THE FRENCH PIEDS NOIRS OF ALGERIA:
LIMINALITY AND HYBRIDITY IN A POST-COLONIAL CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

Settler Colonialism and Post-Colonialism commonly depict the (post)colonial world as dichotomic, opposing 'the colonizer' to 'the colonized.' The Algerian-born French settlers of former French Algeria (1830-1962), also known as 'French of Algeria' or 'pieds noirs,' have suffered from such a simplistic understanding, being considered as direct perpetrators of colonialism. This thesis is devoted to challenging such assumptions, by demonstrating that (post)colonial subjects like the pieds noirs have an ambivalent positionality that cannot be fully understood through the lens of fixed political categories. Instead, it draws on the metaphorical concepts of rite of passage, liminality, hybridity, and 'Third Space of Enunciation' that have been respectively developed by anthropologists Arnold Van Gennep and Victor Turner, and post-colonial scholar Homi K. Bhabha, to show that (post)colonial actors are located in an in-between space. This research also relies on the data collected through seven semi-structured key informant interviews conducted between June 2021 and August 2021. Engaging with the feeling of unbelonging that was ubiquitous in the interviews, this thesis demonstrates that the pieds noirs have undertaken a rite of passage, which led them to enter a long-term liminal space, in which they were neither Algerian nor fully French. This research ultimately enriches the existing literature on (post)colonialism and delves into the different responses post-colonial subjects like the pieds noirs have had towards their hybrid identity.

Key words: settler colonialism, post-colonialism, in-betweenness, liminality, hybridity, rite of passage, Third Space, Algerian War, French of Algeria, pieds noirs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

"I was not ashamed of being pied noir, but I would say that I somehow had an inherent feeling of guilt. I was worried that people would think that I am a colonizer."

– Participant 4

"My country is Algeria. I am French first, but my homeland is Algeria."

– Participant 7

Mainstream International Relations often unconsciously makes one see the world as made of antithetical categories. This applies also to (post)colonial studies, which often incite us to perceive the world as a dichotomy between 'the colonizer' and 'the colonized.'[1] However, such a dualistic approach can come across as quite erroneous. Building on a quite pressing topic, the Algerian War (1954-1962) and its aftermath, I provide a multi-layered understanding of (post)settler colonialism, by investigating a category of individuals that cannot fall into a simplistic distinction between 'perpetrator' and 'victim' of colonialism.[2] My research focuses on the Algerian-born French people who used to live in so-called 'French Algeria' until its independence in 1962, and who were consequently forcibly repatriated to metropolitan France.

The French of Algeria were raised in families of settlers who arrived in Algeria between 1830 and 1950. Algeria had de facto separated from the Ottoman rule in 1713 but was still officially part of the Ottoman Empire until 1830.[3] Despite the far-off Ottoman presence, Algeria was perceived by the French and other European colonial powers like Italy, Malta (then

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[1] Patrick Wolfe, "Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (2006): 402.

[2] Claire Eldridge, "Blurring the boundaries between perpetrators and victims: Pied-noir memories and the *harki* community," *Memory Studies* 3, no. 2 (2010): 123.

[3] Ali Balci, "Algeria in declining ottoman hierarchy: Why Algiers remained loyal to the falling patron," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 1, no. 1 (2020): 1-15.

under British rule) and Spain as "terra nullius."[4] As a growing colonial power, France was interested in Algeria due to its strategic position for trading and the fertility of its land. French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte had consequently sent diplomats and engineers to the Algerian territory prior starting in 1808 to determine how "to carry out such an operation successfully."[5] A process of "complete occupation" ensued, leading to many Europeans moving to Algeria with the intent to settle there.[6]

After a couple of years, Algeria was officially proclaimed a French colony and department in 1848 and was renamed 'French Algeria.'[7] Led by a military jurisdiction which represented the French state, French Algeria was characterized by a strong hierarchical system, in which the European population and the ethnic Algerians were segregated both spatially and institutionally.[8] The Algerian land was confiscated by the French state, and the Algerian community was therefore sidelined from any access to political life.

After years of exploitation and land appropriation, the Algerian War of Independence broke out in 1954, with the so-called Toussaint Rouge (Red All Saints' Day).[9] This first series of anti-French attacks resulted in the rise of violence between the anti-colonial Front de Libération Nationale (National Liberation Front, known as FLN) and the French regime, which was later backed by the Organisation Armée Secrète (Secret Armed Organization, shortened to

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[4] "Terra nullius" is a Latin phrase that means "no man's land." This concept has been used by colonial powers to justify colonization of foreign territories. It denies the sovereignty of indigenous people and considers a territory as being inhabited to legitimize colonization. The French state has used such an argument to get control over Algeria.

[5] Clifford Edmund Bosworth, *Historic Cities of the Islamic World,* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 24.

[6] Hosni Kitouni and William Gallois, "Naming the Suffering of Victims in the French Conquest of Algeria," *Rethinking History* 22, no. 2 (2018): 157.

[7] Eric Savarese, "After the Algerian War: Reconstructing Identity Among the *Pieds-Noirs,*" *International Social Science Journal* 58, no. 189 (2006): 459.

[8] Fiona Barclay, Charlotte Ann Chopin, and Martin Evans, "Introduction: Settler Colonialism and French Algeria," *Settler Colonial Studies* 8, no. 2 (2018): 118.

[9] The Toussaint Rouge refers to the series of attacks against the French settlers that occurred on 1 November 1954 (All Saints' Day for Catholics). For its first major action, the FLN organized about 70 attacks all over Algeria. The Toussaint Rouge is said to be the starting point of the Algerian War.

OAS).[10] The conflict resulted in many casualties on both sides.[11] The 1962 Évian Accords led to a ceasefire and a slow downscaling of violence, which ultimately led to Algeria's declaration of independence in July 1962. Due to the rise of anti-French sentiment across Algeria, a large-scale exodus to mainland France took place in the summer of 1962. The process was quite complex as over 800,000 French settlers left Algeria.[12] From being more or less conscious perpetrators of colonialism, they therefore arguably became *collateral* victims of it.[13]

Once in mainland France, the French of Algeria were renamed 'pieds noirs' ('black feet') by the metropolitan society, the origin of which is debatable as different speculations about the origin have been put forth.[14] It is noteworthy that the term 'pied noir' was only developed after the French of Algeria's forced repatriation, as an attempt to differentiate them from the metropolitan French.[15] In order to maintain historical accuracy, I therefore refer to the French of Algeria as 'French settlers' when talking about the pre-1962 times, and only use the term 'pieds noirs' when talking about the post-exodus years. In fact, not only were the

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[10] The FLN was Algeria's illustrious nationalist organization. It was created in 1954, alongside the National Liberation Army. The FLN relied on protests and coercive methods such as abductions and bombings to demand Algeria's independence. Independentists had three major targets: the ordinary French settlers, the French army, and the ethnic Algerians who were favorable to the French colonial state. Inversely, the OAS was created in 1961 by French settlers who were opposed to Algeria's independence. The OAS members dubbed themselves 'counter-terrorists,' although most of their actions consisted of bombings, targeted killings, torture, and various attacks against the Algerian community and the French of Algeria in favor of the independence.

[11] The horrors committed during the Algerian War have only been recently partially unveiled by the French state, mostly under President Emmanuel Macron's first mandate (2017-2022). For further information, refer to French historian Benjamin Stora's 2021 report on the colonization of Algeria and the Algerian War.

[12] Barclay, Chopin, and Evans, "Settler Colonialism and French Algeria," 124.

[13] Amy L. Hubbell, "The Wounds of Algeria in Pied-Noir Autobiography," *Dalhousie French Studies* 81, no. 1 (2007): 67.

[14] All white settlers born in North Africa can be called 'pieds noirs.' However, due to the uniqueness of the Algerian case, the term most commonly refers to the French settlers born and raised in former French Algeria, who were then repatriated to metropolitan France after the end of the Algerian War. The exact origin of the term has yet never been precisely determined. While some sources argue that it referred to the French sailors' feet, which were blackened by the dust of ships, others believe that 'black feet' alluded to the black boots of the settlers. My interviewees themselves were uncertain about its meaning, although they all agreed that it irrefutably carried a pejorative connotation. The potential meanings of the term are more extensively discussed in Chapter 3.

[15] Jean-Jacques Jordi, "Les pieds-noirs: constructions identitaires et réinvention des origines," *Hommes et Migrations* 1236, no. 1 (2002): 14.

repatriates violently uprooted, but their background also clashed with metropolitan French society, which renamed them as such to exclude them.

It is nowadays mistakenly assumed that the pieds noirs are a homogenous group composed of individuals sharing the same past, traumas and therefore the same opinion about the Algerian War and its outcomes.[16] This spurious assumption fuels misconceptions about the French of Algeria, and provides a wrong understanding of the power hierarchies under and after the colonial regime. In reality, two streams of pieds noirs have emerged. On the one hand, some pieds noirs started embracing a so-called "nostalgérique" discourse.[17] These pieds noirs had a very hard time reconstructing their life after having been uprooted, and never understood Algeria's demand for independence. This stream considers that the French colonial regime brought more benefits than its ending, as modern-day Algeria is still very much characterized by political instability. This approach is said to prevail in modern France, and has been highly politicized by the far-right.[18]

On the other hand, a minority encouraged a more progressive discourse, in which the French colonial regime's wrongdoings are acknowledged.[19] Although this branch of pieds noirs also deeply suffered from the Algerian War, their main objective is to move forward and create a more accurate narrative about French settler colonialism, in order to ultimately re-establish cordial relations with Algeria. The organization I worked with, the Association Nationale des

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[16] Sylvie Thénault, "France-Algérie pour un traitement commun du passé de la guerre d'indépendance," *Vingtième Siècle: Revue d'histoire (Presse de Sciences Po)* 1, no. 85 (2005): 121.

