction et à l'habitat rural (CRHR, or Rural Housing and Reconstruction Commission).<sup>53</sup>

### Propagandizing the Camps

The CRHR was established in French colonial Algeria in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake in the colonial town of Orléansville (today Chlef) on 9 September 1954. The original plan of Orléansville had been laid out in 1843 by Marshal Bugeaud as a defensive military camp.<sup>54</sup> According to Louis Gas, head of the CRHR, the earthquake of 1954 caused more than fifteen hundred fatalities and six thousand injuries, and it ravaged sixty-five thousand residences, including (in Gas's words) twenty-five thousand "normal" buildings and forty thousand "traditional" constructions. He clarified that thanks to changes in legislation and a special fund for reconstruction and planning, the *Commissariat* was well prepared to fulfill its broad duties, which were to oversee and ensure the resettlement of victims and the maintenance of public services; to clear away the debris from the earthquake; to take measures to protect and safeguard certain buildings; to rehabilitate commercial, industrial, agricultural, and artisanal worksites; to assess and grant assistance to those in need; and to simultaneously plan and build housing.<sup>55</sup>

In his press conference on 23 February 1959, Gas pointed out that it had been in the wake of the earthquake in Orléansville that the *Commissariat* had first been put in charge "of the policy of improvements to the traditional dwellings of the rural population in Algeria, and more generally of constructions in rural areas," continuing that its jurisdiction now "extends equally to the regulation of war damages."<sup>56</sup> To this end, the French authorities treated the consequences of an unpredictable natural disaster (an earthquake) and the consequences of calculated destruction (war damage) during an armed conflict for independence as equivalent to each other: the CRHR plans were used to design shelters for the survivors of both an earthquake and the devastation caused by war.

A typical 1956 plan, numbered HTP2-A6C, of the *habitat rural* (rural housing) designed by the CRHR consisted of a one-floor unit composed of two identical spaces: one served for indoor activities, while the other (a



courtyard) served the outdoor practices that were so essential in the daily lives of Algerian families. The dimensions of the courtyard were 5 by just less than 9 meters, resulting in an area of about 29 square meters. The indoor volume was composed of a main room of less than 14 square meters (4.9 by 2.9 meters); a smaller room, of around 7 square meters (3 by 2.3 meters); a tiny kitchen; and a minuscule restroom. The kitchen (2 by 1.7 meters) comprised cooking installations and a small washbasin, whereas the space for sanitation facilities did not include a sink but merely a restroom that was also to be used as a shower. The housing unit was juxtaposed with another identical one, the latter shifted in such a way that the courtyard of the former was always surrounded by three indoor spaces. This overall configuration could be extended at will to form a row of housing units of any length, and its multiple iterations could comprise what the CRHR called a *cité d'habitat rural* and some SASs simply a *cité rurale*. Despite the considerable differences in climatic and socioeconomic conditions, these dwellings, intended for the displaced rural populations, were analogously built in the countryside of the French colonial departments of Algiers, Oran, and Constantine.

A few SAS officers photographed the construction of the *camps de regroupement*, including this type of shelter, in order to document the SAS *monographies* (monographs); these were typewritten military records that meticulously described all of the geographies of the territory in which the SAS operated. In other cases, a few photographs are to be found in some SASs' *Journaux de marches et opérations* (JMO, or War Diaries), consisting of handwritten daily chronicles of the military operations and activities that occurred in the zone controlled by a SAS, one example being the SAS of Bouinan that was created in the Arrondissement of Blida in the Department of Algiers. Some of the pictures do indicate, however, that for some reason the housing units had been built without taking into consideration the shifted positions of the courtyards (as the technical services of the CRHR had suggested), with the result that the privacy of the dislocated families was even further invaded (figs. 10a–e).

The CRHR, however, did not build the *camps de regroupement* using simply their own personnel, as was reported in a questionnaire filled out by SAS officers in 1959 for the purpose of the completion of a detailed census on the massive forced resettlement of the Algerian population. Instead, the forcibly relocated people themselves also acted as civilian *bâtisseurs* (as will be discussed shortly). This survey served as one basis for an investigation into possible improvements of the conditions in the camps in the aftermath of pressure resulting from the 1959 media scandal in France. In the second



part of the survey, “Current Installations,” a statistical chart titled *Nature et nombre de logements* (The Nature and Number of Housing Units) showed an estimated five different typologies of dwellings that were being built in the camps by the time, as well as the construction costs involved. The date of the establishment of the camp was requested and indicated in the first part of the survey, called “General Data,” showing that they corresponded to both before and after the creation of the *regroupement*. The typologies of the housing units that were built, by contrast, presupposed a number of others: *gourbis* (shacks—see discussion below); improved *gourbis*; dwellings that were built by the municipality or by the army, with the support of emergency credits or other means; dwellings that were built by the CRHR; and finally tents.<sup>57</sup>

While for the French army what soldiers meant when they used the term *gourbi* was a “shack,” in the Algerian Arabic language (and primarily in Algeria) a *gourbi* signifies a one-floor house made of a local adobe and built by the inhabitant. Entire Algerian villages were composed of *gourbis*—lump-clay houses of different sizes and various shapes—that harmoniously fit into the surroundings and were often blended into the landscape. According to the *Petit abécédaire de la Grande Guerre* (Little Alphabet Book of the Great War), the term *gourbi* in its original sense was first used in the French language by military officers who had served in Algeria at the outset of its colonization from 1840 to 1845; it was then employed during the Crimean War in 1855 by French soldiers who came from French colonial Algeria. However, its meaning had become profoundly deformed by this point and was used to designate the *abri de tranchées* (a dugout or bunker).<sup>58</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century, various French colonial administrators, travelers, and novelists were pejoratively utilizing the term to portray the asserted miserable living conditions of certain rural Algerian populations under colonial rule. During the Algerian War of Independence, the constructed negative connotations grafted onto the Arabic term in the French language continued to spread; and thus the word *gourbi* in the 1959 survey conveyed a wretched shack, while the “improved *gourbi*” indicated a slightly less lowly shelter.

In addition to the CRHR, both municipalities and army officers contributed to the construction of the dwellings in the *camp de regroupement*. More surprisingly, however, numerous Algerians who had been forced to abandon their homes (or original *gourbis*) were constrained to build their own new imposed *gourbis* (in the negative French sense of the term) themselves under highly constrained circumstances. A subsequent military document provides



Debut des Travaux de construction du Village de Regroupement CHEQA : II - (16.01.59-



Debut des Travaux de la Cité Revale a AMROUSSA -

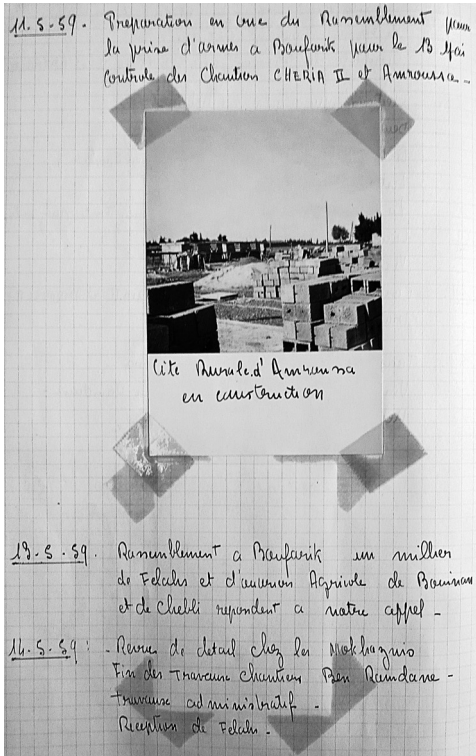


CHEQA I Village de Regroupement (entièrement réalisé par les SAS).



Nivellement pour la construction du Village de CHEQA I

Figs. 10a-e Excerpts from the *journaux de marches et opérations* of the SAS of Bouinan, Algeria, 1959; the JMO were daily chronicles of the military operations and activities

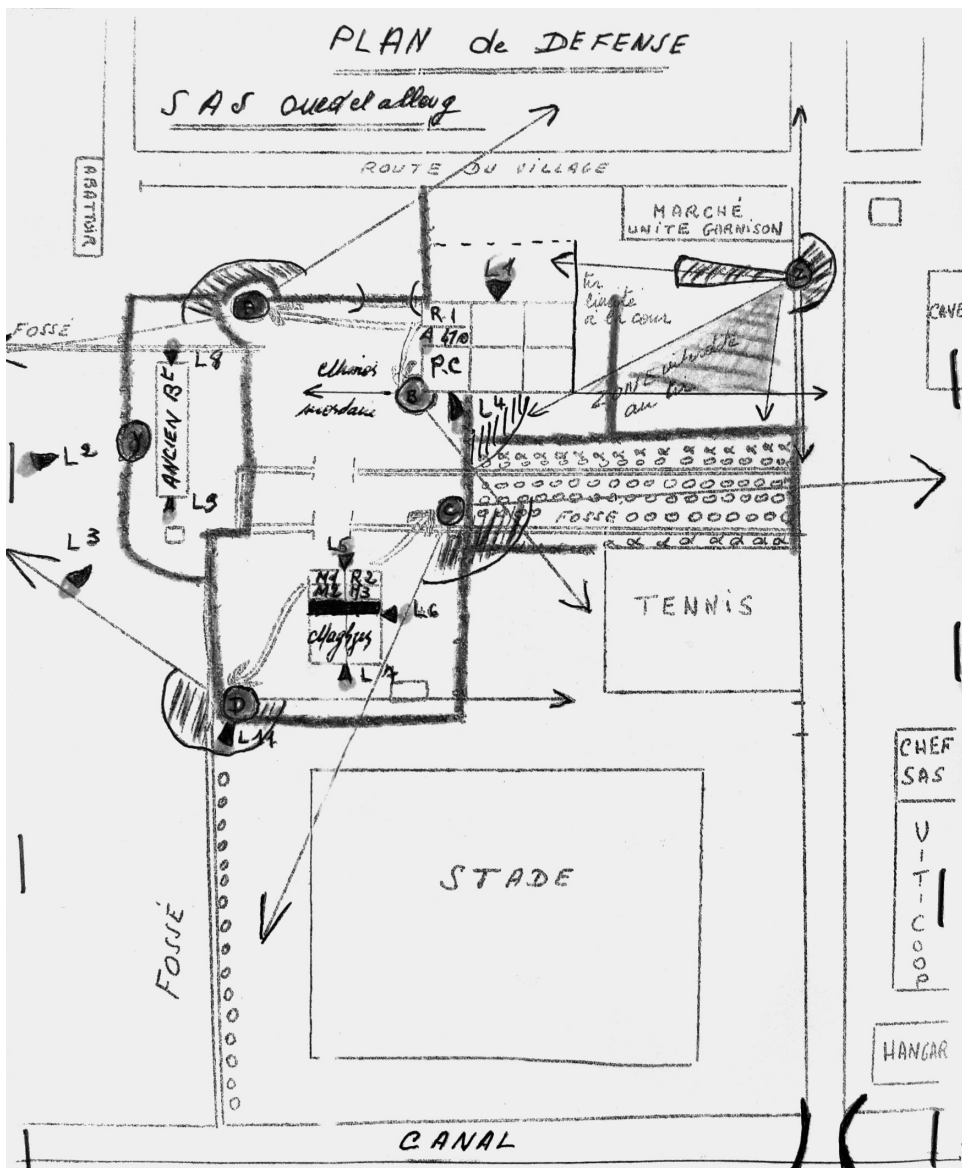


confirmation of this point: a triannual report on the *regroupement* of the civilian population solicited in 1960 by the IGRP explicitly requested the SAS officers to provide the figures for both temporary and permanent shelters that had been purpose-built by the displaced populations in the region under their authority.<sup>59</sup>

### Plans of Defense

The geographic position of the SASs and their *camps de regroupement* were strategically selected in terms of defense and security. In a piece of correspondence marked secret and dated 26 July 1956 that the chief of the SAS of Aïn-Romana (in the Arrondissement of Blida in the Department of Algiers) sent to the mayor of the municipality of Mouzaïaville, the chief argued that the *bordj* “must, however, have certain defensive characteristics that will allow it to resist adverse actions of a certain scale.”<sup>60</sup> The chief then described, using both texts and maps, a meticulous *plan de défense* (plan of defense) in case an alarming situation arose. The area around the SAS’s fortified building included (as in any battlefield) guard towers, blockhouses, and zones for target practice (fig. 11).





#### LEGENDE

- (A) Blockauss-
- (L) LAMPES ou projecteurs-
- (S) Secteur de tir du Blockauss-
- ⇒ Destination du personnel rejoignant les Blockauss-

**Nota** Les Blockauss (A) et (B) sont censés être occupés par l'unité de garnison le 1er impérativement. le 2e était crée des l'installation de l'unité dans l'ancien bâtiment.

Fig. 11 Plan of Defense of the SAS of Oued El Alleg, n.d.

The descriptive text of the plan of defense of the SAS of Laperrine (in the Arrondissement of Palestro in the Department of Tizi-Ouzou) comprised an elaborate account of the kinds of terrain, means of defense, command types, surveillance and security activities, methods of fighting under high alert, and (eventually, if necessary) the evacuation of the population. The map of this plan of defense shows the central position of the *camp de regroupement*—although it is referred to as a *village* in the map and as *village des réfugiés* in the text—in relation to two blockhouses and one tower. The map correspondingly indicates that the entire geographic area comprising the camp was surrounded by barbed wire (fig. 12).<sup>61</sup> It is not clear, however, whether just this one camp was fenced in, or if every French *camp de regroupement* in colonial Algeria was systematically ringed by barbed wire and guard towers. While the photographic archival records consulted for this study do not allow a generalization to be made, a 1960 memorandum on the financing methods for the new settlements for the *regroupement* termed *nouveaux villages* (new villages) suggests that a specific fund was indeed reserved for the *travaux de défense* (defensive works).

This special expense was allocated under the financial category of the *Budget de l'Algérie Chapitre 41-01 Art.1<sup>er</sup>* (Algeria's Budget, Chapter 41-01, Article 1) covering the exclusive costs of the “construction of towers—purchase of barbed wire, etc.”<sup>62</sup> However, Chapter 41-01, Article 1 was likewise utilized to designate requested budgets or effectuated payments for two other types of infrastructural works intended for the “new villages,” namely hydraulic plants and streets and pathways inside the “village.” In most cases, it is thus difficult to determine whether the budget of Chapter 41-01, Article 1 was utilized to fence and watch over the camp or instead to build its infrastructure. In rare circumstances, the name of the fund for the *travaux de défense* is explicitly specified, as in the case of the emergency expenses program requested by the subprefect of Bouira for Aïn Graoueh in the Department of Grande Kabylie.<sup>63</sup>

### French Censorship

In the course of the Algerian Revolution, as well as in its aftermath, a sprinkling of staged visual representations of the forced relocation of the Algerian population in the *camps de regroupement* was overtly displayed and broadcasted, and in even rarer cases also showed armed officers in uniform, guard towers, and barbed wire, with echoes of the recently ended Second World War (and notably the French taboo of the Vichy regime).

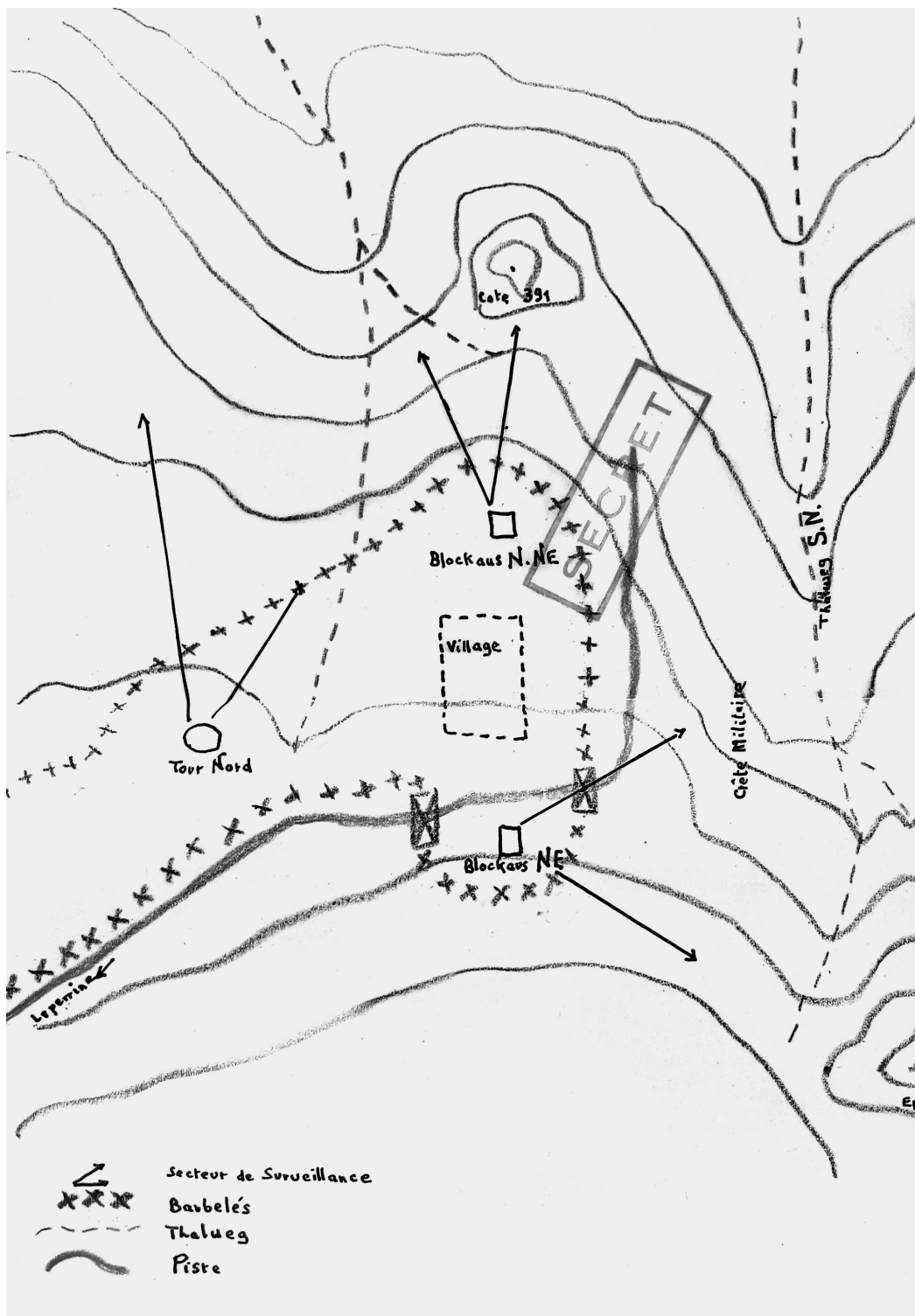


Fig. 12 Plan of Defense of the SAS of Laperrine, n.d.

The French law of 3 April 1955 declaring the state of emergency allowed the French authorities to “take all measures to ensure control of the press and of publications of all kinds, as well as radio broadcastings, screenings of films, and theatre performances.”<sup>64</sup> Accordingly, texts, images, audio sequences, films, theater pieces, and any information about the Algerian War of Independence, including the *camps de regroupement*, were by law subject to control, censorship, seizure, penalties, and police measures.<sup>65</sup> To this end, a propaganda office called the *5e bureau* (Fifth Bureau) provided tactical information aimed at influencing people’s attitudes, beliefs, emotions, motives, values, and behaviors. This campaign of psychological warfare also included the visual and textual representation of the *camps de regroupement* prior to the media scandal of 1959, an effort that continued until the office’s dissolution in February 1960.

The Fifth Bureau supervised and guided the textual and audiovisual productions made by the professional army photographers, cameramen, and filmmakers hired by the French Service cinématographique des armées (SCA, or Cinematographic Service of the Armed Forces, figs. 13a–d), which still exists today under the name of Etablissement de communication et de production audiovisuelle de la défense (ECPAD, or Office of Communication and Audiovisual Productions of Defense).<sup>66</sup> The SCA’s teams covered key events, such as the Generals’ putsches of 1958 and 1961, and produced propaganda material on particular topics. In March 1957—in the midst of the blood-soaked Battle of Algiers, conducted by the most radical of the French military commanders—the SCA released a propaganda feature film bearing the title *Képi Bleu* (Blue Cap).<sup>67</sup>

*Képi Bleu* was a nickname thought to have been given to SAS officers because, unlike other officers, they wore blue hats. In full color, the film featured a cheerful blue-cap officer whose mission was to “pacify” rural areas and to continue France’s colonial “civilizing mission” in Algeria. The propaganda film was extensively screened and watched by large audiences in both Algeria and France, and it was translated into both Arabic and English.<sup>68</sup> To understand how censorship was enforced, it is relevant to analyze what was not shown and said in the film and to question the kind of information exploited and then widely broadcasted.

The SCA film was made against the background of an army sorely in need of self-legitimization in the wake of the condemnation of torture during the Battle of Algiers, and it duly lauded the administrative socioeconomic missions of the SAS officers in colonial Algeria. The narrator in the film eulogizes the SASS’ undertakings, which, according to the ECPAD’s intro-





Figs. 13a–d Shooting of the propaganda film *Au-delà des fusils* (Beyond Guns), directed by Gérard Renateau and produced by the SCA, 1960

ductory text for the film, epitomized “the beneficent will of France to raise [or educate, depending on the translation of the term *élever*] Algeria to the rank of modern countries.”<sup>69</sup>

The text makes no mention of the prominent role that SAS officers played in the military strategy of the *camps de regroupement*; on the contrary, it deliberately supplants this militarily organized procedure by suggesting that it was a type of purely civil-planning system of a “housing policy in response to slum clearing.”<sup>70</sup> In fact, *Képi Bleu* shows an unarmed SAS officer with a blue cap welcoming and handing over the keys to a new dwelling to an Algerian family after he has blatantly set fire to a shack, which is referred to in the film as “the *gourbi* of the *bidonville*.”

The film also displays Algerian men at work on a construction site, building (as the narrator notes) their own new homes, which would then be assigned to them in accordance with their familial circumstances. The film states that in exchange for a modest rent, one could become the landlord of a two-room apartment, including a kitchen and a courtyard. The housing typology exemplified in the movie resembles neither the housing units built

by the CRHR described above, nor the shelters constructed by the inhabitants themselves as photographed by SAS officers and illustrated previously in this chapter.

*Képi Bleu*, one example among many others, fabricated, represented, and communicated a French colonial narrative that censored military reality on the ground. It was a construct that intentionally made no reference to the massive forced resettlement of the Algerian population, or to the construction of the *camps de regroupement*.

- 1 SHAT 1H 1119 D1. Cabinet militaire du gouverneur général en Algérie, Note memento au sujet de la pacification de l'Aurès, Algiers, 12 April 1955.
- 2 See, for example, *Edict de pacification, fait par le Roy pour mettre fin aux troubles de son Royaume et faire désormais vivre tous ses sujets en bonne paix et concorde sous son obéissance* (Paris: F. Morel & J. Mettayer, 1577), <http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb37306040j> (accessed on 25 November 2014). On the various colonial and military methods of pacification, see for example El Mechat, *Coloniser, pacifier, administrer*.
- 3 STAT 1H 1119 D1. Bureau psychologique, X<sup>e</sup> région militaire, Commandement supérieur interarmées, Guide pratique de pacification à l'usage des commandants de sous-quartier, 1958, p. 7.
- 4 SHAT 1H 1119 D1. Bureau psychologique, X<sup>e</sup> région militaire, Etude sur les problèmes et les méthodes de pacification en Algérie, January 1957.
- 5 On revolutionary warfare, see for example Shy and Collier, "Revolutionary War." On counterinsurgency and its role during the Algerian War, see for example Heggoy, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency*; Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies*; Porch, *Counterinsurgency*; Crandall, *America's Dirty Wars*, 174–89.
- 6 Marie-Monique Robin, *Escadrons de la mort: l'école française*, documentary (Ideale Audience, ARTE France, 2003); Robin, *Escadrons de la mort*.
- 7 SHAT 1118 D 3. Conférence du colonel Lacheroy, chef du service d'action psychologique et d'information du Ministère de la Défense Nationale, *Guerre révolutionnaire et l'arme psychologique*. 2 July 1957, p. 4.
- 8 Trinquier, *La Guerre Moderne*, 8. Emphasis in the original. The book was first published in France in 1961 under the title *La Guerre moderne* by Editions de la Table Ronde.
- 9 Galula, *Pacification in Algeria*, 92.
- 10 Petraeus and Amos, "Counterinsurgency."
- 11 *Ibid.*, 9.
- 12 SHAT 1 H 1119 D 1. Cabinet militaire du gouverneur général en Algérie, Note memento au sujet de la pacification de l'Aurès, Algiers, 12 April 1955, pp. 2–3. The arming of members of the Algerian population resulted in the creation of what the French called the *villages d'auto-défense* (self-defense villages).
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 Trinquier, *La Guerre Moderne*, 40.
- 16 SHAT 1 H 1268 D 1. Commandement en chef des forces en Algérie, Etat-major interarmées, Instructions pour la Pacification en Algérie, approuvée par le Général d'Armée Aérienne M. Challe, Commandant en chef des forces en Algérie, 10 December 1959, p. 9.
- 17 Soustelle, *Aimée et souffrante Algérie*, 96.
- 18 *Ibid.* On the Etat-Major mixte, see SHAT 1 H 2576 D 2. Etude sur l'Etat-Major mixte dans l'est algérien, 1957.
- 19 Paillat, *Deuxième dossier secret*, 151.

- 20 Rocard, *Rapport*, 230.
- 21 Soustelle, *Aimée et souffrante Algérie*, 96.
- 22 Paillat, *Deuxième dossier secret*, 150.
- 23 Bourguès-Maunoury (1914–1993) succeeded François Mitterrand as the Minister of the Interior from 23 February 1955 to 1 December 1955. He then served as a Minister of Defense from 1 February 1956 to 13 June 1957 in the government of Guy Mollet's that succeeded Edgar Faure's. From 14 May 1957 to 30 September 1957, he became France's Prime Minister. Then, from 6 November 1957 to 14 May 1958, Bourguès-Maunoury served again as the Minister of Interior in the government of Félix Gaillard that succeeded Guy Mollet. In 1958, like Mitterrand, he opposed the return of General de Gaulle to power.
- 24 Lyautey, *Le rôle social de l'officier*, 37. Lyautey's article was first published in 1891 in the *Revue des deux mondes*, under the title "Du rôle social de l'officier dans le service militaire universel."
- 25 *Ibid.*, 38.
- 26 See for example Rabinow, *French Modern*, 104–25.
- 27 Lyautey's notes and letters are held at the Fondation Lyautey and the Association Nationale Maréchal Lyautey in Thorey-Lyautec, France.
- 28 Yacono, *Les bureaux arabes*, 74. Bugeaud's Direction of Arab Affairs became later called the Bureaux arabes (Arab Bureaus). After the fall of the Second Empire in 1870, the Bureaux arabes were gradually dismantled. However, they inspired Lyautey in Morocco to create first the Bureaux de renseignements (Intelligence Bureaus) and then the Affaires indigènes (AI, or Indigenous Affairs) in which General Parlange served. In September 1955, Soustelle reintroduced the Arab Bureaus to Algeria under the name Sections administratives spécialisées (SAS, or Special Administrative Sections).
- 29 *Ibid.*, 15.
- 30 Gallieni, quoted in Lyautey, *Du rôle colonial de l'armée*, 16, reproduced at <http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb34075148v> (accessed on 15 November 2014).
- 31 *Ibid.*
- 32 On the development of the "colonial school," see for example Porch, "Bugeaud, Gallieni, Lyautey."
- 33 Trinquier, *La Guerre Moderne*, 30. Emphasis in the original.
- 34 Centre d'histoire de Science Po (hereafter CHSP), Archives Paul Delouvrier et Jean Vaujour, CHSP 1 DV 17 Dr 4 and Dr 5. Général Parlange, Inspection générale des regroupements à Monsieur le délégué général du gouvernement en Algérie, Inspection dans le Département de l'Aurès, Algiers, 28 July 1960.
- 35 SHAT 1 H 2030 D 1. J. Florentin, Chef de bataillon de l'Inspection générale des regroupements de population, Les regroupements de population en Algérie, Algiers, 11 December 1960, p. 15.
- 36 Barthes, *Mythologies*, 157.
- 37 Frémeaux, "Les SAS," 56.
- 38 Cited in Trombert, "Les sections administratives spécialisées," 2.
- 39 Cited in Jauffret and Vaisse, *Militaires et guérillas*, 274.
- 40 Decree no. 55-1274 of 30 September 1955, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, 1 October 1955, p. 9646, [https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo\\_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000675553](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000675553) (accessed 20 November 2014).
- 41 Archives nationales d'outre-mer (hereafter FRANOM), FR ANOM SAS DOC 3. Programme de stage du stage d'orientation des officiers des Affaires algériennes et des administrateurs des Services civils contractuels, Stage du 5 au 24 décembre 1955. Algiers, 1 December 1955, p. 1.
- 42 Over the course of this research, both civil and military governmental records were consulted, but not the private archives of Germaine Tillion.
- 43 FRANOM SAS DOC 5. "Les SAS, Sections Administratives Spécialisées, leur politique, leur rôle et leurs méthodes," *Echos de la Wilaya* 5, no. 1 (10 March 1958), pp. 8–9.

- 44 Ministère de la Défense, Centre de doctrine d'emploi des forces (CDEF), Division recherchée retour d'expérience, *Les Sections administratives spécialisées en Algérie: un outil pour la stabilisation* (October 2005), [http://www.cdef.terre.defense.gouv.fr/content/download/3156/49544/file/section\\_administrative\\_specialise\\_algerie.pdf](http://www.cdef.terre.defense.gouv.fr/content/download/3156/49544/file/section_administrative_specialise_algerie.pdf) (accessed on 20 December 2014).
- 45 *Ibid.*, 51.
- 46 The term *bordj* refers to the Ottoman military bastion during the Regency of Algiers (ca. 1517–1830) that preceded French Algeria.
- 47 FRANOM 933/154. Département de Bône, Arrondissement de Bône, SAS Sidi Aissa; SAS de Barral; SAS d'Ain-Zana, SAS d'Hamam-Zaid, SAS de Bordj El Hassane.
- 48 FRANOM 933/154. Département de Bône, Arrondissement de Bône, Regroupement de Bordj-M'raou, SAS de Bordj-M'raou, 20 August 1958.
- 49 FRANOM 933/154. Département de Bône, Arrondissement de Bône, SAS d'Hamam-Zaid, 23 August 1958.
- 50 FRANOM 933/154. Département de Bône, Arrondissement de Guelma, 1 September 1958.
- 51 FRANOM 933/154. Département de Bône, Centre de Regroupement – Herbillon, 22 August 1958.
- 52 FRANOM 933/154. Département de Bône, Comune de Mondovi – Centres de Regroupement, 29 August 1958.
- 53 FRANOM 933/154. Département de Bône, Affaires Algériennes, SAS de Barral, 22 August 1958.
- 54 On the history of Orléansville and its post-earthquake reconstruction, see for example Picard, "Orléansville," 65–75.
- 55 CHSP 1 DV 34. Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie, Service de l'information, Conférence de presse de Monsieur Louis Gas, Commissaire à la reconstruction et à l'habitat rural, Algiers, 23 February 1960, pp. 4–6.
- 56 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- 57 FRANOM 933/154. Centres des arrondissements de Bône, Clairefontaine, Guelma et Souk-Ahras, Recensement des centres de regroupement, Questionnaire 1, 1959.
- 58 Colignon, *Petit abécédaire*, 110.
- 59 FRANOM 933/154. Centres des arrondissements de Bône, Clairefontaine, Guelma et Souk-Ahras, Canevas du Compte-rendu trimestriel au sujet des Regroupements de populations (1<sup>re</sup> partie – Rapport de synthèse), 1959.
- 60 FRANOM 2 SAS 105. Section administrative spécialisée d'Oued-el-Alleug et antenne d'Ain-Romana 1956/1962, Personnel: correspondance (1956/1961).
- 61 FRANOM 5 SAS 191. Section administrative spécialisée de Laperrine 1956/1961.
- 62 SHAT 1 H 4393. Note au sujet du financement des opérations d'installation des "Nouveaux villages," Algiers, 20 April 1960, p. 3.
- 63 SHAT 1H 4393. Programme des dépenses d'urgence intéressant le développement local à réaliser en 1961 au titre du Chapitre 41-01 – Article 1<sup>er</sup> – Travaux de défense. Bouira, 2 June 1961.
- 64 Law no. 55-385 of 3 April 1955, Article 11, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, no. 0085 (17 April 1955), p. 3480, [https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo\\_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000695350&pageCourante=03480](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000695350&pageCourante=03480) (accessed on 8 January 2015).
- 65 This strict control did not prevent a few Algerian and French filmmakers from directing movies during and about the Algerian War of Independence. On propaganda films and the Algerian war, see for example Denis, *Le cinéma et la guerre d'Algérie*.
- 66 The rich deposits of reportages, photographs, and films can be consulted in the archives of Etablissement de communication et de production audiovisuelle de la défense (hereafter ECPAD) in Paris. On the roles of French propaganda photography during the Algerian War, see for example Marie Chominot, *Guerre des images, guerre sans image? Pratiques et usages de la photographie pendant la guerre d'indépendance algérienne, 1954–1962* (doctoral dissertation, Paris VIII, 2008).

- 67 ECPAD SCA 114. Alain Pol, *Képi Bleu* (1957): part 1, <http://www.ecpad.fr/kepi-bleu-12/>; part 2, <http://www.ecpad.fr/kepi-bleu-22/> (accessed on 20 January 2015).
- 68 For a description of *Képi Bleu*, see for example Sébastien Denis's account in <http://fresques.ina.fr/independances/fiche-media/Indepe01013/kepi-bleu.html> (accessed on 20 January 2015).
- 69 ECPAD SCA 114. Alain Pol, *Képi Bleu* (1957): part 1, <http://www.ecpad.fr/kepi-bleu-12/> (accessed on 20 January 2015).
- 70 Ibid.

### 3. Vichy's Ghost in Constantine

Following the second downfall of the French government since the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution in November 1954, the Socialist Guy Mollet succeeded the Radical Edgar Faure as Prime Minister of France on 1 February 1956. Among the ministers of the new government were François Mitterrand, former Minister of the Interior in Pierre Mendès France's government, now Minister of Justice; Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury, former Minister of the Interior in Faure's government, now Minister of National Defense; and Mendès France, former Prime Minister, now a minister without portfolio. Shortly after the formation of Mollet's government, Jacques Soustelle was recalled and replaced by General Georges Catroux, who had already served as Governor General of Algeria in 1943 and 1944. The switch sparked violent protests by French *colons* in Algiers on 6 February 1956 (which from then on was known as *La Journée des tomates*, "The Day of Tomatoes"), prompting Catroux to resign, whereupon the Socialist Robert Lacoste was nominated in his place.

Contrary to Soustelle, who had served under the title Governor General of Algeria, Lacoste was designated Resident Minister of Algeria. He served in this post from 9 February 1956 to 13 June 1957, subsequently acting as Minister of Algeria in the succeeding two French governments prior to the collapse of the Fourth Republic and the return of General de Gaulle to power (namely in Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury's government from 13 June 1957 to 6 November 1957, and afterward in Félix Gaillard's government from 6 November 1957 to 13 May 1958). The significance of the change of title from governor to minister was a legal one, conferring cabinet status on the person in charge of colonial Algeria.

At the time of his nomination, Lacoste was the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs in the newly appointed government. In the 1930s, he had been considered a prominent trade unionist, and during the Vichy regime he participated in the Resistance and signed *Le manifeste des douze* (Manifesto of the Twelve), a declaration by twelve French trade unionists denouncing Vichy rule.<sup>1</sup> In 1944, he became Minister of Industrial Production in the Provisional Government of General de Gaulle and then Minister of Industry and Commerce from 1945 until 1950. In addition to his government positions, he served as a Socialist member of the Dordogne parliament from 1945 to 1958. Lacoste had very little knowledge of Algeria. Immediately after his nomination, he began mixing perfunctory industrial



reforms and a program of territorial reorganization in Algeria with brutal repressions. Officially, he appealed for “ambitious measures to promote economic expansion, social equality, and administrative reorganization,” while at the same time he was lawfully empowered to take “any measures he considered necessary to restore order.”<sup>2</sup> These measures included the devolvement of police powers to the army—not only in remote areas such as the Aurès (where these powers had already been delegated under General Parlangue, prior to Lacoste’s arrival) but throughout the whole of Algeria. This shift culminated in the bloody Battle of Algiers, the fortification of Algeria’s borders, the enhancement of the forbidden zones, and the proliferation of the *camps de regroupement*.

### **Maurice Papon**

In early May 1956, three months following Lacoste’s nomination, Maurice Papon was appointed Prefect of the Department of Constantine and Inspecteur général de l’administration en mission extraordinaire (IGAME, or General Inspector of Administration in the Extraordinary Mission) for the entire Region of Eastern Algeria. Papon was a French civil servant who would be convicted of crimes against humanity on 2 April 1998 at the Assizes Court in Bordeaux for his complicity in the deportation of Jews while serving as General Secretary of the Gironde Prefecture (Bordeaux Region) under the Vichy regime of 1940 to 1944.<sup>3</sup> In Constantine, Papon was in charge of both the civil and military authorities, as will be discussed shortly.

Following the liberation of France in 1944, despite his previous activities as a Vichy civil servant Papon managed to escape the French *épuration légale* (legal purge) by claiming to have participated in the Resistance.<sup>4</sup> While successfully avoiding justice for more than fifty years, Papon enjoyed an “exemplary” career, serving as a high-ranking French government official in Algeria under French rule, in the Protectorate of Morocco, and in various governments in France. Papon even at one point served as Prefect of the Paris Police in General de Gaulle’s Fifth Republic, his tenure coinciding with the 1961 massacre of Algerian pro-independence protesters in Paris, followed in 1962 (also in Paris) by the massacre of anti-OAS protesters who had been organized by the French Communist Party. The OAS refers to the paramilitary extremist group the Organisation de l’armée secrète (or Secret Army Organization), which was violently opposed to Algerian independence.

Papon’s later lengthy trial was a mass-media event, provoking not only controversial debates about memory, history, testimony, justice, and morality in France but also exposing the apparent links and parallels between



*les années noires* (the dark years) of the Vichy regime and *la guerre sans nom* (the war without a name); in other words, the Algerian War of Independence. Although a number of historians and French officials have objected to tracing presumed or real historical parallels between these two still-questionable and disputed wars, Papon's career can nevertheless be considered as an emblematic case, a symbol, or a catalyst of this probable legacy, and to this end Papon's deeds in Algeria during the War of Independence deserve further review.

Papon initially studied law and political economy, then psychology and sociology, graduating from the Sciences Po, Institut d'études politiques in Paris (Institute of Political Studies). In 1934, he enrolled in the Ligue d'action universitaire radicale et socialiste (LAURS, or League of Radical Socialist University Action), then headed by Pierre Mendès France, and participated in the protests against the French extreme right wing, notably the riots of 6 February 1934 in Paris.<sup>5</sup> Interestingly, the young François Mitterrand also participated in those riots, albeit as a young student member of the *Volontaires nationaux* (National Volunteers), an organization related to the *Croix de Feu* (Cross of Fire), a French right-wing league led by Colonel François de La Rocque, who served in Algeria and then in Morocco under the authority of General Lyautey. At the time, Papon belonged, in his own words, to "the Left. Without being leftist."<sup>6</sup>

Prior to the Vichy regime, Papon held a position as a cabinet attaché to various French ministries under the governments of the Third Republic, including the Ministries of Air, the Interior, and Foreign Affairs, also serving as Secretary of State for the Presidency of the Council. In 1944, he was appointed Prefect of Landes in Southwestern France and Cabinet Director of the Commissioner of the Republic in Bordeaux.

On 26 October 1945, he was put in charge of the Subcommission of Algeria at the French Ministry of the Interior, replacing the Commissaire d'état chargé des affaires musulmanes (State Commissioner for Muslim Affairs), General Catroux. His nomination followed the dreadful massacres of Algerians protesting against French colonial rule in Algeria in the towns of Sétif, Guelma, and Kherrata, located in northeastern Algeria in the Region of Constantine. These protests took place on 8 May 1945, the same day as the surrender of Nazi Germany and the end of the Second World War in Europe, in which many Algerian soldiers had fought and died. Despite the symbolism of French and European liberation, the French authorities had no compunction about deploying air power, destroying Algerian villages,

and arbitrarily opening fire on Algerians in order to crush any desire for decolonization and eventual independence.

As with the number of Algerians who were forcibly relocated to the *camps de regroupement*, the number of Algerian victims of the brutal French repressions following 8 May is still widely disputed, the estimates ranging widely from fifteen hundred to forty-five thousand.<sup>7</sup> This tragedy was one of the reasons for the foundation of the Comité révolutionnaire d'unité et d'action (CRUA, or Revolutionary Committee for Unity and Action), which would later evolve into the Front de libération nationale (FLN, or National Liberation Front). For Papon, his appointment involved ensuring the communication of decisions between the French Governor General of Algeria and the French Ministry of the Interior in Paris regarding the juridical repercussions of May 1945 upon both the Algerian and French populations.

Papon "participated in the elaboration of the project of the law of 1946 concerning the events in the Constantine region,"<sup>8</sup> which technically introduced him to the realm of the colonial affairs in Algeria under French rule. He also adamantly opposed proposals to transfer the functions of his subcommission to the Governor General of Algeria and likewise fought against the idea that the role of the Governor General of Algeria should be replaced by that of a Resident Minister, both of them calls that arose in the aftermath of the resignation of General de Gaulle in January 1946. Papon's opposition was fueled by the fact that "the institution of a Minister Resident quickly appeared as the establishment of a diarchy between Paris and Algiers and a taste of the end."<sup>9</sup>

After serving as Chief of the Cabinet of the State Secretary under the French Minister of the Interior in 1946 and then as Prefect of Corsica in 1947, Papon was appointed Prefect of the Department of Constantine on 17 September 1949. At the time of his appointment, the Socialist Marcel-Edmond Naegelen was General Governor of Algeria under French rule, who (retrospectively speaking) failed to properly steer the April 1948 French legislative elections for the Algerian Assembly in order to block Algerians being elected. In his 1962 memoirs on his missions in colonial Algeria from 1948 to 1951, Naegelen portrayed Constantine as:

the poorest of the three [Algerian departments], the one where the European population was least dense, the one which pan-Arab propaganda affected most directly, the one which had been the theater of the horrors of May 1945 in the cities and regions of Sétif

and Guelma, the one where the general rebellion would break out in the Aurès on 1 November 1954.<sup>10</sup>

Facing this daunting situation in the Department of Constantine, Papon was expected (among other things) to thoroughly reorganize the administrative services of the prefecture in order to gather intelligence; to address the question of territorial and social *sous-administration* (underadministration) in order to impede the spread of the various nationalist movements; and to use planned vote-rigging to avoid a repeat of April 1948 in the forthcoming legislative elections to the Algerian Assembly set for June 1951. His most important task, however, was to effectively resolve the legal status of the *disparus* (missing persons)—those “disappeared” Algerians who had been murdered during the French massacres of May 1945 and whose bodies had been burned.<sup>11</sup>

Following his colonial experiences in Constantine, by the end of 1951 Papon had become Secretary General of the Prefecture of the Paris Police. His move from colonial Constantine to metropolitan Paris foreshadowed a similar situation in 1958, when Papon would again be transferred from the battlefields of Constantine to Paris: not as secretary general this time but as Prefect of the Paris Police. The intertwinement of the French police in France and colonial policies in Algeria, coupled with their multifaceted characters, was by no means a novel legacy of French rule, rather it was an intimate relationship that could be traced back to Louis Lépine, who served first as Prefect of the Paris Police between 1893 and 1897, then as Governor General of Algeria from 1897 to 1899, and finally again as Prefect of the Paris Police from 1899 to 1913.<sup>12</sup> However, these crossovers in personnel and the interchanges of experiences gathered in colonized Algeria and in the French Republic intensified dramatically after the Second World War.<sup>13</sup> Unlike other figures, however, Papon was also well-versed in the practices of the Vichy regime, giving his presence in colonial Constantine during the Algerian War of Independence an additional facet that deserves attention.

In the summer of 1954, a few months prior to the outbreak of the Algerian War, Papon was appointed Secretary General of the French Protectorate of Morocco under the government of Pierre Mendès France. In this position, he was predominantly involved in planning colonial reforms aimed at restraining Moroccan demands for independence, including the formulation of various socioeconomic policies for urban and rural *équipements* (infrastructures or planning).<sup>14</sup> In January 1956, Papon became a member of the investigation committee of the Commissariat général du plan (CGP, or

General Commissariat of the Plan), a French institution established in 1946 by General de Gaulle with the aim of elaborating the long-term economic planning of the reconstruction of France, particularly through five-year plans such as the Monnet Plan and the Marshall Plan. Papon did not stay long in the post, and in February 1956 he was appointed Technical Advisor to the Cabinet of the French Minister of the Interior for Algerian Affairs.

Whereas Morocco gained its independence on 2 March 1956, and Tunisia on 20 March 1956, the newly appointed French Resident Minister of Algeria, Robert Lacoste, obtained a bill of *pouvoirs spéciaux* (exceptional powers) from the French National Assembly in Paris to maintain law and order in the French departments of Algeria, to protect its people and goods, and to safeguard the territory of Algeria—in other words to maintain Algeria under French rule.<sup>15</sup>

### The IGAME's Powers

Shortly after the enforcement of the law of exceptional powers, new administrative reforms were announced, and Papon was appointed not only Prefect of the Department of Constantine, but also General Inspector of Administration in the Extraordinary Mission (IGAME) for the Region of Eastern Algeria. The IGAMEs were direct successors of the *inspecteurs régionaux* (Regional Inspectors), which had been first instituted in France by the Vichy regime.<sup>16</sup> The Regional Inspectors were established by a law of 19 April 1941; they acted as a regional intermediate echelon between the government and the departments and were charged with the coordination of information and the implementation of Vichy-era laws. In their extraordinary missions, the Regional Inspectors were directly assisted by “two special collaborators: the intendant [a chief administrative officer] of the police and the intendant of economic affairs.”<sup>17</sup> In the aftermath of the Vichy regime, the position of IGAME was revived in 1948 by French Minister of the Interior Jules Moch in the wake of the labor strikes of 1947 in France; the person appointed bore responsibility for ensuring public order and security in the departments matching France’s military regions.<sup>18</sup> Later decrees in 1951 and 1953 expanded the scope of the 1948 IGAMEs to include administrative and economic matters. In addition, the IGAMEs became involved in the development and management of long-term economic plans.

With his appointment as an IGAME in 1956, Papon assumed “the higher control and the overall coordination of civil and military authorities in the departments included in the Region of Eastern Algeria.”<sup>19</sup> The Region of Eastern Algeria was then considered to be composed of the departments

of Constantine, Batna, Bône (today Annaba), and Sétif. This vast area corresponded with one of the three French military divisions of colonial Algeria.<sup>20</sup> The regions of Constantine, Algiers, and Oran—stretching from the eastern border with Tunisia to the western boundary with Morocco—coincided with the Tenth Military Region of France. As a result of his dual key functions, Papon represented and administered the Department of Constantine while simultaneously heading the Prefectures of Constantine (by himself), Batna (together with General Parlange, who became Prefect of Batna in August 1956), Bône, and Sétif.<sup>21</sup> At the same time, he was in direct correspondence with the military Commander-in-Chief of the Constantine Army Corps, who operated in the territory that included the aforementioned departments. In this context, Papon was responsible (among other duties) for ensuring law and order; defining the forbidden zones; eradicating the Organisation politico-administrative (OPA, or Politico-administration Organization) of the FLN; monitoring the forced relocation and *regroupement* of the civilian population; supervising the civil-military operations conducted by the Sections administratives spécialisées (SAS, or Specialized Administrative Sections); and constantly gathering intelligence. In a letter to Robert Lacoste dated 5 July 1956 on the administrative reforms, Papon avowed that “I think, for my part, that the implementation of new administrations requires a broad effort of adaptation from which we cannot escape, and original solutions, even if they seem excessive from the perspective of common law, are essential to give birth to new departments.”<sup>22</sup>

During his trial of 1997 to 1998, when Papon was cross-examined about his long professional curriculum vitae he was asked to list and describe his life before and after the Vichy regime. While portraying his second set of functions in the Algerian town of Constantine under French colonial rule from 1956 to 1958, Papon (now in his late eighties) asserted, “my mission was pacification.”<sup>23</sup> Papon’s use of the word “pacification” conformed with the general sanitized terminology dictated by the French Republic in colonial Algeria, but according to Jean-Luc Einaudi—French political activist and author of *La Ferme Améziane: enquête sur un centre de torture pendant la Guerre d’Algérie* (The Ameziane Farm: Enquiry on a Torture Center during the Algerian War) and *La Bataille de Paris: 17 Octobre 1961* (The Battle of Paris: 17 October 1961)—what Papon in fact oversaw was the expansion of total warfare in eastern Algeria. During the course of a press conference in the Prefecture of Constantine, Papon unequivocally ordered “all civilians to behave as soldiers” and then stressed that “there are no longer military officers and civilians. It is necessary to be merely soldiers.”<sup>24</sup> Although his

two books were published seven years before Papon's 1998 conviction by the French authorities, Einaudi cogently demonstrated that "under [Papon's] authority [as prefect and IGAME of Constantine], extrajudicial executions and the use of torture [were] practiced by military officers and policemen. Torture became a habitual and normal means to gather intelligence."<sup>25</sup> According to Einaudi, Robert Lacoste buttressed the "interrogation centers" and praised the measures taken by Papon in Constantine, declaring Papon to be "one of the best administrative leaders in Algeria."<sup>26</sup> Indeed, Papon was so persuasive that he was chosen to defend French policies in Algeria at the United Nations General Assembly in the autumn of 1957.<sup>27</sup> At the same time, however, the number of the Algerian people who were compulsorily uprooted and regrouped in the vast territory under Lacoste's lauded administrator nearly tripled<sup>28</sup>—a shift partly influenced by the fortification of the Algerian borders with the Morice Line.

### **Papon's *Regroupement* Directives**

On 17 September 1957, Papon penned a set of new directives entitled "Instructions relatives aux regroupements de populations" (Instructions for the Regrouping of the Population). He divided this long handbook into two main parts. The first, called "Generalities," dealt with the *raison d'être* of the regrouping and provided an in-depth examination of the methods for regrouping, while the second part, "Practical Measures," addressed the classification of the regroupings and the conditions in which the new regrouping operations might be undertaken.<sup>29</sup> Papon confirmed that the purpose of the *regroupement* of the populations was twofold: "to remove the support provided by scattered populations to outlaws, and at the same time to detach these populations—because they are what is at stake in revolutionary warfare—from the influence of the rebels."<sup>30</sup> Papon emphasized that this technique was not new, given that identical methods had been employed elsewhere, and that their efficiency had been proven during the course of the Greek Civil War, as well as in Korea, Malaysia, and Kenya.

Papon's directives also provide corroboration that the *regroupement* of the Algerian population was the corollary of the military policy of enforcing forbidden zones and that the ultimate challenge of revolutionary-style warfare was not the conquest of territory but rather of the population itself. According to Papon, the population was to be successfully subjugated by means of "a mandatory and dynamic participation of the population," which he considered to be "the guiding thread of psychological action."<sup>31</sup> Once the physical ascendancy over the population was assured, he continued,

“moral influence and propaganda may be applied, particularly during the daily and weekly meetings. These would very likely obtain a greater result than is typically achieved in traditional centers.”<sup>32</sup>

In the instructions to his officers—and to civilians, who, as he had ordered, had to behave like soldiers—Papon explained that the Algerian populations who were subjected to forced *regroupement* would become receptive to direct psychological action only if they were immediately “immersed, from the beginning, in an environment of order, discipline, and hygiene, and ‘organized’ in parallel hierarchies representing the professions, diverse origins, settlements in the center, etc.”<sup>33</sup> While it is not clear what Papon meant by “traditional centers” (possibly camps), he was unambiguous about the “excessive” psychological and disciplinary mechanisms that should be used to persuasively overpower civilians.

Papon moreover stated that the French authorities had decided to classify the *regroupement* of the populations into two distinct categories: temporary and permanent. This distinction was predominantly determined by the economic viability of the *regroupement*. The temporary *regroupements* were considered to be, as Papon declared, “refugee camps in which it is necessary to ensure, during a certain time, in addition to security, the means of subsistence—namely, food and shelter in precarious conditions (tents or *gourbis*).”<sup>34</sup> The permanent camps, meanwhile, had to provide “the possibility for the inhabitants to subsist on their own labor, within a political and economic environment. This implies that arable lands, pastures, and construction sites are to be located in the immediate vicinity of these centers.”<sup>35</sup> Not only did any new *regroupements* have to belong to one of these two classes of camps; all existing camps also had to be immediately classified and adapted to meet one of the two categories. First, the SAS officers were requested to complete a questionnaire about the *regroupement*; then, based on these descriptions, a special commission would classify the camps. As part of this process, Papon declared that “the decisions will be taken at the level of departmental mixed general staff, after consulting the related major civil services, who will conduct (in advance, if possible) rapid reconnaissance.”<sup>36</sup>

Lacoste further elaborated on the technical and economic differences between temporary and permanent *regroupements* in directives issued on 12 November 1957, addressed to his IGAMEs and prefects. In an attempt to “standardize the viewpoints and specify the procedure to be applied in order to achieve prompt results and bestow the necessary means,”<sup>37</sup> Lacoste defined every imaginable aspect of these two categories, including types of shelters, the competent decision makers to be put in place, the builders



responsible, the technical characteristics, and the security concerns and financing methods.

In the temporary *regroupements*, the SASs were accountable for providing aid to the population in kind and by labor, social assistance, and health care; the military authority was responsible for security for transportation, construction sites, the population displacement, and the *camps de regroupement*; the Commissariat à la reconstruction et à l'habitat rural (CRHR, or Rural Housing and Reconstruction Commission) was accountable for the provision of any "covered metallic structures" and civil defense; and the prefectural services were expected to purchase and install temporary tents.

In the permanent *regroupements*, the SASs, together with the prefectural and municipal services, were to resolve technical matters related to water conveyance, sanitation, and viability; the CRHR was responsible for the construction of houses; the prefectural and municipal services were in charge of the construction of new town halls; and the military authority (as with the temporary *regroupements*) was to ensure security for the transportation, construction sites, the population displacement, and any *nouveaux centres* (new centers).<sup>38</sup> According to an estimate of 1 April 1959, in the region of Constantine alone, 370,111 people had been subjected to massive *regroupements*, 141,714 of whom were classified under temporary and 228,397 under permanent (figs. 14a-c).<sup>39</sup>

Nevertheless, this outlined prospective future of the *regroupement* in the form of a seemingly clear distinction between temporary and permanent camps remained theoretical, or at least only clear on paper. In fact, despite the French media reports of April 1959 on the disorderliness of the French army, highlighting the policies of *regroupement* and the outrageous conditions of the *camps de regroupement*, the human and socioeconomic circumstances of the *regroupements* remained extremely distressful. According to General Parlange (who in the meantime had become Inspecteur général des regroupements (General Inspector of Regroupings), responsible for enforcing directives and regulations, visiting existing camps, and reporting on their status and conditions): "We must indeed recognize that the regroupement often coincides with 'uprooting' and is associated with a 'scorched earth' policy. The consequences are serious in terms of various human, economic, and social developments that, if we are not careful, will render an already difficult future even more uncertain."<sup>40</sup>

The conclusion he drew was that "It seems to me to be essential that a healthy discipline should be brought back, because lack of discipline is rampant."<sup>41</sup>



Figs. 14a–c Forcibly displaced people building shelters in the *camp de regroupement* of Taher El Achouet in Constantine, 1957

### Construction Sites and the Politics of “Contact”

A 1958 report on the army’s participation in extramilitary pacification tasks featured an introduction by General Raoul Salan, who when the document was issued held both civil and military powers, serving simultaneously as General Delegate of Government, Commander-in-Chief of Forces in Algeria, and Joint-Army Senior Commander for the Tenth Military Region. The report argued that “the first goal of the construction sites is to enable more intimate psychological contacts with the men from the hamlet. ... This is also a way of saying that France is determined to remain in Algeria.”<sup>42</sup> As part of the methods of psychological warfare, the politics of “contact” provided and

secured the French army direct access to the Algerian populations in order to discipline and oversee them, as well as to obtain intelligence from them.

The French army estimated that as of 1 July 1958, there were 203 military construction sites (on which 11,734 workers were employed) and 440 civil construction sites.<sup>43</sup> By 31 December 1958, these figures had undergone a rapid increase, amounting to 407 military sites (with 25,560 hired laborers) and 576 civilian sites.<sup>44</sup> Army officers also spent time protecting both the civil and military construction sites. The locality, status, and type of such sites, however, were by no means specified, since the army's main priority was to attain record numbers in an attempt to legitimate its achievements. According to General Salan, the year 1958 confirmed that "the army's contributions to extramilitary pacification tasks were both complete and total."<sup>45</sup>

Nonetheless, another 1958 document stated that these construction sites were a straightforward part of the army's everyday tasks and were not in fact "extramilitary" at all. The document was a rigorous report drawn up in preparation for a conference at the Centre des hautes études militaires (CHEM, or Center for Advanced Military Studies) in Paris, which trained higher-level officers. Instead, the paper named the sites *chantiers de chômage et de pacification* (construction sites for unemployment and pacification).<sup>46</sup> To this end—particularly in the context of counterrevolutionary strategies in colonial Algeria—officers were, according to the report, trained and encouraged in the expectation that they should "take immediate measures to restore confidence and to face underemployment and unemployment."<sup>47</sup>

Maurice Papon himself mentioned that the construction sites were projected to be located in close proximity to the "permanent" *camps de regroupement*, which were not only inaugurated but also managed and protected by French military officers. These building sites encompassed the restoration, reconstruction, and new construction of infrastructures, hydraulic facilities, public buildings, and other public works.<sup>48</sup>

In a press statement broadcast by radio on 17 September 1957, Papon formally declared that "two thousand constructions sites have been launched, employing sixty-six thousand workers. The most important of these, undisputedly, is the one we have opened at the Tunisian border, where seven thousand volunteer workers are finishing the defensive works."<sup>49</sup> Importantly, Papon's figures are contradicted by those internally collated by the army in 1958 referred to above. The first part of his claim was an attempt to inflate the number of both construction sites and work forces, while failing to define locations, specify the types of camps, quantify investments, or

declare how concrete these projects were. Even if Papon considered the construction of the *camps de regroupement* as part of the *chantiers de chômage et de pacification*, the figures remained exaggerated. Papon's intention appears to have been to impress his radio audience with enormous and propagandistic numbers for official French initiatives in colonial Constantine and Algeria in general. In the second part of his statement, however, what Papon was highlighting was a purely military enterprise, although he did not explicitly say this. The massive defensive work in question was the Morice Line, the military barrier that ran along the Algerian borders with Tunisia in the east and Morocco in the west and which was completed in September 1957. It consisted of daunting electrified fences of barbed wire, watchtowers, and searchlights in the midst of large minefields.<sup>50</sup> However, the Morice Line had not in fact been built by volunteers but rather by conscripted labor forces, subject to repressions and relentless controls. Moreover, it had also engendered further massive *regroupements* of the civilian population, driven by the creation of giant forbidden zones along the perimeters of the line.

Papon continued his press announcement by arguing, "the most common behavior for a population who is willing to escape the influence of the rebels is to regroup itself under the protections of our posts. ... We are opening many building sites for rural housing projects, particularly where the *regroupements* will be permanent because of favorable economic conditions."<sup>51</sup> In short, Papon's words profoundly reversed both the military *raison d'être* of the *regroupements* and Lacoste's aforementioned instructions on the motivations behind the permanent *regroupement*.

### The "Papon System"

This exercise in public camouflage was not an isolated example of Papon's methods of distorting a given reality, suppressing the voice of intimidated civilians, and extolling his own heroic role; it also had little to do (as one might be led to think) with the propaganda thrust or the forced optimism of his press declaration. The "Papon System," as Jim House and Neil MacMaster, authors of *Paris 1961: Algerians, State Terror, and Memory*, called it, was based on the particular experiences he had acquired during the authoritarian Vichy regime, from violent colonial policies, and from subversive military counterrevolutionary operations in colonial Algeria. Concerning this last point, the authors wrote that the:

total system of counter-insurgency and repression was carefully concealed from the public: a high level of decentralization of operations, scattered across the huge space of colonial Algeria, combined with a deliberate kaleidoscope of constantly changing names and acronyms for sinister operations ... made it difficult even for investigative journalists to form a clear picture.<sup>52</sup>

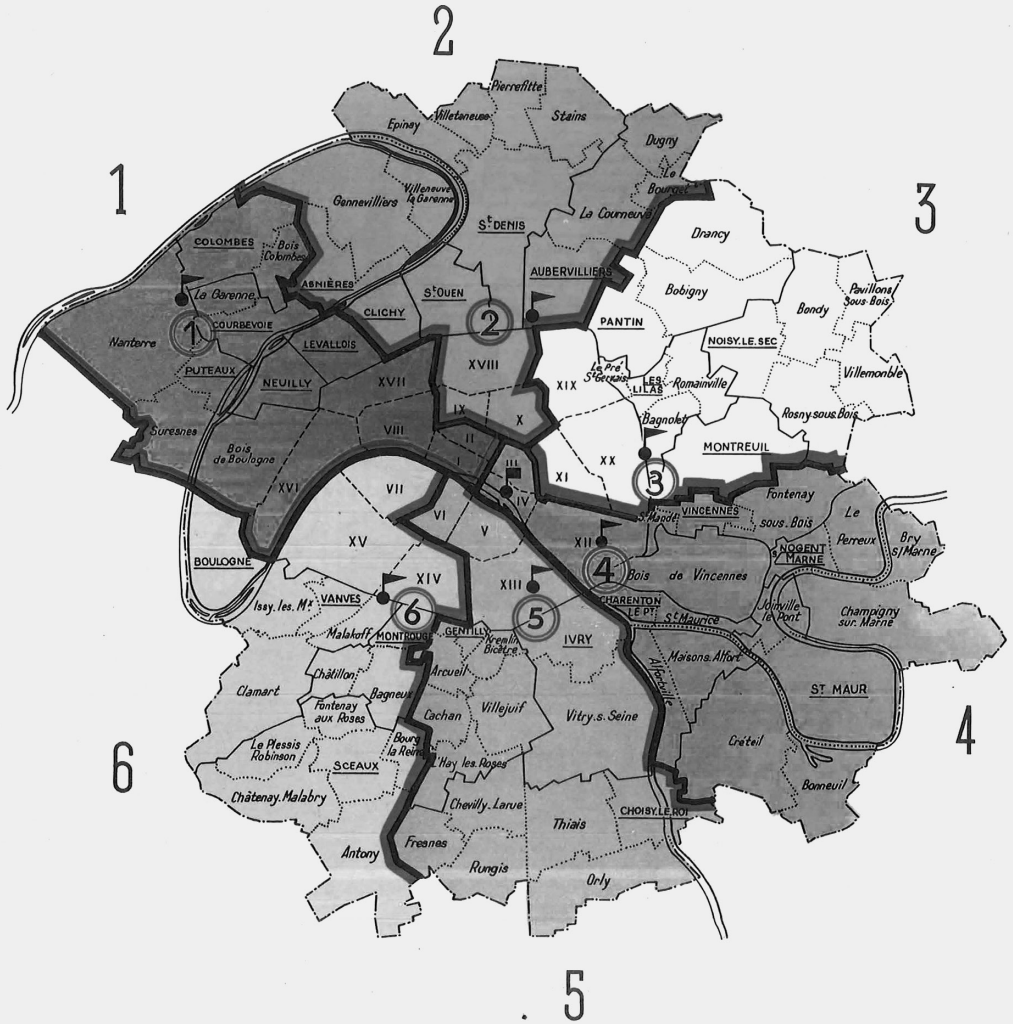
In the course of the Algerian War of Independence, this “Papon System” was not restricted to colonial Algerians but continued unabated in Paris. Shortly before the first French Generals’ Putsch in Algiers on 13 May 1958, Papon was promoted, in March, to the position of Prefect of the Paris Police. In June of that same year, General de Gaulle retained Papon in his post, so that under the new Fifth Republic (until January 1967), Papon became the longest-serving police chief since the time of Louis Lépine around the turn of the twentieth century (as Papon himself proudly proclaimed).<sup>53</sup> Meanwhile, Jean Chapel—another former Vichy civil servant in Bordeaux who had also escaped the purge—replaced Papon in Constantine.

Consequently, the ghosts of Vichy continued to live and serve in colonial Algeria, and echoes of the Vichy regime and the Second World War persisted in Algeria under French rule even after Papon’s departure from Constantine.<sup>54</sup> While describing his various responsibilities as Police Prefect in Paris during his trial of 1997 to 1998, Papon confirmed that one of his roles in Paris had been to fight “the assaults organized by the FLN, whose methods of action were founded in terrorism, as routinely occur today in all countries.”<sup>55</sup> With the intention of primarily targeting the Algerian immigrant community in Paris and undermining their claims for independence, Papon maintained that he “had asked SAS officers, who had done wonders in their pacification tasks, to come from Algeria. We were able to penetrate the FLN environments and, in the end, dominate this devastating phenomenon.”<sup>56</sup> Papon deliberately transferred not only certain Vichy methods to colonial Algeria but also specific actors and techniques that had been employed in colonial Algeria to the postwar Fifth Republic under General de Gaulle.

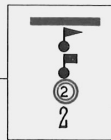
Immediately after Papon’s nomination in Paris, three senior SAS and SAU officers “were secretly flown in from Algeria on 13 August 1958”<sup>57</sup> in order to first create the Service d’assistance technique aux français musulmans d’Algérie (SAT-FMA, or Office of Technical Assistance to the French Muslims of Algeria), which was directly controlled by the newly established Service de coordination des affaires algériennes (SCAA, or Office of Coordination of Algerian Affairs) of the Paris Police Prefecture. Other SAS officers arrived



PRÉFECTURE DE POLICE  
 SERVICE D'ASSISTANCE TECHNIQUE POUR LES F. M. A.



LÉGENDE



Limite des Secteurs.  
 Bureau de Secteur.  
 D<sup>1</sup><sup>er</sup> S.A.T.- F.M.A. et B.R.S.  
 N° des Secteurs SAT.  
 N° des Districts de Police.

----- Limite de la Seine.  
 ----- " des Arrondissements.  
 ----- " des Circonscriptions.  
 ----- " des Communes.  
 ----- " des Districts de Police.

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Fig. 15 Distribution of the sectors of the Service d'assistance technique aux français musulmans d'Algérie (SAT-FMA) within the Prefecture of Paris Police

from Algeria to strategically lead special-intelligence offices in Paris called the Bureaux de renseignements spécialisés (BRS, or Specialized Intelligence Bureaus). Papon energized the exchange of information and strategies between the SAS in colonial Algeria and the SAT-FMA in Paris (fig.15).<sup>58</sup>

In 1988 Papon published *Les chevaux du pouvoir: le préfet de police du général de Gaulle ouvre des dossiers, 1958–1967* (The Horses of Power: De Gaulle's Police Prefect Opens the Files, 1958–1967), in which he continually eulogized his own role in destroying the FLN and resolutely denied the Paris massacre of October 1961, during which French National Police (under Papon's authority) attacked thousands of peaceful Algerian demonstrators. According to Papon, his intention had been "to settle SAS officers who spoke Arabic, knew the specific problems of migrant workers, and were sensitive to their difficulties and misfortunes—even their distress—in those areas inhabited by the Muslim population, where we were almost absent."<sup>59</sup> Of course, Papon did not employ SAS officers and infiltrate *harki*<sup>60</sup> agents among Algerians in Paris to provide socioeconomic support but rather to create comprehensive *fichiers* (card-index files), conduct a full census of the Algerian community, identify FLN supporters, and eventually to launch anti-FLN propaganda campaigns in the *bidonvilles* of Paris where Algerians lived. Because such measures did not fully satisfy Papon's criteria, he additionally imposed a curfew upon all Algerians, or as then called by the French authorities, *Français musulmans d'Algérie* (French Muslims from Algeria), between 8:30 p.m. and 5:30 a.m. Their cafés had to close at 7:00 p.m., and all car journeys required official permission, or their vehicles would be temporarily impounded.<sup>61</sup>

In October 1961, thousands of Algerians (including women and children) peacefully demonstrated against this "system" in the streets of Paris. What became known as the Battle of Paris culminated in the killing of hundreds of Algerians and the detention of thousands of others. Furthermore, after beating them, the French police physically forced many Algerians into the River Seine.<sup>62</sup> The arrested Algerians were detained in the same Vélodrome d'hiver (Winter Velodrome) located in the Fifteenth Arrondissement that some twenty years earlier had served as the forced collection point for the majority of the Jews deported during the Vichy regime. In this case, Vichy methods that had been successfully exported from Bordeaux to colonial Constantine were then brought back to Paris, the capital city of the democratic Fifth Republic of France, where they were again used against colonized Algerians.



- 1 On Lacoste's role in *Le manifeste des douze*, see for example Brana and Dusseau, *Robert Lacoste*, 93–97.
- 2 Evans, *Algeria*, 155.
- 3 On Papon's trial, see for example Erhel, Aucher, and de La Baume, *Le procès de Maurice Papon*, vol. 1; Conan, *Le procès Papon*; Golsan, *Papon Affair*. On Papon's years as a Vichy civil servant, see for example Boulanger, *Papon: un technocrate français*.
- 4 On how Papon avoided the postwar purge, see for example Boulanger, *Papon: un intrus dans la République*, 159–97.
- 5 Papon, *La vérité n'intéressait personne*, 30–31.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 30.
- 7 On the massacre of 8 May 1945 and the numerous estimates of the number of victims, see for example Benot, *Massacres coloniaux*, 9–35; Amrani, *Le 8 mai 1945 en Algérie*, 42–70; Alleg, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 265–67.
- 8 Peyroulou, "Maurice Papon, administrateur colonial," 71.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 70.
- 10 Cited in Kelly, "Papon Transition," 47–48.
- 11 On the activities of Papon in Constantine between 1949 and 1951, see for example Peyroulou, "Maurice Papon, administrateur colonial," 71–75.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 76.
- 13 See for example Blanchard, *La police parisienne et les Algériens*; House and MacMaster, "Une Journée Portée Disparue," in *Crisis and Renewal in France*, 267–90.
- 14 On Papon's planning policies, see for example Papon, "Pour une politique d'équipement." On Papon's aims in Morocco, see House and MacMaster, *Paris 1961*, 41–48.
- 15 Decree no. 56-274 of 17 March 1956, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, 19 March 1956, pp. 2665-66, [https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo\\_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000869921&pageCourante=02665](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000869921&pageCourante=02665) (accessed on 3 March 2015).
- 16 Vital-Durand, *Les collectivités territoriales en France*, 20.
- 17 Barral, "Idéal et pratique du régionalisme," 925.
- 18 Denizart and Passot, *La région avant la région*, 66.
- 19 FRANOM 93/ 4400, letter of 16 May 1956 defining the powers of the IGAME, cited in Peyroulou, "Maurice Papon, administrateur colonial," 77.
- 20 Masson, *Provinces, départements, régions*, 570.
- 21 Later, in 1958, a new Department of Bougie (in Kabylia) was created and placed under the control of the Constantine Military Army Corps.
- 22 FRANOM 12 CAB 124. Inspecteur général de l'administration en mission extraordinaire pour les départements de l'est algérien à Monsieur le Ministre résident en Algérie, signed by Maurice Papon, Constantine, 5 July 1956.
- 23 Erhel, Aucher, and de La Baume, *Le procès de Maurice Papon*, vol. 1, 190.
- 24 Cited in Einaudi, *La bataille de Paris*, 48.
- 25 *Ibid.* One of the most infamous torture centers was the Ferme Ameziane. It was located in the Constantine region and fell under the authority of Papon. See for example Einaudi, *La ferme Améziane*; Vidal-Naquet, *Torture*; Branche, *La torture et l'armée*, 268–76.
- 26 Einaudi, *La bataille de Paris*, 51.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 52.
- 28 Peyroulou, "Maurice Papon, administrateur colonial," 78.
- 29 SHAT 1 H 2576 D 2. Inspecteur général de l'administration en mission extraordinaire, Préfet de Constantine, Instructions relatives aux regroupements de populations, 17 September 1957.
- 30 *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- 31 *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- 32 *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- 33 *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- 34 *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- 35 *Ibid.*

- 36 Ibid., p. 7.
- 37 SHAT 1 H 2576 D 1. Le Ministre de l'Algérie, Robert Lacoste à Messieurs les Inspecteurs généraux de l'administration en mission extraordinaire, Messieurs les Préfets, Regroupements de Population. Instruction no. 388 – DGAP/Sp, Algiers, 12 November 1957, p. 1.
- 38 Ibid., annexes I and II.
- 39 SHAT 1 H 2576 D 1. Regroupements de population, situation au 1 Avril 1959.
- 40 SHAT 1 H 2574. Le général Parlange, Conseiller technique et inspecteur général du regroupement à Monsieur le délégué général du gouvernement en Algérie, Algiers, 15 February 1960, p. 2.
- 41 Ibid., p. 4.
- 42 SHAT 1 H 1119. Délégation générale du gouvernement, Commandement en chef des forces en Algérie, Commandement supérieur interarmées pour la 10<sup>e</sup> région militaire, Etat-major – 6<sup>e</sup> Bureau, Synthèse relative à la participation de l'armée aux tâches extra-militaires de pacification au 1<sup>er</sup> semestre 1958, Algiers, 1 August 1958, p. 18.
- 43 Ibid., p. 30.
- 44 SHAT 1 H 1119. Commandement de la X<sup>e</sup> région militaire et des forces terrestres en Algérie, Etat-major – 6<sup>e</sup> Bureau, Synthèse relative à la participation de l'armée aux tâches extra-militaires de pacification au 2<sup>e</sup> semestre 1958, Algiers, 1 February 1959, p. 18.
- 45 SHAT 1 H 1119. Délégation générale du gouvernement, Commandement en chef des forces en Algérie, Commandement supérieur interarmées pour la 10<sup>e</sup> région militaire, Etat-major – 6<sup>e</sup> Bureau, Synthèse relative à la participation de l'armée aux tâches extra-militaires de pacification au 1<sup>er</sup> semestre 1958, Algiers, 1 August 1958, p. 3.
- 46 SHAT 1 H 2576. Commandement supérieur interarmées, 10<sup>e</sup> région militaire, Etat-major, 6<sup>e</sup> Bureau, Renseignement pour la préparation d'une conférence au CHEM, Algiers, 2 April 1958, p. 7.
- 47 Ibid.
- 48 SHAT 1 H 2576 D 2. Inspecteur général de l'administration en mission extraordinaire, Préfet de Constantine, Instructions relatives aux regroupements de populations, 17 September 1957.
- 49 FRANOM 12 CAB 124. Déclaration faite à la radio le mardi 17 septembre 1957 par Monsieur Maurice Papon, Inspecteur général de l'administration en mission extraordinaire pour la région de l'est algérien, p. 3.
- 50 On the objectives and further developments of the Morice Line, see for example Pervillé, *Atlas de la Guerre*, 34–35; Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, 263–67.
- 51 FRANOM 12 CAB 124. Déclaration faite à la radio le mardi 17 septembre 1957 par Monsieur Maurice Papon, Inspecteur général de l'administration en mission extraordinaire pour la région de l'est algérien, p. 2.
- 52 House and MacMaster, *Paris 1961*, 59.
- 53 Erhel, Aucher, and de La Baume, *Le procès de Maurice Papon*, vol. 1, 196.
- 54 On the combined legacy of Vichy civil servants and colonial Algeria, see for example House and MacMaster, *Paris 1961*, 33–40.
- 55 Erhel, Aucher, and de La Baume, *Le procès de Maurice Papon*, vol. 1, 196.
- 56 Ibid., 197.
- 57 House and MacMaster, *Paris 1961*, 70.
- 58 On Papon's part in the combined legacy of colonial violent repression in Algeria and Paris, see for example *ibid.*, 67–80; Cunibille, *L'assistance technique*; Blanchard, "Encadrer des 'citoyens diminués,'" 219–30.
- 59 Papon, *Les chevaux du pouvoir*, 103–4.
- 60 The term *harki* (from *harka*, "movement") refers to Algerians who served in the French army during the Algerian War of Independence.
- 61 Note de service no. 149-61 of 5 October 1961, meeting agenda by Maurice Papon, printed in Einaudi, *La bataille de Paris*, 299.
- 62 The exact figures are unclear to this day.

