

Coming "Home": Repatriation in the Bouches-du-Rhône, 1962-1970

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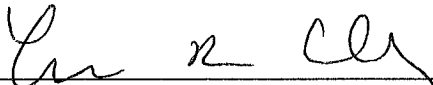
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The shoreline of Marseille slowly materialized over the horizon. Looking out from the steamers’ top deck, the outlines of other ships, already docked, began to take shape. The sharp smell of salt water on the breeze and the calls of seabirds are the same as any port town. Yet the grey cement and steel of La Joliette could never be mistaken for the sun drenched white and blue of the homes along the Algerian shore. Marseille, though a Mediterranean city, does not possess the resplendent white architecture of Algiers, brilliant in the sun. Every seat on the boat is filled. Passengers sit in groups, mothers comforting wailing babies, nervous travelers pacing the floor, others simply sitting in silence, waiting. Suitcases litter the ground, filled to the brim with whatever the families valued most. Marseille approaches. France, long a vague dream, becomes a reality. The passengers wait as the boat draws nearer, still reeling from the shock of exodus and barely accepting that the shore they see is their new home. The “return” begins.

The emotional scenes of departure played out again and again during the summer of 1962 in Algeria. As a violent war drew to a bitter end, Algeria, a former French colony, became an independent nation for the first time since Ottoman control began in 1525. With the rise of a liberated Algeria, those who had sided with the French during the war departed in droves, to escape reprisals or find security in a more stable political environment. The European population of Algeria, typically referred to as *Pieds-Noirs*, fled, most settling in France. Threatened by nationalists, those Algerians who chose to support the French, colloquially referred to as *Harkis*, also quit their country, hoping to find safety in France. Marseille, the French port known as the “gateway to Africa” served as the main point of entry for both groups. In this work, I examine the complicated and often painful arrival of the *Pieds-Noirs* and the *Harkis* in Marseille and the Bouches-du-Rhône département, as well as how their arrival forced national and local government officials to categorize refugees and allocate resources as the French colonial

system crumbled. The ways in which the government differentiated the Harkis and the Pieds-Noirs in those hectic initial years would have lasting impact on the ability of these groups to integrate.

Although the topic of the Algerian War and its consequences remained taboo for decades, beginning in the 1980s, scholarship on the repatriation of the Pieds-Noirs gradually appeared. The early literature on the exodus of European Algerians typically documented their flight from Algeria, initial reactions to France, and, to some extent, their eventual integration.¹ Not surprisingly, many of the first works on the subject were written by Pieds-Noirs, and evoke a certain *nostalgérie*, a combination of the French words for nostalgia and Algeria. The key features of *nostalgérie* include an idealization of colonial times, a stock image of “the good Arab”, and a relative reluctance to speak of the war. Works of this type tend to emphasize the isolation of the Pied-Noir community upon arrival, although with palpable self-pity. Recent studies of the Pieds-Noirs community have turned from a nostalgic interpretation to a more impartial construction of the history.² The authors tend not to be European Algerians, and reveal a greater objective distance from the events. These studies confirm the mass flight of the European community from Algeria, with 930,000 arriving in France in 1962 alone.³

Academic works detailing the story of the Harkis appeared only recently, often written by the children of Harkis. Books on the *ancien supplétifs*, as they are also called, tend to focus on the reprisal killings within Algeria caused by the decision of the French government to limit Harki immigration in the aftermath of the war. Their accounts also often include discussions of the camps Harkis inhabited for the first years of their life in France. As the study of this marginalized population has only recently begun, the

¹For examples of « nostalgérie » histories see : Daniel Leconte *Les pieds-noirs : histoire d'une communauté* (Paris : Seuil, 1980), Pierre Nora, *Les Français d'Algérie* (Paris : René Juilliard, 1961), Robert Garcia. *L'arrachement : genèse de l'exode des Européens d'Algérie, 1830-1962*. (Nice : Editions Gilletta, 1982). For more recent studies see : Isabel Boussard, “Les rapatriés dans le monde rural métropolitain,” in *La Guerre D'Algérie et Les Français*. ed. Jean-Pierre Rioux. (Paris: Fayard, 1990), 353-361, Anthony Rowley, “La réinsertion économique des rapatriés,” in *La Guerre D'Algérie et Les Français*. ed. Jean-Pierre Rioux. (Paris: Fayard, 1990), 348-352, and Jeannine Verdes-Leroux, *Les Français d'Algérie de 1830 à aujourd'hui : une page d'histoire déchirée* (Paris : Fayard 2001).

²Verdes-Leroux *Les Français d'Algérie*, Rowley «La réinsertion économique des rapatriés », Boussard « Les rapatriés dans le monde rural métropolitain »

³Benjamin Stora, *La gangrène et l'oubli : La mémoire de la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris : La Découverte, 1991), 256

existing literature remains broad, attempting to give a wide overview of the Harki experience. Historians of the Harkis argue that France marginalized the Harki population, offering an inadequate welcome for them.⁴

Though various authors have painted portraits of the two communities, several issues with existing scholarship prompt further investigation of the subject. Texts on the immigration of the Pieds-Noirs tend to focus on the community's life in Algeria, often in staunchly sentimental tones. Arrival in France usually appears only as a short epilogue. Works dealing with integration focus narrowly on the economic sector, leaving only a partial view of the Pieds-Noir experience. Books on the Harkis tend to give only cursory attention to the initial years of immigration, focusing instead on the violent events of the 1970s and 80s.⁵

Two recent books on the arrival of the Harkis and the Pieds-Noirs have influenced this study in more direct ways. Jean-Jacques Jordi's *De L'exode à l'exil: rapatriés et pieds-noirs en France, l'exemple marseillaise, 1954-1992*, also looks at repatriation through the local lens of Marseille.⁶ However, Jordi's work gives more weight to the story of the Pieds-Noirs than the Harkis. When he does discuss the Harkis' experience in Marseille, Jordi fails to address the causes and consequences of the discrimination inherent in the separate programming. Additionally, Jordi's argument focuses mainly on the economic growth created by the Pieds-Noirs in Marseille. Todd Shepard's wonderfully written *The Invention of Decolonization* explores the French government's attempts to redefine the boundaries of nation and

⁴For examples of this scholarship see: Abderahmen Moumen. *Les Français Musulmans en Vaucluse, 1962-1991: installation et difficultés d'intégration d'une communauté des rapatriés d'Algérie*. (Paris : L'Harmattan, 2003), Fatima Besnaci-Lancou, Abderahmen Moumen *Les Harkis* (Paris :Editions Le Cavalier Bleu, 2008), and Tom Charbit *Les Harkis* (Paris : La Découverte, 2006).

⁵In 1973, a burst of Anti-Algerian violence swept through the South of France. In the 1980s, the first generation of Harki children, usually in their early 20s, began protesting government treatment of the Harkis, resulting in changing government policy. See for example: Stephanie Abrial *Les enfants de Harkis : de la révolte à l'intégration* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 2002).

⁶Jean-Jacques Jordi. *De L'exode a l'exil: rapatriés et pieds-noirs en France: l'exemple marseillaise, 1954-1992* (Editions L'Harmattan : Paris, 1993).

forge a new identity for France separate from their colonial past.⁷ In his work, Shepard treats the arrival of the Pieds-Noirs and the Harkis as case studies of this identity reconstruction. His work focuses on the way the central French government defined the citizenship of these two populations and his central argument asserts that the government rejected the Harkis, “sidelining republican “color-blindness” rather than confronting republican racism.”⁸ Though his analysis of citizenship is informative for my own work, I differ from Shepard by analyzing integration patterns through a focus on social policies and local and regional government actions, rather than relying on legal and political definitions of citizenship to define integration. Also, I argue that, though national directives played a role in shaping the different programs designed to help immigrants assimilate, ultimately local implementation proved pivotal in the reception of the Pieds-Noirs and Harkis.

Thus, my thesis diverges from previous histories in several ways. First, the existing literature on the Harkis and Pieds-Noirs has been mostly descriptive in nature. I build on these accounts, but by putting the stories of the Pieds-Noirs and the Harkis in direct conversation, I am able to demonstrate the starkly different mechanisms put in place to integrate these two groups. A comparison of the Harkis and the Pieds-Noirs also challenges the supposedly secular and race-blind policies of France. Entering France for the same reason, these two populations quickly became divided by prejudiced policies, which treated the Pieds-Noirs as citizens and the Harkis as refugees. Studying each in isolation cloaks the full magnitude of this difference. Additionally, by looking at Marseille and the Bouches-du-Rhône, a region deeply impacted by Algerian immigration, I narrow the broad focus of the literature to the role of local government in the process of *accueil* and integration. This allows a greater understanding of the ways in which national directives changed during local implementation. National policy towards the Harkis and Pieds-Noirs did not establish entirely equal programming, but the central government at least envisaged

⁷ Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006)

⁸ *Ibid*, 272

an eventual integration of both groups. However, due to the discriminatory assumptions and exigencies of the local communities, only the Pieds-Noirs successfully integrated.

This thesis makes a further contribution to scholarly understanding of the Pieds-Noirs and Harkis by connecting the history of their immigration to the discourse on race, immigration and identity in France. The seminal text on French immigration, Gerard Noiriel's *Le Creuset Français*, argues that all immigrant populations go through the same three basic phases: alienation, progressive acceptance of French customs and traditions, and finally assimilation within the French population.⁹ Other scholars have, however, pointed out that Noiriel's conception of assimilation draws on longstanding but questionable beliefs about the French nation. They argue that traditionally immigration has been downplayed in French discussions of national identity because of a belief that the French Revolution was the culmination and completion of nation building in France.¹⁰ However, as they demonstrate, ignoring immigration in discussions of French identity did not keep immigration from impacting France. Recent works by Yvan Gastaut and Alec Hargreaves have challenged Noiriel's universalist theory by pointing out that the Algerian population remains "unassimilated."¹¹ The Algerian population's distinction has been further explored by scholars of racial discourse in France, who challenge the idea of France as a "color-blind society."¹² The failed integration of the Algerians, as discussed by historians Maxim Silverman and Richard Derderian, shows that France sees more color than it would like to admit.¹³ Rooted in centuries of colonial prejudice, the French nation as a whole holds a negative view of Algerians, which impacted

⁹Gérard Noiriel. *Le Creuset Français: Histoire de l'immigration XIX-XXe siècle*. (Paris: Seuil, 1988)

¹⁰Discussion of this view, as well as refutations of it, can be found in texts such as Herrick Chapman and Laura L Frader, *Race in France: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Politics of Difference* (Berghahn Books: New York, 2004) and Richard L. Derderian. *North Africans in Contemporary France: Becoming Visible* (Palgrave Macmillan: London, 2004).

¹¹Yvan Gastaut, *L'immigration et l'opinion en France sous la Ve République*, (Paris : Seuil, 2000). Alec G. Hargreaves, *Immigration 'race' and ethnicity in Contemporary France*, (New York: Routledge, 1995)

¹²For further discussion and critique of "color-blind" France see Herrick Chapman & Laura L Frader. *Race in France: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Politics of Difference*. (Berghahn Books : New York, 2004).

¹³Maxim Silverman. *Deconstructing the Nation: Immigration, Racism and Citizenship in Modern France* (Routledge: New York, 2014).

the reception of the Harkis as compared to the Pieds-Noirs.¹⁴ Being in dialogue with this context sheds new light on why the two populations received such different treatment upon arrival in France and on the lasting consequences of those differences.

This thesis offers further evidence of French discrimination towards its former colonial subjects. The Harkis, I argue, were treated as Algerians rather than Frenchmen, despite their service to the French, because of the vestiges of colonial patterns of discrimination. In colonial society, “indigenous” Algerians were consistently marginalized and denied advancement through discriminatory patterns of education and employment. French colonizers also viewed the native Algerians, uniformly (and sometimes erroneously) identified as Muslims, as inevitably part of a subservient class.¹⁵ Though the Harkis and the Pieds-Noirs left Algeria for similar reasons and arrived in Marseille at the same time, the government set them onto two separate paths of integration, particularly at the local level. The Pieds-Noirs, consistently portrayed as French, received expansive programs of aid which allowed them to assimilate more easily into French society. In contrast the French isolated the Harkis, who were constructed as Muslim, inferior and foreign. Though officials cited cultural differences or religious incompatibility, I show that the government successfully integrated the Pieds-Noirs but isolated and disadvantaged the Harkis because of a legacy of colonial discrimination brought home to France in the era of decolonization.

* * *

To contextualize the tumultuous arrival of the “rapatriés” in France, it is first necessary to understand Colonial Algeria and the violent end of colonialism there. France first entered Algeria in 1830. After the Dey of Algeria insulted a French envoy in a bizarre incident involving a “flywhisk”, France used the perceived insult as an excuse to invade Algeria. Local resistance was brutally suppressed and

¹⁴For further discussion, see Michel Wieviorka *La France Raciste* (Seuil: Paris, 1992)

¹⁵Patricia M.E. Lorcin, *Imperial Identities: Stereotyping, Prejudice and Race in Colonial Algeria*. (I.B. Tauris Publishers: London, 1995)

with the Ordinance of July 22nd, 1834, France formally annexed the occupied land into national territory.¹⁶ By August of 1881, the French National Assembly had declared Algeria to be a designated “département d’outre mers”, or oversea state, administrated as part of France under the Laws of the Third Republic.¹⁷ French settlers, drawn by wealth from the cash crop agricultural trade or by opportunities for economic advancement, came to Algeria in droves. By the 1950s, Algeria had been structurally incorporated into France and was considered an essential part of the French empire. Algeria functioned as a democratically run entity, under the jurisdiction of the central French government in Paris.

By the mid-20th century most of the Europeans living in Algeria were “Pied-Noirs” or people of European descent born in Algeria.¹⁸ Literally translated as “black feet”, the origin of the name Pied-Noir remains uncertain.¹⁹ The term has carried both positive and negative connotations, although today Pieds-Noirs claim the name with a sense of pride. Not all Europeans living in Algeria could assert French heritage. As early French settlers parted for North Africa, colonists from other European nations, such as Spain, Italy and Malta, also immigrated to Algeria in pursuit of economic opportunities. The mixed society of Algeria thus formed through a combination of various European Mediterranean cultures, as well as elements of local Algerian culture. Pieds-Noirs nostalgically characterized their society as a harmonious conglomerate, with all linguistic, religious and ethnic groups living together in peace. For example, Pieds-Noirs recount offering a plate full of traditional pastries to neighbors for religious celebrations, especially Christmas, Aïd and Purim.²⁰ This neighborly affection reflects a larger idea of communal living, which Pieds-Noirs emphasize when describing the vanished colonial society. The

¹⁶Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, 20

¹⁷Martin Evans, *Algeria : France’s Undeclared War* (Oxford: Oxford Press, 2012), 19

¹⁸John Talbott, *The War Without a Name : France in Algeria, 1954-1962*, (New York: Knopf, 1980), 10

¹⁹Some authors believe it was a derogatory name related to the Native American Black Foot tribe, while others claim its origin has to do with being Europeans born in Africa have feet blackened by African sand.

²⁰Joëlle Hureau. *La Mémoire des Pieds-Noirs: de 1830 à nos jours*. (Paris : Perrin, 2001). 218

accord supposedly extended to Algerian Muslims as well, although in reality the attitude of the Pieds-Noirs towards native Algerians more closely resembled paternalism than equality.²¹

Custom and colonial law relegated the colonized people of Algeria to a lower stratum of society. Colonial tradition in Algeria stipulated that Algerians should be governed on the basis of local laws and traditions, usually influenced by religion. In practice, this meant that Arab and Berber Algerians were judged according to traditional Algerian laws, based on Sharia law. This distinction clearly has a basis in religious identity, but it also served to create distinct class and ethnic groups within Algerian society, with Muslims serving as the opposite of Europeans in classifications of citizenship. Thus a religious category became conflated with an ethnic or racial category. France allowed a select group of elite Muslims to opt for French citizenship, if they gave up their right to be judged by the “local law,” but few accepted the offer.²² In contrast, Europeans of non-French descent born in Algeria attained citizenship automatically and Europeans who immigrated to Algeria could easily apply for French citizenship.²³ Thus a small band of European males controlled politics and native Algerians had a limited voice in politics.²⁴ Algerians were not universally granted French citizenship until 1947. However, historian Todd Shepard argues, the use of a double electoral college system meant that even with full-citizenship, the Arab and Berber Algerians remained defined as “local” citizens, in many ways a second-class citizenship.²⁵ Thus, “native” Algerians, identified as Muslims, were markedly disadvantaged in comparison to European Algerians.

Colonialism imposed a subservient position on the Arab and Berber people of Algeria in a multitude of other ways as well. The French conquest of Algeria included a land grab by the arriving colonials. They pushed native Algerians off the arable plots and began farming cash crops like wine,

²¹Leconte, *Les pieds-noirs*. 88

²²Shepard, *Invention of Decolonization*, 23

²³Shepard, *Invention of Decolonization*, 28

²⁴Evans, *Algeria*, 20

²⁵ Shepard, *Invention of Decolonization*, 42

instead of wheat or other foods, leading to destitution and even starvation for many colonial subjects.²⁶ This inferior societal position, partially created by lack of land, went further than mere material resources. Colonial society reinforced racialized prejudices of Algerians, regardless of their wealth or profession. Frantz Fanon remarked, in his work denouncing French colonialism, “Before the Algerian intellectual, racist arguments spring forth with special readiness. For all that he is a doctor, people will say, he still remains an Arab. ‘You can’t get away from nature.’”²⁷ This discrimination typically reflected judgmental views of Islam, which the French saw as backwards and uncivilized. Islam was associated with a more complex view of Algerian inferiority. The French identified elements of Islam, such as polygamy and veiling for women, as proof that the Algerian people were uncivilized and needed to be taught the superior French ways.²⁸

Yet French colonial discrimination against Algerians rested on a diverse array of perceived differences and inferiorities, not merely religion. Initially, during military occupation of Algeria, French colonizers constructed a hierarchy within Algerian society by focusing on the difference between Arab and Berber Algerians. As French control of Algeria switched from military to civilian rule in the late 1800s, the European settlers focused on establishing the superiority of the “French” over all types of Algerians, be they Arab or Berber.²⁹ For example, Pierre Nora suggests that the racist regime of colonial Algeria in part came from the desire of the non-French European immigrants to prove their “Frenchness.” Fixing themselves on a parallel plane with the French colonizers above native Algerians allowed Italian and Maltese immigrants a way to justify their new identity.³⁰ In this strategic grouping, one uniting element among the Arab and Berber Algerians was religion. The official documents of the period refer to “Muslims” as a population group within Algeria. In doing so, the document is referring to

²⁶Phillip C. Naylor, *France and Algeria: A History of Decolonization and Transformation* (University Press of Florida: Tampa, 2000). 7

²⁷Frantz Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism*, (Grove Press: New York, 1965). 40

²⁸ Ibid. Fanon refers to the view of Islam as uncivilized with the phrase “the myth of the native woman as a slave.”

²⁹Lorcin, *Imperial Identities*.186

³⁰Pierre Nora, *Les Francais d’Algérie*, 86

Arabs and Berbers, as opposed to European settlers. This stratification of society by religion went against the supposedly “laïc” traditions of France.

Colonial discrimination against Algerians extended to the creation of an entirely unequal educational system, in which Arab and Berber speaking Algerians received only limited access to education. Indeed, France divided the Algerian education system into two distinct branches. One tier granted “European” certificates and the other, the one open to Algerian students, granted “special” certificates.³¹ Additionally, colonial policies limited the ability of Algerians to attain certain governmental jobs. The subservient position created for indigenous Algerians in the French colonial system encouraged racist and prejudiced ways of interacting with and viewing Algerians among the European colonizers, which would carry over to the metropole with the exodus of the colonial population.

These existing prejudices would necessarily have influenced the local bureaucrats who first interacted with the Harkis and Pieds-Noirs upon their arrival in France. As Shepard explains, “Racism had an enormous and direct effect on the daily experience of Algerians with local civil status [Arab and Berber Algerians] as well as on popular, intellectual and official thinking about “Muslim” Algerians.”³² When the Harkis stepped off the boats, the local population greeted them with ingrained ideas about Algerians. They perhaps were unaware of their own prejudice, so deeply was society steeped in this quotidian racism. For example, Arab and Berber Algerians were colloquially, and quite acceptably, referred to as *ratons* or *batards*, incredibly offensive terms which literally translate to “rat” and “bastard.” Equally tellingly, French people would address Arab and Berber Algerians with the “tu” form of you, which in French is reserved for close friendships or when one is speaking to an inferior (for

³¹Vincent Confer. *France and Algeria: The Problem of Civil and Political Reform, 1870-1920*. (Syracuse University Press: Syracuse, 1966). These separate education systems disadvantaged Arab and Berber Algerians, as “special” certificates limited employment opportunities.

³² Shepard, *Invention of Decolonization*, 34

example a teacher addressing a child).³³ The Harkis arrived in France saddled with the baggage of this colonial labeling. The racism of colonial hierarchies had become so banal that society seemed unaware it existed. Both bureaucrats and local populations would have reacted differently to the Pieds-Noirs as compared to the Harkis because of their embedded understanding of the two groups.

The traditional colonial divisions of the European settlers and the non-European colonized peoples factored into the construction of the Harkis and Pieds-Noirs in the aftermath of independence. Even the descriptions assigned to the Harkis and the Pieds-Noirs in this work reinforce colonial norms. The Pieds-Noirs are described as European settlers of Algeria. Already they are primarily identified as Europeans rather than Africans, implying that they were not in fact from Africa. Similarly, labeling Harkis as Algerians who fought for the French inherently crafts a label. Assigning the Harkis an identity as Algerians, rather than simply classifying them as part of the French army, sets these soldiers apart. Referring to the Harkis as such reinforces the imposed “non-Frenchness” of these military men. For, it must be noted, Pieds-Noirs also fought for the French but were not considered Algerians who fought for the French. Instead, their service was of a Frenchman serving in French army. Though it is necessary, in order to define terms, to describe the populations in this manner, the names themselves reflect colonial norms. The colonial constructions of the two groups could be carried over to the metropole even with something as simple as a name.

* * *

The political dispossession of the Algerians, paired with a loss of access to land, created strong local resentment, sending the country steadily towards the violent war of independence. Like other colonies, Algerians called for reforms after their participation and sacrifice in World War I, but the few

³³ Marnia Lazreg. “Gender and Politics in Algeria: Unraveling the Religious Paradigm.” *Signs*. Vol. 15, No. 4 (Summer, 1990), pp. 755-780.

rights granted to them did not satisfy the nationalists and enraged the European settler population.³⁴ Riots, sparked by famine and poverty, during the 1930s and the failure, post-World War II, to be granted autonomy, in compliance with the Atlantic Charter of Roosevelt and Churchill, served as a catalyst for a nationalist independence movement in Algeria.³⁵ After minor clashes early in 1945, the tensions finally boiled over in May, with intense nationalist demonstrations in several towns.³⁶ On November 1st, 1954, or “All Saint’s Day,” coordinated attacks occurred across the country. The *Front Libération Nationale* (FLN), a new nationalist organization, claimed responsibility for the series of savage events, marking the beginning of the undeclared war.³⁷ The FLN called for “national independence through restoration of the Algerian state- sovereign, democratic and social within the framework of the principles of Islam.”³⁸ After the events on November 1st, the war quickly escalated. Finally, the situation became so tense that the government called in French troops to “pacify” the nation, starting a chain of attacks and reprisals of appalling gore.

France approached the war with an attitude of determined, unforgiving certainty. Algeria was not simply a territory, it was part of France. The actions of the rebels had put the livelihood of a “sizeable and powerful French-sponsored European elite in Algeria” at risk and the French government deemed it unacceptable to consent to a moderate solution.³⁹ Beyond the need to stabilize society for the resident Frenchmen, the recent French experience in Indochina perhaps also guided the metropole’s uncompromising goal of retention. Only a few years before the Algerian “events,” as the war was called in France, France had lost colonial Indochina (today’s Vietnam) to a nationalist communist insurrection. The loss of Indochina made France, and the French paratroopers sent to Algeria, all the more

³⁴Evans, *Algeria*, 45

³⁵Evans, *Algeria*, 62, 71

³⁶ Evans, *Algeria*, 94

³⁷Evans, *Algeria*, 113

³⁸Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace : Algeria 1954-1962*, (London : Papermac, 1987), 95

³⁹Hutchinson, *Revolutionary Terrorism*, 104

determined to win this war.⁴⁰ There could be no backing out of Africa after such a humiliating defeat in Asia. The experience of Indochina and the standing investment France had in Algeria increased the stakes of this particular struggle for independence. With both the rebels and the colonizers convinced that they had no other choice, the Algerian War became a true *guerre révolutionnaire*, embracing extreme and unconventional methods. The hallmark of the war became the torture and terrorism used as the primary strategy of the combatants. The FLN's focus on violence, specifically terror, instead of politics, marked a sharp difference from earlier nationalist movements.⁴¹ In response to the FLN's use of terrorism, the French troops adopted the practice of torture to obtain information. These controversial strategies of total war brought the impact of the brutal conflict to the everyday villager and city dweller of Algeria.

Though torture functioned as an integral strategy, the French army also knew that in order to succeed they would have to involve the local population. They thus began to recruit local men to serve in special units. These men, called Harkis, served in "harkas", or temporary mobile groups used to maintain order. Harkas had existed prior to the Algerian War but took on a new function of "anti-guerilla" units during the conflict.⁴² The French army never fully incorporated the harkas. This limitation meant that the French army was able to use the local expertise of Algerians without having to wrestle with Algerian soldiers enlisted alongside French soldiers.⁴³ Colonial hierarchies could never place Arabs and Berbers on the same plane as Frenchmen, so the French army carefully kept the Harkis from formally joining the army. Some debate exists as to the number of Algerians who served in the harkas. Several historians list 28,000 men, but others have suggested numbers as high as 60,000.⁴⁴ Harkis tell different stories of their experiences. Some claim to never have killed during the war, merely serving as a

⁴⁰Talbott, *The War Without A Name*, 64

⁴¹Evans, *Algeria*, 117

⁴²Tom Charbit. *Les Harkis*. (Paris: La Découverte, 2006). 14

⁴³Charbit, *Les Harkis*. 15.