[17] Hubbell, "The Wounds of Algeria," 59.

'Nostalgérique' comes from the combination of 'Nostalgia' and 'Algeria,' and is phrased here as an adjective.

[18] Christopher Flood, and Hugo Frey, "Questions of Decolonization and Post-Colonialism in the Ideology of the French Extreme Right," *European Studies* 28, no. 1 (1998): 69-88; John Veugelers, Gabriel Menard, and Pierre Permingeat, "Colonial past, voluntary association and far-right voting in France," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38, no. 5 (2015): 786.

[19] Jordi, "Constructions identitaires et réinvention des origines," 22.

Pieds Noirs Progressistes et leurs Amis (National Association of the Progressive Pieds Noirs and their Friends, shortened to ANPNPA) embraces this approach.[20]

My research primarily aims at determining how this minority of pieds noirs narrate their lived experiences in relation to the Algerian War and its aftermath. I interviewed seven pieds noirs from the ANPNPA between June 2021 and August 2021. Through these semi-structured interviews, I tried to better make sense of their life stories, both before and after their repatriation. All expressed a feeling of *mal-être*, as they have always been uncertain regarding their positionality, being neither Algerian nor fully French. I therefore tried to find a relevant framework to investigate this ambivalence.

My primary objective through this research is therefore to dig into the feeling of unbelonging that was ubiquitous in my interview findings.[21] Drawing on the metaphorical concepts of rite of passage, liminality, and hybridity that have been developed by anthropologists Arnold Van Gennep and Victor Turner, and post-colonial scholar Homi K. Bhabha, I show that the lived experiences of the interviewed pieds noirs highlight the existence of a feeling of in-betweenness, as they could no longer identify with Algeria but did not fully connect with the French society either.[22] I demonstrate that the use of these concepts, once precisely delineated, is relevant to better fathom post-colonial subjects like the pieds noirs.

However, I also want to acknowledge that those are only frameworks of interpretation that have been unconsciously influenced by my own positionality. In fact, although I am a French national, I am an outsider to the pied noir experience; and my thinking is partially the product of the French education system, in which France's colonial past is mostly absent. In an

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[20] The ANPNPA's website is accessible here: http://www.anpnpa.org/. Last accessed on 15/04/2022.

[21] The term 'liminality' comes from the Latin word 'limen' and has been translated into 'threshold.' Although it was first used in psychology, Arnold Van Gennep popularized the term in 1909. It now commonly refers to a transitory stage or space. It is a pivotal concept in anthropology and post-colonial theory, as it highlights the ambiguity and in-betweenness that characterize cultural transformation.

[22] Arup Ratan Chakraborty, "Liminality in Post-Colonial Theory: A Journey from Arnold Van Gennep to Homi K. Bhabha," *Anudhyan: An International Journal of Social Sciences (AIJSS)* 1, no. 1 (2016): 145-153.

attempt to fill this gap of knowledge, I selected the above concepts as they appeared to me as thought-provoking understandings of (post)colonialism.

I proceed in three stages. First, I provide some background information about this research's theoretical framework and methodology. I then move on to the analytic parts. This section is split into two, to show how the French of Algeria's repatriation to France in 1962 marked the beginning of their hybridity. I first focus on the decolonization process and show that the Algerian War marked a violent rupture, which could be interpreted as a rite of passage. I then move on to the post-repatriation stage and compare how social structures and the pieds noirs' positionality were redefined because of Algeria's independence. I ultimately investigate how the pieds noirs have made sense of their in-betweenness since they arrived in metropolitan France.

CHAPTER 1: THE AMBIVALENCE OF (POST)COLONIAL SUBJECTS

The Algerian War and its aftermath have been studied from several angles, by various historians, sociologists, and international relations scholars. For this research, I built upon two main theoretical frameworks. I first synthesize the existing literature on settler colonialism, before delving into the scholarship on rites of passage, liminality, and hybridity. I then discuss the research methods I relied on for this research.

1.1. Settler Colonialism Studies

To begin with, I believe it is important to understand the context in which the pieds noirs have evolved to fully make sense of their status in the (post)colonial context. Settler Colonial Studies (SCS) provides a relevant theoretical framework, as it highlights the omnipresence and paramountcy of power hierarchies within a colonial regime. SCS first highlights the centrality of the territory in the colonization process. Patrick Wolfe, whose work has been seminal in the discipline, wrote that "the primary motive for elimination is not race (or religion, ethnicity, grade of civilization, etc.) but access to territory."[23] According to him, the mainstream assumption at the time that the indigenous territory is inherently unsovereign ("terra nullius") justified the colonization process.[24] The French state justified the colonization of Algeria in such terms, arguing that it discovered the Algerian land.[25]

[23] Wolfe, "Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native," 388.
[24] Ibid, 391.
[25] Barclay, Chopin, and Evans, "Settler Colonialism and French Algeria," 119-120.

Settler colonialism is also said to rely on two main logics. Wolfe argued that settler colonialism is primarily about eliminating the native. As he writes, "settler colonialism destroys to replace."[26] Sai Englert, who provided a thought-provoking critique of the Wolfean approach, went further and argued that settler colonialism also relies on a logic of dispossession.[27] Taking a Marxist approach and relying on Frantz Fanon's argument that colonialism in Algeria is about the exploitation of indigenous labor,[28] Englert demonstrated that colonial expansion is rooted in socio-economic inequalities and racial violence, which are the products of capitalism.[29]

The omnipresence of inequalities both *between* and *within* social groups was touched upon by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu during his ethnographic fieldwork in Algeria (1958-1961). Bourdieu observed that French Algeria was composed of a multiplicity of social groups depending on one's socio-economic citizenship, socio-economic background, ethnicity, or religion.[30] The issue of citizenship was especially pressing, as it was a pivotal factor in determining one's status. Only the colonists were considered French, while ethnic Algerians were perceived as second-class citizens.[31] In addition, both groups consisted of subcategories. The 'settler group' comprised a wide range of settlers. For instance, the wealthiest ones used to live in coastal cities, while some of the more modest households were settled in the rural areas. The 'native group' was composed of the Arabo-Berber population and the Jewish

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[26] Wolfe, "Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native," 388.

[27] Sai Englert, "Settlers, Workers, and the Logic of Accumulation by Dispossession," *Antipode* 52, no. 6 (2020): 1647.

[28] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (R. Philocox, Trans.), (New York: Grove, 1963).

[29] Englert, "The Logic of Accumulation by Dispossession," 1656.

[30] Pierre Bourdieu, *Sociologie de l'Algérie,* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France (PUF), 2012 - first edited in 1961).

[31] Algerians were never recognized as French citizens although they did fight along French troops during both world wars. This lack of recognition fueled the pre-existing anti-French sentiment and led to the escalation of political violence after World War II. The Algerians got some privileges due to their ambiguous status after the Évian Accords.

community.[32] This diversity will be further developed in Chapter 2, as it contributed to the feeling of in-betweenness experienced by the French settlers when they left Algeria.

The Wolfean approach was also fervently criticized for overlooking the role of resistance movements in challenging settler colonialism. One of the core components of settler colonialism is indeed to assume that colonialism is "an enduring structure of oppression."[33] However, this has not always been successful. As Mahmood Mamdani wrote, "[f]or students of settler colonialism in the modern era, Africa and America represent two polar opposites. Africa is the continent where settler colonialism has been defeated; America is where settler colonialism triumphed."[34] Algeria is therefore considered as an unprecedented case due to its endpoint. The French colonial rule indeed eventually failed to embrace the logics of appropriation and the logics of elimination, leading to the collapse of the colonial regime in Algeria, and the settlers' expulsion. The pieds noirs are therefore unique post-colonial subjects, as they transitioned from being actors of the colonial rule, either willingly or unconsciously, to being sudden collateral victims after it fell apart.

The Wolfean approach is also quite limited as it simplistically depicts settler colonialism as being dualistic, opposing the colonial regime to the natives. Englert warned against the use of fixed political categories, and instead encouraged SCS scholars to consider colonial power structures as being constantly evolving and multi-layered, as demonstrated with the pied noir example.[35] Some scholars therefore tried to develop frameworks that better take into consideration these fluctuations. For example, Lorenzo Veracini argued that settler colonialism is characterized by a "triangular system of relationships," which includes the settling power, the colonized culture, and multiple subgroups in both categories.[36] Going even

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[32] Barclay, Chopin, and Evans, "Settler Colonialism and French Algeria," 117; 126.
[33] Ibid, 115.
[34] Mahmood Mamdani, "Settler colonialism: Then and now," *Critical Inquiry* 41, no. 3 (2015): 596.
[35] Englert, "The Logic of Accumulation by Dispossession," 1650.
[36] Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 16.

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further, Caroline Elkins and Susan Pedersen claimed that there are four main social groups interacting under settler colonialism: (1) the metropole, (2) the local government, (3) the settler community, and (4) the native population.[37]

Although I agree with Englert that trying to categorize (post)colonial subjects can be counterproductive, I do think that understanding where the French of Algeria were located helps to understand their gradual transition towards hybridity. I believe that Elkins and Pedersen's approach is the most suitable to the pied noir experience, as it indirectly touches upon the liminality of the pieds noirs. While they used to belong to the second and third entity, they then ended up transitioning both physically and culturally to the 'metropole' category.

