Performing the *Pied-Noir* Family: Weaving Narratives of Memory and Identity

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Submitted for the Degree of PhD

To the National University of Ireland, Galway

College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Celtic Studies

School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures

Discipline of French

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March 2014

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Declaration

I certify that this thesis is all my own work and that I have not obtained a degree in this university or elsewhere on the basis of this work.

Signed: Aoife Connolly Date: March 2013

Acknowledgements

This study was funded by an Irish Research Council Postgraduate Scholarship and by a Galway Doctoral Research Scholarship from the College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Celtic studies at NUI, Galway. Travel related to this thesis was facilitated by bursaries from NUI, Galway and the organisers of the "Algeria Revisited: Contested Identities in the Colonial and Postcolonial Periods" conference at the University of Leicester in April 2012.

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr Philip Dine, for sharing his invaluable expertise and for his much appreciated encouragement, advice and suggestions, as well as for introducing me to the history and literature of Algeria, thereby inspiring this academic journey of discovery.

I would also like to thank Dr Marion Krauthaker, Dr Sylvie Lannegrand and Dr Maria Scott for their helpful comments as members of my Graduate Research Committee; Dr Catherine Emerson for her participation in the PhD reading group and Dr Cathal Kilcline for advice about referencing. Sincere thanks to all the members of the French Department who have guided my learning in undergraduate and postgraduate studies and to Ms Emer O'Flynn for her valued assistance.

My gratitude also extends to those who kindly offered theses, articles or books: Dr Claire Eldridge, Dr Amy Hubbell, Dr Mairéad Ni Bhriain, Dr Máire Áine Ní Mhainnín, Dr John Strachan and M. Bernard Zimmermann; as well as to those who offered insights at conferences.

I would like to acknowledge the ever-helpful staff at the James Hardiman library at NUI, Galway, particularly Dr Geraldine Curtain, Ms Maura O'Malley and Ms Bríd Walsh in the Inter-Library Loans Department, and Research Support Librarians Ms Rosie Dunne and Ms Gwen Ryan. Thanks also to the staff of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

Special thanks to Kevin for his support and encouragement and to my family, especially to my unfailingly supportive parents, Patricia and Gene.

Abstract

Although the Algerian war (1954-1962) is now fifty years past, it remains a contentious issue in France. In the aftermath of this particularly violent conflict, the French public was encouraged to forget the hostilities and various communities involved in the war thus continue to seek a place in the national narrative, often by producing texts which feature their own version of events. One such group is the former European settlers of Algeria, most of whom fled to France in 1962. Against the backdrop of enduring stereotypes and myths associated with this community, which became known as the *pieds-noirs* during the war, this doctoral thesis examines how the settlers have represented themselves in literature and on-screen. It draws on theories of performativity to unravel some of the ways in which a *pied-noir* identity is informed by commemorative discourses. This thesis focuses on the *pied-noir* family as a key site of affective and ideological investment which may facilitate both inclusion and exclusion. More specifically, this study analyses performances of masculinity, femininity, adolescence and childhood as depicted in a variety of both autobiographical and fictional works by the settlers. Lesser known authors are considered, as are eminent writers from this community, including Albert Camus, Marie Cardinal and Hélène Cixous. Many of the variously fictional works analysed, despite appearing to be private stories, are revealed consciously to construct collective memory and to inform the performance of a communal post-independence identity.

Introduction

I The Algerian War and its Contested Legacy

The Algerian War, 1954-1962, was arguably the most traumatic war of decolonisation fought by Western colonial powers. The French had occupied Algeria since 1830 and it had formed three administrative *départements* of France since 1848. Thus, when conflict arose in 1954, the French administration could not conceive of a situation in which France was at war with itself and this *guerre sans nom* was referred to as *les événements* or *opérations de maintien de l'ordre*. Indeed, the war was only officially recognised in France in 1999. The conflict was particularly violent as Algeria was a *colonie de peuplement* in which approximately one million European settlers or *Français d'Algérie* lived alongside some nine million Algerians. It has been noted that decolonisation of settler colonies tends to be more violent due to the three-sided conflict that develops between the settlers, the colonial power and the indigenous population.[1] This was the case in Algeria as some *Français d'Algérie* became involved in the *Organisation de l'Armée Secrète* (OAS), a terrorist group opposing Algerian independence. As violence worsened on both sides at the close of the war, it became apparent that the *Français d'Algérie*, now known as the *pieds-noirs*, would not be able to continue living in the territory and the vast majority fled to France. The slogan at the time was "la valise ou le cercueil", subsequently immortalised in the eponymous novel by OAS activist Anne Loesch.[2] However, in the aftermath of the war, the French were encouraged to forgive and forget a particularly brutal war, with amnesties accorded in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s to those guilty of war crimes. The *pieds-noirs*, as a symbol of a failed colonial system, were an especially neglected aspect of the war and their mass migration to France has remained "invisible" to a certain extent.[3] Their repatriation was