## 4. On General de Gaulle's Colonial Project

The Algiers Generals' Putsch of 13 May 1958 marked both the return of General Charles de Gaulle to power from his twelve-year official political retirement and the collapse of the French Fourth Republic (1946–1958). The coup was led by the apostles of *Algérie française* (French Algeria), who included both civil servants and army officers. The latter included General Jacques Massu, commander-in-chief of the bloody Battle of Algiers, and General Raoul Salan, one of the fathers of counterrevolutionary warfare who, in February 1961, would cofound the paramilitary underground group known as the Organisation de l'armée secrète (OAS, or Secret Army Organization) that opposed de Gaulle's policies in colonial Algeria. The May 1958 putsch and de Gaulle's restoration were fully supported by right-wing *colons*, known as the *ultras*, as well as figures like Jacques Soustelle.<sup>1</sup>

"May '58" was a profound politico-military crisis—if not a revolution—for France. The rebellion of the civil and military authorities was a crucial event in the history of the French Republic, and of colonialism in general, and it was a critical turning point in the French war in Algeria. Although many publications have addressed the various versions and interpretations of May '58—including those written by the actors in the turmoil themselves—its impact has largely faded in common French memory. In May 2008, the Centre d'histoire de sciences politiques (Center for the History of Political Sciences) commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of May '58 in a colloquium. The director of the institution and specialist on the cultural and political history of France in the twentieth century, Jean-François Sirinelli, juxtaposed the huge media attention given to the events of May '68 with the apparent disregard for May '58, although both were significant revolutionary moments, separated by only a decade: "Why does 13 May 1958—whose anniversary is a round number, fifty years—arouse so little interest within French society? I do not have the answer to such a question."<sup>2</sup> Both his question and his answer are telling. The majority of French society seems to remember the period following the Vichy regime, or as a 1979 book title put it, *Les Trente Glorieuses ou la révolution invisible de 1946 à 1975* (Glorious Thirty or the Invisible Revolution from 1946 to 1975),<sup>3</sup> without giving May '58 a second thought.

The events of May 1958 not only brought de Gaulle back to power but also to Algiers—evoking a distinct *déjà-vu*. In May 1943, during the Vichy regime, de Gaulle had moved his headquarters from London to the French territory of

Algiers. With the establishment of the Comité français de libération nationale (CFLN, or French Committee of National Liberation) in June 1943, Algiers became the capital of Free France.<sup>4</sup> In the second volume of his *Mémoires de guerre* (War Memoirs), all three of which were published from 1954 to 1959, de Gaulle describes arriving in Algiers and making a radio broadcast to the French in France in which he declared that “their government was now functioning in Algiers while it waited to return to Paris.”<sup>5</sup> Algiers and the armed forces of Algeria played a crucial role in “seducing” the British and American forces that arrived in Algiers in November 1942, keeping his rival, General Henri Giraud, at bay, fighting the French Vichy regime, and consequently constituting the French Fourth Republic in 1946. Importantly, neither General de Gaulle nor his allies prevented or even condemned the French forces’ violent massacres of May 1945 in the Algerian region of Constantine.<sup>6</sup>

From 1958 to 1962—the year of Algeria’s independence from France—General de Gaulle visited Algeria’s northern and southern departments eight times. The fact that he did so five times between June and December 1958 alone is testimony to the key importance of Algeria and the gravity of the war there.<sup>7</sup> In his first official visit to Algiers on 3–7 June 1958, when he delivered his legendary (and overinterpreted) phrase “Je vous ai compris!” (I have understood you!) at the Forum of Algiers on 4 June, de Gaulle assured the huge crowd that he indeed knew their desires. He declared, “I see that the road you have opened in Algeria is that of renewal and fraternity,” spelling out that the renewal that they sought “begins from the beginning—that is, from our institutions—and that is why I am here.”<sup>8</sup> De Gaulle set himself the task and conferred on himself the right to remodel French institutions, not only in Algeria under French colonial rule but also in France itself. A day before his Algiers speech, law no. 58-520 had been approved, according his government *pleins pouvoirs* (full powers) for a period of six months and thus ensuring that what de Gaulle was about to announce was, at least formally, achievable.<sup>9</sup>

De Gaulle also inversely verified the disparities in status that affected the ten million inhabitants who lived in Algeria under French rule. At the time, this comprised different Algerian populations whom the colonial authorities had first referred to as *indigènes* (indigenous) and then as *musulmans* (Muslims), Jews who had been granted French citizenship in 1870, and French or European citizens (today known as *pieds-noirs*). The general declared: “I duly record in the name of France ... that from today, France considers that, in all Algeria, there is only one unique category of

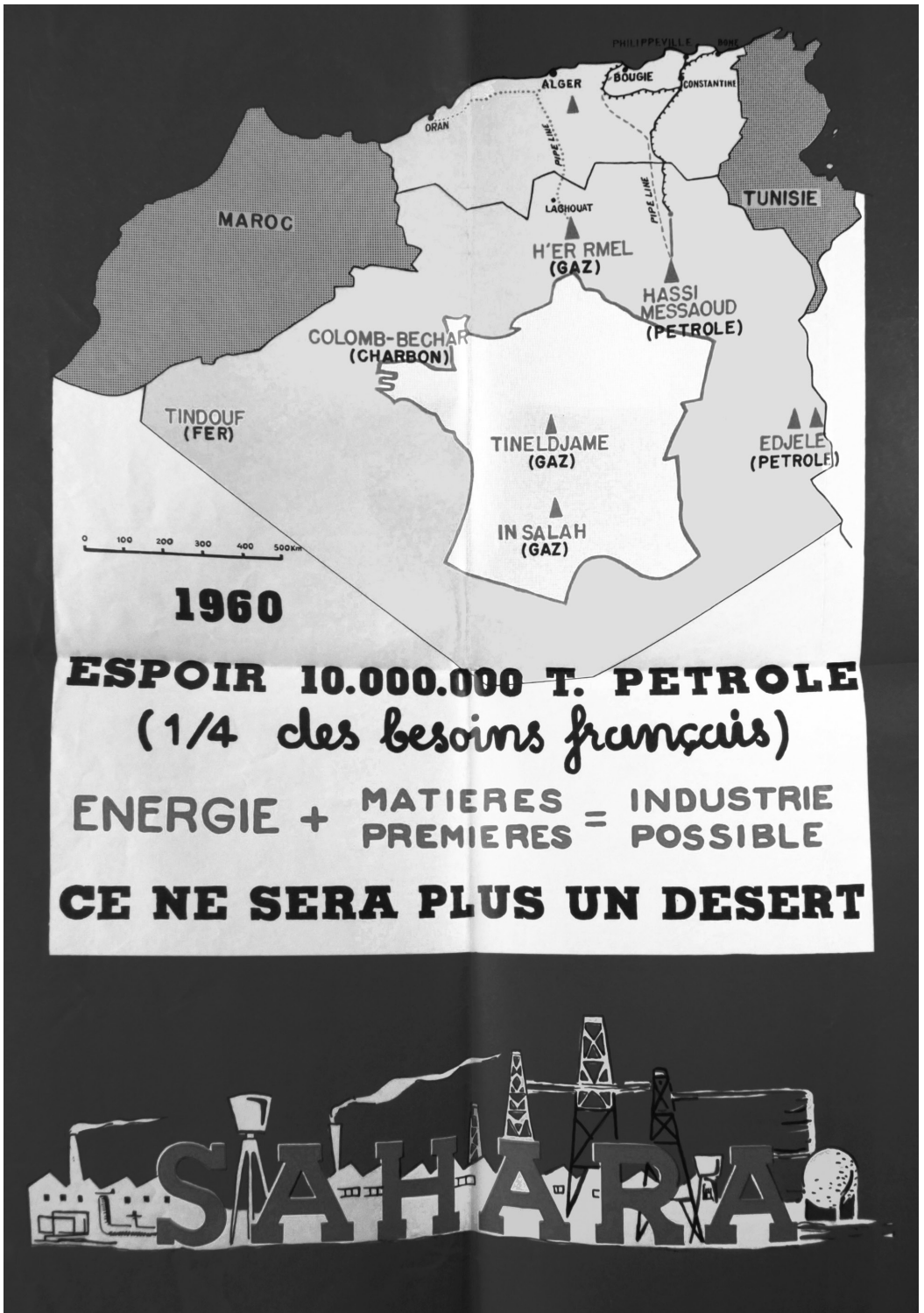


Fig. 16 Promotion poster on the French exploitation of the Algerian Sahara

inhabitants: there are only fully fledged Frenchmen [*Français à part entière*—fully fledged Frenchmen with the same rights and the same duties.”<sup>10</sup> At heart, de Gaulle’s statement was an admission of the obvious dichotomy between the colonizer and the colonized. He emphasized that it was imperative to create opportunities and provide the means to those who had so far lacked them, and that the right to dignity of those who had been excluded had to be acknowledged. At the same time, de Gaulle stressed that it was equally crucial to guarantee a homeland to all those who felt they lacked one.<sup>11</sup> De Gaulle’s twofold aims were short-lived and were soon distorted to defend other, more prosaic French interests in colonized Algeria.

In a repeat of April 1944, when General de Gaulle’s Algiers-based provisional government had extended the right to vote to Frenchwomen (which led them to vote for the first time in April 1945 during the municipal elections in France and again in October 1945 in the first postwar national ballot), on 3 July 1958 de Gaulle decreed Algerian women’s suffrage. He then announced that a referendum would be held on 28 September 1958, enabling men and women in France, the overseas territories, and (for the first time) colonial Algeria to approve or disapprove the constitution of the French Fifth Republic—the constitution that is still valid today.

It was on his last day of his second visit to Algeria, on 1–3 July 1958, that de Gaulle revealed his specific intentions, pronouncing, “Tonight, I proclaim that France intends to carry out on this soil a vast plan of renewal that will achieve goals in which all will have their part. First of all, this means that everyone makes a living by working. Many new construction sites will be opened starting today.”<sup>12</sup> The “renewal” first announced a month earlier had now become a “vast plan of renewal.” De Gaulle promised that before the end of that year he would promulgate new industrially constructed *grands ensembles* (large-scale settlements) that would be built on the territory of Algeria, and he pledged that “starting this year, the number of new housing units will be doubled.”<sup>13</sup> The general vowed that additional financial funds would be freed up immediately in order to meet the amounts earmarked for the *équipement de l’Algérie* (equipment for Algeria) in France’s estimated 1958 budget and to carry out what he argued was an *action d’urgence* (emergency action). Referring to the “necessary resources” that the country would need, he stated that Algeria’s “ground and underground contain them.”<sup>14</sup> What this implied was that de Gaulle’s enormous renewal plan also discreetly aimed to exploit the rich resources beneath the Algerian Sahara (figs. 16–18). To this end, he appointed Jacques Soustelle as Delegate Minister of Overseas Territories and Departments, the Sahara, and Atomic Energy,





Fig. 17 Robert Lacoste, French Resident Minister of the French Government in Algeria, and Maurice Lemaire, French Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, visiting the oil fields in Hassi Messaoud, Algeria, February 1957

Fig. 18 Inauguration of the oil pipeline Hassi Messaoud–Bougie, Algerian Sahara, December 1959



a post that existed from February 1959 to February 1960 under de Gaulle's Prime Minister, Michel Debré.

In his *L'espérance trahie* (Hope Betrayed), published in 1962, Soustelle described his economic assignment in southern Algeria under French colonial rule: "I endeavored to carry out the work of a veritable economic integration in the Sahara, since oil, gas, and minerals were to be incorporated into the economy of the whole Métropole-Algeria."<sup>15</sup> De Gaulle had a personal understanding of the various assets of the Algerian Sahara, acquired during a private visit to various oilfields and construction sites in March 1957, prior to his official return to power in May 1958. The potential he foresaw there consisted not only in exploiting natural resources but also in conducting nuclear tests in the Algerian desert during and after the Algerian Revolution.<sup>16</sup> The French authorities would subsequently detonate their first atomic bomb, named "Gerboise Bleue" (Blue Jerboa—after a tiny jumping desert rodent), in the Algerian Sahara on 13 February 1960; the second, "Gerboise Blanche" (White Jerboa), on 1 April 1960; the third, "Gerboise Rouge" (Red Jerboa), on 27 December 1960; and the fourth, "Gerboise Verte" (Green Jerboa), on 25 April 1961. These test explosions took place even after Algerian independence in 1962, continuing until 1966.

Flanked by a propaganda campaign overseen by his Minister of Information—the well-seasoned Soustelle, who held the post from July 1958 to January 1959—de Gaulle's constitutional referendum was successfully voted in, and he immediately moved to fulfill his pledges. During his fourth official visit to Algeria, he announced at the Place de la Brèche (today the Place du 1<sup>er</sup> Novembre)<sup>17</sup> in the Algerian city of Constantine on 3 October 1958 the initiation of a colossal five-year *plan de développement économique et social* (socioeconomic development plan) for Algeria under French rule. The plan was therefore acknowledged as the Plan de Constantine (1959–1963) after the city in which it was publically proclaimed (fig. 19).

### **The Premises of the Plan de Constantine**

In political and economic terms, renewal alone was considered insufficient, prompting de Gaulle to opt for a more radical plan of action, asserting, "it is this country, so vital and so courageous, but so difficult and so suffering, that should be profoundly transformed."<sup>18</sup> Accompanying this, he also strategically launched a plan to ensure the prolongation of the long-inequitable "rapport" between France and Algeria that had begun in 1830, stressing that "because that is the nature of things, the fate of Algeria will be grounded ... in its personality and its intimate solidarity with the French

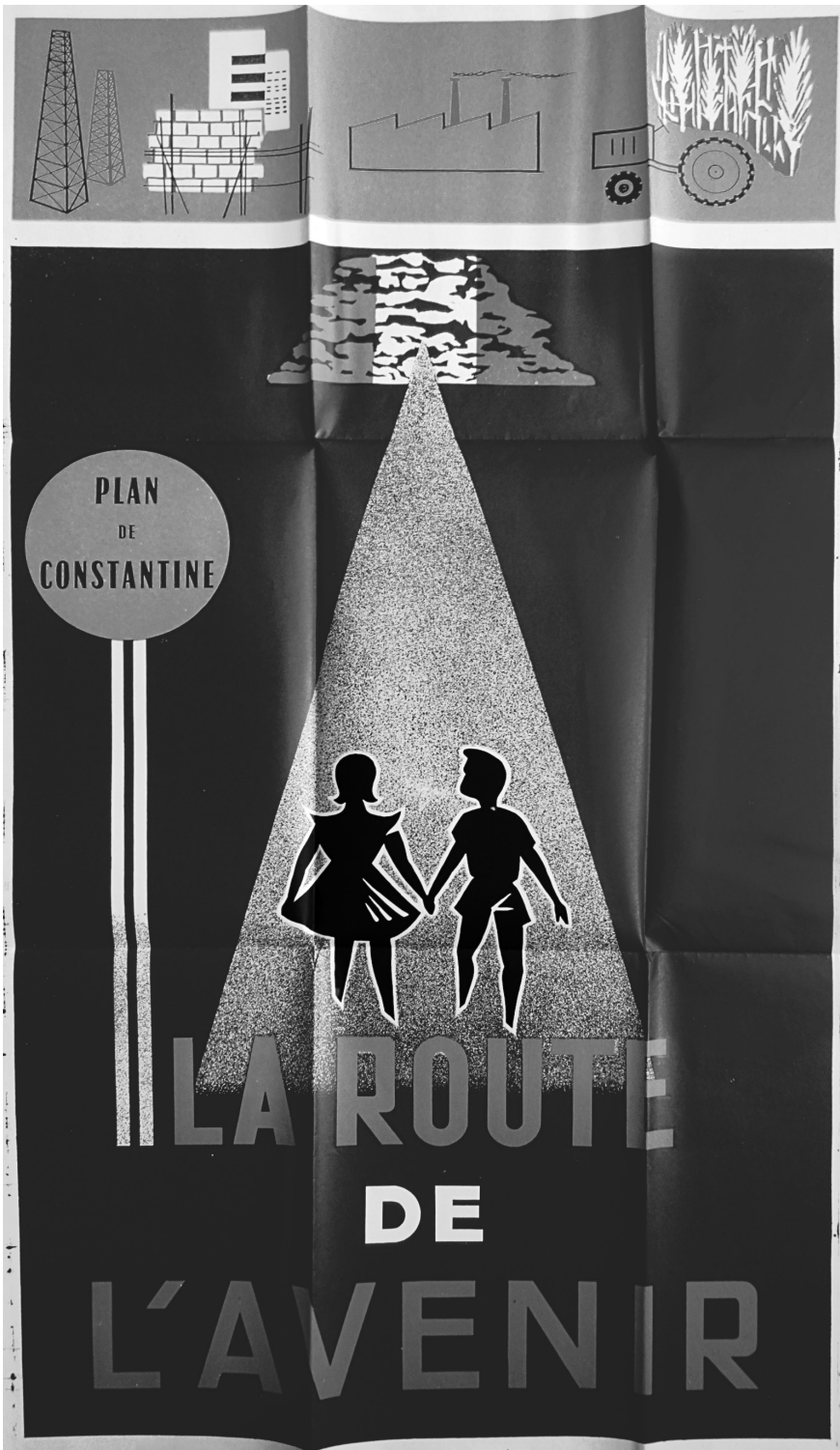


Fig. 19 Promotion poster of the Plan de Constantine

Métropole.”<sup>19</sup> Seen from one perspective, what de Gaulle perhaps meant in propagating the term “solidarity,” later expressed as “cooperation,” was in reality the protection of France’s economic, military, and atomic exploitation of the soil of what would become independent Algeria, as was indeed meticulously negotiated in the Evian Agreements of March 1962.

The grand five-year reform plan ushered in by de Gaulle was addressed to *Algériennes et Algérien*<sup>20</sup> (Algerian women and men) and was truly multifaceted. The plan stipulated that during the five-year period, at least one-tenth of young staff in France recruited to serve in the government, the administration, the judicial services, the army, the education sector, and the civil services had to be recruited from the Arab, Kabyle, or Mozabite communities; salaries and wages in Algeria were to be raised to levels comparable to those in France; two-thirds of girls and boys were to be enrolled in schools, and during the three following years (1963 to 1966) universal schooling would be achieved; and 250,000 hectares of new land were to be allotted to Muslim farmers. Before the end of the five years, de Gaulle declared:

The first phase of Algeria’s agricultural and industrial development [*de mise en valeur*] plan will be brought to its completion. This phase particularly includes the delivery and distribution of Saharan oil and gas; the establishment of large metallurgical and chemical complexes; the construction of housing for one million people; the adequate development of sanitary installations, ports, roads, and transmissions; and the regular employment of 400,000 new workers.<sup>21</sup>

Of all these aims, the following pages concentrate on examining the politics of the prescribed construction of new dwellings for one million people.

### **The Nuances of Economic Planning**

De Gaulle stated that during these five years, the “fraternal human contact” initiated by the French army would be continued and deepened: not only in Algeria but also in Paris and the French provinces. In other words, the wide series of duties ascribed to the Sections administratives spécialisées (SASs, or Specialized Administrative Sections) by Soustelle in 1955 and preserved by the Resident Minister of Algeria, Robert Lacoste, were to be expanded. To this end, not only were Algerians victim of constant military control by the French authorities, but they were also to be subjected to rapid and

forced capitalist industrialization. The French Left promptly denounced de Gaulle's plan, labeling it a clear case of "neocolonialism."<sup>22</sup>

On 19 December 1958, de Gaulle removed certain military functions from the purview of the civil authorities. General Raoul Salan, who had served in Algeria since November 1956 and had been appointed by de Gaulle himself in June 1958 as both commander-in-chief of the armed forces in Algeria and Delegate General of the French Government in Algeria, was recalled to France and assigned the function of Inspector General of Defense in Paris, which displeased him.<sup>23</sup> In an attempt to restore civil authority and to divorce the civil authorities from their military counterparts, de Gaulle appointed two men in place of the all-powerful Salan. The first was air force General Maurice Challe, named as commander-in-chief of the armed forces in Algeria. General Challe launched the extensive military program that took his name (the Plan Challe) and along with General Salan and others would later take part in the second military putsch of April 1961 in Algiers. The second figure appointed by de Gaulle was the Inspector of Finances Paul Delouvrier, named as Delegate General of the French Government in Algeria. Delouvrier's subsequent efforts focused on successfully carrying out de Gaulle's Plan de Constantine.

The choice of Delouvrier was an important one. Although renowned in France today for his subsequent regional-planning career in Paris (1961–1969), which followed his Algerian experience, and for his role at the Institut d'aménagement et d'urbanisme de la région parisienne (IAURP, or Institute for Regional and Urban Planning for the Paris Region), earlier in his career Delouvrier had actively contributed to France's national economic reconstruction after the Second World War. In particular, Delouvrier served as a member of the preliminary study commission<sup>24</sup> that elaborated the first five-year Plan de modernisation et d'équipement (Equipment and Modernization Plan) for France, otherwise known as the Monnet Plan, after its major instigator, Jean Monnet (who today is widely regarded as the founding father of the European Union).

Before the First World War, Monnet had represented his family's cognac business overseas, particularly in London, the United States, and Canada. He later became Deputy Secretary General of the League of Nations in Geneva from 1920 to 1922, having been nominated by both the French and British Premiers upon the creation of the league in 1919. In the aftermath of the Wall Street crash of 1929, Monnet became Vice-chairman of the Transamerica Banking Corporation in San Francisco. In his *Mémoires* (Memoirs), Monnet wrote: "In San Francisco, I gained then lost a lot of

money. I had only capitalized experience.”<sup>25</sup> His familiarity with American Keynesianism and with American financial relations would later inform the tenets for his postwar planning in France and assist him in tapping funds from the United States’ Marshall Plan (officially called the European Recovery Program but popularly named after the Secretary of State and former Chief of Staff of the US Army, George Marshall).

During the Second World War, Monnet became a major figure in the Allied military and economic efforts against Nazi Germany and the Vichy regime. In 1939, he was first appointed chairman of the Anglo-French Economic Coordinating Committee in London, responsible for harmonizing the joint planning of the wartime economies. Following the Armistice of 22 June 1940, he was asked to move to Washington, D.C., to continue his role as a member of the British Supply Council, a post he held until 1942. Despite his French nationality, Monnet stressed that by this point he had become well-acquainted with “the mechanisms of decisions in the United States, the engine, the organs of transmission—and the brakes, too.”<sup>26</sup> Lastly, while working for the American Victory Program, in February 1943 Monnet joined his American, French, and British counterparts in Algiers, where he met the aforementioned General Giraud prior to the arrival of de Gaulle from London in May. Monnet acted to defuse the various tensions between Giraud and de Gaulle before becoming a member of the new Comité français de libération national (CFLN, or French National Liberation Committee), in which he was responsible for armament and supply.<sup>27</sup> Richly equipped with financial and negotiating skills, Monnet traveled back to Washington in November 1943, de Gaulle encouraging him to not only secure American support for Free France but also to convince President Franklin Roosevelt to acknowledge his new government.<sup>28</sup>

In 1945, still under General de Gaulle, who had become President of the *Gouvernement provisoire de la République française* (GPRF, or Provisional Government of the French Republic), Monnet and his well-selected team took charge of France’s economic recovery. Among his numerous initiatives, Monnet advocated the immediate exploitation of the German coal and steel resources in the Ruhr region by abolishing the International Authority for the Ruhr and replacing it with a joint organization led by France and Germany.<sup>29</sup> In January 1946, an institutional framework for the Monnet Plan called the *Commissariat général du plan* (CGP, or General Commissariat of the Plan) was officially founded, almost inevitably headed by Monnet himself. The CGP was expected to make a complete inventory of France’s technical needs and capabilities, as well as to define a five-year plan for

modernization and production. Amongst those who served in the CGP was Paul Delouvrier, who during the war had fought in the French Resistance and now acted as the head of CGP's Financial Office, a post he held from 1946 to 1947. Monnet later warmly recalled Delouvrier's role in the CGP's early team, writing that his "intelligence and the generosity of his character completely fit what our enterprise expected from a new generation of Frenchmen. He enthusiastically tackled the plan's financial problems and began a very successful career."<sup>30</sup>

In 1950, Monnet drafted what would become the Schuman Plan, named after French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman. Based on the Schuman Plan and set by the Treaty of Paris of 1951, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) emerged, presided over by Monnet from 1951 to 1955. In 1957, two additional institutions were created: the European Economic Community (EEC), founded by the Treaty of Rome; and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC), created by the Euratom Treaty. The ECSC was later incorporated into the European Community (EC) upon the creation of the European Union in 1993. In 1953, Delouvrier for his part served as General Secretary of the French interministerial committee set up to discuss questions of European economic cooperation in order to coordinate the activities of French state agencies with the newly established ECSC, directed by Monnet.<sup>31</sup>

In 1958, when Delouvrier became Governor General of Algeria, over a decade after his first mission to the CGP, the French Republic and its president (again, General de Gaulle) once again found themselves trying to address further supranational financial issues. Pierre Massé, whom de Gaulle appointed to serve as the head of the CGP from 1959 to 1966 (while the Plan de Constantine was underway), stated that "originally, de Gaulle and Jean Monnet played modernization against decadence. In signing the Treaty of Rome in 1957, the Fourth Republic played economic openness against withdrawal."<sup>32</sup> But the "play" of the Fifth Republic that General de Gaulle instituted was an ambiguous one.

Compared to the Monnet Plan, the Marshall Plan, and the Schuman Plan, which all honored their progenitors by name, the Plan de Constantine was seemingly shy of its parentage. Although it was General de Gaulle who announced the plan's objectives and Delouvrier whom he appointed to carry them out, the Plan de Constantine was never epitomized with the name of a French representative in Algeria under French rule. No one aspired to engrave his name in France's undeniable history in Algeria. Although the reasons for this deliberate nonpersonification of the plan are unclear, it could



be speculated—retrospectively speaking—that it was because it represented a continuation of the colonial project, or otherwise that it was an endeavor that was doomed to failure. In addition, the plan’s official subtitle was not, as in the Monnet Plan, “Modernization and Equipment,” but rather “The Economic and Social Development of Algeria.”<sup>33</sup> The Plan de Constantine was thus expected to both socially and economically “develop” instead of “modernize” Algeria and its inhabitants.

The term “development” and its antonym “underdevelopment” (in French *sous-développement*) were, and still are, widely used in order to distinguish those who are “developed” from those who are “underdeveloped”;<sup>34</sup> thus the latter are automatically forced to be developed by those who think that they already have achieved this status. The so-called developed accord themselves the right to define and decide who is or who is not developed and, in France’s historical case, the right to intervene and impose a specific form of French development. Concretely, along with implementing the Plan de Constantine in Algeria, de Gaulle entrusted Delouvrier with a somewhat peculiar mission, namely to “pacify and administer, but at the same time, transform.”<sup>35</sup>

The socioeconomic development plan for Algeria was to be drafted by specialized “central and departmental commissions” comprised of representatives from the public administrations, the private economic sectors, and the trade unions, as well as a few professionals. There were five central commissions, each with separate responsibilities: the Central Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Central Commission of Industrial Development, the Central Commission of Social Facilities, the Commission of Synthesis, and the General Commission of *aménagement du territoire* (Territorial Development).<sup>36</sup> In May 1959, the latter was subdivided into four subcommissions: 1) Economic Interests; 2) Infrastructure; 3) Planning of Major Urban and Industrial Zones (also called *aménagement urbain*, Urban Planning); and 4) Administrative Equipment, which served the needs of the French government in Algeria.<sup>37</sup> The proposals that the commissions worked on were to be approved of by the Conseil supérieur du plan de l’Algérie (High Council of the Plan of Algeria). This council was composed of an honorary president, who was also the head of the CGP, and a president, who was also Deputy General Secretary of Economic Affairs at the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria.<sup>38</sup>

Although the aims of French “modernization” in France and French “development” in Algeria were dissimilar, in both cases the supreme decision depended on the French head of the CGP, who was not only the honorary

president but also the president of the Caisse d'équipement pour le développement de l'Algérie (CEDA, or Fund for the Equipment and Development of Algeria), which was created by decree on 17 March 1959 in order to finance the Plan de Constantine's multifaceted programs. According to Pierre Massé, then head of the CGP, "the trajectory of the *Caisse* [CEDA] reproduced, behind the scenes, that of the Algerian tragedy."<sup>39</sup>

The Plan de Constantine launched by de Gaulle was not devised on a tabula rasa; instead, it was widely inspired by previous long-standing (but unrealized) plans to industrialize Algeria, including the 1955 report of the Commission Maspétiol on the financial relations between Algeria and France under the General Governorate of Jacques Soustelle (which in turn had reutilized certain proposals from the 1944 Commission for Muslim Reforms), or the 1958 "Decennial Perspectives of the Economic Development of Algeria" under Lacoste.<sup>40</sup> The core idea of the plan, however, was one that had been instrumental in France and elsewhere in achieving (or feigning to achieve) auspicious economic and military programs on behalf of the whole nation. In his book *Le plan ou l'Anti-hasard* (The Plan or the Anti-accident), published in 1965 while director of the CGP (and thereby the CEDA), Massé stated that "the development is not only the march to abundance, [but] most likely the construction of a society."<sup>41</sup>

### **Pacification, Administration, and Transformation**

With his announcement on 3 October 1958 of the construction of housing for one million people over a period of five years in Algeria, de Gaulle set out to simultaneously introduce both a French housing market addressed predominantly to Algerians in Algeria under French colonial rule and the requisite large-scale construction industry. De Gaulle regarded the projected construction of roughly 220,000 urban dwellings and 110,000 rural dwellings from 1959 to 1963<sup>42</sup> not only as an imperative economic process but also as one of the most pressing political undertakings of the time.

De Gaulle urged his Delegate General of Government in Algeria, Paul Delouvrier, to consider himself the personification of France in Algeria. In a letter of 18 December 1958, he wrote to Delouvrier: "You are France in Algeria. France: that is, its purpose, its authority, its means."<sup>43</sup> De Gaulle admitted that the politico-economic duties given to Delouvrier would be continuously compromised by insecurity; therefore he requested him to collaborate closely with his military counterpart, the general commander-in-chief of Algeria, and in certain cases to delegate his civil powers to his military colleague without abrogating his superior responsibility.<sup>44</sup> Like his

predecessors, de Gaulle deliberately avoided the term “war.” He kept certain civil responsibilities, such as the *maintien de l'ordre* (enforcement of law and order), under military power, while other civil functions, such as those of the French subprefects in Algeria, were reinforced.<sup>45</sup> In his communication to Delouvrier, de Gaulle wrote that “throughout the ordeals and despite the delays, the will of the government is that Algeria will gradually reveal itself in its deep reality thanks to the actions conducted by all of France. To this end, you need to pacify and administer, but at the same time, transform.”<sup>46</sup>

Delouvrier took de Gaulle’s appeal literally. The very same sentence—“you need to pacify and administer, but at the same time, transform”—was reported and incorporated in a detailed report on the activities of the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria in the first half of 1959; the report was drafted and presented by Delouvrier himself and his Secretary General of Administration in Algeria, André Jacomet. A response to de Gaulle’s order was plainly evaluated and accurately described in two of the report’s chapters.<sup>47</sup> The first, “Pacifier et administrer en s’adaptant aux exigences du présent” (Pacifying and Administering by Adapting to Present Requirements), comprised three sections, as follows.

- 1) The continuation and reinforcement of the *oeuvre de pacification* (pacification works) by defining the army’s operational objectives in civil assignments of *pacification*, which the preceding government had begun, and to define the efforts on behalf of the *centres de regroupements* (regrouping centers) and Delouvrier’s new policy of the *Mille villages* (One Thousand Villages).
- 2) The reinstatement of political versus professional administrative structures by divorcing the civil authorities from their military counterparts and redistributing powers and responsibilities.
- 3) The alteration of administrative capabilities by reinforcing the structure of the administration; combating *sous-administration* (underadministration—which Soustelle and Lacoste also were in favor of); strengthening the role of the SASS; “harmonizing” (to use Delouvrier’s term) Algerian and French legislations and structures; reorganizing the Delegation General of Government in Algeria by creating new coordinating services; augmenting the role of the Secretary General of Administration; and establishing a Direction du plan (Planning Directorate), as well as a Fond de développement (Fund for Development).<sup>48</sup>

The second chapter of Delouvrier and Jacomet's report, entitled "Transformer pour préparer l'Algérie nouvelle" (Transforming to Prepare a New Algeria), contained two parts, as follows:

- 1) Preparing for the future by amplifying the Plan de Constantine's economic objectives, including an expansion of the employment market, the accelerated development of an already-expanding economy, human promotion (mainly in terms of education), the construction of a general economic model, the elaboration of the objectives for each sector, and the determination of regional programs.
- 2) The second part of the second chapter sought to immediately undertake the realization of these goals through a series of "interim actions"<sup>49</sup> that comprised several subelements, including:
  - a) the revision of financial mechanisms by transforming the mode of the planning and scheduling of investment costs, augmenting resources, and realigning expenditures;
  - b) human promotion by means of basic schooling, education, and professional youth training; the promotion of Algerians in public service; the education of civil servants; and the improvement of the status of women;
  - c) social promotion via a special plan of investment, health, and social action; enhancement of the conditions of Algerian workers in France; wage increases; and housing improvements; and
  - d) economic development via industrialization, agricultural development, and improvements in the service sector.<sup>50</sup>

The first part of the report, on pacification and administration, revisited certain premises but confirmed the continuation of enforcement efforts and pre-de Gaulle civil-military operations, such as the SAS and the *camps de regroupement*. By contrast, the second part, on transformation and a new Algeria, introduced a rather unwieldy and oblique set of weapons of an educational, social, gender, spatial, psychological, and purely economic nature. In this sense, de Gaulle and his recently inaugurated Fifth Republic waged not only a military war against Algerian pro-independence fighters but also a transformative socioeconomic war against the entire Algerian population. Moreover, the aforementioned "interim actions" preordained for Algeria were simultaneously and deliberately intended to serve France's long-term interests.

Under the banner of cooperation, the French authorities engineered and secured a prolongation of their presence in Algeria after independence. The authorities negotiated and signed a treaty that stated the “principles of cooperation between the two independent and associated countries in economic, financial, cultural, and technical terms, as well as in the enhancement of the Sahara. [These principles] specify the methods for safeguarding France’s economic and strategic interests.”<sup>51</sup> The mass-housing projects belonged to the category of “financial and technical cooperation.” As a result, what was seemingly a “social action” aimed at Algerians under French colonial rule during the Algerian War of Independence became a technical cooperation and an economic leverage for a French stake in independent Algeria.

Although the French authorities in Algeria built thousands of dwellings during the War of Independence, their exact number remains in doubt. The Conseil supérieur de l’aménagement du territoire et de la construction (CSATC, or High Council of Territorial Development and Construction), which gathered a few months before Algeria’s independence in order to discuss the Plan de Constantine’s results, did report some figures.<sup>52</sup> The document gave details for both completed and uncompleted dwellings for the years 1959 to 1961, as well as the number of dwellings that were expected to be built the following year. The report, entitled “L’habitat Algérien au terme de la troisième année du Plan de Constantine, les perspectives pour 1962” (Housing in Algeria at the End of the Third Year of the Plan de Constantine: Perspectives for 1962), was submitted by Jean Le Guillou, Construction Commissioner for Algeria.<sup>53</sup> The document disjointedly calculated quantitative surveys for two housing categories, namely rural and urban dwellings. According to the figures, during the first three years of the plan, the objective had been to build 45,000 rural dwellings and 85,000 urban dwellings; the actual numbers, however, involved the completion of 38,000 rural dwellings and 69,181 urban dwellings by the end of 1961.<sup>54</sup>

When consulting the archival documents, it is common to discover other figures that contradict these numbers. General de Gaulle gave numerous speeches and press conferences designed to legitimize and trumpet his grand plan and broadcast the successes of his policies in Algeria, both nationally and internationally (especially among the members of the United Nations), but even the basic data that he gave in these attempts to quantify his triumphs were often skewed and untrustworthy. According to the author of *Le Plan de Constantine et la République Algérienne de demain* (The Plan de Constantine and the Algerian Republic of Tomorrow), published

in 1961, “handing General de Gaulle exaggerated figures prior to press conferences and speeches did not help his cause; instead, these figures have provoked criticism and distrust within well-informed circles.”<sup>55</sup> Whatever the true figures, however, the French authorities undoubtedly not only built thousands of dwellings during the last years of the War of Independence in Algeria’s rural and urban areas but also overwhelmingly transformed Algerians’ daily lives.

### **Government Design Commissions**

Two commissions at the CSATC played a major role in designing and building dwellings designed to “transform” Algerians and confirm a “new” Algeria: the Commission de l’habitat et de l’urbanisme (Commission of Housing and Urbanism), and the Commission des zones rurales (Commission of Rural Zones).<sup>56</sup> The former oversaw recommendations for the overall housing programs (and their coordination with urbanization projects) and implemented the construction policies of the Algerian housing projects. The latter was expected to advise on “any question” regarding rural development, in particular on the choice, definition, and objective of the rural renovation zones.<sup>57</sup> The term “any” might imply that assignments of the Commission of Rural Zones also included the *camps de regroupement*. The French architect Marcel Lathuilière, President of the Regional Council of the Order of Architects in Algeria, was a member of the Commission of Housing and Urbanism; the Commission of Rural Zones had none.

In an attempt to define the programs, costs, and players involved in the Plan de Constantine’s dwellings in the “new Algeria,” the French Institut technique du bâtiment et des travaux publics en Algérie (ITEBA, or Technical Institute of Building and Public Works in Algeria) undertook an *Enquête sur l’habitat en Algérie* (A Survey on Housing in Algeria). The ITEBA’s survey was centered on eight debates and conferences that were held by different invited speakers and were chaired by various professionals from the French public and private sectors. The talks were hosted by the University of Algiers and took place from October 1958 to June 1959.<sup>58</sup> The survey also served as the basis for the preparation of a series of booklets (released by the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria) containing proposals for the different types of dwellings. The debates and conferences covered the following themes.



- I. 16 October 1958: *Evolution de l'habitat en Algérie* (Evolution of Housing in Algeria), by René Mayer, head of the Housing Service in the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria; chaired by Jacques Saigot, engineer in chief of *ponts et chaussées* (civil engineering) and director of Public Works and Transportation at the General Delegation of Government in Algeria;
- II. 11 December 1958: *Etude sur l'habitat musulman actuel* (Study of Current Muslim Housing), by Pierre Padovani, deputy director of the Société coopérative musulmane algérienne d'habitation et d'accession à la petite propriété (Algeria-based Muslim Cooperative Society of Housing and Access to Minor Property) and founder of the Union des coopératives de construction d'Oranie (Union of Construction Cooperatives in the Oran Region); chaired by the previously mentioned Marcel Lathuillière;
- III. 8 January 1959: *L'urbanisme en Algérie* (Urbanism in Algeria), by Raymond Roux-Dufort, planner in chief and head of the Urbanism Service at the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria; chaired again by Jacques Saigot;
- IV. 12 March 1959: *Les professions du bâtiment face aux perspectives quinquennales* (Five-Year Perspectives for Building Professionals) by R. Besson, engineer of arts and manufactures; the event was to have been chaired by Longobardi, President of the ITEBA, but due to illness Longobardi was replaced by René Mayer;
- V. 9 April 1959: *Les matériaux de construction et le plan quinquennal* (Construction Materials and the Five-Year Plan) by Jean Meley, industrialist and Honorary President of the Union algérienne de l'industrie et du commerce des matériaux de construction (UNAMAT, or Algeria-Based Union of Industry and Commerce of Construction Materials); chaired by A. Mascherpa, President of the UNAMAT;
- VI. 14 May 1959: *Architecture et productivité* (Architecture and Productivity), by Marcel Lathuillière; chaired by his colleague François Bienvenu, architect and Honorary President of the Regional Council of the Order of Architects in Algeria;
- VII. 28 May 1959: *Le financement de la construction des logements* (Financing Housing Construction), by R. Leroy, chief of the Credit Services at the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria; chaired by L. Nunziato, General Inspector of Financial Services;

VIII. 25 June 1959: Conclusion: *L'habitat dans le plan quinquennal de l'Algérie* (Conclusion: Housing in Algeria's Five-Year Plan), by Jacques Saigot; chaired by Paul Delouvrier.

The general tenor of the discussions was set at the outset of the conferences in René Mayer's first report, dated 16 October 1958, only thirteen days after de Gaulle's speech in Constantine.<sup>59</sup> Mayer was a civil engineer of the *ponts et chaussées* and the head of the Housing Department at the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria, later becoming General Secretary of the Plan de Constantine. Mayer proclaimed that "the first general idea I would insist on—at the risk of scandalizing some of you—is that the problem of housing is above all a matter of quantity."<sup>60</sup> To address this problem, Mayer developed a series of successive programmatic principles and advocated the construction of dwellings for different social classes according to their spending power. He stated that salaries in Algeria were one-fifth of those in France and concluded that it would be inconceivable to build housing costing one-fifth of what it would in France; he stated that, despite their very low incomes, Algerians would nevertheless be willing to allocate more of their money for their apartments than people in France.<sup>61</sup> He argued that Algeria's construction industry, along with its various production and employment spheres, should play a leading role in Algeria's economic expansion. Mayer based his appeal on the popular French adage "Quand le bâtiment va, tout va!" (When the building trade is thriving, everything is thriving!), emphasizing that the French authorities should give particular priority to the building trade, just as "the Russians [had done] in their five-year plans with their 'priority on heavy industry.'"<sup>62</sup>

Mayer argued that Algeria needed to address its shortage of architects and draughtsmen, whose numbers (outside of the capital city) had drastically diminished over the preceding few years; he also noted a worrying absence of young architects in the country. Mayer proposed that these problems could be addressed by introducing housing schemes, revitalizing construction programs, and launching projects reminiscent of those undertaken by the HLM (Habitat à loyer modéré, or Low-Cost Housing) departmental office in Oran. According to Mayer, this office had admirably succeeded in designing a formula that always reproduced "the same apartment blocks" on site.<sup>63</sup>

Mayer likewise stressed the need to industrialize the building industry, arguing that the modes of construction-material production were particularly important, because such materials were entirely contingent on individual private initiatives. He thus recommended that the government should

immediately provide a raft of industrialization assistance measures in order to prevent the same housing-shortage disasters that had befallen France following the Second World War. He also stated that the insufficient number of skilled workers created an overly tight market, to such an extent that Algerians' salaries would be higher than their counterparts in France. Moreover, he proposed applying "Taylor's principles" (based on the ideas of the influential US mechanical engineer Frederick Winslow Taylor) in the building industry in Algeria, stating that "If we split up every worker's assignments, we would eventually end up with very complex results produced by unqualified and unspecialized workers."<sup>64</sup>

Finally, Mayer reassured the audience that the financing of this vast program would be set out by the chief of Credit Services at the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria in a separate conference. He again insisted, however, that the French devoted too little money to their housing:

Thank heaven, in Algeria it is different; in particular within the Muslim population, people accept that they must pay a normal price to become owners or tenants of decent accommodations. With equal living standards, it is no exaggeration to say that the inhabitants of this country will accept that they must pay twice or three times what a metropolitan [i.e., someone in France] would accept to pay.<sup>65</sup>

It is therefore obvious that the conditions and premises of French housing programs in Algeria under French rule during the War of Independence and in France were treated entirely differently. Simultaneously, Mayer's speech and his self-contradictory proposals represent a vignette of the paradoxical, if not violent, directives imposed by the French colonial project as a whole.

### **Inclusive Exclusion**

In his final book, *Les damnés de la terre* (The Wretched of the Earth)—written shortly before his death, published in 1961, and banned by the French government—the psychiatrist and author Frantz Fanon offered a flawless description of the violence that inhabits and governs the colonial world. Fanon, who was born in Martinique, dedicated his life to the anticolonial cause, not only as an activist in the FLN (Front de libération nationale, or National Liberation Front) and in treating victims of warfare and torture as head of services at the Psychiatric Hospital in Blida (about 45 kilometers southwest of Algiers) during the Algerian War, but also by meticulously deconstructing

the colonial mind and doctrines. He depicted the dichotomy of the colonizer/colonized as one cemented, among other places, in built environments, in education, and in language. He wrote about two antagonistic spaces: the “native” colonized neighborhoods that included (as Fanon emphasized) the shantytowns and the medinas, contrasted with the “European” colonizer-designed and colonizer-built quarters. Fanon described this dichotomy as follows: “The two confront each other, but not in the service of a higher unity. Governed by a purely Aristotelian logic, they follow the dictates of mutual exclusion: There is no conciliation possible, one of them is superfluous.”<sup>66</sup>

Mirroring this rationale, the purpose of the new dwellings of de Gaulle's plan was to eradicate this all-too-apparent superfluity, or too-present surplus, or too-obvious excess. The exclusion of the colonized people was to become a blurred inclusion, yet still colonial by nature. Designed by the colonizer, in most cases the colonized space was to be built by the colonized. The intended conciliation was to be achieved by taking into account the colonized communities that hitherto had been ignored. The all-too-visible “compartmentalization,” to paraphrase Fanon, or segregation, was to become instantly invisible. It was a sort of precipitate “inclusive exclusion” and as such differed from previous French colonial policies in Algeria. Instead, the notion might be deemed a neocolonial one, as will be discussed shortly.

The collective-housing projects of the French *Société coopérative musulmane algérienne d'habitation et d'accession à la petite propriété* that Mayer referred to in the first conference is glaring evidence of this inclusive exclusion policy. His Deputy President, Pierre Padovani, who was a professor of philosophy at Oran High School, officer of L'ordre national de la Légion d'honneur (Legion of Honor), founder and President of the Union des coopératives de construction d'Oranie, and General Secretary of the HLM Office in the city of Oran—and who was the speaker at the second conference, *Etude sur l'habitat musulman actuel*—stated in his report, “I am indeed glad to stress that in many of our housing projects,” in Kouba [in the Algiers Region], in Saint-Denis-du-Sig [in the Oran Region], and elsewhere, the population is about one-third Europeans and two-thirds Muslims, and they live fraternally side by side.”<sup>67</sup> Lathuillière, who chaired this session and introduced its objectives to the audience, praised Padovani and his housing corporation's effective accomplishments, and applauded his radical shift in extending a common housing formula also to the colonized populations, or the “Muslims,” as they were termed. He stated that:

Muslim habitations have long been in search of a formula. ... Some architects have denounced the errors they have witnessed and the dangers of seeking to revive the medina; while the essential reasons for its existence have disappeared, they [these architects] have not always been listened to. Mr. Padovani has broken with the routine.<sup>68</sup>

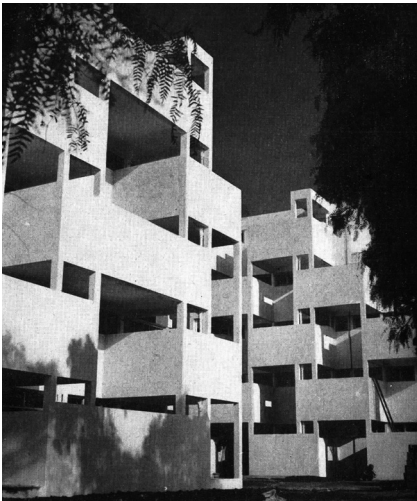
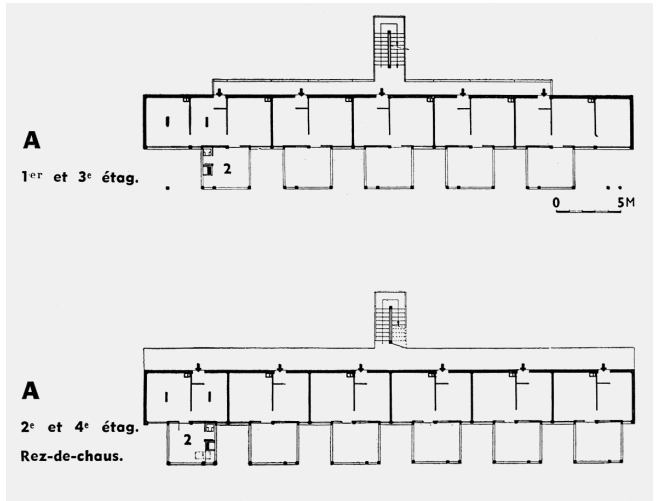
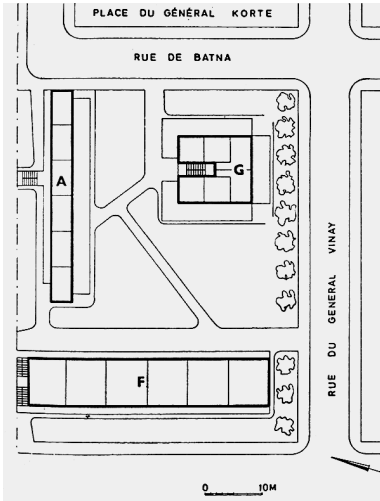
According to Padovani, his formula was based on a rejection of the assumption that colonized populations in Algeria were unable to evolve and that therefore they were incapable of living in European-type buildings. By opposing this common colonial sentiment, his aim was to find a new solution to what he called the “Muslim problem,” which, in his opinion, was a problem that remained “outside the economic cycle.”<sup>69</sup>

Padovani’s first economic enterprise addressed to “Muslims” had begun through a strategic, as he emphasized, “catalyst,” which consisted of “aiding” the *anciens combattants musulmans* (Algerian veterans of the Second World War). He argued that a great number of socioeconomic projects had been promised to these veterans, but quite often they had remained unfulfilled, resulting in severe poverty among veterans and their families, who subsequently faced humiliation and were forced to beg for a living. The first Société coopérative musulmane oranaise d’habitation et de construction (Muslim Cooperative Society of Housing and Construction in Oran) had been established in 1955, the success of an initiative due also to the encouragement of Pierre Massé, the Inspector of Finances at the French Ministry of Veterans and Victims of War at the time.<sup>70</sup>

Padovani and his initial team, which included several Algerian veterans, had commissioned the design of the first housing settlement from:

an architecture office that had once cooperated with Le Corbusier. This is the ATBAT [Atelier des bâtisseurs, Builders Workshop] office in Paris, which included [Vladimir] Bodiatsky, who was represented in North Africa by [Bernard] Romé and his team. Romé, who headed the Private Office of Family Housing, took the risk of accepting the role of technical adviser for our cooperative. He proposed plans to us that we were immediately taken with.<sup>71</sup>

The four-story Nid d’abeilles (beehive) suburban housing building at the Place du Général Korte (today Place des Frères Messaoudi) in Oran was immediately realized and occupied in 1956 (figs. 20a, 20b, 21). Other analogous buildings were constructed in other regions of Algeria, including the



Figs. 20a, 20b, 21 Housing units at Place du Général Korte in Oran built by the Société coopérative musulmane algérienne d'habitation et d'accession à la petite propriété of Oran

Diar El Ourida in Blida and the Diar Sidi Yassine in Sidi-Bel-Abbès. The resulting housing blocks were not dissimilar to those that had been designed and built in Casablanca a few years earlier by the French architects of AT-BAT-Afrique, the branch of ATBAT based in Morocco.<sup>72</sup>

Although the constructed dwellings respected the “norms of Muslim Housing,” as Padovani admitted in his conference paper, he subsequently realized that the developers had mistaken the typology of the buildings when the inhabitants of the new housing blocks loudly criticized certain spatial configurations and elements, such as the height of the walls of the private enclosed patios, the positions and dimensions of the windows, the open-air ovens, the lack of space for basic kitchen appliances, and the absence of parking lots. To this end, Padovani and his team decided to change



their formula and “this time to try a type of dwelling that could suit both Europeans and Muslims, a type of dwelling that would roughly correspond to the Metropolitan ‘LOGECO’ [from *Logement économique et familial*, or Low-Cost and Family Dwellings], where European workers and Muslim workers could live side by side”<sup>73</sup> (figs. 22a, 22b). Although the new Algerian homeowners did not reject the typology of the Nid d’abeilles building, but rather condemned the deficiency or inadequacy of certain features of the dwellings, Padovani took their disapproval as an opportunity to implement another typology, albeit one that turned out to involve a greater investment for the members of the housing cooperative and an additional economic burden for new Algerian property owners. While one could interpret this gesture as an attempt to treat Algerian colonized populations, the European working class in Algeria, and the French working class in France as one unique, analogous social class, the incomes, circumstances, legal statuses, and family compositions (to name only a few socioeconomic facets) of the three overwhelmingly different classes were exceedingly, even colossally, disparate.

Padovani compared the financial underpinnings of the two formulas, explaining, “this [new] formula has a monthly reimbursement of seven to eight thousand francs, while in the previous formula it was enough to deposit 2,500 to 3,500 francs per month to become a homeowner.”<sup>74</sup> This turning point, which was a protocol of inclusive exclusion, was enforced without distinction in countless regions of Algeria, not only on the initial catalyst—the veterans—but also on the inhabitants of the *bidonvilles* (shantytowns). The French authorities were so pleased with these projects that they had even encouraged Padovani and his housing cooperative to launch similar housing programs in the city of Lyon in France, where about twenty-eight thousand “Muslims” were living in similar conditions. As far as the parallels between the two are concerned, Padovani stated, “I have visited the slums of Lyon. For some time now, these slums have been provided, like those in Paris and elsewhere, with Specialized Administrative Sections [Urban SASs]; the slums are much worse off than those of Algeria, because there is no sun.”<sup>75</sup>

Although the projects of the Société coopérative musulmane algérienne d’habitation et d’accession à la petite propriété, together with the housing programs of de Gaulle’s Plan de Constantine in Algeria and the housing blocks designed for Algerians in France, signaled the abrupt end of the French *habitat musulman*, as Padovani stressed, “in reality, it is no longer about Muslim habitation: it is simply about housing, housing for the greatest number, because as we all know, a particular type of housing engenders



Figs. 22a, 22b  
LOGECO Mer et soleil  
(Sea and Sun) in  
Hussein-Dey, Algiers

segregation, which has long been condemned.<sup>76</sup> Quantitative aspects prevailed over other characteristics of the dwellings. Quantity, however, not only implied the numbers of dwellings that were built but equally involved the amount of capital invested and generated—capital that also came directly from the French public authorities and private French entrepreneurs.

The reasons that Padovani and his colleagues abandoned specific designs for the Algerian populations (who by definition were treated differently from other communities) under the Plan de Constantine had nothing to do with antisegregationist principles; instead the shift was dictated by the rationale

of what was a purely quantitative leap deeply embedded in economic interests. In his conference “Architecture et Productivité” (Architecture and Productivity), Marcel Lathuilière recalled: “Any real-estate construction must include both investment and profitability, regardless of the conditions of its realization. Sometimes we forget that there is a relationship between resources and living conditions.”<sup>77</sup>

- 1 On the actors and complex accounts of May 1958, see for example de Sérigny, *La révolution du 13 mai*; Bromberger and Bromberger, *Les 13 complots du 13 mai*; Jean-Thomas, Le Béguet, and Lachaise, *Mai 1958*; Vaïsse, *Comment de Gaulle fit échouer e putsch d'Alger*; Pierre, *Le putsch des généraux*.
- 2 Thomas, Le Béguet, and Lachaise, *Mai 1958*, 9.
- 3 After Fourastié, *Les Trente glorieuses*.
- 4 Vaïsse, *De Gaulle et l'Algérie*, 29.
- 5 De Gaulle, *Mémoires de Guerre: L'unité*, 109.
- 6 Vaïsse, *De Gaulle et l'Algérie*, 38–48.
- 7 “Voyage du Général de Gaulle: 1958–1970,” Fondation du Général de Gaulle, <http://www.charles-de-gaulle.org/pages/l-homme/accueil/chronologies/voyages-du-general-de-gaulle-1958-1970.php> (accessed on 15 June 2015).
- 8 “Allocution prononcée à Alger le 4 juin 1958,” in de Gaulle, *Avec le renouveau*, 15.
- 9 Law no. 58-520 of 3 June 1958, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, 4 June 1958, p. 5327, [https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo\\_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000878381](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000878381) (accessed on 16 June 2015).
- 10 “Allocution prononcée à Alger le 4 juin 1958,” in de Gaulle, *Avec le renouveau*, 15–16.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 16.
- 12 “Allocution prononcée à la radio d'Alger le 3 Juillet 1958,” in *ibid.*, 22.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 23.
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 Soustelle, *L'espérance trahie*, 96.
- 16 On the French nuclear tests in the Algerian Sahara, see for example Larbi Benchiha, *L'Algérie, De Gaulle et la bombe*, documentary (Aligal Production, France 3 Ouest Rennes, 2010); Frémeaux, *La France e le Sahara*, 229–74.
- 17 The 1<sup>st</sup> of November coincides with the date of the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution.
- 18 “Discours prononcé à Constantine le 3 octobre 1958,” in de Gaulle, *Avec le renouveau*, 48.
- 19 *Ibid.*, 50.
- 20 *Ibid.*, 48.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 49.
- 22 Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, 307.
- 23 This point is discussed in chapter 5.
- 24 Mioche, *Le plan Monnet*, 96–97.
- 25 Monnet, *Mémoires*, 129.
- 26 *Ibid.*, 179.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 241.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 251.
- 29 Sutton, *France and the Construction of Europe*, 45.
- 30 Monnet, *Mémoires*, 287.
- 31 Chenu, *Paul Delouvrier*, 126.
- 32 Cazes and Mioche, *Modernisation ou décadence*, 153.
- 33 CHSP. 1DV 32 D1, Plan de Constantine, Mise en place. Arrêté du 12 Février 1959 relatif à la préparation du plan de développement économique et social de l'Algérie.

- 34 The term “development” is particularly used by the United Nations.
- 35 CHSP. 1 DV 19. De Gaulle to Delouvrier in Rapport sur l'activité des services de la Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie au cours du premier semestre 1959, p. 1.
- 36 Archives nationales de France, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine (hereafter ANFPFSS). F/60/4020. Commission générale d'aménagement du territoire, 4 May 1959. The expression *aménagement du territoire* can be translated as “territorial development,” “spatial planning,” “town and country planning,” or “regional planning.”
- 37 CHSP. 1 DV 32 D1. Plan de Constantine, Mise en place. Décision du 2 mai 1959 signé par le Secrétaire Général Adjoint pour les Affaires Economiques pour le Délégué Général du Gouvernement en Algérie.
- 38 CHSP. 1 DV 32 D1. Plan de Constantine, Mise en place. Décision du 9 mars 1959 signé par le Secrétaire Général de l'Administration pour le Délégué Général du Gouvernement en Algérie.
- 39 Cited in Cazes and Mioche, *Modernisation ou décadence*, 154.
- 40 Célimène and Legris, *De l'économie coloniale à l'économie mondialisée*, 262–64.
- 41 Massé, *Le plan ou l'anti-hasard*, 54.
- 42 CHSP. 1 DV 19. Rapport sur l'activité des services de la Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie au cours du premier semestre 1959, présenté par Paul Delouvrier, Délégué du Gouvernement sur la proposition de André Jacomet, Secrétaire Général de l'Administration, July 1959, p. 112.
- 43 Letter of General de Gaulle to Paul Delouvrier, 18 December 1958, reprinted as appendix 4 in Chenu, *Paul Delouvrier*, 384.
- 44 Chenu, *Paul Delouvrier*, 285.
- 45 On the civil and military powers under Delouvrier's governorate, see for example Lemoine, “Paul Delouvrier et l'Algérie,” 49–53.
- 46 Chenu, *Paul Delouvrier*, 284.
- 47 CHSP. 1 DV 19. Rapport sur l'activité des services de la Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie au cours du premier semestre 1959, présenté par Paul Delouvrier, Délégué du Gouvernement sur la proposition de André Jacomet, Secrétaire Général de l'Administration, July 1959.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 Ibid., p. 2.
- 50 Ibid.
- 51 ANFPFSS. 19770828/14. Ministère d'Etat Chargé des Affaires Algériennes, *Les Accords d'Evian, textes et commentaires*, La Documentation Française, 1962, p. 5.
- 52 ANFPFSS. F/60/4021. Délégation Générale en Algérie, Conseil Supérieur de l'Aménagement du Territoire et de la Construction, Secrétariat Général, Ordre du Jour de la session des 22 et 23 janvier 1962, Première séance Lundi 22 à 10 heures, p. 1.
- 53 ANFPFSS. F/60/4021. Conseil Supérieur de l'Aménagement du Territoire et de la Construction, *L'habitat Algérien au terme de la troisième année du Plan de Constantine, les perspectives pour 1962*.
- 54 ANFPFSS. F/60/4021. Conseil Supérieur de l'Aménagement du Territoire et de la Construction, *L'habitat Algérien au terme de la troisième année du Plan de Constantine, les perspectives pour 1962*, pp. 9–12. The housing typologies and their geographic distributions will be discussed in chapters 5 and 8.
- 55 Vaucher, *Le Plan de Constantine*, 46.
- 56 The other commissions included the Commission de population et emploi (Commission of Population and Employment), Commission des zones industrielles et urbaines (Commission of Industrial and Urban Zones), and the Commission des équipements généraux (Commission of General Equipment).
- 57 F/60/4021. Rapport du Secrétariat général du Conseil supérieur de l'aménagement du territoire au Conseil supérieur de l'aménagement du territoire, p. 2.

- 58 The talks were successively published as supplements to the annals of the ITEBA from February 1959 (issue no. 134) to November 1959 (issue no. 143). The eight booklets are available at the SHAT and the FR ANOM.
- 59 Not to be mistaken for the Radical René Mayer (1895–1972), who served as a Deputy of Constantine from 1946 to 1955 and defended the economic interests of the French *colons*. Although I interviewed the engineer René Mayer (1925–2015), who seemed to be Radical, too, the author considered it unnecessary to use the content here because it is largely a repetition of, and indeed less precise than what he stated in 1958.
- 60 Mayer, “Enquête sur l’habitat en Algérie I,” 3.
- 61 Ibid., 6.
- 62 Ibid., 9.
- 63 Ibid., 11.
- 64 Ibid.
- 65 Ibid., 12.
- 66 Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 4. Originally published as *Les damnés de la terre* (Paris: F. Maspero, 1961).
- 67 Padovani, “Enquête sur l’habitat en Algérie II,” 13.
- 68 Ibid., 3.
- 69 Ibid., 6.
- 70 Ibid.
- 71 Ibid., 10.
- 72 On the history, members, and projects of the ATBAT and ATBAT-Afrique, as well as the staff who first worked on the Unité d’Habitation in Marseille and then on the Carrières Centrales in Casablanca and other Nid d’Abeille settlements in Morocco, see for example Cohen and Eleb, *Casablanca*, 325–63; Avermaete, *Another Modern*, 134–75.
- 73 Padovani, “Enquête sur l’habitat en Algérie II,” 12.
- 74 Ibid.
- 75 Ibid., 14. The SAS and the *bidonvilles* will be discussed in chapter 6.
- 76 Ibid., 16.
- 77 Lathuillière, “Enquête sur l’habitat en Algérie VI,” 4.

## 5. Toward Semi-urban Housing

In October 1944, a few months after the liberation of France, the Provisional Government of the French Republic of General Charles de Gaulle created the French Ministère de la reconstruction et de l'urbanisme (MRU, or Ministry of Reconstruction and Urbanism), whose mandate was to *reconstruire* (reconstruct) after the physical destruction and psychological damage caused by the Vichy regime and the Second World War. This task entailed repairing France's image, its unity, and its devastated built environments. The ministers of the MRU included Eugène Claudius-Petit, who served from September 1948 to January 1953 and who during the Algerian War of Independence went on to serve as the head of the newly established Société nationale de construction de logements pour les travailleurs algériens (SONACOTRAL, or National Society of Housing Construction for Algerian Workers) in France. He and the others who held the MRU ministerial post were responsible for determining the parameters and standards for the design of new dwellings intended to bring modernization to the French people, particularly women, in France.<sup>1</sup> These postwar reconstruction plans gradually encompassed housing legislation and programs that were specifically tailored to the French construction industry, the wider aims being the institution of a national welfare state and the formation of a larger middle class to include workers—in short, the creation of a consumer society.<sup>2</sup> This was partly achieved by means of didactic annual exhibitions held in Paris by the Salon des arts ménagers (SAM, or Household Arts Show) to introduce and promote domestic appliances, furnishings, and home designs to consumers.

In order to stay attuned with national politics and to enforce the economic policies of both the Monnet Plan and the Marshall Plan in France, the MRU was expected to closely collaborate with the Commissariat général du plan (CGP, or General Commissariat of the Plan).<sup>3</sup> Compared to other Western countries such as Germany (now split into East and West), the United Kingdom, and Sweden,<sup>4</sup> France suffered ineffectiveness and protracted delays. Despite these failings, French national mass-housing congresses, laws, institutions, and programs proceeded to take on considerable importance, to the extent that the term “housing” was incorporated into the official title of the MRU, which in 1953 became the Ministère de la reconstruction et du logement (MRL, or Ministry of Reconstruction and Housing).



During an abnormally cold month in February 1954, numerous homeless people died on the streets of France, prompting the French Catholic Priest Abbé Pierre to deliver a legendary radio appeal that led to what was known as *L'insurrection de la bonté* (Uprising of Kindness). Faced with this desperate lack of basic shelter, the government responded using emergency measures involving erecting habitation that was qualitatively inferior to the standard HLMs (Habitat à loyer modéré, or Low-Cost Housing). At the same time, the government launched a number of additional low-cost public housing programs, including the Logements économiques de première nécessité (LEPN, or Basic Necessity Low-Cost Housing), the Logements économiques normalisés (LEN, or Standardized Low-Cost Housing), and the Logements populaires et familiaux (LOPOFA, or Working-Class and Family Housing), all of which would shortly become part of another national agenda: the *Opération Million* (Operation Million), involving the construction of housing units for one million French people within a year.<sup>5</sup> Due to slow implementation and delayed execution, however, the spread of shantytowns continued, and France's enormous housing shortage remained tragically precarious.

Upon his return to power, de Gaulle sought to “adjust” what were seen as unsatisfactory postwar incentives. The MRL's name was immediately revised, and the terms *reconstruction* and *logement* were replaced by what was ultimately at stake in 1958: construction, or, to put it more accurately, orchestrated economic growth. Just as he had created the MRU in 1944, de Gaulle now founded the Ministère de la construction (MC, or the Ministry of Construction) and appointed the young former Resistance fighter Pierre Sudreau as its first minister. Sudreau had studied law and political science in his youth. Upon France's liberation, he joined the Interior Ministry, and in 1955 he became Commissioner of Construction and Urbanism of the Paris Region, put in charge of coordinating the *grands ensembles* (large-scale settlements). His mandate in de Gaulle's Fifth Republic was to “construct” and “build” (*construire, bâtir*)—as opposed to *reconstruct*—the economic expansion of the whole of France. As Sudreau argued, this would entail “starting up a long-term policy that integrates the efforts of the construction of housing within an overall conception of urbanism and *aménagement du territoire* [territorial development].”<sup>6</sup> Like the MRU, the new ministry created a huge propaganda machinery in order to propagate state policies, promote large-scale government planning, endorse state-subsidized dwellings, and instruct the new residents.



### French Housing Categories for Colonized Algeria

In Algeria under French colonial rule, which was enmeshed in an undeclared war, the Ministry of Construction, the aforementioned CGP, and the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria (headed by Delouvrier) actively engaged in constructing—or “pacifying” and “transforming,” as de Gaulle recommended—a “new” Algeria. Delouvrier claimed that “in an underdeveloped country like Algeria [*sic*—it had been a colony of France since 1830], the building industry can be considered one of the cornerstones, because it enables a distribution of wages that will be spent to the advantage of various consumer industries.”<sup>7</sup> In order to rapidly promote the building industry and to accelerate the mass production of the promised 220,000 urban housing units of de Gaulle’s five-year socioeconomic development plan for Algeria, the French authorities rationalized the typologies of dwelling units, dividing them into four different categories. The difference was essentially based on the per-unit cost of construction, which ranged from 7,000 to 70,000 new French francs (NF; i.e., between €10,500 and €105,000).<sup>8</sup> The majority of these units—nearly 93 percent—were actually in the range of NF7,000 to NF22,000 (€10,500 to €33,000): a very low-cost standard indeed. The distribution of the four types was as follows:

- 7 percent “superior” or “normal” housing, whose construction costs were to vary between NF50,000 and NF70,000.
- 30 percent of the aforementioned LOGECO housing and HLMs, whose per-unit building costs were not to exceed NF22,000 for a living area of roughly 50 square meters.
- 33 percent *logement million*, which consisted of small apartments of roughly 40 square meters that were expected to cost NF13,000 each.
- 30 percent newly designed *habitat semi-urbain* (semi-urban dwellings, deemed neither exclusively urban nor rural in character), which involved an even smaller living area and cheaper expenses: roughly 30 square meters, costing a mere NF7,000 each.<sup>9</sup>

The superior and normal (in this sense first-class) housing was identical to the HLMs that had been earlier built in postwar France, such housing units had been primarily designed for European colonists, including bureaucrats who served in French public institutions. By contrast, the LOGECO (second-class) housing was designed for working-class Europeans and Algerians, and the *logement million* (third-class) and semi-urban (fourth-class) habitations were exclusively intended for the urban Algerian population. As Padovani

and others said, these dwellings—which were based on predetermined *plan-types* (model plans)—were widely inspired by postwar housing units such as the LOGECOs and the *Opération Million* dictated by the MRL in France but were drastically reduced and modified to coincide with the Algerian colonial context, as will be discussed shortly. More importantly, an additional special category was designed exclusively for Algerians under French colonial rule: the *habitat semi-urbain*.

### Neither Rural nor Urban

Beginning with the outset of the Plan de Constantine, the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria established several design commissions. The numerous listed members of the specific commission that drafted the guidelines for the architectural characteristics and technical aspects of the *habitat semi-urbain* included Marcel Lathuillière, as well as the Swiss-born architect Pierre-André Emery, the latter an early collaborator of Le Corbusier's and a vocal supporter of his plans for Algiers (1931–1942).<sup>10</sup> Both of the two architects had practiced professionally in the colonial city of Algiers since the 1930s, Lathuillière becoming a prolific builder working for the public authorities, while Emery was primarily involved in the private sector, as well as in the Algiers group of the Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne (CIAM, or International Congresses of Modern Architecture). Despite their contrasting backgrounds and disparate professional affiliations, they were both actively engaged in the public debates about housing projects in Algiers, in particular, the lodgings designed for the Algerian population. These lodgings were first called *habitation indigène* (indigenous housing) and later *habitat musulman* (Muslim housing), an alteration rooted in the judicial status of Algerians, as will be discussed shortly.

In the last few decades, historians and scholars have examined the specific influences of the various architects, writers, and politicians who generated divergent architectural styles and engendered a number of different housing types in colonial Algeria in the twentieth century. This has involved a discussion concerning the specific significance of these figures in the collocation of Algiers with the contexts of the Mediterranean, modern architecture in colonial North Africa, and the CIAM. The purpose of this section is to attempt to trace the trajectory by which Lathuillière—whose selection to participate in the design of the categories of dwellings of the Plan de Constantine was by no means a coincidence—focused his architectural objectives and altered and adapted his beliefs about housing for Algerians from the 1930s onward. Tracing this trajectory will assist in

clarifying the spatial strategy that the French Fifth Republic opted for in the final phase of the Algerian War of Independence in colonial Algeria; it will also help to review the role that the housing architecture produced by the various public French organizations played in conditioning the lives of the colonized Algerian population in Algeria, and to investigate the motivations behind the creation of the category “semi-urban.”

Marcel Lathuillière permanently moved to Algiers in 1930 after coming second in the *Foyer civique* (Civic Foyer) design competition of 1927, launched by the municipality of Algiers, to which he had submitted a design project along with the Algiers-born-and-based architect Albert Seiller. The two architects became partners in 1928. Lathuillière graduated from the Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris, where he attended the Atelier Emmanuel Pontremoli, a neoclassicist architect and winner of the Prix de Rome; he was likewise in contact with the Atelier du Palais de Bois,<sup>11</sup> directed by Auguste Perret. The year 1932 saw the establishment of the Algiers Group of the Société des architectes modernes (SAM, or Society of Modern Architects), a French organization that had been created in 1922. The Algiers Group’s active members included Lathuillière, Seiller, and the winner of the aforementioned Civic Foyer competition, Léon Claro.