1.2. Liminality and Rites of Passage

This ambiguity has been addressed in the existing literature on liminality and hybridity. French ethnologist Arnold Van Gennep first developed this body of scholarship with his groundbreaking concept of "rite of passage."[38] According to him, the main transitional stages of one's life should be deconstructed in three phases: (1) the "rites of separation," which consists of leaving the 'familiar'; (2) the "rites of transformation," during which one is isolated and located in a liminal space, and starts an individual journey through which their identity is redefined; and (3) the "rites of incorporation" (also known as "reintegration"), in which one is incorporated into their new group or status.[39] In the case of the pieds noirs, for instance, the exodus to mainland France marked a strong separation from their previous lives in Algeria.

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[37] Caroline Elkins, and Susan Pederson, *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century,* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005): 3-4.

[38] Arnold Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960).

[39] Ibid, xviii.

The adjustment period in metropolitan France stood for the transformation phase. They then were more or less accepted into the metropolitan French society.

British cultural anthropologist Victor Turner supplemented Van Gennep's conceptualization, and focused on the transitional stage. Turner was more specifically interested in the concept of liminality.[40] As he showed, the phase of transition can have a variable length, and is often characterized by a strong feeling of disorientation and "outsiderhood."[41] Echoing very well with the pied noir experience, Van Gennep compared liminality to "the territorial no man's land between two countries."[42] Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin highlighted that it is a continuous process, defining liminality as "the transcultural space in which strategies for personal or communal selfhood may be elaborated, a region in which there is a continual process of movement and interchange between different states."[43]

Furthermore, Turner highlighted the "anti-structure" of such settings, in which usual social norms are blurred, and individuals share common lived experiences.[44] Turner dubbed "communitas" this absence of social structure and this "social interrelatedness."[45] Communitas is consequently an expected outcome of liminality. Such terminology nicely describes the pied noir experience: all the French Algerians, although they were divided based on their social class and geographical location until 1962, were able to bond on another level after their arrival

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[40] Victor Turner, "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal period in *Rites de Passage*" (Chapter 4), in: *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual,* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967).

[41] Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1974), 232.

[42] Nagendra Bhandari, "Negotiating Cultural Identities in Diaspora: A Conceptual Review of Third Space," *Curriculum Development Journal* 42, no. 1 (2020): 79.

[43] Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts,* (London: Routledge, 2013): 130.

[44] Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors,* 273-274.

[45] Ibid, 231.

in France due to their trauma. They became part of a liminal community they were unaware of before due to their intersecting lived experiences.

1.3. Hybridity, In-Betweenness, and the Beyond

The fact that some pieds noirs did succeed better than others to transition out of their liminality connects with the existing scholarship on binarity and hybridity. Critical theorist Homi K. Bhabha's seminal work *The Location of Culture* can be taken as a point of reference to understand these concepts.[46] Inspired by Jacques Derrida's *deconstruction* approach,[47] Bhabha was fervently opposed to the binarization of the post-colonial world. His main objective was therefore to "deconstruct the bipolar concept of cultural identities and give birth to a new form of identities in the hybrid space of cultural interaction."[48] Intersecting with the argument made by Sai Englert about settler colonial subjects,[49] Bhabha's main contribution was to show that social groups in the post-colonial world cannot be perceived as fixed, as "cultures are never unitary in themselves, not simply dualistic in the relation of Self to Other."[50] Both therefore argued that the (post)colonial world is perpetually evolving.

Drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin's work on linguistic hybridization and its politized connotations,[51] Bhabha was in fact only interested in social relations in post-colonial settings. His main contribution was to develop the concept of "Third Space of Enunciation," which refers to the liminal space between the colonized and the colonizer to which some post-colonial

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[46] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, (London: Routledge, 1994).

[47] Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (G. C. Spivak, Trans.), (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1976).

[48] Bhandari, "Negotiating Cultural Identities in Diaspora," 78.

[49] Englert, "The Logic of Accumulation by Dispossession," 1650.

[50] Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 35-36.

[51] Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press Slavic Series, 1982).

subjects belong.[52] These subjects' cultural identity is characterized by ambivalence and in-betweenness, and hybridity therefore refers to the process they undertake to redefine their positionality between two contrasting cultures.[53] As Eleanor Byrne wrote, the Third Space "is not simply one thing or the other, nor both at the same time, but a kind of negotiation between both positions."[54] The concept therefore carries a strong connotation of fluidity. In relation to the literature on rites of passage, Bhabha's Third Space can therefore be perceived as an exemplification of Turner's liminal space, as post-colonial subjects temporarily no longer belong to any social group and interiorize new social norms to redefine their identity.[55]

Interestingly, Bhabha used the metaphor of home to exemplify his point. He was inspired by Sigmund Freud's concept of the "unhomely" ("das Unheimliche").[56] This Freudian term carries a double meaning. It first refers to the "Heimat" ("home," "motherland"), and the lack of belonging that is carried by the prefix "Un." The term also means "scary," which could be seen as an outcome of rootlessness.[57] Although Freud's work is slightly out-of-scope with regards to my research, and therefore only superficially reviewed here, I do believe that the concept of "unhomeliness" illustrates very well the pieds noirs' experience. Their new life did feel like a "foreign land."[58] All their points of reference were challenged once in France, leading to this uncanny feeling Freud described.[59]

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[52] Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 37.

[53] Chakraborty, "Liminality in Post-Colonial Theory," 149.

[54] Eleanor Byrne, *Homi K. Bhabha*, (New York: Palgrave, 2009), 42.

[55] Bhandari, "Negotiating Cultural Identities in Diaspora," 81.

[56] Sigmund Freud, *Das Unheimliche,* (Ditzingen, Germany: Reclams Universal-Bibliothek, 2020, first published in 1919).

[57] Susanne Müller, "L'Unheimlich à l'œuvre: passages de l'intime au public et du familier à l'étrange dans l'art contemporain," In: *L'intime, le privé, le public dans l'art contemporain* edited by Anäis Lelièvre and Éliane Chiron, (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2012), 111-120.

[58] Chakraborty, "Liminality in Post-Colonial Theory," 151.

[59] Freud, *Das Unheimliche.*

Bhabha mostly drew from this concept to show that such disorientation related to home is a necessary feature of the post-colonial condition.[60] Since post-colonial subjects must adapt to new political categories and redefine their cultural identity, he argued that post-colonial subjects enter a state of hybridity - that he dubbed "the beyond." As he wrote: "the 'beyond' [establishes] a boundary: a bridge, where 'presencing' begins because it captures something of the estranging sense of the relocation of the home and the world - the unhomeliness."[61] Bhabha went further in defining disorientation, as he explained that in the beyond "we find ourselves in the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion."[62]

1.4. Application to the Pied Noir Experience

The frameworks outlined in the previous section served as a starting point and were expanded throughout this research. I also tried to compile them. I started with researching academic concepts that could convey the feelings of unbelonging and in-betweenness (which I interchangeably use with 'ambivalence'), which was ubiquitous in my interviews. After selecting an adequate framework, I realized that liminality could be perceived as a feature of hybridity, and a product of a rite of passage. I then noticed that Bhabha's Third Space allowed one to visualize the pied noir hybridity. Finally, supplementary concepts like Freud's notion of Unheimlich enabled me to understand the collateral effects of such hybrid identity, and incited me to explore them further.

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[60] Joel Kuortti, and Jopi Nyman, *Reconstructing Hybridity: Post-Colonial Studies in Transition,* (New York: Rodopi, 2007), 8.

[61] Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 9.

[62] Ibid, 1.

It is also noteworthy that I only employed fragments of the existing literature, and only enriched the aspects that are relevant to the pied noir experience. Although I will not dig too much further into SCS, this framework did help me to contextualize French settler colonialism, and most importantly, to understand the paramountcy of structure in the French Algerian colonial system. To simplify my thinking, I also mostly use the term 'Third Space' throughout my thesis, keeping in mind, nonetheless, Bhabha's definition of "beyondness."[63] I am also furthering his scholarship, by demonstrating that his work can also be relevant to understand colonial actors, and not only post-colonial subjects.

1.5. Researching the Pieds Noirs' In-Betweenness

Methodologically, I adopted an ethnographic approach, and conducted seven semi-structured key informant interviews.[64] My ethnographic approach was mostly analytical, as opposed to evocative, as I tried to "develop theoretical explanations of broader social phenomena" through the collected data.[65] Given that the pieds noirs in France often gather through associations and discussion groups, I conducted some online research to identify potential groups that could be interested in taking part in my research. I came across the ANPNPA, which was founded in 2008. As explained on their website, the founding fathers of the organization did not identify with *nostalgérique* associations and wanted to promote an alternative understanding of the Algerian War.[66]

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[63] Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 9.
[64] The interview questionnaire is available in Appendix 3.
[65] Laura L. Ellingson, and Carolyn Ellis, "Autoethnography as constructionist project," in James A. Holstein, and Jaber F. Gubrium (Eds.), *Handbook of constructionist research,* (New York: Guilford, 2008), 445.
[66] "Déclaration des membres fondateurs de l'association." Association Nationale des Pieds Noirs Progressistes et leurs Amis. November 8, 2008. http://www.anpnpa.org/. Last accessed on 15/04/2022.