[1] See David Prochaska, "Making Algeria French and Unmaking French Algeria", *Journal of Historical Sociology* 3, no. 4 (1990): 307. Prochaska notes that despite this "three-way jockeying", the war in Algeria is usually depicted as a "two-way battle waged between the French on one side, and the Algerians on the other", while the role of the French of Algeria has not been "systematically analyzed".

[2] Anne Loesch, *La Valise et le cercueil* (Paris: Plon, 1963).

[3] See Andrea L. Smith, "Introduction: Europe's Invisible Migrants", in *Europe's Invisible Migrants*, ed. Andrea L. Smith (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), 9. Smith notes the invisibility in academic literature of populations "repatriated" to Europe after decolonisation movements since the

particularly traumatic as many of the former settlers had never been to France before. In fact, they had originated from all over Europe, particularly from Spain, Italy and Malta, as well as from France, although administrative statistics from 1843 suggest that there were also settlers from Germany, Switzerland and even Ireland.[4] Many of these settlers hoped to escape from the poverty of their birth countries, while some were political exiles from France's Second Empire or from the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine following the Franco-Prussian war.[5] France's efforts to colonise Algeria with a majority of settlers from metropolitan France proved to be largely unsuccessful and officials therefore decided to naturalise Jews in Algeria as French citizens in 1870, while European settlers were naturalised by laws passed in 1889 and 1893. These populations together formed the *Français d'Algérie*, who are now known as the *pieds-noirs*.

Although it is over 50 years since Algerian independence and the exodus of almost one million *pieds-noirs*, France's colonial legacy remains a problematic subject. Issues associated with immigration from the former colonies in North Africa still prove controversial, as was evident in 2009, when President Nicolas Sarkozy launched a debate on French identity. [6] The teaching of colonial history has also been a source of contention, most notably in 2005, when the second paragraph of article 4 of the "loi du 23 février" stated that the positive role of colonisation would be taught in schools – a clause which was eventually repealed by President Jacques Chirac, who himself served in the Algerian war.[7] Another source of contention is the commemoration of the war. The adoption of a controversial law in 2012, which

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Second World War, which she estimates at between five and seven million people over approximately 35 years.

[4] Andrea L. Smith, *Colonial Memory and Postcolonial Europe: Maltese Settlers in Algeria and France* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006), 73. The arrival of 130 Irish settlers in Bône in 1869 is also described by Xavier Yacono, "Les Composantes d'une communauté", in *Les Pieds-Noirs*, ed. Emmanuel Roblès (Paris: Philippe Lebaud, 1982), 65.

[5] Philip Dine, *Images of the Algerian War: French Fiction and Film, 1954-1992* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 150-151. Dine notes that the "myth of dispossession" promoted by the *pieds-noirs* serves to create sympathy for them and "denies the historical importance of the colonial profit motive".

[6] See, for example, an interview with historian Emmanuel Todd by Jean-Baptiste de Montvalon and Sylvia Zappi, "Ce que Sarkozy propose, c'est la haine de l'autre", *Le Monde*, 27 December 2009. See also Anonymous, "Debate on national identity stirs up passions over immigration", France 24, http://www.france24.com/en/20091206-debate-national-identity-stirs-passions-over-immigration/. Date accessed: 25 February 2014.