⁴⁴Hamoumou, *Et ils sont devenus Harkis*. 116

sort of village watch, while others aided in active offensives against the FLN army. The Harkis were not the only *supplétif* forces who joined in the French fight. Other categories of Algerians also became implicated in the French cause. Specialized Algerian units, including the GMS and moghzanis, also served various roles of protection or surveillance for the French army. The army hired these men with renewable contracts and none of the various groups formally counted as part of the French army.⁴⁵

Despite the fact that Harkis made up only a portion of the Algerians who served France during the Algerian War, after the war, the term “Harki” came to be a blanket appellation for all Algerians who had fought for the French. The name, because of this association, also came to carry negative connotations in the eyes of many Algerians, as well as some French soldiers. Due to this prejudice, some historians of the Harkis have chosen to adopt the more neutral term *français musulmans*.⁴⁶ However, this term imposes a religious dichotomy that did not always exist (not all Harkis were practicing Muslims), and also applies with equal veracity to Algerian immigrants who did not side with the French during the war. Thus I will conserve the use of the word Harki in this thesis to denote all Algerians who participated in French military action during the war.

The French people eventually soured on the unpopular and unsuccessful war. Charles de Gaulle, the hero of World War II and former Prime Minister, regained power in 1958 as President, with a mandate to solve the problem of the Algerian rebellion. Founding the 5th Republic, de Gaulle promised the Pieds-Noirs “I have understood you.” However, as French public opinion turned against the war, de Gaulle began to plan an exit strategy.⁴⁷ Peace talks convened and on March 18th 1962, de Gaulle and FLN leaders signed the Evian Accords, officially ending the conflict. The terms of the accord proposed a decision of independence by referendum. European Algerians panicked, taking to the streets in protest.

⁴⁵Maurice Faivre. *Les Combattants musulmans de la guerre d'Algérie: des soldats sacrifiés*. (Paris : L'Harmattan, 1995). 29-30. Summary accounts of Algerians in the war can also be found in: Mohand Hamoumou *Et Ils sont devenus Harkis*, and Fatima Besnaci-Lancou and Abderhamen Moumen *Les Harkis*.

⁴⁶Ex: Abderhamen Moumen's *Les Français Musulmans en Vaucluse*.

⁴⁷Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, (New York: The Viking Press, 1977) 506

They had no desire to leave the French empire, but in a referendum where all Algerians had a vote, they would be wildly outnumbered by the nationalists. Indeed, their fears proved accurate. On Sunday July 1st, 1962, 6 million Algerians voted yes to independence as defined by the Evian Accords. In comparison, only 16,534 voted no.⁴⁸ This dramatic victory offers a glimpse of the grievances simmering within colonial society. Clearly, Algeria eagerly anticipated independence. The Evian Accords laid out a specific exit plan for France. It stipulated a ceasefire and the release of all prisoners, as well as guaranteeing the “full sovereignty” of Algeria. The agreement also created a transition period of three years in which Europeans would have the right to choose between Algerian and French citizenship.⁴⁹ However, instability in the fledgling Algerian government quickly showed that the Evian Accords offered protection in name only. Even as the war drew to a close, memories of terrorist attacks, torture victims and gratuitous bloodshed haunted the survivors. Perhaps a less violent war would have allowed Pieds-Noirs and Harkis to stay in Algeria and take part in forming a new nation. As it was, the conflict had been so bitter and divisive that there could be no return to colonial norms and the *Algérie de Papa*.

With the end of the Algerian War, France faced a crisis of national identity at home. France had begun acquiring colonies in the 16th century, like many other European nations. At their height, they maintained a presence in Canada, India, Indochina, Egypt, and the Caribbean, to name just few. The colonial endeavors of France came to be justified under a blanket ideology of the *mission civilatrice*, or civilizing mission, of France. This idea claimed that France, the cradle of civilization, had a unique duty to spread its superior culture to other, less enlightened peoples.⁵⁰ Added to the ideological program of the *mission civilatrice* was an economic benefit. France’s colonies served as protected markets for French-produced goods and provided France with necessary raw materials for production, such as the rubber plantations in colonial Indochina. By 1956, with the undeclared war dragging on, Algeria stood as one of

⁴⁸Benjamin Stora, *Algeria: A Short History*, 104

⁴⁹Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, 520

⁵⁰Naylor, *France and Algeria*, 14

the few remaining colonies and the last one in Africa.⁵¹ Though France maintains control even now of several small islands, withdrawal from Algeria marked an end to their period of colonial power. Historians have described the Algeria War as the largest “national trauma” for France in the 20th century for these reasons.⁵² In part this trauma was because France had ideologically tied “the destiny of France” to their success in the retention of Algeria.⁵³ Loss of international influence compounded the loss of their colonies, with the rise of the United States globally and the creation of the European Economic Community in Europe. Lacking the authority it once claimed, France must have felt threatened by the changes. What would France become when no longer an empire? The end of the Algerian conflict, coupled with other destabilizing trends, sparked questions of national identity in France.

The Algerian War created painful memories and psychological scars for the French nation. Officially, the French government did not label the conflict a “war.” There could be no declaration of war from France because the Algerian nationalists were considered insurgent rebels, not a separate nation. France could not declare war on France and Algeria was France. Only in 1999 did the National Assembly pass a law allowing the conflict to officially be referred to as the Algerian War. During the war, some discussion had been provoked in mainland France by the use of torture, especially among the intellectual left.⁵⁴ However, after 1962 silence swiftly settled on the whole topic. It was not until 20 years later that soldiers and Pieds-Noirs began to publish “histories” and memoirs of their experiences and not until the 1990s that serious academic scholarship on the subject began. Indeed American and English historians first broached the sensitive topic, as French historians seemed reluctant to discuss the controversial

⁵¹ Morocco and Tunisia both gained independence in 1956 and France’s West and Sub-Saharan African colonies gained independence in 1960. None of these colonies had been departments of France and all the movements of decolonization occurred peacefully.

⁵²Serge Berstein, «La Peau de Chagrin de l’Algérie Française » in Jean-Pierre Rioux, *La Guerre d’Algérie et Les Français*, 217

⁵³Ministère d’Algérie, *Action du gouvernement*, 18. Quoted in Naylor, *France and Algeria*.

⁵⁴For discussion of torture in the Algerian War and its public perception in France see: Marnia Lazreg, *Torture and the Twilight of Empire: From Algiers to Baghdad* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008). Rita Maran, *Torture : The Role of Ideology in the French-Algerian War*, (New York: Praeger, 1989). and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Torture: Cancer of Democracy, France and Algeria, 1954-1962*. (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963).

events. The contradictions of identity evoked by the Algerian War, as well as the remarkable violence of the event, raised issues the French populace clearly did not wish to address.⁵⁵ When the war ended, France attempted to forget the whole ordeal. A national survey shows that just before the Evian Accords in March 1962, 75% of French people ranked the Algerian War as their primary concern. By September of 1962, only 13% were still concerned about Algeria, less than the percentage that listed vacation as their uppermost concern.⁵⁶ Deeply concerned by the changes it had wrought, France clearly wanted to forget the painful loss of their colony and the unpopular tactics of the war, unwilling to address the deep questions of national identity it provoked. Amidst this desire to forget, there came a surge of immigration, as threatened populations fled from Algeria to France, forcing an unwelcome confrontation with France's colonial past and the unfinished legacy of its failures in the Algerian War.

* * *

Drawing on bureaucratic, media and memoir sources, this study demonstrates the way in which the Bouches-du-Rhône, and specifically Marseille, dealt with the Algerian arrivals. Given the local nature of this thesis, most archival material came from the holdings of the municipal archives of the Bouches-du-Rhône. Additionally, local newspapers such as *Le Provençal* and *La Marseillaise*, as well as the national journal *Le Monde*, offer a glimpse into how contemporaries understood the events surrounding Harki and Pied-Noir immigration to France. Memoirs, though always complicated due to inherent bias, provide an invaluable view of the emotions and memories of the people who lived through the tumultuous upheavals in the wake of the war. Within each of these primary sources, I found a distinct inequality of available material. Pied-Noir immigration and programs were carefully tracked and meticulously recorded in local archives, loudly trumpeted in local newspapers and widely covered in memoirs. Their story can be pieced together from the available documents. With the Harkis, finding sources was more problematic.

⁵⁵For more on the role of memory and the Algerian War see Benjamin Stora's *La Gangrène et l'Oubli*

⁵⁶Stora, *La Gangrène et l'Oubli*, 117. The survey was conducted by IFOP

Even an exact count of how many Harkis came to France remains unattainable. For example, a circulaire from the Minister of Rapatriés to the various Prefects, in 1963, claimed that 9,000 Harkis had been resettled but that 15,000 still resided in various camps throughout France.⁵⁷ However, this number might not include Harkis who came to France through means other than army repatriation, or Harkis who had not yet have entered the camp system. Additionally, a segment of the Harki population proved unable to leave Algeria until a later date.⁵⁸ Historian Tom Charbit estimates that a total of 140,000 “repatriated French Muslims” lived in France by 1968, including 85,000 supplétifs and 55,000 notables, functionaries or career military men.⁵⁹ Marseille officials recorded the numbers of “Muslim Algerians” who arrived at the port, but did not separate out the number of Harkis. They simply did not track the numbers as assiduously as with the Pieds-Noirs, perhaps because of army involvement in the process of Harki repatriation. This decision makes it difficult to ascertain the exact number of Harkis who entered Marseille, as opposed to other Mediterranean ports.

As might be guessed from the confusion over numbers, the mention of Harkis in government archives is relatively slim compared to the official record on Pieds-Noirs. All efforts aimed at the situation of the Pieds-Noirs came through the *Ministre des Rapatriés*, a Paris position with subordinate Prefects at the regional level. The French government never named a “*Ministre des Harkis*.” Harkis did not quite qualify as rapatriés, though in some cases they could apply for programs given to other rapatriés. Instead the departments of Algerian Affairs, Rapatriés and the Army jointly shared responsibility.⁶⁰ Due to the confusion of responsibility, the official record on the Harkis is hard to find. Programs and initiatives for them appear less frequently and are scattered throughout dossiers with a myriad of functions. Some Harki files are thrown in with documents pertaining to Pieds-Noirs and the

⁵⁷ Archives du Bouches-du-Rhône, 218 W 57 Circulaire from the *Ministre de Repatriés* to the Prefects, « Reclassement des supplétifs musulmans réfugiés en France », February 25th, 1963

⁵⁸ *Des Vies*, 81

⁵⁹ Charbit, *Les Harkis*, 62

⁶⁰ 137 W 460, « Aspects du Problème des « Harkis » en France », Confidential Booklet published by the Ministry of the Interior.

docks of Marseille. Other documents deal with specific locations where Harkis lived, or specific programs they participated in through the Forestry Department. Unlike the Pieds-Noirs, Harkis do not have dedicated dossiers. Researching the official position on Harki policy thus depended on discovering the rare and occasional mention. In piecing together the events of their journey, I relied on the work of other scholars and on the dozens of documents that I could locate.

* * *

As the Pieds-Noirs and Harkis left for France, they brought with them, inevitably, memories of the war the French so longed to forget. The challenging arrival of ghosts of the colonial system sparked a proactive government reaction, with attempts to smooth over the controversies of the past through programming designed to integrate and assimilate. First, I look at the arrival of the Pieds-Noirs, and the various government programs established to provide monetary aid, housing and employment for them. An evident desire to buttress the French identity of the European Algerians lay embedded in these programs, a desire which ultimately succeeded. The second chapter turns to the experience of the Harkis. Government decrees limited their arrival, segregated their bureaucratic treatment, and, with perhaps good intentions, isolated a community the government deemed not yet ready to be French. Through this differential treatment, rooted in colonial prejudices, the local government fostered long-term patterns of marginalization for the Harki population and their children. By focusing on the initial years of repatriation, roughly 1962-1970, I demonstrate the way in which early and often ad hoc reactions established enduring norms. The triumph of government policy for the Pieds-Noirs and its failures for the Harkis created a lasting impact on France and the Bouches-du-Rhône, challenging ideas of citizenship, identity and assimilation in France and recreating colonial hierarchies in the metropole.

Pieds-Noirs: The Return of the “French”

Standing on the upper deck of a steamer, Francine Dessaigne watched as the Algerian shoreline slowly faded from view. Her heart breaking, she began a journey to leave the only home she had ever known. “A part of my life ended when, from the boat, I saw the white homes along the bay, the arcades of the boulevards on the seashore, the large buildings of my neighborhood fade from view,” she recalls.⁶¹ Dessaigne, alongside nearly one million European Algerians, left Algeria as the Evian Accords created an independent Algerian nation. The European colonists, often called Pieds-Noirs, knew that when France withdrew from Algeria, their privileged position within society would disappear. How could their minority population hope to maintain dominance over the nine million Algerians who would soon have a legal voice in government? How, after a conflict as brutal as the Algerian bid for independence, could they remain when they were viewed as “the enemy” by the victorious FLN?⁶² As family by family the Pieds-Noirs boarded planes and boats, the life they had collectively carved out beneath the burning Mediterranean sun faded into memory and integration into mainland France became their best hope for the future.

This chapter examines the mass exodus of the Pieds-Noirs to France, as well as the way the French government reinforced the construction of the African-born colonials as French. The diverse community of European Algerians left Algeria in a wave of uncertainty. Inherently linked with the complicated legacy of the Algerian War, their arrival in France was tainted by bitter memories the French would rather forget. Yet instead of ignoring the Pieds-Noirs, the French government spun into action to create programs, aiding the Pieds-Noirs’ integration into the metropole. The repatriation of the Pieds-Noirs had particular impact on the city of Marseille, the main point of arrival for the fleeing Europeans. On the eve of World War II, Marseille contained roughly 660,000 people. By 1970, the population had increased to

⁶¹« Une partie de ma vie s’est terminée lorsque, du bateau, j’ai vu s’éloigner les maisons blanches qui bordent la baie, les arcades du boulevard du front de mer, les grands immeubles de mon quartier. » Francine Dessaigne. *Journal. D’une mere de famille Pied-Noir*. (L’Esprit Nouveau:Paris, 1962). 237

⁶²The FLN or *Front de Libération Nationale* was the Algerian nationalist insurgent group in the Algerian War

890,000. Most scholars estimate that of that dramatic increase, between 100,000 and 130,000 were Pieds-Noirs, the majority of whom arrived in the summer of 1962.⁶³ The decision of the rapatriés to remain in the already crowded southern city prompted official programs for aid, housing, and employment. In each step of the integration process, the government overcame bureaucratic and monetary problems, the frustration of the Marseillaise population, and the resentful attitude of the Pieds-Noirs themselves, to incorporate the Pieds-Noirs into France. With remarkable speed and efficacy, they secured the Pieds-Noirs' colonial identity as "French," assimilating them into French society.

The End of Colonial Algeria

For the European population of Algeria, French withdrawal came as a shock. The Pieds-Noirs, a diverse community, had lived in Algeria for generations by 1962. Contrary to FLN portrayals of the Pieds-Noirs, European Algerians were hardly the "colons" of the Caribbean islands. Most Pieds-Noirs did not own luxurious plantations staffed by local workers. Rather they tended to be salaried professionals, artisans, or workers, dependent on the structure of the colonial state for their jobs.⁶⁴ On the eve of independence, the majority of Algerian Europeans had been born in Algeria. France served, if anything, as a vacation spot, and many had never set foot in the metropole. Some Pieds-Noirs could not even claim French origins. Early in the days of colonialism, waves of Southern European immigrants populated Algeria alongside French immigrants. Italians, Maltese, and Spaniards made up a large portion of the Pied-Noir community. As Europeans, they could apply for French citizenship under colonial law and almost always did. However, they often spoke a language in addition to French at home, and felt few cultural ties to mainland France. The world of the Pieds-Noirs, moreover, was a mix of orient and occident. The Pieds-Noirs embraced Algerian foods and music, blending cultures and creating their own

⁶³These numbers are consistently quoted in histories of Marseille. For examples, see: Roger Duchene & Jean Contrucci, *Marseille* (Fayard, Paris: 1998). Emile Temime, *Histoire de Marseille* (Editions Jeanne Laffitte : Marseille, 2006). Ed. Edouard Baratier, *Histoire de Marseille*, (Privat : Toulouse, 1973). Alessi Dell'Umbria, *Histoire universelle de Marseille* (Agone : Marseille, 2006).

⁶⁴Berstein. « La Peau de Chagrin de l'Algerie Francaise » in Jean-Pierre Rioux. *La Guerre d'Algérie et Les Français* (Fayard : Paris, 1990). 209

tightly knit communities, which had little in common with French traditions. This distinct and multi-national culture belies the universal acceptance of the Pieds-Noirs as French. Colonial structure privileged them as the elites over Arab and Berber populations, but the Pieds-Noirs were not an inherently French population. Paternalism defined the relations between Pieds-Noirs and native Algerians, a sense of inherent superiority mingled with concern for their well-being. Families and neighbors fostered close relationships, partaking communally in the joys and tribulations of everyday life.⁶⁵

The final days of the Pieds-Noirs in colonial Algeria were complicated by the emergence of a violent organization, determined to keep Algeria French. As President Charles de Gaulle rolled out plans to remove French troops from Algeria, certain French generals formed a “secret army” to prevent the independence of Algeria. This organization, which used the same terror tactics as the FLN, was known as the *Organisation de l’Armée Secrete*, or the OAS. The OAS, essentially a paramilitary group, attempted to establish European unity against Algerian independence, relying largely on intimidation and terrorist attacks. Once it realized the hopelessness of forestalling independence, the OAS switched to a *terre brulée*, or scorched earth, policy, eliminating buildings which could prove useful to an independent Algeria. Henri Martinez, an OAS operative who eventually resettled in France, remembers orders to burn “the prefecture, the central post office, the central telephone station, the customs offices, the central heater and its interminable chimney, even the monument to the dead; all that could, sooner or later, contribute to administrative life or life in general...”⁶⁶ The OAS menaced the European and Algerian populations alike, and many Pieds-Noirs retained powerful memories of the fear the OAS instilled.

⁶⁵ Daniel LeConte. *Les Pieds-Noirs : histoire et portrait d’une communauté*, (Le Seuil : Paris, 1980), 88

⁶⁶ « La préfecture, la poste principale, le central téléphonique, les bureaux des douanes, la central thermique et son interminable cheminée, même le monument au morts; tout ce que de près ou de loin contribue à la vie administrative ou à la vie tout court... » Henri Martinez. *Et Qu’ils M’accueillent avec des Cris de Haine*. (Editions Robert Laffront : Paris, 1982) 356

A significant portion of the European population, however, supported the desperate actions of the OAS. As one Pied-Noir man later reflected, “They considered, and I considered with them, it was... the only way to do something and to respond to the violence with violence, which was the only way left to express oneself.”⁶⁷ Other Pieds-Noirs believed that DeGaulle’s government had “sold” Algeria to the United Nations and that France would leave the Europeans at the mercy of the FLN without qualms.⁶⁸ After such perceived government deception, the OAS seemed the only option. The OAS also organized activities on mainland France. Many Parisians, for example, blamed a particularly violent police repression of Algerian workers in 1961 on infiltration of OAS members into the police force.⁶⁹ The French government feared that immigration of European Algerians might include the arrival of dangerous OAS adherents as well. The deadly outbursts and rigid determination of the OAS ended, perhaps, any hope the Pieds-Noirs might have had for a peaceful transition to an inclusive new republic. As the Pieds-Noirs struggled to understand the collapse of the society they loved, many began to head for France, bringing with them the prejudices and expectations of privilege which had formed the basis of colonial society.

Leaving Algeria

The summer of 1962 became the season of exodus for Pieds-Noirs, who fled to France in droves. The “return” to France began shortly after the signing of the Evian Accords in May of 1962, with the largest spike in numbers occurring in June, 1962. Between the months of May and August of that year, 700,000 European Algerians entered France. Of this number, historian Jean-Jacques Jordi estimates that 50 -75% of rapatriés first arrived in France in Marseille.⁷⁰ Local newspapers, perhaps prone to hyperbole, estimated a higher percentage. On one particularly busy day in June, 8,500 rapatriés arrived at the docks

⁶⁷“...ils ont considéré, et moi j’ai considéré avec eux, que c’était... le seul moyen de faire quelque chose et de répondre par la violence à la violence, qui était le seul moyen qui restait pour s’exprimer. » - Jeanine Verdes-Leroux. *Les Français d’Algérie* (Fayard : Paris, 2001). 366

⁶⁸Micheline Susini, *De Soleil et de Larmes* (Editions Robert Laffont : Paris, 1982). 76

⁶⁹Yvan Gastuat. *L’Immigration et l’opinion en France sous la Ve République* (Le Seuil : Paris, 2000) 18

⁷⁰Jean-Jacques Jordi. *De L’exode à l’exil: rapatriés et pieds-noirs en France: l’exemple marseillaise, 1954-1992* (Editions L’Harmattan : Paris, 1993). 20

of Marseille. Thousands more reached asylum in Marseille by air on the same day.⁷¹ The second largest city in France, Marseille is located in the department of the Bouches-du-Rhône, on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. The city served as the obvious point of entry for those fleeing Algeria because it was the largest French port on the Mediterranean. Ancient trade relations between Marseille and North Africa, dating back to Marseille's past as a Phoenician city, linked the city with colonial Algeria.⁷² Refugees commandeered space on the normal traffic used for trade or vacation purposes to make their way to France.

Initially, neither the Pieds-Noirs nor the French government expected the rapatriés to come in large numbers, nor did they expect them to stay for a long period of time. The French government predicted that the vast majority of European Algerians would choose to remain in Algeria and participate in the new republic. In a meeting at the Prefecture of the Bouches-du-Rhône, Robert Bolin, the National Secretary of State of Rapatriés, suggested that "we can count on the return of 100,000 families in 4 years, not counting soldiers, government employees and Muslims who choose to establish themselves in France."⁷³ This appraisal almost comically underestimated the number of Pieds-Noirs families that eventually reentered France. The official timeframe suggested that France would deal with a gradual flow. In reality, France faced the daunting task of housing, employing and integrating 700,000 Pieds-Noirs, most of whom entered France in the course of a single summer, rather than over four years. Even as late as July 1962, one of the heaviest periods of immigration, the Reinstallation Commission remained optimistic that only a modest percentage of European Algerians would choose to come to France.⁷⁴

Those who did come, they believed, had simply extended their normal vacation cycle. Instead of going

⁷¹ La Provençal, June 26th, 1962, p. 2

⁷² Temime, *Histoire de Marseille*, 10

⁷³ « ...on peut escompter le retour de 100,000 familles en 4 ans, non compris les militaires, les fonctionnaires, et les musulmans qui choisiraient de s'établir en France. » - Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, Robert Boulin, Meeting Notes, March 26, 1962

⁷⁴ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, Commission de Coordination pour la Réinstallation des Français d'Outre-Mer, Report, July 18, 1962

on vacation in June, Pieds-Noirs had arrived in May, to wait out the chaos. An article from May 1962 in *Le Monde*, reinforced this presumption, reporting that many rapatriés planned to stay in France only temporarily, eventually returning to Algeria “when the situation becomes clearer.”⁷⁵ French officials remained sure that these vacationers would eventually go back to their homes and belongings. The assumptions of the government proved to be patently false. In fact, the Reinstallation Commission’s report from July 1962 remarked that Algerians quickly occupied the jobs and apartments vacated by Pieds-Noirs. Replacement meant that assimilating the European population back into Algeria in the future would be difficult.⁷⁶ Only in January of 1963 did the “Study of the Problems Posed by the Repatriation of Algerian Refugees”, created by Economic and Social Council of France, remedy the government’s erroneous assumptions. They admitted that their original estimations about repatriation were too low and that moving forward, they must assume that all rapatriés who arrived in France meant to stay.⁷⁷

The misguided calculations of the government could not change reality and officials in Marseille had to scramble to meet the seemingly incessant flow of rapatriés during the summer of 1962. No ordinance restricted the immigration of Pieds-Noirs to France. As French citizens, they had a right to live anywhere within the French nation. However, leaving for the metropole often proved to be a daunting ordeal, despite freedom of entry. The OAS, reluctant to allow Europeans to leave and thus weaken their cause, blocked all boats from leaving Algeria on March 18th, 1962, following the signing of the Evian Accords. When they eventually stopped their blockade, the OAS still menaced the population and would allow only women, children and the elderly to leave. Finally in May the real exodus began, as OAS restrictions

⁷⁵ «...quand la situation sera plus claire. » - *Le Monde*, May 17, 1962, p. 13

⁷⁶Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, Commission de Coordination pour la Réinstallation des Français d’Outre-Mer, Report, July 18, 1962

⁷⁷Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456 « Etude des Problemes Poses Par Le Rapatriement des Refugies d’Algérie », Conseil Economique et Social, January 9, 1963

loosened.⁷⁸ Pieds-Noirs began to flee in earnest. As Henri Martinez writes “The Pied-Noir people were vanquished... We all knew it. Already immense lines appeared at the port and the airport; already cars were left abandoned, randomly along the sidewalks or parking lots.”⁷⁹ The Europeans left everything, desiring only to depart quickly. On June 21, the Commissioner of the Port reported that potential travelers, turned away because the boat was full, continued to try to enter an ocean liner even after the gang plank had been lifted.⁸⁰ The desperation of the Pieds-Noirs in this occurrence is palpable. Not content with eventually leaving for France, they demanded to leave now.