The SAM asked all of its adherents “to build on the principles of modern aesthetics, excluding any pastiche and any reproduction of ancient styles, whenever they are not prevented by absolute necessity.”<sup>12</sup> In Algiers, this “pastiche” most probably referred to the neo-Moresque style that dominated the French colonial architecture of the early twentieth century, encouraged by Charles-Celestin Auguste Jonnart. Jonnart served as General Governor of Algeria in 1900, from 1903 to 1911, and then again from 1918 to 1919, and was partly inspired by the studies and opinions on the Arab kingdom of the Emperor of the French Second Empire, Napoleon III.<sup>13</sup> In an article entitled “Il faut être de son temps” (It Is Necessary to Be Contemporary) published in *Chantiers*, Frantz Jourdain, President of the Paris SAM, criticized the outdated educational system of the Beaux-Arts that had “poisoned the youth” and lauded the Algiers-SAM’s accomplishments: “my colleagues [in Algiers], in a few years, have done more in favor of modern evolution than the French architects [in Paris], who are too indecisive, divided, uncertain, confused, and torn in different directions.”<sup>14</sup> If Algiers-based French architects succeeded in imposing nonregional architectures, or modern architecture deprived of “pastiche,” it was because the French *colons* in Algeria virulently criticized and condemned the stylistic choices of the General Government,

arguing that neo-Moresque forms did not belong to them. Instead they mainly favored a style in Algiers that was intrinsically recognizable as “European.”<sup>15</sup>

The General Delegate of the Paris-SAM stated that the group encompassed many diverse personalities, naming some of them after construction materials: the “Friend of Iron” (Frantz Jourdain), the “Master of Cement” (Auguste Perret), and the “Protagonist of Steel” (Henri Sauvage). He also stressed that one of the most *belle* (beautiful) branches of the SAM was the Algiers Group founded by Lathuillière and his friends, because it demonstrated that “on both sides of the Mediterranean reign the same spirits and beat the same heart, so that France is both in Algiers and in Paris.”<sup>16</sup>

Algiers hosted the first *Exposition d'urbanisme et d'architecture moderne* (Exhibition of City Planning and Modern Architecture) in February 1933. This exposition took place three years after the monumental celebrations of the hundredth anniversary of the French colonization of Algeria, known as *Le centenaire de l'Algérie française* (Centenary of French Algeria, fig. 23). These celebrations were held primarily in Algiers but were also held in other parts of Algeria during the first six months of 1930. The exposition also came two years after the *International Colonial Exhibition* in the Bois de Vincennes in Paris in 1931, which displayed the immense resources of both the French colonial empire and the majority of the other great colonial powers. In terms of the preparations for the 1933 *Exhibition of City Planning and Modern Architecture*, Lathuillière was the deputy president of the organization committee, Seiller was the general curator, and Emery was the General Secretary. The exhibition was organized by the influential Association d'urbanisme Les Amis d'Alger (Association of Urbanism Algiers's Friends), the Algiers-SAM Group, and the Trade Union Association of Architects Graduated and Admitted by the Government.<sup>17</sup>

### **From “Indigenous” to “Muslim” Dwellings**

Rudolphe Rey, the president of the exhibition committee and the president of the *Amis d'Alger* who invited Le Corbusier to Algiers, asserted in an article titled “Tous urbanistes!” (All Town Planners!) that “planners and architects in Algeria, closely united in the continuation of their generous effort, will not cease to guide public authorities in their great task of remodeling and developing our African cities.”<sup>18</sup> In a special issue of *Chantiers* dedicated to the exhibition,<sup>19</sup> the articles and the projects presented were divided into two parts: first, urbanism and the large-scale planning and development of cities in Algeria; and second, architecture and modern construction in Algeria. Lathuillière published an article with the title “L'architecture

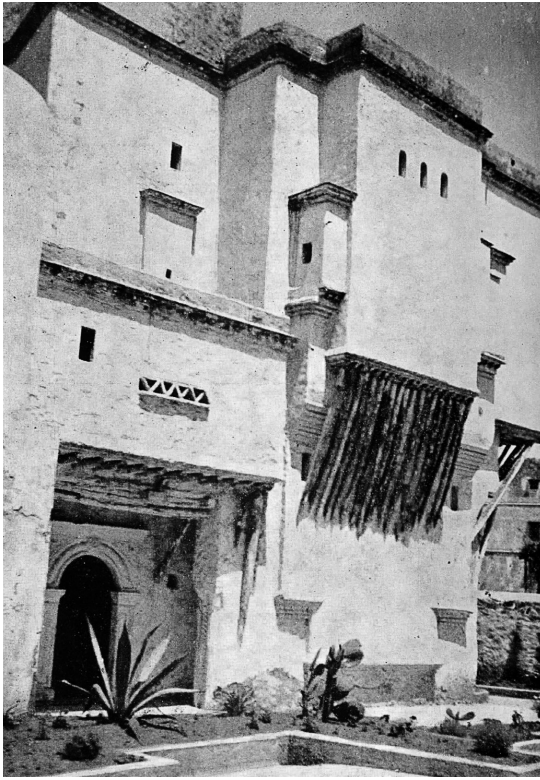


Fig. 23 *La maison indigène du centenaire* (Indigenous House of the Centenary) designed by Léon Claro on the occasion of the celebrations of the Centenary of French Algeria

moderne et l'aménagement de l'habitation" (Modern Architecture and the Configuration of Housing), whereas Seiller reported his ideas in an article under the heading "L'hygiène dans l'habitation" (Housing Hygiene). Both contributions ignored the question of housing designed for Algerians, which was only directly dealt with in one article in the issue of *Chantiers*: "L'habitation indigène et les quartiers musulmans" (Indigenous Housing and Muslim Neighborhoods), written by architect François Bienvenu, who was born and based in Algiers and who worked for the French general government. Bienvenu described the ongoing public debates on the types of housing in which Algerians—or, as they were called, the *indigènes* ("indigenous" or "native" people)—were expected to live. He described two opposing schools of thought, neither of which had been able to forge a commonly acceptable compromise. The debates involved centered on a rhetorical question: Was it necessary to conceive and build dwellings that would satisfy the current lifestyle of the Algerian population, or would it instead be better to envisage the adaptation of Algerians' modes of living to the French colonial lifestyle through European-type housing?<sup>20</sup>

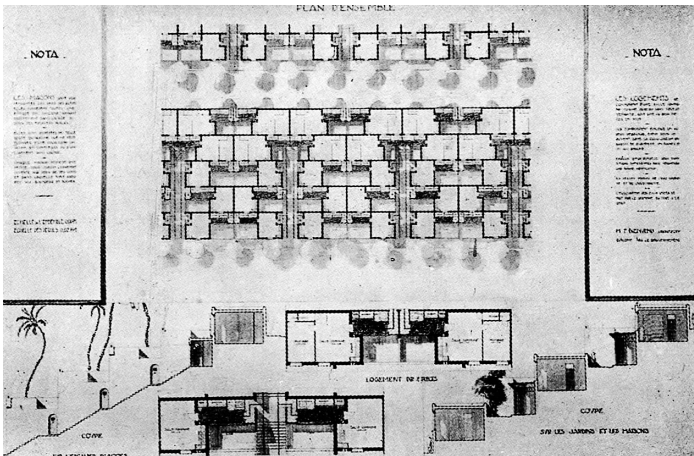
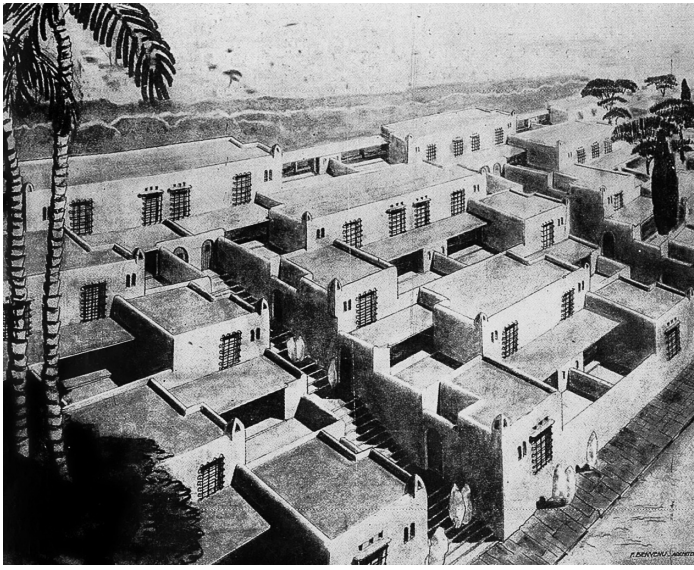
Some French representatives believed that were Algerians to inhabit European-style dwellings, this would generate new needs that would be incompatible with their salaries, thus representing a threat to colonial

agriculture and industry. Others thought that if the Algerian population lived in European-style housing, it would stimulate new commercial transactions that would in turn be beneficial to the entire colony, and therefore to the European Community.<sup>21</sup> Both arguments were rooted in economic interests and were engraved in colonial practices. According to Bienvenu, who designed and built housing for Algerians in Algiers (figs. 24a, 24b), “the problem of the resettlement of the indigenous population should be the priority, the key problem on which everything else depends: sanitation, circulation, development, and embellishment.”<sup>22</sup> By the time of Algerian independence in 1962, however, the French colonial administration had not only demonstratively failed to resolve these questions but had likewise been unsuccessful in averting the *crise du logement* (housing crisis), which may well have provoked the further expansion of shantytowns.

Lathuillière also curated the second version of the *Exhibition of Urbanism and Modern Architecture* (this time called the *Exposition de la cité moderne: urbanisme, architecture, habitation*, “Exhibition of the Modern City: Urbanism, Architecture, Housing,” fig. 25), which took place in the uncompleted Civic Foyer in Algiers from 28 March to 19 April 1936. The exhibition comprised four different sections: urbanism, architecture, housing, and construction techniques. Seiller curated the housing section, which displayed the interiors of dwellings, their layout, furniture, and decoration; Emery was again the General Secretary of the exhibition.<sup>23</sup> On this occasion, a special issue of the French magazine *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*—whose Algerian correspondent from 1935 to 1948 was Lathuillière—was devoted to *La France d'outre-mer* (Overseas France). This time, the exhibition featured the *habitat indigène*: not only in the French overseas colonies and protectorates but also—and particularly—in Algeria.

Positions were again divided. The president of the HBM (Habitat à bon marché, or Low-Cost Housing) Office of the Municipality of Algiers expressed his opinion in an article, “L’habitat indigène en Algérie” (Indigenous Dwellings in Algeria), arguing that “indigenous dwellings must meet the requirements of customary mores, which demand the absolute privacy of the home.”<sup>24</sup> He illustrated his text with the housing project designed by Bienvenu. Lathuillière, by contrast—who in the meantime had obtained authorization to build public works for the French general government in Algeria—stressed in his article “Le problème de l’habitat indigène en Algérie” (The Problem of Indigenous Housing in Algeria) that “it would be an error to push respect for their [Algerianv] customs to the point of trying to recall, by form and disposition, ancient buildings.”<sup>25</sup> Lathuillière’s device was to group





Figs. 24a, 24b “Indigenous” housing designed by François Bienvenu

together the non-European populations who lived in Algeria—as he noted, the Arabs, Berbers, Turks, Mozabites, and other communities that had Islam as a common bond—and he presented a design for a housing complex intended for non-Europeans in Algiers. He also expressed the breadth of his design agenda, recommending that “new constructions will have to be careful about satisfying old customs, and should guide some habits in order to pave the way for a gradual assimilation to European mores.”<sup>26</sup>

During the Algerian War of Independence, Jacques Soustelle, French ethnologist and Governor General of Algeria in 1955 and 1956, advocated an overhaul of the conventional and timeworn colonial doctrine of assimilation, to be substituted by a reformed policy of integration, arguing in his book *L'espérance trahie* (Hope Betrayed) that assimilation was unrealistic,

because it “assumes that all inhabitants of Algeria, and predominantly Muslim Arabs or Berbers, are to be transformed, by a sort of magic wand, into Frenchmen of the Métropole, particularly in terms of religion, customs, and language.”<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, the French authorities, both civil and military, remained in essence immune to such sentiments. Instead they proved unable and unwilling to jettison their deeply held belief in the power of imposed assimilation and continued to repeatedly resort to belligerent means to compel colonized populations (called French subjects) to embrace French ideals—an impulse that, it can be argued, has lasted to the present day. Henri Labouret, one of the most prominent French colonial administrator-ethnographers, wrote about the roots of French colonial policy in a chapter in his seminal book *Colonisation, colonialisme, décolonisation* (Colonization, Colonialism, Decolonization) titled “L’assimilation,” arguing that “the Frenchman owes to his temperament, and to an education rooted for centuries in classical thought and the principles of Roman Law, an ideal assimilation that has long dominated our history, our political life, and our colonizing actions.”<sup>28</sup>

The *Exposition de la cité moderne* showcased the architecture of precolonial dwellings in the French Empire, and one of the articles in the special issue of *L’Architecture d’Aujourd’hui*—“L’habitation indigène dans les colonies françaises” (Indigenous Housing in French Colonies)—correspondingly illustrated some of the exhibits from the sections on *habitation indigène* (Indigenous Housing), covering French North Africa, French West and Equatorial Africa, French Madagascar, French Indochina, and French Oceania.<sup>29</sup> As opposed to the examples shown for the other French colonial possessions, traditional housing in French North Africa was divided into two categories: *L’habitation rurale* (rural dwellings) of both nomadic and settled populations; and *La maison urbaine* (the urban house), which consisted primarily of courtyard houses. The author expressed his admiration for the great variety of peoples who lived in this immense and diverse territory, and highlighted the extent to which both the human and natural environments were faithfully reflected in the meticulous proficiency of their habitations. The author also argued that traditional housing settlements—that is, pre-French colonial dwellings—were shaped to regional geographic and climatic conditions, embodied cultural values, and provided the setting for various social customs, including family privacy and the separation of activities according to gender.<sup>30</sup>

In its colonial meaning and usage, therefore, the term *indigène* involved the unhappy yet telling conflation of two incompatible typologies, referring,



CITÉ INDIGÈNE DE LA BOUCLE, ALGER (Maquette Perfecta)

F. BIENVENU, ARCHITECTE

## EXPOSITION DE LA CITÉ MODERNE D'ALGER

PAR MARCEL LATHUILLIÈRE  
Commissaire général

L'Exposition de la Cité Moderne d'Alger a connu, pendant trois semaines, un succès considérable. Une grande partie de la population de la ville et de nombreux visiteurs venant des différentes villes d'Algérie, de France ou de l'étranger défilerent sans interruption.

Pourquoi une Exposition a-t-elle été organisée à Alger? Quel était son programme? Quelles furent les raisons de son succès?

Avant même de répondre à ces questions élémentaires, il convient de donner un aperçu sur la situation qu'occupe Alger en Afrique du Nord et sur les conditions dans lesquelles cette ville s'est développée depuis dix ans.

Alger, capitale de l'Algérie, forme avec ses faubourgs une ville de 360.000 habitants, en grande majorité français ou d'origine européenne; quatrième ville de France par le chiffre de la population, elle possède, par sa qualité de capitale, un caractère suffisamment personnel pour échapper à la qualification de «ville de province». L'expansion de l'Algérie après la guerre ne pouvait manquer d'avoir sa répercussion sur le développement d'Alger; la ville a crû pendant ces quinze dernières années à une cadence rapide et c'est cette

croissance qui a imprimé à elle et à ses habitants, cet esprit particulier fait de contrastes violents.

Alger n'est plus la ville d'Orient de jadis, on y trouve peu ou pas d'exotisme, sauf dans le quartier indigène dans lequel d'ailleurs les européens d'Algérie ne se promènent guère, c'est une ville moderne, éclatante et vivante qui ne ressemble à aucune ville de la Métropole.

L'urbanisme et l'architecture d'Alger sont en opposition absolue. La nouvelle ville est l'œuvre d'architectes jeunes, car il n'existe dans cette heureuse cité ni maîtres ni pontife, la grande majorité des architectes a terminé ses études après la guerre, donc peu de préjugés et surtout pas d'entrave, pas de contrainte, pas de dogme. Cette jeune génération s'est trouvée, à partir de 1925, en face de nombreux problèmes à résoudre, la crise du logement était plus aiguë que partout ailleurs et les édifices publics ou utilitaires faisaient défaut ou étaient devenus notoirement insuffisants. Pendant près de dix ans il a fallu construire vite et avec des moyens relativement assez limités. De nombreux chantiers s'ouvrirent partout, des quartiers entiers surgirent du sol et bien souvent des architectes nouvellement sortis de l'Ecole eurent la charge de mener à bien l'édification de constructions très importantes.

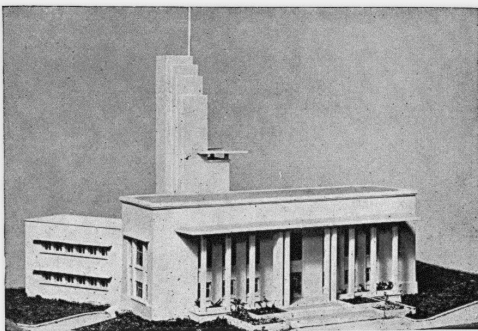
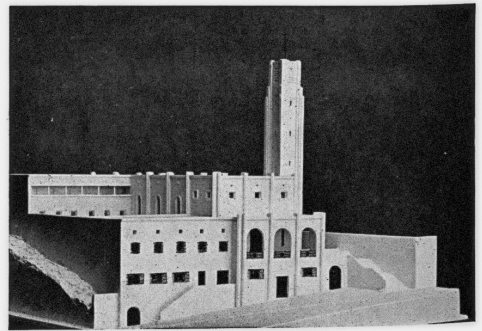
HOTEL DE VILLE DE DJIDJELLI  
GUÉRINEAU ET BASTELICA, ARCHITECTESCITÉ DES DOMINICAINS, ALGER  
BONET ET CARBONELL, ARCHITECTES

Fig. 25 "Exposition de la cité moderne d'Alger," article by Marcel Lathuillière



as it did, not only to the traditional and regional architecture built prior to French colonization but also to the dwellings designed by the French authorities for the colonized populations. Thus, the expression *habitation indigène* was employed to signify interchangeable times and spaces, namely pre-French as well as French colonial housing settlements for non-European populations. This controversial dual appellation had its roots in the judicial status of the colonized populations. This was dictated by the French colonial legislation known as the *Code de l'Indigénat* (Code for the Indigenous People), a set of discriminatory regulations that failed to accord any constitutional, political, or economic protection to the populations that were subjected to it. In Algeria under French colonial rule, the colonized populations were considered citizens of neither Algeria nor France. Instead, they were designated *indigènes sujets français* (indigenous French subjects), or simply *sujets français* or *indigènes*. Mirroring this, both precolonial and colonial housing settlements that were inhabited by the *indigènes* were labeled as *habitation indigène*.

With the abolition of the *Code de l'indigénat* in the aftermath of the Second World War, it was recognized that the term *indigène*, rooted as it was in racial differences, needed to be substituted. At this juncture the Algerian populations became *les français musulmans d'Algérie* (French Muslims from Algeria), although they were still not given the benefits of full French citizenship. Therefore, the designation by race was replaced by that of religion, a measure that still controversially discriminated Algerians from other communities who lived in Algeria and treated them differently. While for Algerians the criteria were based on religious affiliation, for Frenchmen, Jews, and Europeans, they were based on juridical citizenship. The “non-Muslim” populations—which included Christians from France and other European countries, as well as Jews who had settled in Algeria long before French colonization—were called neither “French Christians” nor “French Jews”; and for unknown reasons, Jews and Christians were perceived to be one cohesive group. Unlike in the French Protectorates of Morocco and Tunisia, the Jewish community in the French departments of Algeria had been incorporated into the French population in 1870 when they were granted French citizenship under the Crémieux Decree.<sup>31</sup> The colonized Algerian population was thus the sole community to be officially defined in terms of its religious faith. As a result, the *habitation indigène* correspondingly came to be called the *habitat musulman* or the *cit  musulmane* (Muslim housing).<sup>32</sup> Despite the change in terms, the appellation remained a deeply colonial one,

and the design thinking continued to be based on discriminatory principles, as will be discussed shortly.

### **The Assimilationist Viewpoint**

Assimilating the “indigenous” and then “Muslims” to French standards and dwellings in Algeria under French colonial rule spawned several studious debates among colonial administrators, politicians, and architects. One such set of discussions took place during the French 12<sup>th</sup> Congrès national d’habitation et d’urbanisme (National Congress of Housing and Town Planning) held in May 1952 in Algiers. The congress was organized by two influential French institutions: the Union nationale des fédérations d’organismes d’HLM (UNFOHLM, or National Union of Federations of HLM Organizations) and the Confédération française pour l’habitation et l’urbanisme (CFHU, or French Confederation for Housing and City Planning). As an additional part of the congress, a study trip devoted to the questions and problems of urban dwellings in Algiers was organized by the Fédération algérienne des organismes de HBM (Algeria-based Federation of Low-Cost Housing Organizations).<sup>33</sup> Eugène Claudius-Petit, French Minister of the MRU, and other representatives of various French housing agencies and legislative bodies attended the congress, their presence reinforcing the suggestion that France and Algeria faced similar housing and planning issues, and yet at the same time also underscoring the fact that Algeria was in reality profoundly different. One of these major dissimilarities consisted of the socio-cultural composition of Algeria’s inhabitants: that is, that Algeria was not only populated by French citizens and European communities (Italian, Spanish, Greek, Maltese, German, and Austrian, among others, who had the basic right to easily become French citizens) but also by Algerian populations (the “Muslims”). To this end, the congress involved an animated discussion about the housing-unit typologies in which the two communities should dwell: French (including Jews) and Europeans versus the Algerian “Muslims.”

These deep discrepancies between Algeria and France, but similarly with the French Protectorates of Morocco and Tunisia, were evident in the debate about a purported housing type for Algerians, from which two opposing policies emerged.<sup>34</sup> One position was developed by the French participants from the *Métropole*, who advocated an emblematic colonial planned segregation, involving the design of three categories of housing settlements.

- 1) Low-cost and low-rise dwellings created for specific classes of the Algerian population—called the *musulmans non évolués* (nondeveloped Muslims) and *musulmans peu évolués* (less-developed or underdeveloped Muslims)—who lived in the shantytowns; this proposal was spatially and financially comparable with the *cités d'urgence* (emergency settlements) built in postwar France.
- 2) *Habitat à bon marché* (HBMs) aimed at the European working-class populations and a small fraction of Algerians described as the “Muslim population that has already achieved a certain degree of development [or evolution].”<sup>35</sup>
- 3) Dwellings for the European middle classes eligible for public funds to make private investments.

The second approach was promoted by French architects who practiced in Algiers, notably Marcel Lathuillière, who by this point was an architectural adviser to the French general government in Algeria, a member of the Council of the Order of Architects in Algeria, and the President of the North African Section (Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia) of the Union of International Architects (UIA).<sup>36</sup> This latter stance aspired to “a radical and assimilationist urban modernization,”<sup>37</sup> a position that rejected community-based designs, single-family housing, and low-rise dwelling units, instead encouraging collective multifamily high-rise buildings in which the two communities, Algerians (“Muslims”) and Europeans (including French people), would be required to learn to live together. Unlike Europeans, however, under this model Algerians had no alternative but to assimilate themselves to French colonial dictates and to adopt French models of domesticity. According to Lathuillière, “a dwelling has a great influence on the behavior of a family. ... Collective dwellings impose disciplines that shape the civilized man. This is where the role of the architect is clearly apparent: a role that goes far beyond the boundaries of art and technology and gains a greater social significance.”<sup>38</sup>

This assimilationist viewpoint found a resolute supporter among the prominent colonial personalities in Algiers in the form of René Montaldo, doctor of medicine, general adviser for the municipality of Teniet-el-Haad, and president of three groups: the Commission of Housing at the General Council in Algiers, the Public HLM Office in the Department of Algiers, and the Algerian Federation of HLM Organizations. In June 1953, a Congrès des présidents des conseils généraux de France (Congress of Presidents of the General Councils of France) was held, and Montaldo drafted a report



on habitation summarizing the discussions that had taken place and the challenges that had been identified during the congress. In his report, Montaldo argued that the recently completed and the upcoming construction sites for low-cost HLM settlements in the French departments of Algeria “are absolutely identical to similar realizations in the Métropole, in terms of design, implementation, and amortization, that obey the same law of 1922.”<sup>39</sup> He emphasized, however, that these initiatives were insufficient to cope with the rise and spread of what was an alarming housing shortage, and that specific solutions—not so much of a formal character but in terms of cost effectiveness—should be implemented in Algeria without delay in order to clear “the slums, the shantytowns, the ‘negro villages’ that disfigure our conurbations, and are a real paradox, as an accusation and a curse to such a great civilization that France has brought to this country.”<sup>40</sup> Needless to say, one might equally argue that these “disfigurements” were by no means intrinsic to the Algerian populations but were if anything a direct consequence of the French colonization of Algeria.

In his article “L’habitat économique et social en Algérie” (Low-Cost and Social Housing in Algeria), published in a special 1953 issue of the French magazine *Techniques & architecture* dedicated to Algeria (and edited by Pierre-André Emery, the magazine’s correspondent in North Africa), Montaldo distinguished two major housing-scheme programs envisaged by him for the Algerian population. The first was in the process of being implemented by the Public Housing Organization that he directed; it consisted of “normal HLMs” that were designed for the categorized “*musulmans évolués*.” The foremost objective of this program was “to establish, through the dwelling, a policy of contact that would lead both elements of our population to better know each other, to further interact with each other, and to love each other.”<sup>41</sup>

As Montaldo emphasized, the second proposal affected the majority of the “Muslim” population that lived in rural regions, as well as in the “*bidonvilles*, *villages nègres*, and the *Casbah*”<sup>42</sup> of urban areas. In the absence of other opportunities, many Algerian communities were constrained to inhabit one of these settlement types and frequently had to build their own shelters. In urban areas, the *bidonvilles*, *villages nègres* (also called *villages indigènes*), and the *Casbah* were neighborhoods that were inhabited almost exclusively by Algerians. In his report, Montaldo urged the French government to dedicate more resources (in particular, further funding and credits) to rural municipalities, which coupled with a standardization of the *gabarit de cellule uniforme* (identical cell dimensions) and the industrialization of con-

struction sites would mean that “production costs would be subjected to positive repercussions.”<sup>43</sup>

Montaldo went on to summarize his recent experiences at the Public Housing Office in the Department of Algiers, listing four strategies that together constituted, as he argued, a *doctrine*:

- 1) building housing units that could be readily modified and extended—later known as *habitat évolutif* or *cit  musulmane  volutive*—in order to better improve the lives and development of rural families by means of continuously improved facilities;
- 2) creating exclusively collective dwellings and high-rise buildings in major cities, with the exception of the *cit  de recasement*, which were low-rise buildings reserved for provisionally housed families;
- 3) pursuing a policy of ubiquitous contact between the different ethnic groups and encouraging “a formal rejection of the construction of ‘medina Style’ settlements,” which he argued were “too compartmentalized”;<sup>44</sup> and
- 4) initiating a policy of rent defrayal by implementing a form of *surloyers* (surcharge-rent) in higher-salaried urban areas to offset the inherently insufficient economic returns in very-low-wage rural sectors.<sup>45</sup>

### A Colonial Typology

General de Gaulle’s socioeconomic development plan and his unexpected 1958 proclamation that Algeria was inhabited by only one category of people, *Fran ais   part enti re* (fully fledged Frenchmen),<sup>46</sup> meant that with a stroke of the pen the Algerian population was suddenly considered French. This new status not only normalized the policy of contact but also served as a legitimization for the projected housing for what had become a new French population (now including Algerians) in Algeria under French colonial rule. One of the ramifications of this profound shift was that the debates about community-based designs and culture-specific housing devoted to particular populations in Algeria slowly but surely lost their *raison d’être*. Thus, with one important exception, the typological housing denominations in Algeria came to echo those of the mass-housing projects and preapproved plan-type housing units that had previously been built by the MRL in France—the HLMs, the LOGECOs, and the small housing units of the emergency *Op ration Million*, all of them designs primarily based on construction-cost criteria. The exception to this rule involved the Minister of Construction Pierre Sudreau. Although he was at pains to amend the authoritarian policies

of his predecessors and enhance the national production of new modern housing in France proper, including the Referendum Apartment of 1959,<sup>47</sup> Sudreau nevertheless endorsed the creation of an abject category of housing in Algeria that did not exist in France—the *semi-urban*. This singular type was considered expedient because even the lowest category of housing development in France—that is, the *logement million*—was economically inaccessible to certain classes of the colonized population in Algeria.

The *logement semi-urbain* was created by decree on 20 May 1959. Its launch was accompanied by a twenty-six-page technical brochure specifying every characteristic of the envisaged housing units with an introduction written by an extensive list of members of a special working group that included Lathuillière, Emery, and André Jacomet, the General Secretary of Administration in Algeria. The introduction explained that the *semi-urbain* was a form of habitation designed for the populations that lived on either the outskirts of cities or in rural towns.<sup>48</sup> As such, the *semi-urbain* was distinct from the rural-housing category, which was regulated by another institution, namely the Commissariat à la reconstruction et à l'habitat rural (CRHR, Rural Housing and Reconstruction Commission).

Jacomet classified the various categories of urban housing that were built in Algeria from lowest to highest, explaining that “the semi-urban lodging is situated in the range of the types currently being built in Algeria at the most modest level. Above it, we find the temporary assistance settlement; above this, the modern housing types of ‘million,’ ‘LOGECO,’ and ‘normal,’ similar to those found in the Métropole.”<sup>49</sup> Although he freely acknowledged the absolutely minimal standards of the semi-urban housing, he emphasized that these units were “a decisive step of social development for families that have been torn from the *gourbi* [shacks] and the slum.”<sup>50</sup> Whereas the most inferior category of urban public housing to receive state funding in France was the *Opération Million*, in Algeria it was the *semi-urbain*, a dwelling of reduced size and reduced cost (and therefore of reduced comfort) that was expected to house Algerian families whom the French authorities considered to be neither urban nor rural but rather “not yet urban” or “in the process of becoming urban.”

The semi-urban dwelling targeted a specific set of socioeconomic groups: Algerians employed in the agricultural sector; agents of local administrative services; salaried workers in the semipublic sectors, such as railroad, post office, and telecommunications; and artisans and shopkeepers in the tertiary sector.<sup>51</sup> The wages of these Algerian workers were so low—about NF250 per month—that they could barely actually afford the *logement semi-urbain*,

whose rent amounted to roughly NF30 per month over a period of fifteen years, or a noninterest bank loan of around NF5,500. In addition, the French authorities assumed that these neither urban nor rural families were not prepared to move into modern high-rise buildings, since they were unaccustomed to higher standards; therefore they argued that a gradual “development” was necessary. Although French policymakers made similar value judgments regarding the attitudes and behavior of French working-class families who moved from the slums into the public social housing of the aforementioned LENS or LOPOFAs that were specifically designed for them,<sup>52</sup> the *semi-urbain habitat* provided Algerian families in colonized Algeria with even more inferior comfort and even lower standards.

### The Design of Semi-urban Housing

As was the case in postwar France, women in Algeria were instructed how to settle in and to adapt themselves to the modern requirements of their new domestic space, as prescribed by the government, as well as how to allocate their budgets for household expenditures. In colonial Algeria, the French authorities assumed that the female Algerian inhabitants of the *logement semi-urbain* would demand and make changes to the spatial configuration of their domestic spaces, which were deemed to be inappropriate:

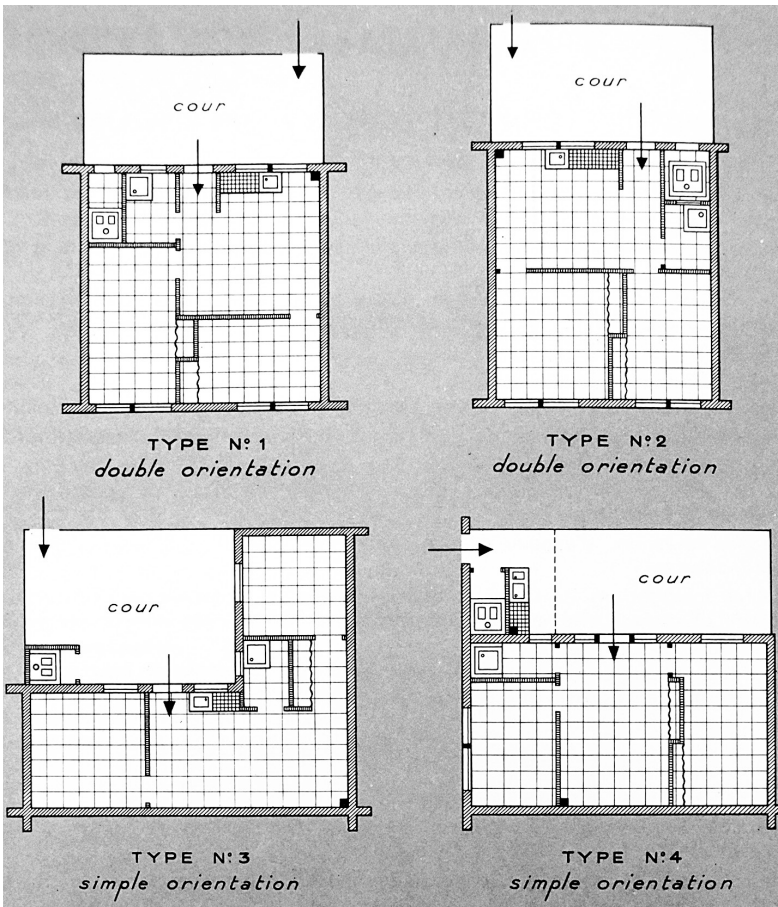
The Muslim woman ... is the one who will require a house that is properly exposed, allowing good exposure to sunlight in winter, and also to open the windows to the outside. This woman will also very soon require the removal of any opaque walls that are not based on Koranic prescriptions, and she will quickly consider that her house and courtyard are too *cellulaire* [cellular] in form.<sup>53</sup>

The significance of this anticipated grievance stems from the fact that, as in the forms of housing developed by MRL officials in postwar France, *cellulaire* (compartmentalized dwellings) in the form of *cellule* (habitation cells) were key articles of faith in the design of the semi-urban dwelling. Quiet apart from this predicted problem, due to strict financial restrictions the dimensions of the cells in Algeria were moreover drastically reduced, and the finishing work was often left uncompleted.

The 1959 functional and technical instructions stipulated the design of low-rise buildings, comprising a cluster of twenty-five to sixty individual cells arranged in either single-story or two-story blocks (duplexes). The range of types included a *2 pièces principales*, a two-room unit with a living area of 24



Figs. 26a-c Semi-urban dwellings published in a brochure by the Housing Service of the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria





to 27 square meters; a *3 pièces principales*, a three-room unit of 31 to 34 square meters; and a *4 pièces principales*, a four-room unit of 38 to 41 square meters. The minimum floor space of the main bedroom was to be 9 square meters, whereas the second or third bedrooms had to occupy 7 square meters. The living room and the incorporated kitchen had to be contained in a minimum space of 11 square meters. The *salle d'eau* (a room for bathing and laundering) was to be a minimum of 2 square meters, while the restroom was to be located outside the living space and without any direct contact with the other rooms. The units were to include an internal courtyard with a minimum floor space of 16 square meters, enclosed not by the walls of the rooms of the units but by fences that were meant to be the equivalent to reeds attached to wooden poles (figs. 26a–c).

The units were to be equipped with running water, even if new mains had to be laid, but electricity and gas were to be supplied only if an immediate public distribution network was already in place.<sup>54</sup> On one level, the minuscule dimensions of the cells—which were smaller than both the modernist *Existenzminimum* dwelling debated at CIAM II in Frankfurt in 1929 and the tiniest one-room dwelling (with an area of 35 square meters) of the 1922 HBM in France—were justified, according to the authors, by the meager wages of the future Algerian property owners. More notably, however, the cramped space was deliberately meant to negate what was considered to be an exaggerated and pernicious ideal of cohabitational and communal ways of life, the instructions arguing that “the rules of Muslim solidarity lead to a disproportionate extension of family relationships” and that “this conception of community is a serious obstacle to the awakening and development of a family unit.”<sup>55</sup> The working group that outlined the recommendations for semi-urban housing expressed a clear preference for building three-room units, indeed the more the better, even at the risk of delivering these units without completing the finishing stages because, as the advisors argued, the new owners would be automatically obliged to invest more of their savings on the interior workings of the new properties.

In essence, the semi-urban dwelling epitomizes France’s colonial project in Algeria. The prefix “semi-” represents the diminished spatial provisions and a failure to automatically supply basic prerequisites such as electricity. Moreover, the semi-urban dwelling contributed to the further impoverishment of the already economically penurious population (even though they were not unemployed) and to their abrupt incorporation into the French system of bank debt. The *logement semi-urbain* was also termed *accession à la propriété de catégorie très économique* (literally, “accession to very econom-



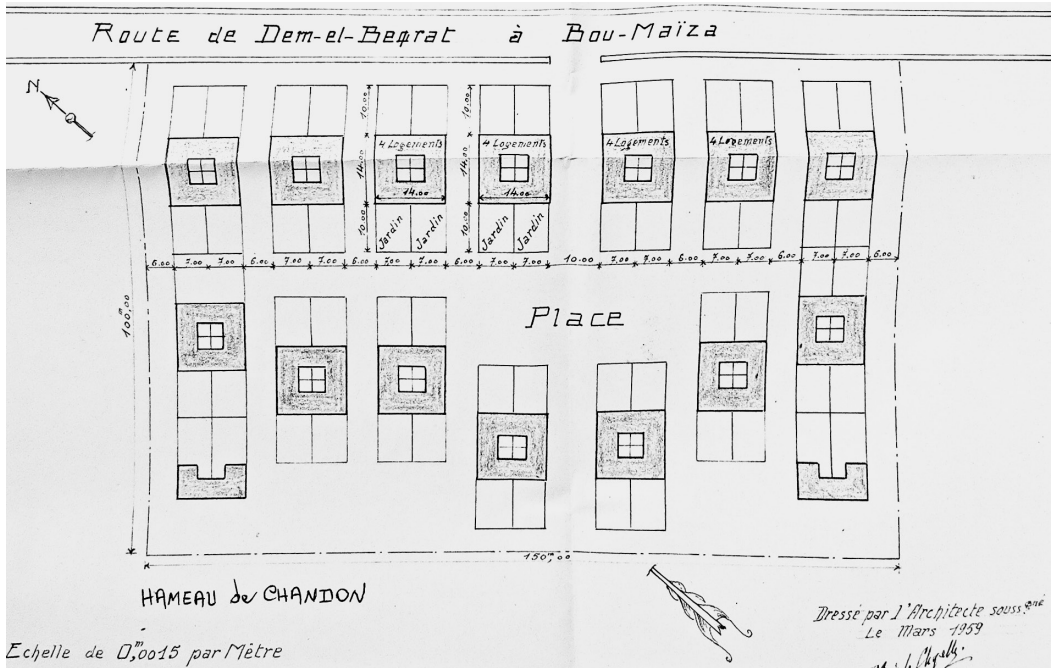


Fig. 27 *Accession à la propriété*, plan of the regroupement of the village of Beni Merouane in Dem El Bégrat, 1959



Fig. 28 Plan of a new fortified settlement for the regroupement in Ain Babouche designed by the CRHR, 1958

ical property”)—implying having access to a property, or, in this context, being given access to a property. The housing units were subsidized by the government’s Fonds de dotation de l’habitat (FDH, or Funds for Housing Endowment). The FDH was responsible for public loans to public and private housing cooperatives to build one of the three categories of semi-urban dwellings. The borrowed fixed amounts were calculated according to four geographic zones, A, B, C, and D, as well as to the sizes of the housing units, ranging from a minimum of NF4,200 for a two-room unit in Zone D to NF6,960 in Zone A, repayable within fifteen years without interest.

In the colonized Department of Bône (today Annaba) in northeastern Algeria, a vast construction program was launched in March 1959, comprising 2,500 semi-urban dwellings that were also known as *logements à 500,000 F* (NF5,000 housing units). The engineer-in-chief, head of the Department of Urbanism and Construction of Bône, explained the different administrative and financial procedures for creating, building, and delivering a semi-urban *cellule* to the municipalities under his department (figs. 27, 28).<sup>56</sup> He stressed that municipalities were to play a vital role in promoting and facilitating the enforcement of this *accession à la propriété*, in that they were required to:

- 1) register possible candidates and certify their morality, solvency, and livelihood; priority was to be given to the *chef de famille* (household heads) in employment with the municipality or elsewhere;
- 2) provide a financial safety net for housing cooperatives, as the FDH required, to cover insufficient reimbursements, prior to granting loans;
- 3) and seek (and possibly acquire) the necessary lands as soon as the number of creditworthy applicants was considered sufficient to justify the construction of twenty to sixty semi-urban dwellings, and eventually to themselves provide these dwellings to the housing associations in order to progressively launch construction operations.<sup>57</sup>

The lists of candidates that the municipalities gathered were to be sent to the Prefecture of Bône with letters of motivation, thus resulting in a competitive environment. In the case of the municipality of Dem El Begrat, the president of a special delegation even suggested offering the required land free of charge in order to build semi-urban dwellings to accommodate Algerian workers and their families. In his letter to the colonel commandant of Bône dated 13 March 1959, he wrote: “you know the attraction offered today by decent housing, and there is no more effective fight against FLN propaganda than to provide a decent roof to a Muslim family.”<sup>58</sup> This spatial

counterrevolutionary strategy, fueled by psychological operations, was similarly applied to clear Algeria's shantytowns.

- 1 On the role of women, see for example Rudolph, *At Home in Postwar France*, 87–113.
- 2 On the consumer society and the welfare state, see for example Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society*; Swenarton, Avermaete, and van den Heuvel, *Architecture and the Welfare State*.
- 3 Le Goullon, "La construction de cités nouvelles," 130.
- 4 Pouvreau, *Un politique en architecture*, 111.
- 5 Driant, *Les politiques du logement*, 100.
- 6 Cited in Rimbaud, *Pierre Sudreau*, 130.
- 7 Cited in Saigot, "Enquête sur l'habitat en Algérie VIII," 16.
- 8 The French New Franc (*Nouveau Franc*, NF) was introduced in January 1960 in response to devaluation in the 1940s and 1950s. One NF was equal to one hundred former francs (*Francs*, F). In 1963, the NF was again called the Franc (F). In 1999 the Franc was replaced by the Euro, at the rate of F6.55957 to €1.
- 9 FRANOM 81F/433. *L'Habitat dans la Plan de Constantine*. As in other cases mentioned earlier, the appellation of the first category often differed: it was sometimes called *de luxe* (luxurious), or "semi-luxurious," or *de standing plus élevé* (higher standard). In terms of price, the LOGECO and HLM *classique* were sometimes expected to range between NF20,000 and NF30,000 NF. Moreover, certain documents reported the costs in NF, while others in old francs.
- 10 CHSP 1 DV 34. *Habitat semi-urbain*.
- 11 Aïche, "Figures de l'architecture algéroise," 273.
- 12 Article 2 of the constitutive statutes of the SAM, as cited by the General Delegate of SAM in de Thubert, "Architecture moderne," 291–93.
- 13 On the French neo-Moresque style in Algiers, see for example Oulebsir, "Les ambiguïtés du régionalisme."
- 14 Jourdain, "Il faut être de son temps," 290.
- 15 Oulebsir, "Les ambiguïtés du régionalisme," 118.
- 16 De Thubert, "Architecture moderne," 292.
- 17 The Algiers-based magazines *Travaux nord-africains* and *Chantiers* dedicated special issues to the exhibition. See *Travaux nord-africains*, no. 1136 (18 February 1933); *Chantiers*, no. 3 (March 1933). The first part on urbanism in *Chantiers* included the famous projects by Tony Soccard, Maurice Rotival, and Le Corbusier for the Quartier de la Marine.
- 18 Rey, "Tous urbanistes!" 237.
- 19 Bienvenu, "L'habitation indigène," 246.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Ibid. On Bienvenu, see for example Çelik, *Urban Forms*, 130–43.
- 23 *Exposition de la cité moderne: urbanisme, architecture, habitation—Alger du 28 mars au 19 avril 1936* (Algiers: Comité d'Organisation, 1936), 8–9.
- 24 Pasquier-Bronde, "L'habitat indigène," 20.
- 25 Lathuillière and Seiller, "Le problème," 22.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Soustelle, *L'espérance trahie*, 284.
- 28 Labouret, *Colonisation, colonialisme, décolonisation*, 85.
- 29 Persitz, "L'habitation indigène."
- 30 Ibid., 14.
- 31 The 1870 Crémieux decree was abolished from 1940 to 1942 under the Vichy regime.
- 32 This does not mean that the term "Muslim" was never used before 1945. On the contrary, Islam and Muslim customs had been a subject of study for the French administration and social scientists since the onset of French colonization. The term "Muslim" was also used

- to designate a specific category of urban planning, for instance in Georges Marçais, “L’urbanisme musulman,” *Algérie*, May 1936, pp. 8–9. Other expressions were also used, such as *maison moresque* (Moresque house) or *urbanisme nord-africain* (North African Urbanism). Except in a few cases—for instance in René Lespes’ article “L’évolution des idées sur l’urbanisme algérois de 1830 à nous jours” *Chantiers nord-africains*, no. 3 (1933): 247–62—the appellation “Algerian house” was rarely employed. *Algérois* referred to the geographic region of Algiers and not to the inhabitants of Algiers. Because colonized Algeria was deemed a French department, the terms *Arab*, *Berber*, *gourbi*, *negro* and *indigenous* were often used to designate the settlements in which the Algerian colonized population lived.
- 33 Fourcaut, “Alger-Paris,” 128.
- 34 *Ibid.*, 131.
- 35 Cited in *ibid.*
- 36 Lathuillière, “Algérie 1955,” 2.
- 37 Fourcaut, “Alger-Paris,” 131.
- 38 Report by Marcel Lathuillière, “L’habitat des musulmans dans les villes d’Algérie,” *Rapport du XIIe Congrès national d’habitation et d’urbanisme* (Algiers, May 1952), cited in *ibid.*, 132.
- 39 FRANOM 81F/2204. René Montaldo, Rapport sur l’habitat, Congrès des présidents des conseils généraux de France, June 1953, p. 2. The law of 1922 unified the provisions prescribed by the previous laws regarding publically funded housing programs in France. On the politics of social housing in France, see for example, Berthet, *Contribution à une histoire*; Driant, *Les politiques du logement*; Effosse, *L’invention du logement*; Guerrand, *Le logement populaire*.
- 40 *Ibid.* France is written in capital letters in the original document. The “*village nègre*” was a settlement inhabited, as the term clearly denotes, by nonwhite people; that is, by Algerians. On the origin of the “*village nègre*,” see for example Henni, “Black Color.”
- 41 Montaldo, “L’Habitat économique et social,” 46.
- 42 *Ibid.*
- 43 *Ibid.*
- 44 *Ibid.*
- 45 *Ibid.*
- 46 “Allocution prononcée à Alger le 4 juin 1958,” in de Gaulle, *Avec le renouveau*, 15–17.
- 47 On the Referendum Apartment of 1959, see for example Newsome, “The ‘Apartment Referendum.’”
- 48 CHSP. 1 DV 34. Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie, Direction des Travaux Publics et de la Construction et des Transports, Service de l’Habitat, *Logement Semi-Urbain*.
- 49 *Ibid.*
- 50 *Ibid.* On the term *gourbi* and its connotations, see chapter 2.
- 51 *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- 52 Rudolph, *At Home in Postwar France*, 125.
- 53 CHSP. 1 DV 34. Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie, Direction des Travaux Publics et de la Construction et des Transports, Service de l’Habitat, *Logement Semi-Urbain*, p. 6.
- 54 *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- 55 *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- 56 FRANOM. 933/160. Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie, Département de Bône, Service de l’urbanisme et de la construction, Habitat. *Lancement d’un programme de construction de logement type semi-urbain*. Présenté par l’Ingénieur en Chef des ponts et chaussées, Chef du Service départemental de l’Urbanisme et de la Construction. Bône, 6 March 1959.
- 57 *Ibid.*, pp. 1–2.
- 58 FRANOM. 933/160. Département de Bône, Arrondissement de Bône, Commune de Dem El Begrat. Le Président de la Délégation Spéciale à Monsieur le Colonel Commandant le B.E.T.E.S., Bône, 13 March 1959.

## 6. Officers, Technocrats, and *Bidonvilles*

On 2 October 1958, the day before de Gaulle's legendary speech in Constantine, the civil cabinet of the Prefecture of Algiers issued a directive entitled "Aménagement des bidonvilles" (The Planning of Shantytowns) to the presidents of the special delegations that had been established in March 1958. The two-page document was signed by General Jacques Massu, one of the architects of the infamous Battle of Algiers, commander of the Zone Nord Algérois of the 10<sup>th</sup> Parachute Division, and the person in charge of civil rule in the Department of Algiers. Copies were sent to the General Secretaries of General Safety, the Plan and Economic Affairs, and the Bureau of the Plan, as well as intelligence officers and chief officers of the Sections administratives spécialisées (SASs, or Specialized Administrative Sections) and the Sections administratives urbaines (SAUs, or Urban Administrative Sections). General Massu wrote: "The problem of housing plays an important role in the exceptional effort undertaken for the social and economic recovery of the workers; this has triggered the construction of many HLMs [Habitat à loyer modéré, or Low-Cost Housing] and the extension of the policy of access to property."<sup>1</sup> He argued, however, that due to the initial capital that they were requested to provide before they could become owners, this solution was unaffordable for certain segments of the population. Massu stressed that thanks to the successful policies of certain municipalities that had strategically donated land, their initial financial burden had been significantly reduced. He revealed that the donations provided a number of indirect revenues, and the construction sites represented an active economic hub within the municipality. He noted that while waiting for the construction of proper dwellings for the inhabitants of the vast *bidonvilles* (shantytowns), it was "equally necessary to absorb the 'bidonvilles' as soon as possible by undertaking their ordered, openly spaced reconstruction by the inhabitants themselves, under the control of a technician who can easily be found locally."<sup>2</sup> To enforce this directive, Massu called on the civil capacities and military skills of the SAS officers—abilities that he stressed were compatible with the planning program: "SAS chief officers stationed to your municipalities are qualified to help you and relieve you of some of your tasks by facilitating the execution of any measures that you might need to take, and by obtaining any material support from the local military authorities ..."<sup>3</sup>

With the directive of the "Aménagement des bidonvilles," General Massu turned more than 160 *bidonvilles* in Algiers alone into legalized forced-labor



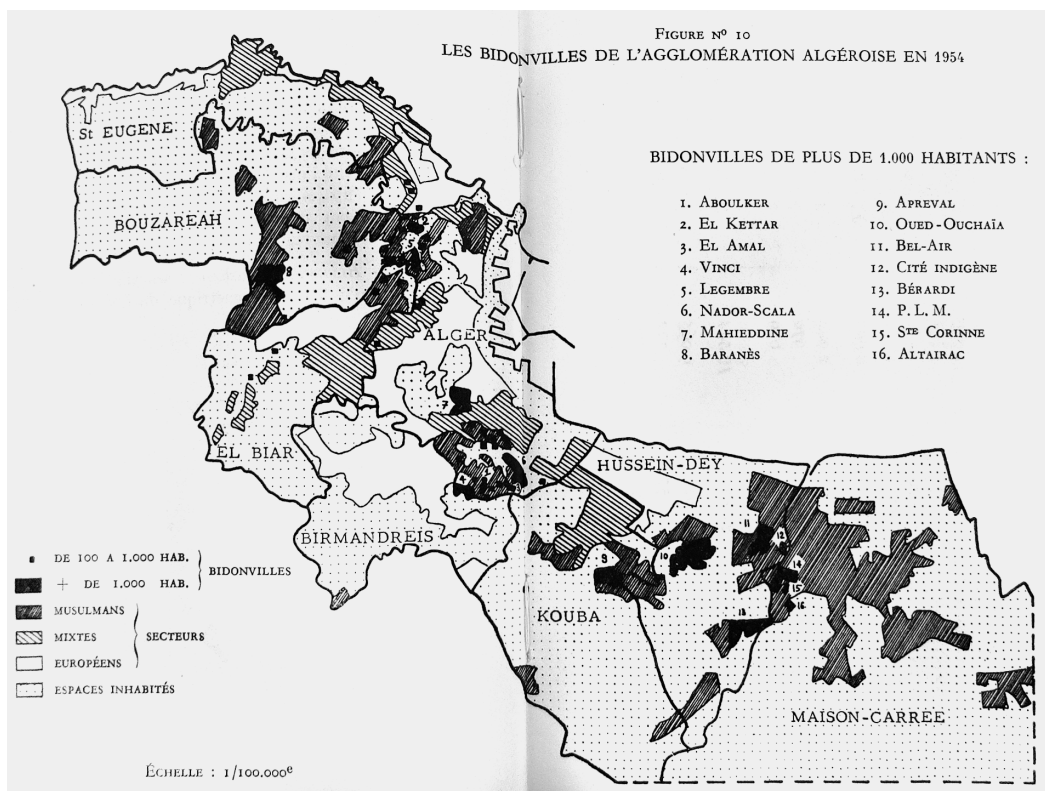
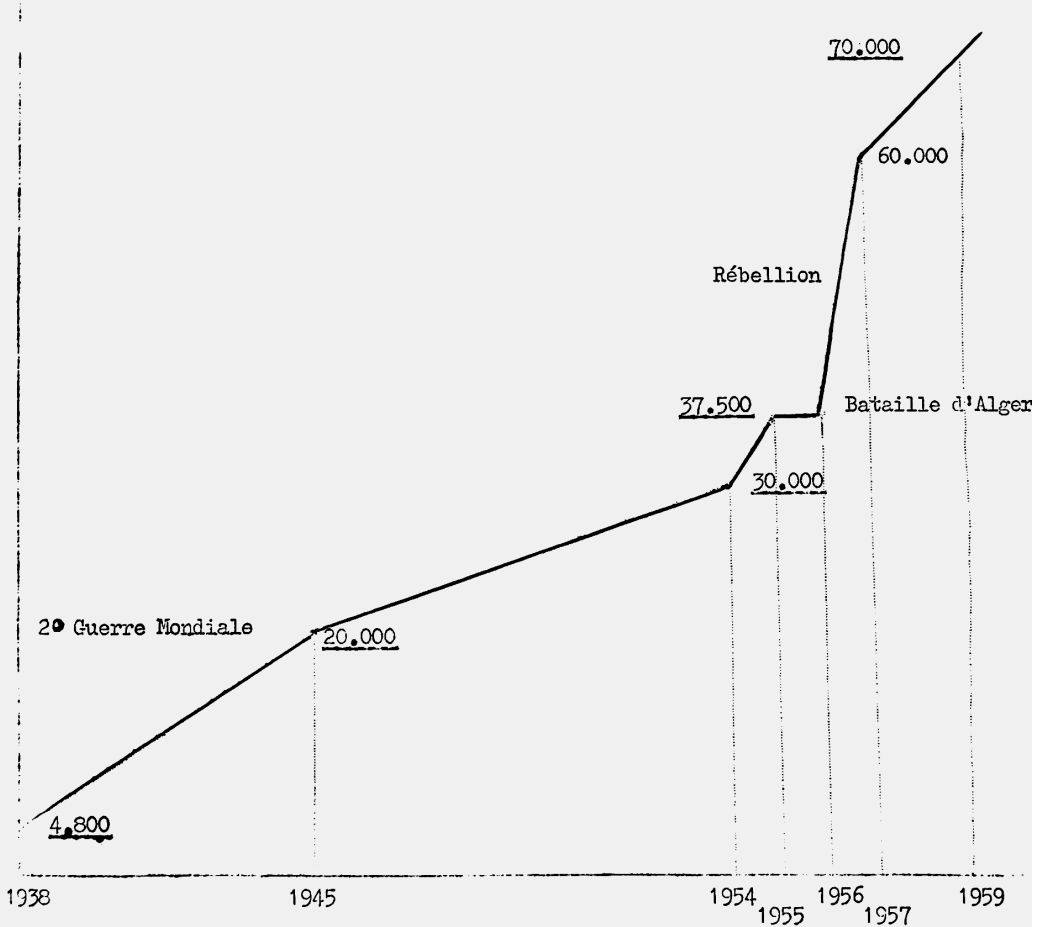


Fig. 29 Bidonvilles in the Algiers Region in 1954

sites, in which approximately one-third of Algiers's entire *bidonville* population<sup>4</sup> was constrained to build basic infrastructures and to marginally improve their own provisional shelters under the constant control of the French army, represented by SAU officers familiar with the conditions of the *bidonvilles* and their inhabitants (fig. 29).

Inhabited by Algerians, like Algiers's famous densely populated Casbah, the *bidonvilles* constituted what were perceived to be revolutionary strongholds that the French civil and military authorities found extremely difficult to penetrate—and therefore to control. The French army developed specialized counterrevolutionary operations that SAU officers imposed in Algiers's vast *bidonvilles*, and later in those *bidonvilles* in the suburbs of Paris populated by Algerian migrants, most notably Nanterre.<sup>5</sup> In addition to generating concerns about hygiene, the residents of the *bidonvilles* were usually considered to be an “uncontrolled and unrecorded population, inevitably serving as a refuge for criminals and killers of the FLN.”<sup>6</sup> During the violent Battle of Algiers that terrorized Algiers's inhabitants from September 1956 to September 1957 (figs. 30, 31)—and during which tens of thousands of



ANNEXE IIIACCROISSEMENT DE LA POPULATION  
DES BIDONVILLESVille d'ALGER

Etant donné l'imprécision et la non-concordance des renseignements fournis par les Services officiels du recensement, ce graphique ne peut prétendre représenter l'exacte évolution de la population des bidonvilles.

La courbe ci-dessus n'a pour but que de donner quelques indications valables sur les différentes phases de cette évolution.

Fig. 30 Chart indicating that during the bloody, infamous *Bataille d'Alger* the number of inhabitants of the *bidonvilles* in Algiers doubled



Fig. 31 A still from the movie *La Battaglia di Algeri* (1966), directed by Gillo Pontecorvo

people were placed under house arrest, and thousands of others tortured, disappeared, or killed—the military authorities of the Department of Algiers launched a military operation known as *Opération bidonville*. Its aim was “to permit the insertion in all the *bidonvilles* a simple organization that would enable the easy control of all of the inhabitants and the detection of suspicious elements.”<sup>7</sup> Officers were requested to follow a tested, systematic method that comprised a number of measures, as follows.

- 1) First, they were to number the groups of houses of the *bidonvilles*: the group numbering (*numérotage*) included any huts or other structures built around the same courtyard. The assigned number was to be painted on the façade of the shelter; the size of the painted number was to be roughly 50 centimeters high by 10 to 50 centimeters wide.
- 2) Next, they were to establish detailed records for three hierarchies of assumed leaders: the head of the family and the head of the group of houses (both of whom were designated by the Algerian inhabitants), and the head of the cluster, who was nominated by the French military commander of the sector to which the *bidonville* belonged.
- 3) They were then to deliver new numbered identity cards incorporating the letter of the military sector, the exact number of the *bidonville*, the assigned letter of the cluster, and the allotted number of the group of houses: for instance, “N 47 C 11.” Those who had no identity cards were obliged to apply for one within eight days of their identity control.<sup>8</sup>

Frequent searches were to be carried out at any time, day and night. According to the French military authorities, the efficiency of the numbering system for identifying every human being, referred to as a *numéro minéralogique* (number plate), would effortlessly facilitate the rigorous and permanent control of the *bidonville* population. Control was also assured by placing the appointed heads of the clusters, of the groups of houses, and of the families responsible for the people who were registered under direct official control.<sup>9</sup> In essence, the inhabitants of the *bidonvilles* were subject to a state of siege, and Algiers's *bidonvilles* became military battlefields. *Opération bidonville* echoed the doctrines of subversive counterrevolutionary warfare scripted and implemented by the French military officers—militants of the *Algérie française* (French Algeria)—who staged the coup d'état of May 1958, triggering the return of General Charles de Gaulle to power.

### SAU Officers as Witnesses

With de Gaulle's five-year socioeconomic development plan of 1959–1963, termed the *Plan de Constantine*, the missions of the SAUs were extended to include additional civil and military tasks, implying the clearance of the self-constructed settlements (*bidonvilles*) inhabited by the Algerian population. This operation was euphemistically called the *Résorption des bidonvilles* (Bidonvilles Clearance).

In a class of documents entitled “Comment j'ai résorbé les bidonvilles” (How I Cleared the Bidonvilles), SAU chiefs were requested to report on the procedures and phases that they had used to accomplish their assigned missions and were asked to historicize their shortcomings and successes.<sup>10</sup> For instance, the SAU chief in colonial Mostaganem, in the northwest of Algeria, stated that since the outset of the Algerian War of Independence—or to use his phrase, the *événements* (the events)—and more precisely since 1956, due to constant military operations both the number of new shantytowns and the number of shelters in existing shantytowns recently built on municipal land had increased dramatically. He reported that a number of public housing projects had begun in 1958, which had raised false hopes, and that since 1959 the military authorities had been operating in what was a situation of general distress among the inhabitants, writing, “this state of affairs worries the military commander, who has taken certain measures as part of the control of the population with the initial aim of containing the influx.”<sup>11</sup>

There were eight shantytowns in Mostaganem in February 1959, home to 6,163 inhabitants. The largest *bidonville*, called Sidi-Abdelkader, accom-

modated eighteen hundred people, but these figures had rapidly changed. In order to stem the internal migration provoked by the bloody war and thereby to prevent the construction of new shantytowns, the army had requested potential newcomers to meet three unequivocal, yet unrealistic, conditions: 1) to supply an authorization for their departure from other locations; 2) to have gainful employment; and 3) that their dwelling be made of permanent materials. According to the SAU chief, although these actions had halted the proliferation of shantytowns, the actions were still unsatisfactory. Instead, as he argued, “it is necessary to fight and destroy the *bidonvilles*.”<sup>12</sup>

The Mostaganem SAU took additional radical measures. First, it enforced a vast program of *recasement* (resettlement), not by supplying newly constructed housing units but by “individuating” (targeted selection of) vacant dwellings and buildings. This was undertaken by the Bureaux de contrôle de populations (Population Control Bureaus), whereupon the earmarked properties were allotted to the *bidonville* inhabitants by SAU officers. As a result of this method, the total number of *bidonville* inhabitants in Mostaganem had dropped to 3,013 by the end of 1959. The second policy meshed with de Gaulle’s Plan de Constantine, namely a parallel plan of public HLMs launched by the civil authorities. Both the rental fees and the expense of acquiring the residential units that had already been built were predictably too exorbitant for the majority of the *bidonville* inhabitants. A few *cités de recasement* (resettlements projects) located in *bidonvilles* or elsewhere<sup>13</sup> were realized to this end, but the required credits soon proved to be insufficient and the program was abandoned. Nevertheless, the total number of *bidonville* inhabitants in Mostaganem dropped again, to 1,847. In April 1961, the SAU chief reported that “the demise of the control bureaus, which constituted the basis of this work, has stopped the war on the *bidonvilles*.”<sup>14</sup>

Some of the same policies were similarly implemented by another SAU in the *bidonville* of Boulilef in Mostaganem. Before introducing any program, however, the SAU chief had resolved that he would first impose himself, as he argued, on “this hostile neighborhood, and that is why we installed a mobile antenna.”<sup>15</sup> The objective of this itinerant SAU branch—which at the outset visited the *bidonville* of Boulilef three times a week and then permanently settled there, its staff living among the inhabitants in a prefabricated house—was, as the chief put it, “to make contact with this heterogeneous population.”<sup>16</sup>

This military policy of making “human contact” was part of the overall French colonial doctrine of wartime pacification. As in the *camps de regroupement*

*ments*, this forced strategic communication between French officers and Algerian civilians was widely applied in the *bidonvilles*. The army officers were ostensibly posted to protect the population but in fact simultaneously acted to gather intelligence and ultimately assimilate Algerians to French rule, including to French domestic spaces and expenditures. As discussed in the previous chapters, this multifaceted type of colonialism and warfare was an inherent part of France's subversive and psychological counterrevolutionary operations.

In colonial Bône (today Annaba), in northeastern Algeria, the proliferation of shantytowns, or self-constructed settlements, had been in existence since 1955 for the same reasons as in Mostaganem; in other words, due to the inevitable consequences of the war that had broken out in November 1954. By the end of 1956, the SAS in Bône had implemented *résorption* (clearance) operations in the two largest shantytowns, Pont-Blanc and Joannonville, which housed ten thousand people between them. According to the SAS chief, the measures had been undertaken "for humanitarian reasons and for security imperatives."<sup>17</sup> As in the *bidonville* of Boulilef, a team of officers from the Algerian Affairs division of the SAS of Bou-Hamra settled in the shantytowns in question and requisitioned a large strip of land located 5 kilometers from the city center. Soon after, the division created three building sites: 1) a *chantier de montage* (assembly site) in the *bidonvilles* where the departing inhabitants were to be selected and any usable materials from their shacks recycled; 2) a *chantier de chargement et de transport* (loading and transport site), which would provide for the designated families; and 3) a *chantier de reconstruction* (reconstruction site), in which, after leveling and staking out the terrain, the newcomers were to be received. The rules stressed, however, that "before setting up every family, the officers of this team will take care of identifying and taking a census of the members, and establishing a family record: the first element of the coming system of control. Of course, this reception will be accompanied by an always-welcomed food-assistance program."<sup>18</sup> The newly ordered and openly spaced settlement, named Sidi-Salem, hosted fourteen thousand inhabitants in roughly three thousand units dubbed *coquettes maisonnettes* (cute houses). The SAS chief insisted that by these means Algerian families had now become modern, stating "they can ultimately hope to one day access a 'standard' that is equivalent to ours; isn't that the essential goal of the Muslim promotion?"<sup>19</sup> Again, this reflected an innate part of both the colonial attitude and the military mindset.

### The Case of the *Bidonville* in Clos-Salembier

Captain Courbon, the SAU chief of the *bidonville* in Clos-Salembier in Algiers, addressed “Muslim promotion” differently. In his forty-three-page study “Les bidonvilles et leur résorption: Perspectives de promotion humaine, l’expérience du Clos-Salembier” (The *Bidonvilles* and Their Absorption: Perspectives of Human Promotion—The Experience of Clos-Salembier), Courbon contended that “to eliminate a *bidonville* is to act in the sense of improving the living quarters and intending—by way of modifying the lifestyles and economic behaviors that result from the new housing—to move toward the promotion of the family”<sup>20</sup> (fig. 32). He assumed that the primary mission of the SAU chief, in addition to taking a census of the *bidonvilles*’ populations and limiting the expansion of the shantytowns, was “to organize and humanize the *bidonvilles*.”<sup>21</sup> He further argued, however, that because the *bidonvilles*—generally regarded as refuges for FLN revolutionaries—were per se inimical to “human promotion,” it was vital to progressively suppress them. According to Courbon, the specific typology of housing designed for these populations should meet the aforementioned goals, as well as take into account certain social traditions, so that collectively these actions were aimed to help mold individualist tendencies, community necessities, and customs to the realities of modern life. He bemoaned the incompetence of the design team, however, stressing that “the choice of the type of dwelling is solely left to the care of architects and technicians. This is a regrettable error, because the framework in which the individual lives represents the key factor of his behavior.”<sup>22</sup> Courbon argued that the formal responses to the question of the *bidonvilles* should primarily be centered around three types of housing, as follows (figs. 33a, 33b).

- 1) *Habitat horizontal*: transitory and temporary low-rise buildings of a semi-rural character (not to be confused with semi-urban dwellings), which comprised courtyards that recalled traditional dwellings (but also the *bidonville*). Courtyards that were large enough could be converted into tiny gardens, as in the case he highlighted of the laborers’ gardens developed by the Jesuit priest Father Félix Volpette in Saint-Etienne in France in 1894. Courbon believed that although these types of houses would improve living conditions, they would also encourage individualistic tendencies and discourage Algerian solidarity. He concluded that this solution could not be enforced in urban areas due to the elevated land costs.



SCHEMA D'UNE OPERATION DE RESORPTION  
DE BIDONVILLE

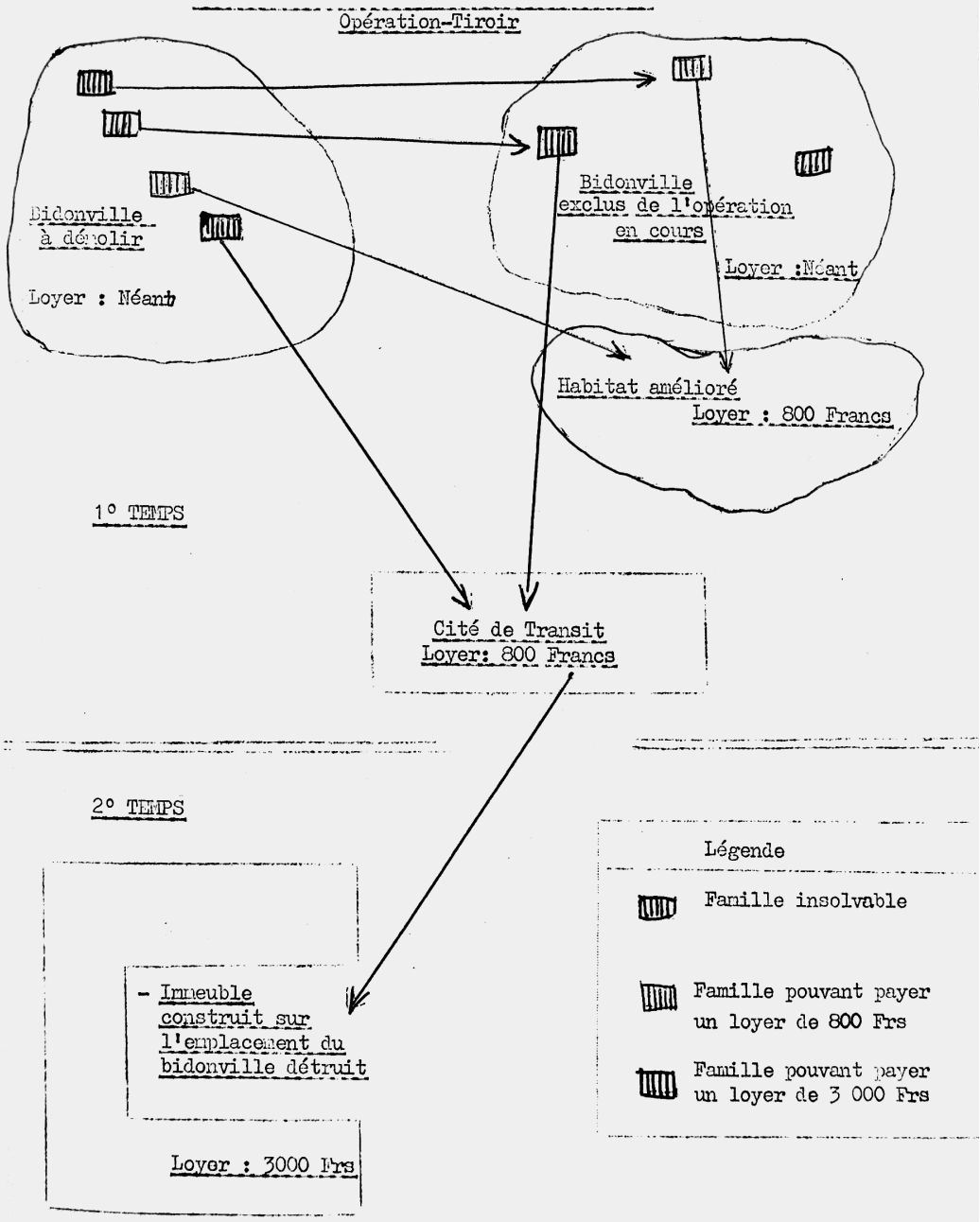


Fig. 32 Opération tiroir, a scenario for the evacuation of the bidonville of Clos-Salembier

- 2) *Habitat vertical*: high-rise buildings with modern, standard infrastructure that would enable a collective lifestyle—an idea that was dear to Courbon. He stressed that recently built collective housing had often been built on narrow streets with heavy traffic, forcing the inhabitants to live in what were noisy neighborhoods that lacked playgrounds for their children.
- 3) *Grand ensemble*: large housing settlements. Although this type of housing had aroused a great deal of controversy in France, Courbon believed that this was the most propitious form of community living, because it integrated “all of the indispensable resources of modern life and the development of society. [The *grand ensemble*] can pave the way for both a new manner of dwelling and a new manner of living.”<sup>23</sup>

Captain Courbon assumed that private courtyards would simply be replaced by open and freely accessible spaces devoted to common amenities such as child-care and health-care centers, sports facilities, shops, or a mosque. Nevertheless, he calculated that the majority of the residents of the *bidonvilles* were subsolvent in the sense of being unable to afford the monthly rent of NF3,000 for a one-room dwelling. To this end, he asserted that a number of *bidonvilles améliorés* (improved *bidonvilles*) should be built in accordance with strict rules of urbanism and hygiene. He argued that *baraques très sommaires* (very rudimentary barracks) should be installed in these places, and that the authorities should set lower rents on the inhabitants.<sup>24</sup> What Courbon was, in other words, recommending was that rent should be charged on each and every shelter—including those in the *bidonvilles*.

Courbon also took for granted that “human promotion” (or “development”)—and thereby the creation of new communities—could be achieved if the authorities exercised appropriate guardianship. He claimed: “It is essential to organize and direct the first steps. Tutelage also seems likely to be necessary in order to do things in an astute manner and to explain the virtues of the assets that the conditioning provides.”<sup>25</sup> Courbon deemed that the new renters would tend to confound the superfluous with the necessary; therefore it was also the task of the SAU officers and instructors to orient them about the new requirements of their situation. In his attempts to educate these new communities, Courbon went a step further by organizing an exhibition on French furniture and appliances (including price tags) in a standard apartment; a consultant advised potential customers on the use of the objects and ultimately registered orders (with payment in installments). This pilot experience had been highly successful, according to the captain.