I sent out a call for research participants by email. Seven participants positively responded to my call for volunteers, with four women and three men coming back to me. "Data saturation" was reached after the seventh interview, as no additional themes were emerging from the interview transcriptions.[67] To simplify the reading process and maintain their identity anonymous, I refer to each participant with 'P + the order in which they were interviewed' (e.g., Interviewee 1 is referred to as 'P1').

My participant sample is quite heterogeneous, partly since the association welcomes any pied noir who wants to become a member. My interviewees were all born in Algeria between 1940 and 1959. Some of their ancestors were first-generation settlers, while some families had only lived in Algeria for a couple of years. They were all repatriated to metropolitan France between mid-1961 and late 1962. Five of them used to live in the main coastal cities or their vicinity (Algiers and Oran, as well as the city of Blida), while two of them grew up in eastern Algeria (in the cities of Guelma and Tébessa).

They also came from quite diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Some of my participants grew up in quite affluent European families, while others were raised in more modest households. All of them now live in France, mostly in Central and Southern France. All the interviews have been conducted individually and online, but some participants did know each other prior to the interviews thanks to the association. P3 and P7 are even childhood friends who grew up in Algeria together and have been in touch since their repatriation. More information about their personal background can be found in Appendix I.

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[67] Greg Guest, Arwen Bunce, and Laura Johnson, "How Many Interviews Are Enough? An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability," *Field Methods* 18, no. 1 (2006): 60.

As Lee Ann Fujii greatly phrased it "another dimension that a relational researcher should bring to her analysis is careful consideration of how positionality shaped the research process."[68] I have been deeply aware of mine throughout the research process. Reflecting through an intersectional prism, my analysis has been modeled by both the fact that I am an outsider to the pied noir community, and the fact that I was raised in an educational system in which France's colonial past was avoided. My initial interest in this topic was therefore rooted in both my academic interest in post-colonial studies, and a long-lasting personal frustration about the secrecy surrounding the Algerian War and its outcomes.

Furthermore, it seems that my interviews were a two-way learning journey. In fact, some interviewees shared with me that being interviewed had some kind of cathartic effect. This feedback illustrated what Ian Proctor and Maureen Padfield argued in their seminal article about the unexpected outcomes of interviews, in which they claimed that the reflective process encouraged in semi-structured interviews can be transformative both for the researcher and the researched.[69] Moreover, this research is what I would call a 'co-production' between my participants and myself. Through their testimonies, my interviewees emphasized a feeling of ambivalence and unbelonging that they could not properly phrase, and that I was able to merge with the existing scholarship on hybridity and liminality.

However, despite an attempt to make my methods as valid and reliable as possible, this research has three main shortcomings. First, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all the interviews were conducted online through either Skype, Zoom or Jeetsi. Although I do not think that it affected the quality and quantity of the collected data, I believe that it is yet important to acknowledge the differences between onsite interviews and digitally mediated

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[68] Lee Ann Fujii, *Interviewing in Social Science Research: a Relational Approach,* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 82.

[69] Ian Procter, and Maureen Padfield, "The effect of the interview on the interviewee," *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 2, no. 1 (1998): 123-136.

research methods.[70] Secondly, it is important to reflect on how knowledge is produced. In an attempt to get the most accurate testimonies, all the interviews were conducted in French, and all the verbatim transcripts were translated into English. I closely followed existing guidelines for researchers who must make translation decisions.[71] However, a slight difference in the meaning of each testimony remains possible.[72] Lastly, I would like to reiterate that I am an outsider to the pied noir community. None of what is written in this thesis reflects my personal opinion. I simply attempted to transmit in an approachable way the lived experiences of others, from the eyes of someone who has read a lot about the topic but never had to endure the pied noir uprooting.

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[70] Melis F. Cin, Clare Madge, Dianne Long, Markus Breines, and Mwazvita Tapiwa Beatrice Dalu, "Transnational online research. Recognizing multiple contexts in Skype-to-phone interviews," *Qualitative Research* 0, no. 0 (2021): 1.

[71] Dagmar Abfalter, Julia Mueller-Seeger, and Margit Raich, "Translation decisions in qualitative research: a systematic framework," *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 24, no. 1 (2021): 469-486.

[72] Svend Brinkmann, and Steinar Kvale, *InterViews* (3rd Revised Edition), (London: Sage Publications Ltd, 2014), 182-183 (Chapter 10).

CHAPTER 2: FROM SETTLERS TO HYBRID POST-COLONIAL SUBJECTS

This first analytical chapter discusses the pre-repatriation stage. I believe that to understand the French of Algeria's hybridity, it is important to go back to the roots of their ambivalent positionality. Following Eric Savarese's claim that "in colonial Algeria, issues of naming are issues of power,"[73] I consequently discuss the power hierarchies under French settler colonialism to understand the transitional journey undertaken by the French settlers. This argument is articulated as follows. First, I claim that the French of Algeria's heterogeneity contributed to making them hybrid post-colonial subjects after 1962. I then demonstrate that the Algerian War and its inherent outcomes made the French of Algeria enter a rite of passage and an inherent liminal space, or 'Third Space.'

2.1. Positionality and Heterogeneity Under French Settler Colonialism

All the interviews started with a discussion of my participants' childhood memories, and therefore, of the colonial system in French Algeria. Most testimonies intersected, although I noticed that they also contrasted depending on my interviewee's background. I therefore realized that the settlers were a complex social group, characterized by more diversity than I expected prior to starting this research.

In fact, like many other European settlers, the French of Algeria were considered as members of the colonizing power until Algeria's independence. There is no debate on this matter; and this was not countered by any of my interviewees. In reference to Elkins and Pederson's four-edged conceptualization of settler colonialism, I argue that the ordinary French settlers used to belong to either the "settler community," or to the "local government" for those

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[73] Savarese, "After the Algerian War," 457.

who were working for the French administration.[74] Although they were not all aware of the range of privileges they had access to, my participants did acknowledge that they were treated differently from the local population.

The French were in fact segregated both spatially and culturally from ethnic Algerians. European settlers, who were also separated based on their origin, had their own bars and restaurants, their own residential areas, and mixed-race marriages were still taboo. Some of my interviewees did have some Algerian acquaintances that they met on the street, however, as P1 exemplified "[she]would never go to their place" as there were "invisible cultural barriers." My interviewees also described, for instance, how the school system was a (failed) replica of the metropolitan French educational system. Settler children had their own schools, and only a few attended schools with Algerians. French was also made the official language, and a handful of French of Algeria spoke Arabic or Tamazight.[75] Hence, ethnic Algerians were sidelined from any decision-making process. As P3 explained, "they [non-Europeans] did not have access to some positions in the administration."

It is noteworthy that this segregation was less striking in rural areas. In eastern Algeria, for instance, the interactions between ethnic Algerians and French settlers was more widespread. P7, from Tébessa, went to an Algerian public school, where the French settlers were a minority. P5, who was born and raised in Guelma, also had a very different childhood. First, he was born in secrecy, from an ethnic Algerian mother and a French father. Due to his father's family butcher shop, he was also able to befriend many Algerians. Guelma's urban space was also generally less segregated, which made interactions between communities easier. Nonetheless, P5 acknowledged the existence of strict power hierarchies even in smaller cities. As he explained to me, he only realized the race-based inequalities later when he grew up, as

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[74] Elkins and Pederson, *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century,* 3-4.
[75] Also known as 'Standard Algerian Berber.'

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the colonial structure was so deeply etched in colonial subjects: "I now realize that I was trying to ignore everything that was going on. I was not directly part of it; I was probably too young."

As shown above, it is therefore pivotal to approach the term 'settler' very carefully, as it refers to a wide range of individuals and not to one homogeneous group with identical experiences. In the Algerian context, it commonly encompasses European migrants, and members of the Jewish community.[76] However, demographics were quite varied.[77] My sample of interviewees represents this diversity. Some of them had Maltese and Spanish roots and were not fully French, while the others came from all over France. In addition to their difference in ethnicity and origins, European settlers came from a multitude of socio-economic backgrounds. While some of them were raised in families that moved to Algeria with the purpose of attaining upward social mobility, others grew up in families that were in Algeria for personal or professional reasons, and were often members of the colonial elite.

Furthermore, there were several waves of colonization, meaning that not all French settlers arrived in French Algeria at the same time. According to a census conducted in 1962, only 70% of French families in Algeria came from initial settlers, while the rest quite recently moved to Algeria.[78] Similarly, some of my interviewees were raised from descendants of first settlers, while others only freshly arrived, and therefore did not stay for so long in French Algeria. This affected the way the French of Algeria positioned themselves later. For instance, P1's father moved to Algeria in 1923 to pursue his military career. She therefore drew a sharp difference between moving with the intent to colonize and moving out of "necessity," and therefore claimed that "[her] parents were not colons at all."

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[76] Sung-Eun Choi, *Decolonization and the French of Algeria: Bringing the Settler Colony Home,* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 14.

[77] Bourdieu, *Sociologie de l'Algérie.*

[78] Marc Louis Bourgeois, "La mélancolie pied-noire. Transmission transgénérationnelle," *Annales Médico-Psychologiques* 166, no. 1 (2008): 454.