As showed by their haste to depart, fear and confusion characterized the flight of the Europeans. One Pied-Noir man, interviewed years later, said, “We left, I don’t know why, to tell you honestly. There was a movement of panic, everyone followed; they told us that they were going to slit our throats, kill us. Everyone left.”⁸¹ Daniel LeConte, a historian and Pied-Noir, notes that those who fled Algeria did so because they felt materially or physically menaced by the new Algerian state.⁸² The fear of violence was not without cause. The nationalists’ rise to power did in fact endanger some Europeans. Alain Yvorra left Algeria because neighbors warned that the FLN had blacklisted him. Shortly after fleeing to France, he learned that his father had been abducted by the FLN and brutally tortured before finally being recovered by the French army.⁸³ As the conflict between the OAS and the FLN spiraled out of control, attacks became a regularity in the life of the Europeans. In her journal from 1962, Francine Dessaigne reports almost quotidian acts of violence. Deadly attacks on mailmen were followed the next day by the

⁷⁸Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, Commissariat Spécial du Port, « Etude sur l’Exode des Populations d’Algerie en 1962 » January 25, 1963

⁷⁹« Le peuple pieds-noir est vaincu... Nous le savons tous. Déjà des immenses chaines d’attente au port et à l’aérodrome; déjà des voitures abandonnées ouvertes, au hasard des trottoirs ou des parkings. »- Henri Martinez. *Et Qu’ils M’acceuillent avec des Cris de Haine*. (Editions Robert Laffront : Paris, 1982). 353

⁸⁰Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, « Etude sur l’Exode des Populations d’Algerie en 1962 » Commissariat Spécial du Port, Jan 25, 1963

⁸¹On est partis, je ne sais pas pourquoi, je vous le dis franchement. Il y a eu un mouvement de panique, tout le monde a suivi ; on nous disait qu’on allait nous égorger, nous tuer. Tout le monde est parti.” - Jeannie Verdes-Leroux. *Les Francais d’Algérie*. 372

⁸²Daniel LeConte. *Les Pieds-Noirs*, 239

⁸³Danielle Michel-Chich. *Déracinés* (Editions Plume : Paris, 1990) 23

murder of a Pied-Noir woman by “fanatical Muslims.”⁸⁴ The ominous slogan of “la valise ou le cercueil” – the suitcase or the coffin- reverberated throughout Algeria. The phrase, believed to be spread by the Algerian nationalists, implied that Pieds-Noirs would either leave with a suitcase in hand or end up in a coffin, killed for remaining in Algeria.⁸⁵ Some Pieds-Noirs left Algeria with the assumption that the move would only be temporary, just as the French government believed. Odette G, who left Algeria at the age of 42, later reflected “when I left Algiers, I didn’t leave to save myself. I left on vacation with a plan to return...”⁸⁶ She parted, unaware that her vacation would lead to permanent resettlement in France.

As the Pieds-Noirs, for their varied reasons, quit Algeria in droves, conditions of the cross-Mediterranean voyage worsened. The boats had a limited number of seats, and the preferable cabins filled up quickly. One official remarked, “In fact, the passengers started lining up at 6 am, in a space that more evidently resembled a prisoner camp than a marine port. They arrived without order numbers and the distribution of tickets naturally must be the object of improvements.”⁸⁷ Due to the chaos and sheer volume of travelers, many people, initially planning on traveling in a higher class, were forced to choose between traveling fourth class or staying in Algeria until the next boat. For those who chose immediate departure, the conditions could be harrowing. Fourth class accommodations had no beds, no service and no complimentary food. On a trip that often lasted over 24 hours, the fourth class passengers found themselves without resources. On its voyage on the 10-12th of May 1962, The *Ville de Marseille* carried 1,400 rapatriés, including 925 fourth class passengers. These 925 people could obtain food only through purchasing it in an ill-stocked cafeteria and passengers also lodged complaints about insufficient availability of water. Those families familiar with traveling in cheaper accommodations knew to bring

⁸⁴Dessaigne. *Journal*. 142

⁸⁵La Marseillaise, June, 10, 1962, p. 2 The newspaper also implied that the OAS, and not the FLN, promulgated the slogan, in order to convince European Algerians that independence would mean obligatory departure.

⁸⁶« Lorsque je suis partie d’Alger, je ne suis pas partie pour me sauver. Je suis partie en vacances avec l’idée de rentrer... » Michel-Chich, *Déracinés*, 22

⁸⁷« En fait les passagers sont convoqués à 6 h. sur un terrain qui évidemment ressemble plus à un camp de prisonniers qu’à une gare maritime. Ils y arrivent sans numéro d’ordre et la distribution des cartes d’accès à bord doit naturellement faire l’objet d’améliorations.» - Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 458, Note, May 1962

blankets and food to make their trip more comfortable. However, for the voyage of the *Ville de Marseille*, the official observers noted “...at least 400 of these 4th class passengers left their homes without taking anything, thinking they would travel in a different class.”⁸⁸ After an exposé in a Parisian newspaper on the conditions of these passengers, the city of Marseille attempted to ameliorate the situation by providing hot food and drinks for the refugees upon their arrival in La Joliette, the major port of Marseille.⁸⁹

Europeans also fled to France on the *pont-arienne* or “air bridge”, created by special increased routes between Algeria and Marseille. Indeed 90% of rapatriés who left Algeria by plane got off at Marseille. Although many rapatriés simply used Marseille as a transition point before taking trains or planes to other cities, the massive temporary arrival still strained the city’s resources and housing capacity.⁹⁰ Air France and Air Algeria provided essentially the only two flight options, in an age where nationalized airplane companies remained the norm. Like maritime travel, flight numbers peaked in June of 1962. The cadence of immigration was such that on a typical day, over twenty five planes arrived from Algeria at the airport, La Marnane. Collectively, these airplanes could easily carry upwards of 1,500 rapatriés a day to Marseille. Waiting for departure by flight could prove just as traumatic as the experience on the boats. Pieds-Noirs had to reserve tickets at least a week in advance. In one instance, 1,000 fearful people slept outside the airport in Algiers, hoping to benefit from last minute cancellations and standby tickets.⁹¹ One man, remembering his departure years later, said “People were afraid they would be killed if they returned home – they knew that the settling of scores was already happening – or that they

⁸⁸“... au moins quatre cents de ces passagers de 4 sont partis de chez eux sans rien prendre, pensant voyager dans une autre classe.” - Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 458, Note, May 1962

⁸⁹Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 458, Letter from Prefet Haas-Picard to Secretary of State of Rapatriés, 18 May, 1962

⁹⁰La Provençal, June 6th, 1962, p. 2

⁹¹La Provençal, June 19th, 1962, p. 2

would be stuck in Algeria forever.”⁹² Desperate, Pieds-Noir camped at the airport until a flight became available.

Administrative issues created inevitable complications in arrival by air, but officials made every effort to smooth the process. In the beginning, only the wealthier residents could afford to pay for their ticket. To fix this, the French government adopted a policy of reimbursement for travel costs, a remarkable decision given that they were under no obligation to do so. In a letter on June 3rd, 1962, the Cabinet Director of the Prefect of the Bouches-du-Rhône, Michel Denieul, wrote to the directors of Air France and Air Algérie, confirming that the plane tickets of rapatriés would be reimbursed when they arrived in France.⁹³ The administration also extended reimbursement benefits to rapatriés traveling by boat. Air travel presented other organizational problems. In the same letter, Denieul speaks to the directors about his concern over baggage handling issues. It appears that, not infrequently, a passenger’s baggage did not arrive on the same plane as them.⁹⁴ Upon landing in France, families would wait in vain for their belongings, stranded in the airport and unsure what to do without their only possessions. *La Provençal*, a Marseille newspaper, criticized the airport *accueil* staff for being less equipped than the maritime team. The article provides anecdotes about a young single mother waiting for aid and an elderly man lost at the airport, suggesting that much more could be done and emphasizing the importance of a good welcome “sur la plan psychologique.”⁹⁵

Despite the proclaimed importance of welcome, the government also greeted the arrival of the Pieds-Noirs with a very real sense of fear. Officials knew that alongside the most innocent rapatriés fleeing instability, there could be an operative of the OAS trying to slip into France. One internal note

⁹²« Les gens avaient peur d’être tués s’ils retournaient en ville – car ils savaient que des règlements de compte avaient déjà lieu -, ou d’être bloqués en Algérie pour toujours. » - Michel-Chich. *Déracinés*. 33

⁹³France is divided 96 départements, plus an additional 5 départements overseas. Though these regions have less authority than American state, départements are in some ways the equivalent. The Prefect is the political head of the department, roughly equivalent to a governor. Local government is further divided into communes, with mayors controlling various cities or communes.

⁹⁴Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 457, Michel Denieul (Cabinet Director to the Prefet des Bouches-du-Rhone), Letter to Directors of Air France and Air Algeria. June 3, 1962

⁹⁵La Provençal, June 21st, 1962, p. 2

from 1962 spoke of this concern, warning, “Don’t forget that repatriation of our Algerian compatriots is also the repatriation of the OAS. If there is a chance to neutralize the OAS, it’s at their arrival on the metropolitan ground. We must count on this fact, rather than on a slow death by suffocation.”⁹⁶ Officials remained unconvinced that the end of colonial Algeria would be the end of the violence of the OAS. They worried that if the OAS successfully infiltrated the mainland, the group would perpetuate the terror they had created in Algeria. The government took certain measures to control their entrance. For example, a newspaper article describes extra searches performed on the cars coming from Algeria. One OAS affiliate had smuggled arms into France, from Oran, by concealing them in a car. After that, customs conducted a special inspection of every car from Algeria, to guarantee that it contained no guns.⁹⁷ This special precaution might have slowed the entry of arms into France but most OAS sympathizers were average Europeans, not identifiable extremists. Blocking their entrance proved nearly impossible. Henri Martinez, an OAS operative who later wrote a book about his experience, immigrated to France with no difficulty in June of 1962.⁹⁸ If newspaper reports are to be believed, the OAS did indeed enter France alongside the rapatriés, bringing with them an upswing in crime. During July of 1962, *Le Marseillaise* reported a rash of robberies and hold-ups committed in the city of Marseille, all allegedly in the name of the OAS.⁹⁹ Rather than tightening immigration or cutting it off altogether, however, the government continued their plan of rapid immigration, overcoming the problem of the OAS by attempting to change attitudes rather than blocking migration.

In part, the determined response of the government to the various set-backs came from a need to prove French support for the Pied-Noir community. The Pieds-Noirs already felt abandoned by the French government because of independence. Often, the “repatriated” people had never been to

⁹⁶ « N’oublions pas que le rapatriement de nos compatriotes d’Algérie est aussi le rapatriement de l’OAS. S’il y a une chance de la désamorcer, c’est à l’arrivée sur le sol métropolitain qu’elle existe. Il faut plus compter sur ce fait que sur une mort lente par asphyxie. »- Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 457, Note on Rapatrié Policy, June 62

⁹⁷ *Le Marseillaise*, July 25, 1962 p. 8

⁹⁸ Martinez, *Et Qu’ils M’acceuillent*. 366

⁹⁹ *Le Marseillaise*, July 1962

France, despite having been raised in the belief that it was their *terre natale* or native land. Even as they left, Pieds-Noirs developed an aching nostalgia for the society that once was. Daniel Saint-Hamont expressed being unable to understand “that I was going to be obligated to live in a foreign country, without the sun, in exile...”¹⁰⁰ The sandy beaches of Algeria became, in their memory, a paradise left behind. Marie Elbe, who left Algeria at age 38, says “I remember a marvelous life, country sides of a grandiose beauty and people who were warm and fraternal... Every time I evoke my country, the depart, I can’t keep from crying.”¹⁰¹ They often write about the pain of leaving behind the resting places of their loved ones; mourning the fact that “all our dead” remain buried in Algeria.¹⁰² Pervasive in their accounts of departures as well is the idea of *un peuple déraciné*, or a rootless people. The Pieds-Noirs, as a community, did not feel at ease in France, but nor could they call Algeria their home. Robert Mantot, a Pied-Noir who left Algeria as a teenager, explains, “I am rootless, like a plant that they decided to transport. I was marvelously happy on my land, my family had profound roots in Algeria.”¹⁰³ Without these “roots”, many Pieds-Noirs felt lost in their new life in France. Saint-Hamont calls France a *foreign* land and Marie Elbe is referencing Algeria when she speaks of the departure from her country. Tellingly, though always French citizens, the identity of the Pieds-Noirs was rooted in their Algerian community, not in the idea of being French.

Marseille : Point of Arrival or Final Destination?

As rapatriés entered Marseille, the city’s government balked at the sheer numbers. Marseille had seen a previous wave of Europeans returning from North Africa when Tunisia and Morocco both achieved independence in 1956. However, those populations, though not insignificant, were not

¹⁰⁰« que j’allais être obligé de vivre dans un pays étrangers, sans le soleil, en exil... » - Daniel Saint-Hamont, *Le coup de sirocco* (Fayard : Paris, 1978)

¹⁰¹« J’ai le souvenir d’une vie merveilleuse, de paysages d’une beauté grandiose et de gens chaleureux et fraternels... A chaque fois que j’évoque mon pays, le départ, je ne peux retenir mes larmes. » [Michel-Chich, *Déracinés*, 95

¹⁰²Verdes-Leroux. *Les Français d’Algérie*, 298

¹⁰³« Je suis un déraciné, comme une plante que l’on a décidé de transporter. J’étais merveilleusement heureux sur ma terre, ma famille avait des racines profondes en Algérie. » - Michel-Chich, *Déracinés*. 152

comparable to Algerian immigration because the earlier groups arrived gradually and fewer Europeans inhabited those former protectorates. The total volume of rapatriés from both Morocco and Tunisia in Marseille only reached 40,000 people, less than half the number of rapatriés from Algeria.¹⁰⁴ Marseille did however feel crowded by these smaller groups of immigrants. Officials feared that the city simply could not handle the onslaught of more refugees, who would need aid, comfort, instructions and solidarity. Despite many protests that Marseille could not take any more, however, Pieds-Noirs continued to arrive by the thousands each day.

Marseille seemed to have no choice but to develop bureaucratic structures of welcome, beginning with *antenne*, or branches, of aid at both the port, La Joliette, and the airport, La Marseillan. On June 13th, 1962 the *Service d'Accueil* was created as an independent body, to deal with the migrants.¹⁰⁵ The *accueil* served multiple functions. For example, officials stationed medical professionals at La Joliette to inspect and help those aboard the arriving ships, as well providing an ambulance on standby.¹⁰⁶ The local government installed services to provide information about where to find aid and where to create a *dossier*, in order to start receiving monetary assistance.¹⁰⁷ The SNCF, France's nationalized train company, provided information on tickets to other cities, allowing the rapatriés to travel with relative ease to their final destination. The city, in conjunction with the Red Cross, set up free buffets of food and hot drinks, as well as providing a place for warming bottles for infants.¹⁰⁸ Initially the Pieds-Noirs arriving in Marseille were wary of the bureaucracy and had an endpoint in mind, heading to families or friends residing in France. The Prefect of the Bouches-du-Rhône, Haas-Picard, said these early arrivals were not "true" rapatriés because they had a "*point de chute*," or final destination, and only required a night in a

¹⁰⁴Pascal Blanchard and Gilles Boëtsch. *Marseille Porte Sud : 1905-2005*, (La Découverte, Paris : 2005). 135

¹⁰⁵Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 462, Note, March 13, 1963

¹⁰⁶Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, Note, June 1962

¹⁰⁷Le Provençal, May 19th, 1962, p. 2

¹⁰⁸18 May 62, Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 458, Communiqué from M. Payan, Commissaire du Port, 17 May, 1962

hotel before continuing on.¹⁰⁹ One rapatrié said that their initial reluctance to accept aid also came from a place of pride. The Pieds-Noirs did not consider themselves repatriated, but rather displaced, she says, and they did not want to appear to be charity cases.¹¹⁰ For whatever reason, few rapatriés chose to use the *antennes* when they first opened.¹¹¹ Over time, however, more Pieds-Noirs took advantage of the aid the French government offered.

For the Pieds-Noirs, arrival seemed just as traumatic as departure. Despite the various services set up to ease the transition and help the Pieds-Noirs, confusion and acrimony reigned. One man, reflecting on his arrival, says, “Marseille, that was horrible. They waited for us like we were mobsters even though we were wrecks. They put the men on one side and the women on the other. They brutally inspected our bags.”¹¹² Another Pied-Noir remembers children crying “like orphans”, waiting alone on one side of the airport as their parents filled out the unending stacks of paperwork necessary for entry.¹¹³ One man, arriving at the port of Marseille, recalls seeing a sign reading “Throw the Pieds-Noirs in the sea.”¹¹⁴ Another man remembers his family’s repatriation, saying “[The metropolitans] didn’t give us any presents. The police and soldiers went through all the baggage and the smart thing to do was to stay quiet. Afterwards, no welcome...”¹¹⁵ Slow bureaucracy and words of resentment made arrival in France seem like just one more nightmare for the Pieds-Noirs to endure. Yet, as one Pieds-Noir woman points out, the hostility came from both directions. “The welcome was cold, that’s the least one can say... But

¹⁰⁹Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 457, Letter from Prefet Haas-Picard to M. Juilliet (Conseiller Technique au Cabinet du Premier Ministre), May 31, 1962

¹¹⁰Michel-Chich, *Déracinés*. 37

¹¹¹La Provençal, June 10, 1962, p. 2

¹¹²« A Marseille, la, ça a été horrible. On nous a attendus comme des Mafiosi alors qu’on était des loques. On a mis les hommes d’un cote, les femmes de l’autre. On a inspecté nos bagages brutalement. » - Verdes-Leroux, *Les Français d’Algérie*. 380

¹¹³Michel-Chich, *Déracinés*. 36

¹¹⁴“Pieds-Noirs à la mer.” [Michel-Chich. *Déracinés*. 36

¹¹⁵« On nous a rien fait cadeau.... La police et les miliatires ont fouillé tous les bagages et on avait intérêt à ne rien dire. Ensuite, aucun accueil... » Jean-Jacques Jordi. « L’exode et l’exil des pieds-noirs ». In Guerre d’Algérie Magazine (July-August 2002). P. 44

one also has to recognize that we too, we were aggressive when we arrived in France.”¹¹⁶ Bitter about French “abandonment” of Algeria, the Pieds-Noirs believed that the French population cared little about their plight and thus expected a substandard welcome. The local government, in its plans of integration, had to work against the reluctant attitudes of the Marseillaise population, as well as against the animosity of the Pieds-Noirs.

In contrast to Pied-Noir stories of unpleasant reception, many organizations expressed nothing but support for the rapatriés. The French viewed the Pieds-Noirs not as foreigners but as fellow Frenchmen. Newspapers seemed to sympathize with them. Stories portrayed the Pieds-Noirs as victims of the chaotic and dangerous events leading up to Algerian independence. Alone and without resources, the press saw, or at least painted, them as objects of pity, encouraging French citizens to recognize repatriation as a national problem that deserved to be solved. Official opinion, as expressed in certain outlets, also seemed in favor of supporting the Pieds-Noirs. Government employees, in the dry language of bureaucratic French, expressed pity for the Pieds-Noirs. Certainly the government created policies which introduced exceptional levels of monetary aid and administrative care for European Algerians. This reaction was hardly intuitive. The programming and special incentives created for the Pieds-Noirs cost the French people millions of taxpayer Francs. Previous rapatrié groups had received varying levels of aid, but never had a group of this size entered France within such a short period. It would have been only natural, one might think, for the newspapers and officials to be upset at the intrusion of this often bitter population. Their acceptance seems tied to a sense of duty. Various articles and letters reference the idea of “solidarity”, of a certain responsibility of the French people towards the Pieds-Noirs. Because French departure from Algeria caused the Pieds-Noirs to leave, France had an obligation to help them. There was a sense that aiding the Pieds-Noirs represented one of the costs of ending the war in Algeria.

¹¹⁶ « L'accueil a été froid, c'est le moins que l'on puisse dire.... Mais il faut bien reconnaître que nous aussi, nous étions agressifs en arrivant en France. » Michel-Chich. *Déracinés*. 49

The government desired to help the Pieds-Noirs, in general, but Marseille officials hoped they would consent to receive aid in another city. Rapatriés, however, quickly identified Marseille as their preferred final destination. Some reasons had to do with climate. Daniel LeConte, in his nostalgic history of the Pieds-Noirs, notes “[t]he European population vowed a religious cult to the sea... The sun, it’s the indispensable complement, with its caresses drying your skin.”¹¹⁷ The sun, the sea, the Mediterranean climate and culture of Algeria were integral to the Pieds-Noirs’ identity and way of life. Haim Lévy, a young adult when he moved to France, initially looked for jobs only in Marseille. “I wanted above all else to stay close to the ocean and I was ready to accept practically any job to do that,” he professed.¹¹⁸ In France, faced with a startling amount of change, many rapatriés seemed to cling to the warmth of the *Sud*. They found the climate and sea views of Marseille reassuringly like those they had left behind in Algeria. Besides its Mediterranean allure, Marseille also had a pull on the Algerian Europeans because of its longstanding association with the colony through trade. Pieds-Noirs sometimes had family in Marseille, tying them to the city. Some French officials suspected more sinister reasons for the attachment to the south. A letter from the Minister of the Interior in August of 1962 claims that the Pieds-Noirs refused to quit the Bouches-du-Rhône because the OAS and affiliated groups wanted the rapatriés to remain *en masse*. This would allow them to develop into a significant political block, eventually creating influence for the OAS.¹¹⁹ Because of one or several of these reasons, Marseille in particular and the south of France in general remained the favored settlement location of rapatriés.

French authorities identified this preference and Marseille officials feared its consequences. Already the primary point of triage for the arrival of the Pied-Noir population, Marseille felt it could not handle its permanent settlement. Even as early as 1961, Marseillaise officials nervously exchanged letters

¹¹⁷« La mer, la population européenne lui voue un culte dominical... Le soleil, c’est l’indispensable complément dont les caresses sèchent la peau. » - LeConte, *Les Pieds-Noirs* 160

¹¹⁸« Je voulais par-dessus tout rester au bord de la mer, et j’étais prêt à accepter pratiquement n’importe quel boulot pour cela, » - Michel-Chich, *Déracinés*, 57

¹¹⁹Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 99 W 244, Letter from Minister of the Interior to Prefet Haas-Picard, August 11, 1962

expressing their concern at the saturation of the city, stating that they needed to develop a program of dispersion to other areas of France.¹²⁰ The level of immigration in 1961, apparently already heavy enough to provoke worries, was minute in comparison with the veritable flood that arrived in the summer of 1962. The officials' concern then became something close to panic. By June of 1962, the Inspector General of the 9th Region, which included Marseille, wrote of his anxiety for the immediate problems of housing the new arrivals. He suggested, as part of a solution to the crisis, that they begin a massive press campaign in France and Algeria, alerting the Pieds-Noirs to the difficulties of settling in Marseille and encouraging them to plan to arrive elsewhere.¹²¹ Newspapers did indeed take up the cause. One article in *La Provençal* called it a "scandal" that 90% of rapatriés coming by plane arrived in Marseille and demanded that airports elsewhere in France absorb some of the flow.¹²² However, this planned press campaign had relatively little success in convincing the rapatriés to look to other cities.

Concerned by the concentration, France created a plan of national diffusion, in theory recognizing the national character of the crisis. According to this plan, the rapatriés arriving in Marseille would be directed to other departments by a series of incentives. Certain regions, deemed to have enough housing and employment opportunities, would be authorized to extend larger allocations and loans to the rapatriés. In cities and regions with no room for the influx, such as Marseille, the rapatriés would be offered no loans at all. Additionally, the national government appointed several departments and cities as "welcome" centers, making it clear that Marseille should be viewed as nothing but a point of transit.¹²³ They hoped this national politic would lead to the realization of their goals for the rapatriés, offering information and direction to the thousands of migrants.¹²⁴ In general, this diffusion plan

¹²⁰ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 467, Letters to and from the Prefect des Bouhces-du-Rhone, 1961

¹²¹ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 457 Note by Inspecteur General de l'Administratoin en Mission Extraordinaire pour la 9e Région, June 26, 1962

¹²² La Provençal, June 6th, 1962 p. 2

¹²³ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 459, Letter from the Prefet de Bouches-du-Rhone to the Mayor of Besancon, a « région d'accueil », August 3, 1962

¹²⁴ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 457, Note, June 1962

indicates the way local and national governments interacted in France. As a unitary and high centralized state, policy directives came from Paris. Implementation, however, took place at the local level and local government had a certain amount of freedom in achieving the directives imposed by the national government. The national diffusion program appeared to have only moderate success. Correspondence from the Prefect of the Bouches-du-Rhône flew out to the different welcome regions, protesting their lackadaisical attitude towards the crisis and demanding more help. The other regions, in the obsequious language of bureaucratic French, insisted that though they had been named as reception centers, they were already too full and they simply could not take more people.¹²⁵ Marseille officials, rebuffed with excuses no matter where they turned, realized that the saturation would remain a largely regional problem. Clearly, even though the Pieds-Noirs had been constructed as French, not all French officials seemed eager to lend assistance.