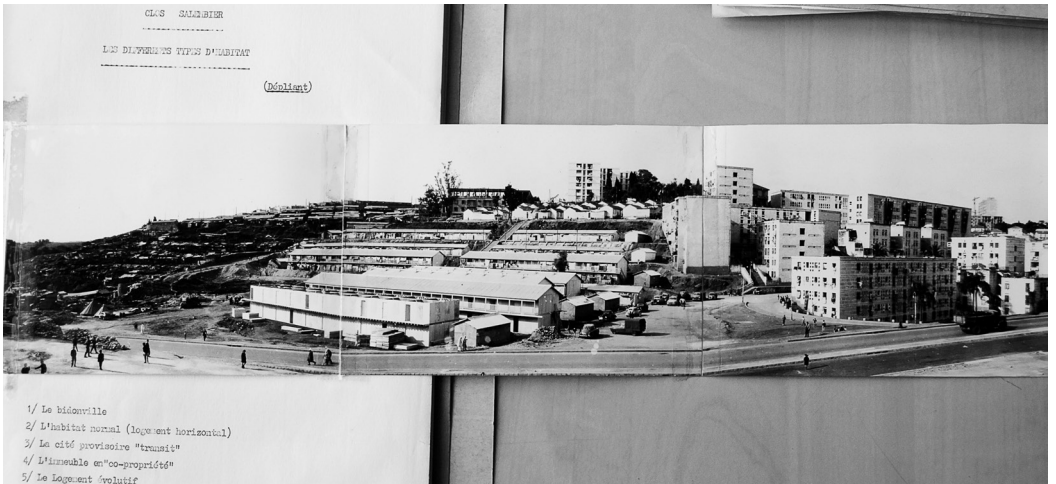
L'Opération en cours - 1<sup>o</sup> Tranche



La Cité de Transit : "Les Accacias"

Fig. 33a The clearing of the bidonville in Clos-Salebier documented by the SAS officer in charge in 1959

Fig. 33b Five types of settlements documented by the SAS officer of Clos-Salebier in 1959



CLAS SALEBIER  
 LES DIFFERENTS TYPES D'HABITAT  
 (réalisés)

- 1/ Le bidonville
- 2/ L'habitat normal (logement horizontal)
- 3/ La cité provisoire "transit"
- 4/ L'immeuble en "co-propriété"
- 5/ Le logement "voluité"

With these paternalistic, assimilationist, and didactic schemes of “human promotion,” Courbon and many others engineered consumer demands and placed additional financial burdens on a broad class of Algerian families in the *bidonvilles*—“improved” or not—who already existed precariously on very low incomes. Courbon based his assumption on what he saw as a self-perpetuating cycle: “The improvement of the living environment inevitably engenders new needs. Having electricity will call for having radio and television; a large room with angled walls will allow the installation of modern furniture; and a shower cubicle will contain a child’s bathtub.”<sup>26</sup>

The schooling of the populations in the *bidonvilles* was simultaneously carried out by another French institution, the Service des centres sociaux (SCS, or Social Centers Service), which was officially founded on 27 October 1955 by the ethnologist and World War II deportee Germaine Tillion. Tillion served under the authority of her fellow ethnologist Jacques Soustelle, who in turn served as General Governor of Algeria from January 1955 to January 1956. The first two pilot centers were established in the *bidonvilles* of Bel-Air (with 7,000 inhabitants) and Boubsilia-Birardi (with 6,500 inhabitants), both located in Hussein-Dey in the eastern part of Algiers.<sup>27</sup> Their aim was to provide basic French education and professional training to the Algerian *bidonville* inhabitants: an initiative that meshed with UNESCO’s “self-help” empowering policy among what were known at the time as the underdeveloped countries (today known as the developing countries).<sup>28</sup> To this end, as Tillion reflected in 1997, “I thought that what could save Algerian families from the extreme poverty they wallowed in was to provide them with tools that would allow them to survive with dignity in the city.”<sup>29</sup> Under General de Gaulle and the Delegate General of the French Government in Algeria Paul Delouvrier, the Service des centres sociaux became the Service des centres sociaux éducatifs (SCSE, or Social and Educational Centers Service) by decree no. 59-896 of 30 July 1959. The SCSE fell under the authority of the Ministry of Education—specifically, under the direct lead of the French General Director of National Education in Algeria, who was also rector of the Academy of Algiers—and was driven by the policy of “Muslim promotion” envisaged in the Plan de Constantine’s socioeconomic development strategy.

### Jacques Chevallier’s Politics and Battles

In 1953, the conditions of Algiers’s *bidonvilles* alarmed not only the CIAM-Algiers group, headed by Pierre-André Emery—who exhibited the group’s comprehensive surveys at the CIAM IX on *La charte de l’habitat* (*The Housing Charter*) held in Aix-en-Provence<sup>30</sup>—but also the newly elected Mayor of

Algiers, Jacques Chevallier, a Catholic “son of the French Empire.”<sup>31</sup> Prior to this position, which lasted until 1958 (i.e., until General de Gaulle’s return to power), Chevallier had served as Mayor of El Biar (a residential suburb of Algiers populated by Europeans) from 1941 to 1943; as a counterespionage agent in North America in 1944, under the orders of Jacques Soustelle; as a Liberal politician in the Algerian Assembly; as a general adviser to the city of Algiers, from 1945 to 1956; and as Secretary of State for War from June 1954 to January 1955. Chevallier was thus particularly well acquainted with the politico-economic stakes of the Algerian Revolution and the multifaceted colonial conditions of the Algerian population, including those who lived in the *bidonvilles*—conditions that had dramatically deteriorated in the aftermath of the French massacre of May 1945. He dedicated a great deal of effort to the regional planning of Algiers, in particular to the demolition of the *bidonvilles* and the construction of heavily advertised mass-housing projects for both the European and Algerian communities. Chevallier also created the Association pour l’étude et le développement de l’agglomération algéroise (AEDAA, or Association for the Study and Development of the Algiers Region), which in 1955 became known as the Agence du plan d’Alger (Plan Agency of Algiers), the latter subsequently serving as a model in France itself.<sup>32</sup>

In his 1958 book, *Nous, Algériens ...* (We, Algerians ...), Chevallier wrote of “how together, Europeans and Muslims reunited, we have together made the city of Algiers what it has become over the last five years: a capital.”<sup>33</sup> He believed in the axiom of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry—French aristocrat, aviator, writer, and author of one of the most translated and best-selling books in the world, *Le Petit Prince* (The Little Prince), whose main character is said to have been inspired by de Gaulle’s Minister of Construction, Pierre Sudreau—an axiom that ran “Pour réunir les hommes: ‘faites-leur bâtir une tour.’”<sup>34</sup> This can be translated as either “To reunite people, make them build a tower” or “To reunite people, build a tower for them.” In accordance with this aphorism, Chevallier wrote, “This is how we launched and delivered with enthusiasm the ‘housing battle,’ which earned the city of Algiers its nickname as the first construction site of France.”<sup>35</sup>

Thousands of housing units were designed and built during the course of the bloody War of Independence and the violent Battle of Algiers. These included the well-known Diar El Saada (Housing of Happiness), Diar El Mahçoul (Housing of the Kept Promise), and the Climat de France, Djenan El Hassan (Beautiful Gardens) that Chevallier discussed in his book; but also lesser-known developments such as the Eucalyptus (fig. 34), the Champ de



Manoeuvre, La Concorde (figs. 35a–c), and the Carrières Jaubert. The list also includes the initiation of the construction of twenty-five thousand dwellings in Bachdjarah. Chevallier contended that the two communities, Europeans and Algerians, ought to live together in the same housing blocks, “so the men of this country will understand one another, the law of these settlements excludes any spirit of exclusion.”<sup>36</sup> Both Algerians and French *colons* criticized Chevallier: the pro-*Algérie française* disagreed with housing being built for Algerians, while the Algerian nationalists accused him of being “neocolonialist.”

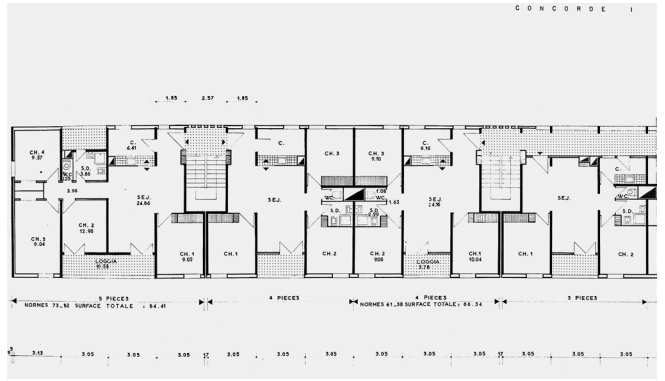
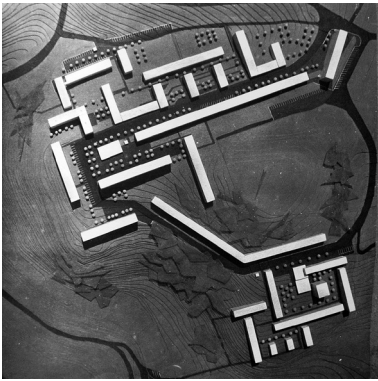
The ambiguities involved in Chevallier’s position and others like him, or rather the hammer and the anvil they were caught between, can also be seen in the case of Jean de Maisonseul. De Maisonseul was an architect, painter, urbanist (alumnus of the Institut d’urbanisme de l’université de Paris, IUUP, and later member of the Institut d’urbanisme de l’université d’Alger, IUUA), former draughtsman for Pierre-André Emery, and then member of the Agence du plan. He had directed the reconstruction plan of the town of Orléansville (today Chlef) after the devastating earthquake of September 1954, the project including the construction of the Centre Culturel Albert Camus, designed by Louis Miquel and Roland Simounet between 1955 and 1960. Another member of the Agence du plan, Jean-Jacques Deluz, regarded the center, “despite the specificity of its scenic conception, [to be] one of the best [examples of] modern architecture in colonial Algeria.”<sup>37</sup> On 22 January 1956, a few months before the onset of the Battle of Algiers, Albert Camus issued his “Appel pour une trêve civile pour l’Algérie” (Appeal for a Civil Truce for Algeria),<sup>38</sup> a peaceful attempt to reconcile European communities with Algerians that was also supported by Algeria’s liberals, including Chevallier (who like Camus supported the colonial politics of association). Chevallier was also among the signatories of the document, as was de Maisonseul, the latter spending time in prison from 1956 to 1958 for his activities.<sup>39</sup>

On 16 November 1953, a year before the outbreak of the war and during Chevallier’s tenure as Mayor of Algiers and the French general government of Roger Léonard, the Compagnie immobilière algérienne (CIA, or Algerian Real Estate Company) was established, a body that would be dissolved only in 1980, twenty-eight years after Algeria’s independence. The CIA’s primary objective was “to provide the population of Algeria—as part of regional planning and the clearance of the *bidonvilles* and the *taudis*—the greatest number of healthy, sustainable, and economical dwellings.”<sup>40</sup> The term *taudis* was broadly used in France, in particular after the Second World War.<sup>41</sup> According to the *Grand dictionnaire encyclopédique Larousse*, the term





Fig. 34 Les Eucalyptus, housing project built by the CIA in the outskirts of Algiers



Figs. 35a–c La Concorde (1,200 housing units) in Birmandreis, Algiers

*taudis* is derived from *se tauder*—that is, *se mettre à l’abri* (to shelter from)—and signifies *un logement misérable, sal et mal tenu* (a wretched, dirty, and unkempt house). To eradicate both the *taudis* and the *bidonvilles*, the first phase of the CIA’s activities consisted of the construction of six thousand low-cost dwellings intended for both the sale and rental markets. By June 1955, the CIA had acquired extensive lands in the suburbs of a number of major Algerian cities, notably Algiers, Oran, Constantine, and Bône, totaling 145 hectares.<sup>42</sup>

Two types of housing were built: *logement économique simplifié* (simplified, economic housing) and *logement traditionnel horizontal* (traditional, low-rise housing), the latter consisting of two-bedroom dwellings with courtyards, with a surface area of 60 square meters. The second stage involved a larger plan, implemented all over Algeria and including the construction of three housing typologies: 1) the *cités musulmanes* (Muslim settlements) in low-rise buildings comprising two-room houses with courtyards and designed for the clearance of the *bidonvilles*; 2) the *logements musulmans évolutifs* (transformable Muslim dwellings), which were composed of *habitat amélioré* (improved housing) in low-rise buildings with the same layout as the former type, but with a larger area; and 3) the aforementioned *logements économiques simplifiés*, grouped in collective buildings in order to contend with the *taudis*.<sup>43</sup> By December 1955, the CIA owned 170 hectares, it had added a fourth category of low-cost housing called the *Logement économique et familial* (LOGECO, or Low-Cost and Family Dwellings), and it had built 1,145 units—581 in Algiers and 564 in Oran. In addition, 3,291 dwellings were under construction, and 2,577 housing were being designed: this meant “a total of more than seven thousand units, 60 percent of which are for sale.”<sup>44</sup> In August 1956, during the Algerian War of Independence, the CIA was further charged with implementing special housing programs and projects that were to be designed for French civil servants of the Department of National Defense in major Algerian cities (figs. 36a–d).<sup>45</sup> In order to execute this task, the CIA created another public institution called the *Compagnie immobilière pour le logement des fonctionnaires civils et militaires* (CILOF, or Real Estate Company for Military and Civil Servant Housing). By December 1958, the CILOF had built 1,855 dwellings, 1,862 units were under construction, and an additional 1,583 were in the design process.

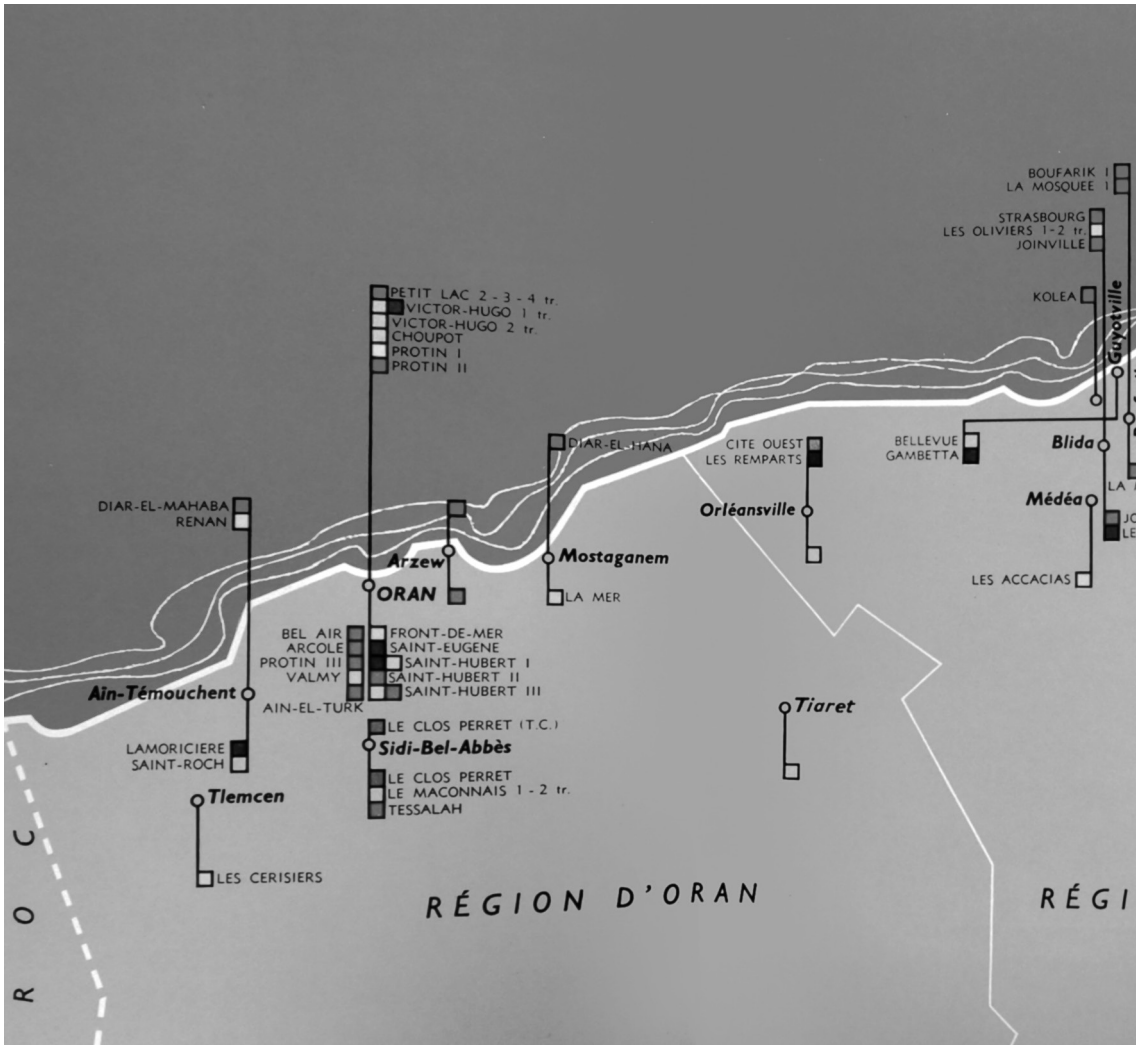
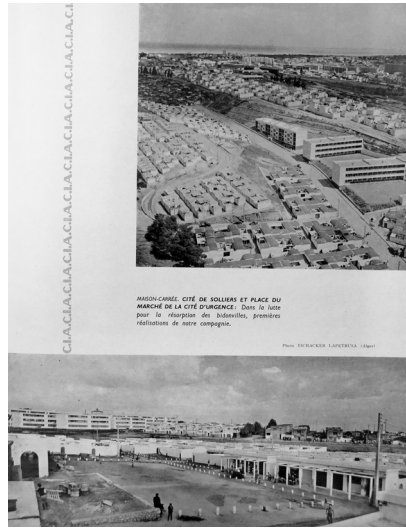
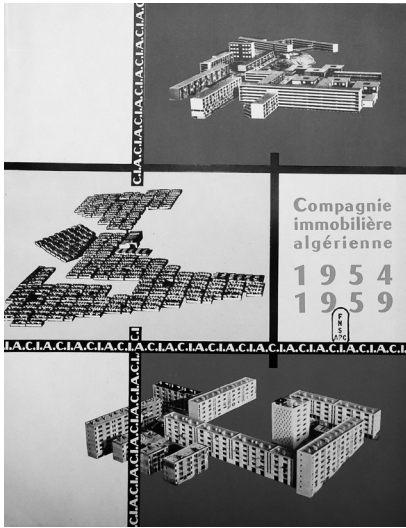
### Algiers, Paris, and Eugène Claudius-Petit

August 1956 marked the foundation of the French Société nationale de construction de logements pour les travailleurs algériens (SONACOTRAL, or National Society of Housing Construction for Algerian Workers, today known as Adoma)<sup>46</sup> by French Prime Minister Guy Mollet, a socialist. Eugène Claudius-Petit, the former Minister of Reconstruction and Urbanism, was appointed the first chairman of SONACOTRAL, a role he would hold from 1956 to 1977. His official assignment was to dismantle the vast *bidonvilles* that proliferated around the suburbs of Paris (fig. 37), such as in Nanterre, and to guarantee “the financing, construction, and arrangement of *locaux d’habitation* [residential premises] intended for French Muslims from Algeria who came to work in France, as well as for their families.”<sup>47</sup> Claudius-Petit was assisted by the former General Secretary of General Safety in Algeria, Jean Vaujour, who in 1960 became director of the military and civil cabinets of the Delegate General of the French government in Algeria, Paul Delouvrier. Vaujour was “convinced of the utility of the Company, and [was] familiar with Algeria and Algerians.”<sup>48</sup>

The pairing of Claudius-Petit and Vaujour was a carefully chosen one. While the SONACOTRAL president was skilled in large-scale urban development and public mass-housing projects and policies of postwar France, his deputy Vaujour was proficient in ensuring public law and order and national security in colonial Algeria. As a result of this partnership, Claudius-Petit and Vaujour envisioned an off-the-record political mission: SONACOTRAL would contribute to sabotaging the growing influence of FLN members who lived in (or might come to live) in the *bidonvilles* in Paris. SONACOTRAL also provided beds, or *locaux d’habitation*, for Algerian workers in France and undertook the supervision of Algerian inhabitants of the *bidonvilles* in France. According to the census of 1954, the number of Algerian workers (i.e., economic migrants) in France was estimated to be 210,000 out of a total population of 1,553,600 foreign workers that included Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese, and various colonized populations from the French protectorates and colonies of Africa and Asia belonging to the Second French Empire.<sup>49</sup>

The supervision of the Algerian population who lived in the Parisian *bidonvilles* was reinforced with the appointment of Maurice Papon as Prefect of the Paris Police in 1958 by the government of the Radical Félix Gaillard. Prior to this position, Papon had served in Constantine as Inspecteur général de l’administration en mission extraordinaire (IGAME, or General Inspector of Administration in the Extraordinary Mission) from 1956 to 1958. Despite being a former Vichy civil servant, Papon had been granted

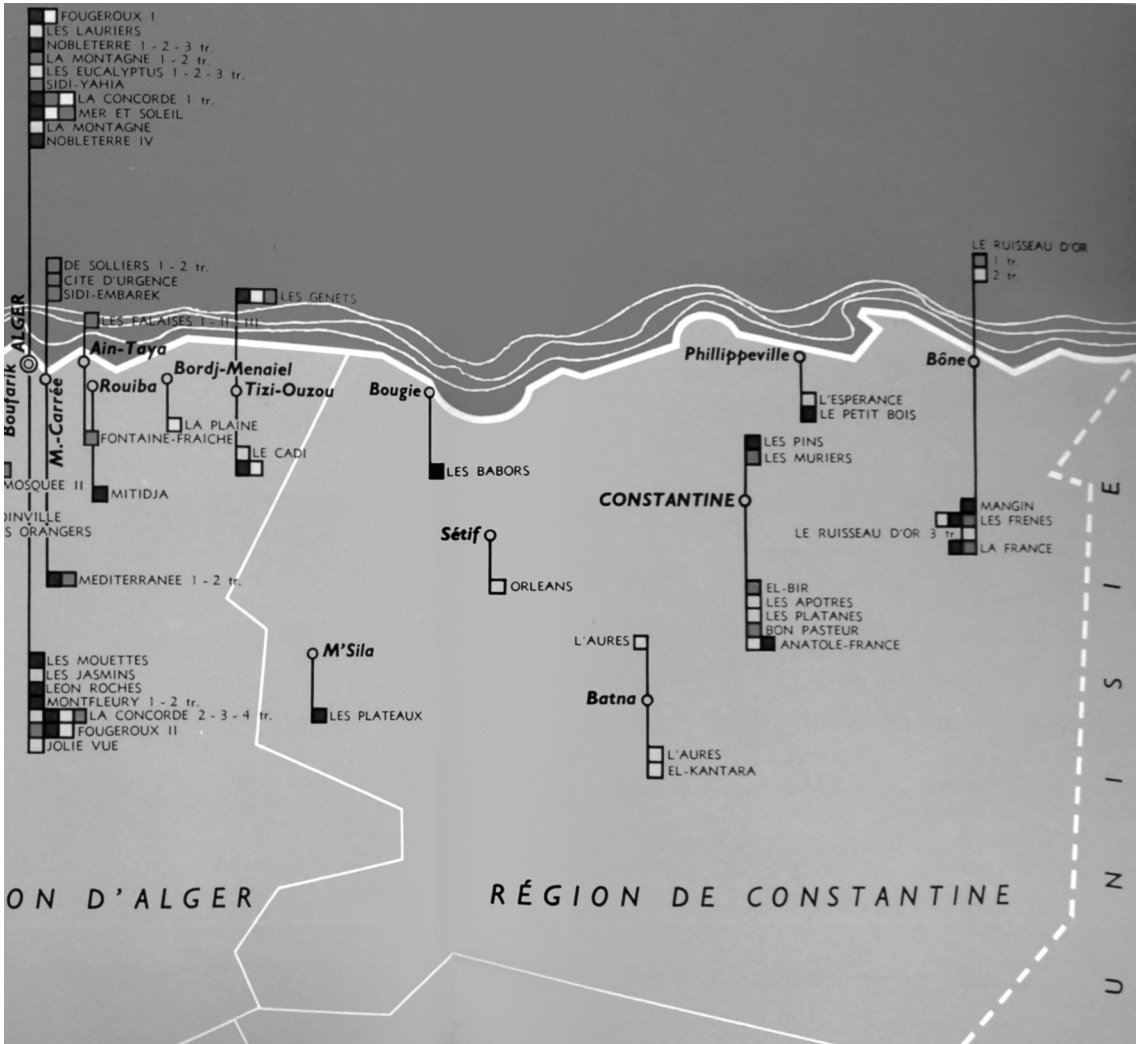
# Architecture of Counterrevolution







Figs. 36a-d CIA pamphlet excerpts and a map showing the distribution of housing projects under the authority of the CIA in northern Algeria from 1954 to 1959



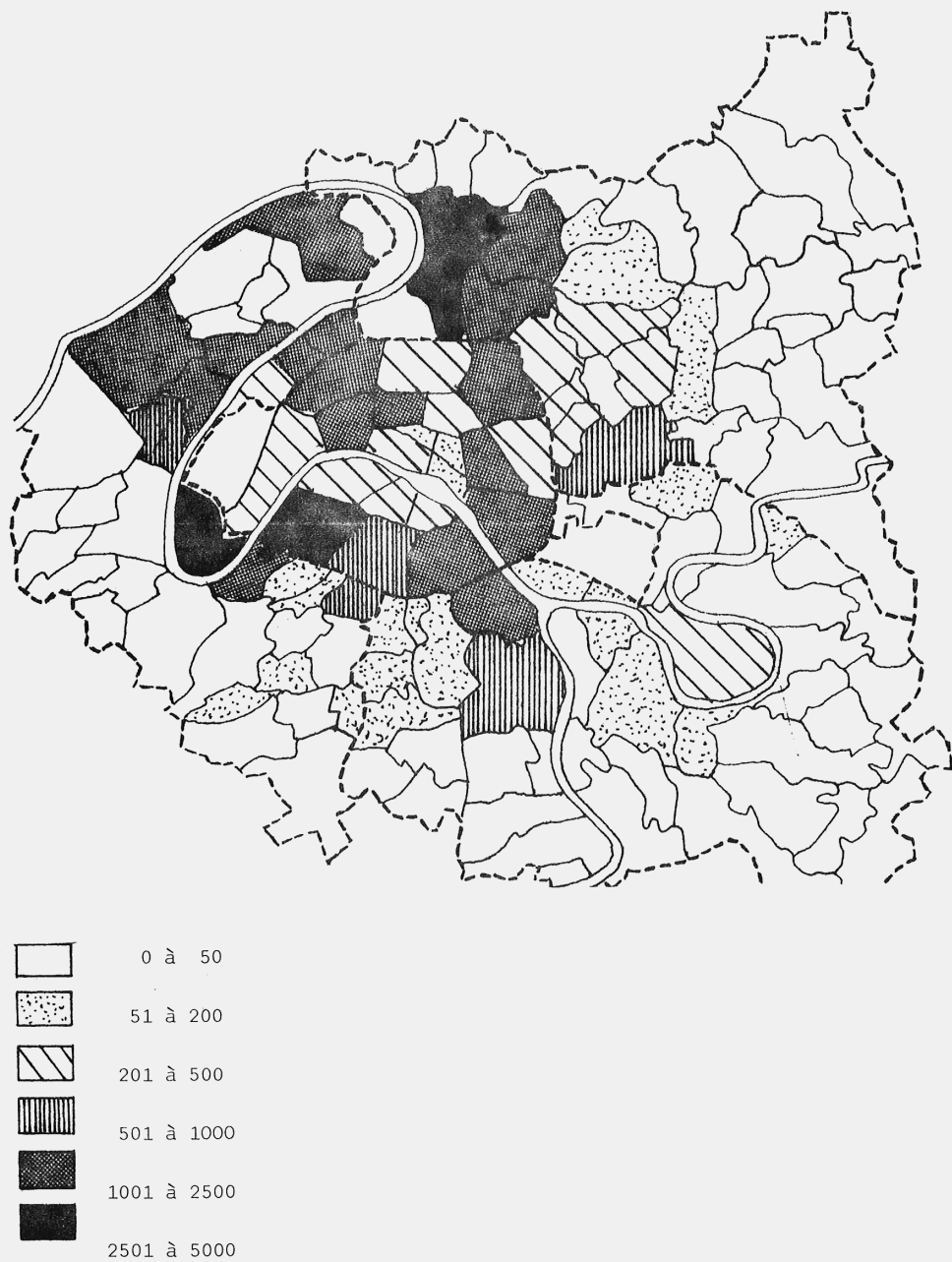


Fig. 37 Distribution of Algerian workers in the Region of Paris in the 1960s



the French Resistance Card in 1958 (but was later charged with committing crimes against humanity in 1998), and his arrival in Paris represented the exporting to France of various colonial and military doctrines that had been enforced in Algeria. Papon founded the Service d'assistance technique aux français musulmans d'Algérie (SAT-FMA, or Office of Technical Assistance to the French Muslims of Algeria) in August 1958, the mandate of which was "to strengthen the action that has been undertaken in the Seine in order to protect the Muslim population from political influence and the material constraints of anti-national organizations."<sup>50</sup> Experienced French SAU officers who had been in charge of *bidonvilles* in Algiers were brought back to France in order to supervise Parisian *bidonvilles* inhabited by Algerians (fig. 38). For instance, Captain Montaner, who was chief of the SAU at the *bidonville* in Clos-Salembier in Algiers, became chief of the SAT-FMA at the *bidonville* in Nanterre in Paris. The French Groupe d'étude et d'action pour les nord-africains de la région parisienne (GEANARP, or Study and Action Group for North Africans in the Paris Region) described Montaner as follows:

Drawing on psychological methods, he immediately enjoyed influence because he spoke Arabic, knew the Koranic laws, and worked effectively with the administration. He has substantial funds, and the means he employs are similar to those used by any other social worker in a North African context ... . He pursues a completely different goal, however: with him, the spirit of 13 May and of the *Algérie française* pervades Nanterre.<sup>51</sup>

The first *bidonville* operation enforced by Claudius-Petit, Vaujour, and the SONACOTRAL team took place in the Prefecture of the Seine, where 40 percent of Algerian laborers were located. The most urgent requirements of the *lits de foyers* (beds in hostels, or dormitories) were evaluated to be 16,900 beds for the first phase and an additional six thousand beds for a second stage in the Region of Paris alone. In this context, SONACOTRAL created temporary shelters called *foyer-hôtels* (dormitory hotels) for single male workers and *cités de transit* (transitory estates) for married workers and their families; later it built *grands ensembles*, most notably Les Canibouts in Nanterre, designed by the architect Marcel Roux,<sup>52</sup> who had collaborated with Claudius-Petit at the French Ministry of Reconstruction and Urbanism. Although the two typologies were not expected to last (both the dormitories and the collective shelters were meant to be provisional), the resulting buildings were to be transformed into standard low-cost collective housing

PRÉFECTURE DE POLICE  
**ORGANIGRAMME DU SERVICE D'ASSISTANCE TECHNIQUE AUX FRANÇAIS MUSULMANS**

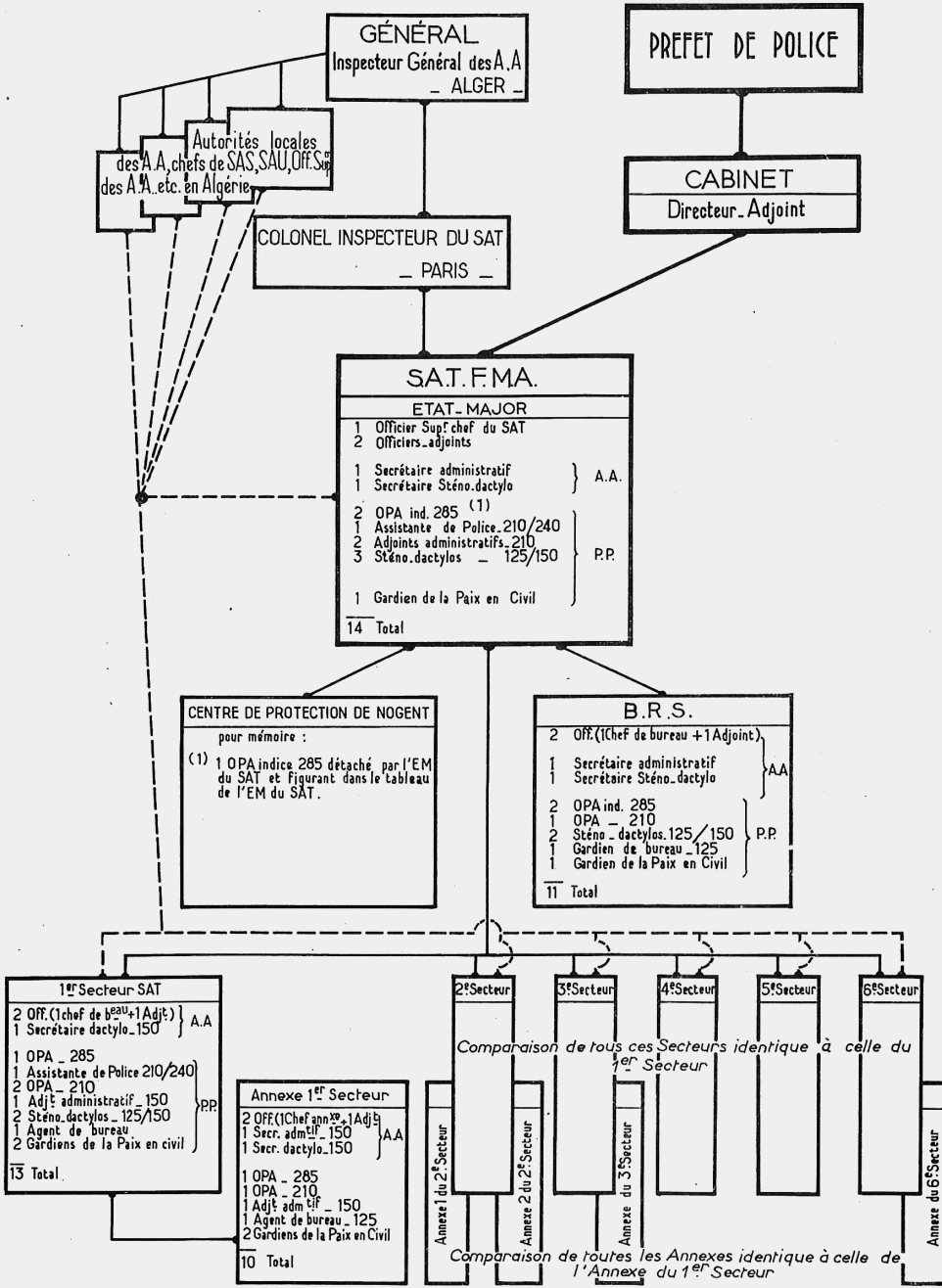


Fig. 38 Organizational chart of the Service d'assistance technique aux français musulmans of the Paris Police.

once the workers returned to their respective homelands. Every built unit accommodated approximately 250 beds; the multi-bed rooms housed ten beds, and the kitchens and bathrooms were shared. In order to facilitate surveillance, the newly hired managers of the dormitories had formerly served as policemen, veterans, or colonial administrators.<sup>53</sup> In its first ten years, SONACONTRAL built just over sixty *foyers* (dormitories) in France<sup>54</sup>—that is, fifteen thousand beds—for Algerian workers who were ultimately constrained to remain in France, as well as other migrants from neighboring countries and from former colonies who contributed to the rapid French economic development of *Les Trentes Glorieuses* (The Glorious Thirty).

One of the key shareholders to cofinance and comanage both the CIA in Algeria under French colonial rule and SONACOTRAL in France was the French public financial institution the Caisse des dépôts et consignations (Deposits and Consignments Funds), which King Louis XVIII had established in 1816. This centralized endowment was chaired by François Bloch-Lainé from 1952 to 1967; he had previously served as Ministry Director under French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman. In 1954, Bloch-Lainé created the Société centrale immobilière de la caisse (SCIC, or Central Real Estate Company of the Fund), which launched the construction of the *grands ensembles* of Sarcelles in France. One year later, Bloch-Lainé founded the Société centrale pour l'équipement du territoire (SCET, or Central Company for Territorial Equipment). He then appointed the civil engineer, Léon-Paul Leroy, as director of both the SCIC and the SCET.<sup>55</sup> Together Bloch-Lainé and Leroy represented the Caisse des dépôts et consignations at the CIA in Algeria.<sup>56</sup> When they traveled to Algeria in 1955, they advised and inspired the conception of the Algiers-based Société d'équipement de la région d'Alger (SERA, or Equipment Company for the Region of Algiers).

On 4 December 1956, a meeting of the Algiers city council was held, presided over by Jacques Chevallier, resulting in a report titled “Urbanism: The Municipality’s Participation with the Semipublic Company ‘Société d'équipement de la région d'Alger’” that stated that the SERA was analogous to the SCET and that the SCET, the Caisse des dépôts et consignations, and the CIA had contributed to the creation of the SERA in Algeria. SERA’s goal was, as the report stated, “to achieve operations related to real estate and economic and societal equipment in the region of Algiers.”<sup>57</sup> The report also specified that it was crucial to change the legal statutes of the SERA and to convert it into a semipublic institution (it was originally a fully public company), because it was necessary to take measures that would help foster administrative decentralization and deconcentration.<sup>58</sup>

Claudius-Petit was alarmed about the unprecedented property investments and the scale of property speculation—and their severe consequences—in both Algeria and France. In 1957, he denounced what he saw as faulty principles, largely based on “economic return that can only be justified in the context of capitalist efficiency.”<sup>59</sup> He went further, criticizing both the abject housing projects that had been built and the legal precepts and financial standards of French urbanism that SCIC and SCET director Leroy had defended in November 1957 at the Cercle d’études architecturales (CEA, or Circle of Architectural Studies)—an association created in 1951 by Pierre Dalloz, future director of the Agence du plan d’Alger, that gathered together architects, engineers, developers, and civil servants. Claudius-Petit argued:

The studies seem to envisage more financial, quantitative, and productive aspects; and we never distinguish the human purpose of this, in which any regional planning policy runs the risk of becoming a dreadful machine. ... My concern in particular derives from an ongoing observation: the impotence of the French administration to oppose the powers of money when these powers are sufficiently coalesced.<sup>60</sup>

Alongside de Gaulle’s Plan de Constantine, other financial programs, or “machines,” were designed for the Algerian populations who lived in the *bidonvilles* in both Algeria and France. In contrast to the “modern” (as it was termed) urban housing in Algeria, which included the *logement million* and the *habitat semi-urbain*, the national plan projected an even lower category of housing called the *habitat sommaire* (rudimentary housing), as if the *habitat semi-urbain* had not already seen comfort requirements reduced to their most elementary form and surface areas to their bare minimum. The housing intended to replace the *bidonvilles* in the suburbs of the vast majority of Algerian cities belonged to particular programs, as set out in the general report of the Plan de Constantine: “rural housing and the clearance of suburban *bidonvilles* are subject to special programs that will indeed progressively make room—besides housing of a properly rural type—for a semi-urban type adapted to the needs of a more developed portion of the rural population.”<sup>61</sup> The report estimated that 110,000 housing units would be constructed over a period of five years, either for rural housing or for the clearance of the *bidonvilles*. The report also stressed that this figure did not include the dwellings built by the French army and the SAS—in other words,

both the temporary and permanent *camps de regroupement*, later called the *Mille villages* (One Thousand Villages).

### From “Opération Bidonville” to the “Housing Problem”

In the aftermath of the military *Opération bidonville* mentioned earlier, SAU and SAS chiefs were entrusted with the task of solving “the problem of habitation” in the urban *bidonvilles*.<sup>62</sup> They were asked to write reports, entitled “Le Chef de SAU et le problème de l’habitat” (SAU Chief and the Housing Problem), about their own deeds and accomplishments in the *bidonville* where they were operating. For example, Captain Berthault, chief of the SAU of Climat de France in Algiers, said that he was expected to “prepare with equity the list of beneficiaries when a new projects is assigned to the removal of a bidonville; in two years I was able to see one third of my bidonvilles disappear.”<sup>63</sup> He argued that the physiognomy of the district of Climat de France had been profoundly transformed and that the majority of “his” *bidonvilles* had been hurriedly substituted with the “monumental settlements” that the municipality had built nearly everywhere. In addition to temporary settlements, or *cités de transit*—such as the Beaucheraye and at the Boulevard Clémenceau—he listed the following realized housing projects intended for the inhabitants of Algiers’s *bidonvilles*: the Cités HLM “Chevallier,” as he called it (1957–1959), for ten thousand inhabitants; the Cité des anciens combattants (Housing of Veterans), for 1,500 people; the Cité de la régie foncière d’Alger (Housing of Algiers Property Management Agency), called “Perez” (1954), for 2,500 dwellers; the Cité Taine (1959), for fifteen hundred people; and Diar El Kef (1960–1961), for four thousand residents.<sup>64</sup>

Unlike in Algiers, the SAU of Mascara, in northwestern Algeria, suffered from inefficient planning and construction processes. According to its chief, due to military operations in the countryside the number of inhabitants of the neighborhood of Bab-Ali had increased from fifteen thousand to twenty-five thousand, and of Boulilef from four hundred to four thousand in only a few years. The majority of the newcomers gravitated to *bidonvilles* that had in fact already been earmarked for clearance for hygiene and security reasons, but the municipality had ultimately failed in its attempts to house and relocate the inhabitants. The SAU chief argued that “the municipality’s bureau of urbanism was overwhelmed; constructions that were actually being built were rare.”<sup>65</sup>

In the case of the town of Sétif, in northeastern Algeria, the town was divided into two zones under the control of Algerian Affairs: one overseen by

the SAU of Sétif and the other by the SAS of Yahiaoui, which included several neighborhoods as well as the general rural area. In its report on the “housing problem,” the Yahiaoui SAS stressed that given the density of the various populations under its control and the extreme rapidity with which shelters were being built, the territory it was in charge of was very much the concern of urban planners.<sup>66</sup> The SAS chief’s dispatch noted that the coercive measures taken against the proliferation of illegal settlements built without approved central planning were due to his initiative in persuading the Prefect of Sétif to issue a decree on 3 August 1960, officially forbidding the construction of new buildings within 150 meters inside and 500 meters outside the barbed wire surrounding the city of Sétif.<sup>67</sup> Further, the SAS head emphasized that his mission consisted of two elements. The first was of a police character, since the SAS had to enforce the law; the second was of an administrative character, since it had to oversee the issuing of building permissions and to ensure that the civil housing service only issued compliance certificates with the SAS head’s approval. In conclusion, the chief of the Yahiaoui SAS judged that by means of these forced measures it had been possible to resolve the anarchic “housing problem” and to avoid what he termed the “birth” of further *bidonvilles*.<sup>68</sup>

This strict military control was not practicable in every Algerian town. In the case of the SAU of Mostaganem, in the northwest of Algeria, for example, the head of the SAS denounced the resistance of the municipal authorities, complaining that they had circumvented his assistance and arguing that “on several occasions, [I] offered support to the municipality for various problems, including that of housing, claiming a share of participation in the overall work. [I] was simply and purely evicted from this taboo and strictly reserved area.”<sup>69</sup>

The examples above indicate three key things: a concentration of efforts and resources on the colonized capital city, an alarming oversimplification of the “housing problem,” and the ineptitudes of the French civil and military authorities in housing its colonized populations with dignity.

### **Special Funds: Associating, again, Algeria with France**

Just a few weeks after launching the Plan de Constantine, and as part of his war efforts in Algeria, General de Gaulle instigated an additional policy in the form of the Prestations d’action sociale (PAS, or Social Action Funds) in Algeria and the Fonds d’action social pour les travailleurs musulmans d’Algérie en métropole et pour leurs familles (FAS, or Social Action Fund for Muslim Workers from Algeria in the Métropole and Their Families, today



known as FASILD<sup>70</sup>) in France. One of the four areas of action of the FAS was “ending the *bidonville* problem.”<sup>71</sup> Its budget came from the mandatory, so-called “social” contributions of Algerian workers in France that were collected by their employers; the funds were then expended in France but also transferred back to Algeria (given that Algeria was deemed a French department).

The Plan de Constantine’s general report emphasized that the PAS and the FAS “had to provide NF7 million in 1959, which will increase to NF60 million in 1963. In five years, nearly NF200 million will be released for the benefit of construction.”<sup>72</sup> The FAS subsidized a number of planned socio-cultural, educational, and housing construction projects submitted by various French organizations and associations, including SONACOTRAL, all of them operating nominally on behalf of the so-called French Muslims from Algeria. In addition to this special public fund, fed by Algerians’ earnings, Claudius-Petit sought further reverse financial support from the French general government in Algeria. In a letter to Paul Delouvrier dated 18 August 1960, Claudius-Petit stated that seventeen *foyer-hôtels* were being built in the Region of Paris and its surrounding area and that by the end of that year the number would increase to thirty, saying that 7,500 single Algerian workers would be “accommodated in good conditions of hygiene and comfort.”<sup>73</sup> He further stated that twenty low-cost-dwelling construction sites were to be created to host the numerous “Muslim” families living in the Paris *bidonvilles*. The request was for additional resources for the undertakings, Delouvrier writing, “we take the liberty of asking if, because of the new tasks that SONACOTRAL has assumed, Algeria might consider joining in its endeavor by providing a subsidy.”<sup>74</sup>

Paul Delouvrier, the General Delegate of the French Government in Algeria, was thereby required not only to tackle the “*bidonville* problem” in urban areas in Algeria under French rule, and to some extent in France, but also to rapidly solve the chaotic forced *regroupement* of the population in rural Algerian areas initiated by the French army. The latter had caused a severe media scandal in France’s left-wing and right-wing newspapers alike in 1959, which had further endangered the international reputation of the French Republic in colonized Algeria.

- 1 FRANOM 2 SAS 167. Préfecture d'Alger, Cabinet civil, Le général de division Massu, Commandant la Zone Nord Algérois et de la 10e DP exerçant les pouvoirs civils dans le Département d'Alger à Messieurs les présidents des délégations spéciales, Aménagement des bidonvilles, Algiers, 2 October 1958.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 It was calculated that by 1954 one-third of Algiers's population—that is, 86,500 inhabitants—was living in *bidonvilles*. See Descloitres, Reverdy, and Descloitres, *L'Algérie des bidonvilles*, 65.
- 5 On French counterrevolutionary policies in the *bidonvilles*, or the anti-*bidonville* strategy, in Algiers and Paris, see for example MacMaster, “Shantytown Republics.” On the Nanterre *bidonville*, see for example Herpin and Santelli, *Bidonville à Nanterre*; Hervo, *Chroniques du bidonville*; Sayad and Dupuy, *Un Nanterre algérien*.
- 6 SHAT 1 H 1213. Comment j'ai résorbé les bidonvilles de Bône, p. 1.
- 7 FRANOM 1 K 1183. Commandant militaire du département d'Alger, Commandement du Grand Alger, Note de Service no. 685/C.EMM, Opération bidonville, Algiers, 19 February 1957.
- 8 Ibid., pp. 1–3. Additif à la note de service, Numérotage des cartes d'identité, Algiers, 20 February 1957.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 SHAT 1 H 1213. Résorption des bidonvilles.
- 11 SHAT 1 H 1213. SAU Mostaganem, Comment j'ai résorbé les bidonvilles.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 The *cités de recasements*, also called *cité de transit*, were designed to temporarily house the inhabitants of the *bidonvilles* until the completion of permanent dwellings in apartment buildings. These temporary settlements were located either in an area of the *bidonville* or in vacant spaces outside the city center. Among these *cités de recasement* was Djenan El Hassan, designed by Roland Simounet.
- 14 SHAT 1 H 1213. SAU Mostaganem, Comment j'ai résorbé les bidonvilles.
- 15 SHAT 1 H 1213. SAU Mostaganem. Comment j'ai résorbé les bidonvilles de Bouilief.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 SHAT 1 H 1213. Comment j'ai résorbé les bidonvilles de Bône, p. 1.
- 18 Ibid., p. 2.
- 19 Ibid., p. 3.
- 20 SHAT 1 H 1213. Capitaine Courbon, SAU de Clos-Salembier, Les bidonvilles et leur résorption: perspectives de promotion humaine, l'expérience du Clos-Salembier, p. 19.
- 21 Ibid., p. 12.
- 22 Ibid., p. 19.
- 23 Ibid., p. 20.
- 24 Ibid., p. 21.
- 25 Ibid., p. 23.
- 26 Ibid., p. 25.
- 27 Forget, “Le Service des Centres Sociaux en Algérie.”
- 28 On the making of the UNESCO programs, see for example Muzaffar, “The Periphery Within.”
- 29 Tillion and Lacouture, *La Traversée du mal*, 102–3.
- 30 On the Algiers CIAM and the Mahieddine *bidonville*, see for example Çelik, “Learning from the Bidonville”; Çelik, “Bidonvilles, CIAM et grands ensembles”; Bonillo, “Le CIAM-Alger.”
- 31 Planche, “Jacques Chevallier,” 160.
- 32 For detailed accounts of the Agence du plan, see for example Deluz, *L'urbanisme et l'architecture d'Alger*, 63–100; Almi, *Urbanisme et colonisation*, 110–13; Deluz, “La contribution de l'Agence du plan.”
- 33 Chevallier, *Nous, algériens...*, 139.

- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Ibid., 141. However, according to Deluz, the three housing settlements built by Fernand Pouillon did not preclude segregation of Algerian and European populations; see Deluz, *L'urbanisme et l'architecture d'Alger*, 59–62.
- 37 Deluz, *L'urbanisme et l'architecture d'Alger*, 63. The center was suggested by Camus. It was destroyed by a subsequent earthquake in 1980. On the center, see Miquel and Simounet, “Centre Albert Camus.”
- 38 The text of the appeal is published in Camus, *Actuelles III*, 167–183.
- 39 Camus wrote two articles about the imprisonment of Jean de Maisonseul; see *ibid.*, 185–96.
- 40 FRANOM 1 F 2212. Compagnie immobilière algérienne. 1 June 1955, p. 1.
- 41 Among the notorious figures who used the term *taudis* was the French urban sociologist Paul-Henry Chombart de Lauwe, who established the Groupe d'ethnologie urbaine (Urban Ethnology Team) in 1950 in order to study working-class families and their housing in Paris. See Chombart de Lauwe, *Des hommes et des villes*; Chombart de Lauwe, *Famille et habitation*.
- 42 FRANOM 1 F 2212, Compagnie immobilière algérienne, 1 June 1955, p. 2.
- 43 FRANOM 1 F 2212, Documents Algériens, Réalisations nouvelles dans le domaine de l'habitat musulman, La Compagnie immobilière algérienne, no. 48, 31 December 1955.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 FRANOM 1 F 2212, Compagnie immobilière algérienne, Activités, August 1956, p. 4.
- 46 After the independence of Algeria, the SONACOTRAL lost its L, becoming the SONACOTRA (Société nationale de construction de logements pour les travailleurs). On the foundation of the SONACOTRAL, see for example Bernardot, “Une politique de logement”; Hmed, “Loger les étrangers.”
- 47 Cited in Bernardot, “Chronique d'une institution,” 40.
- 48 Pouvreau, *Un politique en architecture*, 170.
- 49 Herpin and Santelli, *Bidonville à Nanterre*, 11–18. By 1962, there were 335,000 Algerian workers in France. These numbers do not include political refugees and foreign students.
- 50 Cunibile, *L'assistance technique*, 42. There were other public and private institutions that dealt with the so-called North-Africans such as the Fonds d'action sociale (FAS), created in December 1958.
- 51 Cited in Cohen, “Des familles invisibles,” 214.
- 52 Bernardot, “Chronique d'une institution,” 44.
- 53 Lyons, *The Civilizing Mission*, 124.
- 54 Bernardot, “Chronique d'une institution,” 42.
- 55 Newsome, *French Urban Planning*, 108.
- 56 FRANOM 1 F 2212. Compagnie Immobilière Algérienne, (n.d.).
- 57 FRANOM 1 F 2212. Mairie de la ville d'Alger, Extrait du registre des délibérations du conseil municipal, Séance du 4 décembre 1956, Présidence de M. Jacques Chevallier, Maire, Ancien Ministre, p. 2.
- 58 Ibid.
- 59 Cited in Pouvreau, *Un politique en architecture*, 172.
- 60 Cited in *ibid.*, 173.
- 61 CHSP 1 DV 32 D 1. Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie, Plan de Constantine, 1959–1963. Projet de rapport général. Deuxième partie, voies et moyens du développement (troisième fascicule), 13 June 1960, p. 203.
- 62 SHAT 1 H 1213. Capitaine Berthault. Chef de la SAU du Climat de France, Algiers, August, 1959–September 1961. Le Chef de SAU et le problème de l'habitat.
- 63 *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- 64 *Ibid.*
- 65 SHAT 1 H 1213. Le Chef de SAU et le problème de l'habitat, Mascara, p. 2.

- 66 SHAT 1 H 1213. Lieutenant Hauvuy, SAS de Yahiaoui, Le Chef de SAU et le problème de l'habitat, (n.d.).
- 67 Ibid., p. 3.
- 68 Ibid., p. 5.
- 69 SHAT 1 H 1213. Le Chef de SAU et le problème de l'habitat. Mostaganem.
- 70 Fonds d'aide et de soutien pour l'intégration et la lutte contre les discriminations (Fund of Aid and Support for Integration and Struggle against Discriminations). It is a public institution that finances activities supporting the "integration" of migrants within the French population in France.
- 71 Lyons, *The Civilizing Mission*, 149.
- 72 CHSP 1 DV 32 D 1. Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie, Plan de Constantine, 1959–1963, Projet de rapport général, Deuxième partie: voies et moyens du développement (troisième fascicule), 13 June 1960, p. 208.
- 73 CHSP 1 DV 34 D 4. SONACONTRAL, Société nationale de construction de logements pour les travailleurs originaires d'Algérie, Direction administrative et financière, Paris, 18 August 1960, signed by President Eugène Claudius-Petit, p. 1.
- 74 Ibid., p. 2.

## 7. From Permanent Camps to Villages

The media scandal over the existence of French *camps de regroupement* in Algeria that arose in April 1959 in France, a few months after the establishment of the constitution of the new Fifth Republic, triggered a number of emergency policies regarding the forced resettlement of the Algerian population. These suddenly switched to rural modernization reforms and were thereby hastily integrated into General de Gaulle's strategic Plan de Constantine. The media scandal was initially provoked by two Frenchmen who were allowed to visit the *camps de regroupement*. One was Monsignor Jean Rodhain, an affirmed *pétainiste* (Philippe Pétain supporter) and General Secretary of the French Secours Catholique (Caritas France), who had just returned from a visit to colonial Algeria and had launched an emergency appeal in the daily French Catholic newspaper *La Croix* on 11 April 1959 for humanitarian aid for the one million involuntary displaced Algerians. The other was Michel Rocard, the young Inspector of Finances, who leaked to the French media his report on the *camps de regroupement*, which he had submitted on 17 February 1959 to the newly appointed Delegate General of the French government in Algeria, Paul Delouvrier. This resulted in two lengthy articles: one in the weekly left-wing French magazine *France Observateur* (on 16 April 1959) and one in the daily left-wing French newspaper *Le Monde* (on 17 April 1959). Immediately following the leaking of the report, the majority of French newspapers and magazines likewise reported on the disgraceful conditions in the *camps de regroupement* and deplored the material and psychological situations of the forcibly resettled Algerian families, which included a great number of children who suffered from diseases and famine.<sup>1</sup> In the wake of the discredit caused by the media scandal and the criticisms, Delouvrier proclaimed that he would personally take direct charge of the *regroupement* of the Algerian populations; he later announced a large rural renewal program that he called the *Mille villages* (One Thousand Villages), as will be discussed shortly.

In parallel with the Plan de Constantine, de Gaulle gave his blessing to the methods and objectives of the Plan Challe, a series of brutal, systematic military operations conducted throughout the entire territory of Algeria that took place between 1959 and 1961. The plan was named after Maurice Challe, General of the French Air Forces, who served as commander-in-chief of the French armed forces in Algeria in 1959 and 1960 and who deliberately resigned in 1961 from the French army and participated in the second Algiers Generals' Putsch against General de Gaulle. The Plan Challe

was expected to “asphyxiate” (to use the French army’s technical term) the rebellion and destroy the FLN on the ground. The military offensive included further fortification of the Algerian borders, an action that resulted in the enlargement of the “forbidden zones” within which entire villages and agricultural areas were to be forcibly and immediately evacuated or destroyed. The Plan Challe protracted and expanded French military regrouping measures, dramatically increasing the number of the forcibly resettled populations, and contributed to the construction of thousands of temporary and permanent *camps de regroupements*.

For General de Gaulle, the forced resettlement of the Algerian population was designed, in addition to its military facets, to “pacify” and control the population; this was a political project. As mentioned in the previous chapters, the *camps de regroupement* were an instrument for the French civil authorities, who used the camps as a socioeconomic alibi to enforce rapid rural renewal; they were also helpful for the French army to quietly wage a bloody war of “pacification.” The concomitance of the Plan Challe with the Plan de Constantine provoked various tensions, however, and engendered several misunderstandings between the civil and military authorities, including the Sections administratives spécialisées (SAS, or Specialized Administrative Sections). Delouvrier, who was eventually entrusted with the task of regulating the regrouping policies, struggled to solve these predicaments (figs. 39, 40).

### **Delouvrier’s Regroupement Policies**

On 31 March 1959, a fortnight prior to the aforementioned unwelcome attention of the French media, Delouvrier issued directive no. 2.445 CC to the French military and civil authorities, outlining his intention to decelerate and halt the massive formation of the *regroupements*. He declared that “recent surveys [conducted by Michel Rocard and others] have attested that these [*regroupement*] operations are currently on the rise, to an extent that was not initially envisioned.”<sup>2</sup> He warned that “the means at our disposal no longer allow us to meet the basic needs for assistance; the situation of new *regroupements* would create practically insoluble problems.”<sup>3</sup> Due to the scarcity of economic means, Delouvrier ordered that restrictions be placed on the forced evacuation of Algerians, thereby interrupting the construction of additional *camps de regroupement*, stipulating, “no *regroupement* will be operated without my agreement. I indicate my intention to allow only those *regroupements* that are either of absolute military necessity or that result from the will of the populations themselves.”<sup>4</sup> Until the expiry of his mandate





Fig. 39 Paul Delouvrier, Delegate General of the French Government in Algeria, and French Prime Minister Michel Debrè, visiting the Sector of Aumale, Region of Algiers, February 1959

Fig. 40 French Colonel Marcel Bigeard discussing the military strategy of *regroupement*, operational Sector of Saïda, Algeria, 1959

in Algeria under French colonial rule in November 1961, however—and even after, as will shortly be discussed—the numbers of people affected and the numbers of camps swelled dramatically.

On 24 April 1959, in the wake of the media scandal, Delouvrier distributed directive no. 3.444 CC in which he recalled his guidelines of the previous month and added that if the *regroupements* were based on sane economic and property-based foundations, they might become *foyers de promotion sociale* (places of social promotion). As he stressed, however, “if the inhabitants do not find opportunities for normal existence in their dictated places of settlement, the *regroupement* will become a place of impoverishment and discontent, in which the politico-administrative organization of the adversary will find fertile ground for agitation.”<sup>5</sup> In order to circumvent this forecasted rebellion, Delouvrier endeavored to turn existing *camps de regroupement* into *foyers de promotion sociale* by enhancing the living conditions of the forcibly resettled populations and by providing them with prospects for “normal existence,” to paraphrase Delouvrier, although the circumstances of what was in fact a war were far from “normal.” According to Delouvrier, “the objective we seek is to render all *regroupements* economically viable; that is, to ensure every regrouped family the possibility of gaining its means of subsistence from a productive job, which will mostly be farming.”<sup>6</sup>

This self-subsistence was to be variously applied and achieved, depending on the case in point. Thus, Delouvrier outlined three target cases, consisting of two opposing scenarios and one intermediate one, the latter of which he urged should be considered the priority. The first case applied to the *regroupements* located in territories without any access to arable lands and agricultural fields, his recommendation being to place them under the supervision of the general commanders of the zones in question, who would, in accordance with military obligations, once again displace the populations, this time to more advantageous locations. The second case consisted of the forcibly regrouped populations who had access to their original farming lands and would be allowed to maintain their own forms of subsistence, obviating the need for urgent intervention. Thirdly were all those *regroupements* that belonged to neither of these two groups and which demanded immediate remedying.<sup>7</sup>

Due to the weighty French bureaucratic machinery, the long and drawn-out freeing-up of appropriate funds, and the lack of determination of a number of military and SAS officers, Delouvrier’s instructions that the *camps de regroupement* be ameliorated were not always acted upon. In his instruction no. 3.852 CC of 5 May 1959, Delouvrier informed the civil and military

authorities that the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria had signed an agreement with the French Red Cross, and that three appropriately equipped trucks were formally authorized to circulate throughout the *regroupements* and to supply food and medical aid.<sup>8</sup> The first Red Cross truck departed only on 25 June in the region of Algiers, as Delouvrier announced in his directive no. 5.766 CC of 1 July 1959, in which he requested his men cooperate fully, stating, “in these difficult circumstances that we face, and given the enormous need created by the *centres de regroupement*, I believe that we must welcome and facilitate, as much as possible, any offers of help that we are likely to receive.”<sup>9</sup> In addition to this humanitarian assistance—which undeniably demonstrated the inability of the French army to deal with the socioeconomic problems that it had generated in the *camps the regroupement*—Delouvrier also promoted any sort of third-party support and sponsorship of the camps, including accepting offers from a number of religious organizations.

### **Financing the Conversion of the Camps into Villages**

In an attempt to finance the conversion of the *camps de regroupement*, on 1 June 1959 the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria augmented the price of gasoline consumed in colonial Algeria, as reported in the Algiers-based French newspaper *La Dépêche quotidienne d'Algérie*: “To finance the progress of pacification and the installation of the *centres de regroupement*: Increase by Fr.9 per liter of gasoline, starting from this night at midnight.”<sup>10</sup> It was not until 17 December 1959, however—a full year after Delouvrier’s nomination—that a comprehensive financial reform was instituted and specific funds, dubbed *Dépenses d'équipement local* (DEL, or Local Equipment Expenditures), eventually became available. According to Delouvrier, the public funding methods used thus far had been imperfect, due to unwieldy administrative procedures, a dearth of prefectural technical expertise to correctly manage the credits, and an insufficiency of municipal technical control in appropriately deploying the credits, which taken together swelled to “an abusive use of certain subsidies, and their investment in works of questionable usefulness.”<sup>11</sup>

Against this background, it was decided that the public DEL credits were to be directly coordinated by the chiefs of the department and the sub-prefects, whereas public technical services—such as the *ponts et chaussées* (civil engineering), sanitation service, rural infrastructure, agriculture services, soil protection and restoration, national education, public health care, and rural housing—were to be allocated in order to assist the municipalities and

administrative authorities in the preparation and execution of the investments funded by the DEL. In his explanations of the expected nature and characteristics of the DEL expenses, Delouvrier stressed that “the necessary expenditures for the transformation of the *centres de regroupement* into *villages nouveaux* equipped with collective facilities must be given the utmost priority.”<sup>12</sup>

One of the supposed simplifications of the utilization modalities of the DEL credits was to provide extra funding to a number of different French institutions and organizations, ranging from prefectures, municipalities, federations of municipalities, the Société agricole de prévoyance (SAP, or Provident Agriculture Society), the Caisse algérienne d'aménagement du territoire (CADAT, or Algerian Fund for Regional Planning), the Caisse pour l'accession à la propriété et à l'exploitation rurale (CAPER, or Fund for Property Access and Rural Exploitation), and even private companies. The costs of 80 percent of the construction of the new rural dwellings in the camps were entrusted exclusively to the Commissariat à la reconstruction et à l'habitat rural (CRHR, or Rural Housing and Reconstruction Commission), whereas the remaining 20 percent fell to the DEL and was to be allocated to the CAPER. This fund was supposed to be used in one of the following three cases: 1) for the construction of *habitations sommaires* (rudimentary dwellings) at a unit cost not exceeding NF2,500; 2) for the purchase of construction materials for the same type of housing; 3) the fund could likewise be assigned again to the CRHR.<sup>13</sup> The effective construction of shelters was to be undertaken using the labor of the forcibly relocated populations, as described in a section of the document under the heading “Modes of Works Execution,” stating: “For the construction of rural housing, the DEL credits must serve only to acquire construction materials, to supervise the labor work of the recipients [of rural housing], and to complete it in case it is insufficient. The labor supplied by the population must be deployed wherever possible.”<sup>14</sup>

### **Mobile Working Groups and Their Inspection**

In order to convert camps into villages and to construct new settlements, Delouvrier instituted the Groupes de travail itinérants (Mobile Working Groups), whose assignments were “to go into the field, establish programs in order to provide every *regroupement* with a healthy economic basis, and facilitate its implementation.”<sup>15</sup> These mobile teams were to be composed of one SAS officer and two rural development technicians who might be drawn from existing public technical bodies, such as agriculture services,

provident agriculture societies, farming, sanitation service, the forestry and water commissions, or soil protection and restoration. The teams were to be nominated and supervised by the *Secrétaires généraux régionaux* (Regional General Secretaries), who were likewise accountable for coordinating and overseeing the forced resettlement of the Algerian population. The secretaries had to appoint at least one Mobile Working Group in every French department in Algeria, although Delouvrier recommended nominating more than one group in order to accelerate the long and drawn-out processes.<sup>16</sup>

The Mobile Working Groups were predominantly expected to propose, study, and evaluate the following aspects: 1) the future of the *regroupement* and the proportion of the forcibly relocated people who were likely to remain in the *regroupement* once peace was achieved; 2) the economic viability of the camps, or “centers,” broken down into water supply overseen by the sanitation service, accessibility, and means of communication overseen by the civil engineering service, habitability conditions overseen by the CRHR, and the means of existence of the population overseen by the agriculture, soil protection, and restoration services; 3) the legal status of the lands where the camps were located, overseen by the property jurisdiction service; 4) social and administrative facilities, such as the organization of community life, and the establishment of cooperatives, community housing, schools, and post offices, as well as the sanitary amenities for public health care and socio-medical centers; 5) the extent of immediate assistance to those who were in need and to those who were fit to work; and 6) the military operations of protection and self-defense in collaboration with the military commander of the sector to which the camp was attached.<sup>17</sup> The resulting projects were to be submitted to the prefect, who simultaneously acted as the president of the *Commission départementale de réforme agraire* (Departmental Commission of Agrarian Reform) and who was expected to define the priorities and eventually take all necessary measures to enforce the selected programs.

In an attempt to enforce his directives and regulate the chaotic *regroupements*, Delouvrier created the *Inspection générale des regroupements de population* (IGRP, or General Inspection of the Regrouping of the Population), which he attached directly to his cabinet. He appointed General Parlange, the forefather of the first *regroupements* in the Aurès, as a technical consultant and general inspector of the IGRP on 1 November 1959—five years after the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution. In his first report to Delouvrier about the dreadful conditions of the *camps de regroupements*, General Parlange stated that “my mission was to visit the centers, to estab-

lish contact with their leaders, to monitor the implementation of your directives, and to inform you about the problems that may arise; you made me ultimately responsible for studying, together with the appropriate services, the projects that are likely to improve the fate of the regrouped populations.”<sup>18</sup> While Parlange praised the military successes of the camps, he denounced their human, social, economic, and planning consequences. In his report to Delouvrier, Parlange stated that “on the level of urbanism, serious mistakes have been committed,”<sup>19</sup> including the inadequate locations and precarious sites on which many shelters and camps had been built, the absence of legal rights to use the occupied lands, and deficiencies in the water supply and other facilities. He concluded his survey by stating that the situation was far from being immediately remediated and that barely one-tenth of the existing camps—which he continually referred to as “centers”—could be integrated into the program of the *Mille villages*. He added that the official terminology had to be changed as soon as possible, arguing that “at the moment, where a number of very important permanent accomplishments have enabled us to silence those former attacks against the *centres de regroupement*, it would be psychologically interesting to change the official appellations of these gatherings.”<sup>20</sup> Parlange suggested four categories for the new designations of the camps, as follows.

- 1) *Nouveaux villages* (new villages), referring to any centers that were built of enduring materials and were located in the administrative center of the municipality.
- 2) *Nouveaux hameaux* (new hamlets), referring to the satellites of the former municipality centers; these were composed of permanent agglomerations and were located in the vicinity of the “new villages.”
- 3) *Nouveaux quartiers* (new neighborhoods), located in the immediate vicinity of an old village or town.
- 4) *Groupes d’abris provisoires* (groups of temporary shelters), referring to the temporary *regroupements* that had to either disappear or be transferred.<sup>21</sup>

To this end, Parlange intended not only to erase the word “center” from the vocabulary but also to eradicate the description “regroupement,” since both terms had become tarred due to the media scandal and subsequent public criticisms.



### Delouvrier's Mille Villages

Following Parlange's recommendations, Delouvrier signed a new directive entitled "Regroupements de populations – Mille villages" (Population Regrouping—One Thousand Villages) on 25 May 1960, stating that the recent "evolution of pacification" had led him to revise his previous instructions and to issue new ones.<sup>22</sup> He reiterated that although certain temporary *regroupements* were dictated by operational necessities and that the military authorities considered the *regroupements* to be the most efficient means of combating the rebels, any new *regroupements* must be conceived in the context of a step toward the villages. In Delouvrier's opinion, the village was "a viable sociological unit and the symbol of progress in the countryside."<sup>23</sup> He wrote that "a village is not a simple agglomeration of housing. It is useless to build houses if the people who inhabit them do not have the necessary resources to support their existence."<sup>24</sup> He again insisted in distinguishing between temporary *regroupements* that ought to progressively be abolished, and permanent *regroupements* that were supported by the DEL credits and would henceforth bear the titles "new village, new hamlet, [or] new neighborhood, in accordance with the size of the population and their locality."<sup>25</sup> He declared that the creation of new *centres de regroupement* was to be based on unified actions by both the civil and military authorities acting in collaboration and combining their resources, and that new *commissions mixtes* (mixed commissions) in every region, department, and *arrondissement* would have to make any decision on the *regroupements* together.<sup>26</sup>

The conception of new centers was for the first time to be subjected to an *enquête préalable* (preliminary enquiry) that had to be undertaken by the *Equipe itinérante* (Mobile Team), which was then renamed the *Equipe itinérante d'aménagement rural* (Mobile Team for Rural Planning). The new team was to include both civil and military representatives, consisting of one SAS officer, several skilled civil technicians, and local military officers. Furthermore, Delouvrier declared that he "would attach great value to the fact that [the Mobile Team for Rural Planning] should equally include credible elements from the population to be regrouped, as it is important to get them interested in their own affairs."<sup>27</sup> In parallel with these mixed teams, he announced his intention to establish at every echelon, region, and prefecture *Bureaux d'aménagement rural* (Offices of Rural Planning) "specifically charged with the *regroupement* and the program of 1,000 Villages."<sup>28</sup>

The *Mille villages* was a slogan that Delouvrier launched to designate "permanent" *camps de regroupement* or, as he now termed them (and requested others to do likewise), "new villages, new hamlets, new neighborhoods."

The new catchword confused a number of both civil and military officers who were in charge of implementing Delouvrier's new policies, because they interpreted the *Mille villages* as a restriction of the number of the built "villages" to only one thousand, thus resulting in colossal mistakes in compiling the statistics and in financial mismanagement.<sup>29</sup> To amend these problems, Delouvrier distributed a directive that aimed to enunciate (and again redefine) the difference between short-lived and long-lasting *regroupements*, stressing that the "permanent centers" were characterized by their economic and social viabilities, which were expected to ensure their inhabitants a solid future. He argued that "there are only two categories of new settlements and not three: temporary and permanent (*Mille villages*)."<sup>30</sup>

The French press at the time in fact duly adopted the misunderstood slogan, as in the article "Zelamta: Premier des 'Mille Villages' est inauguré en Oranie" (Zelamta: The First "Mille Villages" Is Inaugurated in the Oran Region) in *Le Monde* on 10 June 1959, in which the author reported that the *nouveau village* of Zelamta was located precisely on the same site as a former *camp de regroupement*; that it comprised two hundred new dwellings, but that the water supply was still provided by wells while the inhabitants waited for the sanitation service to install proper pipes; and that forty similar villages were planned in the Oran Region.<sup>31</sup> To this end, Delouvrier's new terminology insinuated—and inevitably led the media to likewise report—that the French authorities were merely planning and building "new villages" for Algerian farmers in the name of the rural reforms of the Plan de Constantine.

General Parlange drafted an extensive document titled "Réflexions sur la création des nouveaux villages" (Reflections on the Creation of New Villages) in which he listed the various incentives that, as he saw it, ensured that the "new villages" corresponded with the premises of the Plan de Constantine. He argued that the new village would: 1) enforce municipal reforms by means of formal administration, frequent and simplified contact with the population, and the resolution of economic problems; 2) allow the implementation of ethnic and social promotion through the improvement of housing, and thereby intensify the indoctrination of the local elite; 3) curb the neglect of rural areas and partly absorb the proletariat; 4) facilitate hygienic control and the actions of the Mobile Working Groups, as well as hasten the promotion of women; and 5) enhance general cooperation.<sup>32</sup> Parlange warned about the agrarian reform, however, stating "in the regions of great colonization, it is a necessity but it faces huge difficulties," in response to which he felt that it was "essential to prevent the new villages from simply becoming a reservoir of staff employed by the *colons*."<sup>33</sup> While

he criticized the slow procedures of the CAPER in purchasing and redistributing arable lands from *colons* to Algerians, he praised the efficiency of the newly established Sections coopératives agricoles du Plan de Constantine (SCAPCO, or Cooperative Agricultural Sections of the Constantine Plan).<sup>34</sup>

In a document titled “La SAS devant le problème rural ou la création d’une SCAPCO” (The SAS before the Rural Problem, or the Creation of a SCAPCO), the chief of the SAS of Kouba in the Department of Algiers argued that the creation of a SCAPCO in the territory under his authority had been fundamental to the success of the planned colonial rural renewal and that “rural reform constitutes the Achilles’ heel of the economic revolution of this country.”<sup>35</sup> In another record, called “L’expérience de rénovation rurale” (The Experience of Rural Renewal), the chief of the SAS of Righia in the Department of Bône said that the agrarian reforms had been introduced to remedy the situation in the *camps de regroupement* of Righia, claiming that “it was necessary to provide jobs and subsistence to more than three thousand people.”<sup>36</sup>

Parlange’s reflections on the new villages most likely served as the basis for a comprehensive guideline called “Les mille villages” that was drawn up and distributed in April 1960, in which he announced that six hundred *nouveaux villages* were under construction or undergoing transformation. He stressed that both the conversion of *camps* into “villages” and the construction of new villages were meant to meet the politico-socioeconomic goals of the Plan de Constantine, including the immediate development of the countryside.<sup>37</sup> The IGRP assumed that one of the first steps of rural reforms should consist of:

Improving the status of the inhabitants, and thus increasing their resources; it is necessary to simultaneously maintain their previous resources and to find new ones. The economy of the olden days will not effectively provide access to modern life; however, it is not a question of asking all the inhabitants to abandon their land and live by something other than farming.<sup>38</sup>

Farmers who were forced to live in the *camps de regroupement* were expected not only to remain farmers but were also to be dragooned into the French colonial development of Algeria’s countryside. The IGRP intended to improve the yield of the land, as well as to “éduquer les exploitants” (instruct farmers), by including directors and monitors in the SCAPCO—rural engineers and rural-housing technicians who would be “capable of

‘engaging’ the inhabitants in the action toward a modern life, to instruct them without authoritarianism, and to help them without formalism.”<sup>39</sup> The IGRP stressed that it was indispensable to “first improve housing: a tangible evidence of progress, a sensitive matter not only to men, but more importantly, to women; we must therefore make everyone forget the houses that they had to leave and that they were sentimentally attached to.”<sup>40</sup> One of the aims of this typical “civilizing mission,” as mentioned earlier, was to isolate Algerian farmers (women and men) from the influence of the Algerian liberation fighters.