[7] For the presidential communiqué on this decision as well as the Ligue des droits de l'homme's own communiqué and commentary, see Anonymous, "Abrogation de l'article de loi sur le 'rôle positif' de la colonisation", LDH Toulon, http://www.ldh-toulon.net/spip.php?article1151. Date accessed: 15 October 2013.

stated that 19 March 1962 – the date of the ceasefire in Algeria – would be a national day of remembrance for civilian and military victims of the conflict, was condemned by associations representing both the *pieds-noirs* and the *harkis* (Algerian auxiliaries who sided with the French) due to the large number of casualties from both of these groups after this date.[8] For many of the *pieds-noirs*, two events which took place after the ceasefire have been a significant source of trauma: the French army's opening fire on a crowd of *Français d'Algérie* during a demonstration on the Rue d'Isly in Algiers on 26 March 1962, leaving over forty dead; and the massacre of many more at the hands of indigenous Algerians during independence celebrations in Oran on 5 July 1962 – an incident in which the army was slow to intervene.[9]

In the contemporary period, sporadic rioting in Parisian *banlieues* has been linked to France's troubled colonial past. Andrew Hussey considers the 2005 disturbances, along with rioting in Gare du Nord in March 2007, to be "only the latest and most dramatic form of engagement with the enemy", in a battle that dates from colonial times.[10] In Hussey's analysis, France's policy of *laïcité* can "very quickly resemble the 'civilising mission' of colonialism" for Muslim immigrants, while the *banlieues* may be regarded as "the most literal representation of 'otherness'".[11] By the same token, Stephen Graham, analysing Foucault's concept of the "boomerang effect" ("l'effet de retour") of colonialism,[12] identifies the 2005 riots as "the latest in a long line of reactions towards the increasing militarisation and

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[8] Guillaume Perrault, "Guerre d'Algérie: feu vert au 19 mars; La proposition de loi PS, approuvée par le Sénat, est définitivement adoptée par le Parlement", *Le Figaro*, 9 November 2012. Antoine Fouchet, "Le souvenir de la guerre d'Algérie divise encore les parlementaires; La proposition de loi PS faisant du 19 mars le jour du souvenir de la guerre d'Algérie n'a pas fait l'unanimité, hier, au Sénat. Les associations de pieds-noirs et de harkis dénoncent le choix de cette date", *La Croix*, 9 November 2012.

[9] The number of casualties and deaths for both incidents remains contested. For the Rue d'Isly incident, the number of deaths is generally cited as between 40 and 90. The number of deaths on 5 July in Oran is less clear. It is not mentioned by Stora in his list of unrecognised massacres in *La Gangrène et l'oubli* (Paris: La Découverte, 1998) but is a recurring theme in many texts by or published interviews with the *pieds-noirs*. For example, one of Savarèse's interviewees cites a figure of 3,000 dead or missing among the French Algerian and pro-French indigenous population. See Éric Savarèse, *L'Invention des pieds-noirs* (Paris: Séguier, 2002), 124. Buono quotes the Algiers military headquarters' figure, dated 14 July 1962, of 25 dead and 218 missing, but cites a figure of over 3,000 disappeared Europeans up to 31 December 1962. See Clarisse Buono, *Pieds-noirs de père en fils* (Paris: Balland, 2004), 91.

[10] Andrew Hussey, "The French Intifada: how the Arab banlieues are fighting the French state", *The Observer*, 23 February 2014.

[11] Ibid.

[12] See "Cours du 4 février 1976", in which Foucault refers to "l'effet de retour [...] de la pratique coloniale", in Michel Foucault, "«Il faut défendre la société»: Cours au collège de France (1975-1976)" (Paris: Association pour le Centre Michel Foucault, 2012), http://ae-editions.eklablog.com/foucault-il-faut-defendre-la-societe-a59223077. Date accessed: 15 October 2013.

securitisation" of the country, resulting from a form of "internal colonisation", in which the *banlieues* are "'near peripheral' reservations attached to, but distant from, the main metropolitan cores of the country".[13] The 2005 riots were specifically linked to the Algerian war in the French press, in relation to the bitter memories revived when a law instituting a state of emergency, enacted during the conflict in 1955, was used again to enforce a curfew in the *banlieues*.[14] One of these articles, from *Le Figaro*, may be mentioned here as an example of enduring stereotypes of the *pieds-noirs*.[15]

Positioning the riots as the result of previously repressed trauma from the war, author Alain-Gérard Slama claims that the *pieds-noirs* have, unlike immigrants of North African extraction, successfully integrated in France despite a difficult arrival in 1962.[16] The former settlers appear in the following description as naive, easily manipulated, prone to lawlessness, destructive and bitter, and are arguably regarded as not quite French, although they are keen to be recognised as such:

> A certains égards, la violence des immigrés d'aujourd'hui rappelle le désespoir des pieds-noirs manipulés par l'OAS sur leur terre natale à la fin de la guerre d'Algérie: même propension à s'enfermer dans des zones de non-droit, même instinct suicidaire de destruction, même acharnement à s'en prendre aux symboles de l'ordre public, écoles, administrations, services sociaux. On peut même se demander si l'on ne trouve pas, partiellement, un appel du même ordre à se voir reconnaître comme des «Français à part entière» chez les jeunes des banlieues et chez les pieds-noirs qui ont vécu dans l'humiliation et la colère, les mépris [*sic*] de la métropole.[17]

The latter are, however, regarded as being at a cultural advantage compared to other immigrants, because of their experience of the French education system, their use of the French language, and their Judeo-Christian heritage, with the journalist deciding that "Ils ont enrichi la France de leur capacité de travail et de leur bonne humeur".[18]

Such enduring stereotypes about the *pieds-noirs* may be read as an indication of France's failure to engage with its colonial history, including that of the former settlers. Thus, as Philip Dine notes, despite the publication of a vast number of works

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[13] Stephen Graham, "Foucault's Boomerang – The New Military Urbanism", *Development Dialogue* 58 (April 2012): 40.
[14] Alain-Gérard Slama, "Banlieues: le trauma colonial", *Le Figaro*, 14 November 2005. Isabelle Ligner, "Pour des Algériens, le recours à une loi de 1955 est une 'provocation'", AFP, 8 November 2005, LexisNexis.
[15] Slama, "Banlieues: le trauma colonial". North African immigrants are also stereotyped in this article but it is representations of the *pieds-noirs* which are of interest for our study.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.

by private, often unknown individuals on the subject of the war, France was, until very recently, frequently considered by scholars as having a non-existent literary corpus on the subject.[19] We might usefully note here that fifty years after independence, an official from France's National Archives explained its website's short essay on "the end of the Algerian war", which contained no mention of the *harkis*, nor any specific reference to the *pieds-noirs* or to the OAS, by stating that the subject was still too raw for more details to be given.[20] Furthermore, Pierre Nora, despite having published a critical text on the *Français d'Algérie* in 1961, based on his experience as a teacher in Oran, neglected to include Algeria in his influential work *Les Lieux de mémoire* (1984-1992), which contains essays by historians on symbolic sites of memory with regard to French identity and culture. Aside from an essay by Charles-Robert Ageron on the international colonial exhibition in Paris in 1931, France's colonial legacy is markedly absent from the collection.[21] Commenting on this absence, Richard Derderian rightly wonders whether some sites of memory are "simply too contentious and too divisive to be enshrined and perpetuated in the kinds of symbolic sites of memory that inspire Nora's collection" and points to the French state's "willful forgetting as its primary strategy toward the Algerian War and [...] much of the imperial past".[22]

The initial official silence regarding the trauma of the war and subsequent enduring gaps in the transmission of a national memory of the subject have now been widely discussed by scholars.[23] There has undoubtedly been a progressive *ouverture* with regard to the war, facilitated by the opening up of archives, particularly those of the French army, during the 1990s. Nevertheless, as the celebrated historian of the war, and himself a French Algerian, Benjamin Stora notes, the existence of

[19] Philip Dine, "Reading and remembering *la guerre des mythes*: French literary representations of the Algerian war", *Modern & Contemporary France* 2, no. 2 (1994):143-144.

[20] Anonymous, "France Remembers the Algerian War, 50 Years On", France 24, http://www.france 24.com/en/20120316-commemorations-mark-end-algerian-war-independence-france-evian-accords. Date accessed: 24 February 2014. While this article states that there are four paragraphs in this essay, there are now eight paragraphs, written by historian Guy Pervillé, which do mention the *harkis*, the OAS and the "population française d'Algérie". See Guy Pervillé, "Fin de la guerre d'Algérie", Archives de France, http://www.archivesdefrance.culture.gouv.fr/action-culturelle/celebrations-nationales/recueil-2012/institutions-et-vie-politique/fin-de-la-guerre-d-algerie/. Date accessed: 16 October 2013.

[21] See Pierre Nora, ed. *Les Lieux de mémoire I: La République* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984), 561-591.

[22] Richard L. Derderian, "Algeria as a *lieu de mémoire:* Ethnic Minority Memory and National Identity in Contemporary France", *Radical History Review*, no. 83 (Spring 2002): 29.