As early as July of 1962, the Regional Economic Committee had admitted defeat. In their summary of the Reclassement Program for Rapatriés, they wrote, "Despite measures of decentralization towards other regions and the essential vocation of the Bouches-du-Rhône as a transit center, Pieds-Noirs install themselves in the department for reasons of climate, sentiment or unity."¹²⁶ The people, for whatever reasons, had chosen to stay and the Bouches-du-Rhône needed to develop policies to cope with the strain of the sudden population growth. In January of 1963, the Economic and Social Council, in their study of the problems posed by repatriation, stipulated that Pieds-Noirs in the Mediterranean region would not have access to monetary allocations unless they could show proof of housing in the region.¹²⁷ This measure aimed to prevent rapatriés from indefinitely inhabiting the area, living off of government

¹²⁵Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 459, Letter from the Prefet de Bouches-du-Rhone to the Mayor of Besancon, a « région d'accueil », August 3, 1962

¹²⁶« ...en dépit des mesures de déconcentration vers les autres régions et de la vocation essentiellement de transit reconnue aux Bouches-du-Rhône, [Pieds-Noirs] «s'installent » dans ce département pour des raisons climatiques, sentimentales, ou de regroupement. » - Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, La Commission Economique Régionale, « Procédure de Reclassement Economique des Rapatriés », July 1962

¹²⁷Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, Conseil Economique et Social, « Etude des Problèmes Posés Par Le Rapatriement des Refugies d'Algérie », January 9, 1963

aid in the hopes of one day finding jobs and homes. Paradoxically, in many cases it proved nearly impossible for the rapatriés to establish themselves at a permanent address without aid payments, as the Economic and Social Council noted in their 1963 report.¹²⁸ The Bouches-du-Rhône government, reflecting on policy in April of 1963, suggested that the diffusion plan had been flawed, even to the limited extent that it had worked at all. By giving the Pieds-Noirs higher allocations in certain regions, policy may have in fact discouraged the rapatriés from seeking economic integration. In some cases the allocations being paid out were higher than the salaries they could have hoped to make with a new job. Central policy reversed, accepting the concentration of the rapatriés and attempting to wind down the exaggerated aid they had initially offered.¹²⁹

Living Off Government Money

For those who remained in Marseille, further services, departments and staffs stepped in to provide the complex process of *accueil*. In a procession of different locations, Marseille offered a center for the creation of dossiers for each rapatrié family. These dossiers comprised the first step in applying for the allocations guaranteed to all rapatriés by the law of December 26, 1961. These initial services also helped the most desperate Pieds-Noirs find housing in Marseille. The bureaucracy struggled with the vast size of the population to be served. One note from 1962 stated that, calculating a time of 30 minutes per dossier, it would take 315 functionaries to adequately tackle the flow of rapatrié dossiers. They had hired only 40.¹³⁰ Such dramas of scale hindered the Marseille *accueil* services from administering their aid in a timely manner. For weeks in June, *La Provençal* printed recurring stories about the delay in dossier processing and the long lines and disorder of the entire service.¹³¹ Despite its

¹²⁸ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, Conseil Economique et Social, « Etude des Problèmes Posés Par Le Rapatriement des Refugies d'Algérie », January 9, 1963

¹²⁹ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 99 W 244, Note, April 2, 1963

¹³⁰ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 457, Note, June 1962

¹³¹ La Provençal, June

shortcomings, local services did process thousands of dossiers and provided viable aid to many rapatrié families.

The initial goal of the Pieds-Noirs who opened state dossiers and officially declared themselves to be rapatriés was to obtain monetary aid. At the port, as part of the service of *accueil*, the *antenne* of the various services were able to provide small amounts of emergency funds, as well as reimburse ticket costs. However, the December 1961 law, created in the aftermath of earlier repatriation waves from North Africa and Indochina, created a much broader mandate of aid for rapatriés. From the beginning, the aid was designed to be limited. According to a secret document, the government intended aid to be used specifically for *Français de souche*, or French people of French descent, although typically this definition extended to include French people of all European descents. Aid should be offered only in special or extreme cases, rather than being an automatic right.¹³² However, as time went on and various media campaigns in the local newspapers explicitly spelled out what the Pieds-Noirs had a right to, the aid went from being purely exceptional to being expected. Pieds-Noirs who established themselves in the system had a right to a year of monthly subsistence payments, giving them a period in which to transition and find a job. The maximum level of aid, for a head of family, married with children, amounted to 450 NF per month.¹³³ Some families could qualify for money from “*primes géographiques*”, as part of the national program of diffusion. However, as the Bouches-du-Rhône was one of the most inundated regions, the Pieds-Noirs of Marseille gave up this extra sum in choosing to live there.¹³⁴ Only unemployed Pieds-Noirs could receive allocations, as payments ended once the interested party found a job.

¹³²Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 455, Telegram from the Secretary of State of Rapatriés to all the Metropolitan Prefets, May 19, 1962

¹³³Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, Commissariat Spécial du Port, « Etude sur l'Exode des Populations d'Algerie en 1962 », January 25, 1963

¹³⁴Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 463, Press Bulliten issued by Secretaire d'Etat des Rapatriés, August 14, 1962

Generous as the programs may have been, the National government intended the impact of social aid allocations to be short-term. The payments ended after a period of 12 months. At that point, Pieds-Noirs who remained unemployed could put themselves on the unemployment list and benefit from normal unemployment. By 1963, most rapatriés had ceased to receive the monthly allocations and now had to adjust to life in France, only a short period after their arrival, with their own resources. In May 1963, there were 5,200 on the “demanding employment” list who would be impacted by the loss of monthly allocations, as well as nearly 3,000 other rapatriés who were unable to work for reasons of health or age. All of these people would see a sharp drop in their resources with the end of allocations.¹³⁵

Some government officials wanted to create a gradual program of decreased aid, to make the rupture less painful.¹³⁶ Prefect Haas-Picard referred to the subsistence payments as “the morphine of the rapatriés.” He asked, in 1963, for an additional 3 million NF to be given to the Bouches-du-Rhône by the central government, to be distributed on an individual basis so that “...they don’t suffer too much when we end [aid].”¹³⁷ He wanted to establish this discretionary safety net in particular for the ill, single mothers and the elderly, populations which relied most heavily on the monthly allocations for their livelihood. However, Haas-Picard did not deny some of the negative aspects of the extensive aid program. He said, “It is certain, in effect, that the end of the regime of subsistence allocations will correspond for many rapatrié families to a “revealing shock” which will compel them to be more conscious of their interests and their future.”¹³⁸ Though the allocations were necessary in the short-term, Haas-Picard believed they had in some cases retarded the actual integration of the rapatrié families and

¹³⁵ Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 468, Note, May 1963

¹³⁶ Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 458, Note, May 1963

¹³⁷ “...il ne souffre pas trop lorsque qu’on la lui supprimera.”

¹³⁸ « Il n’est pas douteux, en effet, que la fin du régime de l’allocation de subsistance va correspondre pour beaucoup de familles rapatriées à un véritable « choc révélateur » qui va les contraindre à mieux prendre conscience de leur intérêt et de leur avenir. » - Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 458, Letter from Prefet Haas-Picard, May 18, 1963

that the end of aid would shock them into planning for their future in France. He clearly hoped that after allocations ceased, the Pieds-Noirs would begin to make more aggressive and permanent inroads into settlement and employment in France. This statement hints at his belief that autonomy was necessary for true integration into French society. Pieds-Noirs, it was implied, needed only short-term aid and quick integration to successfully establish themselves in France. As a population already considered French, Haas-Picard and other local officials had every confidence that if given the tools, the Pieds-Noirs could independently start again in the metropole.

Housing in a Crowded City

When settling in Marseille, the rapatriés sought first to deal with the dire problem of housing. Vacationers traditionally flocked to Marseille in summer because of its expansive Mediterranean beaches. The bulk of Pieds-Noirs arrived in Marseille during peak vacation season. Tourists already filled the hotels and the Pieds-Noirs could barely be squeezed in during May, much less during the height of the immigration in June and July. To provide for those in need of temporary housing, the government set up two *centres d'hébergement* in Marseille. Hotel Bompard, the original center, had previously been used to house Tunisian rapatriés. The city converted it to use for Algerian rapatriés in 1962. It quickly became clear that Bompard was too small to serve all the people who needed emergency housing. Therefore, Marseille launched a second center, La Rouguière.

The creation of the La Rouguière proved a significant expenditure of funds and time for the city's government. The Délégué Regionale, in a letter from March of 1962, proposed a construction project that would provide 1,061 rooms in 310 *logements* as part of La Rouguière complex. Thus equipped, La Rouguière would be able to offer up to 2000 rapatriés housing at a time, with each family allowed 48 hours of temporary residence. The Délégué also predicted the need to create 1,200 *baraquement*, or shacks, for use as temporary housing, as the flow of rapatriés had vastly exceeded their initial

expectations.¹³⁹ The local government invested substantial sums into making satisfactory housing conditions for the rapatriés. They installed gas, electric, running water and water heaters and agreed to foot the bill for utilities. Additionally, the government shelled out 5,620,000 NF to supply the center with beds, sleeping bags, tables and stools. It also contracted out cleaning and food services, providing the Pieds-Noirs with a clean, safe environment and access to all the basic necessities.¹⁴⁰ The government thought out each action for the housing centers with care. As with other aid programs, France aimed to prove through their generosity that the Pieds-Noirs belonged in France. Their welcome was meant to be warm, their transition as easy as possible. This housing program shows a quantifiable monetary investment in the integration of the Pieds-Noirs. The government made a concerted effort to provide for the temporary needs of the rapatriés, instead of leaving the population to fend for itself.

As the centers alone proved insufficient, the government introduced several other drastic measures for short-term housing solutions. National law gave the Marseille government the ability to requisition unoccupied housing. A commission report from July of 1962 called for the requisition of 20,000 vacant homes for use by the Pieds-Noirs arriving in Marseille.¹⁴¹ Though this particular meeting called only for the requisition of vacant homes, technically the government also had been granted the right to acquire homes that were “under occupied”, and homes not used as primary residences. The requisitioned homes could be acquired only temporarily, to serve until more real estate could be built or rapatriés could be convinced to move to other regions. Law also permitted the city to requisition vacation homes and hotels for a period of 3 months. Increasingly desperate, the Government even requisitioned school buildings, empty during the summer holidays.¹⁴² It appears that the only type of housing they proved reluctant to use were *colonies de vacances*, as official believed that the Pieds-Noirs could benefit from

¹³⁹ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 459, Letter from Délégué Régionale, 31 March, 1962

¹⁴⁰ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 459, Summary of Expenditures, May 23, 1962

¹⁴¹ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, Commissariat Spécial du Port, « Etude sur l’Exode des Populations d’Algérie en 1962 », January 25, 1963

¹⁴² Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, Commissariat Spécial du Port, « Etude sur l’Exode des Populations d’Algérie en 1962 », January 25, 1963

sending their children to summer camps. Surprisingly, any protest of these measures, if it existed, has disappeared from the official records. Newspapers, too, remain silent when it comes to criticizing the policy. Perhaps because the requisitioning program was temporary and of only moderate scale, the homeowners remained apathetic towards the policy. Only feelings of sympathy were publicly expressed, further reflecting the determination to create smooth integration for the Pieds-Noirs.

As the rate of immigration slowed in late 1962, requisitioning ended and public housing began to serve a different function. The government eliminated the 48 hour limitation on the centers and families unable to find other housing took up a semi-permanent residence in the Hotel Bompard and La Rouguière complexes. By December 31st, 1962, families staying at La Rouguière began paying rent, a shift which the government had been planning for months. Many of the residents had jobs and were simply staying in La Rouguière as a stop-gap measure before finding more permanent housing through HLM programs.¹⁴³ The government also wrote in a stipulation that rent could not surpass “la moitié des ressources” of the family, preventing it from eating up the family’s earnings.¹⁴⁴ By March, 1963, Marseille already planned to phase out housing in La Rouguière. Hotel Bompard, on the other hand, remained active for a much longer period of time. The Marseillaise government finally and officially cleared out Bompard in December of 1967, with just a few straggler families left in the building.

The permanent efforts to house the rapatriés deeply impacted the skyline of Marseille. Marseille had been partially destroyed by the German army in World War II. The city was still in the process of rebuilding when the Pieds-Noirs began to stream off the boats and planes.¹⁴⁵ Almost simultaneous with the arrival of the Pieds-Noirs, Marseille saw the installation of its first industrial centers and the beginning of its large, publically-subsidized housing units. The HLM, or *Habitation à Loyer Modéré*, is the French public program of rent-controlled housing. The government initially conceived of the project as a

¹⁴³HLM or *Habitation à Loyer Modéré* was a government program designed to create affordable housing to low-income families, similar to American « projects »

¹⁴⁴Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 459, Note, January 1963

¹⁴⁵Marseille: 2600 Ans d’Histoire – Roger Duchene, Jean Contrucci, 700

way to improve housing conditions for lower income families in France. According to historians Roger Duchene and Jean Contrucci, the arrival of the Pieds-Noirs served as an impetus for the creation of the infamous projects in Marseille, erected mainly in the northern *quartiers*, or neighborhoods, of the city.¹⁴⁶ These complexes have become synonymous with the poorest and most crime ridden areas of Marseille, roughly the equivalent of ghettos, but at the time they seemed eminently utilitarian. In the early 1960s, the local administration invested millions of francs in HLMs, requiring that 10% of each HLM building be rented exclusively to rapatriés.¹⁴⁷ By 1964, the 10% initially allocated to rapatriés had been increased to 30% of each new building, as well as the same percentage for existing HLMs when vacancies became available. If a rapatrié family left an HLM apartment, the owner was expected to rent the apartment to a different Pied-Noir family.¹⁴⁸ Through the various national and local allocation programs, Marseille set aside, in total, half of all HLM units for rapatriés.¹⁴⁹ *Le Marseillaise*, a communist newspaper, angrily protested the government's HLM program in favor of rapatriés, saying it took away housing from needy working-class metropolitans.¹⁵⁰ This criticism did not vilify the Pieds-Noirs however, who were still seen as meriting aid. Rather, the paper criticized the government for requisitioning an existing housing program intended for other purposes rather than creating a new program for the Pieds-Noirs. To solve persistent housing shortages, HLM companies also began assembling prefabricated homes in 1963. They tried to maintain, as much as possible, the same level of quality as in other HLM buildings but there is an unmistakable and unpleasant uniformity to their appearance. By March of 1963, 1,629 *logements* had been built with this "accelerated" program of prefabricated homes.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁶ Marseille: 2600 Ans d'Histoire – Roger Duchene, Jean Contrucci, 704.

¹⁴⁷ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, Report of the Commission de Coordination pour la Réinstallation des Français d'Outre-Mer, July 18, 1962

¹⁴⁸ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 12 O 1559, Letter from Ministre des Rapatriés to Prefets, Delegates Régionaux and Inspectors Generaux, January 24th, 1964

¹⁴⁹ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 12 O 1791, Circulaire no. 62-55 from Ministre des Finances, Ministre de Construction and Secretray of State of Rapatriés, September 1962

¹⁵⁰ *Le Marseillaise*, June 6, June 7, 1962

¹⁵¹ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 12 O 1791, Note, April 1963

By design, HLMs served low-income families and the standard held true with rapatriés as well. In a *circulaire* released by the Minister of Finance in July of 1962, he observed that HLM housing should be reserved for “families with modest resources” and families with higher levels of income should find other housing opportunities.¹⁵² That is to say, HLMs aided the *petites gens du bled* of Algeria, the Europeans who filled the lower middle class of colonial Algeria’s society. In order to facilitate the acquisition of these housing units by rapatriés, the government created special loans. The loans could be put towards buying or renting HLM housing or towards private sector options. To qualify for housing loans, Pieds-Noirs simply had to create a dossier declaring their rapatrié status and had to have been residing in France for four months. The concrete monotony of mass-produced HLM complexes came to define the first years in France for many Pied-Noir families.

HLM programs represented the housing solution for a significant percentage of rapatriés who applied to the government for help, though their stay in the complexes proved short lived. A report from January of 1962 states that Marseille had been able to rehouse 20,000 families, 5,000 of them in HLM housing projects.¹⁵³ A “*Bilan et Perspectives des Activités en Faveur des Rapatriés*”, issued in 1963, demonstrated that 38% of the 82,000 rapatriés who had been rehoused in 1962 were given homes in HLM projects. An additional 2% found housing in prefabricated homes.¹⁵⁴ The HLM’s function as rent-controlled housing naturally attracted renters who could not afford other homes. The concentration of the HLMs in the northern and eastern sections of Marseille isolated these *petits gens*, who could only reach the city center by a highway. Public transport did not extend to the northern section of Marseille until the 1980s and even then served limited neighborhoods.¹⁵⁵ However, though physically cut-off from downtown Marseille, the Pieds-Noirs experience in the HLMS was not one of total seclusion. Though

¹⁵² Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 12 O 1791, Circulaire from the Ministre of Finances, July 1962

¹⁵³ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, Commissariat Spécial du Port, « Etude sur l’Exode des Populations d’Algérie en 1962 », January 25, 1963

¹⁵⁴ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 12 O 1791, « Bilan et Perspectives des Activités en Faveur des Rapatriés », 1963

¹⁵⁵ Histoire Universelle de Marseille, Dell’Umbria, 511

rapatriés did indeed occupy large portions of the HLMs, non-repatriated French families inhabited a significant portion of each HLM building. HLM housing grouped the Pieds-Noirs, to a certain extent, but the presence of other French families prevented them from being isolated by this program. They lived in constant contact with metropolitan French, absorbing their customs and traditions. Today HLMs are seen as the “ghettos” of French cities and tend to house marginalized or impoverished minority groups. However, the Pieds-Noirs, though initially present in large numbers, have since left the HLMs. They tended to vacate the concrete complexes during the 1970s. They were often replaced by North African immigrants, sometimes Harki families.¹⁵⁶ The Pied-Noir community as a whole effectively transitioned from low-income housing to integration into more affluent French society.

Reclassement: Employing the Pieds-Noirs

As the speed of immigration began to slow, official attention instead turned to *reclassement*, or finding employment for the new arrivals. *Reclassement*, translated literally as “redirection,” was the term used for the economic integration of the Pieds-Noirs into France. The programs focused on finding suitable employment for rapatriés, or in cases where no job could be found, on providing training to allow them to enter new fields. In a study by the Economic and Social Council in January 1963, the authors noted that the time had come to switch focus from *accueil* to the more permanent problems of housing and employment.¹⁵⁷ The government worried about the economic problems which could be prompted by the arrival of the Pieds-Noirs. France had, in recent years, had a fairly strong economy due to the post-war boom prevalent in all of Europe. However, the economic growth which had thus far been carrying France to prosperity would not be strong enough to create jobs for all the Pieds-Noirs. Unemployment seemed doomed to rocket. The government feared that if reclassement programs were not created, the Pieds-Noirs would become a dangerously underemployed segment of French society.

¹⁵⁶Histoire Universelle de Marseille, Dell’Umbria, 563

¹⁵⁷Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, “Avis adopté par le Conseil Economique et Social », L’Etude des Problèmes Posés Par Le Rapatriement des Refugies d’Algérie », January 9, 1963

Marseille in the early 1960s had experienced growth, along with the rest of France, but it remained economically limited. Originally founded by Greek sailors, the city had always been identified with its port. *Le Vieux Port*, or Old Port, continues to be the main tourist attraction of Marseille even today. The port also served as the main economic draw of Marseille. However, as the Pieds-Noirs began to spill in from Algeria, the port faced economic difficulties. Marseille benefited from its location on the Mediterranean to establish itself as the main point of exchange and trade between mainland France and its African colonies. These colonies formed part of the *zone franc*, the zone in which the currency was tied to the French currency. With the wave of independence movements in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the *zone franc* had been reconfigured and Marseille's favored trade position significantly reduced. Between 1958 and 1962, the percentage of total trade carried out with former colonies dropped from 66% to 56%.¹⁵⁸ The loss of colonial trade could only be made up for by less lucrative trade with other European or African countries. Marseille had only very limited large-scale industry, mostly centered on soap and oil products, which could not provide a major source of jobs. When France joined the CECA, an early precursor of the EU, it encouraged immigration from Italy and Spain. These laborers saturated the markets which might have otherwise provided opportunities for Pieds-Noirs laborers. A report, grasping at ways to solve the economic problems of the rapatriés, suggested creating new industrial centers in nearby areas. However, these solutions were expensive undertakings and ran into early technical issues. The massive industrial build-up the government imagined never came to fruition. Locals, in particular women, traditionally filled seasonal labor jobs and this seemed likely to continue in the future.¹⁵⁹ Agriculture in the area provided limited opportunities for the newcomers, as most arable land already had established owners. In the face of such daunting economic handicaps, Marseille's eventual ability to

¹⁵⁸ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, « Rapport Sur Les Aspects Economiques et Sociaux du Problème des Rapatriés Dans Le Département des Bouches-du-Rhône », November 5, 1962

¹⁵⁹ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, Rapport Sur Les Aspects Economiques et Sociaux du problème des Rapatriés Dans Le Département des Bouches-du-Rhône, November 5, 1962)

integrate the Pieds-Noirs was, as historian Louis Pierrein calls it, “a miracle that one can never underline enough.”¹⁶⁰

The existing economic conditions meant that the type of jobs the Pieds-Noirs expected simply would not be available. Colonial structure had benefited the European Algerians. They filled commercial and bureaucratic positions which were restricted from Muslim Algerians. More broadly, the education system of Algeria catered to French-speaking Europeans, leaving Arabic or Berber-speaking populations at a disadvantage. These and other subtleties of the colonial system gave Pieds-Noirs an increased ability to find desirable, well-paying jobs. A study examining the former professions of the rapatrié lists, for example, large numbers of government employees, specialty artisans, small shop owners, and workers in fields like plumbing, masonry, electricity, and industrial labor.¹⁶¹ The French government worked hard to integrate government workers from Algeria into the mainland bureaucratic system. It provided jobs automatically for officials, bureaucrats, and nationalized employees, like teachers. However, for the Pieds-Noirs who had benefited from colonial bias in more nuanced ways, it was a rude awakening to discover that their skills could not earn them much in France. A report analyzing the economic problems of repatriation said Pieds-Noirs lacked the education and training of their mainland French counterparts, thus making it difficult to find them comparable jobs, or similar pay gradients to what they had received in Algeria.¹⁶²

To tackle the problems posed by Marseille’s economy and the poor qualifications of the Pieds-Noirs, the government created centralized programs to systematically find jobs. Once again, they let nothing stand in the way of the Pieds-Noirs’ integration into metropolitan society. In July of 1962, a report set the demand at 34,000 jobs and the availability at 29,000 jobs for the Bouches-du-Rhône. The Regional Economic Commission feared that such a gross deficit of available jobs would ruin the region’s economy,

¹⁶⁰Louis Pierrein « La Grande Industrialisation » in *Histoire de Marseille* ed. by Edouard Baratier, 456

¹⁶¹Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 463, Note on Reclassement, 1963

¹⁶²Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137W 456, Rapport Sur Les Aspects Economiques et Sociaux du Problème des Rapatriés Dans Le Département des Bouches-du-Rhône, November 5, 1962

which already supported structural unemployment of 9,000 people.¹⁶³ In July of 1962, the central government planned the creation of a *Bourse Nationale d'Emploi* to deal with the problem. Newspaper reports eagerly detailed the function of the new system and local Marseille publications expressed only positive opinions of the undertaking.¹⁶⁴ Recognizing the concentration of the arrivals of the Pieds-Noirs in the south, the Government proposed basing the Bourse in Marseille, rather than Paris. Though they also created several regional branches, the central headquarters remained in Marseille for the duration of the Bourse's existence. The Commission designated to coordinate repatriation described its function saying, "The Bourse assures the placement of the rapatriés in the region of Marseille or the departure of the rapatrié to a location where work is proposed for him... It assures as well, eventually, their placement in a center of professional development."¹⁶⁵ Administrative observers emphasized the speed required in reclassement. Between 1960 and 1962, the number of young people between the ages of 15 and 19 had grown by 52%. This population surge, commonly known as the Baby Boom generation, would soon be entering the job market, at which point employment efforts would need to be shifted toward the young. Reclassement of the Pieds-Noirs, seen as indispensable for integration, needed to happen immediately.

As one of its primary functions, the Bourse coordinated efforts of employment. The government believed that by centralizing the job search, they could create the national diffusion which had always been their intention. They would match the jobs offered with qualified applicants, regardless of where the candidates currently resided, in the hopes that eventually the rapatriés could all be moved to départements with employment. The Prefect of the Bouches-du-Rhône lauded the Bourse as an effective experiment in new methods of centralization. For example, all applicants used a standardized form to

¹⁶³Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, La Commission Economique Régionale, «Procédure de Reclassement Economique des Rapatriés », July 1962

¹⁶⁴Le Provençal, July 28th, August 2, August 4, 1962, Le Marseillaise August 17, 1962

¹⁶⁵« La Bourse assure le placement des rapatriés dans la région de Marseille ou le départ du rapatrié vers le lieu de travail qui lui est proposé... Elle assure également éventuellement leur placement dans un centre de perfectionnement professionnel. » - Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, Report of the Commission de Coordination pour la Réinstallation des Français d'Outre-Mer, July 18, 1962

request employment through the Bourse, which allowed bureaucrats to neatly categorize the applicants and more efficiently give their names to employers. After conducting a National Survey about open positions, using “UNEDIC-ASSEDIC”, the Bourse put the job offers into different categories, identified likely candidates and supplied funds for the applicants to travel for interviews. Prefect Haas-Picard waxed enthusiastic about the success of the program in a letter from September of 1963, saying that the Bourse had found jobs for 50,000 rapatriés and even declaring that “... in the Bouches-du-Rhône, the question of redirection of the rapatriés is now in its terminal phase.”¹⁶⁶ His statement in this case was perhaps optimistic but regardless the Bourse proved effective at facilitating the placement of the Pieds-Noirs.

For those Pieds-Noirs who failed to be placed, government programs or individual effort provided other opportunities. The Bourse designed classes and internships to direct rapatriés towards new industries where they might have higher hopes of finding permanent employment. The government also provided a series of internships of professional *perfectionment*, intended to serve both young rapatriés between the ages of 17-25 and adults who qualified for work by Algerian standards but whose education proved lacking in the metropole. These internships were offered for industries like metalworking, electrical work, building, and office work, among other professions.¹⁶⁷ Some Pieds-Noirs felt that the fierce competition of France drove them to be more innovative and creative than their metropolitan counterparts. They often remark that moving to France, in the long run, enabled them to prosper in a way that they could not have done in Algeria.¹⁶⁸ The government facilitated this innovation with loan programs to help rapatriés start businesses. The loans helped finance investments of up to 20 million NF.