### **Planning and Propaganda Offices**

In order to coordinate the design of rural dwellings and new villages or permanent camps, Delouvrier created the Bureau d’aménagement rural (Office of Rural Planning), which operated under the direct authority of the General Secretary of the prefecture. In his directive of 4 November 1960, a few days prior to the end of his mandate, Delouvrier emphasized that this institution was expected to again actively link, coordinate, analyze, and stimulate the various administrative and technical services, as well as “to foster the unity of action of all those who contribute to the creation and equipment of the *regroupements* of the population.”<sup>41</sup> The head of the office was to be selected from among the existing French administrative or technical services or from high-level French military officers from Algerian Affairs. Moreover, the Office of Rural Planning was designed to become the driving force of the Mobile Teams for Rural Planning.

The establishment of yet another bureaucratic body suggests that the French civil and military authorities were failing to cooperate, meaning that the confidential policy coordination of the *regroupements* continued to be a precarious question. These deficiencies additionally affected the displaced Algerian population and were not openly debated at the time. On the contrary, the authorities conducted national and international propaganda campaigns in order to deflect attention away from the cruel realities of the *camps de regroupement* and to sustain the belief that the Fifth Republic, unlike its antecedent, was acting to promote the development of the displaced Algerian populations, as dictated by the Plan de Constantine. In his *Campagne d’information sur les regroupements et les nouveaux villages* (Information Campaign on the *Regroupements* and New Villages) launched on 4 July 1960, General Parlange pointed out that the campaign had simultaneously to address and sway the Algerian population, the Métropole, the inter-

national community, and the United Nations prior to its coming General Assembly.<sup>42</sup>

In addition to general information training courses organized for French students from France in the *camps de regroupement*, the French authorities undertook various symbolic and in-depth propaganda measures involving: 1) the press, by means of sponsored articles and by inviting French and foreign journalists to visit the camps; 2) the distribution of illustrated brochures with short commentaries; 3) the screening of short films and documentaries (in Arabic and French) on the socioeconomic benefits of the *regroupements*, produced by the Information Service of the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria and SAS officers (seven short French films and one American film were produced as part of this effort); 4) a series of postcards, greeting cards, and posters to be drawn up and divided into two parts: on the left side was to be “Jadis” (Before), representing isolated villages of deteriorated *gourbis* (shelters) and emphasizing the *promiscuité* (cohabitation) of farmers and their animals; on the right side would be the slogan “Aujourd’hui: programmes des 1,000 villages” (Today: A Program of 1,000 Villages), portraying the layout of buildings, the town hall, the infirmary, and the school (the postcards were to be freely supplied to all military officers posted in Algeria, who were to send them to their families and friends in France; the authorities even envisioned providing every postcard with “a number eligible for a lottery, whose winners would be offered a free voyage to Algeria”);<sup>43</sup> 5) conferences showcasing recent photographs that were to be held before selected and general-public audiences; 6) traveling truck-based exhibitions on the Plan de Constantine and the *nouveaux villages* that were to be organized in France; 7) reports and pamphlets in several languages that were to be periodically transmitted to the United Nations; and finally 8) visits to the *regroupements* that were to be organized for politicians and industrialists who would influence the public opinion of their respective countries.<sup>44</sup>

In preparing the illustrated brochures of the program of the *Mille villages* designed to reinforce the propaganda efforts, the IGRP demanded that the French army and SAS officers deliver photographic documentation of the *camps de regroupement* under their respective authorities by the beginning of August 1960.<sup>45</sup> Aerial photographs were employed to highlight the vast collection of the built settlements called “new villages” or “new neighborhoods.” In assembling the photographs and their legends, the IGRP composed an abundant catalogue of newly built rural settlements that portrayed both the settlements’ spatial organization and the daily

lives of the displaced populations (figs. 41a–d). As a result of this survey, a booklet entitled *Algérie: Naissance de mille villages* (Algeria: The Birth of the One Thousand Villages) was ultimately published. The booklet attempted to demonstrate that it was France’s inevitable mission to “civilize” Algerian farmers, families, women, and children.<sup>46</sup> The concluding colonial text on the achievements of the French authorities claimed that in December 1960, “1,024 new villages host one million regrouped people. The creation of these villages was enabled by the construction of 84,000 permanent homes made of durable materials.”<sup>47</sup>

In order to instruct officers in the building of the new “villages” and dwellings, the IGRP and the French army issued a number of technical directives and guidelines, including the *Guide pratique pour la création des nouveaux villages* (Practical Guidebook for the Creation of New Villages; figs. 42a, 42b) and the *Notice technique pour la construction des nouveaux villages* (Technical Guidelines for the Construction of New Villages)—the latter of which was based on the recent experiences of both SAS officers and the CRHR.<sup>48</sup> Another such set of practical guidelines was *Comment faire le pisé? Ou la construction traditionnelle à bon marché* (How to Make Compressed Earth? Or Low-Cost Traditional Construction), formulated by Commander Guet from Algerian Affairs and consisting of a methodical documentation with sketches about methods for producing local construction material.<sup>49</sup>

### Design Guidelines for Officers

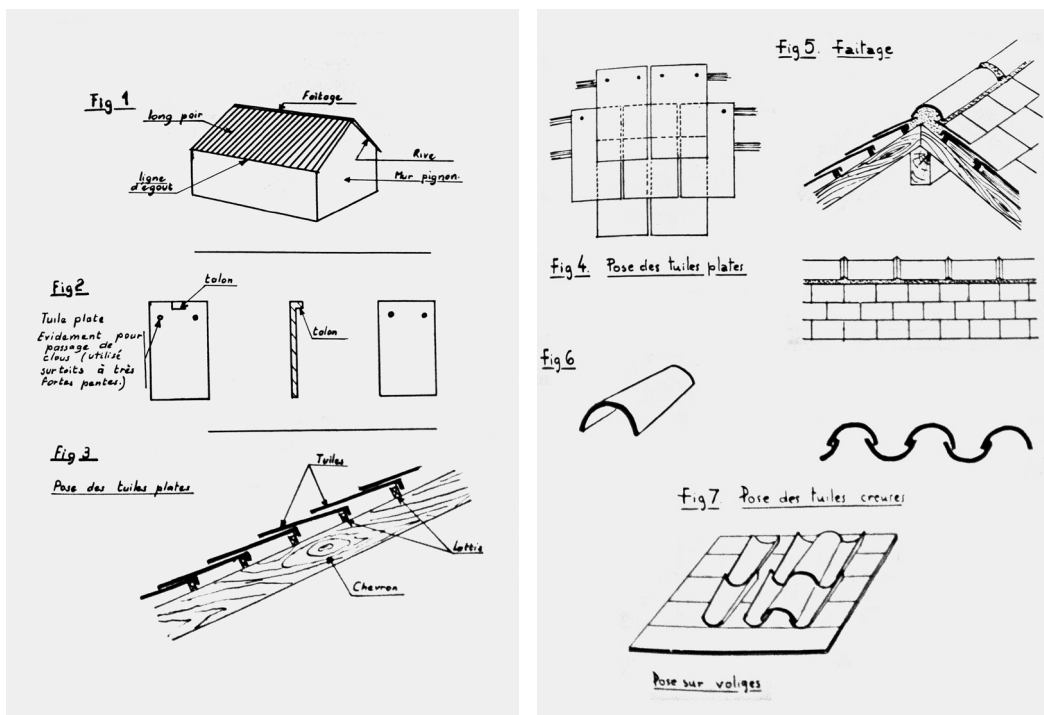
Despite these belated measures, as Jacques Bugnicourt—a former national secretary of Socialist Students in France and a close friend of the aforementioned Michel Rocard—pointed out in his November 1960 book *Les nouveaux centres ruraux en Algérie: Problèmes d’aménagement des terroirs et des villages* (New Rural Centers in Algeria: Planning Problems of Lands and Villages), “the overall impression is that we build anywhere, anyhow, and anything.”<sup>50</sup> Bugnicourt, who served in Algeria as a conscript after having completed his studies in political science and geography in France, was acquainted with the population *regroupements* and the policies that underlay them and how they were implemented, since he was not only an SAS officer in charge of the Commission for Rural Renewal in the Department of Orléansville from 1958 to 1961 but also a member of Delouvrier’s Commission of the Civil Cabinet charged with studying and revising the population *regroupement* directives.<sup>51</sup>

Bugnicourt’s intention in his didactic survey was to rival the civil and military authorities in their planning and construction of permanent camps, or “centers,” called “villages.” With the ambition of ridding the “new villages”





Figs. 41a-d Visual documentation of the *camps de regroupement* produced by the IGRP, 15 June 1960



Figs. 42a, 42b Notice technique pour la construction des nouveaux villages drafted by the Région territoriale et corps d'armée of Algiers

of the detritus of the *camps de regroupement*, he composed an operative framework drawing on established rural planning practices and theories outlining the basic standards of existing models of villages, farms, agriculture fields, and rural housing. He illustrated his comparative study with a wide range of maps, plans, and sketches of rural settlements in Europe, Israel, Russia, Algeria and elsewhere in Africa, and other parts of the world too. Under the title “Un village à insérer dans un contexte économique” (A Village to Be Inserted in an Economic Context), Bugnicourt proposed a fourfold hierarchy of units, as follows.

- 1) The *unité homogène* (homogeneous unit) would be a zone characterized by similar geologic, climatic, agricultural, and social features.
- 2) The *unité de vie collective* (unit of collective life) would be a territorial ensemble comprising the circulations and exchanges between individuals that were to be coordinated by a *bourg* (a larger market village, or a market center). For this Bugnicourt recommended following Israeli colonial planning in the region of Lachish in the occupied territory of Palestine as an ideal model.

- 3) The *village-centre* (village center) would provide villages with public facilities such as town halls, schools, and shops, as well as social amenities that would serve collective life. Bugnicourt borrowed the term from the French urbanist Gaston Bardet, an alumni of the IUUP and one of the founders of the IUUA,<sup>52</sup> and a progressive Catholic who investigated Fascist town planning in his 1937 book *Une nouvelle ère romaine sous le signe du Faisceau: la Rome de Mussolini* (A New Roman Era under the Fascist Banner: Mussolini's Rome).<sup>53</sup> Bardet assumed, like French theorist of *urbanisme* Marcel Poëte, that towns are living organisms, leading him to attack the functionalist Athens Charter and Le Corbusier's doctrines. Paradoxically (and ironically), in this section of his survey, Bugnicourt represented the plan of a "village-centre d'après Le Corbusier" (Village-Center According to Le Corbusier).
- 4) The *unité élémentaire* (basic unit) would be a village comprising rural dwellings and agricultural and public buildings that could be organized in two ways, either grouped or dispersed.<sup>54</sup>

Based on French town planning theories—in particular, Bardet's treatises<sup>55</sup>—Bugnicourt's survey endeavored to define the number, distance, and size of "new villages" and to supply the resettled Algerian population with basic services and commodities, as had others before him in connection with further settlement patterns (although they had done so more accurately), most importantly the German geographer Walter Christaller in his 1933 central places theory.<sup>56</sup> Bugnicourt advocated that the optimum (and maximum) distance between planned villages was 3 kilometers; he argued that such a distance would minimize commuting times and would maximize the time spent in the fields and with the family. He also claimed that this criterion was the one generally adopted not only by the CAPER in Algeria but also by a number of rural specialists in European countries, such as in the agrarian reform in Spain and the Law Caziot of 9 March 1941 during the Vichy regime in France,<sup>57</sup> which had been a law encouraging the regrouping of lands at the expense of small family farms. Bugnicourt suggested that the significance of a village theoretically depended on the number of cultivated units that could be constituted within that 3-kilometer demarcation (figs. 43a, 43b); the "basic unit," however, should ideally include roughly sixty families and should never be allowed to dip below thirty or to exceed one hundred fifty families.

Bugnicourt again quoted Bardet's 1949 *La nouvelle structure rurale* (The New Rural Structure) and listed a few existing model villages that had been

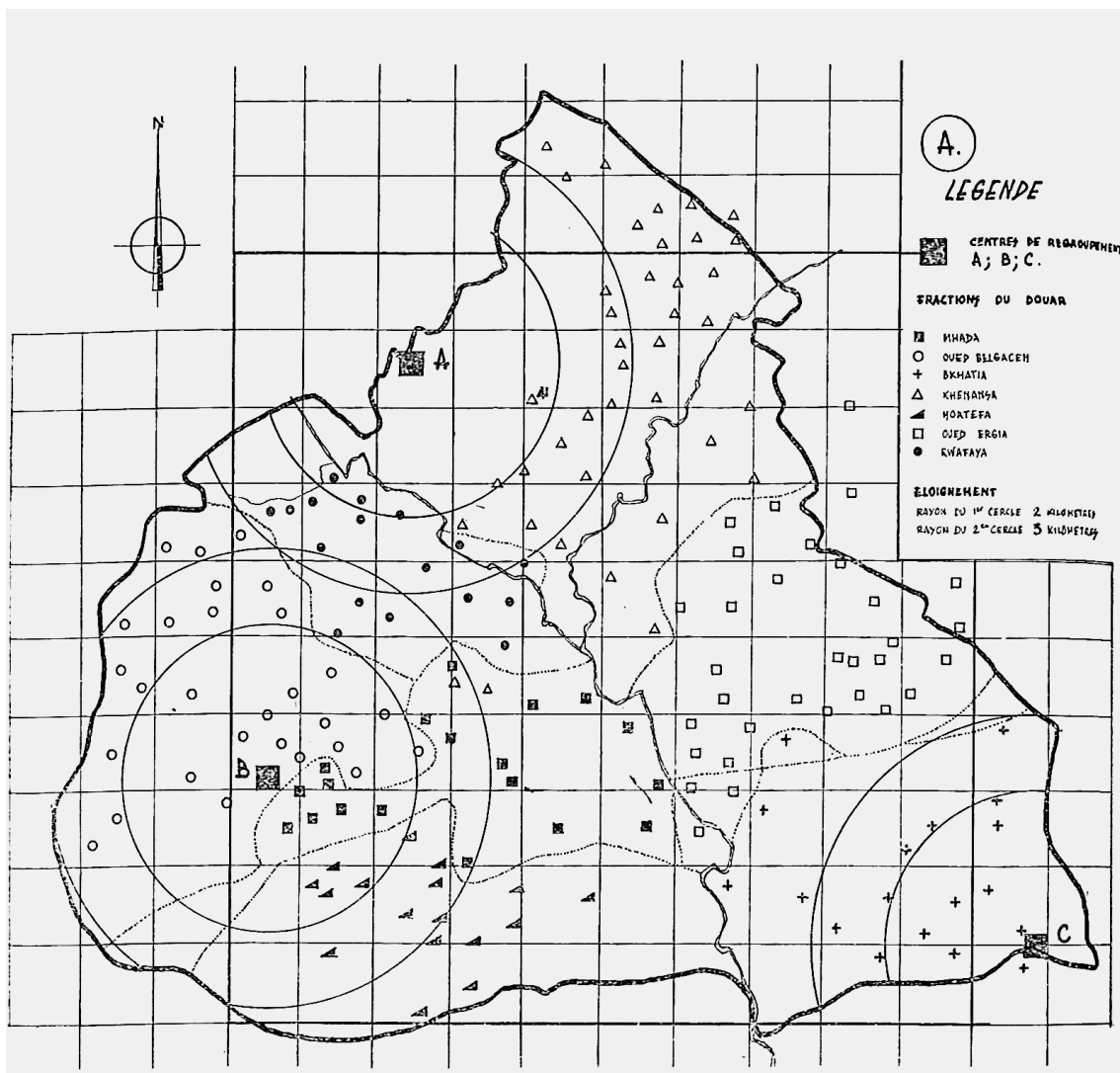


Fig. 43a Excluding the relief

Figs. 43a, 43b Maximum distance between fields and *camps de regroupement*, according to Bugnicourt; *regroupement* of the population of the village of Herenfa, Department of Orléansville (today Chlef)

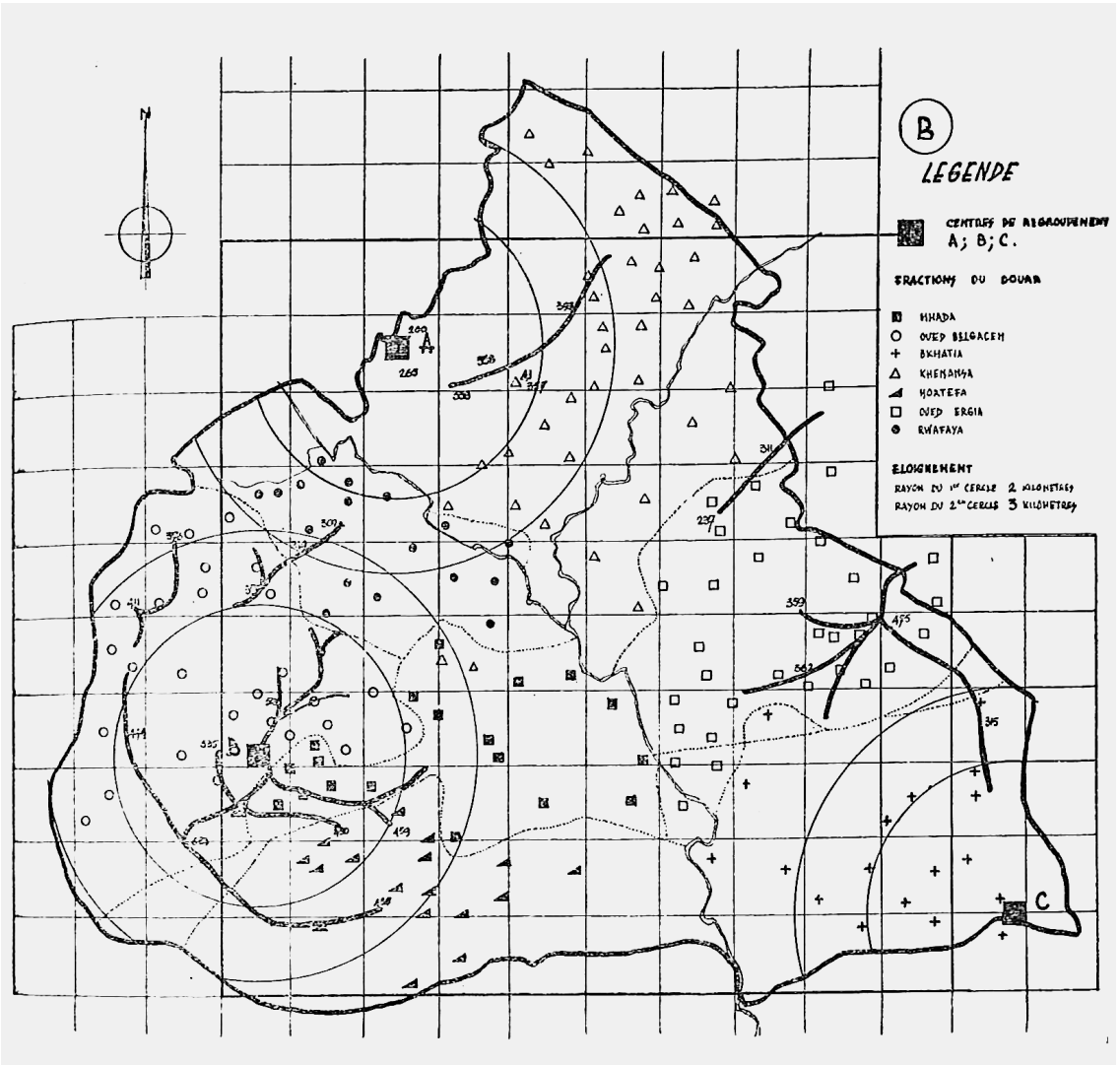


Fig. 43b Including the relief



built in Israel, as well as several rural models created by the Spanish Office National de Colonization (National Bureau of Colonization).<sup>58</sup> He then argued that master plans of the functional, aesthetic, economic, and social aspects of new rural settlements should be designed by professionals, who would be best employed at the CAPER and the Commission de réforme agraire et d'aménagement rural (CDRA, or Committee of Agrarian Reform and Rural Planning). It should be noted that the respective missions of these bodies were extended to include the *camps de regroupement* in June 1959. Bugnicourt divided ideal plans into two main classic types: 1) radial organizations, or the spider's web plan; and 2) the rectangular, gridiron, or checkerboard type. According to his assessment, the latter system regrettably lacked imagination when it was employed, which resulted in "imprisoning men between straight lines, without taking into account their aspirations, their tastes, their professions, or even the relief or the landscape."<sup>59</sup>

In relation to rural housing, Bugnicourt argued that courtyards were quintessential spaces in rural Algeria and that their omission, as often occurred, exhibited a profound ignorance of traditional domestic life in the Mediterranean region. He also favored a low-cost *habitat évolutif* (transformable dwellings) that could be readily extended, modified, and modernized for various domestic, economic, social, and psychological needs. He then described the necessary basic amenities of colonial housing, or housing built by the colonial administration in the colonies for local populations,<sup>60</sup> that were discussed in the 1956 publication *Tropical Architecture in the Humid Zone* by Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew, English modernist architects and town planners who worked in the British colonies of West Africa. Bugnicourt advocated that the habitable surface area of a rural dwelling for a family of five should only consist of between 30 and 35 square meters and that the minimum surface area of the rooms should be 8 square meters—dimensions that were much smaller than those in force in France. Bugnicourt argued that the discrepancy was due to the less exacting criteria in Algeria.<sup>61</sup> On the other hand, one might equally argue that this was an intrinsic part of a colonial mindset.

### **Other French Accounts**

In 1961, a year after Bugnicourt's book, Xavier de Planhol, French professor of geography at the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Nancy in France who was in Algeria to do his national service, published *Nouveaux villages algérois: Atlas Blidéen, Chenoua, Mitidja Occidentale* (New Villages in the Algiers Region: Atlas of Blida Region, Chenoua, Western Mitidja), in



which he documented the *camps de regroupement* (which he referred to as *nouveaux villages*) created by the French army in the region of Algiers. As de Planhol mentioned in the foreword, the book had been assisted and facilitated by “the indefatigable complacency that the military authorities of every rank have shown to me and the support they have brought to my inquiries.”<sup>62</sup> According to the author of *Human Rights in the Shadow of Colonial Violence*, de Planhol’s book “praised the achievements of the French development, which he claimed had enormously raised the overall quality of life for the rural Algerian population”<sup>63</sup>—particularly when compared with the outrageous conditions of the displaced populations who were forced to live in the temporary *camps de regroupement*, which the media had already openly denounced in 1959.

General Maurice Faivre, who served as French military captain for five years in Algeria during the war and who defended France’s interests there, praised both de Planhol’s study and Bugnicourt’s survey. Faivre incorporated a recapitulation of the contents of both books in a chapter entitled “Le progrès social en vue” (Social Development in Perspective) in his 2009 book *Les 1000 villages de Delouvrier: protection des populations musulmanes contre le FLN* (Delouvrier’s 1,000 Villages: The Protection of the Muslim Population against the FLN).<sup>64</sup>

The first four chapters of de Planhol’s *Nouveaux villages algérois* are dedicated to the *regroupement* of the Algerian population in the different geographic areas of the greater Algiers region; these are followed by two sections entitled “Des bidonvilles aux cités de recasement” (From the *Bidonvilles* to Resettlement Estates) and “Problèmes d’habitat et d’organisation” (Problems of Housing and Organization). De Planhol purposely included the politico-military project of the clearance of the *bidonvilles* into the operations of the *nouveaux villages*, arguing that

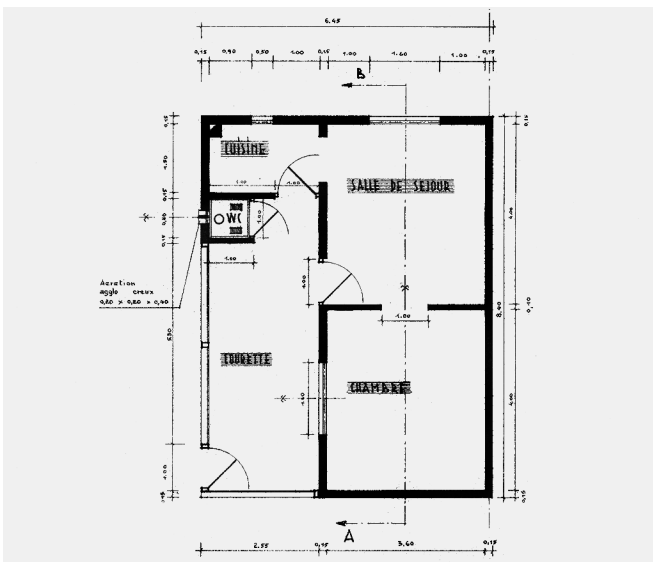
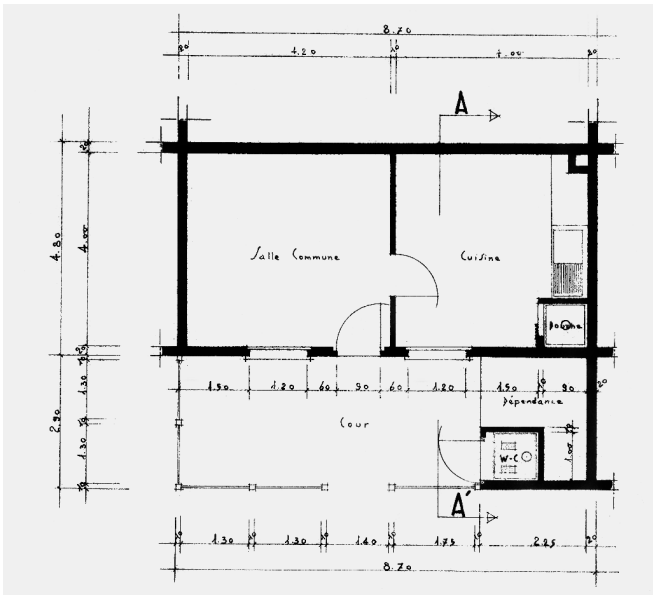
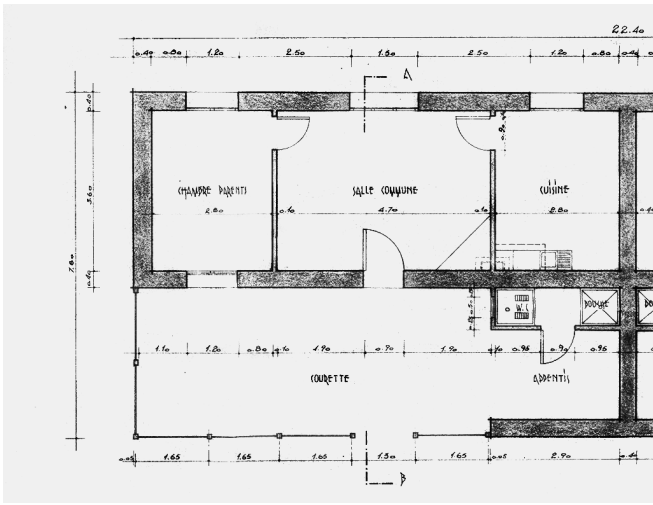
it constitutes the final stage of the reorganization of *peuplement* [peopling, populating, or colonization, depending on the translation and interpretation], consisting less this time in displacement than in “urbanization” of these basic habitats, allowing both the social promotion of its inhabitants and the establishment of satisfactory safety, in geometrically laid-out and wide streets that have succeeded the maze of *gourbis* separated by inaccessible courtyards.<sup>65</sup>

Although it is difficult to grasp the sense of what de Planhol meant by “urbanization” in the aerial photographs that he included in his chapter

on rural housing, it is possible to recognize the purpose of the geometric arrangement of the camps and to observe the presence of control devices in certain camps, such as the walls that surrounded the shelters and the watchtowers. In order to justify the compact gridiron layouts and similar repetitive appearances of the vast majority of the “new villages,” de Planhol pointed out that safety was crucial, arguing that in order to guarantee security the authorities had had to “minimize the perimeter of defense.”<sup>66</sup> The rural settlements that were built thus were essentially expected to act as fortresses and to isolate the Algerian population from Algerian revolutionaries.

The low-cost standardized houses predominantly designed by the CRHR were intended to tackle issues of quantity, time, and cost of construction, rather than quality. The CRHR’s drive for purely statistical results meant that various socio-cultural practices, traditional construction materials, and the specific geographic and climatic conditions present on the ground in any *regroupement* were simply disregarded, which resulted in the dissolving of essential social structures and the community equilibrium of the rural Algerian population. According to de Planhol, “the house-type ‘rural habitation,’ now reproduced in thousands of copies, makes no concession to the needs of the exploitation of the soil. It is exclusively a question of shelter.”<sup>67</sup> He described the low-rise shelters, or “rural habitat,” that had been built as being predominately composed of two tiny rooms. Whereas the depth was always equal to 3 meters, the width of the rooms varied according to two designed versions: the first was two rooms of 2.95 meters (8.85 square meters per room) or one room of 3.5 meters (10.5 square meters), and the second was of 2.3 meters (6.9 square meters). To this end, the overall indoor living surface area was always either 17.7 or 17.4 square meters, as if this insignificant variation made a qualitative difference for its inhabitants. The area of the smallest room did not even correspond to Bugnicourt’s already miserable planning guidelines, which predicated a minimum surface area of 8 square meters. The kitchen was 2 by 1.2 meters, and the surface of the restroom was not even mentioned. An outdoor space called the *courette* (tiny courtyard) was commonly included. In the best cases, the *courette* was 5 by 6 meters, and the kitchen and sanitary facilities had direct access to it (figs. 44a–c).

The IGRP eventually criticized (in May 1960) these types of “rural housing” designed by the civil servants of the CRHR. In a letter to the prefects of the northern French colonial departments of Algeria entitled “Construction des habitations dans les nouveaux villages” (Construction of Housing in the New Villages), the IGRP warned that “if this type of housing seems to



Figs. 44a-c Three housing types designed by the CRHR for the Algerian population in the aftermath of the earthquake that hit Orléansville (today Chlef) in 1954, and sporadically used for the forced resettlement program

provide satisfaction in certain municipalities and has the approval of a few sub-prefects, it is nevertheless the subject of intense criticism from users and local administrative authorities.”<sup>68</sup> Although the IGRP acknowledged the effectiveness of the CRHR’s design, which succeeded in minimizing the costs of construction that the French general government in Algeria had imposed, it did report that “the overly standardized type of these constructions is not always adapted to the local climate or to the taste and desires of the inhabitants of the new communities.”<sup>69</sup>

The new inhabitants denounced not only the use of inadequate construction materials (such as the 20-centimeter cinderblocks) as the predominant construction materials for the walls of the new houses, in contrast to the ideal isothermal characteristics of their former houses, but also the virtually microscopic sizes and dimensions of the indoor and outdoor spaces, which were significantly smaller than their previous living spaces and courtyards. The dissatisfaction was so serious that “certain regrouped [people] categorically refused to move into the houses [built by the CRHR] that were allocated to them.”<sup>70</sup> The IGRP’s circular triggered internal polemics; the head of the CRHR rejected the critiques and denied any responsibility on the part of his employees and services.<sup>71</sup> As it was, the problem of rural housing, or permanent camps, built for the forcibly resettled Algerian populations would ultimately remain unresolved.

- 1 SHAT 1 H 2485 D 2. Coupures de presse concernant les réfugiés et les camps de regroupement, 1959.
- 2 FRANOM 9336/14. Paul Delouvrier, Le délégué général du gouvernement en Algérie à Messieurs Les généraux commandants de corps d’armée, exerçant les pouvoirs civils dans les groupes de départements d’Alger, de Constantine et d’Oran, et à Messieurs Les secrétaires généraux régionaux, Directive no. 2.445 CC, Regroupement de populations, Algiers, 31 March 1959, p. 1.
- 3 Ibid., p. 2.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 SHAT 1 H 2030 D 1. Paul Delouvrier, Le délégué général du gouvernement en Algérie, Directive no. 3.444 CC, Regroupement de populations, Algiers, 24 April 1959, p. 1
- 6 Ibid., p. 2.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Instruction no. 3.852 CC of 5 May 1959.
- 9 SHAT 1 H 2574. Paul Delouvrier, Le délégué général du gouvernement en Algérie, Circulaire no. 5.766 CC, Regroupement de populations, Algiers, 1 July 1959, p. 2.
- 10 SHAT 1 H 2485 D 2. Coupures de Presse, “Pour financer les progrès de la pacification et l’installation des centres de regroupement: augmentation de 9 f. par litre d’essence depuis cette nuit 0 heure,” *Dépêche quotidienne d’Algérie*, 1 June 1959.
- 11 FRANOM SAS DOC 3. Paul Delouvrier, Délégué général du gouvernement en Algérie, Circulaire no. 6.870 Cab/SG du 17 Décembre 1959, Caisse d’équipement de l’Algérie – Réforme du financement des dépenses d’équipement local, p. 7.

- 12 Ibid., p. 8.
- 13 Ibid., pp. 13–14. Dispositions particulières concernant l’habitat rural. In comparison, a unit of semi-urban housing cost NF7,000.
- 14 Ibid., p. 13.
- 15 SHAT 1 H 2030 D 1. Paul Delouvrier, Le délégué général du gouvernement en Algérie, Directive no. 3.444 CC, Regroupement de populations, Algiers, 24 April 1959, p. 2.
- 16 Ibid., p. 3.
- 17 Ibid., pp. 2–3.
- 18 SHAT 1 H 2574. Le général Parlange, Conseiller technique, Inspecteur général des regroupements à Monsieur Le délégué général du gouvernement en Algérie, Algiers, 15 February 1960, p. 1.
- 19 Ibid., p. 3.
- 20 Ibid., p. 9.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 SHAT 1 H 2574. Paul Delouvrier, Le délégué général du gouvernement en Algérie, Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie, Cabinet du délégué général, Inspection générale des regroupements, Directive no. 4.625 CC, Regroupement de populations – Mille villages, Algiers, 25 May 1960, p. 1.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Ibid., p. 2.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 Ibid., p. 4.
- 29 Cornaton, *Les camps de regroupement*, 70.
- 30 SHAT 1 H 2574. Paul Delouvrier, Le délégué général du gouvernement en Algérie, Circulaire no. 3.270 CC, *Centre de regroupement – Mille villages*, Algiers, 19 April 1960, p. 1.
- 31 SHAT 1 H 2485 D 2. “Zelamta: Premier des ‘Mille Villages’ est inauguré en Oranie,” *Le Monde*, 10 June 1959.
- 32 CHSP 1 DV 17 D 4-5. Général Parlange, Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie, Cabinet du délégué général, Inspection générale des regroupements, Réflexions sur la création des nouveaux villages, Algiers, 9 March 1960, pp. 1–2.
- 33 Ibid., p. 3.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 SHAT 1 H 1213. Département d’Alger, Ville d’Alger, 8<sup>e</sup> Arrondissement, SAS de Kouba, La SAS devant le problème rural ou la création d’une SCAPCO, p. 1.
- 36 SHAT 1 H 1213. Capitaine Charles Vidonne, Chef de la SAS de Righia, Département de Bône, L’expérience de rénovation rurale, p. 1.
- 37 SHAT 1 H 1119. Inspection générale des regroupements, Les milles villages, April 1960, p. 1.
- 38 Ibid., p. 3.
- 39 Ibid., p. 5.
- 40 Ibid., p. 10.
- 41 SHAT 1 H 2574. Paul Delouvrier, Le délégué général du gouvernement en Algérie, Circulaire no. 9.2610 CC/ IGRP, Regroupement de population – Bureaux et Equipes Itinérante d’Aménagement Rural, Algiers, 4 November 1960, p. 2.
- 42 SHAT 1 H 2574. General Parlange, Inspection général des regroupements des populations, Campagne d’information sur les regroupements et les nouveaux villages, Algiers, 4 July 1960, pp. 1–2.
- 43 Ibid., p. 4.
- 44 Ibid., p. 5.
- 45 CHSP 1 DV 18 D 2. Inspection générale des regroupements de population au Général de corps d’armée commandant en chef des forces en Algérie, Documentation photographique sur les centres de regroupement, 15 June 1960.

- 46 FRANOM B.12.260. *Algérie: Naissance de mille villages*.
- 47 Ibid.
- 48 SHAT 1 H 2030. Région territoriale et corps d'armée d'Alger, 3<sup>e</sup> Bureau, Notice technique pour la construction des nouveaux villages.
- 49 FRANOM 2 SAS 167. Inspection générale des regroupements, Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie, Comment faire le pisé ? Ou la construction traditionnelle à bon marché, (Documentation recueillie par le Commandant G. Guet, Officier supérieur des Affaires Algériennes), Algiers, 30 July 1960.
- 50 Bugnicourt, *Les nouveaux centres ruraux*, 11. Many thanks to Michel Cornaton, who generously offered the author Bugnicourt's book.
- 51 CHSP 1 DV 17 D 2. Cabinet civil, Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie, Note à l'attention de Monsieur Prévot chargé de mission au cabinet du délégué général, Algiers, 5 March 1959.
- 52 On the joint legacy of the IUUP and the IUUA, see for example Frey, "Les valises du progrès urbanistique."
- 53 Bardet, *Une nouvelle ère romaine*. See also Cohen, "Gaston Bardet"; Frey, "Gaston Bardet."
- 54 Bugnicourt, *Les nouveaux centres ruraux*, 63–126.
- 55 Bardet, *Mission de l'urbanisme*, in particular chapter 8, "La nouvelle structure rurale," 395–448.
- 56 Christaller, *Central Places*. In 1940, Christaller joined the Nazi Party and served in Heinrich Himmler's SS-Planning and Soil Office. Christaller is also known as "Hitler's geographer."
- 57 Bugnicourt, *Les nouveaux centres ruraux*, 132–33.
- 58 Ibid., 140–42.
- 59 Ibid., 209.
- 60 Ibid., 284.
- 61 Ibid., 286.
- 62 De Planhol, *Nouveaux villages algérois*.
- 63 Klose, *Human Rights*, 169.
- 64 Faivre, *Les 1000 villages*, 161–73.
- 65 De Planhol, *Nouveaux villages algérois*, 80.
- 66 Ibid., 89. The second relevant factor consisted of the cost of land.
- 67 Ibid., 100.
- 68 CHSP 1 DV 17 D4-D5. Inspection générale des regroupements, Cabinet du délégué général, Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie, Construction des habitations dans les nouveaux villages, Algiers, 30 May 1960, p. 1.
- 69 Ibid., p. 2.
- 70 Ibid., p. 3.
- 71 On the internal polemics, see CHSP 1 DV 17 D4-D5.



## 8. Mass Housing: More with Less

A study commissioned to examine of the distribution of the 220,000 urban housing units to be built over the course of five years promised by General de Gaulle in October 1958 mobilized a number of French civil servants and technocrats. By the autumn of 1961, the survey “L’habitat algérien au terme de la troisième année du Plan de Constantine: Les perspectives pour 1962” (Algerian Housing in the Autumn of the Third Year of the Plan de Constantine: Perspective for 1962) reported that 22,153 housing units had been built in 1959 in urban areas; 27,502 dwellings in 1960; and an additional 19,526 housing units had been built during the first three quarters of 1961.<sup>1</sup> In three years, 69,181 standardized apartments in urban areas, divided into the four categories of superior/normal, LOGECO (Logement économique et familial, or Low-Cost and Family Dwellings), *logement million*, and semi-urban housing, had been built in urban areas—that is, less than the half of the pledged number. As in France immediately following the end of the Second World War, not much progress had been made in the effective production of urban housing in Algeria since the launching of the Plan de Constantine, but the norms, prototypes, surveys, and completed projects had left their distinct stamp on the architectural, socioeconomic, and political landscapes of Algeria and its inhabitants by the time of Algerian independence—and, even though several housing projects were left uncompleted, have continued to do so ever since.

Under the supervision of the Conseil supérieur de l’aménagement du territoire<sup>2</sup> et de la construction (High Council of Territorial Development and Construction), seventeen specialized committees acting at different levels were charged with defining the necessary programs and elaborating regional plans for the economic development of urban regions in Algeria, including the designation of residential areas and the spread of the categories of mass housing. These comprised five different Commissions centrales de l’aménagement du territoire (CCAT, or Central Committees for Territorial Development), which were regrouped under the Commission générale d’aménagement du territoire (CGAT, or General Committee for Territorial Development), along with twelve *commissions départementales*, or *commissions régionales* (departmental or regional committees) representing the twelve departments of Algeria.<sup>3</sup> The central committees were responsible for the overall examination of economic questions, technical particularities, and large-scale projects at a national level, such as the study of dams; the

planning of major cities and industrial areas; and the analysis of infrastructure, roads, commercial harbors, and routes for the national gas-supply systems. The departmental committees, by contrast, were requested to analyze any possible aspect that could directly affect the living conditions of rural areas and small towns.<sup>4</sup> All committees, however, were expected to work together according to the following clause: “The bulk of the plan [Plan de Constantine] is the actions of all kinds that will bring livelihoods to the people and will enable them to more effectively utilize their working capacity.”<sup>5</sup> Further, “the development plan is, at all levels, the orchestration of the life of the country.”<sup>6</sup>

The CGAT was composed of various representatives of French administrations from Algeria and France. This included the French general government in Algeria; the Permanent Secretary of National Defense; the Organisation commune des régions sahariennes (OCRS, or Joint Organization of the Saharan Regions); the Ministry of Construction and Urbanism; the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation; the General Regional Secretaries of Algiers, Oran, and Constantine; nine “experts,” including civil engineers; twenty-nine representatives of different economic branches in Algeria; and nine representatives of trade-union organizations. The CGAT was presided over by a French general inspector at the Ministry of Construction and Urbanism, Mr. Bonnome.

In order to establish an inventory of existing and planned housing units and public buildings, as well as to create “a rational equipment program that will enable the harmonious development of the agglomeration in the coming years,”<sup>7</sup> the working teams of the CGAT were urged to collaborate with the French town planners who had been appointed for various cities in Algeria. The planners included the head of the CIAM-Algiers group Pierre-André Emery, responsible for the cities of Mostaganem and Tizi-Ouzou; the famous French urbanist Jean Royer for Bougie; and the French urbanist, alumnus of the UUIP, and cofounder of the IUUA Tony Socard for Bône.<sup>8</sup> The CGAT entrusted five specialized French *bureau d'études* (consultancy offices) with undertaking the quantitative surveys for the twelve departments of Algeria, appointing the Société d'économie et de mathématique appliquées (SEMA, or Company of Economics and Applied Mathematics) for Bône, Constantine, and Philippeville (today Skikda); the Bureau d'études et de réalisations urbaines (BERU, or Office of Urban Investigation and Realization) together with the Compagnie française d'organisation (COFROR, or French Organization Company) for the cities of Oran, Arzew, and Mostaganem; the Société centrale pour l'équipement du territoire (SCET, or Central Company

for Territorial Equipment) for the greater Algiers area; and the Bureau central d'études pour les équipements d'outre-mer (BCEOM, or Central Office of Studies for Overseas Equipment) for Orléansville, Médéa, Tizi-Ouzou, Sétif, and Batna. Most of these technocratic agencies were based in Paris and knew little about the peculiarities of Algeria's peoples, climates, construction materials, and resources.<sup>9</sup>

In a letter of 7 July 1959, André Laure, a chief civil engineer and attaché to and member of the Commissariat général du plan (CGP, or General Commissariat of the Plan), wrote to Jacques Saigot, director of Public Works and Transportation for the French general government in Algeria, that “the Subcommittee of Urban Planning, reduced to its sole Paris members, met in Paris on 24 June in order to hear the presentation by the appointed offices on the progress of their work.”<sup>10</sup> He pointed out that work on the studies would slow down at the public French institutions due to the upcoming summer holidays but that, contrary to some peoples' expectations, the collaboration between the French bureaus and the appointed town planners in Algeria (who had not attended the meeting in Paris) seemed to be acceptable.<sup>11</sup> French architects and town planners who practiced in Algeria were requested to work with the French members of the subcommittees based in France but were not directly members of these commissions—that is, they were neither invited nor authorized to participate in the decision-making and policy-making processes. Instead, they were requested to enforce the verdicts and protocols drafted by their French counterparts based in France and not in Algeria. Only French civil servants who worked for the French General Delegation in Algiers and the elected politicians who oversaw the three IGAMEs (Inspecteur général de l'administration en mission extraordinaire, or General Inspector of Administration in the Extraordinary Mission) of Algiers, Oran, and Constantine were allowed to voice their preferences.

In a meeting of the members of the CGAT attended by forty-five technocrats—including the representatives of the COFROR, the SCET, the SMA, and the BCEOM—the question of housing typologies and their distributions was raised but not resolved due to the fact that the commissioned surveys were still ongoing. Bonnome, president of the CGAT, stressed that “it is primarily a matter of managing an influx of people who would be confronted with half or lower salaries once they arrive, and thus it is about answering an important demand that is generally not solvable.”<sup>12</sup> Based on statistical studies and examples in other Mediterranean countries, notably Italy, he recommended building as soon as possible a maximum eighty thousand housing units per year in urban areas and to accelerate their realization by introducing

“initiatives from France, where the building industry is in a semi-recession due to the considerable increase in productivity.”<sup>13</sup> Not only was this prescribed figure never reached—and therefore de Gaulle’s pledge was not fulfilled—but also a number of building techniques and construction companies from France rapidly expanded into the Algerian market.

In its first extensive activity report from February 1960, the CGAT stressed that it was not practicable to establish a precise census of housing needs or to indicate a distribution of the different housing typologies that would correspond to the habits and financial resources of the Algerian population. The report noted that “no studies are currently accurate enough (similarly to those that have been made in France) that would allow for making such an assessment.”<sup>14</sup> The report continued by saying that the information that the French urban consultancy companies had provided on the major cities was still inconclusive and that the first hypothetical results would be delivered by the end of the first quarter of 1960.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, the spread of the typologies of the 69,181 housing units that were built during the first three years of the Plan de Constantine was not based on effective surveys or defined demands: instead they were most likely based on the cost of construction and different modes of financing. In a press conference on 16 February 1960, Saigot noticeably failed to refer to this absence of accurate data with which to determine the type and distribution of housing across Algeria, instead declaring that “according to Delouvrier’s statement, housing is one of the cornerstones of the plan, because the building industry allows for distributing wages that will be spent for the benefit of various consumer industries.”<sup>16</sup>

In an attempt to create jobs and consumers, as well as tenants and landlords, the Caisse algérienne d’aménagement du territoire (CADAT, or Algerian Fund for Regional Planning) was charged with purchasing land in order to promote the construction of vast residential and industrial areas. The CADAT was created in 1956 and was dissolved in 1980, well after Algerian independence. The fund was entitled to autonomously—or at the request of the general governor, regional or municipal public administrations, or public housing organizations—acquire, plan (*aménager*), promote, and sell housing estates (fig. 45). A report of 29 April 1960 to Minister of Construction Pierre Sudreau titled “Le développement de l’aménagement du territoire et de la construction en Algérie en cours de la période d’application du Plan de Constantine” (The Progress of Territorial Development and Construction in Algeria over the Course of the Period of the Application of the Plan de



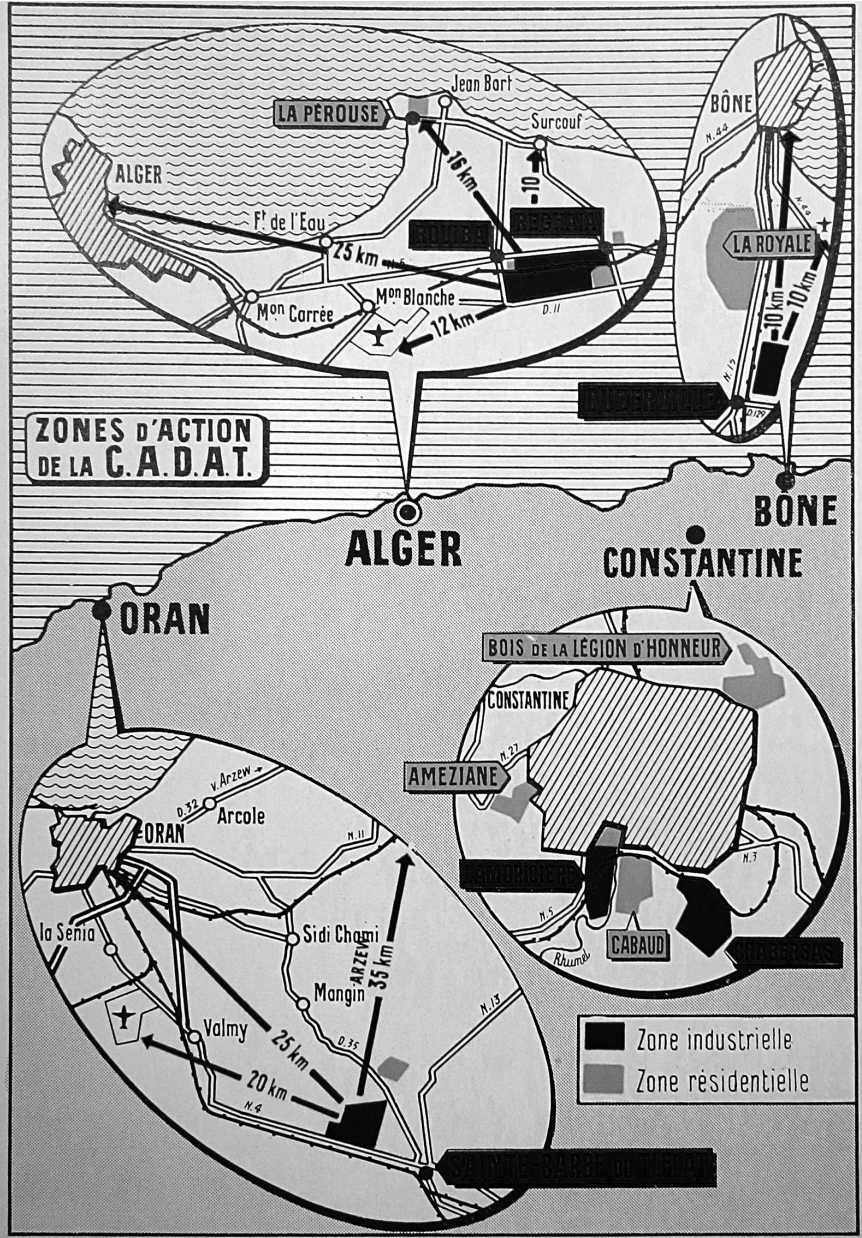


Fig. 45 Description of the CADAT and its regional planning projects in Algeria published in the *Bulletin de la caisse d'équipement pour le développement de l'Algérie*, no. 3 (February 1961): 19

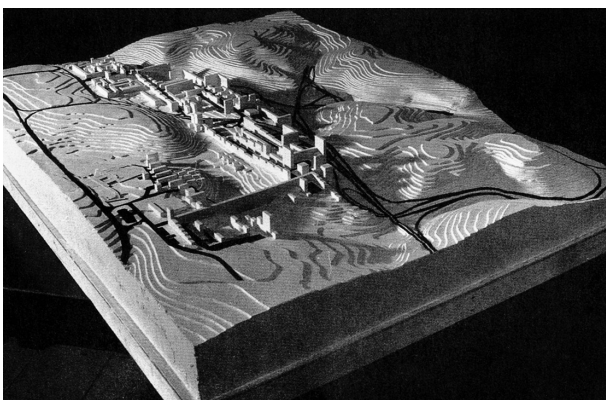
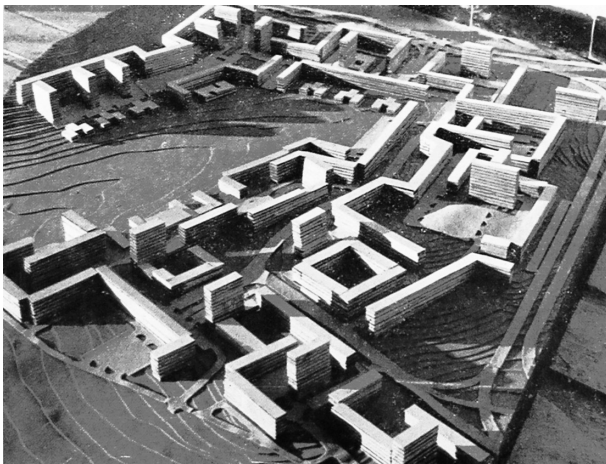
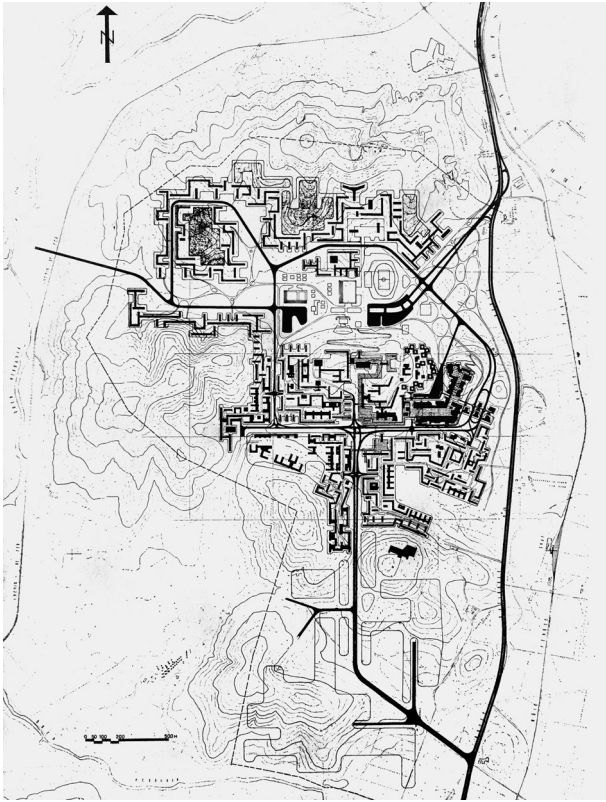
Constantine) stated that “the current situation of Algeria may, in many respects, be compared to that of France ten years ago, at the beginning of the second Plan of Modernization and Equipment.”<sup>17</sup>

### **CADAT's Mass-Housing Projects**

The same report also argued that the CADAT played an essential role in obtaining lands at reasonable prices, which facilitated “a rational urban development together with realizing its full planning scope.”<sup>18</sup> It reported that the CADAT had acquired (or was on the verge of acquiring), as part of the projected twenty-seven operations, roughly one-third of the 4,500 hectares that the Plan de Constantine deemed necessary for the construction of new residential zones in nineteen major cities in Algeria. Notable among these large-scale mass-housing projects were La Royale, covering 700 hectares in the coastal city of Bône, which was carried out together with the Société d'équipement de la région de Bône (SERB, or Equipment Company for the Region of Bône); and the residential neighborhood called Les Annassers in Algiers over an area of roughly 350 hectares, which was entirely conducted by the Société d'équipement de la région d'Alger (SERA, or Equipment Company for the Region of Algiers).<sup>19</sup>

La Royale was also called Hippone La Royale after Hippo Regius, a major city of the Roman Empire in Algeria that had been destroyed by the Arabs and renamed Annaba (“the city of jujubes”). The new town of La Royale, composed of thirty thousand newly designed housing units, was a large southern extension of the city of Annaba, which had 150,000 inhabitants in 1959. The new town was designed by the French architects Daniel Badani and Pierre Roux-Dorlut (figs. 46a, 46b). The two architects had met during the Second World War at the atelier of the Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts that Augène Beaudouin had reconstituted in Marseille; together they established an architecture office in Montpellier in 1946. Badani obtained the title of Architecte en chef des bâtiments civils et palais nationaux (Chief Architect of Civil Buildings and National Palaces) and was appointed architect at the Ministry of Overseas Territories. Between 1946 and the commission of La Royale in 1959, Badani and Roux-Dorlut realized housing projects and public buildings in France and in the French colonies of the Ivory Coast, Niger, and Senegal.<sup>20</sup> In 1959, parallel to the commission of La Royale, they were offered the job of designing a university complex for the Algerian city of Constantine. Although in 1959 they had developed (with the collaboration of Jean Prouvé) optimal modular lighting elements called “pyradomes” for the ceilings of the faculty in Constantine, the La Royale project was very much





Figs. 46a, 46b La Royale in Annaba with 30,000 housing units designed by Daniel Badani and Pierre Roux-Dorlut

Fig. 47 Model of the first phase of Les Annassers designed by the Agence du plan d'Alger

built in keeping with the spirit of the typical postwar French *grands ensembles* in France.

Les Annassers for its part included twenty-one thousand housing units over an area of 356 hectares. Feasibility studies for the development had been first begun by the Agence du plan d'Alger in 1956, when the Mayor of Algiers, Jacques Chevallier, had initiated an ambitious building campaign to address Algiers's ongoing housing shortage (fig. 47).<sup>21</sup> Whereas 5,500 dwellings of the neighborhoods numbered 1, 2, and 3 were designed by the Agence du plan d'Alger (Algiers's Plan Agency), the remaining 15,500 units were coordinated by the French architect Jean Le Couteur (fig. 48). Le Couteur had graduated from the atelier Auguste Perret at the Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts and then became partners with the French architect Paul Herbé. Together they worked for Bernard Zehrffuss in Tunisia when Zehrffuss was the director of the architecture and public works services between 1943 and 1948,<sup>22</sup> and later they went on to work in Chad, Mali, Niger, and Senegal. In 1951, they became chief architects at the Ministry of Reconstruction and Urbanism. Prior to the Les Annassers project, Le Couteur and Herbé designed and built the renowned Cathedral of Sacré-Cœur in Algiers, with its hyperbolic roof, started in 1955 and completed in 1961, in the midst of the bloody war to decolonize Algeria.

Both large-scale housing estates were published in a special issue the French journal *Urbanisme* of 1961 dedicated entirely to Algeria and the French *aménagement du territoire* (territorial development), urbanism, construction, and housing projects that had been either proposed or realized under de Gaulle's Plan de Constantine over the course of the Algerian War of Independence.<sup>23</sup> The special issue included four categories of surveys and development types: 1) regional urban studies and perspectives, using the examples of the cities of Algiers, Oran, and Arzew; 2) schematic urban plans for twenty cities, including Constantine and Bône; 3) large-scale programs, illustrated using the examples of Les Annassers and La Royale, as well as El Bir, a mass-housing project built for five thousand inhabitants on the outskirts of Constantine; and 4) rural schemes trumpeting the new villages and *cités de regroupement* as examples of the impact of rural reforms and the rural-housing improvement policies of the Plan de Constantine (figs. 49, 50). Not surprisingly, the military-controlled *camps de regroupement* received no mention whatsoever. Either intentionally or unintentionally, the message imparted by the professional journal, directed by Jean Royer, largely echoed the targeted message of the propaganda brochures about the Plan de Constantine's housing distributed by the Information Service of the General

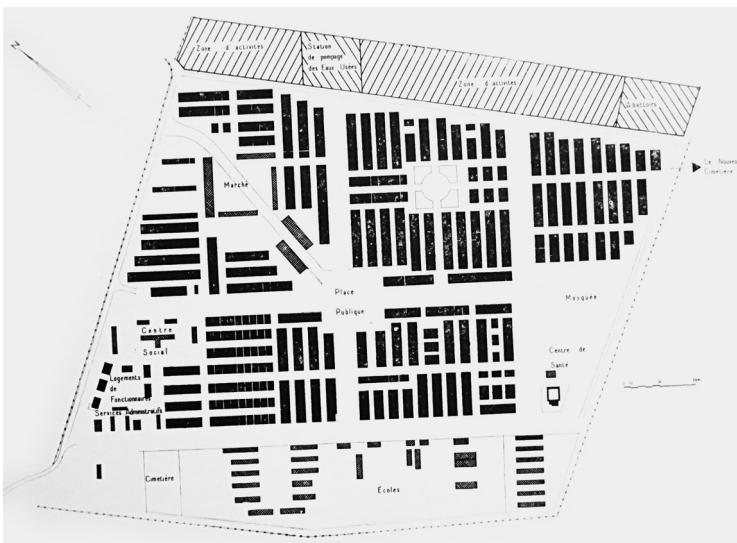
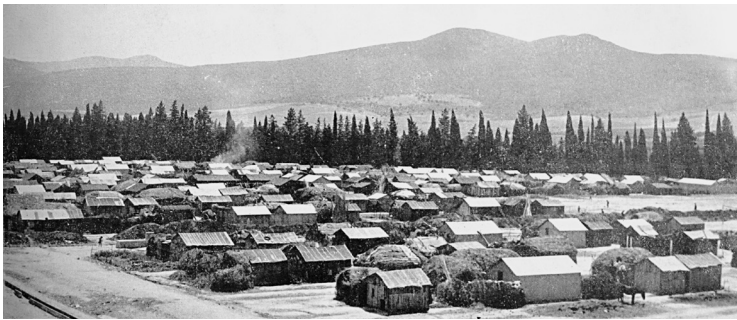
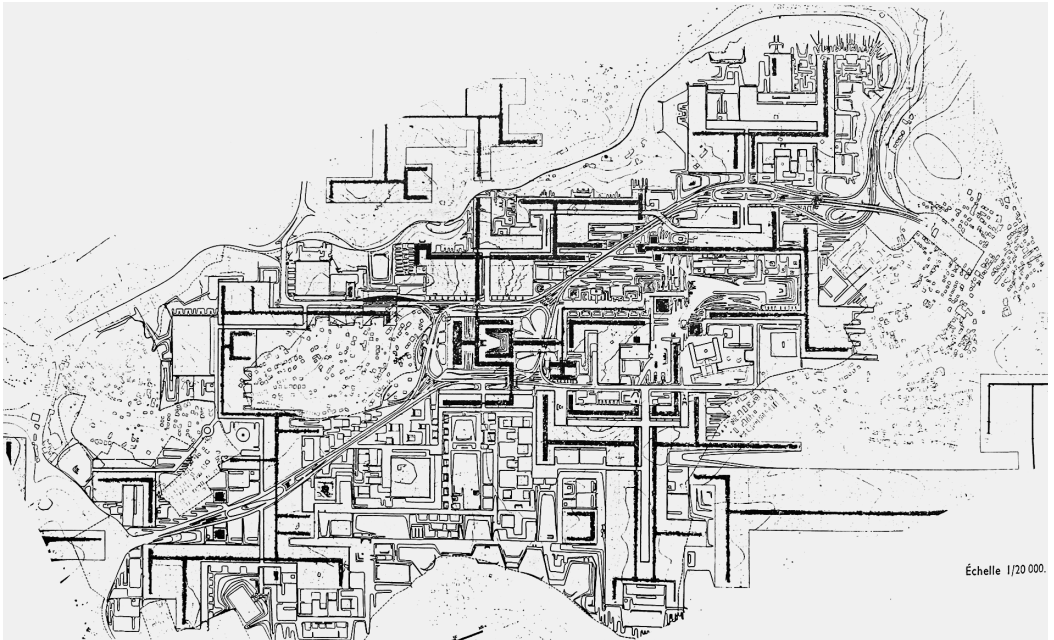


Fig. 48 Master plan of Les Annessers designed by Jean Le Coureur as part of the Plan de Constantine

Fig. 49 New rural settlements in Randon, Municipality of Bône

Fig. 50 Master plan for the regroupement of Sidi Salem in Constantine

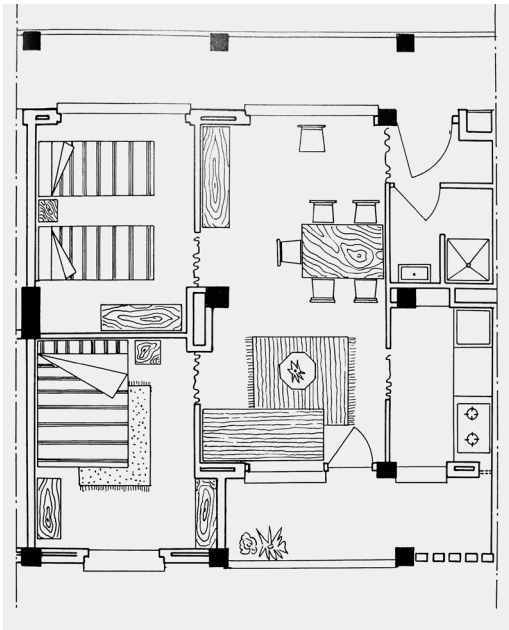
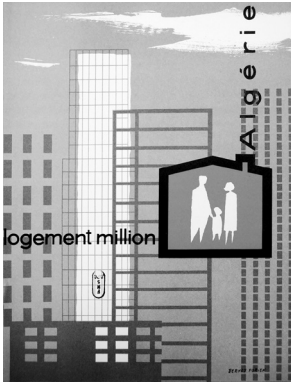
Delegation of the French Government in Algeria and the French government in France. Both *Urbanisme* and the Information Service conveyed the spirit of the colonial civilizing mission.

Besides generating jobs and consumers in Algeria, the Plan de Constantine's production of urban mass housing, often called *l'habitat du secteur moderne* (modern-sector housing), was expected to accelerate the pace and reduce the costs of construction—that is, to produce a rapid French industrialization of construction based on and inspired by French building experiences in France after the Second World War. In a memorandum on preparations for an official visit by the Minister of Construction to Algeria, the French General Delegation reported that a large number of French construction companies had expressed their interest in coming to work in Algeria, causing considerable concern among the six thousand building companies that were already working in Algeria, the document reporting that the Algeria-based companies' "professional organizations would like to channel this [influx]."<sup>24</sup> The memorandum argued, though, that the lack of a skilled labor force and the scarcity of construction materials might slow construction processes; it also stressed that the 297 architects who were officially registered with the Order of Architects in Algeria were insufficient, especially in the regions of Constantine, Oran, and Bône. The memorandum specified that, based on past negative experiences, "the intervention of architects who operate from France has led to often controversial results, except when there was a close association between them [the architects] and an office based in Algeria."<sup>25</sup> The document also listed the types of housing that were recommended in Algeria—the semi-luxurious, the normal, the LOGECOs (or the HLM Abis), the *logement million* (or the HLM AA), and the semi-urban—and argued that the technical characteristics of these categories were similar to those built in postwar France, except for the semi-urban and the *logement million*, which encompassed particular prescriptions that were comparable to the *Opération Million* (Operation Million) in France.<sup>26</sup>

### ***Logement Million***

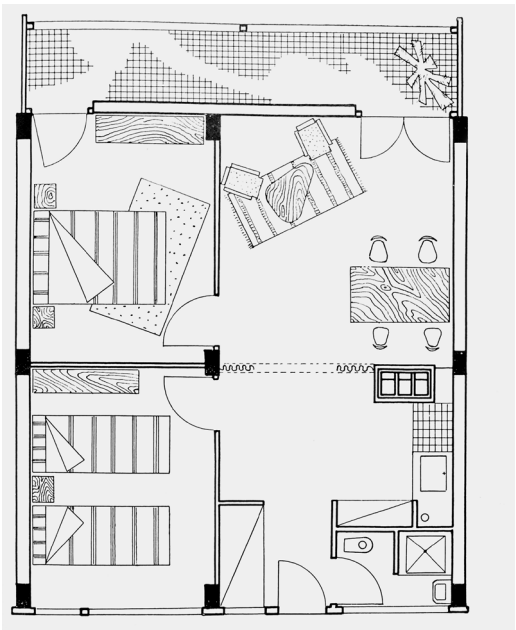
The technical guidelines for the *logement million* in Algeria were devised by the French Centre algérien d'expansion économique et social (CAEES, or Algerian Center of Economic and Social Expansion) and issued on 9 December 1958, when General Raoul Salan was in charge of both military and civil affairs and a few days before the appointment of Paul Delouvrier as Delegate General of the French government in Algeria (figs. 51a–d). As in the case of the commissioning of semi-urban housing, the involvement of the Order of





**3 PIECES**

Dégagement . . .	m <sup>2</sup>	1,20
Cuisine . . . . .	»	3,56
Salle d'eau W.C. »		2,22
Séjour . . . . .	»	14,28
Chambre . . . . .	»	7,56
Chambre . . . . .	»	7,56
Loggia . . . . .	»	4,40
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>m<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>40,78</b>



**3 PIECES**

Dégagement . . .	m <sup>2</sup>	1,55
Chambre . . . . .	»	9,70
Chambre . . . . .	»	9,70
Séjour Cuisine . .	»	19,25
Loggia . . . . .	»	7,10
Salle d'eau W.C. »		1,95
Rangement . . . .	»	1,15
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>m<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>50,40</b>

Figs. 51a–d Excerpts from a brochure for the *Logement million*

Architects in Algeria was again represented by Marcel Lathuillière and Emery. The introduction to the brochure for the *logement million* announced: “To reduce costs, the working group will search for norms to reduce surfaces and heights. Obviously, this will acutely raise the problem of family cohabitation. But this coexistence could be solved by multiplying the number of rooms, rather than by increasing their dimensions.”<sup>27</sup> The team proposed three types of housing units: a two-room flat of 31 to 34 square meters, a three-room apartment of 39 to 43 square meters, and a four-room dwelling of 47 to 53 square meters. The minimum height of 2.5 meters was thought to accord with existing prefabricated construction elements that measured 2.75 meters in height, a dimension that also enabled the erection of a six-story building without having to insert an elevator. The width of such buildings was set to a maximum of 9 meters. The working team argued that “what matters is that, in terms of hygiene and sanitation fittings, the built dwellings have all of the elements deemed necessary by the conditions of modern life. The units will be small in size, but healthy.”<sup>28</sup> This “hygienist” principle resulted not only in miniscule housing units for large families with virtually microscopic kitchens and bathrooms but also in long, repetitive, prefabricated housing slabs lacking in technical and architectural qualities. To this end, a number of French architecture agencies became factories for the frenetic production of *logement million* and other low-cost mass-housing projects in Algeria. One of these bureaus was the office of the French architects Alexis Daure and Henri Béri.

After graduating from the Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris, Daure went to Algiers to work for Fernand Pouillon on the renowned mass-housing projects. According to Jean-Jacques Deluz—who worked for Daure and Béri in Algiers in 1956 and then for the Agence du plan d’Alger under the directorship of Gérard Hanning<sup>29</sup>—Daure was “certainly the one who translated with the most character the intentions of Hanning’s landscapes.”<sup>30</sup> Hanning for his part was a former collaborator of Le Corbusier’s who conducted studies on *Le Modulor* and the *Unité d’habitation*, as well as the *cellule* (cell) before the *unité*.<sup>31</sup> Pouillon argued that Hanning was “the most brilliant and sensitive organizer of ordered landscapes.”<sup>32</sup> This idea of systematic, if not indeed paranoiac, order certainly was a prevalent feature in the architecture and urbanism of Daure and Béri in Algeria both before and during the Plan de Constantine.

Prior to the housing of the Plan de Constantine, more precisely in 1955 during Jacques Chevallier’s tenure as Mayor of Algiers, Daure and Béri designed and realized a great number of housing units. These included





the vast estate of La Montagne in Hussein-Dey on the outskirts of Algiers, which was designed and built (together with the young Roland Simounet) for Algerian populations living in the *bidonvilles* and was promoted by the Compagnie immobilière algérienne (CIA, or Algerian Real Estate Company). Another of Daure and Béri's projects was the colossal housing development of 1957 on the heights of Bab El Oued in Algiers, which was composed of the Carrières Jaubert (Diar El Kef, steps II, III, and IV, designed together with Simounet and the engineer Vladimir Bodiansky; figs. 52a, 52b) and the Frais Vallon (Taines A, E, and F), realized together with the Régie Foncière d'Alger (Algiers Property Management Agency) as the developer (figs. 53a–d).<sup>33</sup>

La Montagne was composed of two thousand *logements économiques* (low-cost housing), five hundred *logements évolutifs* (transformable dwellings) in collective buildings, one thousand individual houses (figs. 54a–d), and collective facilities such as markets, shops, baths, and *cafés maures* (cafés for Algerian men, literally “Moorish cafes”). The typical courtyard unit for the single-story individual houses was set out on a 7.65 by 7.7 meter plot, which somewhat approximated to Michel Ecochard's housing grid for the Carrières Centrales in Casablanca.<sup>34</sup> The spatial organization of the horizontally grouped dwellings was dissimilar, however. The two-room (28.8 square meter) or three-room (38.7 square meter) units of La Montagne's *logements évolutifs* comprised two loggias on the opposite sides of the building: one of 1.3 square meters and the other of 2.1 square meters.

In contrast to these housing categories, the Carrières Jaubert's housing units were conceived as temporary shelters intended for the Algerian inhabitants of the *bidonvilles*. They were termed *cit  de recasement* (resettlement housing) or *cit  de transit* (transitory housing), and they are still standing today. Their units were not only smaller than those of any other housing scheme type but were also devoid of private sanitary facilities. The living area was shrunken to below that of prewar HBMs (Habitat à bon marché), and the absence of washing spaces and toilets simply replicated the desolation of the slums. Referring to Simounet's Djenan El Hassan transitory housing, Deluz argued that “the pretty graphic spaces, the proportions and dimensions of the Modulator, are powerless to hide the misery and high density of occupation.”<sup>35</sup> Deluz did, however, praise Daure and Béri's attempts in Diar El Kef to revive the use of architectural stonework set by Pouillon in Diar El Mahçoul, thus demonstrating the probable influence of Pouillon on Daure.<sup>36</sup> Nonetheless, these uses of articulated spaces and stone disappeared with their housing units for the Plan de Constantine.