This diversity of French settlers - meaning here, future pieds noirs - is paramount to understand why they have become hybrid post-colonial subjects since 1962. The very category of 'French settler' was from the beginning quite disparate. The French of Algeria were seen as a heterogeneous social group by the local community due to their European roots and administrative status, as ethnic Algerians were never granted French citizenship.

However, I noticed through my interviewees' life stories that although many of them shared common lifestyles, their socio-economic classes, and their family background has affected the way they self-identified, as well as their perception of French settler colonialism. Furthermore, as shown with Victor Turner's concept of communitas, it is noteworthy that the French of Algeria only connected after their repatriation, once they all faced the same uprooting regardless of their social status.[79]

2.2. The Algerian War and Beginning of a Rite of Passage

It was also evident in my interview findings that the Algerian War marked a turning point, and was somehow a starting point in the French of Algeria's hybrid sense of selfhood. After years of compliance with the French colonial system, French settlers were encouraged to take sides and to reflect about their positionality. This led to internal fractures within the settler community. Their options were quite limited: a small minority supported the Algerian independentists; while most settlers were mostly in favor of the maintenance of French colonial rule, due to a rising fear about potential change.[80] Others could not bear the idea of leaving

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[79] Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors*, 231.
[80] Christopher Harrison, "French Attitudes to Empire and the Algerian War," *African Affairs* 82, no. 326 (1983): 94.

Algeria, as it had become their home. A last category, for more political and pragmatic reasons, did not want the French colonial empire to fail again.[81]

As apparent in my interviewees' personal recollections, the French of Algeria therefore reacted differently to the rise of political violence that started after World War II.[82] Some understood the strong anti-French sentiment that had emerged from over a century of exploitation and land appropriation. P1 explained that "it was something that was becoming inevitable." She went further, arguing that some settlers became aware of their wrongdoings: "When you are in the middle of it, you do not notice it. It is afterwards that you realize and think 'this is not possible that such a situation existed and that you somehow backed it.'"

It is, however, noteworthy that no one ever expected that the conflict would become so bloody.[83] My oldest interviewees, who were in middle school or in their teenage years at the time, shared with me vivid memories of the war. They described how the ordinary French settlers were stuck in between the FLN's pro-independence actions, and the OAS's bloodthirsty colonial discourse. They depicted how public executions and acid attacks had become part of their daily lives; how tanks and guns were elements of the urban landscape for almost ten years; how they got used to curfews and checkpoints; and how they had to hide at home. P4 labeled these recollections "indelible memories."

Young settlers also became aware of their symbolic role as official colonizers. P4, for

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[81] The French colonial empire's public image had already been deeply fragilized by the so-called 'First Indochina War' (1946-1954), through which the national independence coalition Việt Minh attained independence from the French Empire. The French state was therefore even more determined in not losing another major colony like French Algeria.

[82] The first instance of political violence was the 1945 Sétif and Guelma massacres, which were orchestrated by the French authorities to shut off the rise of anti-colonial protests in the Constantine region. However, the Toussaint Rouge is said to be the main event that triggered the Algerian War.

[83] The human cost of the war has never been properly determined due to a broken collective memory between the two countries. On the French side, the French claimed that about 27,000 soldiers and 6,000 French non-combatants were killed by the independentists. They recognized about 500,000 Algerian casualties, while the Algerians argued that numbers go up to 1,500,000.

instance, very greatly emphasized this realization: "On the one hand, as many pieds noirs, I was turned upside down by the war. On the other hand, the fact that I was quite young made me more aware of the existing tensions and the constant *qui vive.*" My oldest interviewee from Guelma also shared personal stories about the ethical dilemma he faced, as he was conscripted to join the conflict. As he explained to me, he had to decide between fighting for his official motherland and betraying those he used to consider as adoptive brothers, and risk being seen as a deserter by the French state. As he argued, "this war was not mine."

In reference to Arnold Van Gennep and Victor Turner's work on rites of passage and liminality, I therefore argue that the Algerian War slowly marked the beginning of a rite of passage. Drawing on Van Gennep's tripartite concept, the Algerian War triggered a gradual rite of separation (first stage), through which French settlers slowly disintegrated from the society they considered as theirs, and entered the 'unfamiliar.'[84] They gradually transitioned from "structure," in which their social status was fixed, to "anti-structure," in which all their social norms were challenged.[85] They had to re-assess all their points of reference, ranging from the place they considered as home, to whether ethnic Algerians were friends or enemies, to the understanding of their own ancestry. This feeling of disorientation led them to unconsciously enter a liminal space.

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[84] Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*.

[85] Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors,* 273-274.

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2.3. Repatriation: The *Coup de Grâce*

The French of Algeria irreversibly entered this in-between space after the Évian

Accords, which were signed in March 1962 and marked Algeria's ultimate step towards

independence.[86] The successive expeditious exodus of the French community came across as

a *coup de grâce*, and forced most of the French of Algeria into long-term hybridity. However,

the redefinition of the French settlers' sense of selfhood was not uniform, demonstrating once

again that the French of Algeria were far from being a homogeneous social group.

A first category of settlers was in denial, and still had faith in the French President

Charles de Gaulle, and his government. For instance, the OAS continued its coercive actions

in an attempt to maintain the colonial regime. P1 cynically named them "those who relentlessly

hoped until the end." These settlers were hoping that the political crisis would get resolved,

meaning that their status would remain the same and that they could still rightfully consider

Algeria their home.

Inversely, some settlers were aware of the gravity of the situation. The wealthiest

settlers invested in housing in metropolitan France out of precaution. More modest households

sent their children abroad, having nowhere to go, and no plan about the future. Three of my

interviewees, who were still children at the time, were sent to relatives in France between mid-

1961 and early 1962. Their parents only joined them later. Others were sent to French

protectorates, like P6, who was sent to family relatives in Morocco in March 1962.[87]

Most of the French settlers were forcibly repatriated to metropolitan France by the

French government in the spring of 1962.[88] The FLN had indeed advised the French colonial

regime to leave as soon as possible, due to the rise of official and informal reprisals against the

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[86] The main outcome of the Évian Accords was the ceasefire between the French troops and the FLN. It also paved the way for Algeria's independence, which was officially proclaimed in July 1962.

[87] France had two protectorates in North Africa, Morocco, and Tunisia, and many more across the globe. Unlike French colonies, French protectorates had more political autonomy, as they were run by local rulers.

[88] Eldridge, "Between perpetrators and victims," 124.

settler community. The popular slogan "la valise ou le cercueil" ("the suitcase or the coffin"), developed by the Parti du Peuple Algérien (Algerian People's Party, shortened to PPA) became widespread.[89] The metaphorical slogan greatly highlighted the limited range of options the French settlers had, so to say, leaving or perishing.[90] As expected, this traumatizing dilemma was ubiquitous in my interviews. P7 described it as "an experience that leaves a mark on your mind," while P6 colloquially explained to me that "[she] ha[d] been torn away from Algeria from one day to the next, pow!"

This striking feeling of rupture was not only related to the fact that European settlers had to leave. The urgency of the situation and its suddenness were the major traumatic factors. Most families were poorly prepared. The French settlers were required to take only important belongings with them (most often, a single suitcase), as repatriation boats and planes were overcrowded.[91] Leaving behind their life and their house, both P1 and P2 dubbed their repatriation "a forced exile." P2 also labeled it a "total undesired rupture." Most repatriates arrived in Southern France, where they either settled in due to the topographic similarities between that region and coastal Algeria;[92] while some moved to other regions if they still had family relatives in metropolitan France.

The data collected through my interviews therefore suggests that the French of Algeria's repatriation marked the official beginning of their long-standing feeling of hybridity, and a consequent move into Van Gennep's transformative and liminal rite of transformation

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[89] Bourgeois, "La mélancolie pied-noire," 454.

[90] Some French settlers did stay in Algeria even though the French state encouraged all French nationals to leave for their own security. At their own risk, they therefore remained in Algeria after the main repatriation movements in the spring of 1962. They were renamed 'pieds verts' ('green feet'), in opposition to the 'pieds noirs.' Due to the high risks of persecution, most of them changed their last names to make it less foreign sounding. Most of them are now dual citizens. As a very small minority, the pieds verts are often forgotten in the collective memory of the Algerian War.

[91] Eldridge, "Between perpetrators and victims," 124.

[92] Bourgeois, "La mélancolie pied-noire," 454.

(second stage). The beginning of the Algerian War triggered the French of Algeria's slow separation from Algeria, while their subsequent repatriation marked an ultimate rupture.

Using Van Gennep's accurate comparison, the French of Algeria indeed entered "a territorial no man's land between two countries."[93] Not only were they geographically disoriented, but they were also culturally unsettled. Bhabha's concept of Third Space therefore concretizes the pieds noirs' positionality. It touches upon the feeling of dislocation experienced by the pieds noirs: they could not go back to Algeria and arrived in a territory that they never socialized in.[94] As members of a liminal space, which is characterized by fluidity, they therefore had to undertake a series of long-term negotiations to determine where they belonged, and who they wished to become.[95]

However, I find Bhabha's conceptualization too limiting to fully understand the pied noir hybrid experience. Bhabha only showed interest in post-colonial subjects and overlooked colonial actors. Based on my findings, I believe that it is impossible to understand the French of Algeria's positionality as post-colonial subjects without first understanding the roots of their hybridity. The fact that they were members of the settler community and that their feeling of belonging disappeared once colonization was over is the reason they ended up in a Third Space.

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[93] Bhandari, "Negotiating Cultural Identities in Diaspora," 79.