¹⁶⁶ « ...dans le Bouches-du-Rhône, la question du reclassement des rapatriés est maintenant dans sa phase terminale. » - Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 468, Letter from Prefet Haas-Picard, September 1962

¹⁶⁷ Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137W 456, Rapport Sur Les Aspects Economiques et Sociaux du Problème des Rapatriés Dans Le Department des Bouches-du-Rhône, November 5, 1962

¹⁶⁸ Michel-Chich, *Déracinés*. 98

The rapatrié had to provide 40% of the total cost through their own means, with the government financing the remaining 60%.¹⁶⁹

Ultimately, through the Bourse, government training, special programs or individual innovation, 70% of Pieds-Noirs smoothly integrated themselves into the economy of the Bouches-du-Rhône. Indeed historian Jean-Jacques Jordi argues that their arrival in the département acted as a stimulus for the growth of Marseille's fledglings industries, creating a stronger and more diversified economy.¹⁷⁰ The local government displayed a remarkable ability to create space for the Pieds-Noirs within the local economy. The Pieds-Noirs, as a group, successfully forged a livelihood for themselves using their own ingenuity and the abundant government resources. The privilege of the colonial system carried over to the policies in the Bouches-du-Rhône, allowing special opportunities for the "returning" Pieds-Noirs to start afresh in their new home.

Teaching "Frenchness"

As the Pieds-Noirs settled into jobs and homes in Marseille in the fall of 1962, officials worked to prepare for the coming school year. The French public education department operated the school system of Algeria, meaning the curriculum of the Algerian system for Europeans matched French standards. Older students, who had passed the *baccalauréat* exam, could choose a university just as mainland French students could. Though the University of Aix-Marseille certainly saw an increase in their student body, the problem remained manageable as students entered universities throughout France. Integrating Pieds-Noirs children into the Marseille school system proved more difficult. As Pieds-Noirs settled in newly built up residential areas, it became necessary to create new schools. The Mayor of Marseille, Gaston Defferre, sent an urgent letter to the Prefect of the Bouches-du-Rhône in September of 1962, explaining his city's desperate need for more school classrooms. To solve the problem, the

¹⁶⁹Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, Report of the Commission de Coordination pour la Réinstallation des Français d'Outre-Mer, July 18, 1962

¹⁷⁰Jordi. *De l'exode à l'exil*, 141, 151

government used a mixture of mobile units and prefabricated classrooms. Marseille, in Deferre's letter, asked for a cadre of 59 mobile classrooms, costing a total of 380,000 NF. The departmental, rather than the communal, government shouldered the cost of the classrooms, as well as the supplies for the new schools. In October of 1963, the government conducted a survey and, based on the responses of 344 out of 436 schools, ascertained that there were at least 6,237 rapatrié students in the Marseille school system.¹⁷¹ Schooling remained problematic longer than issues of employment or housing. Indeed in 1965, Mayor Deferre pleaded with the département to keep the mobile classroom, which he claimed the city still urgently needed. In perhaps hyperbolic terms, he estimated the number of rapatrié students in the school system at 22,000.¹⁷²

School sometimes highlighted the difference of Pied-Noir children, yet it also fulfilled an integral function in the process of their integration. Some Pieds-Noirs remember school with bitterness. Ignorant teachers occasionally questioned their ability to speak French, unaware that French was the primary language of all Pieds-Noirs, especially in school. Though there was rarely an incident of overt prejudice from other students, Pieds-Noirs remarked on feeling different from their peers.¹⁷³ Largely, however, school served as yet another method of integration. Despite overcrowding, the government did not separate the Pieds-Noirs into their own classes or give them different schools. Instead, the Pieds-Noirs mixed with the other Marseillaise children as the city scrambled to deal with the expanding needs of the schools. Growing up in close contact with French schoolmates meant that Pied-Noir children learned the values and norms of French culture and had the same educational opportunities as their metropolitan counterparts. School had always served an important role in the creation of a common French identity,

¹⁷¹Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 131 W 377, Letter from the Inspectuer of the Academie to the Mayor of Marseille, October 5, 1963

¹⁷²Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 131 W 377, Letter from Gaston Deferre, Mayor of Marseille, March 24 1965

¹⁷³Michel-Chich, *Déracinés*, 62

even dating back to the policies of Jules Ferry in the 1890s.¹⁷⁴ French schools taught all students the “classics” of French culture, including Enlightenment values, French history and the literary works of Hugo and Molière. In the same way the central government had once made Provençal people French through education, the school system of Marseille taught Pieds-Noirs children to adopt a certain idea of French identity. Indeed this type of education is essential to the assimilationist model proposed by Noiriél.

The Success of Integration

Just two years later, by 1964, mass migration had ended. As the political climate of Algeria rapidly devolved into chaos and instability, European Algerians realized they would be unwelcome in their former homeland. The majority of Pieds-Noirs instead found a new home in France. As the rate of immigration slowed, the government began to shut down its welcome and aid services. Transit centers closed on December of 1963, as did the special *attenes* at the airport and docks. After a 12 month period, the financial aid to the rapatriés ended and even the housing programs had only been designed to benefit the rapatriés until 1967. The rush ended and the Pieds-Noirs, to a certain extent, had to continue the process of integration on their own. The machine-like efficiency of the bureaucracy had been remarkably effective in finding housing and employment for the over 100,000 Pieds-Noirs who settled in Marseille. The rapid placement of this population displayed a particular intensity. The French, perhaps out of guilt for “abandoning” the Pieds-Noirs, recreated a system of privilege for the arriving colonists. Previously cushioned by the discriminatory policies of colonial Algeria, in France the Pieds-Noirs received specialized attention that allowed this population to find their footing in an unfamiliar country.

¹⁷⁴For more on school and French identity see : Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Palo Alto: Stanford Univeristy Press, 1976), Deborah Reed-Danahay, *Education and Identity in Rural France: The Politics of Schooling* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), and Dell’Umbria, *Histoire Universelle de Marseille*

The names of Pied-Noir families helped by government aid fill a shelf of the regional archives, each box a foot thick. These boxes contain dossier after dossier, representing the thousands of new presences in Marseille. In 1962, newspaper reports expressed rage at the delay in getting aid to Pieds-Noirs families. Articles condemning aid for the rapatriés, however, are nearly impossible to uncover. Though Marseille newspapers often complained about the number of people settling in their city, as opposed to other areas of France, they never criticized the huge expenditures planned for their aid. They called for solidarity and unity in welcoming and helping the Pieds-Noirs. The government spent millions, if not billions, on programs of subsistence allocations, housing loans, and travel reimbursements. These costs went unprotected by the general public. Perhaps some of this acceptance came from a sense of responsibility. The Pieds-Noirs, it seemed to be implied, had been forced from their homes due to French action, or, more distantly, had been there in the first place because of French colonial ambitions. Still the level of aid dispersed appears rather exceptional. The welfare system existed, but not in the comprehensive form of present-day France. For example, France offered unemployment at the communal level, and though Marseille provided unemployment benefits, not all communes did.¹⁷⁵ Moroccan and Tunisian rapatriés had been given aid, but the government developed less complete programs for them. For example, they received no special housing allocations. The enormous expense undertaken for the Pieds-Noirs' benefit reinforced the idea of "repatriation." Pied-Noir families had no need to declare their French nationality; they were French citizens. Their voyage to France was a "return." In keeping with this, the government made every effort to prove to this population that they were more than refugees. They were rapatriés, French citizens returning to a motherland who may have abandoned her colony but who would always welcome her people.

In 1963, the Minister of Work wrote that through employment and economic integration, the government could create a situation where "there will no longer be 'rapatriés' but only Pieds-Noirs, like

¹⁷⁵ Archives des Bouches-du-Rhone, 137 W 468, Note, May 13th, 1963

there are Bretons, Basques, Alsatians, Auvergnats etc”¹⁷⁶ The goal was to create a community of Pieds-Noirs that felt French before they felt Algerian, with their Algerian identity relegated to a sort of regional pride and heritage. This hope reflected a broader French understanding of immigration. According to the classic theory of Noiriel, the “melting pot” of France creates perfect absorption, with all immigrant groups eventually assimilating into French culture.¹⁷⁷ Though Noiriel articulated this theory in the 1980s, it represents a traditional view of the creation of French identity, a process which had been enacted time and again in the centralization of the French nation. The French government seemed to believe that if it could facilitate the integration of the Pieds-Noirs, the repatriated population would eventually adopt a French identity, eliminating their problematic primary identity as Algerians.

Cultural dissimilarities marked the Pieds-Noirs, but seemed not to hinder their eventual integration. Some Pieds-Noirs, reflecting on the past, speak of the sharp differences in French culture, which initially shocked them. LeConte characterizes Algerian society as a collection of micro-communities. Neighbors greeted each other in the street and shared their lives. In France, the *quartiers* of Marseille proved less communal.¹⁷⁸ One woman recalled how surprised her French neighbors seemed when she brought around cakes for no particular reason. They could not understand that such generosity and hospitality comprised the norm in Algerian society.¹⁷⁹ LeConte argues that the Pieds-Noirs only slowly overcame the impersonal neighborhoods of the metropole through affiliations with political or religious groups.¹⁸⁰ However Jordi, not himself Pied-Noir, claims that though French parishes embraced the Pieds-Noirs, as a whole an “anti-religious wind” blew through the community and many seemed to cool on religious

¹⁷⁶ « ...il n’y aura plus de « rapatriés », mais simplement des Pieds-Noirs, comme il y a des Bretons, des Basques, des Alsaciens, des Auvergnats, etc...” - Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 468, Notes from Press Conference of the Ministre de Travail (Grandval) March 4, 1963

¹⁷⁷ Gérard Noiriel. *Le Creuset Français: Histoire de l’immigration XIX-XXe siècle*. (Paris: Seuil, 1988).

¹⁷⁸ Le Conte, *Les Pieds-Noirs*, 245

¹⁷⁹ Michel-Chich, *Déracinés*, 68

¹⁸⁰ Le Conte, *Les Pieds-Noirs*, 245

participation.¹⁸¹ Perhaps, however, this anti-religious tendency in fact aided their integration into a proudly secular France. Regardless of religious attitude, the Pied-Noir population developed strong communities in the South, with various social and political associations designed to bring them together. Some groups, like the Association Nationale des Français d'Afrique du Nord, d'Outre-Mer et de leurs Amis (ANFANOMA), existed before the arrival of the Pieds-Noirs but quickly became a way for Pieds-Noirs to meet, commiserate and advocate for their interests. Political parties as well developed special agendas in the South to entice the vote of the Pieds-Noirs. Despite the strong and distinct communal identity of the Pieds-Noirs, however, the population effectively integrated into French cities. Jean-Charles Benamara, who left Algeria as a teenager, says his daughters have no sense of being Pieds-Noirs. "They are not concerned by my geographic roots either. For them, it is the summary of a series of stories about my childhood that I tell sometimes."¹⁸² Another Pied-Noir man, in a way mourning the disappearance of a separate Pied-Noir culture, says, "The Pieds-Noirs are very well integrated in French society, all to their own credit... One can say, without too much risk of being wrong, that in one or two generations they will be absolutely integrated."¹⁸³

In a sense, the programs for the Pieds-Noirs advantaged a population which had already been privileged during colonial society. Like the GI Bill and other social security programs which worked as "affirmative action" for white Americans, aid for the Pieds-Noirs furthered the distinct advantage of the arriving rapatriés, as compared to the Harkis. Historian Ira Katznelson describes this phenomenon with the analogy of a global program of foreign aid which delivers \$100 billion in aid to the richest country in

¹⁸¹Jordi. *De L'exode a l'exil*. 162

¹⁸²« Elles ne se sentent pas non plus concernées par mes racines géographiques. Pour elles, cela se résume à une série d'anecdotes de mon enfance que je raconte parfois. » Michel-Chich. *Déracinés* 161

¹⁸³« Les pieds-noirs sont très bien intégrés dans la société française, ce qui est tout à leur honneur. ... On peut dire sans trop risquer de se tromper que dans une ou deux générations, ils seront absolument intégrés. » - Michel-Chich, *Déracinés*. 157

the world.¹⁸⁴ The programs designed to help the Pieds-Noirs did not implicitly harm the Harkis. However, the exclusive rapatrié initiatives built up the socio-economic standing of the population which already had the upper hand because of the educational and bureaucratic structures of colonial Algeria. Thus, the success of the French government, especially at the local level, in integrating the Pieds-Noirs perpetuated colonial norms and hierarchies by allowing the existing social divisions to be recreated on the mainland.

The Marseillaise population, although not always gracefully, accepted the Pieds-Noirs into their city. There were certainly exceptions. The Pieds-Noirs readily saw wrong in the actions of the French initially, especially the de Gaulle government. Yet for every story of petty discrimination or brusque treatment, there are others that speak of solidarity and kindness. The vast cadre of government programs put in place for the rapatriés can hardly be characterized as neglect. Though Marseille may have balked at the inconveniences of such rapid population growth, in essence, all public figures and media organs supported the welcome of the Pieds-Noirs, who were viewed and accepted as French. Though the Pieds-Noirs originally grouped in HLM complexes, they gradually spread out through Marseille and the Bouches-du-Rhône. Today, Pieds-Noirs and their descendants rank as some of the most prominent personages in the South and the term “Pieds-Noirs” has become associated with a moderately affluent lifestyle and a conservative political leaning. The government succeeded in finding the Pieds-Noirs homes, jobs, loans and schooling, setting them on a path to integration. The French government resolutely portrayed the Pieds-Noirs as French, a construction which had already been established in colonial definitions of society. If the Pieds-Noirs, as a community, clung to the golden images of their Algerian past, the government succeeded in ensuring that the next generation grew up French, not Pied-Noir.

¹⁸⁴ Ira Katznelson. *When Affirmative Action Was White : an Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America*. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005). 142.

Harkis: The Return of the “Foreign”

Louiza Djemmal, decades after the upheaval, still remembers her flight from Algeria vividly. “We were cooped up in the boats. I remember it was very turbulent, that day, so much so that the seasickness added to the pain of exile. One would have said that the sea incarnated our anger.”¹⁸⁵ The daughter of a Harki, Djemmal and her family fled Algeria under army protection after neighbors menaced her father. In the army’s haste to evacuate the family, Louiza never got the chance to say good bye to her grandparents, who lived in another village. Such individual tragedies played out for many Harki families, as they stole away in the dead of night and chose exile in an unknown land. As violence spread throughout the Algerian countryside, Harki families desperately tried to reach safety in France. One in France, however, targeted aid programs quickly shunted the Harkis to isolated rural areas. Cut off from French society by several iterations of government aid, Djemmal and multitudes of other Harkis continued to be perceived as decidedly un-French. Channeled into separate administrative paths from the Pieds-Noirs, the Harkis struggled to find their place in an unfamiliar and often hostile world.

This chapter examines the government’s failure to integrate the Harkis, a result which contrasts starkly with the resounding success of the Pied-Noir efforts. The Harkis found themselves stranded in an unfriendly land after independence. Viewed by the victorious FLN as traitors to the newly born nation, thousands of Harkis and their families attempted to flee to safety in France. Government initiatives permitted only the most endangered to immigrate. Though many Harkis arrived in Marseille, central policy directed the families to camps outside the Bouches-du-Rhône for their initial years in France. Subsequent government programs developed for them in the South, though created to ease integration, succeeded only in further isolating the Harki population, reinforcing and imposing on them an identity as foreigners in France. Education, a key memory for children of Harkis, also displayed a tendency to isolate,

¹⁸⁵ « Puis nous avons été parqués dans des bateaux, je me souviens, la mer était très mouvementée, ce jour-là, si bien que le mal de mer s’ajoutait à la douleur de l’exil. On aurait dit que la mer incarnait notre colère. » *Des Vies*, 41

rather than nurturing a French identity. Due to prejudice against the Harkis as Muslims and Algerians, rooted in colonial stereotypes, the government and local populations could not conceive of the Harkis as French and thus did not treat them as such.

The Abandoned Soldiers

Well before their exodus, the Harkis took on ideological importance for both the French and the FLN during the bitter war of independence. The Algerian War was, primarily, a war of civilian violence. The terrorism of the FLN and the torture of the French impacted not just conscripted military men but the average Algerian citizen. As a result, both the French government and the FLN declared themselves to be serving the will of the Algerian public. The Harkis, as portrayed in French propaganda, represented a “Loyal Arab” stereotype. This stock figure of the compliant, subservient Arab was prevalent in Pieds-Noir accounts of life in Algeria. The “Loyal Arab” justified colonialism, showing that the local population respected and loved the French colonizers. The Harkis’ willingness to fight for the French proved that Algerians did not favor independence. Former Governor-General of Algeria, Jaques Soustelle, reinforced this belief, decades after the end of the war. “It is only just that the memory of [the Harkis’] brave deeds will be conserved and that homage will be given to their courage... These Arabs, these Berbers of Algeria did not hate France. They fought and often died for her beside their comrades from the metropole. Thanks to them, we who fought for *l’Algérie Française*, we can say ‘We lost but we did not fail.’”¹⁸⁶ Conversely, the FLN saw the Harkis as the ultimate traitor. They defined the war as driven by a popular mandate for Algerian independence, claiming that Algerians wanted a country run by Algerians, in accordance with their religion and traditions. The Harkis, “brothers” in heritage, should have been on their side in the conflict. Their choice of the French challenged the FLN message of solidarity among the

¹⁸⁶ « Il est juste que le souvenir de leurs épreuves soit conserve et qu’un hommage soit rendu à leur courage... Ces Arabes, ces Berbères d’Algérie ne haïssaient pas la France, ils se sont battus et souvent sont morts pour elle a côté de leurs camarades de la métropole. Grace à eux, nous qui avons lutte pour l’Algérie française, nous pouvons dire : « Nous avons perdu, mais nous n’avons pas failli » - Letter from Jaques Soustelle, July 10, 1985 cited in Faivre. *Les Combattants musulmans de la guerre d’Algérie*, 38

Algerian people, in opposition to the French. One FLN tract distributed to Harkis informed them “you are betraying your brothers... [France] will use you and then abandon you like she abandoned her partisans in Indochina, in Tunisia, in Morocco.”¹⁸⁷ These contrasting portrayals influenced the Harkis after the war. FLN belief in their betrayal meant the Harkis became a threatened population after independence. French imposition of a colonial stereotype on the Harkis encouraged a continuation of colonial prejudice towards the Harkis in the programs developed for them in the metropole.

However, the Harkis’ true motivation for joining the French army was far more nuanced. Their reasons varied by the individual situation and often had little to do with politics or national loyalty at all. Some Algerians did join the army out of sense of duty to France. Typically, men who joined for such reasons had previously served in the French army in World War II or Indochina. This was the case with Atmane Ayata, who joined the Harkis in 1952 as a young man and served in Indochina before re-enlisting during the Algerian War.¹⁸⁸ Other Algerians joined the French cause for more pragmatic reasons. Djemilla Azrou-Isghi, the daughter of a Harki, says her father joined not to defend France but, in her opinion, “*pour des raisons économiques.*”¹⁸⁹ Fear of instability in the countryside was another key motivation for joining the French. Algerians who sided with the French received a gun. With a violent and civilian-oriented war engulfing the entire country, how could Algerians not see the benefit of being able to protect themselves and their families? Abdel Oihabe Boumaraf, born in France in 1965, remembers his father joining the local harka for that reason. His father owned a store and the FLN threatened him because he had sold goods to the French. In reaction, he joined the Harkis in 1959, in order to protect his business and his family from the threats.¹⁹⁰ Other Harkis report less voluntary

¹⁸⁷« ...vous trahissez vos frères », « Elle se servira de vous, puis vous abandonnera, comme elle a abandonné ses partisans en Indochine, en Tunisie, au Maroc. » Faivre. *Les Combattants musulmans de la guerre d'Algérie : des soldats sacrifiés*. 40

¹⁸⁸*Harkis: soldats abandonnés*. Recueillis par le fonds pour la mémoire des Harkis. (Paris : XO Editions, 2012). 42

¹⁸⁹*Des Vies: 62 Enfants de Harkis racontent*: sous la direction de Fatima Besnaci-Lancou (Paris : Editions d'Atelier, 2010), 18

¹⁹⁰*Des Vies*. 29.

methods of recruitment. Some claim that the French army went through the villages and forcibly enlisted men, threatening harm unless the locals would agree to defend the countryside against the FLN. The wife of a Harki, Aicha Baziz, suspected that her husbands' engagement in the GMS came from such harassment. She says, "He joined because of fear, to protect himself. I don't know if it was a choice. It was perhaps more of a "non-choice"; I don't know if his engagement wasn't imposed on him."¹⁹¹ Because of fear, instability, patriotism, economic consideration or forced conscription, the Harkis joined, linking their future to the success of France.

The resentment directed at the Harkis by the FLN created a dangerous environment for them after the war ended. The Evian Accords specifically addressed the precarious situation of those who had fought for the French. It stipulated that no one could be harassed, punished or discriminated against because of "words, opinions or acts committed in relation to the political events in Algeria."¹⁹² However the ruling government in Algeria never truly adhered to the injunction. In fact, the FLN-backed government which came to power included some of the most hardline nationalists. France, hoping to extract itself quickly from the unpopular war, attempted to decommission all Harkis. They assured the men that the Evian Accords protected them and encouraged them to turn in their weapons and return to normal life. Eighty percent of Harkis chose to return to in civilian life, rather than staying in the army and guaranteeing their right of repatriation.¹⁹³ This behavior suggests that the Harkis largely felt secure about staying in Algeria but the chaos of post-war Algeria quickly proved this to be a false security. Left without weapons and still tainted by their affiliation with the colonizers, the Harkis were abandoned by the French. Reprisal killings began to be reported throughout Algeria. In one particularly violent episode in El-Affroun, FLN adherents forced Harkis to drink petrol and then set them on fire. The mayor of the

¹⁹¹ « Il l'a fait par peur, pour se protéger. Je ne sais pas si c'était un choix. Si ce n'était pas plutôt un « non-choix » ; je ne sais pas si son engagement n'avait pas été imposé.» *Harkis: soldats abandonnés*.86

¹⁹² « ...en raison de paroles, d'opinions, ou d'actes commis en relation avec les événements politiques survenus en Algérie... » Mohand Hamoumou « Le Drame des Harkis » in *Guerre d'Algérie Magazine* (July/August 2002). 33

¹⁹³ Charbit, *Les Harkis*, 49

town reported that the French army saw the massacre but made no move to prevent the violence.¹⁹⁴

The FLN arrested and interned some Harkis in prisoner camps after the war, a direct violation of the Evian promises. These men lived in horrific conditions. M'hand Meziane remembers his father telling a story of finding a scrap of stale bread. "The moment he thought he could grab it, a guard spotted him and urinated on the bread to stop him from eating it."¹⁹⁵ *Le Monde* reported on November 13th, 1962, that injured, mutilated Harkis continued to appear at French army bases throughout Algeria, seeking asylum from FLN reprisals.¹⁹⁶ Because the Harkis had been portrayed, during and after the war, as traitors to the nationalist cause, the moment France withdrew from Algeria they became targets. Violence and fear of future attacks prompted Harki families to pick up and leave, often taking only what they could throw together in their haste to escape to safety. The French public, notably at the national level, recognized their perilous exit from Algeria and expressed sympathy for the Harkis' plight.

Despite the precarious situation of the Harkis, immigration to France proved arduous. Harkis typically could not afford to pay the cost of transportation to the metropole upfront, especially since most Harkis lived in the rural countryside rather than large port towns. In order to reach France in the face of monetary concerns and threats from neighbors, most Harkis relied on the aid of the military. Yet, the government, instead of freely welcoming the threatened Harkis, made the French army contacts of these Algerian men rank the Harkis according to the danger of their situation. The army then granted passage to France to only those Harki families deemed the most threatened. The army regrouped the most vulnerable population in camps in Algeria, holding the families there until their passage to France could be coordinated.¹⁹⁷ Not all French officers agreed with the restricted immigration policy. In fact, some began coordinating the escape of their men on their own, a clandestine act in defiance of their

¹⁹⁴ Benjamin Stora *Gangrene et Oublie* 200

¹⁹⁵ « Au moment, ou il croyait pouvoir s'en emparer, un gardien l'ayant vu, a uriné dessus pour le dégouter de le manger. » *Des Vies*, 126

¹⁹⁶ Jean Lacouture, « Plus de dix mille Harkis auraient été tués en Algérie », *Le Monde*. 13 Nov. 1962 p. 7

¹⁹⁷ Besnaci-Lancou and Moumen, *Les Harkis*, 29-31

directives. Indeed on May 16th 1962, the Minister of State in Paris, Louis Joxe, sent out a secret telegram to French officers in Algeria. They were commanded to stop transferring Harkis to the metropole and reminded that “all individual initiatives tending to settle the Muslim French in the metropole are strictly prohibited.”¹⁹⁸ Notably, Joxe’s memo restricts the movement of “Muslim French,” labeling the Harkis even in a military directive by their religion.