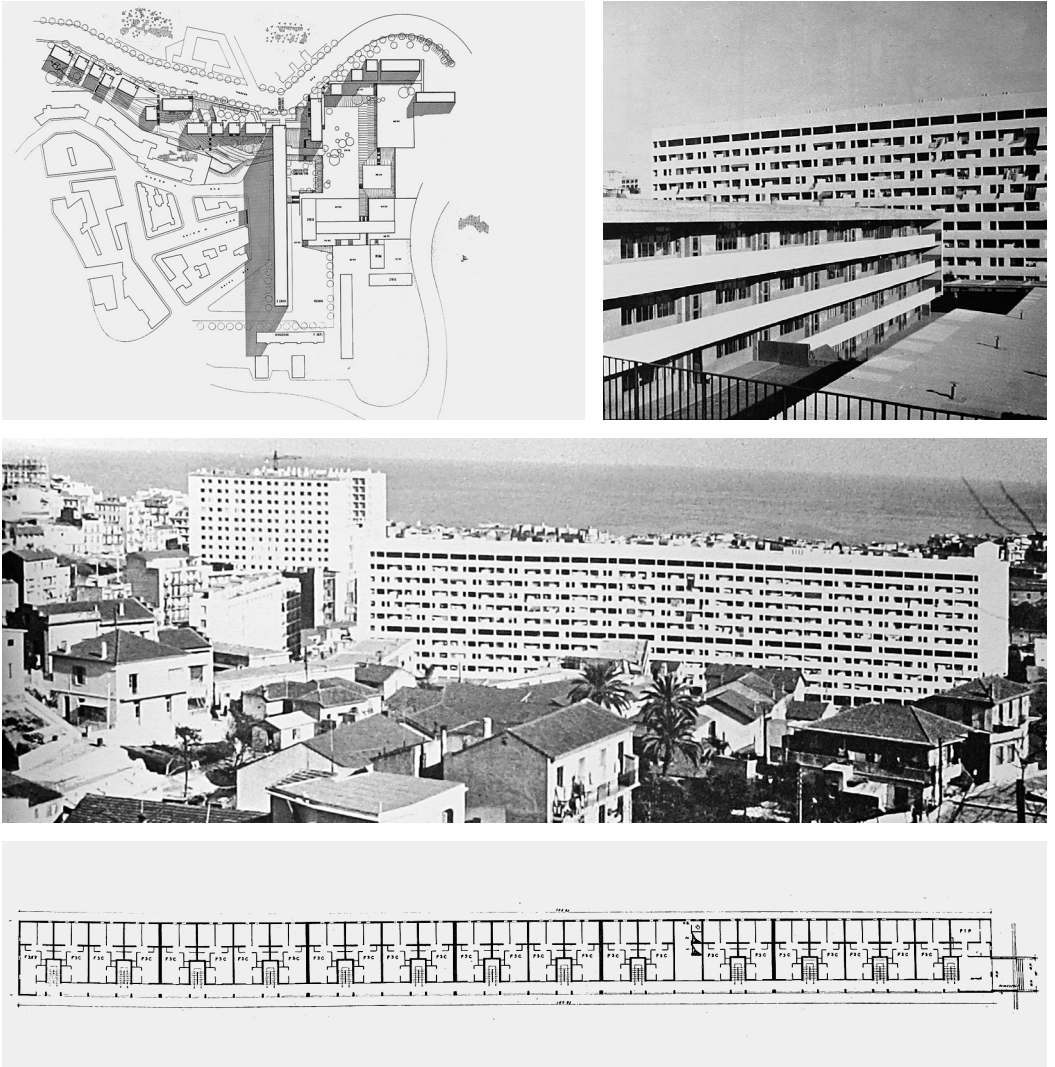


Fig. 53 Housing settlements in the area of Fraix Vallon designed by Daure and Béri

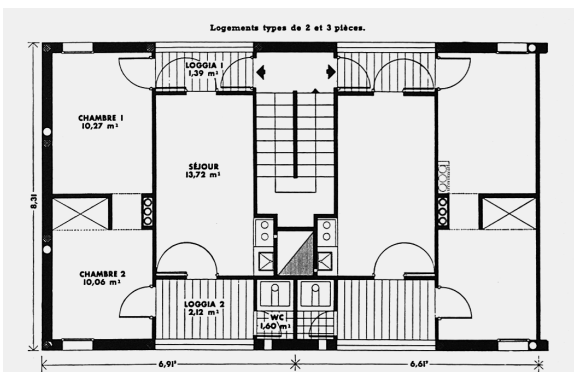
After Chevallier left his position and with the commencement of de Gaulle's Plan de Constantine, the CIA commissioned Daure and Béri to take on a wide range of large-scale housing projects, including El Bir and Les Peupliers in Constantine, and Diar El Afia, Les Jasmins, and Les Palmiers in Algiers.<sup>37</sup> The majority of Daure and Béri's housing complexes, both those that were designed and those that were completed, were composed of long, narrow slabs with similar prefabricated elements of either *brise-soleil*, loggias, or openings, which corresponded to the reduced size and cost requirements. The *logement million* differed from the other low-cost housing categories (normal and LEGECO) in the heights of the constructions (which did not exceed six floors) and in the small living-space areas in the housing units. The spatial composition of most of Daure and Béri's housing projects were more or less similar to one another—analogous monotonous buildings that rapidly mushroomed across the territory of Algeria.<sup>38</sup>

Other architects in Algeria—including Marcel Lathuillère in Les Asphodèles; Challand in Diar Eschems; Régeste and Bellissent in Les Dunes; Maury and Gomiz in Ben Omar and Nador; and Barthe in Les Annassers (to mention but a few of the built projects in Algiers alone)<sup>39</sup>—similarly took the same approach and readily adopted the constraints dictated by the French civil engineers and adopted and helped carry out the colonial and neocolonial tenets of the socioeconomic development plan. The upshot was that whereas in France the postwar Minister of Construction Pierre Sudreau had launched numerous initiatives, studies, and surveys to improve the everyday lives of the discontented inhabitants of the *grands ensembles*, in Algeria, lower-quality *grands ensembles* with smaller housing units for larger families rapidly proliferated from 1959 to 1961, which coincided with the beginning of the construction works of a new fortified city designed for the French government near Algiers.

### **Building and Promising Independence**

The construction of these housing units was conducted despite General de Gaulle's speech given at the Palais de l'Élysée on 16 September 1959—the fifth year of the war and the same day of the fourteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly—in which he proclaimed the possibility of Algeria's independence or self-determination. The speech marked de Gaulle's firm rejection of the policy of *intégration* (integration) championed by Governor General Jacques Soustelle, instead of which de Gaulle outlined three scenarios for the future of Algeria and its inhabitants—both Algerians and Europeans. The first he called *sécession* (secession) and consisted of





Figs. 54a-d La Montagne in Hussein-Dey (Algiers) designed by Daure, Béri, and Simounet

Algeria's full independence from France, which he considered a disastrous scenario that would result in "an appalling misery, an ugly political chaos, widespread slaughter, and soon in a bellicose communist dictatorship."<sup>40</sup> De Gaulle asserted that, whatever happened, all provisions would be made for the exploitation and transportation of the oil of the Algerian Sahara, which he deemed "the *oeuvre* of France that interests the entire West."<sup>41</sup> He termed the second possibility *francisation complète* (complete francization), which would guarantee, as de Gaulle argued, equal rights to the two communities and ensure the formation of a French territory from Dunkirk in northern France to Tamanrasset in southern Algeria. The third alternative involved "an Algerian government by Algerians, supported by French aid and in close union with France, for the economy, education, defense, and international relations."<sup>42</sup> The French authorities had meticulously prepared the ground for the third option and called it "independence."

In Algeria, the possibility of independence provoked fury and rage among the French army and the *colons*, leading to the Algiers *Semaine des barricades* (Week of the Barricades) from 24 January to 1 February 1960, the referendum on self-determination for Algeria on 8 January 1961 (approved by 75 percent of voters), the creation of the French far-right paramilitary called the *Organisation de l'armée secrète* (OAS, or Secret Army Organization) in February 1961, the Algiers Generals' Putsch of April 1961, and ultimately the independence of Algeria from France and the end of the war on 19 March 1962.

Despite this bloody turmoil and the declaration of the possibility of self-determination, the French authorities—represented in Algeria by Paul Delouvrier—enforced a number of French urbanism and *aménagement du territoire* (territorial development) laws and policies in Algeria in 1960, notably decree no. 58-1464 of the *zones à urbaniser par priorité* (ZUP, or Zones of High-Priority Urbanization).<sup>43</sup> The authorities also drafted and implemented new decrees that created new special planning zones in Algeria in order to accelerate investment, industrialize construction, and facilitate the acquisition of lands. Notable among these zones were the *zones d'aménagement coordonné* (ZAC, or Coordinated Development Zones), the *zones d'industrialisation décentralisée* (ZID, or Decentralized Industrialization Zones), the *zones de préindustrialisation* (ZOPI, or Proto-Industrialization Zones), and the *zones d'organisation rurale* (ZOR, or Rural Organization Zones). In a report of March 1962, the inspector general at the French Ministry of Construction reported that Algeria in the meantime had eight ZACs (which included Rouiba-Reghaia<sup>44</sup> and Blida near Algiers; Sainte-Barbe-du-Tlélat, Arzew, and Mostaganem near Oran; and Philippeville, Bône, Duzerville, and



Kroubs near Constantine), three ZIDs (including Bougie, Tizi-Ouzou, and Beni-Saf), and fourteen ZOPIs, in which small industries or artisan workshop areas had been established.<sup>45</sup>

In an attempt to counteract a lopsided influx of people to Algiers, Oran, and Constantine proper, the ZACs were located close to these major cities and were planned with the intention of creating a “couronne de protection”<sup>46</sup> (a ring of protection) composed of secondary overspill (or new) satellite towns with huge industrial enterprises, thus boosting “the priority equipment that is of interest to public and semipublic services or private bodies.”<sup>47</sup> Parallel to the ZACs, the ZIDs were generated in order to ensure a more balanced distribution of industrial activities across Algeria. The parameters of the coordinated programs enforced in the ZACs were to be correspondingly implemented in the three ZIDs. These polycentric planning guidelines were France’s first implementation of *décentralisation industrielle* (industrial decentralization), a policy that monarchist Charles Mauras and the far-right Action Française had advocated in 1914 and that was later championed by the geographer Jean-François Gravier in his 1942 book *Régions et nation* (Regions and Nation), as well as in his legendary *Paris et le désert français* (Paris and the French Desert) in 1947. In France, however, the policy was only effectively instituted and implemented in the 1980s using governmental and territorial reforms that redefined the role of the state in the various regions of France.

### Decentralization Policies and Narratives

In his 1961 article “Lignes de force de l’aménagement général du territoire” (Key Elements for General Territorial Development) on the Plan de Constantine in Algeria, Jean Vibert—who had recently resigned from his position as Director of the Plan de Constantine due to de Gaulle’s second pronouncement on an *Algérie algérienne* (Algerian Algeria, as opposed to French Algeria) in November 1960 and the possibility of Algeria’s independence—argued that the French policy of decentralization “is not only a loosening but a real decentralization that is needed [*s’impose*] in Algeria.”<sup>48</sup> Vibert went further and stated that the imbalance between Algiers and the other regions of Algeria was so acute that he was “tempted to paraphrase the title of the book by J. F. Gravier and write: Algiers and the Algerian Desert.”<sup>49</sup> The ironic aspect in Vibert’s analogy was that the existing Algerian desert—the Sahara—was per se the foremost economic interest of the French authorities in Algeria, in particular during the War of Independence. It is noticeable that the program of industrial decentralization was not extended to the southern

departments of the Sahara but instead focused on the three northern departments of Algiers, Oran, and Constantine (figs. 55, 56). All the while, the French colonial civil and military authorities continued their programs of exploration and exploitation both above and below the vast Sahara, as demonstrated by the ongoing oil and gas extractions and the first French nuclear tests that were conducted there.

The decentralized planning instructions resulted in the construction of a number of new towns in northern Algeria. Some of these guidelines can probably be considered as the backbone of what later became known as the French *politique des villes nouvelles* (new towns policies, 1965–2000) in France—a policy that was ostensibly first advocated and initiated by Paul Delouvrier in the Ile-de-France, when he was appointed Delegate General of the District of the Region of Paris between 1961 and 1969, and then was extended to the entire territory of France. Prior to this, Delouvrier, who today is known as the *père des villes nouvelles* (forefather of new towns) in France, contributed to the industrial decentralization of northern Algeria and was instrumental in the implementation of the planning policies of the ZACs, ZIDs, ZOPIs, and ZORs, as well as the construction of the new towns envisaged by the Plan de Constantine in Algeria. In the aftermath of his experience with the *aménagement du territoire* (in other words, urban and rural planning and development, not urbanism) in Algeria, Delouvrier and his team developed the Schéma directeur d'aménagement et d'urbanisme de la région de Paris (SDAURP, or Development and Planning of the Region of Paris Program). The program was designed to have a decentralizing effect with the construction of eight (ultimately five) new towns surrounding Paris in order to neutralize the huge magnetic population pull of Paris—precisely the same model applied to the Algerian cities of Algiers, Oran, and Constantine. In France, the authorities created new legal planning forms, including the *zones d'aménagement différé* (ZAD, or Differentiated Development Zones) and later the *zones d'aménagement concerté* (ZAC, or Concerted Development Zones), which were more flexible than the ZUP. Whereas in Algeria de Gaulle had ordered Delouvrier to “pacify and administer, but at the same time, transform,”<sup>50</sup> in Paris the general had requested the same man “to bring order to this mess.”<sup>51</sup>

In Algiers, opposing interpretations of the precise aims of the Plan de Constantine emerged. A note to Delouvrier of 3 June 1960 reported two rival readings. The first was that “the Plan de Constantine aims to allow a further development of the Algerian economy at a sufficient pace, with the aid from metropolitan France to be reduced in 1964,”<sup>52</sup> and believed that the figures

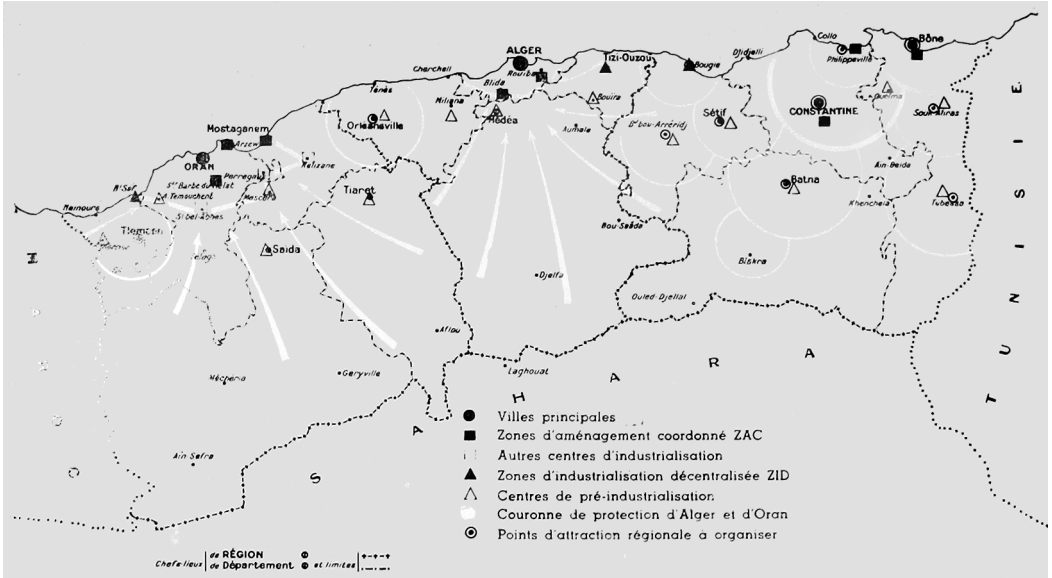


Fig. 55 Distribution of residential zones across the three northern departments of Algeria

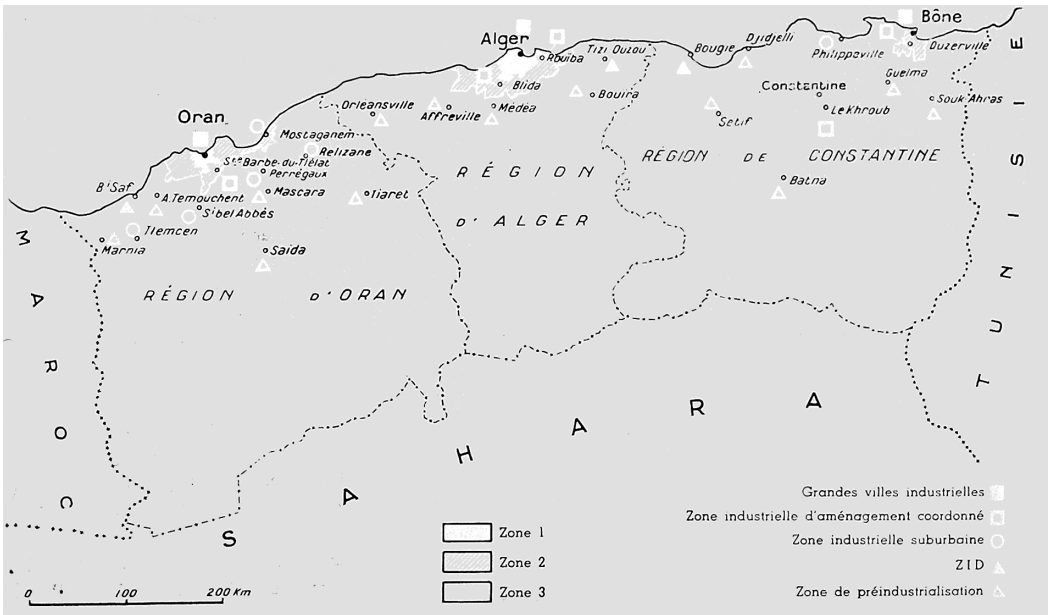


Fig. 56 Distribution of industrial zones in Algiers, Oran, and Constantine

that de Gaulle had announced in October 1958 had to be achieved in order to enable the autonomous development of the Algerian economy in the coming five years. By contrast, the second interpretation claimed that “the Plan de Constantine represents the economic and social aspects of France’s policy in Algeria. Its goal is to contribute to the execution of this policy, i.e., to its process—self-determination—and to its objective—coexistence; it will be achieved only if economic and social progress is a tangible reality for the entire population.”<sup>53</sup> The second position stressed, however, that the figures pledged by de Gaulle had “originated from an irrational transposition of the ‘ten-years perspectives’ and have no scientific value. They do not mark a ‘speed of liberation’ for the Algerian economy.”<sup>54</sup> Both attitudes encapsulated dissatisfaction with the current economic development of Algeria, which in reality could equally be read as the result of French colonial policies there. Whereas the first position blindly supported de Gaulle’s plan, the second assumed that his commitments were basically unfeasible and therefore expressed skepticism about the plan and what were viewed as its unrealistic figures.

In an attempt to address this polarization, the members of the Conseil supérieur du Plan de Constantine (High Council of the Constantine Plan), together with Delouvrier and Pierre Massé (the head of the CGP), gathered on 13 June 1960 in Paris and approved the ultimate objectives of the five-year plan, which consisted of the “renaissance of the countryside, as well as the extension and modernization of ‘modern Algeria.’”<sup>55</sup> The latter aim included the education of *l’homme technicien* (technical man), the implementation of industrialization, and the construction of new towns. The participants also reminded all concerned that the Plan de Constantine’s mission, as de Gaulle had argued in his speech of October 1958, was to provide all inhabitants of Algeria with “what modern civilization can and must bring to men: well-being and dignity.”<sup>56</sup> This paternalistic attitude and idealized approach did little to directly address the real and immediate hesitancy of those executing and investing in the Plan de Constantine, but in an attempt to defuse the situation the High Council of the Constantine Plan defined five key guiding strategies over the course of five years, involving a total investment of 2.5 trillion old francs. These involved: 1) educating farmers in the countryside; 2) providing water and fertile lands; 3) educating technicians for the industrial sector; 4) creating major industries that would generate both customers and laborers; and 5) building new towns in order to settle people in places with profitable businesses.<sup>57</sup>

Two weeks following the Paris meeting, Delouvrier attended the plenary assembly of the Région économique d'Alger (Algiers Economic Region) on 29 June 1960, which was also attended by several European businessmen based in the capital city of French Algeria. Delouvrier reassured these eminent gentlemen—in particular their president, Laurent Schiaffino: French shipowner, politician, businessman, and one of the richest *colons* of Algeria under French rule—that despite the ongoing secret ceasefire negotiations between the French government and the Algerian members of the FLN, the Plan de Constantine would still be carried out. After the end of the armed conflict, he continued, the task would be “to convince all those who live on this earth that the fate of Algeria can be freely regulated in the dignity and freedom of the West only if this country [Algeria] remains in close and deep union with France.”<sup>58</sup> Delouvrier called on those attending to stay calm and asked them “to trust General de Gaulle. You know his difficult and inflexible nature once he has defined the conditions of France’s policy: nothing else matters to him but France and the conditions of its policy.”<sup>59</sup> Delouvrier also reiterated the political purpose of the Plan de Constantine, again evoking the arguments of the freedom and dignity of men. The plan would forge “modern men”; provide indispensable aid to and ensure the participation of “France, Europeans from Algeria, and the Muslim population”;<sup>60</sup> and make the necessary efforts to achieve industrialization and decentralization. “Regarding industrialization,” he stated, “I also must insist, before you Algerians [i.e., French and European industrialists based in Algiers], on one of our [i.e., the French government’s] major concerns, which is also yours: the importance of decentralization.”<sup>61</sup> He stressed the significance of these measures and therefore of the ultimately strategic nature of the Plan de Constantine “if we seek to achieve a harmonious development and prevent any rashness on the part of the population on the coast, and particularly in the cities.”<sup>62</sup>

In order to further achieve this goal, in January 1960 the French government established a mixed-economy organization called the Société d’équipement des zones d’industrialisation décentralisées (SEZID, or Company for Equipment of the Zones of Decentralized Industrialization), which operated together with the CADAT. The role of the SEZID was to “facilitate the completion of various formalities for companies that wish to settle in Algeria or to extend their activities; they can also build factories for themselves, to be rented or sold.”<sup>63</sup> Every industrial operation and every ZAC, ZID, ZOPI, and ZOR included new residential areas designed for managers and workers. For instance, in the ZAC of Rouiba-Reghaia, 25 kilometers east of Algiers,

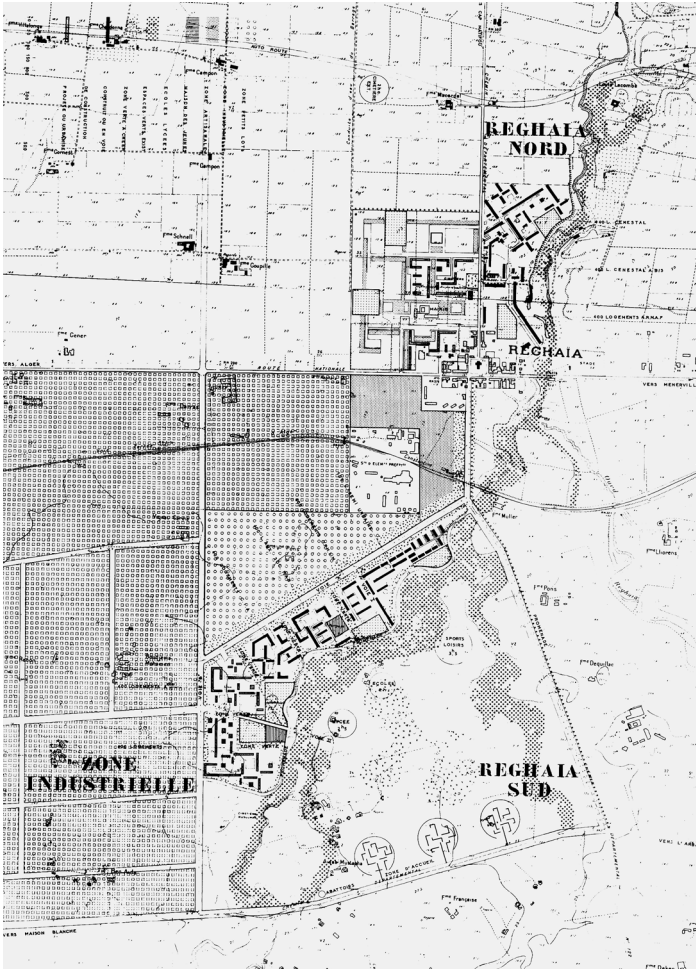
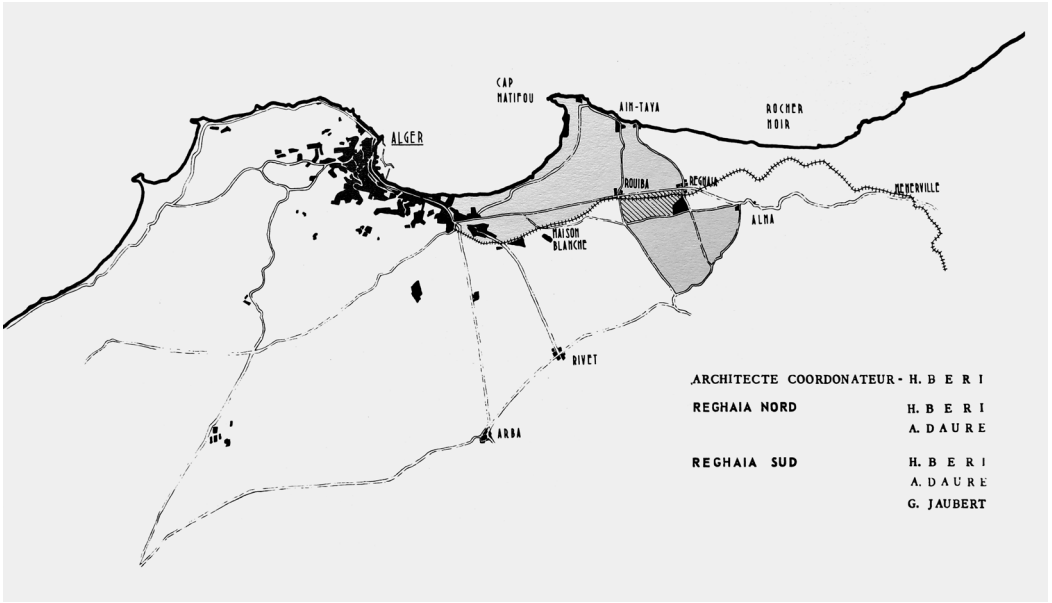
the CADAT purchased lands and created two large housing estates in Rouiba: Les Orangers, which was composed of low-rise buildings and villas, and Rouiba Center, which was composed of high-rise buildings. In Reghaia, the CADAT acquired 193 hectares and commissioned the French architects Daure and Béri to draw up a coordination plan for the area and to partly design and build large-scale housing projects. In the northern area called Reghaia Nord, the units were intended for the middle class, while in the southern area of Reghaia Sud the dwellings were destined for the working class.<sup>64</sup> As already discussed, the planning policies of the Plan de Constantine reinforced segregation, and these projects were no exception. Ultimately, it was planned that the inhabitants of Reghaia would increase from ten thousand to forty thousand in just a few years.

In Reghaia Nord, Daure and Béri built 432 HLM dwellings of four rooms (73 square meters) and five rooms (84 square meters) over an area of 5.2 hectares, as well as 462 housing units of *logement million* of three rooms (42 square meters) and four rooms (54 square meters), covering 4.5 hectares. In Reghaia Sud, the two architects built 411 housing units of three rooms (42 to 45 square meters) over 4.3 hectares in Les Iris, the construction of which was completed in March 1963, one year after Algeria's independence from France (figs. 57a, 57b).<sup>65</sup>

### The Repercussions of the Plan de Constantine

The majority of the historians of the Algerian War of Independence who have investigated the premises, purposes, and results of the Plan de Constantine in Algeria under colonial rule have concluded that the plan was unsuccessful because the French government failed to meet the plan's proclaimed quantitative aims. Their evaluation has been based on two decisive accounts released by the Caisse d'équipement pour le développement de l'Algérie (CEDA, or Fund for the Equipment and Development of Algeria) on 30 June and 31 December 1961.<sup>66</sup> In his article "Les réactions patronales au Plan de Constantine" (Employers' Reactions to the Plan de Constantine), Daniel Lefeuve argued that although the plan had encouraged industrial investments in Algeria, "at the time when three-fifths of the Plan had been implemented, it recorded NF271,343 million of effective investments: that is, only 13 percent of the final goal against the 48 percent that was envisaged. This delay, which justifies one to speak about failure, was compounded by two circumstances."<sup>67</sup> He demonstrated that the delay was not caused by the military conditions of the armed conflict that was taking place at the time





Figs. 57a, 57b The industrial zone of Rouiba-Reghaia and the residential areas in Reghaia Nord and Reghaia Sud

but rather by the industrial primacies and economic priorities that the French political authorities aspired to.

Despite these considerations, however, the Plan de Constantine did indeed succeed in its deeper structural aim of creating a long-term rapport between France and Algeria after its independence, which was highly beneficial for the French government, economy, and businesses. Among these “postcolonial” (or neocolonial) legacies were the exploitation of oil and gas, the continuation of nuclear tests in the Algerian Sahara, and the completion of housing estates, *grands ensembles*, and new towns. The French policy-makers called this irreversible relationship *coopération* and regulated it as such in the French-Algerian Accords d’Evian (Evian Agreements), a treaty signed on 18 March 1962 that ended the Algerian War of Independence and guaranteed France the use of certain Algerian territories, sites, air bases, and military installations for another fifteen years.

The French colonial authorities also used the decentralized planning policy as an alibi for the design and construction of a new administrative capital city called Rocher Noir, located 50 kilometers east of Algiers, that was exclusively designed and built for the French government in order to protect French civil servants from the violent attacks of the French paramilitary OAS, which, as noted, opposed the politics of General de Gaulle in Algeria. As will be discussed in the next chapter, unlike the case with the other new towns and *grands ensembles* in Algeria, a French architect who had won the prestigious Prix de Rome in 1951 was commissioned to design Rocher Noir.

Both the Plan de Constantine and the prospects for self-determination were highly strategic, both nationally and internationally. Whereas the former guaranteed the prosperity of French industry during (and after) the war, the latter reassured the international community that France was indeed willing to cede its preferred colony, but not entirely.

- 1 ANFPSS F/60/4021. L’habitat algérien au terme de la troisième année du Plan de Constantine, Les perspectives pour 1962, p. 9, (n.d.).
- 2 The French appellation *aménagement du territoire* can be translated as “territorial development,” “spatial planning,” “town and country planning,” or “regional planning.”
- 3 ANFPSS F/60/4020. Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie, Direction du plan et des études économiques, Note de directives pour la préparation des plans régionaux, 24 February 1959.
- 4 Ibid., p. 4.
- 5 Ibid., p. 2.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid.

- 8 Tony Soccard had been active in Algiers since the 1930s, working for the real estate public investment company Régie foncière of Algiers. He was one of the cofounders of the IUUA in 1942, together with Jean Alazard, Gaston Bardet, François Bienvenu, and Jean de Maisonseul.
- 9 The design and construction of the *grands ensembles* in France was also led by similar *bureaux d'études*.
- 10 ANFPSS F/60/4020. Lettre de Mr. A. Laure à Mr. Saigot, Directeur des travaux publics et des transports, Algiers, 7 July 1959.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 ANFPSS F/60/4020. Réunion de la Commission générale d'aménagement du territoire du 13 janvier 1960 (2<sup>e</sup> séance), p. 7.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 ANFPSS F/60/4020. Plan quinquennal de développement économique et social d'Algérie, Commission générale d'aménagement du territoire (premier rapport), February 1960, p. 5.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 CHSP 1 DV 34. Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie, Service de l'information, *Algérie d'Aujourd'hui: L'habitat*, Conférence de presse de Monsieur Saigot, Directeur des travaux publics, Algiers, 16 February 1960, p. 5.
- 17 ANFPSS 19820108/22. Rapport au Ministre concernant le développement de l'aménagement du territoire et de la construction en Algérie en cours de la période d'application de Plan de Constantine établi par Monsieur Hugues de Fraysseix, Inspecteur général de la construction, Paris, 29 April 1960, p. 1.
- 18 Ibid., p. 4.
- 19 Ibid., p. 5.
- 20 On the biographies of Badani and Roux-Dorlut, see for instance Hubert Lampereur, "Badani & Roux-Dorlut: Des orfèvres de la grande échelle," *AMC*, no. 224 (May 2013): 77–86.
- 21 On the first Les Annassers project, see Deluz, *L'urbanisme et l'architecture d'Alger*, 151–66.
- 22 Zehrfuss designed and built a number of mass-housing projects in Algiers, the last one in 1953.
- 23 *Urbanisme*, no. 73 (1961).
- 24 ANFPSS 19770830/1. Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie, Voyage d'étude de Monsieur le Ministre de la construction, Note d'information générale, p. 8, (n.d.).
- 25 Ibid., p. 6.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 CHSP 1 DV 34. Logement million Algérie, Première partie: l'objet des recherches, (n.d.).
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 The Algiers-based Agence du plan was headed by Pierre Dalloz and directed by Gérald Hanning (a former collaborator of Le Corbusier's), Marcel Lods, and Wladimir Bodiansky.
- 30 Deluz, *L'urbanisme et l'architecture d'Alger*, 80.
- 31 In his doctoral dissertation Alex Gerber, "L'Algérie de Le Corbusier," 13, states that Hanning worked at Le Corbusier's office from 1938 to 1946, whereas in Jenger, *Le Corbusier – Choix de lettres*, 404, it is stated that Hanning collaborated with Le Corbusier from 1939 to 1944. Hanning directed the Agence du plan d'Alger from 1954 to 1958.
- 32 Cited in Deluz, *L'urbanisme et l'architecture d'Alger*, 64.
- 33 On the role of Simounet and a detailed description of these projects, see Çelik, *Urban Forms*, 157–73; Crane, "Mediterranean Dialogues."
- 34 On Ecochard's grid as a planning strategy for the design of new neighborhoods and courtyard dwellings that replaced shantytowns, see for example Avermaete, *Another Modern*, 155–70; Cohen and Eleb, *Casablanca*, 325–55.
- 35 Deluz, *L'urbanisme et l'architecture d'Alger*, 78.
- 36 Ibid., 80.
- 37 Josette Daure, the second wife of Alexis Daure and the first wife of Jean-Jacques Deluz, donated an album of most projects that Daure and Béri designed or realized in Algeria to the author.

- 38 Daure and Béri's album of projects illustrates precisely this argument.
- 39 Deluz, *L'urbanisme et l'architecture d'Alger*, 101–8.
- 40 "Allocution radiodiffusée et télévisée prononcée au Palais de l'Élysée 16 septembre 1959," in de Gaulle, *Avec le renouveau*, 121.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 The decree of the ZUP was issued on 31 December 1958.
- 44 Rouiba-Reghaia was also the site of a French military air base (Chapter 9).
- 45 FRANOM 81 F/ 1810. Ministère de la construction, Mission d'inspection générale en Algérie, Aménagement du territoire et construction en Algérie, Résultats de 1961 et perspectives pour 1962–1963, Signé par Hugues de Fraysseix, Inspecteur général au Ministère de la Construction, March 1962, p. 7.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 Ibid.
- 48 Vibert, "Lignes de force," 7.
- 49 Ibid., 6.
- 50 Chenu, *Paul Delouvrier*, 284.
- 51 There are several versions of the original sentence uttered by de Gaulle, who addressed Delouvrier while they were flying over Paris in a helicopter: "mettez-moi de l'ordre dans ce merdier," "mettez-moi de l'ordre dans ce bordel," or "mettez-moi de l'ordre dans ce désordre." On these different versions, see Vadelorge, "Mémoire et histoire," 7–11.
- 52 CHSP 1 DV 32 Dr 1. Note pour Monsieur le Délégué général, Le plan de Constantine, 3 June 1960, Conception A, p. 2.
- 53 Ibid., Conception B, p. 5.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 CHSP 1 DV 34 Dr 1. Région économique d'Algérie, Plan de cinq ans, Exposé de Monsieur le Président, 13 June 1960 in Paris, p. 1.
- 56 Ibid., p. 2.
- 57 Ibid.
- 58 CHSP 1 DV 34 Dr 1. Allocution de M. Paul Delouvrier à la séance plénière du 29 juin 1960 de la région économique d'Alger, p. 8.
- 59 Ibid.
- 60 Ibid., p. 5.
- 61 Ibid., p. 3.
- 62 Ibid.
- 63 ANFPSS F/60/4022. Ministère de la Construction, Aménagement du territoire et construction en Algérie, April 1960, p. 3.
- 64 ANFPSS F/60/4020. CADAT, Aménagement du territoire, Industrialisation région d'Alger, Zone de Rouiba-Reghaia, (n.d.).
- 65 Album of projects by Daure and Béri in Algeria.
- 66 Lefeuvre, "L'échec du plan de Constantine."
- 67 Lefeuvre, "Les réactions patronales," 182.

## 9. Erecting Fortress Rocher Noir

General Charles de Gaulle's recognition of Algeria's right to self-determination, sovereignty, and independence was triggered by the internationalization of the "Algerian question" and its inscription in the agenda of the General Assembly of the United Nations by the leaders of the *Gouvernement provisoire de la République algérienne* (GPRA, or Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic). Since the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution on 1 November 1954, the Algerian question had been tabled on the UN agenda six times and been the object of four debates from 1957 to 1959.<sup>1</sup> African and Asian countries, many of them future members of the Non-aligned Movement that had discussed Algeria's colonial conditions during the AfroAsian Conference in Bandung (Indonesia) in April 1955, had supported the legitimate aspiration of the Algerian people. Many of these nations had themselves recently gained independence and had been admitted as UN members. The United Nations recognized Algeria's right to independence on 19 December 1960, over six years after the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution.

The United Nations' recognition of Algeria's right to independence was preceded by the release in France in September 1960 of the "Déclaration sur le droit à l'insoumission dans la Guerre d'Algérie" (Declaration of the Right to Revolt in the Algerian War), known as the *Manifeste des 121* (Manifesto of the 121). The initiative for this public declaration to refuse to take arms against the Algerian people and to approve support for them emerged from the trial of 5 September 1960 of what was known as the "Jeanson network," a group of left-wing militants led by the existential philosopher Francis Jeanson. The Jeanson network had acted as hosts to the FLN (Front de libération nationale, or National Liberation Front) in France, had facilitated its activities, and had supported Algeria's independence from France. The *Manifeste des 121* was signed by 121 prominent French personalities, including Arthur Adamov, Simone de Beauvoir, Maurice Blanchot, André Breton, Edouard Glissant, Henri Lefebvre, François Maspero, André Masson, Alain Resnais, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Pierre Vidal-Naquet. They declared:

We respect and deem to be justified the refusal to take up arms against the Algerian people.

We respect and deem to be justified the conduct of those French people who consider it their duty to provide aid and protection to the Algerian people, who are oppressed in the name of the French people. The cause of the Algerian people, which will contribute decisively to the ruin of the colonial system, is the cause of all free men and women.<sup>2</sup>

The *Manifeste des 121* provoked a deep anger within the French government, the army, as well as amongst other French intellectuals. The French authorities banned and seized the manifesto, censoring all references to it, while right-wing French personalities firmly opposed it and in turn signed a counterdeclaration called the *Manifeste des intellectuels français pour la résistance à l'abandon* (a rough translation of which is the “Manifesto of French Intellectuals for the Resistance to the Abandonment”), which was released in October 1960.<sup>3</sup>

Between de Gaulle’s first declaration on self-determination in September 1959, his speech in which he declared an *Algérie algérienne* (Algerian Algeria, as opposed to French Algeria) associated with France in September 1960, the United Nation’s recognition of Algeria’s right to self-determination in December 1960, the referendum on the Algerian people’s right to independence in January 1961, de Gaulle’s ongoing claims to the Algerian Sahara, the signing of the Evian Agreements that eventually called for a ceasefire in Algeria in March 1962, the referendum on the Evian Agreements in France, the referendum on Algeria’s self-determination in Algeria on 1 July 1962, the acknowledgment of Algeria’s independence on 3 July, and Algeria’s proclamation of independence on 5 July 1962, an alarming number of violent protests and hostile attacks took place first in Algeria and then in France. These ruthless pro-*Algérie française* and anti-*Algérie algérienne* actions culminated in the establishment of a French paramilitary terrorist group called the Organization de l’armée secrète (OAS, or Secret Army Organization), which resorted to an additional layer of armed conflict in Algeria, encompassing intense bombing campaigns in both Algeria and France and various attempts to assassinate General de Gaulle.

In addition to the OAS (which was founded in Franco’s Madrid in February 1961), other anti-Algerian-independence right-wing organizations and political parties existed at the time. These included the Front pour l’Algérie française (FAF, or Front for French Algeria), the ancestor of today’s Front National; the Front national combattant (FNC, loosely translated as Armed National Front), cofounded by Jean-Marie Le Pen, who served in both recent-



ly fought colonial wars, the Indochina War and the Algerian War; the Front national pour l'Algérie française (FNAF, or National Front for French Algeria), likewise presided over by Le Pen; the Rassemblement pour l'Algérie française (RAF, or Rally for French Algeria); the Comité d'entente des anciens combattants (the Common Committee for Veterans); the Association des combattants de la communauté française (ACCF, or Association of French Community Fighters); the Front d'action nationale (FAN, or National Action Front); the Association générale des étudiants d'Algérie (AGEA, or General Association of Students from Algeria); and the Mouvement universitaire pour le maintien de la souveraineté française en Algérie (the University Movement for the Maintenance of French Sovereignty in Algeria). Numerous other murderous defenders of French Algeria were active at the time, including amongst them former supporters of the Vichy regime.<sup>4</sup>

### **The OAS and General Salan's "Strange Paradox"**

The OAS was composed of French civilians and military officers and was supported by both French and Europeans—including some French Jews from Algeria<sup>5</sup>—who firmly opposed the Algerian policies of the Fifth Republic and its leader, General de Gaulle. Confronted with what they asserted was de Gaulle's *trahison* (betrayal), the OAS carried out a protracted campaign of lethal violence against civilians in a fierce rearguard defense of French colonial sovereignty over Algeria and to sabotage any moves toward Algeria's independence. Over the course of eighteen months from January 1961 to July 1962, the OAS murdered fifteen hundred people, injured five thousand others, and attacked and destroyed a large number of infrastructures and buildings.<sup>6</sup> Arguably the greatest irreplaceable loss caused during this campaign, next to the loss of life, was the burning of the Library of Algiers University in June 1962 a few days before the official declaration of Algeria's independence, causing the destruction of an estimated four hundred thousand manuscripts.

Notable among the OAS's founders was the retired General Raoul Salan, ranked among France's most decorated soldiers, who had formerly served as Delegate General of the French Government in Algeria and commander-in-chief of the armed forces in Algeria. Salan served in the French army from 1917 to 1959 and was active during the First and Second World Wars, the Indochina War, and the Algerian War. He led the first Algiers Generals' Putsch of 13 May 1958, which brought General de Gaulle back to power, and co-organized the second Algiers Generals' Putsch of 21–26 April 1961, together with Generals Maurice Challe, Edmond Jouhaud, and André Zeller. More

than any of the other leading OAS partisans—such as Colonel Yves Godard, the aforementioned Jouhaud, Pierre Lagaille, Jean-Claude Perez, or Jean-Jacques Susini—General Salan was intimately acquainted with the military doctrine of the *guerre révolutionnaire* (revolutionary war). This meant that he was well-versed in both insurgency and counterinsurgency operations and subversive warfare tactics and strategies, acquired during two irregular colonial wars, and that he was eminently equipped to wage psychological warfare and use terror methods both against Algerians and against his own French government and people.<sup>7</sup> Salan was arrested in April 1962 in Algiers and condemned to life imprisonment. In July 1968—a mere six years later—he was granted amnesty, and in November 1982 he was reinstated into the French army.

In 1963, one year after the end of the bloody Algerian War, the German jurist and political theorist Carl Schmitt examined Salan in his *Theorie des Partisanen: Zwischenbemerkung zum Begriff des Politischen* (The Theory of the Partisan: A Commentary/Remark on the Concept of the Political), which has become a reference for authors on both the right and left wings today.<sup>8</sup> Schmitt's theory begins with the Spanish guerilla war (1808–1813) against Napoleon and ends with General Salan and the OAS's armed conflict against both the French Fifth Republic and the pro-Algerian independence movements. In between these events, Schmitt analyzes Carl von Clausewitz, Vladimir Lenin, and Mao Zedong.<sup>9</sup> Schmitt expressed his admiration for Salan, portraying him as a brave and intelligent man who had yielded to a given logic and had voiced his alternative “answer.” As Schmitt argued, “Salan stood, in short, in his whole existence as a Frenchman and a soldier, before an *étrange paradoxe* [strange paradox], within an *Irrsinnlogik* [logic of unreason] that embittered a courageous and intelligent man and drove him to the search for a counter-measure.”<sup>10</sup> Schmitt used Salan's actions and the illegality of the OAS not only to establish and validate his own theory but also to commemorate his emblematic “tragic hero,” a man of great military and colonial power who crossed the threshold of legality.

Because Salan believed that de Gaulle betrayed him and the *colons*, he assumed that he was entitled to break French law. Based on the principle that one must fight fire with fire when dealing with partisans, Schmitt claimed that Salan “acted accordingly, not only with the courage of the soldier but also with the precision of the general staff officer and the exacting attitude of the technocrat. The result was that he was transformed into a partisan himself, and that in the end, he declared civil war on his own commandant and regime.”<sup>11</sup> This implies that Schmitt felt that General Salan, the OAS,



Fig. 58 Rocher Noir prior to the construction of the new administrative city

the French government, and Algerian and non-Algerian pro-independence fighters were all waging similar wars and that only the definitions of friends and enemies and the irregularity and legality of their acts differed. In reality, colonial and anticolonial wars are fundamentally dissimilar, and laws decreed by colonial regimes are inscribed in a “logic of unreason” and in the unreasonable.

In the wake of Salan’s illegal return to Algiers<sup>12</sup> and the establishment of the OAS, the Council of French Ministers and the Committee of Algerian Affairs gathered on 15 February 1961 and decided to move the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria away from the turmoil then engulfing the center of the capital city.<sup>13</sup> With the aim of safeguarding French civil servants based in Algiers and ensuring the continuation of colonial administration, the delegation settled on a strategic plan of action that consisted of the construction of a new administrative capital city called Rocher Noir (Black Rock; fig. 58), which was to be located 50 kilometers east of Algiers on the Mediterranean Sea. This was included in the yearly provision for Algeria under financial chapter no. 11-38 entitled “Création d’une ville administrative nouvelle au Rocher Noir” (Creation of a New Satellite Administrative Town at Rocher Noir).<sup>14</sup> The first completed section of the new city was inaugurated in September 1961.

### General de Gaulle’s Instructions

The French authorities, represented by the Société centrale pour l’équipement du territoire (SCET, or Central Company for Territorial Equipment),<sup>15</sup> appointed the French architect Louis Gabriel de Hoÿm de Marien, winner

of the first Grand Prix de Rome of 1951, as the chief architect for Rocher Noir. Hoÿm de Marien took part in the meeting of 27 February 1961 in Algiers, attended by eight representatives of the French Delegation in Algeria. The participants debated plans to launch construction and possible methods to speed construction of the new town, which was expected to accommodate the 3,500 civil servants currently working in the massive Palais du Gouvernement (GG Building, or General Government Building). The GG Building had been designed by the Algiers-based French architect Jacques Guiauchain<sup>16</sup> and built by the construction company Perret Frères from 1929 to 1934. During the Algerian War of Independence, this massive edifice became the symbol of the Algiers General's Putsch of May 1958, as well as of a legendary speech by General de Gaulle of 4 June 1958, declaring "Je vous ai compris!" (I have understood you!). During the meeting, the cabinet director of the new Delegate General in Algeria requested modifiable spaces in order to allow for subsequent divisions between managerial, individual, and collective offices. He also urged that "the parallelism of the programs for housing and offices must be absolute";<sup>17</sup> in other words, that it was imperative that the construction program had to simultaneously produce spaces for both working and living.

At this decisive turning point, General de Gaulle appointed Louis Joxe, former General Secretary of the Comité français de la libération nationale (French Committee for National Liberation), as Minister of State for Algerian Affairs residing in Paris, and Jean Morin as Delegate General in Algeria based in Algiers, who replaced Paul Delouvrier after his resignation. As Delegate General, Morin would later move to the adjacent administrative city at Rocher Noir. Morin was a former resistance fighter and in the aftermath of the Vichy regime had been charged with purging the prefectures of the Fourth Republic of collaborators.<sup>18</sup> He also served as a Deputy Director of the cabinet of the President of the French Provisional Government of the Republic, as Deputy Director of Foreign Affairs charged with German Affairs (working with the then Secretary General of German Affairs Michel Debré),<sup>19</sup> and Prefect of La Manche and of Maine and Loire. Morin's appointment was therefore also apposite inasmuch as it would appear to have been de Gaulle's intention to purge French Algeria of French far-right colonial protagonists.

Immediately prior to his appointment in Algeria, Morin had served as Prefect of the Haute-Garonne (the aforementioned de Hoÿm de Marien's home region) and Inspecteur général de l'administration en mission extraordinaire (IGAME, General Inspector of Administration in the Extraordinary Mission) for Languedoc. At the age of forty-four, Morin was being posted to

what was a highly delicate mission in an unfamiliar environment, in which both French-Algerian and French-French wars were taking place. Michel Debré, by this point de Gaulle's Prime Minister, wrote in his memoirs: "the spring before, I had charged [Morin] with the study of a very special project: to create a new town surrounded by farms in his region in order to welcome the French people from Algeria who wished to resettle in France."<sup>20</sup> Under Morin an analogy of this project became a reality in Algeria, whereby the targeted inhabitants would not be French fleeing the war in Algeria but the French government fleeing French OAS in Algiers.

On 5 December 1960, de Gaulle drafted the "Instructions pour la marche à suivre en Algérie" (Instructions for the Procedure to Follow in Algeria), which he transmitted to Prime Minister Debré, who in turn passed them on to Joxe and Morin.<sup>21</sup> In them, de Gaulle defined the main legal, military, administrative, and economic elements needed to pave the path for the French policy of *Algérie algérienne*. In his third point (on administrative details), de Gaulle proclaimed that once an Algerian public administration had been established, the General Delegate would become a High Commissioner of the French Republic in Algeria and would "maintain in its direct attributions the affairs of sovereignty—in particular, defense—as well as the local administration of aid in all of the domains provided to Algeria by France (notably the Plan de Constantine)."<sup>22</sup> De Gaulle also entrusted the Minister of State for Algerian Affairs, "in addition to the entire Algerian problem," with what he described as "the affairs related to the common domains of Algeria and France (economy, currency, certain matters of finances, justice, education, telecommunications, ports, airports, etc.)."<sup>23</sup> In the directives, de Gaulle was calculating and determined all the facets of Algeria's future and the nation's coming "association" (to borrow his phrasing) with France after Algeria's independence, one of the strategic lynchpins of which was the Plan de Constantine. Noticeably, however, these instructions for Algeria's future with France contained no mention of the new French administrative city of Rocher Noir.

### **Rocher Noir's Architects**

The architect of Rocher Noir, Louis Gabriel de Hoÿm de Marien, is today renowned for Paris's first skyscraper, the at-the-time controversial 210-meter-high Tour Maine-Montparnasse (1958–1973), which he designed together with the French architects Eugène Beaudouin, Urbain Cassan, Raymond Lopez, and Jean Saubot. Hoÿm de Marien was born in Toulouse (Haute-Garonne); he graduated from the Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts

in Paris and was a student of Charles Lemaresquier. In February 1951, at the age of thirty-one, he received his diploma as architect DPLG (Diplômé par le gouvernement), a state certificate that was an extra license for architects. In June of the same year he was awarded the first Grand Prix de Rome for his project on the assigned subject “A Center for International Conferences and Congresses.” In December 1951, he registered at the Order of Architects of the Regional Counsel of the Seine with number 999. He was resident of the French Academy at the Villa Medici in Rome from 1952 to 1955. Hoÿm de Marien was also a graduate of the Royal Institute of British Architects. In France, he was nominated as chief architect of the Bâtiments civils et palais nationaux (BCPN, or Civil Buildings and National Palaces), advisory architect at the Ministry of Construction, architect-in-chief of the company Toulouse-Equipement of the Haute-Garonne, and advisory architect to the Atelier Municipale d’Urbanisme (Municipal Urbanism Workshop) for the town of Toulouse.<sup>24</sup>

Prior to his work at Rocher Noir, Hoÿm de Marien had collaborated with the aforementioned Eugène Beaudouin (who was a professor at the Beaux-Arts school) on a number of projects, including the Rotterdam School in Strasbourg in 1952, students’ housing in Antony and Clermont-Ferrand in 1954, and an apartment building designed for young workers in Cachan. For the French Ministry of Construction, Hoÿm de Marien studied and coordinated a number of *plan d’aménagement* (master plans), such as those of Laubadère, Fould, Saint-Anne, and Ormeaux in Tarbes; Carmaux; La Mandoune and Chambord in Mautauban; Juan-Les-Pins; and Empalot, Rangueil, Saint-Georges, Les Rocades, Les Crêtes, and Les Bords de la Garonne in Toulouse. The French SCET commissioned him with the design and management of large districts, including Empalot, Saint-Georges, and Rangueil in Toulouse and the neighborhood of Pontots in Bayonne. Hoÿm de Marien also designed and built a number of large-scale housing projects. He completed six hundred HLM (Habitat à loyer modéré, or Low-Cost Housing) units in Tarbes, twenty villas in Arpajan, and various other housing projects, including Empalot and Rangueil in Toulouse. He received the official authorization of practice (*patenté*) in January 1961, just a few months prior to the onset of the construction of the gigantic commission for Rocher Noir.<sup>25</sup>

In order to carry out Hoÿm de Marien’s design for Rocher Noir, an Algiers-based French architect was appointed, namely Bernard Bachelot. Bachelot was born in Constantine. His relatives had settled in Algeria under French colonial rule in the 1850s. Like Hoÿm de Marien, he graduated from the Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris, in his case in 1957 at the age of





Fig. 59a (top), 59c (bottom) Preparation work for French nuclear tests, Centre saharien d'expérimentations militaires (Saharan Center for Military Experiments), Reggane, Algerian Sahara, January 1960

Fig. 59b (middle) Operation "Gerboise Rouge," Saharan Center for Military Experiments, Reggane, Algerian Sahara, December 1960

thirty-seven. His diploma project was entitled “A Hammam in Constantine,” for which he obtained a distinction. At the Beaux-Arts, Bachelot studied first at the atelier André Leconte and then at atelier Eugène Beaudouin. From 1952 to 1956, Bachelot collaborated with his professor at the Agence Eugène Beaudouin, where he met Hoÿm de Marien at a time when the latter was working with Beaudouin on the aforementioned student housing project.<sup>26</sup> In April 1957, Bachelot was registered with the Order of Architects of the Circumscription of Algiers with number 420. He was then drafted to serve eighteen months’ military service with the Nineteenth Regiment du Génie in Algiers in the midst of the bloody Battle of Algiers. Bachelot worked for the French military Direction des travaux spéciaux du génie (DTSG, or Direction of Engineering and Special Works), which was charged with the design and construction of the site for nuclear tests at the military base of Reggane in Adrar Province in the Algerian Sahara where France’s first nuclear bomb was detonated on 13 February 1960 (figs. 59a–c). Bachelot subsequently worked for six months for the prolific architect Michel Luyckx, who had come to Algiers in 1934 for the construction of the forum of the new GG Building; Luyckx remained in Algeria until Algeria’s independence in 1962. Bachelot was also hired by the Agence du plan d’Alger. Following his military service and prior to Rocher Noir, Bachelot was commissioned with the design of a number of housing projects in Algiers, including his first built project, Le Bayard, with forty-five apartments. He also received a direct commission from Jacques Chevallier to design a villa for his son Pierre, Chevallier senior having commissioned Fernand Pouillon to design his own personal villa.<sup>27</sup>

### **The Brief for Rocher Noir**

In minutes of a meeting entitled “Démarrage de l’opération—Rocher Noir” (Launching of Operation Rocher Noir) it was recorded that the construction of the new town destined for the French general government in Algeria was to be divided into three phases. The first two were to be completed immediately, with the third to be realized at a later date.<sup>28</sup> This condensed decision-making and implementation timescale for the new town was unprecedented, particularly if compared with the construction of both housing for French people in postwar France and housing units for Algerians during the war.

The first step included dwellings and offices for one hundred fifty heads of public services and their direct staff and was to be completed by the end of July (fig. 60). The second phase comprised the construction of offices and housing units for eight hundred civil servants and was to be achieved by the fourth quarter of 1961 (fig. 61). The parallel construction of these two parts

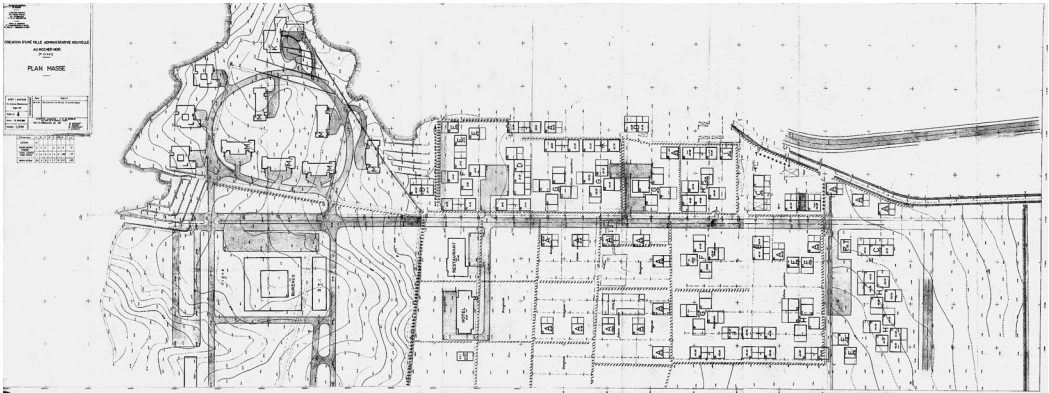


Fig. 60 Plan of the first phase of Rocher Noir

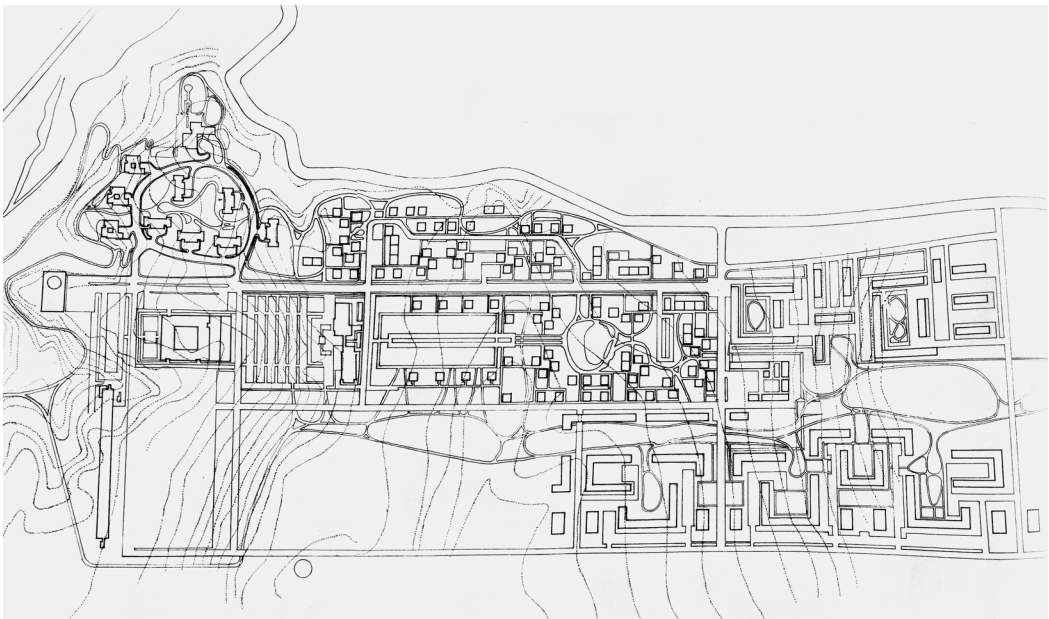


Fig. 61 Plan of the first and second phases of Rocher Noir as published in a newspaper article in Algiers

was to begin immediately, on 21 March 1961, and was to be financed by the Caisse d'équipement pour le développement de l'Algérie (CEDA, of Fund for the Equipment and Development of Algeria). According to those attending this first meeting, the unprecedented speed of design and realization (five months for the first step and seven months for the second) meant that extraordinary measures were required, consisting of “the adoption of accelerated procedures (forward agreement contract, rapid approvals).”<sup>29</sup> It would be safe to assume that the selection of Hoÿm de Marien as the project’s architect was likewise part of this extraordinary procedure.

On 15 March 1961, six days before the planned onset of construction, the CEDA's Department of Public Works, which was established to implement the Plan de Constantine, circulated a report addressed to its directing committee entitled "Construction d'une ville administrative satellite au Rocher Noir" (Construction of a Satellite Administrative Town). According to the authors, their report was based on a preliminary overall program (which had been defined on 27 February) and a sketch that envisaged the realization of the new city in three phases. The cost estimate amounted to ninety million new French francs and had been agreed upon during a meeting of 4 March 1961.<sup>30</sup> The immediate provision of such a large sum for the construction of Rocher Noir was attained by reducing or rescinding funding for a number of public-works projects in the region of Algiers. These cuts affected, amongst others, budgeted investments for civic building (including for national education), the industrial sector, buildings for the Sections administratives spécialisées (SAS, or Specialized Administrative Sections), and various other public building projects.<sup>31</sup> Some of these public projects were abandoned overnight, including the construction of a planned Museum of Antiquity and Muslim Art in Algiers, a crossroads near the government's summer palace, an office building for the public water and energy services, a number of projects for the SAS and the *camps de regroupement*, and other expenses related to administrative offices in Algiers.<sup>32</sup> In other words, with the design of Rocher Noir—a town specifically designed for the representatives of French colonial power in Algeria—the French authorities were magically in a position to overcome the constraints of their colossal bureaucratic machinery: For France's fortress, French red tape vanished.

Rocher Noir was located in the Algerian municipalities of Corso and Bellefontaine. Bordered by the *Oued* (river) Merdès, the very small existing coastal agglomeration of Rocher Noir was served by two national highways (no. 24, which ran close to the Mediterranean Sea; and no. 5, which connected Algiers to Constantine, in eastern Algeria), a departmental road through the village of Bellefontaine, and a railway that connected Rocher Noir to Algiers. The selection of this flat land was strategic, not only because it had the advantage of being served by an existing infrastructure but also because it was relatively easy to connect the new town to basic services (water, electricity, and telecommunications) or to do so in the cases where the main infrastructure was not yet in place.<sup>33</sup> The aspects specifically not mentioned in the descriptive document on the construction of Rocher Noir were that the site was strategically close to Algiers's airport, which was located in Maison Blanche (today Dar El Beida), and, more importantly, to the French air

force base at Reghaia (a former US air force base). The air base had previously served as a refuge for the French Delegate General of the French government in Algeria Paul Delouvrier and commander-in-chief in Algeria General Maurice Challe during the insurrection known as the *Semaine des barricades* (Week of the Barricades) in Algiers between 24 January and 1 February 1960.<sup>34</sup> Three future members of the OAS, including the young Pierre Lagaille and Joseph Ortiz, had organized the Algiers insurrection in support of General Massu, who had publicly lashed out at de Gaulle in an interview in the Munich-based German newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* in January 1960, the outburst prompting Massu to be recalled from Algeria. Similarly to Salan, Lagaille and Ortiz were later convicted for their insurrectional crimes, but were ultimately granted amnesties in 1968.<sup>35</sup>

There is no evidence from the meager and fragmented archival records on the genesis of Rocher Noir that the construction of a better-protected town for the French general government in Algeria was a direct result of the Week of the Barricades. However, according to Jean Morin, a first attempt to isolate the General Delegation had already been undertaken by Delouvrier, but it had failed.<sup>36</sup> A conceivable scenario is that the life of French civil servants working in Algiers was by this point threatened not by Algerian liberation fighters but by the continuous violence of the French far-right “ultras” and that officials had already considered fortifying Algiers or building a new fortified city prior to the decision to launch the Rocher Noir operation. Claire Bachelot, wife of Bernard Bachelot, claimed that Rocher Noir was constantly and rigorously controlled by French military troops and that access to the town was given only by means of a *laissez-passer* (an official pass);<sup>37</sup> in other words, the town was guarded in a way that was similar to procedures at a fortified military base.

In his 1972 book *Les sentiers de la paix: Algérie 1958–1962* (The Paths to Peace: Algeria 1958–1962), Bernard Tricot, one of General de Gaulle’s most influential advisors on Algerian affairs (and who also settled in Rocher Noir in 1962), confirmed the existence of fences and barbed wire around the new settlement. Tricot retrospectively described the new town as follows:

By the Mediterranean Sea was an ocher plateau where the wind whipped up dust, taken over by construction works, a few spots of greenery, building sites, and white constructions dominated by a water tower with geometrical forms, and an enclosure made of a double-high fence that ran between the watchtowers, which were illuminat-



ed at night; it was at once a new town, an administrative town, and a fortified camp.<sup>38</sup>

With an area covering 300 hectares, the future fortified administrative city was expected to contain offices and seven thousand housing units for a population of thirty to thirty-five thousand inhabitants. The first two phases were supposed to accommodate four to five thousand people (roughly one thousand families).<sup>39</sup> The architecture projects for the first 20 hectares—the first step—included an office building with a net usable area of 4,000 square meters with a courtyard, a large parking area, and both individual and collective housing. The housing program comprised a large residence of 900 square meters for the Delegate General in Algeria, which included a private area and another area for receptions; three luxury residences of 380 square meters each with the same concept; twelve residences of 160 square meters each, with six rooms for the directors; 130 villas for civil servants (78–130 square meters with four rooms, and 52–65 square meters with two rooms). Finally, seventy LOGECOs (Logements économiques et familiaux, or Low-Cost Family Dwellings) were to be built for personnel. A twenty-five-room hotel of 1,600 square meters was also to be constructed for single people; a wide range of activities and services were envisaged for the hotel, including a cinema, a restaurant, shops, and a post office. The area that was dedicated to offices also included space for leisure and sporting facilities, such as tennis, basketball, and, of course, the French game of *pétanque* (a bowling game similar to bocce).<sup>40</sup>

The buildings for offices and dwellings were to be located on either side of a main avenue with a width of 10.5 meters. A major design principle was dictated by the highly condensed construction time span: “the very short deadline for the completion of the first portion requires horizontal constructions—and thus also for housing and isolated or grouped villas—but according to a discontinuous order as a way to achieve as harmonious an ensemble as possible.”<sup>41</sup> All of the building plans were also to use the same grid of 1.13 meters and its multiples; that is, 2.26, 3.39, and 4.52. They were built of materials that were available on-site; the terraced ceilings included prefabricated materials. Hoÿm de Marien and Bachelot followed these strict guidelines accordingly (figs. 62a–o), as will be discussed shortly, but suffice to say harmony was a characteristic that did not concern the French technocrats of the Plan de Constantine.

The objective of the second stage, which covered an area of 16 to 20 hectares, was to build eight hundred offices and housing units, a health center





Figs. 62a-o The construction of the first phase of Rocher Noir, completed in 1961

and a conference room (both of 400 square meters), a 1,500-square-meter shopping center, and three types of schools. The schools included a socio-education center, an elementary school, and a middle school, with a maximum of forty classes in total for 1,500 pupils. The first classes were to begin in October 1961, at the start of the school year.<sup>42</sup>

The CEDA reported that the public contracting authority for the offices and the housing of the first step was the Direction des travaux publics, 2<sup>e</sup> circonscription d'Alger (Public Works Department of the Second District of Algiers), while the authority in charge of the collective dwellings of the second phase was the Compagnie immobilière algérienne (CIA, or Algerian Real Estate Company).<sup>43</sup> A comprehensive organizational chart of the engineers, architects, professionals, and companies involved in the Rocher Noir project shows that Hoÿm de Marien was assisted by Bachelot and Bachelot was in turn assisted by two other architects named Dufour and Gauthier (fig. 63). The CEDA also asserted that the construction companies would be selected on the basis of "a market of mutual agreement on unofficial calls for offer from important firms of Algiers that are currently underemployed."<sup>44</sup>

The design of half of the eight hundred housing units of the second phase of Rocher Noir was commissioned to a partner (an *habitué*) of the CIA, namely the French architects Alexis Daure and Henri Béri, who had demonstrated their capacities through their rapid production of mass-housing projects in Algeria under the Plan de Constantine. At Rocher Noir, from May 1961 to February 1962, the two architects built ten housing buildings of two to four stories each, covering an area of 109,000 square meters. The number of rooms of the housing units ranged from a minimum of three rooms (57 square meters) to a maximum of five rooms (85 square meters; figs. 64a–e). The architects argued that the L and U shapes of the buildings defined "free spaces sheltered from the wind; the overlap produces a large variety of perspectives."<sup>45</sup> This aesthetic component was rarely considered in the housing projects built under the Plan de Constantine. In addition, the discontinuity of the buildings at Rocher Noir, which was expected to add harmony to the new town, coincided with formal requests by the French authorities. The second half of the collective-housing program was commissioned to Georges Bize, Jacques Ducollet, and Jacques Vidal (fig. 65).