[23] See, for example, Raphaëlle Branche, *La Guerre d'Algérie: une histoire apaisée?* (Paris: Seuil, 2005). Stora, *La Gangrène et l'oubli*. Jo McCormack, *Collective Memory: France and the Algerian War (1954-1962)* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2007).

previously latent "guerres de mémoires" between different groups (French army officers, Algerian victims of torture, OAS commandos and *harkis*), who have vied for a place in France's national narrative, is now a manifest feature of cultural and political life, especially since the 2005 controversy about the "loi du 23 février".[24] It is against this backdrop that the present thesis will, by exploring the *pieds-noirs*, seek to make an original contribution to the understanding of France's still contested colonial past.

II The *Pieds-Noirs* – A Taboo Topic

Stora cautions against what he calls "les mémoires cloisonnées" of the continuing memory wars, which mitigate against reconciliation,[25] and it is true that much of the existing scholarship on the *pieds-noirs* has been written by members of that community. Daniel Leconte, a former settler, published a history in 1980 with a new edition appearing in 2006.[26] Leconte, however, does not appear to be impartial and acknowledges his desire to show a positive side to the French presence in Algeria.[27] Another early historical analysis was completed by French Algerian Xavier Yacono in 1982.[28] Jean-Jacques Jordi has carried out much of the contemporary historical analysis on the subject.[29] Nonetheless, at times, Jordi, another *pied-noir*, also appears to be emotionally involved in the subject, such as when he notes that the Algeria of the 1950s owed its good land thanks in very large part to the settlers.[30]

Historian Joëlle Hureau's *La Mémoire des pieds-noirs*, first published in 1987 and republished in 2001 and 2010, is one of the first significant scholarly works on *pied-noir* memory and identity. The author discusses the settlement of Algeria, complete with descriptions of the innovations of some of the "pionniers", the formation of an "Algerian" memory among settlers and the imaginative reconstruction of Algeria by the *pieds-noirs* following their exile – a process which

[24] Benjamin Stora, "Algérie-France, mémoires sous tension", *Le Monde*, 18 March 2012.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Daniel Leconte, *Camus, si tu savais... suivi de Les Pieds-Noirs* (Paris: Seuil, 2006).
[27] Ibid., iv.
[28] See Yacono, "Les Composantes d'une communauté" and by the same author, "Pourquoi pieds-noirs?", in Roblès, *Les Pieds-Noirs*, 57-71, 15-19.
[29] Jean-Jacques Jordi, *De l'exode à l'exil: Rapatriés et pieds-noirs en France: l'exemple marseillais, 1954-1992* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1993), 232. See also by the same author *Les Pieds-Noirs* (Paris: Le Cavalier Bleu, 2009) and "The Creation of the Pieds-Noirs: Arrival and Settlement in Marseilles, 1962", in Smith, *Europe's Invisible Migrants*, 61-74.
[30] Jordi, *Les Pieds-Noirs*, 51.

cemented a sense of identity marked by what she calls “Algerian traits” such as loyalty, work, courage, a sense of humour, frankness, family, protective mothers, boys who learn to hold back tears while men openly express their sorrow, and an interest in everyday life rather than politics.[31] Although Hureau’s study has been praised as one of the works by a *pied-noir* which strives to be impartial,[32] her affiliations and background are not mentioned (she was born in Tunisia, according to a biography for a conference),[33] nor does she reveal any details about the interviewees who formed the basis for her research. Indeed, in a rather harsh review, Valérie Morin suggests the work is not of historical, scientific or sociological merit, noting “Il a simplement le mérite d’exister et c’est le seul à son époque”.[34] With Albert Camus among several other creative writers appearing in the bibliography of Hureau’s work, creative writing seems to have informed her impressions and the contribution of both literature and film to the formation of *pied-noir* memory and identity will be central to this thesis.

Subsequent works by members of the *pied-noir* community include Danielle Michel-Chich’s *Déracinés* (1990) and Clarisse Buono’s *Pieds-noirs de père en fils* (2004). In the former, Michel-Chich describes leaving Algeria having lived there for the first eleven years of her childhood.[35] Although this book is not impartial, it is of interest for its collection of extracts from seventy interviews, such as with the author Marie Elbe, who will be studied here in Chapter 2.[36] Sociologist Buono, meanwhile, declares herself to be the daughter of *pied-noir* parents, draws attention to potential difficulties regarding her objectivity as a researcher, and gives details about her interviewees, who include both *pieds-noirs* and their children.[37] In what appears to be a more scientific work, the author describes a collective *pied-noir* memory and an identity formed after 1962, which is based on a concept of victimisation, particularly