The carefully controlled immigration of the Harkis contrasts sharply with the flood of Pieds-Noirs, granted automatic entry into France as French citizens. Though fear and uncertainty often marked the exodus of the Europeans, reprisal killings remained uncommon. Actual threats on their life, though they did occur, did not primarily prompt the Europeans to leave. For the Harkis, however, leaving was less voluntary. Harki families faced harassment, violence or even death if they chose to remain in the newly independent country. Yet France greeted this more threatened group of French nationals with less hospitality. To a certain extent, this may simply have been a case of miscalculated assumptions. For example, historian Todd Shepard suggests that the French government created the status of “rapatrié” for the Pieds-Noirs, allowing them to freely immigrate, because they believed it would help reassure the European population and curb their desperation to leave.¹⁹⁹ Nonetheless, the national government allowed all Pieds-Noirs to enter and even reimbursed their ticket costs. Their policy towards the Harki treated them as foreign refugees, to be evacuated only in the direst of circumstances. Harkis who managed to get to France on their own or through the help of French acquaintances had to prove their status as Harkis to receive aid. The government assumed immigrant worker status unless the Harki could demonstrate that he had served the French and deserved to benefit from the programs offered.²⁰⁰

The news reported the success of the army in bringing some Harkis to safety in France but thousands of Harkis remained left behind in Algeria. An article in *La Provençal* from June 5th, 1962, noted

¹⁹⁸ Benjamin Stora, *Algeria, 1830-2000: A Short History*. 101

¹⁹⁹ . Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, 145

²⁰⁰ Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, Note Concernant le Problème des Réfugiés d’Algérie to the Prefet , March 24 1962

that military authorities had “regrouped” 5,000 Harkis and family members. Their transfer to France was to be coordinated with the Secretary of State within the next few days.²⁰¹ However, this number seems trivial when compared with the number of Harkis and family members whom the French left in Algeria. There can be no doubt that a significant number of Harkis died because the French denied them protection. Consensus on the number of deaths, as is perhaps common with such controversial subjects, is lacking. Articles in *Le Monde* from 1962 estimated 10,000 deaths.²⁰² The Vernejoul Report of 1963, a French government report, suggested 25,000 deaths as a more accurate count and the Red Cross listed an additional 13,500 Harkis incarcerated in Algeria at the time.²⁰³ A secret report by a local Algerian official, the Sous-Prefect d’Akbou, claimed the deaths toll reached 150,000 Harkis.²⁰⁴ Whatever the truth may be, clearly the Harki population faced serious threats of violence, which the French government chose not to respond to with sufficient vigor. Even historians of the Pieds-Noirs acknowledge the abandonment of the Harkis as one the greatest tragedies of the Algerian War.²⁰⁵

Leaving the Harkis to fend for themselves in Algeria proved a controversial issue for the French, especially at the national level. *Le Monde* published several articles in 1962 about the massacres underway in Algeria. One author remarked with irony that though the Harkis suffered the most from the chaos after the war, France proved the most reluctant to let them in.²⁰⁶ Another reporter noted that though 30,000 people had entered France, representing 5,000 Harkis and their families, more than 10,000 had been killed who would have entered if they had been given the choice. The author openly laid the blame on the French government, saying their actions had put the Harkis in conflict with their

²⁰¹Le Provençal, June 5th 1962, p. 2

²⁰²Jean Lacouture, « Plus de dix mille Harkis auraient été tués en Algérie », *Le Monde*. 13 Nov. 1962 p. 7 and Michel LeGris, « Pèlerins de la peur et voyageurs de la misère » *Le Monde*. 06 Dec. 1962 p. 7

²⁰³Benjamin Stora, *Algeria: 1830-2000, A Short History*, 127

²⁰⁴Besncai-Lancou & Moumen, *Les Harkis*, 39

²⁰⁵For examples see : Pierre Nora, *Les Français d’Algérie* (Paris : René Juilliard, 1961) 235, Jeannine Verdes-Leroux, *Les Français d’Algérie de 1830 à aujourd’hui : une page d’histoire déchirée* (Paris : Fayard 2001) 102, Benjamin Stora, *La Gangrène et l’Oubli : La mémoire de la guerre d’Algérie* (Paris : La Découverte, 1991) 200.

²⁰⁶Michel LeGris, « Pèlerins de la peur et voyageurs de la misère » *Le Monde*. 06 Dec. 1962 p. 7

“coreligionnaires” in the first place and thus it was their responsibility to care for the Harkis.²⁰⁷ In even stronger terms, the political figure Pierre Vidal-Naquet called the lax protection offered to Harkis a continuation of “old racist and colonial attitudes.” “The Harkis should not have to, in any case, pay for our mistakes; even though we try to forget it today, the Algerian War happened.”²⁰⁸ As the newspaper debates demonstrate, sympathy for the threatened Harkis existed within the French population. However, facing the overwhelming flow of repatriation, the government chose to give Pieds-Noirs primary attention. Paris newspapers may have complained but clearly this did not lead the government to reverse its policy on Harki immigration. Additionally, after the scandal of the Harki massacres died down, few reporters took an interest in the continued fate of the Harkis.

Generally, French newspapers offered limited coverage of the Harkis. *Le Monde* may have discussed the suffering of the Harkis in Algeria, but it lost interest when it came to their reception and aid in France. Only one article in the local papers demonstrated a desire to document the conditions of the Harkis in France. Reporting from the camp Larzac, an article entitled “Le Larzac? C’est Kif-Kif Algérie,” painted a rosy picture of life in the camp, in conflict with the reports of most Harkis.²⁰⁹ Using “kif-kif,” a Franco-Arabic slang word, the newspaper aimed to show that the Harkis found Larzac to be just like home. The Pieds-Noirs received a dedicated page in both *La Marseillaise* and *Le Provençal* for eight years. In contrast, articles on the Harkis appeared only sporadically, sometimes on the “Rapatrié” page but other times in the “Algeria” section of the foreign news. This difference in documentation perhaps reflects the attention of the French public towards the Harkis. The Harkis, a population neither fully French nor fully Algerian, found themselves in limbo in media coverage as well as in policy. This might have reflected the general wish of France to forget the Algerian War, of which the Harkis were a

²⁰⁷Jean Lacouture « Plus de dix mille Harkis auraient été tués en Algérie » *Le Monde*. 13 Nov. 1962 p. 7

²⁰⁸« Les Harkis n’ont en tout cas pas à payer pour nos fautes ; bien qu’on tende aujourd’hui l’oublier, la guerre d’Algérie a eu lieu. » - Pierre Vidal-Naquet [secrétaire du comité Maurice Audin], « La Guerre Révolutionnaire et La Tragédie Des Harkis » *Le Monde*. 12 Nov. 1962, p. 11

²⁰⁹Le Provençal, « Le Larzac? C’est Kif-Kif Algérie », July 10th 1962, p. 14.

reminder. But the Pieds-Noirs, too, served as a reminder and their story was documented in no shortage of newspaper articles. The lack of coverage in local papers could also be due to the fact that the Harkis were quickly removed from the region. However, this differential representation also shows a certain prejudice on the part of the French. The suffering of the Harkis seemed simply to matter less to the French public.

Arrival in Marseille

Waiting in French army camps for their departure, most Harkis left for France aboard a military ship. Passage across the Mediterranean could be an unpleasant experience. Harkis and their children often use the word “parquer” to describe it, a word which translates to “coop up”, and implies that same sort of animal treatment as the English word. Tahar Chibah, age 12 when he sailed to France with his family, remembers, “We arrived at the commercial port of Marseille, in the middle of tons of wood and cables. It had been necessary to go an entire day without eating or drinking, and it was very hot.”²¹⁰ Leaving behind home and family for a new life in a country they had never been to, the uncomfortable voyage across the Mediterranean could only have added to their apprehension.

Like all immigrants of the tumultuous summer of 1962, the Harkis often entered France in Marseille. A report from the Commissaire of the Port of Marseille in 1963 noted that the first Harkis began to arrive in Marseille in June of 1962.²¹¹ The Harkis’ arrival occurred over an extended period of time, but the bulk of the Harki population arrived shortly after independence. The Harkis came in discrete, controlled groups. Newspapers announced their passage, typically arranged by the army or by individual officers who committed to taking care of their former men. For example, an article in *Le Provençal* on June 11th, 1962, noted the arrival of 200 Harkis and their family members aboard the ship

²¹⁰« Nous sommes arrivé au port de marchandises de Marseille, au milieu d’un tas de bois et de caténaires. Il a fallu rester une journée entière sans manger ni boire alors qu’il faisait très chaud » *Des Vies*, 109

²¹¹Archives du Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456. Commissariat Special du Port “Etude sur l’Exode des Populations d’Algerie en 1962”, January 25, 1963

the *Sidi-Ferruch*.²¹² Though the Harkis began to arrive during the peak of Pieds-Noir immigration, in June of 1962, the two populations received different treatment upon arrival in France. Coming off the same boats, the Pieds-Noirs could tap into the complex *accueil* services put in place. The Harkis, in theory, had access to the immediate allocations, provided they could prove themselves to be Harkis and not simply Algerian immigrants. They could stroll along the dock and get hot food and cool drinks from the Red Cross buffet. Because of the controlled circumstances of their arrival, however, it seems doubtful that most did. Rather than letting the Harkis stream off the boats into the port of Marseille, the army often directed the Harkis directly from the boat to a waiting vehicle.²¹³ Interviews and memoirs of Harkis years later recall a sense of being “herded.” Rather than joining the long lines for temporary housing in Marseille, the Harkis were loaded onto special trucks, set up to take them to camps in the interior of France. For example, those who arrived on the *Sidi-Ferruch* were accompanied by officers and taken directly to a camp called Larzac. For those Harkis who did linger at La Joillette, *accueil* staff did not direct them to the Services d’Accueil set up by the Department of the Secretary of Rapatriés to receive aid. Instead the Department of Muslim Affairs handled their reception, with a booth set up at the dock to direct them to the “Centre d’Accueil Nord African,” which provided limited amounts of temporary housing for “passengers with difficulties.”²¹⁴

The question of what to do with the Harkis proved a puzzle for the local government. As Prefect Haas-Picard pointed out in his letter on December 10th, 1962, the problem of Harki relocation was “one of the most preoccupying subjects” for the ministers of Rapatriés and the Army, as well as officials at local and regional levels.²¹⁵ In particular, officials worried about the Harkis’ perceived lack of qualification

²¹²Le Provençal, June 11th, 1962, p2

²¹³Des Vies

²¹⁴Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 138 W 57, Note from CANA March 13, 1962. The Department of Muslim Affairs existed primarily as a colonial institution, but clearly continued to exist at least immediately after the end of the Algerian War.

²¹⁵Archives du Bouches-du-Rhône, Letter from Prefet of the Bouches-du-Rhône, Haas-Picard, to the Sous-Prefets of Arles and Aix, December 10th 1962

for jobs. Haas-Picard describes the Harkis as “non-specialized manual laborers” who would need jobs which “necessitated no special competence.”²¹⁶ In this letter, he proposes a plan in which each commune would offer a job to one or two of these otherwise unemployable men, allowing them to find a sustainable job in France. Certainly, the Harki population tended to lack education. The colonial system of education had fostered the education of French colonists but limited the French literacy of the colonized. Algeria had the same compulsory public school system as mainland France, as a department, but this mandatory schooling was not enforced outside the European population.²¹⁷ The government clearly expressed an interest in the well-being of the Harkis and their integration. However, it did not meet the challenge of the Harkis’ lacking qualifications with a complex and expensive program of “reclassement.” Instead, the local government somewhat half-heartedly searched for existing jobs which required no skills or technical training. By providing limited access to training, the government doomed the Harkis to continuing cycles of poverty.

Unsure of how to employ them, Marseille officials additionally insisted that the Harkis could not stay in their city because of conflicts with existing populations in the area. The Marseillaise government claimed that the presence of a large Algerian immigrant population in the Bouches-du-Rhône meant that the Harkis would not be safe in the region. Algerian immigration had been ongoing and even encouraged during colonial times. In 1968, Marseille alone had an Algerian worker population of 25,000 with an estimated 5,000 additional workers who had entered clandestinely.²¹⁸ During the Algerian War, this population typically sided with the Algerian nationalists. The FLN had a large support base in mainland France, with Algerians residing in France providing funding for the cause and in some cases even

²¹⁶Ibid

²¹⁷Alf Andrew Heggoy, “Education in French Algeria: An Essay on Cultural Conflict.” in *Comparative Education Review* (Vol. 17, No. 2, June 1973).180-193

²¹⁸Historians do not provide census data from an earlier year but the population of North African workers in Marseille was likely smaller, but still significant in 1962. Baratier, *Histoire de Marseille* (Privat : Toulouse, 1973).

extending the guerilla war to the mainland. Marseille officials feared that the FLN-sympathetic population would harass the pro-French Harkis if the Harkis were permitted to settle in the city.²¹⁹

Some evidence exists to support their claims. Occasional reports made their way into the official record of North Africans feeling threatened by “*coreligionnaires*.”²²⁰ Yet these sporadic reports appeared *during* the war, indicating the coercion stemmed from certain Algerians living in France refusing to support the FLN monetarily. Tensions certainly existed between FLN sympathizers and Harkis after the war. In Algeria, the FLN-backed government openly condemned Harkis as traitors and their followers seemed likely to follow suit. In the Port Commissioner’s report of 1963, officials claimed that the security of the Harkis in France continued to be threatened by the FLN. The report expressed an urgent desire to solve the conflict because “hospitality and the right of asylum are given a sacred character in Islam.”²²¹ Usually French officials spoke of Islam as an uncivilized religion but here it seems to have positive attributes associated. It perhaps offers a glimpse of the ways in which perceptions of the religion could be manipulated for different purposes.

The report suggested that the solution to the problem would be to send the Harkis to the countryside, away from the urban concentration of the Algerian immigrants and the government followed this policy assiduously. Minister Roger Frey wrote in a letter in June of 1962, “It appears that in reason of the large number of rapatriés flooding into Marseille, the transit of Muslim refugees in that city must be reduced to the shortest duration possible and that they will be, in consequence, directed to centers with larger capacities situated in other departments.”²²² Overwhelmed by the veritable flood of Pieds-Noirs entering the Bouches-du-Rhône, regional officials felt unable to also occupy themselves with

²¹⁹Archives du Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456. Commissariat Spécial du Port “Etude sur l’Exode des Populations d’Algérie en 1962” January 25, 1963

²²⁰Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 138 W 54. « A/S de la protection d’un Français-Musulman » November, 1961

²²¹Archives du Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456. Commissariat Spécial du Port “Etude sur l’Exode des Populations d’Algérie en 1962” January 25, 1963

²²²« Il est apparu qu’en raison du grand nombre de rapatriés affluant à Marseille, le transit dans cette ville des réfugiés musulmans devrait être réduit à la plus courte durée possible et que ceux-ci seraient, en conséquences, acheminés vers des centres de grande capacité situés dans d’autres départements. » Archives du Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 460, Letter from Roger Frey 15 June 62

the Harkis. Instead, they pleaded that Marseille's existing populations posed a threat to the Harkis and thus for their own safety, they must be shunted far away, making them someone else's problem. The interactions between the "coreligionnaires" appear an insufficient reason for removing the Harkis from Marseille. More likely, the urban overcrowding due to the arrival of the Pieds-Noirs created housing issues. The Harkis had to be sent elsewhere because the city did not have the resources to provide for both and, as was usually the case, the Europeans' needs were privileged.

The Harkis' ambiguous legal status in France further complicated their arrival. The Commissaire of Marseille's port, in his report on Algerian rapatriés, carefully made the distinction between the Harkis and other Algerians who immigrated to France in search of economic opportunities. "Alongside the French rapatriés who are regaining their mother country, there are Muslim refugees obligated to quit Algeria because, loyal to the French population, they have been menaced. These non-French Muslims, having for years opted for France, are not rapatriés in the true sense of the word: they are refugees, and have a right to the same allocations, to the same measures of integration."²²³ He recognized the Harkis as refugees, but already refused to situate them with the "rapatrié" Pieds-Noirs and they are notably "non-French." Twice within the quote, the commissaire highlights that the Harkis are "Muslim." Indeed it appears that part of what makes them "non-French" is their faith. The emphasis on religion, in an ardently secular state, shows a carryover of colonial language, in which "Muslim" was the standard term for indigenous Algerians. The Harkis were not afforded French identity upon arrival in France, a distinction which reinforced preexisting colonial prejudices. Yet it seems doubtful that the Pieds-Noirs, universally granted rapatrié status, merited the appellation more. Both populations were born in Algeria and, in the case of Pieds-Noirs with non-French backgrounds, neither could claim French heritage. Algeria had been French territory for nearly a century and if birth on French soil qualified one for citizenship, all involved should have been considered French citizens. As the Commissaire pointed out, the

²²³Archives du Bouhces-du-Rhône, 137 W 456. Commissariat Special du Port "Etude sur l'Exode des Populations d'Algerie en 1962", January 25, 1963

Harkis benefited, in theory, from the same allocations and measures of integrations as other rapatriés. Thus, all programs of allocations, loans and housing could potentially be used to benefit the Harkis. However, as in the case of the laws allowing repatriation, differential policy quickly belied French claims of equal treatment. For example Francois Misoffe, the Minister of Rapatriés, instructed his staff saying, “You must not rehouse the former harkis except after having rehoused all the rapatriés asking for housing or in particularly bad housing.”²²⁴ It came to be seen as only fair to give Pieds-Noirs preference in rapatrié programs because Harkis had access to “special programs”, like camps.

The Harkis entered France as Algerians, not as French, carrying with them complicated colonial legacies of citizenship. Upon arrival in France, they had to pursue French citizenship through official channels. Because they had to declare citizenship, the French government could, and clearly did, limit Harki entry into France. By requiring that the Harkis go through an application process to gain French citizenship, the French government assigned them an Algerian, rather than French, identity. Yet this label proved false. Harkis could not reenter Algeria after fleeing in 1962. Algeria rejected the Harkis after the war and denied them Algerian citizenship. Many Harkis and their children tell stories of being denied entry into Algeria on trips to visit relatives they left behind. Bitterly they recall fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters who died in Algeria, without a chance for them to say goodbye.²²⁵

Accounts vary on the Harkis’ ability to actually gain French citizenship. Many Harkis did choose to become French citizens. One newspaper story in 1962 trumpeted the choice of a group of 150 Harkis living in a village in the Basse-Alpes region to request French citizenship.²²⁶ The language in the article describes the “naturalization” of the Harkis as an *en masse* project. The article said the majority of Harkis likely “would choose” French citizenship. However, naturalization plans did not always work. For example, the daughter of a Harki explains that her mother, despite living in France for nearly 40 years,

²²⁴Besnaci-Lancou, Moumen *Les Harkis*, 63

²²⁵For example, see interviews in *Des Vies, Soldats Abandonnés* or scholarly works on the subject of Harkis.

²²⁶Le Monde. « Les Harkis Réfugiés Choisiront Pour La Plupart La Nationalité Française » December 31 1962

never received French citizenship and thus did not have access to certain health and pension benefits.²²⁷ Due to the anecdotal nature of both the interviews and the newspaper stories on citizenship, it is unclear how widespread the acquisition of citizenship was for Harkis. Those Harkis who did not acquire French citizenship became stranded in limbo, unable to lay claim to any nation. The requirement that Harkis apply for citizenship reinforced the construction of the Harkis as a non-French population. The Pieds-Noirs, despite their diverse origins, were French. Harkis, despite being French subjects and serving the French in the war, were not.

Significantly, the government construction of the Harkis as foreigners impacted immediate aid structures. The Harkis, identified by their religion rather than their service to France or their birth on French soil, fell under the jurisdiction of “Muslim Affairs.” The French government in colonial Algeria grouped the population into two masses – the French and the “Muslims.”²²⁸ By choosing to include Harkis within the group of all Algerians, in a reflection of colonial norms, rather than within the group of all French, the government reinforced their inferior position. The French governments' grouping of the Harkis within the Muslim Affairs department portrayed the Harkis as the same as Algerian worker immigrants. Rather than recognizing their special circumstances, as refugees and former French soldiers, the Harkis became merely another group of “Muslims” entering France.

Life in the Camps

To prepare for the coming of the Harkis, the French government repurposed camps in France to serve as temporary housing for the refugee population. Thus, though the Harkis arrived in groups along the Mediterranean coast, the government quickly coordinated with the army to move them inland to the camps. None of the camps had been created for the use of the Harkis. Rivesaltes had previously been used as a concentration camp for Jews and Spanish republicans during the Vichy regime.²²⁹ Others had

²²⁷Des Vies, 97

²²⁸Lorcin, *Imperial Identities*.186

²²⁹Des Vies, 13

been used to house FLN prisoners of war during the Algerian War or had previously been used as military camps.²³⁰ Like past groups housed there, the Harkis lived in a regimented, military-ruled atmosphere. The major difference between the Harkis experience and previous populations involved their freedom.²³¹ While former occupants of the camps were prisoners, the government did not treat the Harkis as interned prisoners. They had the freedom to leave the camp system and find housing elsewhere if they chose. However, the symbolism of the placement remains powerful.

If the Harkis dreamed of a better life in France, the camps quickly readjusted their expectations. As Fatima Bouda-Abdou remembers, « I have bad memories of [Rivesaltes] because for me, to go to France was something glorious ; instead, I found myself being moved about in military trucks, living encircled by barbed wire in the middle of clouds of dust.”²³² The physical layout of the camps added to their foreboding nature. The camps typically had large outer walls, confining the Harkis and their families within barbed wire screens. When the Harkis first arrived in the summer, the army had set up tents for housing. Though perhaps not ideal, the tents proved sufficient shelter during the summer months. However, as winter approached, more permanent and suitable housing had yet to be erected. The Harkis, used to the heat of Algeria, found themselves with only thin cloth to protect them from the bitter cold of winter, which even in Southern France produced temperatures more extreme than those found in Algeria.²³³

Though outside the regional focus of this thesis, life in the camps remains relevant to a comparative history of the Pieds-Noirs and the Harkis because it underlines the differences in their treatment. The Pieds-Noirs, though facing their own challenges, remained in the region, developing

²³⁰Charbit, *Les Harkis* 73

²³¹ I base this comparison especially upon the treatment of Spanish Refugees and French Jews during World War II. For more on day-to-day life in the camps for Spanish Refugees see: Villegas, Jean-Claude, and Pierre Vilar. *Plages d'exil: les camps de réfugiés espagnols en France, 1939*. (BDIC: Nanterre, 1989.) For more on Jewish internees see: Ch. 4 of Michael R. Marrus and Robert O. Paxton *Vichy France and the Jews* (Stanford University Press: Stanford, 1981).

²³²« J'en garde un mauvais souvenir parce que pour moi, aller en France était quelque chose de très glorieux ; or, je me suis retrouvée à être déplacée en camions militaires, à vivre entourée de fils barbelés au milieu de nuages de poussière. » Des Vies. Fatima Bouda-Abdou. 26

²³³Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 138 W 55, Note on Harki policy, 1962

roots and communities in Marseille and the surrounding towns. The Harkis population, on the other hand, often spent the first 5-10 years in France in a constant state of transit. As they moved between camps, all intended to be temporary, the Harkis struggled to develop a community which was integrated with the mainland French. Many Harkis eventually returned to the Bouches-du-Rhône after years in the camps, in search of the mild climate which had earlier enticed the Pieds-Noirs. Thus the camps play a role in the history of the Harkis in that region, despite their physical location outside of the Bouches-du-Rhône.

The presence of the army in camp administration seems one common element between all the Harkis camps. Though the Harkis were civilians, the French Army had initial responsibility for them. Once safely in France, the army retained some control over the population. Each camp had a designated director, who typically came from a military background. Soldiers who had served in Algeria or Pieds-Noirs seemed to have been favored when selecting personnel. Officials justified this strategy by claiming that Pieds-Noirs or soldiers from the Algerian War best knew how to interact with Algerians. In ideal cases, they even perhaps knew a smattering of Arabic, which would help them communicate with the Harkis.²³⁴ Though demonstrating a certain logic, the presence of these *colons* within camp administration had significant drawbacks. Ex-military personnel tended to impose military-style discipline on the camps, despite the fact that the Harkis had not reenlisted. The son of a Harki recounts “The camps were horrible. For meal times, a siren went off and we had to go, some with their dish, some with their little bowls... We were basically prisoners because no one could leave the camp. We had classes and we had to go, but there was no teacher, just military men.”²³⁵ Strict rules governed conduct

²³⁴Besnaci-Lancou, Moumen, *Les Harkis*, 73

²³⁵« Le camp était horrible. Pour manger, une sirène retentissait et on devait aller, qui avec sa gamelle, qui avec des petites bassines... On était plutôt des prisonniers puisqu'on ne pouvait pas sortir du camp. On avait des classes d'école ou on était entassés, mais on n'avait pas de maitre, juste des militaires. » Jean-Jacques Jordi, Mohand Hamoumou, *Les Harkis, Mémoire Enfouie* (Les Editions Autrement : Paris, 1999). 52 The speaker means in this context that his parents could not leave at will on a daily basis. Permission was required to leave the camps for

in the camps. As Mohamed Sebbani remembers, “In the camp of Rivesaltes, my parents weren’t authorized to leave the camp and had very strict hours. We lived more in a disciplinary camp than in a camp for political refugees.”²³⁶ Though Arabic language skills certainly had a practicality to them, putting Pieds-Noirs and soldiers in charge of the Harkis only perpetuated colonial hierarchies of power. These people, perhaps inevitably, brought with them ideas of Algerians which had been instilled by colonialism and the propaganda of war. They had been taught, generally, to view Arabs as lesser, albeit in a well-meaning paternalistic manner. Some Harki children, for example, fondly remember camp officials who provided comfort, aid and education. Zohra Aridj cherishes a warm memory of “a social worker, kind and devoted, [who] helped us, perhaps a little too much because when it became necessary to retrieve our autonomy, that wasn’t easy.”²³⁷ As Aridj points out, even the kindly camp staff helped the Harkis by creating monitored micro-communities where the Harkis became entirely dependent on the good will of the camp administration for their livelihood. With perhaps the best of intentions, the officials limited the autonomy of the people living in the camps.

Women and girls in particular became isolated by camp life. Although women could participate in “menage” classes designed to teach them about French standards of hygiene, childcare and housekeeping, apart from these classes, they typically found themselves without any contact with the world outside the camp.²³⁸ “Menage” classes were a common colonial form of imposing French culture on the colonized people, and thus represented yet another carryover of colonial policy. Men left the camps daily to go to work, often provided for them in factories or through government programs. Typically hard manual labor, work at least gave men a chance to experience life in France outside the

errands or visits. However, Harkis were able to leave the camp *system* at will – they were not forced to stay in the camps should they choose to find employment elsewhere.