Rocher Noir, the most rapidly built site in Algeria (and most likely in France, as well), was inaugurated on 25 November 1961. In a press article entitled "La nouvelle capitale administrative de l'Algérie" (The New Administrative Capital of Algeria), the journalist emphasized that after the general public had become familiar with the massive silhouette of the GG Building through

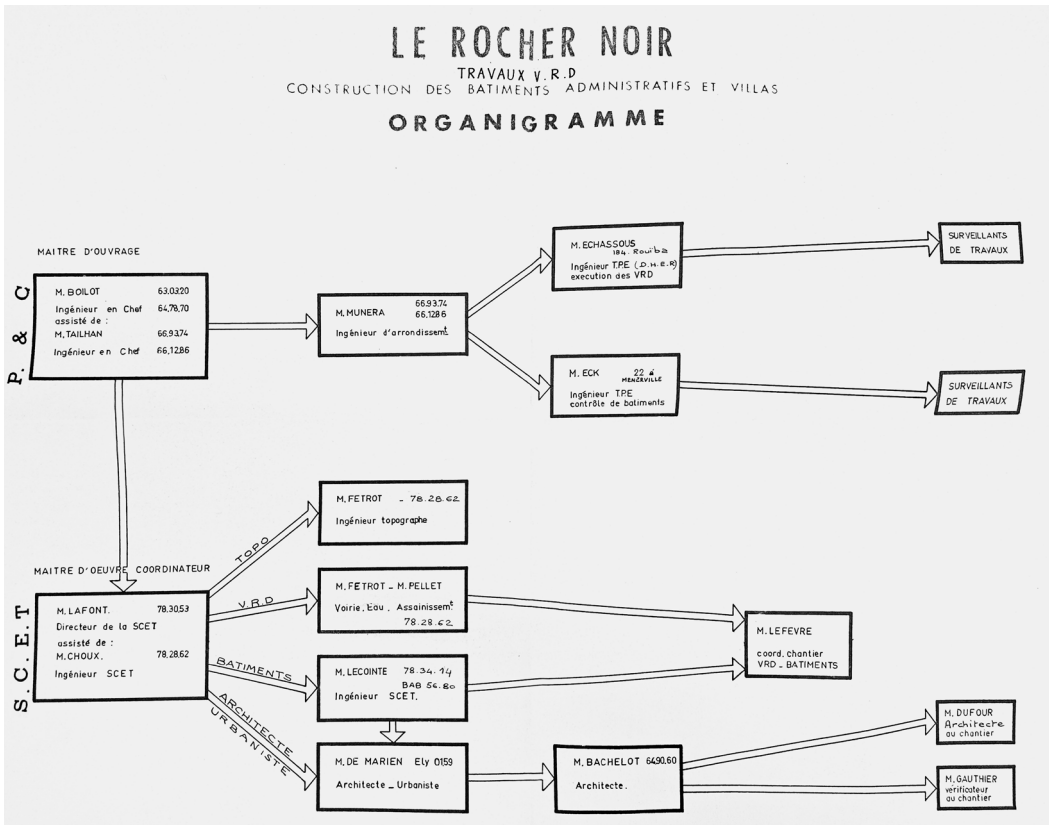
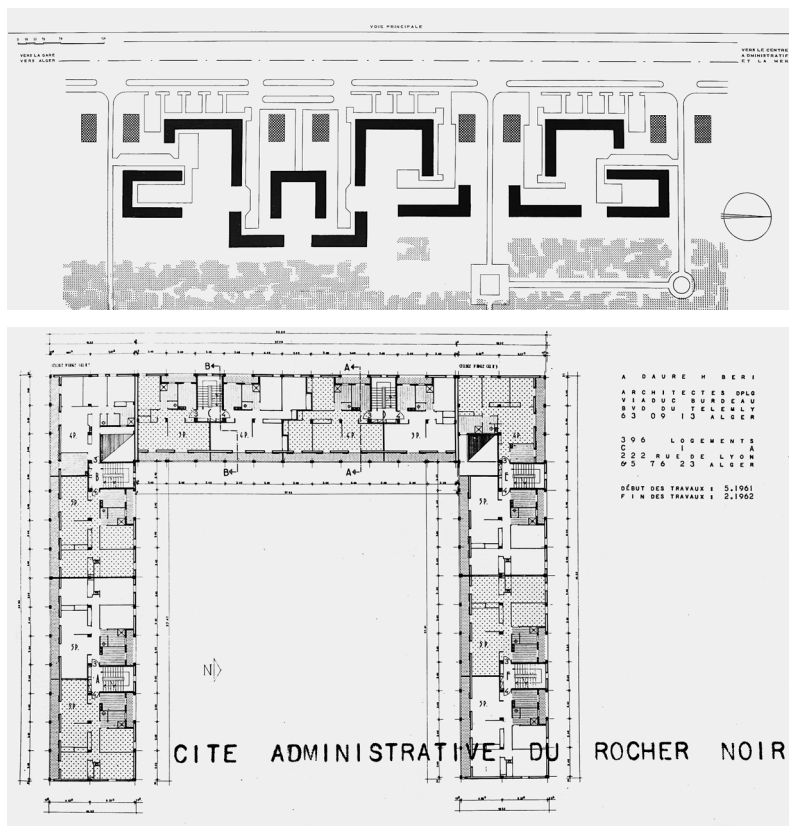


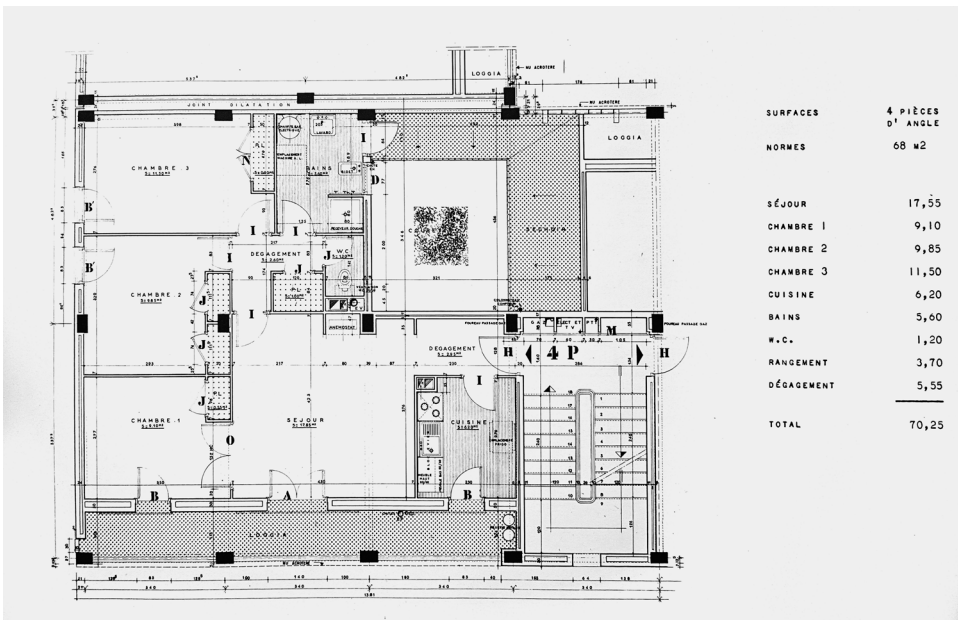
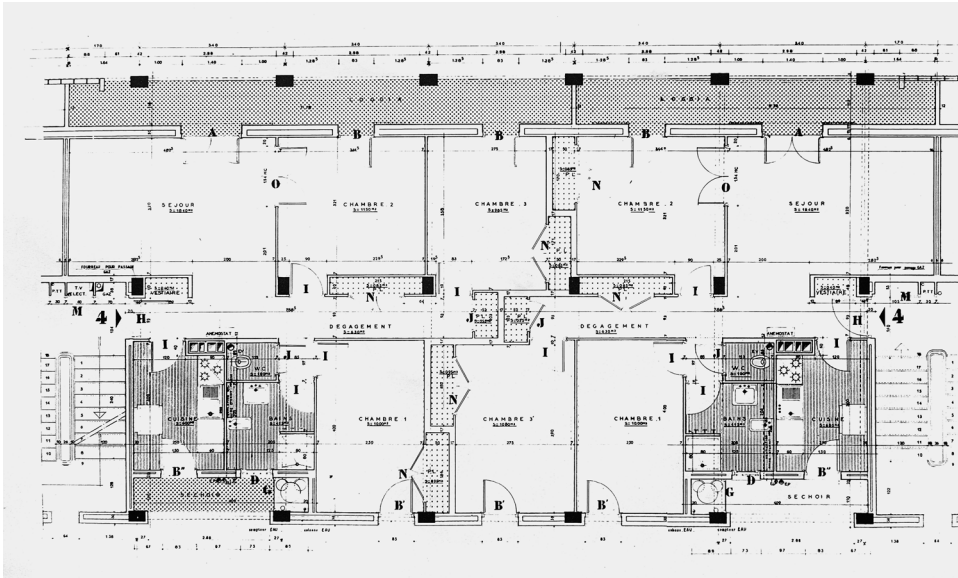
Fig. 63 Organizational chart of the construction of Rocher Noir

frequent television news and press photographs, the French government had decided to move its main headquarters. The author of the article argued that because “this building has served as the main setting for the events that marked the political destiny of France, [the general public] has not always understood the reasons behind changing the location of the central [French] government in Algeria, a change that nevertheless reflects a profound reform, both political and administrative.”<sup>46</sup> As far as Rocher Noir’s real raison d’être was concerned, the journalist turned to the official speech by Jean Morin, the last Delegate General in Algeria, delivered during the inauguration of Rocher Noir. Morin argued that with the institution of the new capital of the French government in Algeria, the government was freed of various pressures, stressing that politically, “the resolution of France was well declared: if it was to break with a long history and pursue the path of political development, it was ultimately necessary to restore the balance between the Algiers region and its peers, Constantine and Oran.”<sup>47</sup> Morin added that administratively



Figs. 64a, 64b, 64c Housing units designed by Daure and Béri in Rocher Noir





Figs. 64d, 64e Plans of the four-room apartments designed by Daure and Béri in Rocher Noir

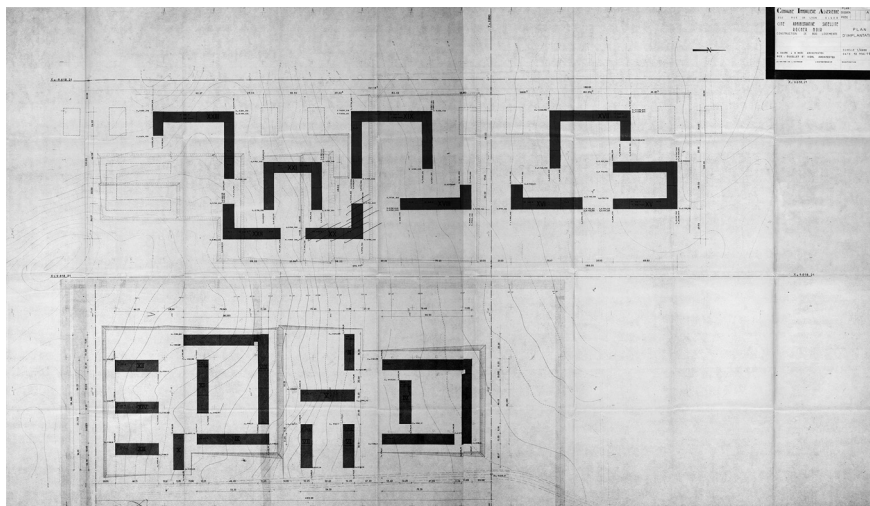


Fig. 65 Housing projects designed by Daure and Béri (upper part) and Bize, Ducollet, and Vidal in Rocher Noir

speaking, “our policy of devolution [*déconcentration*] and decentralization equally imposed a profound transformation of the General Delegation and its transfer out of Algiers.”<sup>48</sup>

The French government had been prompted to design and build Rocher Noir by both the simulated alibi of regional development inscribed in the Plan de Constantine and by the unspoken security issues that the well-practiced and lethal French OAS terrorists had provoked in Algiers. This was a clear sign that France was still determined, despite everything, to remain in Algeria, even at the cost of decelerating their already-launched (and very optimistic) industrialization projects. Morin and the general public were aware of de Gaulle’s declarations about Algeria’s self-determination. And, in the wake of the failure of the French-Algerian negotiations of 1960, de Gaulle and a handful of carefully selected members of his government engaged in secret meetings with the aforementioned GPRA in Switzerland in February 1961—while the administrative city of Rocher Noir was in the process of being designed. To this end, Rocher Noir not only secured the continuation of the French colonial project but also provided the physical setting for the mandated transition to Algerian independence in that, as will be discussed shortly, it served as the official headquarters for the commission charged with administering this turning point, as stated in Article 9 of the Evian Agreements: “The headquarters of the commission of the ceasefire will be set at Rocher Noir.”<sup>49</sup>



### Safety and Security at Rocher Noir

The safety of the construction site of Rocher Noir was ensured by military troops who patrolled the boundaries of Rocher Noir by night as part of the systematic security scheme for the military sector of Ain-Taya Maison Blanche, but they provided no protection during the day.<sup>50</sup> In a letter of 12 June 1961 on the “protection des chantiers du Rocher Noir” (the protection of the construction sites of Rocher Noir), the engineer-in-chief of the department of civil engineering responsible for Rocher Noir urged the General Director of public works, water management, and construction to take responsibility for the internal protection of the construction site since the army was failing to guarantee the site’s safety. He recalled that during the meeting of 17 April 1961 at Rocher Noir, the attendees had agreed that the civil services would build an illuminated barbed-wire fence, while the military authorities would guard the site outside the fortified barrier. He confirmed that “the barbed-wire fence was immediately undertaken. Night lighting for the perimeter defined by the line of the barbed wire should be achieved soon, with the likely engineering support.”<sup>51</sup> The engineer-in-chief argued that these defense measures were insufficient and that continual internal surveillance of the construction site was urgently required. He had officially requested a permanent police presence on-site on several occasions, but he regretted to have to report that “nothing has been done so far. We can now expect incidents or attacks, especially since the building site is fully operational.”<sup>52</sup>

The OAS’s sophisticated intelligence, powerful killing machinery, and growing numbers of supporters facilitated an expansion of its targets to include attacks on France’s new fortified city, as well as against Algerian and French people in Algeria and France. According to one OAS advocate, the OAS was “a state of mind”<sup>53</sup> instead of a political party; he was eager to relate his version of OAS terrors in a book published as early as 1962. He asserted that multiple sabotage attempts and bombs were planned against Rocher Noir. A few had already succeeded, including those that targeted the post office and the villa of Jean Morin, while a number of others had failed. He argued that, as well as its intention to murder de Gaulle, the OAS’s other primary goal was to obliterate Rocher Noir.<sup>54</sup>

In a five-page document titled “Rapport sur les dégâts causés à la villa K par l’explosion du 29 juillet 1961” (Report on the Damages to Villa K Caused by the Explosion of 29 July 1961), Hoÿm de Marien gave an inventory of the destruction within the underground section and the ground floor of the recently built house. He wrote that the explosion had “degraded the works without dispersing them”<sup>55</sup> and listed the immediate interventions that he

deemed necessary to repair the damage to the walls, floors, ceilings, and other structural elements. Hoÿm de Marien forbade access to the insecure building site, however, and ordered that the structure be shored up before starting the cleanup and demolition from the top (figs. 66a–e).<sup>56</sup>

Due to its wide range of supporters, the OAS also managed to detonate another bomb at the fortified Rocher Noir on the night of 14 November 1961. In the description of the “Affaire du ‘plastiquage’ du ‘Rocher Noir’” (The Rocher Noir bombing affair) that was part of documents drawn up in early 1962 to assess French police actions against the OAS, the three authors of this violent explosion were identified. One of the three Frenchmen, who was also the leader of the sabotage operation, was the site manager of the metals construction company Arendt, which was operating at Rocher Noir.<sup>57</sup> The Arendt employee was assisted by a Rocher Noir guard.<sup>58</sup> As a result of these offensives, the French authorities were compelled to consider the French and European populations, including those involved in designing and building Rocher Noir, as potential suspects. Ironically, this was the same reflexive dynamic that had beset the Algerian population from the onset of the Algerian Revolution and throughout the course of the war for Algeria.

### **Building New French Headquarters**

The few surviving plans for Rocher Noir that were preserved by Louis Gabriel de Hoÿm de Marien indicate that the architect drafted two versions for the master plan of the fortified city.<sup>59</sup> The first plan for the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria was inspired by the French tradition of urban and garden planning. The plan recalled the symmetry and geometry of the gardens of the château of Versailles designed by André Le Nôtre for Louis XIV. The straight and wide avenues, the impressive length of the view from the monumental *point de vue* (outlook), and the central axes are symbols of these types of planning patterns. Hoÿm de Marien replaced the plants with a series of buildings that were positioned within large squares, which are evocative of the Super Quadras of Lucio Costa’s plan for Brasília (constructed 1956–1960), the new federal capital of Brazil. This plan was not adopted, however (fig. 67).

The second plan for Rocher Noir aimed to fulfill various functional characteristics dictated by the representatives of the French authorities in Algeria. Organized along one main axis and emerging in green spaces, the various city sectors were fixed from the start and were designed to accommodate one specific activity, such as administration, housing, education, leisure, health care, commerce, or parking (fig. 68). Contrary to the first monumen-



Figs. 66a–e Explosion in Rocher Noir photographed by Louis Gabriel de Hoÿm de Marien

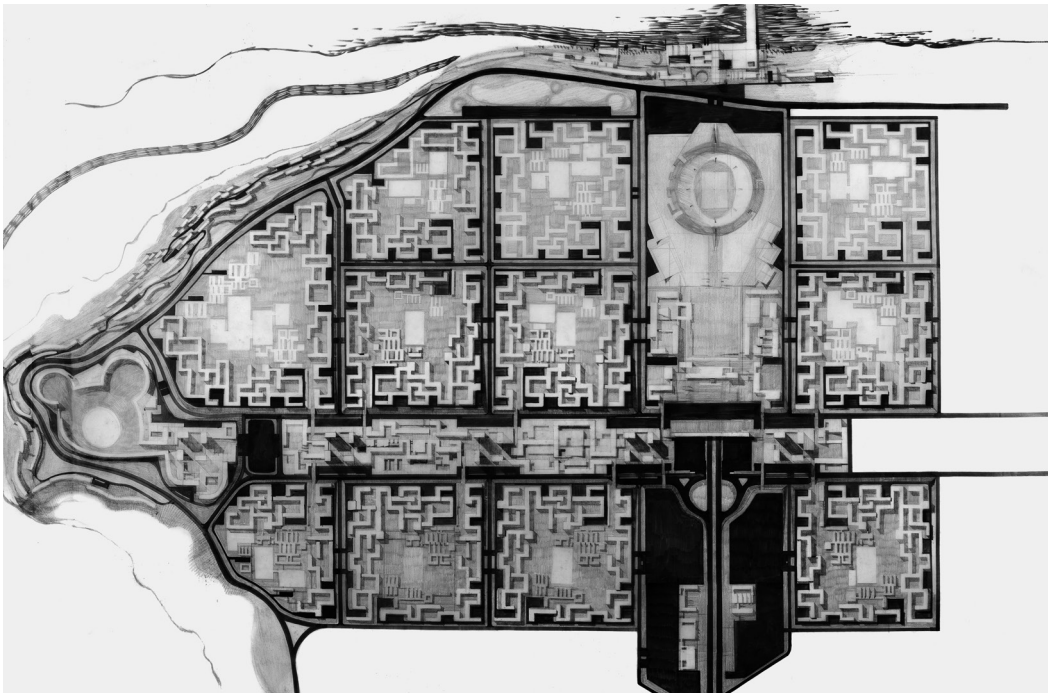


Fig. 67 Plan for Rocher Noir designed by Louis Gabriel de Hoÿm de Marien

tal plan, the resulting blueprint was a collage of necessary facilities that were contained in different structures designed either by Hoÿm de Marien himself or by other French architects who were already active in Algiers.

In a coordination meeting on the planning and organization of the administrative satellite city, in the presence of Hoÿm de Marien and Bachelot, the French representatives of various organizations (the Commissariat of the Plan, Civil Engineering, Service of Architecture, Civil Cabinet of the Delegate General, Service of Equipment, and the SCET) deliberated on a list of required public buildings and appointed architects for their immediate design. The memorandum of the meeting indicates that before examining the nature of these administrative facilities, the attendees decided to create what they called *trames d'accueil* (sites and services; literally, reception roster) for the Algerian populations. As they argued, "the presence of the CAS [Cité administrative satellite, or Administrative Satellite City] will inevitably result in the establishment of a *bidonville*. It is preferable to plan the location of this *bidonville* now in order to channel the people who will move near the new town."<sup>60</sup> To monitor this community, Hoÿm de Marien proposed locating the future *cit  d'accueil* (a reception neighborhood) outside of Rocher Noir, on the other side of the river; such a neighborhood was designed accordingly. The French authorities had requested that they place the headquarters of the Groupes mobiles de s curit  (GMS, or Mobile Security Groups), a reserve of the French army specifically created during the Algerian War of Independence, in the immediate vicinity of the *cit  d'accueil* (fig. 69). Significantly, Hoÿm de Marien's design for the *cit  d'accueil* recalls both semi-urban housing and the permanent *camps de regroupement*.

The list of required buildings included a large array of structures, such as:

- a commercial center, health center, and *poste de garde* (control room) at the entrance of the fortified city;
- a conference center, sports club, and various green and leisure spaces, which were to be designed by Hoÿm de Marien;
- the headquarters of the Compagnies r publicaines de s curit  (CRS, or Republican Security Companies)—riot-control forces, a reserve of the French National Police—commissioned from the French architects Marcel Lathuillier and Nicola di Martino;
- the 1,000-square-meter police headquarters, which was also to be completed by Lathuillier;



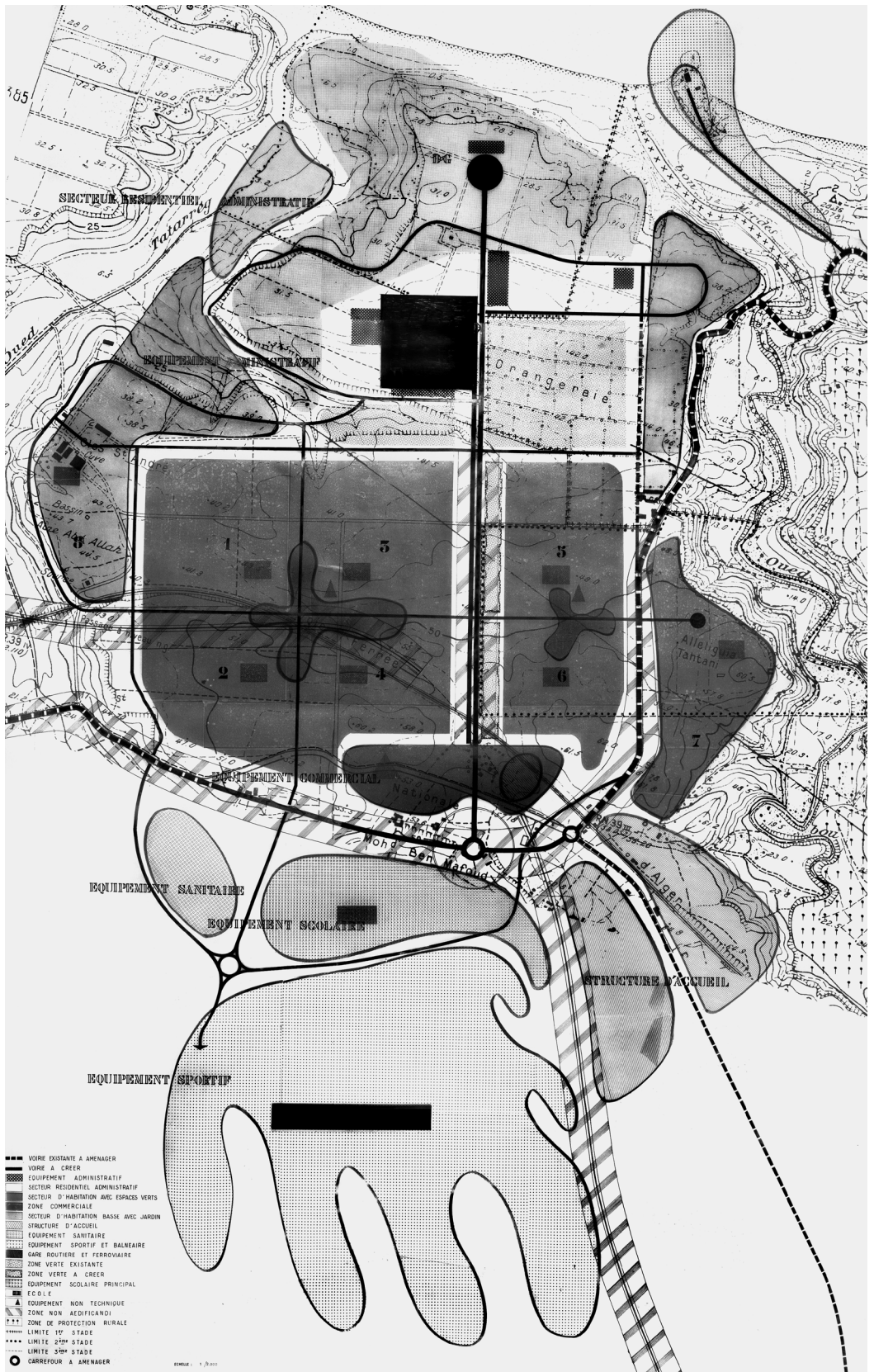


Fig. 68 Plan defining the functions in Rocher Noir

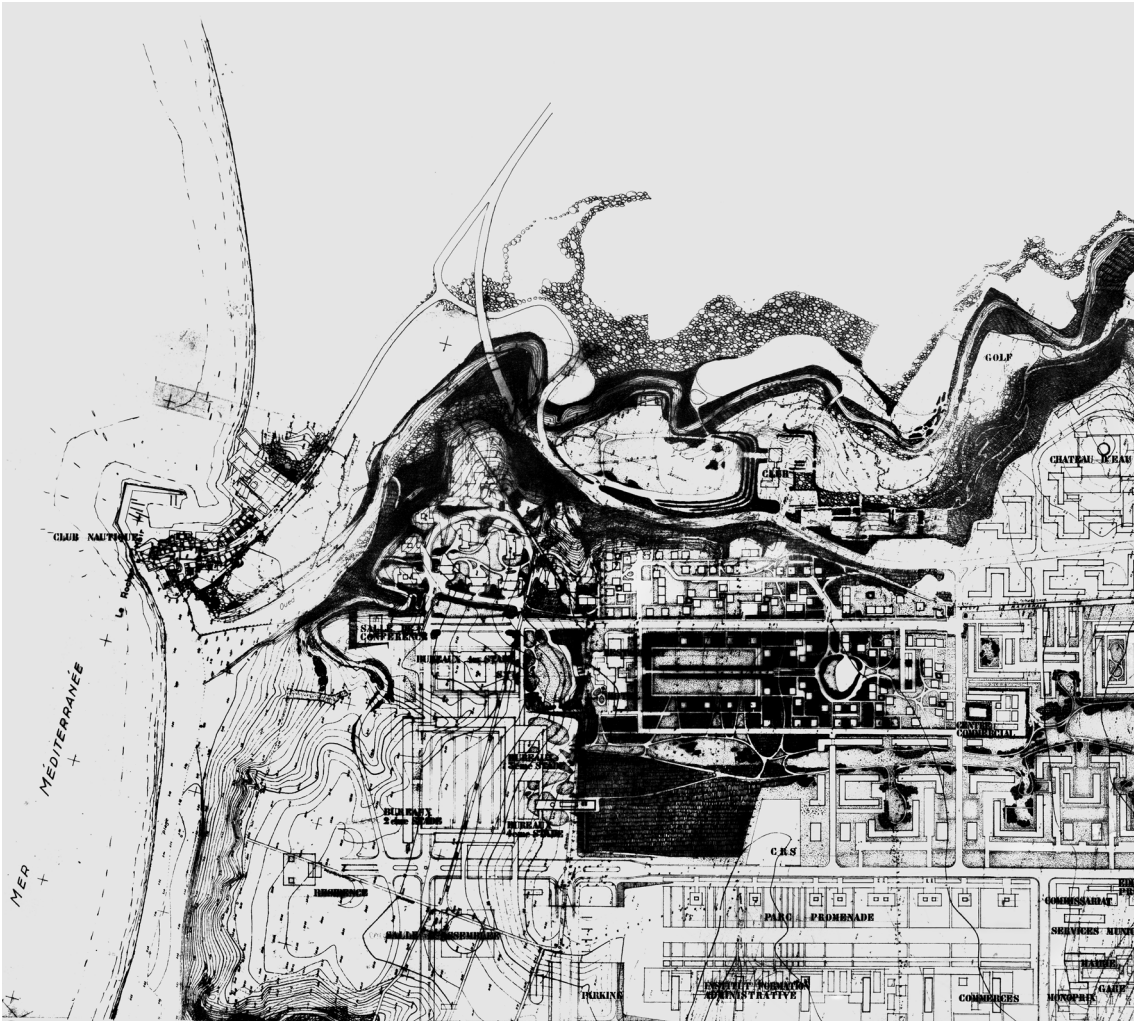


Fig. 69 Master plan for Rocher Noir designed by Louis Gabriel de Hoym de Marien





- a high school, which was to be codesigned by Bachelot and Hoÿm de Marien;
- and a prefabricated elementary school, which was to be completed by the Service of Architecture of the General Delegation.

Although the budgets for the city hall, the telephone exchange, and the post office had still not been allotted, the rest of the plan for these various functions was carried out accordingly.<sup>61</sup>

The plan indicates that in addition to these facilities, the French authorities also envisioned dedicating a large area to religious and cultural activities: not only for the Catholic and Jewish communities but also for the Muslim population, including a Muslim graveyard (fig. 69). On 21 October 1961, the engineer-in-chief of the civil engineering department of the General Delegation defined the areas that were supposed to be devoted to the various faiths in a letter to the director of the SCET. He proposed providing 5,000 square meters to Catholics, 5,000 square meters to Muslims, 3,000 square meters to Jews, and 2,000 square meters to Protestants.<sup>62</sup> This symbolic, yet unprecedented juxtaposition of the religions that coexisted in Algeria under French rule was never implemented. This was also the case for other projected public buildings, such as those designed by Lathuillière.

The completed buildings of Rocher Noir are clearly visible in the aerial photographs of a French military reconnaissance operation of April 1963, less than a year after Algeria's independence. The photographs reveal that not only was the plan ultimately faithfully adopted according to Hoÿm de Marien's second master plan but also that the third phase was never completed (figs. 70a–c). In addition to this evidence, Hoÿm de Marien photographed the construction site and the realization of his first colossal city-planning project. Unlike other related documents, Hoÿm de Marien preserved visual records that, in addition to recording his architecture, reveal a number of aspects of the conditions in which this rushed politico-military city was built. Some of these photographs indicate that during one of his first trips to the site of the future city, Hoÿm de Marien visited the housing projects designed by Pouillon in Algiers. This visit suggests that he was attracted either by Pouillon's architecture or by his fast and efficient construction methods; Hoÿm de Marien's design for Rocher Noir, however, was not influenced by Pouillon's work. Unlike Hoÿm de Marien, Bachelot did not keep any photographs he might have taken during the implementation of Hoÿm de Marien's plans.

### Rocher Noir's Opposing Narratives

Despite what was the construction of France's hastiest city-planning project, French architecture magazines showed little interest in publishing the plans of Rocher Noir. In 1961, a handful of photographs were published in a special issue of *Urbanisme* dedicated to the Plan de Constantine and the large planning and housing projects in Algeria. In his article "Lignes de force de l'aménagement général du territoire" (Guidelines of General Spatial Planning), Jean Vibert, former director of the Plan in Algeria and General Secretary of the Conseil supérieur du plan (High Council of the Plan), stated that the new town of Rocher Noir was planned in order to enforce the policy of decentralization and to relieve Algiers from a massive population influx. He also mentioned the shared legacy of Rocher Noir and the large new industrial area of Rouiba-Reghaia, and their immediate proximity to the highway, railway, harbor, the school of agriculture, the military base, farmland, and the aerodrome. Vibert argued, or rather gave as a justification, that:

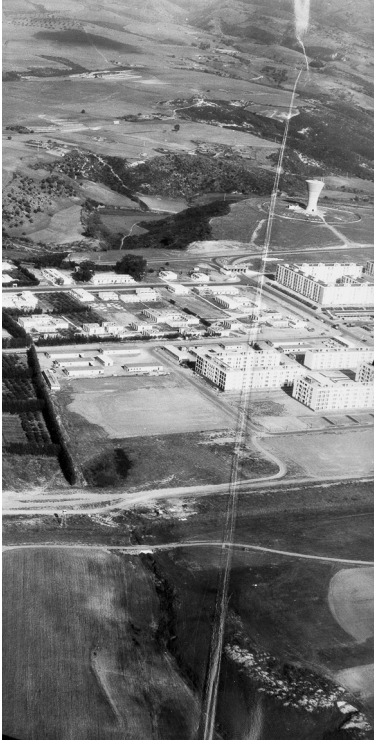
The central organizations will be based at Rocher Noir, fifty kilometers from Algiers, which will leave the center of the city to those activities that cannot move away from the port. The choice of the location of the administrative city might have engendered criticism—the plan has located it to the west rather than to the east of the city—and its principle might have provoked suspicion of ulterior political motives, but the fact remains that under the threat of city congestion, it is necessary to first move the services or activities away that do not absolutely need to occupy the central areas and the environs of the harbor.<sup>63</sup>

In contrast to this appeal, the Swiss-born architect Jean-Jacques Deluz, who was in Algiers at the time of the decision-making, criticism, debates, and construction of Rocher Noir, provided a different interpretation. In the last part of his 1980 article titled "Alger 1962: L'héritage" (Algiers 1962: The Heritage), Deluz criticized the authoritarian planning and mediocre architecture of what he labeled the "technocrats of de Gaulle's regime," and of the Plan de Constantine. With an intimate knowledge of the project, he precisely summarized and denounced the particularities of Rocher Noir, the French "ville fantôme" (ghost city), arguing:



Figs. 70a-c Military aerial photographs of Rocher Noir, 23 April 1963





The most surprising operation, which concludes this last period of French colonization, is that of Rocher Noir (today Bou Merdès), a rare case of a deliberately ephemeral town. The technocrats of power, demonstrating here a cynicism and a lucidity that one could almost admire, decided to build a “capital” whose life will be that of the troubled period that is expected during the transfer of power. By 1961, all credits were channeled to this false city; all operations were frozen to its advantage. De Marien, architect Prix de Rome, but insignificant, was appointed; they chose a site in eastern Algiers, accessible from the airport but without contact with Algiers. And, while the metropolitan area was living amid the turmoil of the putsch, assassinations, and repressions; the growing rumor of the Muslim people rising from the ghettos; and the carcasses of abandoned buildings marking out the entire suburban landscape, Rocher Noir lived day and night in the fever of a delirious construction site, which was effectively completed within the allotted deadlines. ... Then this city became that which it was planned to be: a ghost town abandoned in a grandiose landscape, but without poetry, without architecture, without history.<sup>64</sup>

This significant and thorough opinion reflects not only the politico-military complexities of the situation in which Rocher Noir had been hurriedly built—after and despite all other projects—but also the mediocrity of its master plan and its architecture, which later ultimately became a ruin. In the same issue of *Techniques & Architecture*, another Swiss-born architect, Pierre-André Emery, the leader of the CIAM-Algiers group, published his article “L’architecture moderne en Algérie: 1930–1962” (Modern Architecture in Algeria: 1930–1962). Emery mentioned the construction of Rocher Noir without commenting on its architectural characteristics or planning specificities, asserting instead that “the ultimate attempt of the General Delegation of the government in Algeria was the creation of a satellite administrative town, the ‘Rocher Noir,’ fifty kilometers east of Algiers. It was hardly completed at the time of the declaration of independence.”<sup>65</sup>

During the hasty design and construction of Rocher Noir, various Algiers-based French newspapers reported the evolution of the government’s endeavor and questioned the role of such a capital. In an article of 13 February 1961 titled “Le Rocher Noir, deviendra-t-il une capital” (Will Rocher Noir Become a Capital?) in the *Dépêche quotidienne d’Algérie*, the writer stated that the only official information concerning the rumors about Rocher Noir was



that the future capital of the French government in Algeria was to be given the name Algéria—a name that was fortuitously never adopted.<sup>66</sup> The headlines of other articles announced one or another of the various aspects of the new city, such as:

- “Opération Rocher Noir: d’abord cité administrative, ensuite: ville nouvelle de 30,000 habitants” (Operation Rocher Noir: First an Administrative City, Then a New City for 30,000 Inhabitants);
- “Pour être prêt le 31 août on travaille à trois postes sur certains chantiers de villas” (To Be Ready on 31 August, Three Shifts Are Operating in Certain Villas’ Building Sites);
- “Un hôtel de 25 chambres et un restaurant de 200 couverts permettront d’accueillir tous ceux qui auront à faire dans la nouvelles cité administrative du Rocher Noir” (A Hotel of Twenty-Five Rooms and a Restaurant Seating Two Hundred Will Welcome All Those Who Have to Deal with the New Administrative City of Rocher Noir);
- “Le réservoir de 2,000 m<sup>3</sup> ‘monte’ de 90 cm par jour” (The 2,000-Cubic-Meter Water Tank “Goes Up” 90 Centimeter per Day); and
- “800 Logements en 8 mois au Rocher Noir” (Eight Hundred Dwellings in Eight Months at Rocher Noir).<sup>67</sup>

### Financial Aspects

As mentioned earlier, the estimated costs for the future ghost city were set at NF90,000,000: this included the expenses related to the design and construction work and the acquisition of land. The fees for Hoÿm de Marien alone totaled more than NF1,000,000, of which the SCET paid the first installment of NF95,000 in 1960,<sup>68</sup> the second of NF552,179 in 1961,<sup>69</sup> and the final payment of NF404,713 in 1962.<sup>70</sup> In addition, the General Treasury of Algiers made two further payments to Hoÿm de Marien in 1962, the first of NF128,322 to pay for Rocher Noir’s offices and a second one of NF38,092 for a twenty-four-classroom school.<sup>71</sup> Hoÿm de Marien traveled twice a month to Algiers on average, and attended the coordination meetings at Rocher Noir’s construction site every fifteen days. He was also permanently represented on-site by one to two employees who went back to Paris once a month.<sup>72</sup>

Bachelot for his part attended the weekly meetings at Rocher Noir. His monthly fee was approximately NF5,000, which Hoÿm de Marien paid him in the form of monthly checks from April 1961 to April 1962,<sup>73</sup> by which point Bachelot apparently no longer had authorized access to the construction site

of Rocher Noir and had to leave Algeria immediately.<sup>74</sup> In one year, Bachelot's fee amounted to NF60,000—very little compared to Hoÿm de Marien's excessive remuneration. Hoÿm de Marien and Bachelot had agreed upon this sum in May 1961. Hoÿm de Marien confirmed the flat rate in a letter of 9 May 1961 to Bachelot, in which he also listed Bachelot's tasks. These included acting as the liaison with the French administration in Algiers, the SCET, and the construction companies; attending the site meetings; and directing works for the first and second phases, which comprised fifty-two dwellings of two rooms, seventy dwellings of three rooms, seventy-eight units of four rooms, three villas of L-type, twelve villas of K-type, the residence of the General Delegate, a hotel, a restaurant, the first stage of the office building for 150 employees, and the second phase of the office building for 800 employees.<sup>75</sup>

A few months after their agreement, Bachelot was overwhelmed by unforeseen tasks. In a letter to Hoÿm de Marien of 26 February 1962, Bachelot explained that due to political exigencies, he had been compelled to be at the Rocher Noir construction site four times in the previous two weeks; he therefore asked Hoÿm de Marien to reconsider his pay, due to the change of programs and to the additional workload that no longer corresponded to their mutual initial agreement. Bachelot wrote: "the last few days augur new working conditions. I think at this moment that it is impossible for me, with a remuneration of NF5,000, to carry out the completion of the health center, the construction of the shopping mall, and the construction of the two aforementioned works [second and third phases of the office-building projects]."<sup>76</sup> Bachelot proposed that Hoÿm de Marien increase his monthly fee by an additional NF2,000 until the completion of the works in June or July of 1962.

Hoÿm de Marien rejected Bachelot's request, arguing in his letter to Bachelot of 26 March 1962: "I have already told you, my dear Bachelot, that since the beginning, I was afraid that the building site would be more interesting to me from the study and realization viewpoints than from a financial viewpoint, and the year-end accounts have confirmed that fear."<sup>77</sup> Hoÿm de Marien continued that it was impossible for him to satisfy Bachelot's demands, because "the advances that I am providing at this moment for the design of the third phase of the office building and the high school are too important for me to add not only an increase, but also an extension of the duration of your payments, especially since I still have no insurance on the implementation of these two programs."<sup>78</sup> Hoÿm de Marien indicated that he would contact the SCET and ask them to hire Bachelot directly for

the oversight of the construction of other possible future buildings at Rocher Noir.

The 2,500 Algerian workers who built Rocher Noir and who worked for one of the twenty French construction companies (including Perret Frères, who built the GG headquarters in the center of Algiers)<sup>79</sup> were confronted with extremely precarious conditions. On 1 July 1961, workers had protested against their unacceptable working conditions, which the military authorities had reported on, revealing that the workers' fees were substandard, the site lacked potable water, and that the workers were not being provided with a lunch allowance. The officer who wrote the report stated that "I discovered the living conditions in the camps: dirt, tents without beds, no garbage collection, etc."<sup>80</sup> He continued by also condemning the presence of *combines* (tricks or fiddles) in what he called *camps* (camps) that some of the building-site chiefs were involved in, describing that the chiefs compelled workers to pay a fee in exchange for being hired.

The French civil authorities, unsurprisingly, denied these facts. A report from 29 July 1961 on a survey that the Health, Safety, and Labor Inspection of the General Delegation in Algeria conducted claimed that "although hygiene and safety may be poor, we cannot affirm that they are alarming or that they could cause serious disorders, as the military authorities have suggested."<sup>81</sup> The principal labor inspector (the author of the document) argued that the workers' remuneration depended on their skills, as well as the wage category of the area of the building site. Their salaries varied between NF1.06 per hour for unskilled laborers and NF3 per hour for those who were better skilled. He asserted that the laborers did indeed have access to a canteen and that the price of one meal was NF5—equivalent to five hours of hard work under the Algerian sun for those who were deemed insufficiently skilled.<sup>82</sup> The inspector reported that "following the intervention of an SAS officer who pointed out to [the workers] that they were in the third wage area, they have resumed work."<sup>83</sup> The presence of an SAS officer on the Rocher Noir construction site suggests that Algerian workers were most likely hired on from the *camps de regroupement*, which were located in eastern Algiers. The right to one-day-a-week breaks was also suspended, and workers were requested to work seven days a week. This suddenly became possible by enforcing the existing Article no. 49 of the labor code, which had been implemented in France in September 1939 (at the beginning of the Second World War) and decreed that "in state establishments, as well as in those where construction works are carried out on behalf of the state, and in the interest of national defense, weekly rest breaks may be tem-

porarily suspended by the relevant authorities.”<sup>84</sup> To this end, Rocher Noir was a city erected for the purpose of national defense, a city built for and during a colonial war—a “war city.”

### The Myth of Arches

Among the buildings that Algerian workers built were the villas for French civil servants and for Delegate General Jean Morin. The photographs of these low-rise housing units indicate that Hoÿm de Marien used the same prefabricated elements—as recommended by the French authorities—to define and shape the various modular units. Hoÿm de Marien treated the construction of the villa for the General Delegation, the villas for the directors and general secretaries of public services at the General Delegation, and the dwellings for the civil servants and hotel and restaurant workers alike. Hoÿm de Marien’s architecture for Rocher Noir was characterized by repetitive and identical structural vaulted roofs, which were a reference to the existing French architecture in Algeria, and indeed to the vaults of the architecture in the broader Mediterranean region, but were also ideally suited to accelerating the construction of the buildings.

In Algiers under French rule, vaulted arches (either as a structural or prefabricated element) defined the spatial rhythm of a number of projects, including the military fortification of the seafront of the Boulevard de l’Impératrice (later the Boulevard de la République, today Avenue Ernesto Che Guevara) that connected Algiers Harbor and the Place du Gouvernement (today Place des Martyrs, or Martyrdom Square) in the 1850s—a century before the Algerian War of Independence. Another similar project was Roland Simounet’s design for the dwellings of the *cit  de transit* (temporary transitional housing complex) called Djenan El Hassan of 1956–1958, which was expected to accommodate the inhabitants of Algiers’s slums. Numerous scholars have noted the formal relationships between Simounet’s project and Le Corbusier’s vaulted Maison Monol (1919), the R sidence Peyrissac in the rural area of Cherchell in Algeria (1942), and his Rob and Roq housing in Roquebrune in Cap-Martin in France (1949). The flat land of Rocher Noir and the one-story housing units—but not their spatial distribution or density—might also be associated with the completed project of the Cit  La Montagne on the outskirts of Algiers, designed by Simounet, Daure, and B ri and promoted by the aforementioned CIA.

The living areas, construction materials, domestic appliances, and interior designs of the large villas and dwellings cannot be compared to the housing projects, intended for the Algerian population. The French authorities

assigned a large budget to the daily living and working comforts of its civil servants. In the case of the 900-square-meter villa of the Delegate General, Hoÿm de Marien visited the building and examined the interior details with Morin's wife and took her wishes and those of her husband into consideration. In a letter to Mrs. Morin of 26 December 1961, after the relocation of the General Delegation from Algiers to Rocher Noir, Hoÿm de Marien listed his endeavors to satisfy the Morins' choices. These included the operation of the fountain located in the courtyard; Saint-Laurent furniture; the arrival of an imported table for the Morins' dining room in the *petit séjour* (small living room); a modern tapestry; and the design of radiator covers.<sup>85</sup>

Although Hoÿm de Marien used identical elements for the individual houses, he initially envisaged distinguishing two different categories according to luxury characteristics, as follows:

- 1) A zone of individual "residential" housing with green spaces, close to the seaside, whose average residential density was ten dwellings per hectare; one hundred fifty houses were distributed over 15 hectares, and each house was on 1,000 square meters of land.<sup>86</sup>
- 2) A zone of individual "normal" housing with green spaces, to be located between the collective housing and the area of existing rural habitations, whose density was to be twenty dwellings per hectare (double that of the former zone); one hundred houses with a per unit land area of 500 square meters.<sup>87</sup>

As listed, in addition to individual houses, as part of the projected general housing sector Rocher Noir was planned to accommodate collective housing. This vast sector was composed of three different zones. In the first and the second zones, the housing density was fifty units per hectare. Whereas the first included 2,500 housing units contained in buildings of a maximum of four floors per housing unit, the second was intended to consist of one thousand dwellings along with a shopping area. The third zone was to be made up of high-rise buildings whose height was to be between eight and sixteen floors, for 2,200 dwellings, the zone planned to have one hundred dwellings per hectare. The towers and the later collective-housing complexes with shops were never built.<sup>88</sup>

### From Algiers to the Fortress

In order to resettle a few hundred French civil servants and their families 50 kilometers from Algiers, on 18 June 1961 Morin founded “a committee charged with studying the problems posed by the transfer of the General Delegation to Rocher Noir.”<sup>89</sup> The committee was composed of the General Inspector of Administration, the General Inspector and Director of Public Works, the Director of the Civil Cabinet of the Delegate General, the Director of the Military Cabinet of the Delegate General, the Project Manager at the Cabinet of the General Secretary of Administration, and a representative of the chief architect of Rocher Noir, Hoÿm de Marien.<sup>90</sup> The working group drafted a series of hypotheses determining the people and teams who were entitled (or required, as the case may be) to move to Rocher Noir first.

The committee prepared extensive lists of government workers and their positions, affiliations, and family compositions. They selected the location and division of the allotted offices, as well as the types of dwellings for the employees and their families. In a letter of 26 June 1961 to the Director of the Civil Cabinet of the Delegate General, Hoÿm de Marien emphasized that because the construction of the office building was progressing rapidly, the exact configuration of the necessary offices in this first phase was required as soon as possible. He argued that “if the information corresponding to the real needs of the administration is not provided, and to avoid delays in the delivery of the building, we would be obliged to apply a theoretical allocation made during the attribution and of which I am not sure that this will meet the needs of the services.”<sup>91</sup>

The resettlement of the first group of the Civil Cabinet of the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria began in early September 1961. This move took place a few days after the relocation of the Military Cabinet of the General Delegation to the military air force base of Reghaia, roughly 10 kilometers from Rocher Noir. In his memoirs entitled *De Gaulle et l'Algérie: mon témoignage, 1960–1962* (De Gaulle and Algeria: My Testimony, 1960–1962), Jean Morin described the beauty of the site and the strategic characteristics of France’s new headquarters in Algeria. In the subchapter “Mettre le pouvoir à l’abri des tumultes” (Protecting Power from Strife), Morin emphasized that “thanks to its natural advantages, Rocher Noir offers the administrative city ... the advantage of being easy to defend.”<sup>92</sup> He also argued that “Rocher Noir is not only an administrative city, but a real city that must be able to fully meet its own needs. By the Fall of 1962, one thousand civil servants with their families were to be settled there: four thousand inhabitants. In short, a small Algerian Washington.”<sup>93</sup>



In addition to the planned self-sufficiency of the French “Washington, DC,” in Algeria under colonial rule, the French authorities meticulously drew up contingency plans for the emergency evacuation of the employees of Rocher Noir. In a document entitled “Protection des personnalités de la Délégation Générale du Rocher Noir en cas de coup de force” (Protection of the General Delegation of Rocher Noir in Case of Uprisings), the Military Cabinet proposed two evacuation scenarios.<sup>94</sup> The first supposed that an armed uprising might take place in Oran, which would provide sufficient time to evacuate Rocher Noir via the helicopters permanently stationed at the new city and additional ones that would be sent to help with the evacuation effort. The second solution envisaged “an important and impromptu attack on Rocher Noir by dissidents of the army or the OAS.”<sup>95</sup> This second hypothetical evacuation action was expected to take place via helicopters over the Mediterranean Sea.<sup>96</sup> The theories about possible revolts and the evacuation plans for Rocher Noir were even submitted to the French Prime Minister on 22 October 1961.<sup>97</sup>

The relocation of the French General Delegation from Algiers to Rocher Noir was coupled with a measure dubbed *déconcentration* (devolution), which the government decreed in March 1960<sup>98</sup> and again in January 1961.<sup>99</sup> This measure was implemented together with the decentralization policies of the Plan de Constantine. *Déconcentration* consisted of reducing the number of civil servants working for the General Delegation in Algiers. In a note signed by the General Secretary of Administration in Algeria, the secretary requested a “list of the excessive personnel who, following the devolution measures, must leave the central administration; they will be assigned to an external service or reassigned to the director of human resources.”<sup>100</sup> Each department accordingly provided a description of its services and assignments, its employees who were indispensable for the achievement of the department’s goals and objectives, and the workers who could be considered redundant. A number of diagrams bearing the subtitles “Après déconcentration” (After devolution) and “Avant réorganisation” (Before reorganization) were also appended.<sup>101</sup>

The tactical measure of *déconcentration* enabled the French authorities not only to reorganize their own costly colonial administration but also to remove a number of French institutions that had emerged from the Algerian War of Independence—a war that was about to end. Notable among these institutions was the Inspection générale des regroupements des population (IGRP, or General Inspection of the Regrouping of the Population), which Paul Delouvrier had created to coordinate the chaotic establishment of

the *camps de regroupement*.<sup>102</sup> To this end, the construction of Rocher Noir and the transfer of the new headquarters of French power in Algeria served not only to protect French civil servants from OAS assaults and to reorganize France's own colonial administration but also to pave the way for the transition planned in the French-Algerian conventions. These transitions were enforced during the last months of colonial rule and after the independence of Algeria, which the country gained a few months after the inauguration of Rocher Noir.

Rocher Noir was ultimately neither a capital city of a nation state, such as Algiers was for independent Algeria, nor a capital city of a colony, as Algiers was for the French colonial government in Algeria. Instead Rocher Noir was a fortified enclave, a military and militarized town that was built by and for the colonizer on colonized territory during the very last phase of a colonial war. Although it was called an administrative city, the plan was that Rocher Noir would serve as the headquarters for the French colonial government in Algeria and it would accommodate its French civil servants.

- 1 "The Internationalization of the Algerian Problem and Its Inscription on the Agenda of the General Assembly of the United Nations from 1957–1959" (1959), Wilson Center Digital Archive, Cold War International History Project. <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/121601> (accessed on 18 January 2016).
- 2 The French version is available at <http://www.fabriquedesens.net/Declaration-sur-le-droit-a-l> (accessed on 19 January 2016). An English translation is published in André Breton, *What Is Surrealism? Selected Writings, Book 2*, edited by Franklin Rosemont (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1978), 460–62.
- 3 On the complex history of these manifestos and French intellectuals, see for example Rioux and Sirinelli, *La Guerre d'Algérie*.
- 4 For a more detailed list of pro-French Algeria organizations, see Déroutède, *OAS*, 17–37.
- 5 On the involvement of French Jews from Algeria in OAS operations, see Katz, *Burdens of Brotherhood*, 201–16; Choi, *Decolonization*, 45–51.
- 6 The exact numbers of OAS casualties are disputed. The two numbers cited here are from Déroutède, *OAS*, 243.
- 7 On Salan's military career, see Gandy, *Salan*.
- 8 Schmitt, *Theorie des Partisanen*.
- 9 Raymond Aron, author of *La tragédie algérienne* (1957), *L'Algérie et la république* (1958), and *Paix et guerre entre les nations* (1962), criticized Schmitt as having committed a "conceptual error" in comparing the head of the OAS, Salan, to Clausewitz, arguing that Salan could not be equated with the Prussian officers who had fought a national enemy when Salan and his like had defied the nation itself. See Mouric, "'Citizen Clausewitz,'" 83–85.
- 10 Schmitt, *Theorie des Partisanen*, 47.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 57.
- 12 Raoul Salan was banned from entering Algeria in 1960.
- 13 ANFPFSS F/60/4032. Délégation générale en Algérie, Direction des travaux publics, de la construction et des transports, Administration générale, Service général, Procès-verbal de la réunion tenue le 27 Février 1961 à 15 heures, dans le bureau de Monsieur Giraud,

- Directeur des travaux publics, de la construction et des transports, Démarrage de l'opération—Rocher Noir, Algiers, 3 March 1961, p. 2.
- 14 ANFPFSS F/60/4032. “Délibération. Article 1—Il est créé au programme d'équipement de l'Algérie pour 1961 un chapitre nouveau 11-38 intitulé *Création d'une ville administrative nouvelle au Rocher Noir.*”
  - 15 ANFPFSS F/60/4032. Caisse d'équipement pour le développement de l'Algérie, Département de l'équipement public, Rapport au comité directeur, Construction d'une ville administrative satellite au Rocher Noir, 15 March 1961, p. 3.
  - 16 Jacques Guiauchain (1884–1960), a member of the third generation of the Guiauchain dynasty in Algiers, was the son of the architect George Guiauchain (1840–1918) and the grandson of Pierre Auguste Guiauchain (1806–1875), chief architect of the city of Algiers.
  - 17 ANFPFSS F/60/4032. Délégation générale en Algérie, Direction des travaux publics, de la construction et des transports, Administration générale, Service général, Procès-verbal de la réunion tenue le 27 Février 1961 à 15 heures, dans le bureau de Monsieur Giraud, Directeur des travaux publics, de la construction et des transports, Démarrage de l'opération—Rocher Noir, Algiers, 3 March 1961, p. 2.
  - 18 Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, 424.
  - 19 Association des amis de Michel Debré, *Michel Debré et l'Algérie*, 30.
  - 20 Debré, *Trois Républiques*, 263.
  - 21 De Gaulle, *Juin 1958–Décembre 1960*, 418–20.
  - 22 *Ibid.*, 419.
  - 23 *Ibid.*
  - 24 Archives départementales de la Haute-Garonne (hereafter ADHG) 156 J. Curriculum vitae of Louis Gabriel de Hoÿm de Marien.
  - 25 *Ibid.*
  - 26 Delétage, “Bernard Bachelot,” 25–37; Armand and Marfaing, *Bernard Bachelot*, 11.
  - 27 Armand and Marfaing, *Bernard Bachelot*, 12.
  - 28 ANFPFSS F/60/4032. Délégation générale en Algérie, Direction des travaux Publics, de la construction, et des transports, Administration générale, Service général, Procès-verbal de la réunion tenue le 27 Février 1961 à 15 heures, dans le bureau de Monsieur Giraud, Directeur des travaux publics, de la construction et des transports, Démarrage de l'opération—Rocher Noir, Algiers, 3 March 1961.
  - 29 *Ibid.*, p. 2.
  - 30 ANFPFSS F/60/4032. Caisse d'équipement pour le développement de l'Algérie, Département de l'équipement public, Rapport au comité directeur, Construction d'une ville administrative satellite au Rocher Noir, 15 March 1961, p. 1.
  - 31 ANFPFSS F/60/4032. Etat modifiant le programme d'équipement de l'Algérie pour 1961, (n.d.).
  - 32 ANFPFSS F/60/4032. Opérations retirées du programme d'équipement public au profit du Rocher Noir, Algiers, 6 March 1961.
  - 33 ANFPFSS F/60/4032. Le Rocher Noir : construction d'une cité Administrative satellite, (n.d.).
  - 34 Diamond, *France under de Gaulle*, 30.
  - 35 On the “Week of the Barricades,” see Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, 349–72; Evans, *Algeria*, 270–76.
  - 36 Morin, *De Gaulle et l'Algérie*, 96.
  - 37 Claire Bachelot, interview with the author on 23 November 2015. Many thanks to Sophie Armand for organizing the meeting.
  - 38 Tricot, *Les sentiers de la paix*, 310.
  - 39 ANFPFSS F/60/4032. Le Rocher Noir: construction d'une cité administrative satellite, (n.d.), p. 1.
  - 40 *Ibid.*, p. 2.
  - 41 *Ibid.*
  - 42 *Ibid.*, p. 3.

- 43 ANFPFSS F/60/4032. Caisse d'équipement pour le développement de l'Algérie, Département de l'équipement public, Rapport au comité directeur, Construction d'une ville administrative satellite au Rocher Noir, 15 March 1961, pp. 2–3.
- 44 Ibid., p. 3. The underemployment was caused by the war, the actions of the OAS, and the allocation of existing construction funds for the benefit of Rocher Noir.
- 45 Album of projects by Daure and Béri in Algeria donated to the author by Josette Daure.
- 46 FRANOM 81 F 452. La nouvelle capitale administrative de l'Algérie, (n.d.).
- 47 Ibid.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 FRANOM 19770828/14. Les accords d'Evian: textes et commentaires, La documentation française, 1962, p. 6.
- 50 FRANOM 15 CAB 91. Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie, Cabinet militaire, Note pour Monsieur Rodier, Chef du cabinet civil, Protection du chantier du Rocher Noir, Algiers, 20 June 1961.
- 51 FRANOM 15 CAB 91. Pont et Chaussées, Département d'Alger, 2<sup>e</sup> circonscription, M. Pierre Boilot, Ingénieur en chef à Monsieur le directeur général des travaux publics, de l'hydraulique et de la construction, Protection des chantiers du Rocher Noir, Algiers, 12 June 1961.
- 52 Ibid.
- 53 Nicol, *La Bataille*, 8.
- 54 Ibid., 199.
- 55 ADHG 140 J 21. CAS Rocher Noir, Rapport sur les dégâts causés à la villa K par l'explosion du 29 juillet 1961, Algiers, 31 July 1961, p. 1.
- 56 Ibid., p. 4.
- 57 Archives de la fondation Charles de Gaulle (hereafter AFCDG). AFCDG F 45 3, Mission C, Décembre 1961–1962, Lutte contre l'OAS, Bilan de l'activité de la police dans la lutte contre l'OAS du 1<sup>er</sup> au 11 janvier 1962, Annexe 1, l'Affaire du "plastiquage" du "Rocher Noir." The three men were Hans Krull, born in 1933 in Germany; Maurice Chapellon (who worked for Arendt), born in 1934 in France; and Lucien Aquilina, born in 1918 in Algeria under French colonial rule.
- 58 Ibid.
- 59 The plans can be consulted at the ADHG under the following reference: 156J.
- 60 ADHG 140 J 21. Création d'une ville administrative satellite au Rocher noir, Mémoire, p. 1. According to the French authorities, these people were expected to most likely come from the Kabylia region.
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 ADHG 140 J 21. L'ingénieur en chef des ponts et chaussées à Monsieur le directeur de la SCET, Ville administrative du Rocher Noir: exercice des cultes, Algiers, 21 October 1961.
- 63 Vibert, "Lignes de force," 7.
- 64 Deluz, "Alger 1962," 46.
- 65 Emery, "L'architecture moderne en Algérie," 57.
- 66 FRANOM 9113 3 F 1. "Le Rocher Noir, deviendra-t-il une capitale?" *Dépêche quotidienne d'Algérie*, 13 February 1961.
- 67 ADHG 140 J 21. Newspaper articles collected by Bachelot.
- 68 ADHG 156 J. Louis Gabriel de Hoÿm de Marien, Relevé des honoraires pour 1960.
- 69 ADHG 156 J. Société centrale pour l'équipement du territoire, Attestation, Algiers, 24 January 1963.
- 70 ADHG 156 J. Société centrale pour l'équipement du territoire, Attestation, Algiers, 30 July 1964.
- 71 ADHG 156 J. Louis Gabriel de Hoÿm de Marien, 1962—Recettes.
- 72 ADHG 156 J. Déclaration de taxes pour l'année 1961, Paris, 25 June 1962. The cover letter explained that the high expenses of the architecture office of Hoÿm de Marien are due to Rocher Noir and the trips to Algiers. Claire Bachelot also remembered Hoÿm de Marien coming to Algiers every two weeks.

- 73 ADHG 140 J 4. Livre journal des dépôts et des dépenses 1959–1962 de Bernard Bachelot.
- 74 Author's interview with Claire Bachelot on 23 November 2015. His departure was most likely due to the fact that Bachelot also became a suspect.
- 75 ADHG 140 J 21. Lettre de Louis Gabriel de Hoÿm de Marien à Bernard Bachelot, Paris, 9 May 1961.
- 76 ADHG 140 J 21. Lettre de Bernard Bachelot à Louis Gabriel de Hoÿm de Marien, Algiers, 26 February 1962.
- 77 ADHG 140 J 21. Lettre de Louis Gabriel de Hoÿm de Marien à Bachelot, Algiers, 26 March 1962.
- 78 Ibid.
- 79 ADHG 140 J 21. Opération Rocher Noir, Réunion de chantier. In an attempt to accelerate the construction of Rocher Noir, companies were requested to collaborate. The enterprises that responded included Badaracchi, Ballot, ENAC, Houdry, Laurent, Nord-France, Omnium, Perret, Segan, Socolon, and Sotrafom.
- 80 FRANOM 1K 1183. Le Capitaine Maltre, Commandant de la 2<sup>e</sup> Batterie et le Sous-Quartier de Bellefontaine à Monsieur le Chef d'Escadron, Commandant le 1/405<sup>e</sup> RAA et le Quartier Alma-Menerville, Compte rendu concernant le Rocher Noir.
- 81 FRANOM 1 K 1183. Délégation générale en Algérie, Inspection du travail et de la main-d'œuvre d'Alger et Titteri, Conditions de travail sur les chantiers du Rocher Noir, Algiers, 29 July 1961.
- 82 Ibid.
- 83 Ibid.
- 84 FRANOM 15 CAB 91. Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie, Direction générale de l'action sociale, Sous-direction du travail, Suspension du repos hebdomadaire pour le personnel des entreprises chargées de la construction des bâtiments administratives du Rocher Noir.
- 85 ADHG 140 J 21. Lettre de Louis Gabriel de Hoÿm de Marien à Madame Morin, Paris, 26 December 1961.
- 86 ADHG 140 J 21. Louis Gabriel de Hoÿm de Marien, Cité administrative satellite: Opération Rocher Noir, Programme d'aménagement, p. 4.
- 87 Ibid.
- 88 Ibid., p. 5.
- 89 FRANOM 15 CAB 91. Le Délégué général en Algérie, Algiers, 18 June 1961.
- 90 Ibid.
- 91 FRANOM 15 CAB 91. Lettre de Louis Gabriel de Hoÿm de Marien à Monsieur Vieillescazes, Directeur du cabinet du délégué général, Cité administrative satellite, Bureaux 1<sup>er</sup> stade, Paris, 26 June 1961.
- 92 Morin, *De Gaulle et l'Algérie*, 96.
- 93 Ibid.
- 94 AFCDG F 45 4. Délégation générale en Algérie, Cabinet militaire, Protection des personnalités de la délégation générale du Rocher Noir en cas de coup de force, Algiers, 19 October 1961.
- 95 Ibid., p. 1.
- 96 Ibid., p. 2.
- 97 AFCDG F 45 4. Lettre à Monsieur Le Premier Ministre (Michel Debrè), 22 October 1961, (n.d.). The author of the letter is not identified.
- 98 Decree no. 60-251 of 23 March 1960, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, 24 March 1960, p. 2775, [https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo\\_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000876689](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000876689) (accessed 28 March 2016).
- 99 Decree no. 61-77 of 20 January 1961, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, 21 January 1961, pp. 872–73, [https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo\\_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000874567&pageCourante=00872](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000874567&pageCourante=00872) (accessed 28 March 2016).

- 100 FRANOM 15 CAB 91. Délégation générale en Algérie, Cabinet du secrétaire générale, Note pour les directeurs généraux, Directeurs et chefs de service, Mesure de déconcentration, Algiers, 17 July 1961.
- 101 FRANOM 15 CAB 91. Structure du service des affaires algérienne (après déconcentration; Structure du service des affaires algérienne (avant réorganisation), (n.d.).
- 102 FRANOM 15 CAB 91. Délégation générale du gouvernement en Algérie, Cabinet du délégué général, (n.d.).



## 10. Game Not Entirely Over

According to Jean Morin, the French Delegate General in Algeria from December 1960 to March 1962, General Charles de Gaulle had never mentioned the words *intégration* and *partition*. Morin argued that the only plausible policy that de Gaulle would have enforced in the case of a total failure of negotiations was the policy of “*regroupement*, which ... would have represented in [de Gaulle’s] mind a mere preliminary step before the withdrawal from Algeria.”<sup>1</sup> Morin explained that *regroupement* consisted of gathering the European and French populations, as well as any Algerians who embraced the said policy, within the same territory in Algeria, which implied a systematic division of Algerian territory. Morin explained that *regroupement* was “a kind of zoning, which those who uphold this theory call ‘sharing by regrouping.’”<sup>2</sup> De Gaulle and others used the same term *regroupement* that the French army had employed to designate the colonial military policy of *regroupement* (i.e., forced resettlement) of the Algerian population. Prime Minister Michel Debré compared the “sharing by regrouping” to what had occurred in the State of Israel—which was arguably far from “sharing”—Debré stressing that this strategy would “create a new State of Israel in North Africa, the eradication of which would be the target of all Arab countries, if not all Muslims around the world, to whom we would give a reason to maintain or worsen their coalition against us.”<sup>3</sup> Although the negotiations of 1962 resulted in a ceasefire that was implemented with some difficulty—due to the ongoing OAS attacks—the project to regroup Europeans and to divide the Algerian territory was nevertheless undertaken.

In contrast to Morin’s argument, de Gaulle had considered partitioning Algeria between the European and Algerian populations by creating French exclaves within Algeria’s territory and assigning the Sahara to a French section in order to pressure Algerian liberation fighters.<sup>4</sup> The author of this colonial project was the Gaullist politician and scholar Alain Peyrefitte, who claimed that de Gaulle had asked him “to float the idea by writing newspaper articles and a short book proposing a kind of ‘French Israel’ in the coastal region in which the European population would be the majority.”<sup>5</sup> Peyrefitte duly obliged, his articles in *Le Monde* of September 1961 coinciding with the relocation of the French General Delegation to Rocher Noir.

In his 1962 book titled *Faut-il partager l’Algérie?* (Shall We Share Algeria?),<sup>6</sup> Peyrefitte juxtaposed the contradictory claims by the numerous antagonists about what they believed to be their “rights” in Algeria and their

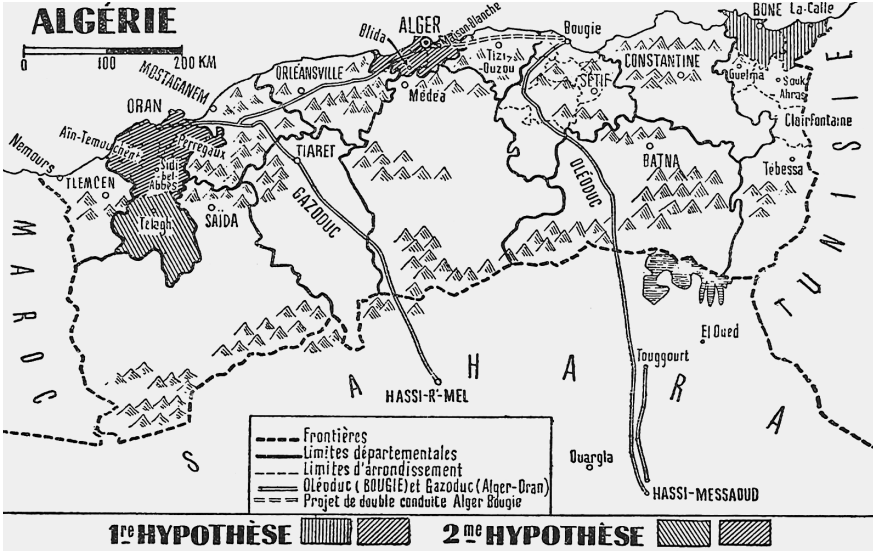


Fig. 71 a Algeria's regroupement, scenarios 1 and 2

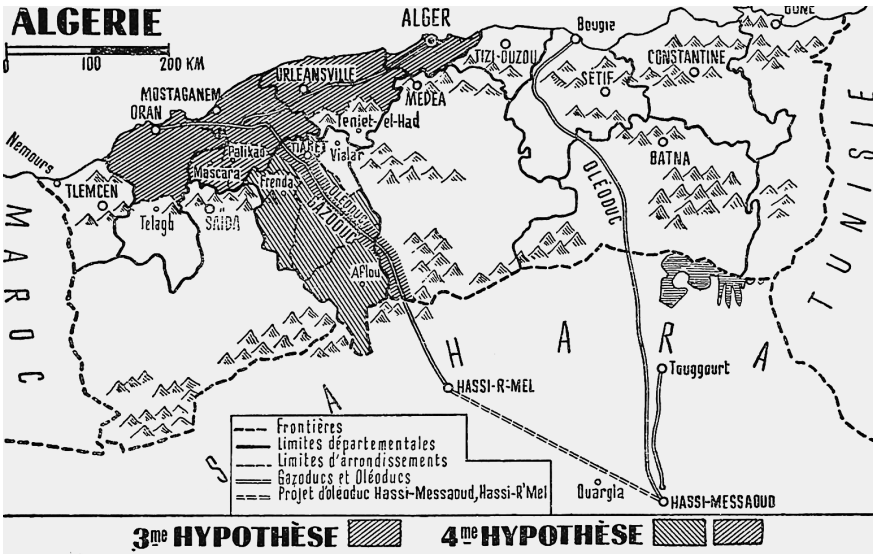


Fig. 71 b Algeria's regroupement, scenarios 3 and 4





Fig. 72 Hersant Plan

mutual incompatibility. He exposed the failures and defects of the French colonial doctrine of *assimilation* and used these shortcomings to justify the necessity of physically dividing Algerian territory, proposing new mapping of what Algeria as a country, or countries, should be composed of. Peyrefitte outlined the probable development of different scenarios in a divided Algeria, analyzing the constitution of the State of Israel and the partition of Palestine, the Swiss Confederation, the French-British colonies that eventually formed Canada, the partitions of Pakistan and India, Greek and Turkish Cyprus, and East and West Berlin. However, he disregarded Ceuta and Melilla, two Spanish exclaves within Moroccan territory that resulted from Spain's colonization of Morocco, which today are highly controlled, walled fortresses of the European Union within the African continent. (Just across the Strait of Gibraltar from Ceuta and Melilla lies the British exclave of Gibraltar, at the southern tip of the Iberian Peninsula.)

Peyrefitte recommended six potential *regroupement* scenarios (figs. 71a–d). In each map that accompanied his schemes, he defined the exact route of the oil and gas pipelines that would connect the source of exploitation in the Algerian Sahara to the northern parts of Algeria. The principles of the partition were based on territorial defense, community unity, and access to oil and gas, and in all six maps Algiers and Oran were demarcated as French exclaves. As Peyrefitte argued, “What is worthy of France is not to create a French Israel, but a multiracial society in the image of Lebanon, a country in which people would freely choose to live together and to link their fate

with that of a great country.”<sup>7</sup> This illusory scenario overlooked the fact that for 132 years the French colonial regime had had no intention of enforcing France’s national symbolic tripartite motto of *liberté, égalité, fraternité* and that it was therefore wishful thinking to believe that this situation could be suddenly rectified at the stroke of a pen. In addition, Peyrefitte glorified only France, calling it “a great country,” neglecting the Arab, Berber, and other great civilizations living in Algeria before French rule—an attitude that was faithful to the French colonial tradition.

Prior to Peyrefitte’s partition plan for Algeria, in 1957 (before de Gaulle’s return to power), Robert Hersant, a French right-wing newspaper magnate, had also advocated the partition of Algeria as a solution to the Algerian War of Independence. Politically, Hersant was initially involved with the Socialist youth movement in 1935, but he later founded the right-wing Jeune Front party in 1940. Then, he became a member of the *Secrétariat général à la jeunesse* (General Secretariat of the Youth) of the Vichy regime and had immersed himself in various indoctrination methods. In the immediate postwar period, Hersant succeeded in escaping the *épuration légale* (postwar legal purge), but in 1947 he was tried and sentenced to ten years of what some have described as “national indignity.”<sup>8</sup> In 1952, he benefited from the general amnesty. The “Hersant Plan” (fig. 72) was vigorously debated and rapidly abandoned—even the deputies of the Radical Party (who were colleagues of Hersant’s) did not support it. As Peyrefitte argued:

In the Hersant Plan, the partition was a goal in itself. In mine, it is neither the goal nor the means: the goal is association, the means is the federation, the sharing is merely the risk to take in this process. In short, the Hersant Plan, which some might have qualified as “imperialist” and “colonialist,” was rejected by the Right, who called the authors “traitors of the national cause.” Today, the project, whose inspiration is, objectively, much more liberal, is disqualified almost as if it were the expression of the ideology of the OAS.<sup>9</sup>

A number of historians have noted that Algeria’s 1961 partition project was de Gaulle’s strategic way of discouraging FLN fighters and accelerating the peace negotiations. One could also suggest that it was a strategic means of nurturing the expectations of the partisans of *Algérie française*, including those serving in the French Fifth Republic, when the OAS, during the last bloody days of the war, was desperately fighting for a partition of Algeria as an ultimate solution.<sup>10</sup>

### Negotiating the Future of Rocher Noir

In the wake of the unsuccessful peace negotiations of 1960 and 1961 in Melun, Switzerland, and Rousses and Evian-les-Bains (France), the French authorities and the members of the *Gouvernement provisoire de la République algérienne* (GPRA, or Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic) agreed to meet again at Evian-les-Bains and to discuss the conditions of the ceasefire and the interests of France in Algeria on 7 March 1962. The two powers signed what came to be known as the Evian Agreements on 18 March.<sup>11</sup> Although the ceasefire was announced the day after the signing of the accords, the OAS sabotaged the ceasefire by multiplying its brutal killings, merciless assaults, and pitiless reprisals, including attacks, gunfire, ambushes, bombings, and massacres, so that Algerian and French blood continued to be shed.

The ninety-three-page Evian Agreements defined the forthcoming financial, economic, military, technical, and cultural bonds to be shared between France and the not-yet-independent Algeria, which was summarized in the term *coopération*. Through this contract of cooperation, France preserved its presence in Algeria. The section “Déclaration de principes sur la coopération pour la mise en valeur des richesses du sous-sol du Sahara” (Declaration of Principles on the Cooperation for the Enhancement of the Underground Resources of the Sahara)<sup>12</sup> retained France’s privileges to exploit the oil and gas fields in the Algerian Sahara. France also protected the economic interests and technical precepts (“*coopération*”) of the Plan de Constantine in Algeria, maintained a number of military bases and installations in Algeria, including the strategic Mers El Kebir naval base, and retained the right to detonate atomic bombs in the testing grounds of the Algerian desert. More than 90 percent of French voters approved the terms of the Evian Agreements in a referendum of 8 April 1962, which was held in France (but not in Algeria).

According to the terms of the accords, an interim period was to be overseen by a Franco-Algerian Provisional Executive, whose mission involved organizing a referendum on Algeria’s self-determination, upholding the ceasefire and security of Algerians and Europeans, and supervising the release of prisoners. On 6 April 1962, de Gaulle, Prime Minister Debré, Minister for Algerian Affairs Joxe, and the French Minister of the Sahara and his Secretary of State of the Sahara signed a decree in Paris that nominated the twelve members of the Provisional Executive.<sup>13</sup> In their decisions, De Gaulle and the civil servants in France and in Algeria nonetheless still considered Algeria a French territory until the proclamation of independence, and therefore they felt entitled to appoint the members of the exec-



utive, Debrè arguing that it was “the government of the Republic that designates the members of this executive, and does so unconditionally.”<sup>14</sup> The committee included three Frenchmen from Algeria and eight Algerians, of which five were FLN members. The French authorities nominated the Algerian lawyer Abderrahmane Farès, who had just been released from prison, as President of the Provisional Executive, and the Frenchman Roger Roth, Mayor of Philippeville, Algeria (today Skikda), as Deputy President. The Provisional Executive was housed in the unfinished French bastion at Rocher Noir.

In order to preserve French legacies and interests in Algeria, de Gaulle replaced Jean Morin with the French diplomat Christian Fouchet. Fouchet was appointed High Commissioner of the French Republic to Algeria, a capacity he served in from 19 March to 3 July 1962 (the day of de Gaulle’s proclamation of independence). Following Debré’s resignation on 14 April 1962, de Gaulle appointed Georges Pompidou as Prime Minister; Pompidou later served as President of France from 1969 until his death in 1974. Pompidou was extremely familiar with the various Franco-Algerian questions and France’s interests in Algeria, since he had played a crucial role in the peace negotiations with the Algerian members of the FLN, the result of which was the Evian Agreements.

The preparations for the independence of Algeria provoked the outrage of the OAS in Algeria, particularly in the crowded cities of Algiers and Oran, and in response the OAS intensified its arbitrary violence under the banner of *Algérie française*. Although its chief architect, General Raoul Salan, was captured in Algiers on 21 April 1962, the OAS continued terrorizing Algeria’s inhabitants in what was advocated as an enforced *politique de la terre brûlée* (scorched-earth policy).

The headquarters for both the Provisional Executive and High Commissioner Fouchet were located at Rocher Noir. A French television news program of 25 March 1962 filmed Fouchet’s arrival, coincidentally depicting the vastness of the uncompleted buildings and infrastructure of Rocher Noir.<sup>15</sup> The black-and-white film shows the presence of cranes in the administrative town that had been built for the French government in Algeria and that suddenly became the center of operations of the Franco-Algerian Provisional Executive. Looking at the footage now, it is somewhat difficult to see whether or not the town in which Fouchet had just landed via helicopter was under construction, was abandoned, or was being reconstructed after wartime damage or a natural disaster of some kind. What is visible is the presence not only of a number of cranes but also of military watchtowers at

the entrance of the town and near the long slab-like shape of the office building. It was also at Rocher Noir that the widely reported official handover of power from Morin to Fouchet took place. The French public buildings and housing projects of Rocher Noir appeared in other French news programs, for instance in the footage reporting the official visits of the French prefects to Farès (Algeria) on 17 April 1962,<sup>16</sup> or during the inspection of 21 April 1962 of the armed forces who protected the population of Rocher Noir,<sup>17</sup> or in an interview with Fouchet of 4 March 1962, in which a journalist reported on the ongoing crimes of the OAS.<sup>18</sup>

In the referendum of 1 July 1962, the Algerian and European populations of Algeria were called to respond “yes” or “no” to the question: “Voulez-vous que l’Algérie devienne un Etat indépendant coopérant avec la France dans les conditions définies par la déclaration du 19 mars 1962?” (Should Algeria become an independent state, cooperating with France under the conditions defined by the declaration of 19 March 1962?). Over nine-tenths (91 percent) of the participants voted “yes.”<sup>19</sup> Although it is most likely that the voters approved of the first part of the question, referring to the independence of Algeria from France, it is not clear how many of them had read the conditions of cooperation that were mandated in the Evian Agreements before the referendum (or even after it).

In his declaration of 3 July 1962<sup>20</sup> on the “reconnaissance de l’indépendance de l’Algérie” (Recognition of Algerian Independence), de Gaulle summarized the juridical steps that had led France to grant Algeria its independence: the referendum of 8 January 1961 in France, which acknowledged the right of the Algerian population to self-determination, and the referendum of 8 April 1962, which approved the Evian Agreements of 19 March 1962 and enforced the law of 14 January 1961 on the Algerian independent state, in cooperation with France. He then declared that “with the election of self-determination of 1 July 1962, the Algerian people voted for the independence of Algeria in cooperation with France.”<sup>21</sup> This imposed legacy between France and Algeria and the planned attachment of Algeria to France inaugurated what was simply another French colonial era in Algeria—while the forms and means of colonialism were different from those of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the ends were similar.