[31] Joëlle Hureau, *La Mémoire des pieds-noirs: de 1830 à nos jours* (Paris: Perrin, 2010). See in particular Chapter 10, 269-307.
[32] Savarèse, *L’Invention des pieds-noirs*, 37.
[33] Anonymous, “Joëlle Hureau-Artigau”, Sénat, http://www.senat.fr/evenement/colloque/france_algerie_comprendre_le_passe_pour_mieux_construire_lavenir/joelle_hureau.html?iframe=true&width=700&height=350. Date accessed: 22 October 2013.
[34] Valérie Morin, “Bilan des études sur les rapatriés”, Hermès, http://www.hermes.jussieu.fr/rephisto.php?id=66. Date accessed: 8 March 2011. Hureau refers to this review, which she rejects, in an introductory commentary to the 2010 edition of her *La Mémoire des pieds-noirs*, 9-10.
[35] Danielle Michel-Chich, *Déracinés: les pieds-noirs aujourd’hui* (Paris: Plume, 1990), 10.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Buono, *Pieds-noirs*. See especially 7-15.

with regard to their neglected history.[38] She contends that this identity will eventually self-destruct as their history becomes better known, although she believes it can survive in a different form if the descendants of the *pieds-noirs* accept that the Algeria of their forefathers no longer exists.[39]

Jeannine Verdès-Leroux's *Les Français d'Algérie de 1830 à aujourd'hui* (2001) is significant as the work of a non-*pied-noir* who seeks to understand the neglected topic of the community's history by interviewing the former settlers.[40] Verdès-Leroux explains the behaviour of those who argued in favour of colonialism as a repetition of a Republican discourse forged in the 1880s and maintained throughout the first half of the twentieth century, and she appears to be sympathetic to their predicament.[41] Political scientist Éric Savarèse's *L'Invention des pieds-noirs* (2002) is also significant as one of the rare works on the *Français d'Algérie* which is not what he calls an "égo-histoire", i.e. a text in which the *pieds-noirs* themselves try to set the record straight about their history.[42] Indeed, Savarèse suggests that little is known about the *pieds-noirs* outside their own community and a narrow circle of historians and social scientists, showing most notably that the settlers are largely excluded from school texts dealing with the war.[43] He goes on to discuss a *pied-noir* identity which was "invented" after the repatriation of a group of diverse individuals, and notes in his conclusion that stereotypes about the *pieds-noirs* need to be patiently deconstructed.[44] He also suggests that the literary output of the *pieds-noirs* may be richer in information than the academic studies carried out to date.[45] This thesis will seek to respond to both of these observations precisely by deconstructing stereotypes through an examination of the literary output of the *pieds-noirs*. A 2009 study by another political scientist, Emmanuelle Comtat, analyses the voting habits of the

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[38] Ibid. See in particular 57-110. Similarly, "a contest over the space and image of the victim" with regard to France's colonial past has been outlined by Michael O'Riley, who contends that "the refusal of the victim's posture is central to arresting the cycle of victimization". See Michael F. O'Reilly, *Cinema in an Age of Terror: North Africa, Victimization, and Colonial History* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 2, 20. Cited in Philip Dine, "Review: Michael F. O'Riley, Cinema in an Age of Terror: North Africa, Victimization, and Colonial History", *H-France* 12, no. 39 (2012), http://www.hfrance.net/ vol12reviews/vol12no39Dine.pdf. Date accessed: 20 February 2014.

[39] Buono, *Pieds-noirs*, 135, 188.

[40] Jeannine Verdès-Leroux, *Les Français d'Algérie de 1830 à aujourd'hui* (Paris: Fayard, 2001).

[41] Ibid.

[42] Savarèse, *L'Invention des pieds-noirs*. See Chapter 1, 25-61.

[43] Ibid., 46.

[44] Ibid., 258.

[45] Ibid., 76.

former settlers, a group she feels remain "assez mal connus".[46] For her part, Comtat concludes that the *pied-noir* vote is "multiforme" but that the trauma of the Algerian war has differentiated this group from the metropolitan French as the majority of the *pieds-noirs* are today politically positioned on the right.[47] However, while she states that many have probably voted for the FN, there are also a large number who are likely to have never supported this extreme right party.[48]