²³⁶ « Au camp des Rivesaltes, mes parents n’était pas autorisé à sortir du camp et avaient des horaires très stricts. Nous vivions plus dans un camp disciplinaire que dans un camp de refugies politiques. » Des Vies. Mohamed Sebbani. 69

²³⁷ « ...une assistante sociale, gentille et dévouée, nous aidait, peut-être un peu trop car lorsqu’il a fallu retrouver notre autonomie, cela n’a pas été facile. » Des Vies. Zohra Aridj. p. 17

²³⁸ Ibid. Also see Moumen *Les Francais Musulmans en Vaucluse*, 97

camp. Women, however, had no reason to leave the barbed wire fences. The camps provided rationed food and daily necessities. Women thus rarely encountered French people, besides the few employees who worked in the camps. Harki women describe the way in which the war “crushed” their husbands, many of whom became abusive or alcoholic. Because the French government granted aid only to the Harkis themselves, the wives had no right to pensions or aid if they left their husbands and divorce remained a rare occurrence.²³⁹ As a result of the camp system, the wives of many Harkis never learned to speak fluent French. This linguistic handicap would limit the women in their ability to find communities, jobs and self-sufficiency in their new surroundings.

Authorities may have envisioned the camps as a stopgap measure until more permanent solutions could be developed, but the Harki camps quietly continued to operate for decades. The government optimistically believed that they would be able to “reclasse” and disperse the Harkis in the course of one summer.²⁴⁰ This belief proved a complete overestimation. Isolated and restrained by the limits of the camps, most Harki families could not gather the resources to leave. The camps provided jobs, food and community; without them many families felt they could not survive in France. And so they trudged on in the crowded barrack-like conditions. Rivesaltes closed in 1964 but other camps, like Saint-Maurice-l’Ardoise, continued to operate until the 1970s.²⁴¹

Bias, one of the later camps to be opened, had a different fate. The French government chose Bias as a repository for those Harkis deemed unequipped for life in France. This included widows, the elderly, the handicapped and their families. Bias remained open as an army-operated Harki camp until 1991. Even as late as the early 2000s, it continued to be inhabited by a mostly Harki population, although the official administrative structure of the camp had been eliminated.²⁴² Most French citizens

²³⁹Dalila Kerchouche, *Destins de harkis ; aux racines d’un exil* (Editions Autrement: Paris, 2003). For examples of stories of abuse see interviews on pg. 100 & 106, among others.

²⁴⁰Besnaci-Lancou & Moumen, *Les Harkis*, 54

²⁴¹Ibid. 57

²⁴²Des Vies. 115

were unaware of the continued existence of this Harki enclave. Its inhabitants living in relative poverty, Bias served its “temporary” function for nearly 30 years. Jeannette Boufhal spent her childhood in Bias because her father had only one kidney. She condemns the camps for the limits they placed on Harkis and their futures. “I think that it was a mistake to have grouped the Harkis in the camps and, what is more, to decide their future, and that of their children, for them. They were not able to evolve like all the Pieds-Noirs who were installed in apartments and hotels.”²⁴³ Rather than serving as a bridge into integrated life in France, the camps created a distinct and different population, making it yet more difficult for the Harki population to find their place in France.

The camps proved a lasting trauma for the Harkis, although originally the national government saw the camps as a humanitarian solution to a complicated problem. The French government recognized, to an extent, that it had a responsibility towards the Harkis because of their service during the war. Local Bouches-du-Rhône bureaucrats blamed the “threat” of the large Algerian population for their inability to house the Harkis in the region but other concerns also influenced French policy. Behind the claims of security threats lurked a deep-seated belief that Harkis could not integrate into French society immediately. As one report on the Harkis explained, “The villages of France, even those which are semi-abandoned, are closed communities: the implantation of partially foreign elements, due to language and especially habits of life and religious attitude, cannot be done except with an extreme prudence, keeping in mind all the precise elements.”²⁴⁴ The French government saw Larzac, Rivesaltes, Bias and the other camps as convenient, temporary programs which would ease the Harkis into life in France. The social workers and administrative hierarchy of the camps, in theory, could teach the Harkis

²⁴³ « Je pense que c’était une erreur d’avoir regroupe les Harkis dans des camps et, qui plus est, de décider à leur place de leur avenir et de celui de leurs enfants. Ils n’ont pas pu évoluer comme tous les Pieds-noirs qui ont été installés dans des appartements et des hôtels. » Des Vies. 118

²⁴⁴ « Les villages de France, même ceux qui sont en cours d’abandon, sont des communautés fermées : l’implantation d’éléments en partie étrangers par la langue et surtout par les habitudes de la vie et l’attitude religieuse, ne peut se faire qu’avec une extrême prudence, en tenant compte de tous les éléments en présence. » Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 138 W 54, « Possibilités de Logements “Précaires » 1962.

the skills and norms they would need for a successful life in France. The camps could also provide education for the children, although this did not always prove to be the case. However, by isolating the “foreign elements,” the camp program also reinforced a perception of the Harkis as non-French and continued a pattern of condescending monitoring which had previously limited Algerians in colonial times.

Back to the Bouches-du-Rhône

After several years in the camps, most Harki families eventually left to try their fates elsewhere. Leaving the bitter winters of the camps, they traveled south, finding a new home in the Bouches-du-Rhône. The record of their migration back to the Mediterranean is scattered. No centralized body tracked the movement of the Harki families so their paths to the Bouches-du-Rhône become tangible only through their participation in programs created for them in the region.

Perhaps the most unique program option came through the actions of the Bachaga Boualem. Bachaga was not a first name but rather a title meaning “high dignitary.” Said Boualem formed part of the elite of native Algerian society during colonial times, serving as a sort of mayor for his region of Algeria. He coordinated with the French government and spoke fluent French, able to communicate with the colonizer. Boualem proudly led a unit of Harkis during the Algerian War, having long since committed himself to a belief that Algeria should remain tied to France.²⁴⁵ Indeed Boualem later wrote two books criticizing the French government for not showing enough support for the Harkis, whom he said had sacrificed so much in the name of service to their *mère patrie*.²⁴⁶ The French government classified Boualem as a “notable,” rather than a Harki, during the exodus, indicating his superior status. Boualem, as a notable, had priority entrance into France and his immigration was not regulated by the French army. Boualem fled Algeria at the end of the war and chose to settle in the Bouches-du-Rhône on a large

²⁴⁵Faivre, *Les Combattants Musulmans*, 58

²⁴⁶Said Boualam, *Les Harkis au Service de la France* (France Empire : Paris, 1962). and *Mon Pays la France !* (France Empire : Paris, 1963)

farmstead. Using his status and a certain amount of personal wealth, he procured a series of loans from the French government in order to pay for his large purchase. Called *Mas Thibert*, Boualem's property near Arles became a sort of refuge for many newly arrived Harki families.²⁴⁷ In correspondence with the Prefecture of the Bouches-du-Rhône, Boualem requested additional loans to create 15 prefabricated structures to house the Harkis arriving at his new home. The government supplied partial funding, but proved unwilling to pay for some of the costs, citing unnecessarily expensive building materials.²⁴⁸ Boualem's unique establishment, as his desire for prefabricated homes might indicate, grew quickly. R. Hollands, the sous-Prefet of Arles, observed that Boualem arrived at Mas Thibert in 1962 with 66 family members and associates, and by the next day 73 more Harkis had arrived. Boualem anticipated that a further 100 Harkis would soon join his farm.²⁴⁹

Mas Thibert represented a unique situation in France. On one hand, Boualem provided a home for the Harkis which freed them from military control. Boualem himself directed Mas Thibert and the encumbering bureaucracy of the camps did not restrict the residents of the Mas. Boualem believed he offered a location which could replicate the communal, village life of Algeria. Most Harkis, before joining the French army, had traditionally worked as farmers on family land and Mas Thibert allowed the Harkis to again engage in communal agricultural work. However, Mas Thibert presented its own limitations. Although the French government did not monitor the Harkis living in Mas Thibert, Boualem reportedly regulated his little community himself. He expected the Harkis residing in Mas Thibert to work for the community. Boualem in fact reinstated a semi-feudal system which had been in place in Algeria, with peasants serving as low-paid workers on the rich landowner's farm. The Harkis of Mas Thibert had no

²⁴⁷The word *mas* has its origins in the provencal language, the language of the South of France before Parisian French was imposed. The word means a farm, serving a dual purpose of meaning both the farm house and the land on which it stood.

²⁴⁸Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 460, Letters between Boualem and Ministers of the Prefecture, 1962

²⁴⁹Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 460, Note by R. Hollands, Sous-Prefet of Arles, June 1962

opportunity for further education or professional advancement and depended for their entire livelihood on the good will of the Boualem. Education of the children was internally managed.

Thus Mas Thibert continued a system reminiscent of French colonialism. Prior to independence, French officials would identify the leaders of an Algerian community living in France, a position which they called the *caïd*, and then negotiate all dealings with the community through that leader. The government insisted this replicated the tribal practices native to Algeria and would serve as the best way to interact with Algerians, although they did admit that the power granted to the *caïds* could lead to corruption.²⁵⁰ Boualem continued this imperial tradition after the death of the colonial system. His privileged position within France was a direct result of his advantaged position within colonial society. Some Harkis complained of the restrictions imposed by Boualem. Tahar Chibah, for example, bounced around in the Harkis camps before his family settled at Mas Thibert. Chibah claims that Boualem expected those living on his land to be “des Harkis obéissants,” or he would make life impossible. He found that “the injustices struck us.”²⁵¹ Mas Thibert isolated the Harkis within their own micro community, sheltering them from the unknowns of France but also keeping their futures and their freedom tied to the will of one charismatic man.

More commonly, Harkis found their way to the Bouches-du-Rhône as part of the *hameaux forestier* program, a program of employment and housing through the Forestry department. Like present day California, the Mediterranean region of France is naturally prone to forest fires. The dry climate and low underbrush cause summer fires capable of wiping out entire forests. The early 1960s seems a peak period for forest fires in France. A slew of newspaper articles in both *Le Monde* and local newspapers recounted the devastating effects of summer fires. These articles often appear just a few pages away from stories about the end of the Algerian War and the arrival of the first waves of Harkis and Pieds-Noirs. While the Rapatrié department scrambled to accommodate the arriving populations, the Forestry

²⁵⁰ Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 218 W 57, « Cas Particulier de Berre », from a folder marked 1950-1953

²⁵¹ “...les injustices sévissaient” *Des Vies*, 109

department struggled to find a solution to the perennial plague of the fires.²⁵² The French government attempted to solve two problems with one program – providing jobs for the “unemployable” Harkis and making the forests of Southern France safer for the community. Thus was born the *hameau forestier*, or literally, the forestry hamlet.

The Forestry Department created scattered hameaux throughout the south of France. The Bouches-du-Rhône, as one of the areas most affected by brush fires, received five. At first the government in the Bouches-du-Rhône scoped out potential hameaux in small towns like Peynier, Fuveau, Boulbon, La Roque-d’Anthéron, Roquefort-la-Bédoule, Carry-le-Rouet, Meyreuil and other villages on the outskirts of Aix, Arles and Marseille.²⁵³ Yet the existing villages of these selected sites often protested the arrival of the Harkis and successfully blocked the creation of the proposed hameau. Eventually several locations went through, including Fuveau, La Ciotat, Roque d’Anthéron and Joques, where the hameaux was referred to as Logis d’Anne. Each of these locations had an existing town but the Harki hameaux did not house the workers within the town. Rather, the hameaux typically were located several kilometers away from the villages they were named for, in rural settings accessible only by poor roads. Each hameaux consisted of a group of 25 Harkis and their families, living together in their isolated village.²⁵⁴ According to the report of the Port Commission from 1963, the primary method of employing the Harkis consisted of placement in agricultural labor or as a worker in a hameau forestier. The government provided the Harkis in the hameaux with two year contracts, with the idea being that after a two year period, they would have learned skills which would make them employable elsewhere.²⁵⁵ The Harkis did not have access to special retraining programs in construction or electricity, such as were offered by the Bourse National. Rather their “training” came through on the job learning in

²⁵² Moumen, *Les Français Musulmans en Vaucluse*, 66.

²⁵³ Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 460, Note on the Harkis, April 4th, 1963

²⁵⁴ Besnaci-Lancou, Moumen *Les Harkis*, 69

²⁵⁵ Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 137 W 456, Commissariat Spécial du Port “Etude sur l’Exode des Populations d’Algerie en 1962” January 25, 1963

manual labor. Surely the skills they learned in such an occupation would only qualify them for similarly menial positions. Further, Marseille and the Bouches-du-Rhône's anemic industrial sector made unskilled labor jobs fairly rare to begin with.

Though isolated in their rural surroundings, the Harki hameaux developed into close-knit societies which provided essential services to the community. Daily patterns and routines emerged. Initially, the government employed the Harkis in building their own houses. They became the built-in labor force needed by the government to create the physical hameaux.²⁵⁶ Once housed however, the Harkis' energy was redirected towards the work commissioned by the Forestry department. As the Conservator of Water and Forest for Aix-en-Provence described it, the primary task of the Harki men consisted of "the clearing and edging of the most frequently used roads, to constitute a bare strip of land where the fire could not take birth."²⁵⁷ In other words, they made labor intensive firebreaks in the forests of France. Additionally, Harki units worked to protect the French villages in their surroundings by clearing underbrush, a preventative measure against the common wildfires. Harkis also served as first responders in rural fires, when the French fire service could not immediately reach the remote location of the fire.²⁵⁸ Clearly, the hameaux workers provided valuable services to the region, sometimes working alongside or even instead of traditional firefighters.

At its core, the goal of the Harki hameaux arguably succeeded. The Harkis found employment despite their lack of marketable skills. Though conditions of housing did not match the standards of French families at the time, still living in a Harki camp seemed enviable compared to hovels and shanties of the *bidonvilles*, where many North African immigrants lived during the 1960s and 70s. With the Harkis

²⁵⁶ Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 218 W 57, Circulaire from the Ministre des Rapatriés to Préfets on the «Reclassement des Supplétifs Musulmans Réfugiés en France. » February 25, 1963

²⁵⁷ « le débroussaillage en bordure des routes les plus fréquentées afin de constituer une tranchée mise à sol nu où les feux ne pourront prendre naissance. » Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 125 W 173 Letter from Conservateur de l'Eau et des Forêts d'Aix, February 24th, 1965

²⁵⁸ Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 125 W 172, Letter from the Commanders of the Marins-Pompiers of Marseille, September 1967

placed in an unfamiliar country with an often unfamiliar language, the hameaux could act as a sheltering environment for the families. An amicable community developed in these tiny, remote villages. A childhood in the hameaux could bring pleasant memories. As Slimane Djera recalls, “A typical day in the camp of Joques for me would be watching the visit of the peddlers, like the gypsies who would come to sell cloth, going to class in the camp, playing soccer with friends or trying to catch squirrels in order to sell them at the market.”²⁵⁹ Though certainly revealing a degree of poverty and isolation, Djera’s memories seem warmer than those harbored for the camps like Rivesaltes. Cut off though they were, Harkis families created a home for themselves in the forests of France.

However, despite its positive aspects, at its core the hameaux forestier represented a deeply flawed attempt to integrate the Harkis into French society, serving only to isolate the Harkis. The government carefully selected locations for the Harki villages close to existing French towns and villages, with the hope that interaction between the French villagers and the Harkis would ease the Harkis’ transition. However, French towns proved less than accepting of the new arrivals. A committee suggested, for example, the implantation of a hameau in Aix-Valabre. However this plan would have put the hameau close by the Agricultural High School of Aix-Valabre. The mayor of Aix wrote to violently protest the creation of the hameau, admonishing “I won’t hide from you that this news has had the effect of a veritable bomb in the personnel of the high schools, the parents having decided to react very swiftly against this implantation in the neighborhood of young students.”²⁶⁰ The visceral rejection of the village makes it seem as though a prison, rather than 25 Harki families, would be installed next to the school building. When the villages did accept the creation of a hameau, the local governments proposed sites as many as 10 kilometers from the existing town. Though major cities like Marseille and Paris had

²⁵⁹ « Mon quotidien dans le camp de Jouques se résumait à regarder la visite des vendeurs ambulants comme les gitanes qui venaient vendre du linge, à aller en classe sur place, à jouer au foot avec les copains ou à essayer d’attraper des écureuils pour les revendre sur le marché » *Des Vies*, 45

²⁶⁰ « Je ne vous cache pas que cette nouvelle a fait l’effet d’une véritable bombe dans le personnel du lycée, les parents ayant décidé de réagir très vivement contre cette implantation dans le voisinage de jeunes élèves. » Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 125 W 173 Letter from the Mayor of Aix-Valable, October 26th 1970

public transport by the 1960s, rural transportation was less comprehensive. In these small provincial villages, bus routes often did not extend to the Harkis villages and families did not have enough money to purchase a car. Thus visits to town, even to go to the weekly market, would have happened on foot. The good intentions of the hameaux program, to engage the Harkis slowly in French life, were foiled by the prejudiced attitudes of local villages.

The aching isolation and difficulty of life in the hameaux became constant themes in the recollections of Harki children. Aline Carbetta, who spent her youth in Logis d'Anne, a hameaux near Joques, says, "The camp was situated at 8 kilometers from the village, which created a great isolation. The facteur [official in charge of the camp] was the only stranger that we could see. We lived cooped up like American Indians in their reservations."²⁶¹ This comparison with American Indian reservation is a common motif in Harki descriptions of their experience in the *chantier forestière*. The physical distance of the Harkis hameaux from the town center meant that the program did little to counteract their isolation. If anything, it seems to have increased the separateness of the community by encouraging them to become insular. Additionally, though the working and living conditions of the hameaux could be considered superior to the norms of many other North African immigrants, they remained far below the standards of the housing programs created for the Pieds-Noirs. The child of a Harki, Nodine B, remembers "There wasn't hot water or heating in the barracks and we had to cut wood in the forest. I didn't have a childhood, we didn't have a chance to grow up with other children... Even at school we were separated, the French to one side and us on the other- two rows... We were sort of like the Indians of France except that we didn't even have arrows. No, it was worse: we were rats."²⁶²

²⁶¹« Le camp se situait à huit kilomètres du village, ce qui créa un grand isolement. Le facteur était la seule personne étrangère que l'on pouvait voir. On vivait parqué comme les Indiens d'Amérique dans leurs réserves. » *Des Vies*, 85

²⁶²« Il n'y avait pas d'eau chaude, pas de chauffage dans la baraque et il fallait couper le bois dans la forêt. Je n'ai pas eu de jeunesse, ici on n'a pas eu la chance de grandir comme les autres enfants... Même à l'école on nous séparait, les Français d'un côté et nous de l'autre, deux rangs, pourquoi ?... On est peut-être les Indiens de la

In addition to its isolation, the hameau also created disadvantages for the Harkis in their attempts to develop an independent life in France. The Harkis received dismal wages. In a yearly budget of La Roque d'Anthéron, the government provided 4,600 francs for the services of the Harkis, equaling pay for 200 days' work. In contrast, the surveillance personnel of the hameaux and the drivers of the Harkis' van received the comparatively kingly sum of 38,000 francs.²⁶³ Additionally, Harkis in the hameaux continued to live under the thumb of government supervision, like the "facteur" mentioned by Carbetta. Similar to the camps, the hameaux program also lasted much longer than initially intended. Rather than teaching Harkis skills for two years and enabling them to find jobs elsewhere, Harkis became dependent on the hameaux. Their work prepared them for nothing else. Carbetta, for example, lived in the hameau Logis d'Anne until 1984, decades after she arrived. A friend of hers remained in Logis d'Anne until 1995 – 35 years in the hameau.²⁶⁴ Historian Abderhamen Moumen's case study of the Vaucluse suggests similar failures of the hameaux projects in that region.²⁶⁵ Like so many other government programs created for the Harkis, the hameaux helped the Harkis but also made them dependent on the government for all aspects of their future and isolated them further from the native French population. They were not French. They were foreigners, living in the shadows.

In Marseille, the local government established specific urban programs geared towards aiding the Harkis but they too failed to foster integration. The primary instance of this drive was the creation of an HLM complex called "Tilleuls." Built by a government-subsidized construction company, SONACONTRA, Tilleuls existed for the express use of the Harki population.²⁶⁶ Unlike typical HLM complexes, designed solely to provide much needed housing to low-income families, Tilleuls' had a two-

France, sauf que nous, on n'avait même pas de flèches. Non, c'était pire : on était des rats... » Jordi & Hamoumou, *Les Harkis, Mémoire Enfouie*, 101

²⁶³ Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 125 W 173, Budget from La Roque de l'Antheon, 1968. As employees of the Forestry Department, this small number likely represented their total income.

²⁶⁴ *Des Vies*, 85

²⁶⁵ Moumen *Les Français Musulmans en Vaucluse*, Partie II

²⁶⁶ Jordi, *De L'exode a l'exil: rapatriés et pieds-noirs en France*, 176

fold mission. Tilleuls gave the Harkis affordable housing and served as the “advanced” version of the gradual integration intended with the hameaux. The idea behind the complex, and the seventeen others like it created, was to provide an urban residence for those Harkis deemed sufficiently trained or assimilated to make their way in French society.²⁶⁷ The Harkis of Tilleuls resided in the Quartier Saint-Jerome of Marseille, in a group of 100 apartments.²⁶⁸ The Marseillaise government felt justified in prioritizing Pied-Noir families in the larger HLM programs throughout Marseille because of “special” programs like Tilleuls which existed exclusively for Harkis. Thus, though in theory Harkis and their families qualified for rapatrié housing, they typically found themselves denied HLM housing, directed instead towards Harki-specific programming. Like other HLM complexes of Marseille, the far northern location of the Saint-Jerome neighborhood meant the Harkis living there found themselves cut off from public transportation like the metro and separated from the center of the city by a highway.

Certain key differences exist between this particular HLM complex and the multitudes created in the wake of the population explosion in 1962. To begin with, Tilleuls received little documentation within the available archival materials of the Bouches-du-Rhône. HLM construction in 1960s Marseille has several dedicated boxes, each one filled with hundreds of letters, plans, memos, notes and blueprints, explaining in minute detail the creation of each HLM. Dozens of memos and policy directives spell out the specific rights of the rapatriés to their reserved housing units. In contrast, gleaned information on Tilleuls takes careful scouring of boxes labeled for other purposes, such as educating Harki children. It is only through inference and passing references that information about Tilleuls enters the official records.²⁶⁹ This limited information does highlight certain differences between Tilleuls and other HLM complexes, however. HLM programs designed to help the Pieds-Noirs find a home in the city began in 1962 and the programs of reservations only lasted until 1967. In contrast, a letter reveals that

²⁶⁷Abderahmen Moumen, « Une Brève Histoire des Harkis », *Temps Présents*, 2 November 2008

²⁶⁸Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 131 W 377 Letter from the Inspecteur d'Académie d'Aix, 12 November 1964

²⁶⁹The reasons for this difference are not clear. Boxes could have been lost or misplaced through the years, or Tilleuls simply could have been less documented.

construction of Tilleuls had not yet been completed in late 1964.²⁷⁰ Likely, Harki families did not begin to move into the complex until 1965, at which point Pied-Noirs families had already begun to move out of HLM complexes in favor of preferable housing. Rather than being a temporary point from which to better their fortunes, the HLMs became a permanent residence for the Harki families. Indeed as late as 1990, Harkis still occupied the majority of apartments at Tilleuls.²⁷¹ Additionally, the Harkis living in Tilleuls remained under bureaucratic supervision. A former SAS officer, one with an understanding of “the Arab mentality,” ran the urban complex and had the freedom to impose military-style rules on the community.²⁷² This means that a Frenchman intimately familiar with prejudiced colonial norms was assigned authority over the Harkis living in Tilleuls. What chance did the Harkis have of a fresh start if they were never freed from colonial attitudes? Families even needed permission to receive friends and family for visits.²⁷³ This bureau of control existed until 1987. Moreover, it has been suggested that the officer in charge of Les Tilleuls was corrupt. Activist and son of a Harki, Said Merabti remembers that his family could not get housing in the complex originally. He heard rumors years later that this was because in order to get housing one had to pay the former-SAS officer.²⁷⁴ A parallel supervision would have been unthinkable in other HLM buildings. The stigma of living in the HLMs and the continued supervision of a government official who controlled their daily life trapped the Harki families within the marginalized cités of France.

Educating the Harkis

The Harkis, and their children, were also disadvantaged because of issues of education. In the chaos and constant movement of their first years in France, education became a recurring problem. Unprepared for the arrival of the Harkis, the French government hastily cobbled together refugee camps

²⁷⁰ Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 131 W 377, Letter from the Inspecteur de l'Académie, April 1964

²⁷¹ Jordi De L'exode a l'exil: rapatriés et pieds-noirs en France 177

²⁷² Ibid, 177

²⁷³ Ibid 176

²⁷⁴ Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, Said Merabti interview

for them. The bureaucracy focused on finding housing more durable than flimsy cloth tents and on the logistics of feeding and coordinating such a large population. However, in this initial setup, the organizers left education completely aside. Many Harki children report not receiving any education at all during their time in the camps.²⁷⁵ This lack of education was in direct violation of universal schooling laws in place in France. Living there for years on end, the children passed their days in games and helping their parents, given no access to traditional schooling. This would prove particularly debilitating because for the most part these young people spoke Arabic or Berber, rather than French, as their first language. If they had gone to school in Algeria at all, it was unlikely that formal education happened in French. Abandoned in their formative early years, these children were at a stark disadvantage later in life, when they had to struggle to adapt to classes in French, still a foreign language to them. The structure of the camp furthered their linguistic isolation. Historian Stéphanie Abrial says, of education in the camps, “few among [the children of Harkis] pursued secondary education and entering professional life was hindered by a maladaptation to the system of schooling.”²⁷⁶

In the hameaux forestiers, the French government seemed to make a conscious effort to counter the negative impact of shaky education within the camps. From the first, school was viewed as a way to integrate the young Algerians into French society. In the hameau of Logis d’Anne, French officials implemented a gradual plan for integration. The children of Logis D’Anne would go to school in the hameau itself during *maternelle*, or pre-school, but would then join the school of Joques, the nearby village. This plan would add roughly 100-120 students to a school that currently had a student body of 180.²⁷⁷ The intent, as stated constantly by the education officials in charge of the program, was to slowly put the Harki in contact with the French population. Over and over, the officials insisted that their

²⁷⁵Des Vies, multiple interviews

²⁷⁶Stéphanie Abrial, *Les Enfants de Harkis: de la révolte à l’intégration*. (L’Harmattan : Paris, 2001). 38

²⁷⁷Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 131 W 377, Letter from the Inspector d’Academie to the Ministre de l’Education, June 11 1963

educational programs for the Harki children had been planned “to avoid segregation.”²⁷⁸ Here one sees again the unshakable French belief in the power of education for integration. The French determinedly inculcated French values and norms into the rapatriés with school. It would appear those in charge of the academies had similar designs for the Harki children. However, just a few months later, in September of 1963, the plan had shifted to the implantation of mobile classrooms within Logis d’Anne. The Minister of National Education wrote that, “It is desirable and even indispensable, in regards to the hameaux of Logis d’Anne and La Baume, that we envisage providing 12 prefabricated buildings to implant,” to be used as schools.²⁷⁹ The initial program of mixed schools, perhaps the best method to promote integration or at least linguistic immersion, ended almost as quickly as it had been conceived.