[94] Pierre Bourdieu, and Jean-Claude Passeron, *La Reproduction. Éléments pour une théorie du système d'enseignement*, (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1970).

[95] Byrne, *Homi K. Bhabha*, 42.

CHAPTER 3: NEITHER FRENCH NOR ALGERIAN

This last chapter focuses on the French settlers' hybridity post-1962, after they started their new life in metropolitan France. I structure it in a less linear and historically grounded way than Chapter 2, as I am tackling several aspects that have been continuously present in the pieds noirs' lives until today. My main objective is to enrich the theoretical frameworks that have been previously discussed to make them more relatable to the pied noir experience.

My contribution is therefore three-fold. First, I discuss how the very byname of 'pied noir' is an expression of liminality. I then examine how the pieds noirs have made sense of their hybridity throughout the years, and how the process of adaptation to this new identity could come across as traumatic. Moreover, I discuss whether their liminality had an endpoint, to determine whether the French of Algeria reached Van Gennep's last stage ("rite of incorporation").[96] I eventually demonstrate that my interviewees developed different strategies to make sense of their hybrid identity.

3.1. Pied Noir or Not Pied Noir?

I have so far only addressed my subjects with the terms 'French of Algeria' or 'French settlers.' This was a deliberate decision, as the term 'pied noir' was only developed after the French of Algeria's repatriation.[97] In fact, as reminded by SCS scholar Sai Englert, political categories are not fixed entities, but rather fluctuating ones.[98] Since the French of Algeria's social status changed following Algeria's independence, the way they were addressed was successively modified, too. When pondering further, it appeared to me that the term in itself could potentially reflect the pieds noirs' hybridity. Even more so since the very term

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[96] Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage,* xviii.
[97] Jordi, "Constructions identitaires et réinvention des origines," 14.
[98] Englert, "The Logic of Accumulation by Dispossession," 1650.

'French of Algeria' already highlighted a form of in-betweenness between both cultures.[99] I therefore discussed this terminology with my interviewees.

It is commonly assumed that the term 'pied noir' was never used by the Algerians, and was only created by the metropolitan French to refer to the Algerian-born repatriates and their descendants.[100] The initial meaning of the term remains unknown and has been subject to many speculations. French historian and pied noir himself, Xavier Yacono discussed the two prevailing popular assumptions about the meaning of the term.[101] The first one is that 'black feet' referred to the French settlers' black boots, which contrasted deeply with the ethnic Algerians, who did not have such items of clothing. The second prevailing hypothesis is that the term referred to the color of the French of Algeria's feet, who were dark as they used to mash grapes to make homemade wine and had to walk on muddy soils.

If the meaning in itself does not matter so much at first, it is certainly pejorative, and highlights the metropolitan French's attempt to exclude the French of Algeria. My interviewees claimed that the primary reason behind the creation of the term was to mark a difference between the 'actual' French people and the French of Algeria, who did not embrace the main elements of so-called "Frenchness."[102] In fact, although French Algeria was created as an attempt to resemble France, there were in reality what P3 called "discrepancies." Their accent, their education level, their lifestyle was deeply contrasting from the rest of the French population. The pieds noirs were seen as second-class citizens, even foreigners, and their new nickname therefore aimed at making them feel 'non-French.'[103] Once again, they therefore

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[99] Michèle Assante, and Odile Plaisant, "Origine et enjeu de la dénomination 'pied noir,'" *Langage & Société* 60, no. 1 (1992): 62.

[100] Savarese, "After the Algerian War," 457.

[101] Xavier Yacono, "Pourquoi Pieds-Noirs?" In: *Les Pieds Noirs,* (Philippe Lebaud Éditeur, 1982), 16.

[102] Choi, *Decolonization and the French of Algeria,* 13.

[103] Yacono, "Pourquoi Pieds-Noirs?," 16.

evolved in a Third Space, in which they were no longer Algerian (if they ever felt as such), while also not being French culturally-speaking.[104]

I also asked my participants about their identification with the term. All agreed that it was initially pejorative. However, most of them believed that its disdainful connotation faded away throughout years. Some of my participants claimed that they had no major issue with it, while others found it very problematic. I therefore noticed three main reactions: (1) denial and anger towards the term due to its negative connotation, (2) initial discomfort that was transformed into acceptance later, and (3) detachment from the term.

Some French repatriates dislike the term, either because it displays their hybridity, or because they consider that it inadequately depicts their identity. Amongst my participants, P2 was the most ardently opposed to the common use of the term 'pied noir.' According to her, using 'pied noir' to refer to the French of Algeria is wrong as it initially referred to the Jewish community of North Africa. She also despised the fact that the term is now commonly connected with pro-colonial repatriates who support the far-right political party *Rassemblement National*.[105] P2 therefore belongs to a small minority of pieds noirs who would like to see the term disappear, due to its belittling meaning.[106] She therefore encouraged me to use the term 'French of Algeria,' as "we identify better with the Algerian than with the metropolitan French." Similarly, P6 explained that her sister used to disapprove of the term, and rather defined the French of Algeria as being "expatried" (as opposed to "repatriated"), highlighting their uprooting.

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[104] Fiona Barclay, "Reporting on 1962: the Evolution of *Pied-Noir* Identity Across 50 years of Print Media," *Modern & Contemporary France* 23, no. 2 (2015): 202.

[105] Veugelers, Menard, and Permingeat, "Colonial past, and far-right voting in France," 786.

[106] Assante, and Plaisant, "Origine et enjeu de la dénomination 'pied noir,'" 63.

Other participants had more balanced opinions about being called 'pied noir.' Two participants, P1 and P4, also initially used to dislike the term, as it made them feel "different" from the rest of the French population. For instance, P1 explained to me that "there was a time where I would not say I was pied noir." Her main worry was in fact that she would be assimilated with the pro-colonial discourse and would therefore be vilified by the left. After their repatriation, the pieds noirs indeed entered a space of political in-betweenness in which they became scapegoats. On the one hand, they were considered as "complicit" and "perpetrators of a system of colonial domination,"[107] and, on the other hand, they were accused of being passive actors by the far-right.[108]

The ambivalence carried by the term pied noir was also touched upon by P4. He claimed that "for [him], being pied noir was a burden," especially at school. He went further and explained: "I was not ashamed of being pied noir, but I would say I somehow had an inherent feeling of guilt. I was worried that people would think that I am a colonizer." The main reason for such feeling is that P4 went to French school at the time some Algerians moved to France due to the political instability and lack of prospects in post-war Algeria.[109] The French of Algeria were therefore once again in a space of in-betweenness, in which they were perceived as settlers by their Algerian classmates, and as "Arabs" by their metropolitan peers. P4 therefore preferred not displaying his identity for many years, "inasmuch as [he] had in mind what [he] went through and could only see the colonial domination."

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[107] Eldridge, "Between perpetrators and victims," 123.
[108] Barclay, Chopin, and Evans, "Settler Colonialism and French Algeria," 125.
[109] Muriel Cohen, "L'immigration algérienne post-indépendance: l'enracinement à l'épreuve de l'exclusion," *Le Mouvement social* 1, no. 258 (2017): 34.

Initially, most pieds noirs were therefore quite discreet about their roots, most likely to conceal their hybridity and their relationship to settler colonialism. Throughout the years, some of them started to feel more comfortable with the term, and even started enjoying this identity. P3, for instance, came to accept this "originality," that P4 also greatly renamed "their very own particularities." Others, like P5, never felt affiliated with the term, and therefore do not have any opinion about it. P5 indeed always considered that the only thing that mattered was that "he is Algerian." According to him, the term 'pied noir' was more of a synonym to "repatriate," which is a justification he also disagreed with. As he strongly reiterated to me, "Tiphaine, I am not a repatriate, I am just an Algerian." P7 also embraced such a stance, as he explained to me that "I am French first, but my country is Algeria." Similarly, P6 "was never ashamed of being pied noir." Her main reason is that due to her double-edged identity, she always felt "internationalist." Such a perspective shows that a minority of pieds noirs like her, although they did not use this precise terminology, were very much aware of their hybridity, and decided to unveil it.

The way the French of Algeria were defined from *outside* and identified from *within* translated their hybridity. From being at the top of the colonial structure, they brutally lost their points of reference in the metropolitan French society. They all entered a Third Space in which they had to determine whether and how they wanted to flee this liminality. Some tried to conceal it or to re-delineate it, while others never felt affected by this imposed categorization in the first place. This redefinition of their identity also depended on their initial sense of selfhood. As shown in the interviews, some identified as fully Algerians, while others felt more hybrid. Despite a common path, the pieds noirs therefore had contrasting reactions to their repatriation.

3.2. The Pied Noir Trauma(s)

Although I strongly rely on Van Gennep, Turner and Bhabha's work, I was surprised that none of their work directly addressed the potential trauma(s) that can arise from hybrid situatedness. This common suffering is yet crucial, as it intangibly brought together all the pieds noirs, despite their initial heterogeneity in French Algeria. I therefore believe that Turner's work on communitas, which is one of the collateral effects of liminality, is relevant to understand the pied noir trauma(s) and its outcomes.

American social theorist and collective memory expert Jeffrey C. Alexander argued that "cultural trauma occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness."[110] As shown with the phrase "group consciousness," Alexander also emphasized that trauma is a "social process;" a statement that connects with Turner's work on the collectiveness of liminality.[111] Trauma can take different shapes, which explains why I pluralize its spelling.