Claire Eldridge's work seeks to redress the lack of critical attention to the *pieds-noirs* in academic circles until very recently.[49] Eldridge focuses on the output of *pied-noir* associations in bulletins and magazines, calling the activists in these associations "memory entrepreneurs".[50] She also points to comparisons by *pied-noir* associations of their history with international events (for example the September 11 2001 terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre) as a means of strengthening their constructed narratives.[51] Activists' efforts to win France's "memory wars" are also revealed by the work of two associations founded in Carnoux-en-Provence, a South-Eastern French town which was itself constructed as an idealised reproduction of French Algeria.[52] Moreover, by analysing the output of *pied-noir* associations, as well as documentaries aired in France regarding return visits by some former settlers to Algeria, Eldridge suggests that the collective memory disseminated by associations has changed little over the years,[53] a point which is of interest for our own study of representations of the *Français d'Algérie* in literature and film. Further recent work on *pied-noir* associations has been carried out by ethnographer Victoria M. Phaneuf, who considers the activities of these and North African cultural associations as a form of boundary maintenance in a multi-ethnic French society

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[46] Emmanuelle Comtat, *Les Pieds-Noirs et la politique: quarante ans après le retour* (Paris: Sciences Po, 2009), 15.
[47] Ibid., 292.
[48] Ibid., 293.
[49] Claire Eldridge, "The *Pied-Noir* community and the complexity of 'coming home' to Algeria", in *Coming Home? Conflict and Postcolonial Return Migration in the Context of France and North Africa, 1962-2009*, vol. 2 of *Conflict and Return Migration in Twentieth-Century Europe*, ed. Scott Soo and Sharif Gemie (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Press, forthcoming).
[50] Claire Eldridge, "Returning to the 'Return': *Pied-Noir* Memories of 1962", *Revue Européenne des Migrations Internationales* (forthcoming).
[51] Ibid.
[52] Claire Eldridge, "'Le symbole de l'Afrique perdue': Carnoux-en-Provence and the *Pied-Noir* Community", in *France's Lost Empires: Fragmentation, Nostalgia, and la fracture coloniale*, ed. Kate Marsh and Nicola Frith (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2011), 125-136.
[53] Eldridge, "The *Pied-Noir* community".

which seeks to subsume minority identities.[54] Valuable anthropological work has also been carried out by Andrea L. Smith, who studied the setting up of associations for settlers of Maltese origin and their frequent "pilgrimages" to Malta.[55] Smith concludes that the landscape, language, buildings, music and shop-signs in Malta allow the *pieds-noirs* to experience an "idealized French Algeria, a sanitized variation on the colonial past", in which the indigenous population does not exist.[56]

III Telling Tales in Literature and Film

This thesis focuses on the invention of *pied-noir* memory and identity through the writing of fictional and autobiographical stories. The role of telling tales (*histoires*) both privately and publicly in the generation of history (*Histoire*) has been acknowledged as being especially important with regard to France's complex history in Algeria and subsequent attempts to suppress this history after the war.[57] Indeed, Benjamin Stora has produced a bibliography of the vast quantity of books produced since the beginning of the conflict, which he reflects upon in *Le livre, mémoire de l'Histoire* (2005), in which he argues that such works, produced by different groups, are usually overlooked by historians but are extremely important as vectors of knowledge and as regards cultural history and memory, thus becoming "*une archive à part entière*".[58] However, despite the significant corpus produced by the *Français d'Algérie* since their repatriation, there have been relatively few studies of such works. Films or TV series targeted at national or even global audiences are another extremely effective means of creating memories with regard to colonial Algeria. In fact, William B. Cohen has described films as "apparently the most powerful means by which memories are created in the contemporary world", although with regard to the construction of memories of the Algerian war he notes that they "were unable to

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[54] Victoria M. Phaneuf, "Negotiating culture, performing identities: North African and Pied-Noir associations in France", *The Journal of North African Studies* 17, no. 4 (2012): 671-686.
[55] Smith, *Colonial Memory and Postcolonial Europe*.
[56] Ibid., 225.
[57] See Dine, "Reading and remembering *la guerre des mythes*", 141-142. On the theme of literature in Algeria and history, see also David Prochaska, "History as Literature, Literature as History: Cagayous of Algiers", *The American Historical Review* 101, no. 3 (June 1996): 670-711.
[58] Benjamin Stora, *Le Livre, mémoire de l'Histoire: Réflexions sur le livre et la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Le Préau des Collines, 2005), 7. Stora's emphasis.

create a consensual image".[59] Hence representations of the *pieds-noirs* on-screen will also be of interest in our study.