On 2 July 1962, in the presence of a number of Algerian and French personalities and journalists, the President of the Provisional Executive conducted the *levée des couleurs algériennes* (The Raising of the Algerian Colors) and the French national colors of *bleu, blanc, and rouge* were finally replaced by the Algerian colors of *vert, blanc, and rouge* (fig. 73). A black-and-white



Fig. 73 *Levée des couleurs algériennes* (the raising of the Algerian colors) on 2 July 1962

photograph of the event portrays twelve gentlemen standing before the Algerian flag being raised at the unfinished Rocher Noir. Symbolically, a woman and an Algerian officer were requested to hold the rope of the Algerian flag. The verticality of the flagpole competes with the imposing construction site's crane and the uncompleted pillars. Allegorically, the historical moment of Algerian independence in cooperation with France was immortalized not in Algiers but rather in an unfinished town that seemed to have been abandoned, or at best was still under construction. The uncompleted status of Rocher Noir suggests, fitting de Gaulle's intention inscribed in the Plan de Constantine, that France should and would stay in Algeria in order to conclude the self-assigned mission it had begun. The photograph draws our attention from the war's destruction to the war's construction but obscures the fact that for eight long years this so-called construction had been an inherent part of France's colonial violence in Algeria.

In the immediate aftermath of the declaration of Algerian independence from France on 3 July 1962, the French economist Jean-Marcel Jeanneney was appointed as the first French Ambassador and High Commissioner to Algeria. He was primarily charged with the implementation of the Evian Agreements, including the accords of *cooperation* and the Plan de Constantine. Prior to his mission, Jeanneney had served as Minister of Industry in Debré's government from 1959 to 1962 and as such had been deeply familiar with de Gaulle's political and economic politics in Algeria. In his instructions to Jeanneney of 9 August 1962, the Secretary of State for Algerian Affairs ordered: "It is in the name of cooperation that the Ambassador of France will address his Algerian interlocutors. While the cooperation should not serve as a pretext for political intervention, it does enable the maintenance of our clear influence and might pave the way for a broader development."<sup>22</sup>

Jeanneney and his team of representatives from the French government in independent Algeria (cooperating with France) settled in Rocher Noir in the vacant offices of the former French General Delegation of the French Government in colonial Algeria. One of Jeanneney's coworkers later recalled that in July 1962, "We had settled into the spaces that were freed up by the General Delegation; we established ourselves in the different bungalows; everyone lived in a fully equipped bungalow."<sup>23</sup> Unlike other buildings and infrastructures that were constructed by the French authorities in Algeria during the colonial era, Rocher Noir was not transferred to the Algerian government. It remained French propriety on Algerian soil and was formally designated as such before Algeria gained its independence from France.<sup>24</sup>

The Evian Agreements regulated the juridical status of Rocher Noir. Article 19 of the section on the “Garanties des droits acquis et des engagements antérieurs” (Guarantees of Acquired Rights and Previous Commitments) mandated that “the [French] state-owned properties in Algeria will be transferred to the Algerian state, except, with the agreement of the Algerian authorities, the buildings deemed necessary for the normal functioning of temporary or permanent French facilities.”<sup>25</sup> The buildings of the fortified complex of Rocher Noir belonged to this latter category. The question of the property of Rocher Noir was disputed even after the ambassador and his team moved to Algiers in the autumn of 1962, Jeanneney having requested to move into the Villa des Oliviers in the center of Algiers, which had been the residence of General de Gaulle during the Second World War, when Algiers served as the capital of the Free French Forces from June 1943 to August 1944.

With the nomination of the President of the GPRA, Ferhat Abbas, as President of the *Assemblée nationale constituante de la république algérienne démocratique et populaire* (National Assembly of the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria) and the election of the formerly imprisoned Ahmed Ben Bella as President of the *Conseil des ministres* (Counsel of Algerian Ministers) in September 1962, the Provisional Executive ceased to exist. This turning point led to the establishment of the *République algérienne démocratique et populaire* (People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria) and the election of Ben Bella as the first President of the Algerian Republic in September 1963, which provoked tensions and ongoing battles for power among various FLN rivals, culminating in the coup d’état of June 1965—a coup carefully orchestrated by the Algerian army officer Houari Boumedienne, who seized power to become Algeria’s second president until his unexpected death in 1978.

In 1962, the inhabitants of Rocher Noir had also changed again. In a telegram of 20 October 1962 to the French Foreign Affairs bureau, Jeanneney wrote that he had informed the President of the Provisional Executive before its dissolution that he would “consign the facilities, administrative offices, and residences [the Provisional Executive] had occupied to elements of the French forces starting on 2 October.”<sup>26</sup> He argued that this transfer had been triggered by the Algerian authorities’ demand that a number of buildings located in the center of Algiers that were being used by the French army be vacated. Although the Algerian authorities had considered occupying Rocher Noir at the outset of the negotiations over its future, they eventually agreed to the removal of the French officers from Algiers so that Rocher Noir initially became a French military base within independent Algeria.



### Abandoning the Stronghold

The protracted talks between the Algerian and French authorities over several sites, including continued French ownership of Rocher Noir and several other prominent buildings in Algiers (such as Algiers Cathedral, built on an ancient mosque, and the radio and television headquarters), took on overtly political tones. Whereas the Algerian authorities based their claims on the right to independence and sovereignty over their territory, the French authorities took recourse to the aforementioned Article 19 of the Evian Agreements, the interpretation of which they rigorously asserted.<sup>27</sup> In a telegram to Joxe, Jeanneney pointed out that “the thesis of the literal interpretation of Article 19 has by the same token become difficult to defend as the starting point of negotiations that began more than three months after the establishment of independence.”<sup>28</sup> The French ambassador also warned that the juridical text did not specifically refer to the private sector, claiming that the ambiguity of the text entitled France to argue in extremis, for instance, that the rivers and seashores were still owned by the French state. For fear of further severe politico-military conflicts with his Algerian counterpart, who in the meantime had taken control of the radio and television buildings without a formal prearrangement with the French authorities,<sup>29</sup> Jeanneney recommended that “it will most likely be reasonable to indicate that we do not attach major importance to a quarrel over principles, and that we wish to treat the case on a pragmatic level.”<sup>30</sup>

As a response to Jeanneney’s call for pragmatism, Joxe, who had signed the Evian Agreements, insisted that the juridical and political spirit of Article 19 stood. Joxe replied: “Article 19 should be used in good faith: without waiting for the conclusion of an agreement on French state properties, we have given to the Algerian state the enjoyment of many buildings; Algeria, in turn, should not challenge our securities on the buildings we keep.”<sup>31</sup> Joxe recommended that the only solution to this impasse was to open broader negotiations on the topic on 15 November (after Algeria’s celebration of the anniversary of the Algerian Revolution on 1 November); such negotiations would allow the French government to draft the list of buildings that it deemed to be necessary to its ongoing operations. Joxe asked Jeanneney to notify Ben Bella that if the negotiations failed, then the French authorities would be “forced to immediately end the financial arrangements that have allowed Algeria to survive.”<sup>32</sup>

This was essentially blackmail and was the attitude that characterized Franco-Algerian “cooperation” in the aftermath of the Algerian War of Independence. The so-called cooperation was a form of colonialism, a pro-



traction of colonial legacies, and a preservation of colonial powers—some scholars calling it neocolonialism and others, ingenuously, postcolonialism.

In 1963, Rocher Noir became the headquarters for the French Personnel féminin de l'armée de terre (PFAT, or Women Soldiers of the Land Forces). Female French army officers were moved into the recently constructed buildings, where they used the facilities that Louis Gabriel de Hoÿm de Marien had designed for French civil servants in Algeria.

In April 1964, the French bastion of Rocher Noir was evacuated, the French authorities physically and definitively abandoned the newly built fortified and militarized town. The lights of Rocher Noir's watchtowers were switched off forever, but other French military bases continued to exist in Algeria after the formal end of the French war to keep Algeria under French colonial rule. More importantly, oil wells continued to be pumped, and French nuclear bombs for mass destruction continued to be repeatedly detonated in the Algerian Sahara long after Algeria's independence.

1 Morin, *De Gaulle et l'Algérie*, 195.

2 Ibid.

3 Debré, *Trois républiques*, 293.

4 Wall, *France, the United States, and the Algerian War*, 246.

5 Cited in *ibid.*

6 Peyrefitte, *Faut-il partager l'Algérie?*

7 Ibid., 77.

8 For a detailed biography, see for example, Chastenet and Chastenet, *Citizen Hersant*.

9 Ibid., 353.

10 Evans, *Algeria*, 316.

11 On the history of the Evian Agreements, see for example, Khedda, *Les accords d'Évian*; Hélie, *Les accords d'Évian*; Olivier Long, *Le dossier secret*.

12 FRANOM 19770828/14. Les Accords d'Évian, Textes et commentaires, La documentation française, 1962.

13 Decree of 6 April 1962, *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, 7 April 1962, p. 3644, [https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo\\_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000300079](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo_pdf.do?id=JORFTEXT000000300079) (accessed on 1 April 2016).

14 Debré, *Trois républiques*, 291.

15 Institut national de l'audiovisuel (hereafter INA). Allocution Fouchet et passation des pouvoirs, 25 March 1962, <https://www.ina.fr/video/CAF90002953> (accessed on 2 April 2016).

16 INA. Les préfets chez Farès au Rocher Noir, 17 April 1962, <http://www.ina.fr/video/CAF94073303> (accessed on 2 April 2016).

17 INA. Force locale Alger, 21 April 1962, <http://www.ina.fr/video/CAF90002960> (accessed on 2 April 2016).

18 INA. Christian Fouchet: interview en liberté, 4 March 1962, <https://www.ina.fr/video/CAF90006889-04/05/1962> (accessed on 2 April 2016).

19 For a chronology of Algeria's independence, see for example Evans, *Algeria*, 313–38; Monneret, *La phase finale*.

- 20 The commemoration of Algeria's independence is celebrated in Algeria on 5 July (and not on 3 July) because 5 July coincides with the invasion of Ottoman Algiers in 1830 with a naval bombardment by a French fleet under Admiral Duperré and a landing by French troops under Louis Auguste Victor de Ghaisne, French Comte de Bourmont.
- 21 De Gaulle, *Janvier 1961–Décembre 1963*, 242.
- 22 “Document 5: instructions pour l’ambassadeur de France à Alger, 9 August 1962,” in Liskenne, *L’Algérie indépendante*, 93.
- 23 Cited in *ibid.*, 40. The coworker was François Scheer, who was interviewed by Anne Liskenne on 19 March 2014.
- 24 *Ibid.*, 40, footnote no. 15.
- 25 Ben Khedda, *Les accords d’Évian*, 95.
- 26 ANFPFSS AG/5(1)/1809. Questions relatives à l’avenir de Rocher Noir, Télégramme, Algiers, 20 October 1962.
- 27 ANFPFSS AG/5(1)/1809. Questions relatives à l’avenir de Rocher Noir, Télégramme signé par Jeanneney, Algiers, 24 October 1962, pp. 4–5.
- 28 *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- 29 “Compte rendu de l’entretien que M. Jeanneney a eu le samedi 27 octobre de 16h à 17h10 avec M. Ben Bella” in Liskenne, *L’Algérie indépendante*, 157–68.
- 30 ANFPFSS AG/5(1)/1809. Questions relatives à l’avenir de Rocher Noir, Télégramme signé par Jenneaney, Algiers, 24 October 1962, p. 6.
- 31 ANFPFSS AG/5(1)/1809. Questions relatives à l’avenir de Rocher Noir, Télégramme signé par Joxe, Algiers, 26 October 1962, p. 2.
- 32 *Ibid.*, p. 3.

## Epilogue

In the aftermath of the Front National's (FN, or National Front) significant victories in France in the municipal elections of 2014, a number of French municipalities—particularly in the southern regions, where former *colons* live side-by-side with former colonized people from Algeria and elsewhere—voted for FN-aligned mayors. In 2015, the newly elected mayor of Béziers, who declared that he was not an FN member but who enjoyed their backing, chose to commemorate French colonialism in Algeria and the violence of the Algerian War of Independence by renaming a street in the town. He replaced the existing street-name sign Rue du 19 mars 1962—which marked the signing of the Evian Accords, the ceasefire, and the end of the Algerian Revolution and the French war to keep Algeria under colonial rule—with Rue du Commandant Denoix de Saint Marc (1922–2013) Héros Français, denoting instead a French army officer who had served in Algeria and was an advocate of *l'Algérie française* (French Algeria) who participated in the General's Putsch of April 1961 against de Gaulle—in other words, the very antithesis of *l'Algérie algérienne* (Algerian Algeria)—and the independence of Algeria. This emblematic change occurred within the French Fifth Republic—whose constitution was drafted in 1958, during the bloody War of Independence—and it replaced a standing symbol of Algerian independence from France with a celebration of France's colonial violence and the appointment of an advocate of colonized Algeria as a national hero.

This study has endeavored not only to unravel the inherent violence of French colonialism in Algeria but also to reveal its protocols, bureaucracies, mechanisms, and legacies in relation to practices of power in France. It has sought to demonstrate that during the Algerian Revolution Algeria's territory served not only as a theater of counterrevolutionary warfare but also as a breeding ground for new buildings and infrastructures that were designed to administer, oversee, dominate, and control Algerians and assimilate them to French rule, as well as to protect French civil servants from the terrorism of de Gaulle's French military and civil opponents. The practices of architects, engineers, planners, ethnologists, technocrats, and officers in Algeria's war zone (in a manner similar to a number of countries today) testify to the undeniable fact that they not only witnessed but also participated in the major coercive colonial programs of the time: the extrajudicial spaces of the *camps de regroupement*; the transformation of militarily controlled camps into planned villages; the politico-military and economic characters of the

Plan de Constantine; the colonial aspects of the semi-urban housing projects; the military purpose of the clearance of the *bidonvilles* and their substitution with low-cost housing units; the alibi of the French policies of decentralization and the constructions of mass-housing programs; and the design and construction of a French fortified city in Algeria. As such, these built environments abetted the very aims of French colonial violence in Algeria.

*Architecture of Counterrevolution: The French Army in Northern Algeria* has attempted to show that the spaces and buildings that the French Fourth and Fifth Republics designed and built during the Algerian Revolution epitomize not only the ferocious paroxysm of French colonialism but also the failures of French colonial policies of assimilation, association, integration, and Francization. At the moment when de Gaulle publically proclaimed *l'Algérie algérienne*—which was the beginning of the end of *l'Algérie française*—he ostensibly broke with the rigid canons of French colonial policy and acknowledged that France had been unsuccessful in achieving its goal of making Algeria French. This could do nothing, however, to erase what were the irreversible territorial and socioeconomic impacts of 132 years of French colonial presence in Algeria. As demonstrated in the final chapter of this study, as soon as his announcement had been made, de Gaulle and his men—including Georges Pompidou, who after Algeria's independence became first Prime Minister and then President of France—deceptively claimed that their goal was to expunge the policy of assimilation, when in reality the aim remained the same furtherance of French domination, albeit by substituting assimilation with cooperation.

De Gaulle's socioeconomic scheme, the Plan de Constantine announced in 1958, and the Franco-Algerian Evian Agreements, signed in 1962, extended France's presence in Algeria and ensured that France would maintain its manifold legacies in Algeria after the proclamation of Algerian independence. Although France did not succeed in making Algeria French and failed to impose its administration on the Algerians for generations to come, it nevertheless doggedly persisted in defending its economic stakes in Algeria, even after independence. Notable among these interests was the prolonging of the presence of French construction companies, oil and gas extraction businesses, centers for nuclear testing and technology, and a number of military bases in the newly sovereign Algeria. This was the strategic onset of an *Algérie algérienne* facilitated by the majority of heads of state of independent Algeria, who were either military officers of the *Armée de libération nationale* (ALN, or National Liberation Army) or members of

the Front de libération nationale (FLN, or National Liberation Front)—in other words, the signatories to the Evian Agreements.

The spatial, socioeconomic, and psychological consequences of the French war to keep Algeria under colonial rule indicate that the French military and civil authorities did not play a “positive” (to paraphrase the 2005 French law discussed in the introduction) role in Algeria. However, the fact that the French National Assembly succeeded in passing such a law forty-three years after the official termination of colonial rule in Algeria, advocating the “positive” character of colonialism in North Africa, points to two things. First, it indicates a strict control of both the history of French colonial violence in Algeria, in all its varying facets and vestiges, and of how it is fed to the general public in France.<sup>1</sup> Second, it suggests that the apologists for *l'Algérie française* and colonialism are still active today.

In contrast to this control, it is a widely recognized historical fact amongst counterinsurgency professionals, academics, and commentators, both at the time in the 1960s and ever since, that the theories and practices of French counterrevolutionary operations in colonized Algeria were rapidly transferred to other military forces around the globe. As French journalist Marie-Monique Robin powerfully illustrates in her 2003 documentary *Escadrons de la mort: l'école française* (Death Squads: The French School) and her 2004 book of the same title, French officers exported these methods to the Americas, notably to Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and the United States of America, and a number of French military figures who had served in the Algeria war went on to act as instructors in these countries in the 1960s and the 1970s. A permanent French military mission was even established in Argentina, and General Paul Aussaresses—the chief architect of the bloody Battle of Algiers—gave lectures at Fort Bragg, the United States Army training center in North Carolina.<sup>2</sup>

Another advocate of French counterrevolutionary practices in Algeria, David Galula, took part in shaping American counterinsurgency operations. In the 1960s, during the Vietnam War, he joined Harvard's Center for International Affairs and published two seminal books in English: *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* and *Pacification in Algeria: 1956–1958*.<sup>3</sup> Today, the counterrevolutionary measures that he and others tried and tested in Algeria are still cited in the American counterinsurgency field manuals that are studied and used by officers waging the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.<sup>4</sup>

Even though this study has focused closely on French colonial violence and left the Algerian response aside, it is important to note that the Algerian

Revolution and its revolutionary strategies and tactics became a model—both during and after the revolution—for a number of other anticolonial movements and struggles around the world, including for the Palestine Liberation Organization led by Yasser Arafat and the African National Congress in South Africa led by Nelson Mandela. Some authors have called Algeria the Mecca of Revolution.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, the Algerian opposition to colonial rule did not begin with the Algerian Revolution in 1954 but rather with France’s fierce colonization of Algeria in 1830. In 1840, the French Governor General of Algeria, Marshal Thomas-Robert Bugeaud, stated in front of the French National Assembly: “Wherever [in Algeria] there is fresh water and fertile land, there one must locate *colons*, without concerning oneself to whom these lands belong.”<sup>6</sup> This book has endeavored to delineate the continuation of France’s colonial practices and the persistence of France’s colonial mind.

Under colonial rule in Algeria (and elsewhere), human beings, lands, and built environments were occupied, denuded, and destroyed. At the same time, the French civil and military regimes designed and built strategic infrastructures and settlements in order to colonize, “locate *colons*” (as Bugeaud claimed), subjugate, segregate, regroup, control, and ultimately facilitate economic exploitation. This account delineates some of the aspects of the politics of this design, scrutinizes the psychology of colonialism, and portrays the role of planning and architecture in a war zone. Furthermore, this study is a contribution to an understanding of the history of so-called post-war architecture in terms of two central components: on the one hand, the programs of destruction and construction that European empires envisaged and carried out in order to impede the revolutions and wars for national liberation of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s in Africa and Asia and in order to protect European *colons*; and on the other hand, the prolongation of a number of fascist spatial policies, techniques, and technologies that were implemented in Europe and in the colonies in the 1940s.

*Architecture of Counterrevolution: The French Army in Northern Algeria* provides an understanding of a piece in what is a complex puzzle (yet to be fully traced) of how colonial policies and counterrevolutionary military operations exhibited a pronounced interest in architecture and spatial planning and exploited them as elements in their overall repertoire of coercive instruments—strategies that were backed up by legal measures, including the *pleins pouvoirs* (full powers) and the *état d’urgence* (state of emergency), a term that has become familiar to a number of people and countries today.



- 1 This despite the fact that a number of historians have devoted considerable energy in recent years to exposing the phenomenon of French colonial violence in Algeria. See for example Branche, *La torture et l'armée*; Branche and Thénault, *La guerre d'Algérie*; Thénault, *Violence ordinaire*; Thénault, "Personnel et internés."
- 2 Marie-Monique Robin, *Escadrons de la mort: l'école française*, documentary (Ideale Audience, ARTE France, 2003); Robin, *Escadrons de la mort*.
- 3 Galula's theories and books on warfare are discussed in chapter 2.
- 4 See for example Petraeus and Amos, "Counterinsurgency."
- 5 See for example Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*.
- 6 Cited in Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, 30.



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# Abbreviations

AA	Affaires algériennes (Algerian Affairs)	CAPER	Caisse pour l'accèsion à la propriété et à l'exploitation rurale (Fund for Property Access and Rural Exploitation)
ACCF	Association des combattants de la communauté française (Association of French Community Fighters)	CAS	Cité administrative satellite (Administrative Satellite City)
ADHG	Archives départementales de la Haute-Garonne, Toulouse	CCAT	Commissions centrales de l'aménagement du territoire (Central Committees for Territorial Development)
ADIR	Association nationale des anciennes déportées et internées de la Résistance (Association of Women Deportees and Internees of the Resistance)	CCMAN	Commandement civil et militaire des Aurès-Nementchas (Civil and Military Commander-in-Chief of the Aurès-Nementchas)
AEDAA	Association pour l'étude et le développement de l'agglomération algéroise (Association for the Study and Development of the Algiers Region)	CDEF	Centre de doctrine d'emploi des forces (Center of Doctrine for the Employment of the Forces)
AFCDG	Archives de la fondation Charles de Gaulle, Paris	CDRA	Commission de réforme agraire et d'aménagement rural (Committee of Agrarian Reform and Rural Planning)
AGEA	Association générale des étudiants d'Algérie (General Association of Students from Algeria)	CEA	Cercle d'études architecturales (Circle of Architectural Studies)
AI	Affaires indigènes (Indigenous Affairs)	CEDA	Caisse d'équipement pour le développement de l'Algérie (Fund for the Equipment and Development of Algeria)
ALN	Armée de libération nationale (National Liberation Army)	CFHU	Confédération française pour l'habitation et l'urbanisme (French Confederation for Housing and City Planning)
ANFPFSS	Archives nationales de France, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine, Paris	CFLN	Comité français de libération nationale (French Committee of National Liberation)
ATBAT	Atelier des bâtisseurs (Builders Workshop)	CGAT	Commission générale d'aménagement du territoire (General Committee for Territorial Development)
BCEOM	Bureau central d'études pour les équipements d'outre-mer (Central Office of Studies for Overseas Equipment)	CGP	Commissariat général du plan (General Commissariat of the Plan)
BCPN	Bâtiments civils et palais nationaux (Civil Buildings and National Palaces)	CHEM	Centre des hautes études militaires (Center for Advanced Military Studies)
BCRA	Bureau central de renseignement et d'actions (Central Office of Intelligence and Action)	CHSP	Centre d'histoire de Sciences Po, Paris
BERU	Bureau d'études et de réalisations urbaines (Office of Urban Investigation and Realization)	CIA	Compagnie immobilière algérienne (Algerian Real Estate Company)
BRS	Bureaux de renseignements spécialisés (Specialized Intelligence Bureaus)	CIAM	Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne (International Congresses of Modern Architecture)
CADAT	Caisse algérienne d'aménagement du territoire (Algerian Fund for Regional Planning)	CICRC	Commission internationale contre le régime concentrationnaire (International Commission on Concentration Camps)
CAEES	Centre algérien d'expansion économique et social (Algerian Center of Economic and Social Expansion)		



CILOF	Compagnie immobilière pour le logement des fonctionnaires civils et militaires (Real Estate Company for Military and Civil Servant Housing)		musulmans d'Algérie en métropole et pour leurs familles (Social Action Fund for Muslim Workers from Algeria in the Métropole and Their Families)
CNF	Comité national français (French National Committee)	FASILD	Fonds d'aide et de soutien pour l'intégration et la lutte contre les discriminations (Fund of Aid and Support for Integration and Struggle against Discriminations)
CNRS	Centre national de la recherche scientifique (National Center for Scientific Research), Paris	FDH	Fonds de dotation de l'habitat (Funds for Housing Endowment)
COFROR	Compagnie française d'organisation (French Organization Company)	FFL	Forces françaises libres (Free French Forces)
CRHR	Commissariat à la reconstruction et à l'habitat rural (Rural Housing and Reconstruction Commission)	FLN	Front de libération nationale (National Liberation Front)
CRS	Compagnies républicaines de sécurité (Republican Security Companies)	FN	Front National (National Front)
CRUA	Comité révolutionnaire d'unité et d'action (Revolutionary Committee for Unity and Action)	FNAF	Front national pour l'Algérie française (National Front for French Algeria)
CSATC	Conseil supérieur de l'aménagement du territoire et de la construction (High Council of Territorial Development and Construction)	FNC	Front national combattant (Armed National Front)
DEL	Dépenses d'équipement local (Local Equipment Expenditures)	FRANOM	Archives nationales d'outre-mer, Aix-en-Provence
DGER	Direction générale des études et recherches (General Directorate for Studies and Research)	GEANARP	Groupe d'étude et d'action pour les nord-africains de la région parisienne (Study and Action Group for North Africans in the Paris Region)
DGSS	Direction générale des services spéciaux (General Directorate of Special Services)	GG Building	Palais du Gouvernement (General Government Building)
DPLG	Diplômé par le gouvernement	GMS	Groupe mobile de sécurité (Mobile Security Group)
DTSG	Direction des travaux spéciaux du génie (Direction of Engineering and Special Works)	GPRA	Gouvernement provisoire de la République algérienne (Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic)
EAEC	European Atomic Energy Community	GPRF	Gouvernement provisoire de la République française (Provisional Government of the French Republic)
EC	European Community	HBM	Habitat à bon marché (Low-Cost Housing)
ECPAD	Etablissements de communication et de production audiovisuelle de la défense (Office of Communication and Audio-Visual Productions of Defense), Paris	HLL	Hors-La-Loi (outside the law)
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community	HLM	Habitat à loyer modéré (Low-Cost Housing)
EEC	European Economic Community	IAURP	Institut d'aménagement et d'urbanisme de la région parisienne (Institute for Regional and Urban Planning for the Paris Region)
FAF	Front pour l'Algérie française (Front for French Algeria)	ICPC	Ingénieur en chef des ponts et chaussées
FAN	Front d'action nationale (National Action Front)	ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
FAS	Fonds d'action social pour les travailleurs	IGAME	Inspecteur général de l'administration

## Architecture of Counterrevolution

	en mission extraordinaire (General Inspector of Administration in the Extraordinary Mission)		(Politico-administration Organization)
IGRP	Inspection générale des regroupements de population (General Inspection of the Regrouping of the Population)	PAS	Prestations d'action sociale (Social Action Funds)
INA	Institut national de l'audiovisuel	PFAT	Personnel féminin de l'armée de terre (Women Soldiers of the Land Forces)
ITEBA	Institut technique du bâtiment et des travaux publics en Algérie (Technical Institute of Building and Public Works in Algeria)	RAF	Rassemblement pour l'Algérie française (Rally for French Algeria)
IUUA	Institut d'urbanisme de l'université d'Alger (Institute of Urbanism at Algiers University)	RPF	Rassemblement du peuple français (French People's Rally)
IUUP	Institut d'urbanisme de l'université de Paris (Institute of Urbanism at Paris University)	SAAE	Service de l'action administrative et économique (Service of Administrative and Economic Action)
JMO	Journaux de marches et opérations (War Diaries)	SAM	Salon des arts ménagers (Household Arts Show)
LAURS	Ligue d'action universitaire radicale et socialiste (League of Radical Socialist University Action)	SAM	Société des architectes modernes (Society of Modern Architects)
LEN	Logements économiques normalisés (Standardized Low-Cost Housing)	SAP	Société agricole de prévoyance (Provident Agriculture Society)
LEPN	Logements économiques de première nécessité (Basic Necessity Low-Cost Housing)	SAS	Sections administratives spécialisées (Specialized Administrative Sections)
LOGECO	Logement économique et familial (Low-cost and Family Dwellings)	SAT-FMA	Service d'assistance technique aux français musulmans d'Algérie (Office of Technical Assistance to the French Muslims of Algeria)
LOPOFA	Logements populaires et familiaux (Working-Class and Family Housing)	SAU	Section administrative urbaine (Urban Administrative Section)
MC	Ministère de la construction (Ministry of Construction)	SCA	Service cinématographique des armées (Cinematographic Service of the Armed Forces)
MRL	Ministère de la reconstruction et du logement (Ministry of Reconstruction and Housing)	SCAA	Service de coordination des affaires algériennes (Office of Coordination of Algerian Affairs)
MRU	Ministère de la reconstruction et de l'urbanisme (Ministry of Reconstruction and Urbanism)	SCAPCO	Sections coopératives agricoles du Plan de Constantine (Cooperative Agricultural Sections of the Constantine Plan)
NF	Nouveaux Francs	SCET	Société centrale pour l'équipement du territoire (Central Company for Territorial Equipment)
OAS	Organisation de l'armée secrète, or Organisation armée secrète (Secret Army Organization)	SCIC	Société centrale immobilière de la caisse (Central Real Estate Company of the Fund)
OCRS	Organisation commune des régions sahariennes (Joint Organization of the Saharan Regions)	SCS	Service des centres sociaux (Social Centers Service)
OPA	Organisation politico-administrative	SCSE	Service des centres sociaux éducatifs (Social and Educational Centers Service)
		SDAURP	Schéma directeur d'aménagement

	et d'urbanisme de la région de Paris (Development and Planning of the Region of Paris Program)		tiated Development Zones)
SEMA	Société d'économie et de mathématiques appliquées (Company of Economics and Applied Mathematics)	ZEC	Zones de l'est constantinois (Zone of Eastern Constantine)
SERA	Société d'équipement de la région d'Alger (Equipment Company for the Region of Algiers)	ZID	Zones d'industrialisation décentralisée (Decentralized Industrialization Zones)
SERB	Société d'équipement de la région de Bône (Equipment Company for the Region of Bône)	ZOPI	Zones de pré-industrialisation (Proto-industrialization Zones)
SEZID	Société d'équipement des zones d'industrialisation décentralisées (Company for Equipment of the Zones of Decentralized Industrialization)	ZOR	Zones d'organisation rurale (Rural Organization Zones)
SHAA	Service historique de l'armée de l'air	ZUP	Zones à urbaniser par priorité (Zones of High-Priority Urbanization)
SHAT	Service historique de l'armée de terre, Château de Vincennes, Paris		
SONACOTRA	Société nationale de construction de logements pour les travailleurs (National Society of Housing Construction for Workers)		
SONACOTRAL	Société nationale de construction de logements pour les travailleurs algériens (National Society of Housing Construction for Algerian Workers)		
SR	Service de renseignement (Intelligence Service)		
UIA	Union of International Architects		
UNAMAT	Union algérienne de l'industrie et du commerce des matériaux de construction (Algeria-Based Union of Industry and Commerce of Construction Materials)		
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization		
UNFOHLM	Union national des fédérations d'organismes d'HLM (National Union of Federations of HLM Organizations)		
US	United States of America		
ZAC	Zones d'aménagement concerté (Concerted Development Zones)		
ZAC	Zones d'aménagement coordonné (Coordinated Development Zones)		
ZAD	Zones d'aménagement différé (Differen-		

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# Index

## A

Abbas, Ferhat 283  
Abbé Pierre (Henri Antoine Grouès) 126  
Action psychologique (psychological actions) 26, 46  
Adamov, Arthur 233  
Adrar 242  
Affaires algériennes (AA, Algerian Affairs) 60  
Affaires indigènes (AI, Indigenous Affairs) 54, 56  
Afghanistan 53, 63  
African National Congress 294  
Agence du plan d'Alger 161, 172, 188–89, 212, 216, 242  
Agrarian reform 113, 179, 180, 185, 188–89  
Aïn Graoueh 71  
Aïn-Romana 69  
Ain-Taya 253  
Aix-en-Provence 161, 294  
Algerian Affairs *see* Affaires algériennes  
Algerian Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation 14  
Algerian Civil War 13–14, 37–38, 236  
Algerian independence *see also* Evian Accords 52, 54  
Algerian Question 9, 233  
Algerian women 53, 59, 62, 94, 100, 104, 111, 125, 142, 188, 190, 192, 234, 286  
Algérie algérienne 223, 234, 239  
Algérie française 20, 21, 27, 35, 41, 43, 44, 60, 97, 130, 153, 162, 169, 223, 227, 230, 234–35, 238, 252, 271, 280, 282  
Almi, Saïd 18, 294  
American Victory Program 106

Anciens combattants musulmans (Algerian veterans of the Second World War) 118–20  
Annaba *see* Bône  
Antony 240  
Appel pour une trêve civile pour l'Algérie (Appeal for a Civil Truce for Algeria) 162  
Arafat, Yasser 294  
Argentina 52  
Armée de libération nationale (ALN, Algerian Liberation Army) 8, 14, 59  
Armistice 39, 106  
Army of Africa 34, 40  
Arpajan 240  
Arris 42  
Arzew 206, 212, 222  
Assemblée nationale constituante de la république algérienne démocratique et populaire (National Assembly of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria) 286  
Assizes Court 80  
Association d'urbanisme Les Amis d'Alger (Association of Urbanism Algiers' Friends) 130  
Association des combattants de la communauté française (ACCF, Association of French Community Fighters) 235  
Association générale des étudiants d'Algérie (AGEA, General Association of Students from Algeria) 235  
Association nationale des déportées et internées de la résistance (ADIR, Association of Women Deportees and Internees of the Resistance) 34  
Association pour l'étude et le développement de l'agglomération algéroise (AEDAA, Association for the Study and Development of the Algiers Region) 161

ATBAT-Afrique 119  
Atelier des bâtisseurs (ATBAT, Builders Workshop) 118  
Athens Charter 195  
Atomic tests *see* nuclear tests *see also* Gerboise  
Aurès (exhibition) 34  
Aurès (region) 11, 24–26, 30–39, 41–43, 51, 54–56, 58, 60, 80, 83, 185  
Aussaresses, Paul 52, 293

## B

Bab El Oued 218  
Bachdjarah 162  
Bachelot, Bernard 17, 240, 242, 245–48, 256, 260, 265–66  
Bachelot, Claire 17, 245  
Bab-Ali 173  
Badani, Daniel 210  
Bandung 233  
Bardet, Gaston 195  
Barral 65  
Barthe, Guy 220  
Barthes, Roland 59  
Batna 43, 56, 84–85, 207  
Battle of Algiers 9, 52, 73, 80, 85, 97, 149–50, 162, 242  
Bayonne 240  
Beaucheraye 173  
Beaudouin, Eugène 210, 239–42  
Beauvoir, Simone de 233  
Bel-Air 160  
Bellefontaine 244  
Bélorgey, Gérard 16, 294  
Ben Bella, Ahmed 287, 288  
Ben Omar 220  
Beni-Saf 223  
Béri, Henri 216, 218, 220, 228, 248, 268



- Berthault 173
- Bienvenu, François 114, 131–32
- Bigéard, Marcel 52
- Biskra 43
- Bize, Georges 248
- Blanchot, Maurice 233
- Blida 20–21, 66, 69, 116, 119, 198, 222
- Bloch-Lainé, François 171
- Bodiansky, Vladimir 118, 218
- Bogotá 40
- Bône (*today* Annaba) 18, 63, 84–85, 146, 155, 164, 189, 203, 210, 212, 214, 222
- Bonnome 206–7, 222
- Bordeaux 12, 24, 40, 80–81, 92, 94
- Bordj-M'raou 64
- Bou Merdès 261
- Bou-Hamra 155
- Boubilia-Birardi 160
- Bougie 206, 222
- Bouinan 66
- Bouira 71
- Boulevard Clémenceau 173
- Boulevard de l'Impératrice 268
- Boulilef 154–55, 173
- Boumedienne, Houari 14, 286
- Bourdieu, Pierre 16, 49
- Bourg 194
- Bourgès-Maunoury, Maurice 9, 56, 79
- Bouteflika, Abdelaziz 14
- Breton, André 233
- Brise-soleil 220
- Bugeaud, Thomas-Robert 11, 57–58, 63, 65, 294
- Bugnicourt, Jacques 192, 194–200
- Bureau central d'études pour les équipements d'outre-mer (BCEOM, Central Office of Studies for Overseas Equipment) 207
- Bureau central de renseignement et d'action (BCRA, Central Office of Intelligence and Action) 40
- Bureau d'études et de réalisations urbaines (BERU, Office of Urban Investigation and Realization) 206
- Bureau psychologique (Psychological Bureau) 51
- Bureaux arabes (Arab Bureaus) 42, 63
- Bureaux d'aménagement rural (Offices of Rural Planning) 187
- Bureaux de contrôle de populations (Population Control Bureaus) 154
- Bureaux de renseignements spécialisés (BRS, Specialized Intelligence Bureaus) 94
- C**
- Caisse algérienne d'aménagement du territoire (CADAT, Algerian Fund for Regional Planning) 184, 208–10, 227–28
- Caisse d'équipement pour le développement de l'Algérie (CEDA, Fund for the Equipment and Development of Algeria) 109, 228, 243–44, 248
- Caisse des dépôts et consignations (Deposits and Consignments Funds) 171
- Caisse pour l'accession à la propriété et à l'exploitation rurale (CAPER, Fund for Property Access and Rural Exploitation) 184, 189, 195, 198
- Camus, Albert 162
- Cap-Martin 268
- Carmaux 240
- Carrières Centrales 218
- Carrières Jaubert 162, 217–18
- Casablanca 119, 218
- Casbah 60, 139, 150
- Cassan, Urbain 239
- Cathedral of Sacré-Cœur 212
- Catroux, Georges Albert Julien 10, 79, 81
- Ceasefire (in 1962) 8, 15, 227, 234, 277, 282, 291
- Çelik, Zeynep 18
- Centre Culturel Albert Camus 162
- Central Places Theory 195
- Centre algérien d'expansion économique et social (CAEES, Algerian Center of Economic and Social Expansion) 214
- Centre de doctrine d'emploi des forces (CDEF, Center of Doctrine for the Employment of the Forces) 62–63
- Centre des hautes études militaires (CHEM, Center for Advanced Military Studies) 90
- Centres de détention administrative (administrative detention centers) 45
- Centres sociaux (social centers) 38
- Cercle d'études architecturales (CEA, Circle of Architectural Studies) 172
- Ceuta 280
- Chad 212
- Challand (architect) 220
- Challe Plan *see* Plan Challe
- Challe, Maurice 105, 179, 235, 245
- Chambord 240
- Chantiers de chômage et de pacification 90–91
- Chapel, Jean 92
- Château of Versailles 254
- Chenoua 198
- Cherchell 268
- Cherrière, Paul 35
- Chevallier, Jacques 35, 160–62, 171, 173, 212, 216, 220, 242
- Chile 52
- Chirac, Jacques 7–8
- Chlef *see* Orléansville
- Christaller, Walter 195
- CIAM *see* Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne
- CIAM-Algiers group 128, 160, 206



- CIAM II (1929, Frankfurt) 144
- CIAM IX (1953, Aix-en-Provence) 160
- Cité de la régie foncière d'Alger (Housing of Algiers Property Management Agency) called "Perez" 173
- Cité de recasement (resettlement housing) 140, 218
- Cité des anciens combattants (Housing of Veterans) 173
- Cité musulmane évolutive 140
- Cité Taine 173
- Cités de transit (transitory estates) 169, 173
- Cités HLM called "Chevalier" 173
- Cités musulmanes (Muslim settlements) 164
- Civilizing mission 42, 73, 190, 192, 214
- Claro, Léon 129, 131
- Claudius-Petit, Eugène 13, 125, 137, 165–72, 175
- Clausewitz, Carl von 236
- Clermont-Ferrand 240
- Climat de France 161, 173, 217
- Clochardisation 37
- Clos-Salembier 156–59
- Code de l'Indigénat (Code for the Indigenous People) 136
- Cohen, Jean-Louis 18, 297–98
- Colonists *see* Colons
- Colons 35, 79, 97, 129, 162, 188–89, 222, 227, 236, 291, 294
- Comité d'entente des anciens combattants (Common Committee for Veterans) 235
- Comité de vigilance des intellectuels antifascistes (Vigilance Committee of Antifascist Intellectuals) 39
- Comité français de libération nationale (CFLN, French Committee of National Liberation) 98, 106
- Comité national français (CNF, the French National Committee) 40
- Comité révolutionnaire d'unité et d'action (CRUA, Revolutionary Committee for Unity and Action) 82
- Commandement civil et militaire des Aurès-Nementchas (CCMAN, Civil and Military Commander-in-Chief of the Aurès-Nementchas) 56
- Commissaire d'état chargé des affaires musulmanes (State Commissioner for Muslim Affairs) 81
- Commissariat à la reconstruction et à l'habitat rural (CRHR, Rural Housing and Reconstruction Commission) 65–67, 75, 88, 141, 145, 184–85, 192, 200–2
- Commissariat général du plan (CGP, General Commissariat of the Plan) 83, 106, 107–9, 125, 127, 207, 226
- Commission de l'habitat et de l'urbanisme (Commission of Housing and Urbanism) 113
- Commission de réforme agraire et d'aménagement rural (CDRA, Committee of Agrarian Reform and Rural Planning) 198
- Commission générale d'aménagement du territoire (CGAT, General Committee for Territorial Development) 205–8
- Commission internationale contre le régime concentrationnaire (CICRC, International Commission on Concentration Camps) 34, 45
- Commission Maspétiol 109
- Commission of Housing at the General Council in Algiers 138
- Commissioner of Construction and Urbanism of the Paris Region 126
- Commissions centrales de l'aménagement du territoire (CCAT, Central Committees for Territorial Development) 205
- Commissions départementales, or commissions régionales (departmental or regional committees) 205
- Compagnie immobilière algérienne (CIA, Algerian Real Estate Company) 162–65, 167, 171, 218, 220, 248, 268
- Compagnie immobilière pour le logement des fonctionnaires civils et militaires (CILOF, Real Estate Company for Military and Civil Servant Housing) 164
- Compagnies républicaines de sécurité (CRS, Republican Security Companies) 256
- Compiègne 34
- Confédération française pour l'habitation et l'urbanisme (CFHU, French Confederation for Housing and City Planning) 137
- Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne (CIAM, International Congresses of Modern Architecture) 128
- Congrès national d'habitation et d'urbanisme (National Congress of Housing and Town Planning) 137
- Conseil supérieur de l'aménagement du territoire et de la construction (CSATC, High Council of Territorial Development and Construction) 112, 205
- Conseil supérieur du Plan de Constantine (High Council of the Constantine Plan) 226
- Conseil supérieur du plan de l'Algérie (High Council of the Plan of Algeria) 108
- Constantine 11, 12, 16, 24, 32, 34, 43, 52, 55, 61, 63, 66, 80–94
- Constantine Plan *see* Plan de Constantine
- Cornaton, Michel 16, 38
- Corso 244
- Costa, Lucio 254
- Council of the Order of Architects in Algeria 113–14, 138
- Courbon (Captain, SAS Chief of Clos-Salembier) 156–60
- Crémieux Decree 136

Crise du logement (housing crisis) 132

Croix de Feu (Cross of Fire) 81

Croix-Rouge Française (CRF) *see* French Red Cross

## D

Dalloz, Pierre 172

Dar El Beida *see* Maison Blanche

Daure, Alexis 13, 16, 216, 218–21, 228, 248, 250–52, 268

Daure, Josette 16

Décentralisation industrielle (industrial decentralization) 223–24

Déconcentration (devolution) 252, 271

Delouvrier, Paul 10, 12, 15–16, 20, 27, 105–11, 115, 127, 160, 165, 175, 179, 180–90, 192, 199, 208, 214, 222, 224, 226–27, 238, 245, 271

Deluz, Jean-Jacques 16, 18, 162, 216, 218, 261

Dem El Begrat 145–46

Denis, Roland 40

Dépenses d'équipement local (DEL, Local Equipment Expenditures) 183–84, 187

Debré, Michel 102, 181, 238–39, 277, 282–83, 286

Diar El Afia 220

Diar El Kef 173, 217–18

Diar El Mahçoul 161, 218

Diar El Ourida 119

Diar El Saada 161

Diar Eschems 220

Diar Sidi Yassine 119

Direction des affaires arabes (Bureau of Arab Affairs) 57

Direction des travaux spéciaux de génie (DTSG, Direction of Engineering and Special Works) 242

Direction du plan (Planning Directorate) 110

Direction générale des études et recherches (DGER, General Directorate for Studies and Research) 40

Direction générale des services spéciaux (DGSS, General Directorate of Special Services) 40

Djenan El Hassan 161, 218, 268

Drew, Jane 198

Ducollet, Jacques 248, 252

Ducourneau, Paul 35, 36

Dufour (architect, Rocher Noir) 248

Dunkirk 222

Duzerville 222

## E

Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts (Paris) 129, 210, 212, 216, 239–40

Ecole spéciale militaire of Saint-Cyr 57

Einaudi, Jean-Luc 85–86

El Biar 161

El Bir 212

El Kader, Abd (El Emir) 57

El Oued 43

Emergency *see* state of emergency

Emery, Pierre-André 13, 128, 130, 132, 139, 141, 160, 162, 206, 216, 264

Empalot 240

Epuration légale (legal purge) 80, 281

Equipe itinérante d'aménagement rural (Mobile Team for Rural Planning) 187, 190

Etat-Major mixte (Civil-Military General Staff) 55

Eucalyptus (housing settlement) 161, 163

European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC) 107

European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) 107

European Community (EC)

107, 132

European Economic Community (EEC) 107

European Recovery Program *see* Marshall Plan

Evian Accords (Agreements) 14, 104, 230, 234, 252, 281–87

Evian-les-Bains 282

Existenzminimum dwelling 144

Exposition d'urbanisme et d'architecture moderne (Exhibition of City Planning and Modern Architecture) 130

Exposition de la cité moderne: urbanisme, architecture, habitation (Exhibition of the Modern City: Urbanism, Architecture, Housing) in Algiers (1936) 132, 134–35

## F

Faivre, Maurice 16, 199

Fanon, Frantz 9, 116–17

Farès, Abderrahmane 283–84

Faubleé, Jacques 34

Faure, Edgar 9, 43, 56, 79

Fédération algérienne des organismes de HBM (Algeria-based Federation of Low-Cost Housing Organizations) 137

Fonds d'action social pour les travailleurs musulmans d'Algérie en métropole et pour leurs familles (FAS, Social Action Fund for Muslim Workers from Algeria in the Métropole and their Families, *today known as* FASILD) 174–75

Fonds d'aide et de soutien pour l'intégration et la lutte contre les discriminations (FASILD) *see above*

Fonds de dotation de l'habitat (FDH, Funds for Housing Endowment) 146

Forces françaises libres (FFL, Free French Forces) 34, 287

Fouchet, Christian 10, 283–84

Fould 240

Foyer civique (Civic Foyer)

- 129, 132
- Foyer-hôtels (dormitory hotels) 169, 171, 175
- Foyers de promotion sociale (places of social promotion) 182
- Foyers *see* Foyer-hôtels
- Frais Vallon 217–19
- Français à part entière (fully fledged Frenchmen) 100, 140
- Français musulmans d'Algérie (FMA, French Muslims from Algeria) 94, 136, 165
- France Mendès, Pierre 9, 31, 35–36, 39, 41, 43, 79, 81, 83
- Franco-Algerian Provisional Executive 282–84, 287
- Frankfurt 144
- French Red Cross 183
- Fresnes 34
- Front de libération nationale (FLN, National Liberation Front) 8, 14, 16, 82, 85, 92, 94, 116, 146, 150, 156, 165, 180, 199, 227, 233, 235, 281, 283, 287, 293
- Front national (FN, National Front) 234, 291
- Front national pour l'Algérie française (FNAF, National Front for French Algeria) 235
- Front pour l'Algérie française (FAF, Front for French Algeria) 234
- Fry, Maxwell 198
- G**
- Gaillard, Félix 79, 165
- Gallieni, Joseph Simon 11, 57–58
- Galula, David 11, 52–53, 58, 293
- Gas, Louis 65
- Gaulle, Charles de 9–14, 16, 27, 34, 39–41, 55, 63, 79, 80, 82, 84, 92, 94, 97–122, 125–27, 140, 149, 153, 160, 161, 172, 174, 179, 180, 205, 208, 212, 220–27, 230, 233–39, 245, 252–53, 261, 270, 277, 281–89, 291, 292
- Gauthier (architect, Rocher Noir) 248
- Geneva Accords 35
- Geneva Convention of 1949 36–37
- Gerboise Blanche (White Jerboa) 102
- Gerboise Bleue (Blue Jerboa) 102
- Gerboise Rouge (Red Jerboa) 102
- Gerboise Verte (Green Jerboa) 102
- Germany 34, 81, 106, 125
- Gibraltar 280
- Giraud, Henri 98, 106
- Glissant, Edouard 233
- Godard, Yves 52, 236
- Gounod 64
- Gourbis 67, 87, 191, 199
- Gouvernement provisoire de la République algérienne (GPR, Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic) 233, 252, 282, 287
- Gouvernement provisoire de la République française (GPRF, Provisional Government of the French Republic) 106
- Grande Kabylie 71
- Grands ensembles (large-scale settlements) 100, 126, 158, 169, 171, 212, 220, 230
- Gravier, Jean-François 223
- Groupe d'étude et d'action pour les nord-africains de la région parisienne (GEANARP, Study and Action Group for North Africans in the Paris Region) 169
- Groupes de travail itinérants (mobile working groups) 184
- Groupes mobiles de sécurité (GMS, Mobile Security Groups) 256
- Guelma 64, 81
- Guerre moderne (modern warfare) 9, 11, 27, 30, 52–53, 58
- Guiauchain, Jacques 238
- Guillard, Félix 9
- H**
- Habitat à bon marché (HBM, Low-Cost Housing) 132, 137–38, 144, 218
- Habitat à loyer modéré (HLM, Low-Cost Housing) 115, 117, 126–27, 137–40, 149, 154, 173, 214, 228, 240
- Habitat amélioré (improved housing) 164
- Habitat du secteur moderne (modern-sector housing) 214
- Habitat évolutif (transformable dwellings) 140, 198
- Habitat, *or* habitation indigène (indigenous housing) 128, 131–32, 134, 136
- Habitat musulman (Muslim housing) 114, 117, 120, 128, 136
- Habitat rural (rural housing, *or* dwellings, *or* settlement) 64–67, 91, 109, 112, 134, 141, 172, 183–84, 189–98, 200, 202, 212–13
- Habitat semi-urbain (semi-urban dwellings) 12, 127, 129, 141–46, 156, 172, 214, 256, 292
- Habitat sommaire (rudimentary housing) 64, 158, 172, 184
- Hammam-Zaid 64
- Hanning, Gérald 216
- Hassan II (King of Morocco) 35
- Herbé, Paul 212
- Herbillon 64
- Hersant Plan 280–81
- Hersant, Robert 281
- HLM Office in the Department of Algiers 138
- Horne, Alistair 36
- House, Jim 91
- Housing Service in the General Delegation of the French Government in Algeria 114, 143
- Hoÿm de Marien, Louis Gabriel de 237–48, 253–56, 260, 264–70, 288
- Hussein-Dey 121, 160, 218, 221
- I**
- Ichmoul 42

- Indochina War (First) 9, 27, 35, 44, 52, 235
- Inspecteur général de l'administration en mission extraordinaire (IGAME, General Inspector of Administration in the Extraordinary Mission) 80, 84–87, 165, 207, 238
- Inspection générale des regroupements de population (IGRP, General Inspection of the Population Regroupement) 21, 56, 58–59, 69, 185, 189–93, 200, 202, 271
- Institut d'aménagement et d'urbanisme de la région parisienne (IAURP, Institute for Regional and Urban Planning for the Paris Region) 105
- Institut d'ethnologie (Institute of Ethnology) in Paris 31
- Institut d'urbanisme de l'université d'Alger (IUUA, Institute of Urbanism at Algiers University) 31–33, 39
- Institut d'urbanisme de l'université de Paris (IUUP, Institute of Urbanism at Paris University) 13, 162, 195
- Institut technique du bâtiment et des travaux publics en Algérie (ITEBA, Technical Institute of Building and Public Works in Algeria) 113–14
- International Colonial Exhibition in Paris (1931) 130
- Iraq 9, 20, 53, 293
- Israel 194, 198, 277, 280
- J**
- Jacomet, André 110–11, 141
- Jeanneney, Jean-Marcel 286–88
- Jeanson, Francis 233
- Jeanson network 233
- Jews in Bordeaux 12, 24, 80
- Jews in French departments of Algeria 98, 136–37, 235, 260
- Jews in the French Protectorates of Morocco and Tunisia 136–37
- Joannonville 155
- Jonnart, Charles-Celestin Auguste 129–30
- Jouhaud, Edmond 235–36
- Jourdain, Frantz 129
- Joxe, Louis 238–39, 282, 288
- Juan-les-Pins 240
- K**
- Kabylia 16
- Kanoun, Youcef 18
- Kenya 86
- Képi Bleu (Blue Cap, film) 73–75
- Kherrata 81
- Koenig, Pierre 56
- Kouba 117, 189
- Kroubs 223
- L**
- La Concorde 162–63
- La Manche 238
- La Mandoune 240
- La Montagne 218, 221, 268
- La Rocque, François de 81
- La Royale 210–12
- Labouret, Henri 33–34, 134
- Lacheroy, Charles 11, 52
- Lachish 194
- Lacoste, Robert 10, 25, 61, 79–80, 84–87, 91, 101, 104, 109–10
- Lacouture, Jean 37
- Lagaillarde, Pierre 236, 245
- Landes 81
- Languedoc 238
- Laperrine 71–72
- Lathuillière, Marcel 13, 113–14, 117, 122, 128–32, 135, 138, 141, 216, 220, 256, 260
- Laubadère 240
- Laure, André 207
- Le Bayard 242
- Le Centenaire de l'Algérie française (Centenary of French Algeria) 130–31
- Le Corbusier 13, 118, 128, 130, 195, 216, 268
- Le Couteur, Jean 212–13
- Le manifeste des douze (Manifesto of the Twelve) 79
- Le Nôtre, André 254
- Le Pen, Jean-Marie 234–35
- Lebanon 280
- Lefebvre, Henri 233
- Lefevre, Daniel 228
- Lemaesquier, Charles 240
- Lenin, Vladimir 236
- Léonard, Roger 162
- Lépine, Louis Jean-Baptiste 83, 92
- Leroy, Léon-Paul 171–72
- Leroy, R. 114
- Les Annassers 210–13, 220
- Les Asphodèles 220
- Les Bords de la Garonne 240
- Les Canibouts 169
- Les Crêtes 24
- Les Dunes 220
- Les Jasmins 220
- Les Orangers 228
- Les Palmiers 220
- Les Peupliers 220
- Les Rocades 240
- Les Trentes Glorieuses (The Glorious Thirty) 97, 171
- Library of Algiers University (OAS' burning) 235
- Logement économique et familial (LOGECO, Low-Cost and Family Dwellings) 120–21, 127–28, 140–41, 164, 205, 214, 246
- Logement économique simplifié (simplified, economic housing) 164
- Logement million 127, 141, 172, 205, 214–16, 220
- Logement traditionnel horizontal (traditional, low-rise housing) 164
- Logements économiques de

- première nécessité (LEPN, Basic Necessity Low-Cost Housing) 126
- Logements économiques normalisés (LEN, Standardized Low-Cost Housing) 126, 142
- Logements musulmans évolutifs (transformable Muslim dwellings) 164
- Logements populaires et familiaux (LOPOFA, Working-Class and Family Housing) 126, 142
- Loire 238
- London 39–40, 97, 105–6
- London International Institute of African Languages and Cultures (today the International African Institute) 32–33
- Longobardi (President of the ITEBA) 114
- Lopez, Raymond 239
- Louis XIV (King of France) 254
- Louis XVIII (King of France) 171
- Luyckx, Michel 242
- Lyautey, Louis Hubert Gonslave 11, 56–58, 63
- Lyon 120
- M**
- MacMaster, Neil 91
- Madagascar 51, 57–58, 134
- Madrid 234
- Maine 238
- Maison Blanche (*today* Dar El Beida) 244, 253
- Maison Monol 268
- Maisonseul, Jean de 162
- Mali 212
- Malvetti, Xavier 18
- Mandela, Nelson 294
- Manifeste des 121 (Manifesto of the 121) 233–34
- Manifeste des intellectuels français pour la résistance à l'abandon (Manifesto of French Intellectuals for the Resistance to the Abandonment) 234
- Marien *see* Hoÿm de Marien, Louis Gabriel de
- Marina 43
- Marseille 210
- Marshall, Georges 106
- Marshall Plan 84, 106–7, 125
- Martino, Nicola di 256
- Mascara 173
- Mascherpa, A. (President of the UNAMAT) 114
- Maspero, François 233
- Massacre of Algerian pro-independence protesters in Paris (1961) 80, 94
- Massacre of anti-OAS protesters in Paris (1962) 80, 282
- Massacres of Algerians in Sétif, Guelma, and Kherrata (1945) 81, 83, 98, 161
- Massé, Pierre 107, 109, 118, 226
- Massignon, Louis 31, 34
- Masson, André 233
- Massu, Jacques 52, 97, 149, 245
- Mauras, Charles 223
- Maury and Gomiz (architects) 220
- Mauss, Marcel 31
- Mautauban 240
- Mayer, René 16, 114–17
- Médéa 207
- Media scandal of 1959 20–21, 27, 66, 73, 88, 175, 179–80, 182, 186, 199
- Medina 117–18, 140
- Mediterranean 13, 128, 130, 198, 207, 237, 244–45, 268, 271
- Meley, Jean 114
- Melilla 280
- Melun 282
- Mers El Kebir 282
- Métropole 40–42, 102, 134, 137, 139, 141, 174, 190
- Mille villages (One Thousand Villages) 12, 21, 27, 110, 173, 179, 186–88, 191, 192
- Ministère de la construction (MC, Ministry of Construction) 126–27, 206, 222, 240
- Ministère de la reconstruction et de l'urbanisme (MRU, Ministry of Reconstruction and Urbanism) 13, 125–26, 137, 169, 212
- Ministère de la reconstruction et du logement (MRL, Ministry of Reconstruction and Housing) 125–26, 128, 140, 142
- Miquel, Louis 162
- Mitidja Occidentale 198
- Mitterrand, François 9, 20, 31, 34–36, 41, 79, 81
- Moch, Jules Salvador 84
- Mollet, Guy 9, 79, 165
- Mondovi 64
- Monnet, Jean 105–7
- Monnet Plan 84, 105–8, 125
- Montaldo, René 138–40
- Montaner (SAU Officer in Clos-Salembier bidonville) 169
- Monteil, Vincent 42
- Morice Line 27, 86, 91
- Morice, André 27
- Morin, Jean 10, 238–39, 245, 249, 252–53, 268–70, 277, 283–84
- Morocco, French Protectorate of 7, 54, 56–58, 80, 83–84, 136–37
- Mostaganem 16, 153–55, 174, 206, 222
- Mouvement universitaire pour le maintien de la souveraineté française en Algérie (the University Movement for the Maintenance of French Sovereignty in Algeria) 235
- Mouzaiaville 69
- Mozabite 104, 133
- Musée de l'Homme (Museum of Man) 31, 33–34, 39–40, 42
- Musulmans (Muslims) 98, 117–20, 137–38, 174, 260, 277
- Mutter, André 10

- N**
- Nador 220
- Naegelen, Marcel-Edmond 82
- Nanterre 150, 165, 169
- Napoleon Bonaparte 236
- Napoleon III 129
- Nazi concentration camps 12, 24, 31, 34, 38, 45
- Nazi Germany 34, 81, 106
- Neo-Moresque 129–30
- Nid d'abeilles (beehive) 118, 120
- Niger 210, 212
- Non-Aligned Movement 233
- Nouveaux hameaux (new hamlets) 186–87
- Nouveaux quartiers (new neighborhoods) 186–87, 191
- Nouveaux villages (new villages) 71, 186–95, 200, 212
- Nuclear tests *see also* Gerboise 102, 224, 230, 241–42, 292
- Nunziato, L. 114
- O**
- Occupied territories of Palestine 194
- Opération bidonville 152–53, 169, 173–74
- Opération Million (Operation Million) 126, 128, 140–41, 214
- Operation “Orange Amère” 36
- Operation “Véronique” 36
- Operation “Violette” 36
- Oran 32, 66, 85, 114–15, 117–19, 164, 188, 206–7, 212, 214, 222–25, 228, 249, 271, 280, 283
- Order of Architects in Algeria 113–14, 138, 214, 240, 242
- Order of Architects of the Circumscription of Algiers 242
- Order of Architects of the Regional Counsel of the Seine 240
- Organisation commune des régions sahariennes (OCRS, the Joint Organization of the Saharan Regions) 206
- Organisation de l'armée secrète (OAS, Secret Army Organization) 7, 52, 80, 97, 222, 234–37, 245, 252–54, 271–72, 277, 281–84
- Organisation politico-administrative (OPA, Politico-Administration Organization) 85, 182
- Orléansville (today Chlef) 65, 162, 192, 196, 201, 207
- Ormeaux 240
- Ortiz, Joseph 245
- Oulebsir, Nabila 18
- P**
- Pacification, of the Aurès 51, 54–60
- Padovani, Pierre 114, 117–20, 127
- Pakistan 280
- Palais de l'Élysée 220
- Palais du Gouvernement (GG Building, or General Government Building) 238, 242, 248
- Palestine 280
- Palestine Liberation Organization 294
- Palestro 71
- Papon, Maurice 12, 24, 80–87, 90–94, 165, 169
- Parlange, Gaston 56, 58, 60, 80, 85, 88 185–90
- Perez, Jean-Claude 236
- Perret Frères (company) 238, 267
- Perret, Auguste 129–30, 212
- Personnel féminin de l'armée de terre (PFAT, Women Soldiers of the Land Forces) 289
- Pétain, Philippe 179
- Peyrefitte, Alain 277–81
- Pflimlin, Pierre 9
- Philippeville (today Skikda) 60, 206, 222, 283
- Pieds-noirs (black feet) 42, 98
- Place de la Brèche (today the Place du 1er Novembre) 102
- Place du Général Korte (today Place des Frères Messaoudi) 118–19
- Place du Gouvernement (today Place des Martyrs, or Martyrdom Square) 268
- Plan Challe 27–28, 105, 179–80
- Plan de Constantine 12, 14, 16, 63, 102–15, 120–21, 128, 153–54, 160, 172, 174–75, 179–80, 188–91, 205–6, 208, 210–14, 216, 218, 220, 223–30, 239, 244, 246, 248, 252, 261, 271, 282, 286, 292
- Plan de modernisation et d'équipement (Equipment and Modernization Plan) *see* Monnet Plan
- Planhol, Xavier de 198–200
- Pleins pouvoirs (full powers) 98, 294
- Poète, Marcel 195
- Police, Police powers to the army (Algeria) 41–42, 80
- (France) 80, 83, 92–94, 165, 170
- Politique de la terre brûlée (scorched-earth policy) 283
- Pompidou, Georges 283, 292
- Pont-Blanc 155
- Pontecorvo, Gillo 152
- Pontots 240
- Pontremoli, Emmanuel 129
- Pouillon, Fernand 13, 216–18, 242, 260
- Pouvoirs spéciaux (exceptional powers) 55, 84
- Prestations d'action sociale (PAS, Social Action Funds) 174–75
- Prix de Rome 129, 230, 238, 240, 264
- Prochaska, David 18
- Prost, Henri 57
- Prouvé, Jean 210
- Putsch, First Generals' Putsch of May 1958 9, 11, 73, 92, 97–98, 153, 235, 238
- Putsch, Second Generals' Putsch of



- April 1961 73, 105, 179, 222, 235, 291
- Q**
- Quadrillage (grid system) 26
- R**
- Rabinow, Paul 18
- Radio Beirut 40
- Radio Brazzaville 40
- Rangueil 240
- Rassemblement du peuple français (RPF, French People's Rally) 41
- Rassemblement pour l'Algérie française (RAF, Rally for French Algeria) 235
- Ravensbrück 34
- Recognition of Algeria's right to self-determination (UN), declaration 9, 233–34, 252, 284
- Referendum Apartment of 1959 141
- Referendum on Algeria's self-determination 222, 234, 282, 284
- Reggane 241–42
- Reghaia, town (French air force base, former US air force base) 13, 16, 228–29, 245, 270
- Régie foncière d'Alger (Algiers Property Management Agency) 173, 218
- Région économique d'Alger (Algiers Economic Region) 227
- Regional Council of the Order of Architects in Algeria 113–14, 138
- République algérienne démocratique et populaire (People's Democratic Republic of Algeria) 22, 287
- Réseau du musée de l'Homme (Network of the Museum of Man) 33
- Résidence Peyrissac 268
- Resnais, Alain 233
- Résorption des bidonvilles (clearance of bidonvilles) 153–56, 162, 164, 172–73, 199, 292
- Rey, Rudolphe 130
- Righia 189
- Rivet, Paul 31, 34, 39–40
- Rivière, Thérèse 32, 34
- Rob and Roq housing 268
- Robin, Marie-Monique 52, 293
- Rocard, Michel 20, 179–80, 192
- Rodhain, Jean 179
- Romé, Bernard 118
- Roosevelt, Franklin Delano 106
- Roth, Roger 283
- Rouiba-Reghaia 222, 227–29, 261
- Rousses 282
- Roux, Marcel 169
- Roux-Dorlut, Pierre 210–11
- Roux-Dufort, Raymond 114
- Royer, Jean 206, 212
- Ruhr region 106
- S**
- Sacré-Cœur *see* Cathedral of Sacré-Cœur
- Sahara Desert (Algeria) 7, 60, 99–104, 112, 222–24, 230, 234, 241–42, 277, 280, 282, 289
- Saigot, Jacques 114–15, 207–8
- Saint-Etienne 156
- Saint Marc, Denoix de 291
- Saint-Anne 240
- Saint-Denis-du-Sig 117
- Saint-Exupéry, Antoine de 161
- Saint-Georges 240
- Sainte-Barbe-du-Tlélat 222
- Salan, Raoul 10, 26, 52, 55, 89–90, 97, 105, 214, 235–37, 245, 283
- Salon des arts ménagers (SAM, Household Arts Show) 125
- San Francisco 105
- Sartre, Jean-Paul 233
- Saubot, Jean 239
- Sauvage, Henri 130
- Schéma directeur d'aménagement et d'urbanisme de la région de Paris (SDAURP, Development and Planning of the Region of Paris Program) 224
- Schiaffino, Laurent 227
- Schmitt, Carl 236
- Schuman, Robert 107, 171
- Schuman Plan 107
- Sebdou 43
- Secours Catholique (Caritas France) 179
- Section administrative spécialisée (SAS, Specialized Administrative Section) 11, 60–75, 85, 87–88, 92–94, 104, 110–11, 120, 149, 155, 159, 172–74, 180, 182, 184, 187, 189, 191–92, 244, 267
- Section administrative urbaine (SAU, Urban Administrative Section) 60–62, 92, 149–50, 153–58, 169, 173–74
- Sections coopératives agricoles du plan de Constantine (SCAPCO, Cooperative Agricultural Section of the Constantine Plan) 189
- Seiller, Albert 129–32
- Seine (prefecture) 169, 240
- Seine (river) 94
- Self-determination *see* Algerian independence *see also* Recognition of Algeria's right to self-determination (UN), declaration
- Semaine des barricades (Week of the Barricades) 222, 245
- Semi-urbain (semi-urban) *see* Habitat semi-urbain (Semi-urban dwellings)
- Service d'assistance technique aux français musulmans d'Algérie (SAT-FMA, Office of Technical Assistance to the French Muslims of Algeria) 92–93, 169–70
- Service de coordination des affaires algériennes (SCAA, Office of Coordination of Algerian Affairs) 92
- Service des centres sociaux (SCS,

- Social Centers Service) 160
- Service des centres sociaux éducatifs (SCSE, Social and Educational Centers Service) 160
- Service of Architecture of the General Delegation 256, 260
- Services de l'information et de l'action psychologique (Services of Psychological Action and Intelligence) 52
- Sétif 81, 82, 85, 173–174, 207
- Shantytowns *see* bidonvilles
- Sharing by regrouping (de Gaulle partition) 277
- Shawiya 30–31, 37–38, 41
- Sidi-Abdelkader 153
- Sidi-Bel-Abbès 119
- Simounet, Roland 162, 218, 221, 268
- Sirinelli, Jean-François 97
- Skikda *see* Philippeville
- Slums *see* bidonvilles
- Socard, Tony 206
- Société agricole de prévoyance (SAP, Provident Agriculture Society) 184
- Société centrale immobilière de la caisse (SCIC, Central Real Estate Company of the Fund) 171–72
- Société centrale pour l'équipement du territoire (SCET, Central Company for Territorial Equipment) 171–72, 206–7, 237, 240, 256, 260, 265–66
- Société coopérative musulmane algérienne d'habitation et d'accès à la petite propriété (Algeria-based Muslim Cooperative Society of Housing and Access to Minor Property) 114, 117–20
- Société coopérative musulmane oranaise d'habitation et de construction (Muslim Cooperative Society of Housing and Construction in Oran) 118
- Société d'économie et de mathématique appliquées (SEMA, Company of Economics and Applied Mathematics) 206
- Société d'équipement de la région d'Alger (SERA, Equipment Company for the Region of Algiers) 171, 210
- Société d'équipement de la région de Bône (SERB, Equipment Company for the Region of Bône) 210
- Société d'équipement des zones d'industrialisation décentralisées (SEZID, Company for Equipment of the Zones of Decentralized Industrialization) 227
- Société des architectes modernes (SAM, Society of Modern Architects) 129–30
- Société nationale de construction de logements pour les travailleurs algériens (SONACOTRAL, National Society of Housing Construction for Algerian Workers) 125, 165, 169, 171, 175
- Soustelle, Georgette 39
- Soustelle, Jacques 10–11, 25, 31, 39–44, 51, 55–56, 58–60, 79, 97, 100, 102, 104, 109–10, 133, 160–61, 220
- Spanish guerilla war 236
- State of emergency 37, 43–45, 51, 55, 59–60, 73, 294
- State of siege 153
- State of war 36–37
- Strait of Gibraltar 280
- Strasbourg 240
- Strategic Hamlet Program 27
- Sudreau, Pierre 126, 140–41, 161, 208, 220
- Super Quadras 254
- Susini, Jean-Jacques 236
- Sweden 125
- Swiss Confederation 252, 280, 282
- T**
- Tamanrasset 222
- Tarbes 240
- Taudis 162, 164
- Taylor, Frederick Winslow 116
- Tebessa 43
- Teniet-el-Haad 138
- Tenth Military Region 8, 35, 55, 85, 89
- Thénault, Sylvie 44
- Tillion, Germaine 11, 31–34, 36–40, 42–43, 62, 160
- Tizi-Ouzou 43, 71, 206–7, 223
- Tonkin 51, 57
- Touffana 42
- Toulouse 239–40, 298
- Tour Maine-Montparnasse 239
- Trade Union Association of Architects Graduated and Admitted by the Government 130
- Treaty of Paris 107
- Treaty of Rome 107
- Tricot, Bernard 245
- Trinquier, Roger 11, 27, 52–53, 55, 58
- Tunisia, French Protectorate of 7, 27, 84–85, 90–91, 136–38, 212
- Turks 133
- U**
- Union algérienne de l'industrie et du commerce des matériaux de construction (UNAMAT, Algeria-Based Union of Industry and Commerce of Construction Materials) 114
- Union des coopératives de construction d'Oranie (Union of Construction Cooperatives in the Oran Region) 114, 117
- Union nationale des fédérations d'organismes d'HLM (UNFOHLM, National Union of Federations of HLM Organizations) 137
- Union of International Architects 138
- United Kingdom 125
- United Nations 9, 86, 112, 191, 220, 233
- United States of America 9, 52, 98,

- 106, 161, 293
- Universal Exposition in Paris in 1937 31
- University of Algiers 113
- University of Nancy 198
- V**
- Vaujour, Jean 165, 169
- Vélodrome d'hiver (Winter Velodrome) 94
- Vibert, Jean 223, 261
- Vichy regime 10, 12, 31, 34, 39, 45, 71, 79–81, 83–85, 91–92, 94, 97–98, 106, 125, 195, 235, 238, 281
- Vidal-Naquet, Pierre 233
- Vidal, Jacques 248, 252
- Vietnam War 27, 293
- Village-centre (village center) 195
- Villages fortifiés (fortified villages) 27
- Villages nègres (Negro villages) 139
- Villes nouvelles (New Towns) 224
- Volpette, Félix 156
- W**
- World War I 235
- World War II 9, 12, 24, 31, 39, 41, 45, 51–52, 71, 81, 83, 92, 105–106, 116, 118, 125, 136, 160, 162, 205, 210, 214, 235, 267, 287
- Winning hearts and minds 12
- Wall Street Crash of 1929 105
- Washington, D.C. 106, 271
- Y**
- Yabous 42
- Yahiaoui 174
- Z**
- Zedong, Mao 53, 236
- Zehrfuss, Bernard 212
- Zelamta 188
- Zeller, André 235
- Zones à urbaniser par priorité (ZUP, Zones of High-Priority Urbanization) 222, 224
- Zones d'aménagement concerté (ZAC, Concerted Development Zones) 224, 227
- Zones d'aménagement coordonné (ZAC, Coordinated Development Zones) 222–24
- Zones d'aménagement différé (ZAD, Differentiated Development Zones) 224
- Zones d'industrialisation décentralisée (ZID, Decentralized Industrialization Zones) 222–24, 227
- Zones d'organisation rurale (ZOR, Rural Organization Zones) 222, 224, 227
- Zones de pacification (pacification zones) 26
- Zones de préindustrialisation (ZOPI, Proto-Industrialization Zones) 222–24, 227
- Zones interdites (forbidden zones) 26, 45
- Zones of insecurity 24, 45–46, 59
- Zones of security 45
- Zones opérationnelles (zones of operations) 26

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New housing units of the Plan de Constantine, former Boulevard de Champagne, Algiers,  
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This book examines the intersection of French colonial policies and military counter-insurgency operations in architecture in Algeria during the Algerian Revolution (1954–1962). In the course of this bloody and protracted armed conflict, the French civil and military authorities profoundly reorganized the country's vast urban and rural territory, drastically transformed its built environments, rapidly implanted new infrastructures, and strategically constructed new settlements in order to keep Algeria under French rule. The colonial regime planned and undertook not only tactical demolition programs but also developed new structures in order to facilitate the strict control of the Algerian population and the protection of the European communities of Algeria.

Samia Henni's study focuses on the politics of three interrelated spatial counterrevolutionary measures: the massive forced resettlement of Algerian farmers; the mass-housing programs designed for the Algerian population as part of General Charles de Gaulle's Plan de Constantine; and the fortified administrative new town planned for the protection of the French authorities during the last months of the Algerian Revolution. The aim is to depict the *modus operandi* of these settlements, their roots, developments, scopes, and impacts, as well as the actors, protocols, and design mechanisms behind them.