The obstacles the pieds noirs had to overcome in France indeed went way further than "issues of naming."[112] I touched upon such aspects with my participants, and could sometimes hear some voices breaking, or unconscious attempts to avoid the topic. It struck me that even sixty years after their repatriation, my interviewees were still very much affected by their violent uprooting. As P7 metaphorically explained, "[my] wounds are enormous. It is like an old couple, there is both love and hatred."

I identified four main sources of trauma in my interviewees' recollections. First, practical concerns deeply affected the former French settlers, especially the older generations who had children to nurture. My participants' parents had a hard time finding long-term jobs,

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[110] Jeffrey C. Alexander, *Trauma: A Social Theory* (Chapter 1), (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012), 6.
[111] Ibid, 15.
[112] Savarese, "After the Algerian War," 457.

despite the French state's fruitless attempts to offer some aid to the repatriates.[113] Many of them, after months of job-seeking, ended up working for the French civil service out of despair.[114]

Secondly, the pied noir trauma was also mostly moral. In reference to Freud's notion of Unheimlich, the pieds noirs felt homeless because of their forced uprooting.[115] Some of my interviewees, for instance, explained how much they missed the seaside, the colorfulness of the Algerian landscape, or the smell of local markets. The French colloquially renamed this long-lasting wistfulness "Nostalgérie" (which comes from the combination of "Nostalgia" and "Algeria").[116]

My interviewees also explained how the older generations of repatriates - so to say, their grandparents and their parents - were those that suffered the most from this feeling. This generational distinction is another element that was disregarded in the existing literature on hybridity. In fact, P1 drew a distinction between her experience and the integration of her parents. As she explained, settling in was obviously not easier for her, but she accommodated herself. Inversely, her parents deeply struggled with transitioning. For instance, her father never accepted the new reality that was forced onto him. Similarly, P3 explained that her parents were accused of "stealing the French people's jobs," which made them feel unwelcomed. P6 told me that her grandma, who lived in Algeria for most of her life, never was able to accept what happened, and partly died of sorrow three years after her family was repatriated.

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[113] Abderahmen Moumen, "De L'Algérie à la France: Les Conditions de Départ et d'Accueil des Rapatriés, Pieds-Noirs et Harkis en 1962," *La Contemporaine* 99, no. 1 (2010): 66.

[114] Marie-Paule Coutot, "L'intégration socio-économique des pieds-noirs en France métropolitaine: le lien de citoyenneté à l'épreuve," *Revue européenne des migrations internationales* 29, no. 3 (2013): 106.

[115] Freud, *Das Unheimliche*.

[116] Hubbell, "The Wounds of Algeria," 59.

P6's parents also never succeeded to fully settle in France. Algeria therefore became a taboo within their family and led to internal fractures. She added that her parents became withdrawn and embraced a racist discourse towards ethnic Algerians. Many pieds noirs indeed considered that the Algerian people were too "politically immature" to establish functioning governance,[117] especially as Algeria has been facing deep political instability.[118] Likewise, P5, who was one of the founding fathers of the ANPNPA, was excluded from his family as his opinion of the pied noir experience were deeply diverging from the *nostalgérique* discourse.

Thirdly, some of the pieds noirs - especially children - were still traumatized by the violence they eye witnessed during the Algerian War. For instance, P4 was twelve years old when he left Algeria. As P4 explained, "when I read stuff about Algeria, I can always visualize what is being talked about. Things that I experienced, all these accusations, all these assassinations." He went further, arguing that "from my memory, I dispelled Algeria. To me, Algeria stands for suffering."

Lastly, the feeling of 'otherness,' which could be used as a synonym to 'hybridity,' was recurrent in my interviews. Some explained how they had a hard time fitting into French society and their new social environment, especially at school. For instance, P6 recalled how she and a classmate of hers were once called "dirty Arabs" by some neighbors on their way back from school. This episode made her realize that she was "different." Others, inversely, argued that they were surprisingly warmly welcomed by their new peers, but that they still felt like their new life, as P1 phrased it, was not "real."

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[117] Emmanuelle Comtat, "From *indigènes* to immigrant workers: *pied-noir* perceptions of Algerians and people of Algerian origin in post-colonial France," *Settler Colonial Studies* 8, no. 4 (2018): 407.

[118] Algeria's political violence did not end with the departure of the French colonial regime. Leaving Algeria behind with destroyed infrastructure, economic instability, and deep social divides after 132 years of colonialism, political violence went on in the summer of 1962. Algeria was later victim of another civil war (1991-2002), which opposed the elected Algerian government to Islamist armed groups.

The fact that all pieds noirs experienced some type of trauma(s) brought them together, without them always noticing. Their life would have probably never overlapped if they stayed in Algeria, but the fact that they had common wounds, ranging from the war to their repatriation, to the difficulty to acclimatize in France, to their hybridity, made them bond. Adding to their liminality, the pieds noirs therefore entered a state of communitas, in which the redefinition of social structure and their common traumas united them regardless of their initial diverging background under settler colonialism.[119] This feeling of closeness is inherent to Van Gennep's rite of transformation (second phase).[120]

Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that Turner's concept of communitas should be approached carefully. The pieds noirs' intersecting lived experiences does not mean that they all reacted similarly to their trauma(s). Some preferred taking refuge in Nostalgéria and resentment towards Algeria, while others, like my interviewees, tried to move forward. This explains why there are two dominant streams of pieds noirs in France. Furthermore, it was striking in my interviews that some pieds noirs were more affected than others, depending on their age, the region they settled in after their repatriation, and the way their family experienced their forced uprooting.

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[119] Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors*: 273-274.
[120] Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage,* xviii.

3.3. Embracing the Pied Noir Identity and Rites of Reintegration

It is irrefutable that the pieds noirs were evolving in a liminal space for several years following their repatriation. However, Van Gennep's liminal stage, or "rite of separation," is only meant to be transitory. It is in fact expected from individuals to escape this space at some point, in order to be reintegrated into a new community ("rite of incorporation").[121] I therefore tried to determine whether my interviewees attained this third and last stage, and which strategies they relied on to do so.

I identified three prevailing schemes. First, outsiders to the pied noir community played a very important role in helping my participants to feel integrated in French society. P3 described how her partner helped her to cope with her past by making jokes about the pieds noirs to tone down the prejudices she was suffering from. Similarly, P6 explained that her father-in-law openly talked about the Algerian War with her, which enabled her to "escape the trauma she had been enduring without being aware of it." Both P4 and P6 also undertook psychotherapy.

Secondly, most of my participants traveled to Algeria with their partners and children, sometimes also with childhood friends, like P3 and P7 who went back together. In relation to the ongoing discussion on hybridity, the pieds noirs were therefore able to reconnect with the place they used to call 'home,' as they had not been able to make France theirs yet. Some went there without any worry soon after their repatriation, while others only took the plunge after years of hesitation. As explained by P6, previous generations of pieds noirs had indeed refused to go back, being too devastated by their uprooting. P6 initially experienced her parents' apprehension and was "terrified": "I did not want to go back to Algeria because for me, my main memory of Algeria was my grandma making apricot jam."

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[121] Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage,* xviii.

It was therefore for everyone a life-changing trip, that P2 labeled "an important stage." P4, who had "put Algeria aside," could visualize his childhood memories. P3, P4, and P5 also touched upon the Algerians' kindness, as they welcomed the pied noir visitors with phrases like "this is your home," "welcome home," or "you are Algerian like us." While they were expecting potential hostility, Algerians actually greeted them like "brothers," like P5 phrased it. Their reconnection with Algeria was therefore pivotal in the pieds noirs' sense of selfhood, as it made most of them realize that despite the bloody history binding their two cultures, Algeria would always remain part of their identity. P6 compared such realization to "the end of the healing process," while P3 called it "a revelation."

Through these trips, this generation of pieds noirs was therefore able to either escape their identity and identify the culture they felt the closest to, or, instead, accepted their hybridity in the long-term. They were therefore incorporated in a new 'community,' and escaped the liminal space they had been part of since their repatriation. It is also noteworthy that it enabled my participants - who were the last generation of French of Algeria born in Algeria and repatriated to France - to show their birthplace to their children and grandchildren.

Moreover, community projects enabled the pieds noirs to gather and to form a tangible exemplification of communitas.[122] Van Gennep and Turner did not clarify whether the rite of incorporation consists of joining only one community. In my opinion, reintegration into structure, at least in the pied noir context, can be multiform. In addition to their reconnection with their Algerian roots, associations like the ANPNPA indeed helped the pied noir, as P3 explained, "to move forward." For instance, P4, who strongly suffered from isolation for many years, was happy to finally find "support" from peers. The progressive agenda taken by the association also motivated my participants to join in the first place.

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[122] Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors*, 231.

Van Gennep also did not specify whether incorporation is systematic, and infinite. Not all pieds noirs attained the third stage of their rite of passage. Most of my participants' parents, for instance, seemed to have passed away without exiting their liminality. Many living pieds noirs are still stuck in a liminal space, which explains the internal divides within the pied noir community. The duration of my interviewees' hybridity also varied.

Furthermore, I would argue that they remain hybrid both in their own eyes and in the eyes of the French state. Their social security number, for instance, highlights that they were born in former French Algeria.[123] Each number indeed ends with a code that displays one's birthplace. The French nationals who were born abroad are labeled by the number '99,' which was also used in French Algeria.[124] My participants therefore considered this trivial detail a daily reminder of their difference.