Instead, schooling served as yet another factor isolating the Harki children. For another Bouches-du-Rhône hameau at La Baume, the Inspector of the *chantiers forestaires*, Cheneu, discussed the reversal of the earlier government position.²⁸⁰ “The Municipal Council has decided that two prefab classrooms must be installed in the hameau itself. This decision obviously goes against the instructions regarding a rapid integration of Muslim children through direct contact with European students.”²⁸¹ Of note here is the wording chosen by Cheneu. The logical opposite of the word “Muslim” in this sentence should be “Christian.” Instead Muslim becomes the opposite of European. France, unwilling to classify based on race but equally unwilling to act outside of existing colonial stereotypes, quickly separated the French and “Muslim” children. In the new plan, the older students would be asked to walk 1.4 kilometers to school in a nearby village once they had finished their primary education in the hameau. Similarly, those officials in charge of the education plan for the Bouches-du-Rhône decided it would be

²⁷⁸ Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 131 W 377, Minutes from a meeting at Aix about the Harkis of Joques, April 25, 1963

²⁷⁹ « Il est souhaitable, et même indispensable, en ce qui concerne les hameaux du Logis d’Anne et de la Baume, que soit envisagée également l’attribution de 12 logements préfabriqués à implanter... » Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 131 W 377, Letter from Inspecteur d’Academie d’Aix to the Ministre de l’Education Nationale, September 2, 1963

²⁸⁰ Chantiers forestaires is term used for the hameaux. It means forest construction site, if translated literally.

²⁸¹ Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 131 W 377, Note by Cheneu, the Inspector of the Bouches-du-Rhône of the Chantiers Forestaires, June 24, 1963

unnecessary to expand the schools of Peyrolles to accommodate the Harki children from the hameau. “There is no reason to envisage the implementation of mobile classrooms [in Peyrolles], all the students of the chantier being educated at Logis d’Anne.”²⁸² Rather than integrating the Harkis of Peyrolles into the French school system, the Harki children were transported to Logis d’Anne to be taught alongside their “Muslim” peers. In another hameaux near Fuveau, the children received their education in a meeting room rather than being incorporated into French schools.²⁸³ A low level bureaucrat of Jouques said of Logis d’Anne, “Separated, these rapatriés couldn’t integrate themselves and it seemed too late to realize the integration which the surrounding villages had feared since [the Harkis’] arrival in the region.”²⁸⁴ This bureaucrat, though plainly sympathetic to the Harkis, reveals a key point. The surrounding villages *feared* the integration of the Harkis. In the eyes of the public, the Harkis seemed foreign, unfamiliar, even dangerous. The benevolent plans of the central government had little chance of working if the French public would not accept the Harkis as French. Integrating the Harkis required an effort of education directed towards the French as well, a consideration never undertaken.

Ultimately, school as a mechanism of integration failed. Belkacem Guéroui, the son of a Harki, lived in the neighboring department of the Var. He remembers with emotion the first time someone gave him a book, the first time someone cared enough about his future to tell him he had potential. “I will never forget [the book] because the system put in place for the children of the Harkis was a system that excluded. I essentially wasn’t educated except with the children of my community. I would have liked to mix with other children and I feel cut off from the pleasure of an enriching education.”²⁸⁵ The

²⁸² « Il n’y a plus lieu d’envisager l’implantation de classes mobiles, la totalité des élèves du chantier étant scolarisés au Logis d’Anne. » Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 131 W 377, Minutes from a Meeting of the Sous-Prefet Marodon du Ministre des Rapatriés, Capitaine Cheneau Inspecteur Departemental des Chantiers de forestage and Aymeric, Inspecteur Departemental de Enseignements Elémentaires Primaires, October 9 1963

²⁸³ Ibid

²⁸⁴ « Eloignés, ces rapatriés n’ont pu s’intégrer et il semble trop tard pour réaliser cette intégration que d’ailleurs les villages environnants redoutaient depuis leur arrivée dans la région. » *Les Harkis, Mémoire enfouie* p. 106

²⁸⁵ *Des Vies*, 50

segregated, inadequate schooling of the Harkis destined the population for permanent identification as outsiders in France.

Tellingly, Pieds-Noirs children tend to express disinterest in their parents' past, feeling themselves to be French rather than Pieds-Noirs. In contrast, children and even grandchildren of Harkis tend to feel a dual identity, claimed and yet rejected by both France and Algeria. Though consistently categorized by their religion, many Harki children seem to have adopted the secular values of France. For example, historian Alec Hargreaves points out that survey evidence shows that only four percent of Harki descendants under the age of 26 were strict practicing Muslims and twenty six percent did not identify themselves as Muslim at all.²⁸⁶ However, France consistently tried to identify Harkis and their families as "Muslim." Additionally, the children of Harkis are commonly identified as "Buers," a word used in French media and official wording to describe French citizens of North African descent.²⁸⁷ This group includes as well the children of Algerian immigrant workers, meaning the Harkis and their descendants have ultimately been assigned an Algerian identity despite French citizenship. Today, the children of Harkis largely remain locked in a cycle of poverty. According to historians Jordi and Hamoumou, due to issues of education, children of Harkis living in the ghettos of France have an eighty percent unemployment rate.²⁸⁸

Failure to Integrate

The issue of integration loomed large in official discussion of the Harkis. The French bureaucracy approached the population with a certainty of their difference. They looked different with their dark skin and strange clothing. They sounded different with their Arabic chatter. Sometimes they prayed to a different god. Everything, in the eyes of the French, marked the Harkis as separate, other. The Harkis

²⁸⁶Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France*, 103

²⁸⁷ Richard L. Derderian. *North Africans in Contemporary France: Becoming Visible* (Palgrave Macmillan: London, 2004). 12. In a state where citizenship is paramount, France typically does not accept the existence of sub-groups within France. The Beur group is a notable exception to this. No other second generation group has been assigned to an ethnic group.

²⁸⁸ Jordi, Hamoumou, *Les Harkis, Mémoire Enfouie* 113

were foreign. Thus the programs established to help the Harkis attempted to work at slowly mitigating this difference, but in the end they highlighted it. Speaking hopefully in a report from 1962, the government declared that “Harkis and their sons, when they have found in our country the conditions of a normal life, would be perfectly able to integrate themselves in the national French community.”²⁸⁹ Perhaps this optimistic prediction might have come true had Harkis been given the opportunity to find “the conditions of a normal life” in France. Perhaps they might one day have succeeded in becoming just one piece of a cohesive French society. But normal never existed for the Harkis helped by government programming. Monitored, controlled and sequestered away from the French population, the Harkis lived in decidedly abnormal conditions. Each program established to aid their gradual acclimation to the metropole only distanced them further from the French people. Indeed, the Harkis who seemed to most successfully establish an integrated life in France largely did so through army contacts and private aid, rather than government assistance.²⁹⁰ At every turn, the government reminded Harkis that they had come to France as refugees, not rapatriés. They were Algerian, not French.

Of particular interest are the traits which the bureaucracy identified as “foreign” about the Harkis – language, social norms and religion. In truth, Harkis typically did speak either Arabic or Berber as their first language, like most Algerians. As ex-soldiers however, at least the Harkis themselves, if not their families, knew the basics of the French language. Certainly social norms in Algeria included cultural differences. The Harkis, often poor farmers before joining the army, admittedly had little education and would have needed training to adapt their rural habits to a more urban life in France. Yet the Pieds-Noirs too experienced culture shock in France, distanced from their mixed Algerian culture. Their differences may have been smaller but nonetheless the government reaction to overcome them was immediate and

²⁸⁹ « Les Harkis et leurs fils, lorsqu’ils auront ainsi retrouvé chez nous les conditions d’une existence normale pouvant parfaitement s’intégrer dans la communauté nationale française. » Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, 138 W 55, Note on Harki policy, 1962

²⁹⁰ *Des Vies*, multiple interviews

ultimately successful. What made the Harkis' culture impossible to integrate? Clearly the Harkis faced more dramatic educational and language barriers, but surely not insurmountable ones.

Official records highlighted the religious difference of the Harkis but in fact labeling of the Harkis was not solely based on religion. France proudly declares itself to be colorblind. The nation does not recognize racial difference within its population. Rather one is either French or not French, with citizenship and nationality serving as synonyms. Some scholars posit that this view of nationality and immigration stems from the heritage of the French Revolution, in which the French nation is viewed as being a "finished product" since the French Revolution.²⁹¹ However, avoiding discussion of race did not prevent racialized prejudices from flourishing in France. This proves especially true for Algerians, who carried with them legacies of colonial prejudice when they arrived in France. According to Neil McMaster, colonialism "initiated processes of domination and exclusion and... these became embedded in institutions, ways of thinking, common sense racism and other forms that have continued to be reproduced within contemporary, post-colonial society."²⁹² Harkis may have joined the French during the Algerian War, but French public opinion of the Harkis nonetheless remained heavily influenced by their prejudiced views of Algerians. Maxim Silverman notes that the new racism of the post-colonial era, of which anti-Algerian racism forms the prime case study, results "from the breakdown in the distinction between "there" and "here."²⁹³ Entering the space of the metropole, the colonial migrants' arrival caused confusion of shared space and prompted questions of inclusion and memories of embarrassing past mistakes. French officials in 1962, hurriedly directing the Harkis towards holding camps, betrayed this impulse to differentiate the North Africans, to recreate the "there" and "here" distinction. The Harkis' identity as Muslims certainly played a role. However, in colonial Algeria, "Muslim" was the word

²⁹¹Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, "North African Immigration and the French Political Imaginary" in *Race, Discourse and Power in France* ed. Maxim Silverman (STUFF, 1991), 90

²⁹²Neil McMaster. *Colonial Migrants and Racism: Algerians in France, 1900-62* p. 208

²⁹³Maxim Silverman *Deconstructing the Nation: Immigration, Racism and Citizenship in Modern France*. (Routledge: London, 1992). 111

used to distinguish any Arab or Berber Algerian from European Algerians. Thus, in consistently labeling the Harkis as Muslims, the French recreated colonial divisions in the metropole. Religious difference proved an easy way to make the Harkis, and all other Algerians, an other. In a secular society like France, such an emphasis on religion was unheard of and would have been considered inappropriate with Christian populations.

Though it accepted the Harkis because of their service in the war, France nevertheless failed to truly welcome them. The government did commit itself to providing programs of aid to the Harkis, programs which surely kept many Harkis from destitution in their early years in France. But these programs, generous or insufficient as they may have been, are not the same as the rights and pensions granted to veterans. The French government did not officially recognize the service of the Harkis during the Algerian War until a law in June of 1994.²⁹⁴ Rather than recognizing the Harkis as a group of soldiers, the government classified the Harkis by race and religion, lumping them with existing North African immigrant populations. This also occurred in the eyes of the French public. Mohamed Benane, born during the Algerian War itself, felt the rejection of the French people around him keenly. “The inhabitants of Tavernes didn’t know what a Harki was. 90% of the people didn’t even know what the word “Harki” meant. It’s sad but it’s true. They didn’t know the history. For them, we were Arabs and that was it.”²⁹⁵ Other Harkis and their children tell similar stories of prejudiced interactions with French people. The French public did not understand the unique history of the Harkis and when they saw Harkis, they simply saw Algerian immigrants. In the discourse of both official records and newspapers, the salient commonality between Harkis and other Algerian immigrants was their religion and culture. However, this classification simplifies the issue. Some Harkis were not Muslim and Berber Harkis had a culture distinct from Arab Algerians. Though religion was a key factor in the “otherness” of the Harkis, colonial constructions of race and inferiority also played a role.

²⁹⁴ Moumen « Une Brève Histoire des Harkis »

²⁹⁵ *Des Vies*, 22

Ultimately, the Harkis' first years in France evidenced good intentions failing to come to fruition. A stark difference existed between the stated intentions of the French national government and the local implementation. National policy stipulated plans which would, ideally, have created eventual integration for the Harkis. Even ultimately damaging programs like the camps or the hameaux had been created with the intention to slowly ease the Harkis into life in France. However, implementation of optimistic goals stalled because of the resistance of local populations. Examples of this shine through, for example, in the reluctance of local populations to accept hameaux or allow Harkis children to join their schools. In part these problems proved insurmountable because the local bureaucrats did not understand how to address the racism and prejudice present within French society, and perhaps within themselves. Unable to discuss the disadvantaged position of the Harkis in terms of lingering colonial discrimination, the officials accepted half-measures and compromises which did little to solve the root problem.

Living in an unfamiliar settings and under constant surveillance, the Harkis did not, and perhaps could not, advocate for better conditions. Especially for Harki women, lacking French language abilities left them unable to promote their rights. It was not until the children of the Harkis came of age in the late 1970s that demand for reform in treatment of the Harkis began to arise. The children's movement highlighted the appalling conditions of the programs and the way their parents had been treated, forcing the French government to finally admit the error of its policies.²⁹⁶ No record of indemnities or monetary aid to the Harkis appears in the record before the 1980s because in fact they received none until that period. Today French government programs work to bring the marginalized Harki population out of poverty. Effectively these efforts attempt, with limited success, to counteract the debilitating programs of the 1960s. Children of Harkis do not always self-identify as Harkis, but they are typically identified as "foreigners" by the French public, who associate them with other Algerian immigrants in the press and

²⁹⁶Stora, *La Gangrène et l'Oubli*, 263

quotidian conversations. After more than 50 years in France, the children of the Harkis, despite being French citizens, remain an “other” in the only home they have ever known.

Conclusion

For both the Harkis and Pieds-Noirs, accounts of departure from Algeria evoke pain and loss. Exiled from the land they had called home, all suffered a terrible deprivation upon arrival in France. *Patrie* France might have been, but homeland it certainly was not. Yet if the two stories begin with a common pain, a common point of origin, the fate of the Harkis and the Pieds-Noirs had little in common after arrival in the metropole. Though both groups came to France as the unintended consequence of a military failure, at no point were they equal. At no point had Algerians and Frenchmen, or perhaps more accurately Europeans, been treated alike in *l'Algérie Française*. De Gaulle scoffed in 1959, "You cannot possibly consider that one day an Arab, a Muslim, could be the equal of a Frenchman?"²⁹⁷ To the French president, it was unthinkable that the colonized Algerians, a group which included the Harkis, could ever be equal to the French. Notably his refusal of parity ties to the race (Arab) and religion (Muslim) of this colonial group. Harkis and Pieds-Noirs lived separate experiences of reception and integration in France because of the enduring prejudices of the colonial regime. The remarkable success in integrating the Pieds-Noirs and the equally marked failure to integrate the Harkis owed much to France's inability, especially at a local level, to overlook existing colonial norms and stereotypes.

Ultimately, a comparison of the two populations reveals decidedly different themes. The Pieds-Noirs did not have a simple transition into life in France. Confusion and disorder reigned in their first moments in the metropole and the often embittered population felt that France had abandoned them. Yet despite these initial challenges, the French government refused to let the Pieds-Noirs become insular. Instead, local government sprang into action, highlighting the French identity of the Pieds-Noirs and assuring their stability with immediate programs of housing, employment and financial aid. The Pied-Noir story is one of inclusion, with a constructed French identity bestowed upon the more or less willing Pieds-Noirs. In contrast, the Harkis represent a failure of the French government. Their exit from

²⁹⁷Shepard, *Invention of Decolonization*, 75

Algeria was, if anything, more perilous and like the Pieds-Noirs, they relied on government aid to help stabilize their arrival in France. Yet rather than immersing the Harkis within French society, national directives, influenced by colonial views of Algerians as “uncivilized,” sent Harkis to holding camps. Instead of inclusion, the Harkis experienced years of isolation and were constructed as a foreign population, in opposition to the “French” Pieds-Noirs. This understanding of their identities set the two populations on vastly different paths of integration in France.

The Harkis had a profound lack of choice in their arrival, a striking difference from the Pieds-Noirs experience. The latter could pick when they left Algeria, and once in France they had a choice in where they wished to go. The programs set up for their benefit offered concentrated aid in certain areas, at least initially, but they could establish themselves anywhere in France and still receive governmental aid. The government created programs for their housing, aid and employment, but ultimately the Pieds-Noirs had to decide when and if to apply for them. In contrast, authority figures directed each step of the Harkis’ arrival in France. The army decided when they could leave Algeria. When the Harkis entered France, most found themselves directed towards camps. Though these camps provided basic shelter and food, the Harkis had little choice in if they went. Harkis often had limited education and most could not read French.²⁹⁸ Unaware of the programs available to them and unable to inform themselves, the Harkis lacked agency and had to accept the decisions of the officers and officials put in charge of them. This want of autonomy kept them sequestered within the limitations of camps, hammeaux, and cités long after the Pieds-Noirs had struck out on their own in metropolitan life.

In addition to the Harkis’ lack of control, solutions to the “problem” of the Harkis created more isolation than was deemed appropriate for the Pieds-Noirs. Even in the areas where Pieds-Noirs received the most privileged housing allocations, no more than 50% of any given building could be reserved for

²⁹⁸Indeed Jean Vittori claims that in Algeria, 94% of Muslim Algerian men and 98% of Muslim Algerian women were illiterate in French. Jean-Pierre Vittori. *Nous Les appelés d’Algérie* (Paris : Stock, 1977).

the rapatriés.²⁹⁹ This meant that even at the height of the housing programs, Pied-Noir families lived in close contact with their fellow French citizens. This mixing occurred with equal regularity in schools for the Pied-Noir children. Despite some geographic clumping of Pied-Noir families, they hardly ever constituted a majority within French school districts and Pied-Noir children thus received their education alongside their mainland French peers. All these trends of forced inclusion are reversed in the treatment of the Harkis. In an attempt to shelter the Harkis from the shock of life in France perhaps, the French government designed aid programs which would ease the Harkis into contact with the French public. The rural camps offered but fleeting glimpses of the outside world to their inhabitants. The hameaux too isolated the Harkis, cutting them off from French villages. Urban housing, like Tilleuls, housed exclusively Harkis, instead of merely privileging their applications. The politics of inclusion and exclusion at play in these policies reflect the predominant colonial system of Algeria. “Muslim Algerians,” the category most often used to describe the Harkis, were constructed in colonial society as uncivilized and unprepared for European life.³⁰⁰ Despite the factors marking the Harkis as French, including in many cases French citizenship, they ultimately remained defined, grouped, and isolated by their relation to the colonial world.

The time line of aid also highlights the differential treatment of the two populations. Pieds-Noirs received immediate aid, from the moment of their arrival in the Bouches-du-Rhône. Housing programs, temporary and permanent, swung into action the same summer as they stepped off the boats and planes. Employment programs had a staggering success rate, with operations largely completed by the end of 1963. Within less than 2 years, the programs had supported and then gently liberated the Pieds-Noirs, helping them find their footing in the foreign city and then prompting them to find independence. Harkis arrived at the same time but while Pieds-Noirs moved into HLMs, they boarded trucks for the

²⁹⁹Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, 12 0 1791, Circulaire no. 62-55 from Ministre des Finances, Ministre de Construction and Secretray of State of Rapatriés, September 1962

³⁰⁰Lorcin *Imperial Identities* 186

harrowing experience of the camps, many of which stayed operational well into the 1970s. For those who left the camps, for Tilleuls or the hameaux, programs only became available around 1965. The hameaux existed until the early 90s and Harki specific HLMs continue to be inhabited mostly by Harki families. Against the stated intentions of the government, the Harkis often remained for decades within these “temporary” systems. Pieds-Noirs programs immediately supported their integration, allowing the Pieds-Noirs to find their own place in France relatively quickly. Kept in “temporary” programs for years on end, the Harkis entered government-directed programs of employment and housing later and, perhaps as a result, tended to stay much longer, cut off from mainstream life in France.

Embedded in these differences is a subtler, more sinister difference of classification. The Pieds-Noirs unquestionably got access to the title of rapatrié - French citizens brought home from a hostile land. Their actual national origins mattered not all; Pieds-Noirs were French. In contrast, the Harkis could be clustered under a dizzying variety of names. Sometimes, reports on « rapatriés » included information regarding the Harkis, though other documents make it clear that Harkis could not claim rapatrié status. Some primary sources call the Harkis refugees. However, perhaps most commonly documents refer to Harkis as *Français Musulmans* or a similar appellation tied to the assumed religion of the Harkis. As the son of one Harki points out, this religious affiliation and its unjust implications persist even today. “First of all, most former harkis and their children don’t practice Islam. And even if they are practicing, why advertise the religion of certain citizens? Does one speak of French Catholics or French Jews? As for origin, I find that even more shocking. What would people say if one only spoke of Platini in adding “French of Italian origin?” And why not speak of French of Alsacien origin or Savoyard origin because Alsace and Savoie were only provinces of France after Algeria?”³⁰¹ As this speaker points out, the Harkis were – a remained - grouped according to their religion and “origin,” something which is not done for European populations. For example, the children of Pieds-Noirs are not typically referred to as “French

³⁰¹Interview excerpt in Jordi & Hamoumou, *Les Harkis: Une Mémoire Enfouie*, p. 18.

of Algerian origin.” They are equally unlikely to be referred to by any sort of religious categorization. Rather the Pied-Noir identification seems to be voluntary, claimed through participation in groups, clubs or political societies. Conversely, as historian Yvan Gastaut points out, the French public judges the Harkis alongside other “immigrants,” based on decidedly prejudiced grounds. “The immigrant was determined in relation to their ancestors and the color of their skin, the physical criteria creating an identity for those who do not correspond to the presumed norm of a Frenchmen or a European.”³⁰² The children and even grandchildren of Harkis carry with them their Algerian heritage, constantly labeled and presented with terms tied to a colonial past they did not necessarily live through.

The intentions of the government in its reception of these two groups remain unclear. What drove these men and women, whose fleeting interactions with the Harkis and Pieds-Noirs so irrevocably changed the course of their lives? Intentions are a notoriously complicated subject for the historian. One cannot know exactly what policymakers thought when they decided that the hameaux children did not, after all, need to go to school with other French children. The unofficial reasons for preferring the settlement of the Pieds-Noirs in Marseille over that of the Harkis cannot be definitively stated. The historian can see only what has been left in the record. Yet if intentions are unknowable, one can at least glimpse priorities. The Pieds-Noirs were perceived and constructed by the rules of colonial life as French, and thus their repatriation was carried out with the assumption that the population needed only time and subsidies to adapt to French life. They were, after all, already French. Harkis, in contrast, were saddled with the colonial baggage of the subaltern. They represented the uncivilized - rural, unskilled polygamists with an unhealthy obsession with their religion.³⁰³ Harkis, thus construed in the tradition of colonial Algeria, could not be treated by French bureaucrats as ready for free interaction with the French. The gradual projects at integration operated under the discriminatory assumption that the

³⁰² « L’immigre était déterminé en fonction de ses ascendants et de sa couleur de peau, le critère physique créant une identité pour ceux qui ne correspondaient pas à la normalité présumé d’un Français ou d’un Européen. » Yvan Gastaut, *L’Immigration et l’opinion en France sous la Ve République*, 68

³⁰³ Lorcin *Imperial Identities* 186, 241-254.

Harkis were incapable of normal life in France and needed to be civilized and taught before they could be unleashed upon France and French citizens. Though the intentions of the French government, especially at the national level, appear to be good, it created two different expectations for the populations. They wanted both to integrate into French society but had varying assumptions about their ability to do so. Thus, while Pieds-Noirs blended into French society, the perhaps well-intentioned programs of the French government treated the Harkis as fundamentally unready for life in France.

Today, France still struggles with issues evident in the comparative story of the Harkis and the Pieds-Noirs. The unacknowledged undertones of prejudice, against a religion, against a colonial group, against a race, remain present in France today. Careful to cling to a race-neutral discourse, Right Wing parties in France spew hatred against Islam and immigrants, keywords which in the parlance of modern France both refer to Algerians.³⁰⁴ France continues in its reluctance to acknowledge the ability of non-European groups to be French. As in the experience of the Pieds-Noirs and the Harkis nearly half a century ago, European immigrants easily integrate into France while North African immigrants are labeled as “foreigners” even after attaining citizenship. This prejudice damaged the Harkis, creating lasting inequality for them and their children. Unless France can acknowledge the hidden racism and discrimination inherent in its past colonial ventures and current society, the tragedy of the Harkis can be repeated with contemporary immigrant groups. Only by coming to terms with the taboo of Algeria and its aftermath can France find its identity in a post-colonial world in which global migration continues at ever increasing rates.

³⁰⁴Yvan Gastaut, *L'Immigration et l'opinion en France sous la Ve République*, 71

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