Lastly, Van Gennep described the entry into the third and last rite as the ending of one's liminality.[125] I believe that this is misleading in relation to the pied noir experience. In fact, quite the opposite, the main outcome of my participants' rite of passage was neither to integrate into a new community, nor to become fully Algerian or metropolitan French, but rather to accept their eternal hybridity. As P3 nicely phrased it, "now, [I] am almost proud of being pied noir. It makes me original."

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[123] Michèle Baussant, *Pieds Noirs: Mémoires d'exils,* (Paris: Stock, 2002).

[124] Nidam Abdi, "Les rapatriés d'Algérie numérotés français. Ils peuvent obtenir la modification de leur numéro de Sécu, qui révèle leur naissance outre-mer," *Libération,* December 22, 1997. https://www.liberation.fr/vous/1997/12/22/les-rapatries-d-algerie-numerotes-francais-ils-peuvent-obtenir-la-modification-de-leur-numero-de-sec_222774/. Last accessed on 24/04/2022.

[125] Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage,* xviii.

CONCLUSION

This thesis aimed to better understand the lived experiences of the French of Algeria, and showed that (post)colonial subjects like the former French settlers cannot be fathomed through a dyadic lens and fixed political categories. Instead, I demonstrated that their positionality has been constantly reshaped, as they undertook a rite of passage which, as conceptualized by Arnold Van Gennep and Victor Turner, was three-fold. The escalation of political violence during the Algerian War and the collapse of French settler colonialism after 132 years marked a 'rite of separation'; while the settlers' exodus indicated their entry into a 'rite of transformation.' This second stage was characterized by a feeling of in-betweenness, that was exemplified through a long-lasting feeling of unbelonging; the adoption of the pejorative term 'pied noir;' a hostile attitude against the settler community; and an understandable disorientation that was sometimes complemented by a latent nostalgia.

I demonstrated that all these factors forced the French of Algeria into a liminal space that can be visualized as a 'Third Space,' using Homi K. Bhabha's concept. Lastly, I concluded that some pieds noirs, like my participants, eventually attained the final 'rite of re-incorporation' thanks to several strategies. For instance, I highlighted the importance of the community aspect, drawing on Turner's concept of 'communitas,' and the fact that conversations with outsiders and trips back to their birthplace helped my participants to cope with their hybridity. Nonetheless, challenging Van Gennep's work, my main finding was that the French of Algeria's liminality was not suppressed, but rather embraced.

This research therefore enriched the existing literature on (post)colonialism. First, I demonstrated that Bhabha's work should not be restricted to the post-colonial stage, but that it should also include a dimension that examines power structures under a colonial regime to fully fathom the transition colonial actors undertake when becoming post-colonial subjects. In addition, I delved into the scholarship on liminality and hybridity by examining aspects that were overlooked by Van Gennep, Turner, and Bhabha. I also addressed the traumatic features of hybridity, and highlighted the role played by Turner's concept of communitas in overcoming post-colonial subjects' trauma(s). Bhabha mostly discussed the hybrid stage, while my approach in this thesis proved that hybridity - at least in the pied noir context - can have an endpoint. Enhancing Van Gennep's work on reincorporation, this research therefore stressed that the reintegration of post-colonial subjects like the French of Algeria can take the shape of eternal hybridity.

I also believe that these findings could be applied to the lived experiences of other post-colonial subjects. For example, the pieds noirs share similarities with the displaced ethnic Germans from Central Europe ("Ostdeutsch"), who also entered a state of hybridity after they were expelled from the region they considered as home following World War II. As subjects of a controversial colonial power, their story was very much overlooked in Germany's collective memory, and they consequently had a hard time redefining their positionality. Moreover, like the pieds noirs, they had to reunite around associations (commonly called "Vertriebenenverbände") to be able to adress their collective trauma and attain a semblance of communitas.[126]

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[126] Henning Süssner, Review of *Ostdeutsch heißt Gesamtdeutsch Organisation, Selbstverständnis und heimatpolitische Zielsetzungen der deutschen Vertriebenenverbände 1949-1972*, by Matthias Stickler, *German Politics & Society* 23, no. 4 (2005): 108-112.

As a final note, I would like to acknowledge that conducting this research and co-producing knowledge about the pied noir experience with my key informants was an intellectually enriching process, which made me discover an aspect of the Algerian War and my own national history that I was unaware of. Although the French state has lately been trying to shed more light on this bloody period of French history, the collapse of French Algeria, and more precisely the pied noir question, remain largely overlooked. My findings therefore highlight an urgent need for former colonial regimes like France to more proactively dig into their own imperial history to understand the complex positionality of their subjects, even more so as the year 2022 marks the sixtieth anniversary of Algeria's independence. As aptly stated by P2 regarding the Algerian War and its aftermath, "there is an historical work that must urgently be done."

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Information about the key informants

	Gender	Year and place of birth	Family background	Repatriation date	Current location	Interview
P1	Female	1945, Algiers	Father (member of the military) was born in France (Haute-Savoie) and moved to French Algeria in 1923 to pursue his career. Mother was born in the Algerian region of Constantine	June 1962	Bouches-du-Rhône, South East France	June 26, 2021, Skype
P2	Female	1959, Mostaganem (but grew up in Blida – vicinity of Algiers)	Third generation in French Algeria; Spanish and Alsatian roots	May 1962	South West France	June 29, 2021, Jeetsi
P3	Female	1953, Algiers	Grandparents moved to French Algeria; Spanish and Italian roots	Summer of 1961	Indre-et-Loire, Central France	June 30, 2021, Zoom
P4	Male	1950, Algiers	Fifth generation on the mother's side. Mother had Spanish origins; father came from Tunisia, and had Maltese roots	May 1962	Isère, South East France	July 1, 2021, Zoom

	Gender	Year and place of birth	Family background	Repatriation date	Current location	Interview
P5	Male	1940, Guelma	Family was initially from Malta and settled in French Algeria around 1839. Was therefore member of the fifth generation	July 1962	Pyrénées-Orientales, South West France	July 5, 2021, Jeetsi
P6	Female	1952, Oran	Family was ¾ European; her ancestors arrived in French Algeria after 1900	March 1962 (first to Morocco), then to Paris in August 1962	Landes, South West France	July 8, 2021, Zoom
P7	Male	1943, Algiers (but grew up in Tébessa)	Fourth generation in French Algeria	Juin 1962	Indre-et-Loire, Central France	July 28, 2021, Zoom

Appendix II: Consent form

I, _____ (participant's full name) authorize _____ (researcher's full name) to use the following personal information:

1. I volunteer to participate in this research study, led by Tiphaine Trudelle, student in International Relations at the Central European University (Vienna, Austria).

2. I understand that the project is designed to facilitate information as part of an academic project (master's thesis).

3. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation. I can withdraw from participating at any time.

4. I am under no circumstances forced to answer questions that make me feel uncomfortable or that I would prefer not to give an answer to. I can also end the interview at any time.

5. I understand that my participation will consist of an interview of approximately 60 to 120 minutes. Notes will be taken, and the interview will be recorded on a voice recorder or filmed if I participate in a video interview (on Skype or Zoom, for example).

6. I understand that a transcript of the interview will be written, analyzed and translated from French into English by Tiphaine Trudelle. Access to the transcript of the interview will only be limited to the researcher and her thesis supervisor, Professor Michael Merlingen. Voice or video recordings will be immediately destroyed after publication of the thesis.

7. I must expressly tell the researcher if I do not want my name to be disclosed. In this case, the researcher will make sure to maintain my anonymity, by using a nickname in her thesis.

8. I have read and understood the explanation provided to me, and I agree to participate in this study.

Telephone number: _____

Address: _____

Date and place: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix III: Interview questionnaire

1) Personal life

Introductory questions

- · Name, age, marital status
- · Place of birth, age at general repatriation in the summer of 1962

Life in Algeria

- · What is your family history? In what year did your family settle in Algeria? Why did they move there?
- · Can you describe your living conditions in Algeria?
- - Place of birth and city where you were raised
- - Parents' work
- · How was daily life in Algeria?
- · Were you perceived as 'settlers'?
- · Could you feel a gap between the French population and the Algerian population?

Repatriation to France and installation

- · Can you describe in detail the repatriation of your family and property?
- · How did you feel as a young child/adolescent who just was forcibly repatriated?
- · How did the integration process within the metropolitan French society go? Have you suffered from any form of culture shock?
- · Have you encountered any discrimination?
- · Would you call yourself a victim of trauma?

2) Pieds noirs

- · What does the term "pied noir" mean according to you?
- · Do you think that the term pied noir has a pejorative connotation? Do you have a problem with being called as such?
- · How do you differentiate them from the rest of the French metropolitan population?
- · What are your feelings about Charles de Gaulle's actions? Do you still have resentment about the abolishment of French Algeria?
- · How does the ANPNPA help you as a member of the pied noir community? How does it (re)define your identity?

- · How does your association move away from other pied noir organizations?
- · How do you explain the growing support for far-right movements on the issue of decolonization and mass immigration?

3) Collective memory

- · How is the collective memory of the pieds noirs constructed?
- · How accurate is it? How do you relate to it?
- · In your opinion, is the pied noir topic sufficiently taught at school? What would you change?

4) Conclusion

- · What is their conclusion about their own story?
- · Ask them if they have any other aspects they would like to discuss

Appendix IV: Interview transcripts and signed consent forms

Available in French, upon request.