This thesis will follow on from the work of Dine, who analysed French fiction and films of the Algerian war from 1954-1992.[60] In an afterword to his study which brings his analysis up to 2001, Dine points to the destabilising potential of feminine and young narrative voices and to the development of new "modes of remembering" with regard to the Algerian conflict.[61] This work will continue such analysis up to the present day, but will focus specifically on the *pieds-noirs*, including female and young narrators. The significant work of Peter Dunwoodie on French Algerian literature is also engaged with in this project. Dunwoodie traces the literature of the colony from the Orientalist writing of early visitors such as Eugène Fromentin, through the Algerianist writers of the 1920s – who, drawing on the colonialist fiction of Louis Bertrand and inspired by the writings of Robert Randau, constructed a concept of *Afrique latine* – to the *École d'Alger* movement of the mid-1930s to the 1950s, which featured Albert Camus as its most famous writer and focused on a united Mediterranean identity.[62] Dunwoodie's study shows differing attempts to construct an identity that would explain the colony's "allegiance (to France) and its difference".[63] He explains that such constructions of an imagined settler identity were constantly under threat in the colony, hence the applicability of Homi Bhabha's concept of the "belatedness" that marks writing designed to rehabilitate the presence of settlers in the colony.[64] Dunwoodie consequently highlights "fiction's part in narrating the creation of a colony".[65] Our discussion will show the role of fiction (often mixed with autobiographical testimony) in the creation and preservation of a post-independence *pied-noir* identity which is marked by the Algerian war or by an engagement with the real possibility of the end of colonial Algeria. It is useful to note at this point that Janine de la Hogue (herself a *pied-noir*) dates the beginning of this body of writing to 1954.[66] Marie Cardinal, however,

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[59] William B. Cohen, "The Algerian War and French Memory", *Contemporary European History* 9, no. 3 (November 2000): 490.
[60] Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*.
[61] Philip Dine, "(Still) À la recherche de l'Algérie perdue: French Fiction and Film, 1992-2001", *Historical Reflections* 28, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 267-262, 270.
[62] Peter Dunwoodie, *Writing French Algeria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
[63] Ibid., 1.
[64] Ibid., 266.
[65] Ibid., 301.
[66] Janine de la Hogue, "Les Livres comme patrie", in Roblès, *Les Pieds-Noirs*, 113.

considers World War II to have been a moment of simultaneous separation from and unification with France and thereby as the defining moment for the birth of an as-yet-unnamed *pied-noir* identity.[67] Our study also considers Rosemarie Jones's valuable critique of French Algerian literature up to the 1970s.[68] Yet, while Jones concludes that *pied-noir* literature was dying in the twentieth century, "deprived of [...] the need for justification which was its initial and sustaining inspiration",[69] this thesis will include the study of contemporary narratives.

Amy Hubbell's more recent work focuses on the real and imagined returns to Algeria by some of the settlers.[70] Hubbell's study focuses mainly on Marie Cardinal. This writer's propensity to return to the same scene in different works, as well as the significance of the motif of return for the *pieds-noirs* more generally, is considered in the light of psychoanalyst Jacques Mauger's research on memory and repetition (as well as the theories of Sigmund Freud, Judith Butler and Marie-Laure Bardèche) as a pleasurable way of repressing unsavoury aspects of the past and avoiding the present.[71] Marie Cardinal and Hélène Cixous have also been included in Fiona Barclay's study of France's construction of its identity in the postcolonial era, with Barclay contending that these authors challenge the concept of a unified Republic through their literary memories of Algeria.[72] Both Hubbell and Barclay have drawn attention to the French Algerian identity of Cardinal and Cixous, both of whom are often mistaken for metropolitan French, and these authors will also be considered here, specifically with regard to their performance of a *pied-noir* femininity – a subject which remains largely unexplored as gender and postcolonial studies tend to focus on colonised rather than colonising populations. John Strachan has also made a valuable contribution to the study of the *Français d'Algérie* by showing how the European settlers were not simply agents of colonialism but were themselves subject to Republican mythologies which attempted to influence them culturally but which

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[67] Marie Cardinal, *Les Pieds-Noirs* (Paris: Belfond, 1988), 46, 72.
[68] Rosemarie Jones, "*Pied-Noir* Literature: The Writing of a Migratory Elite", in *Writing Across Worlds: Literature and Migration*, ed. Russell King, John Connell, and Paul White (London: Routledge, 1995), 125-140.
[69] Ibid., 138.
[70] Amy L. Hubbell, "(Re) Writing Home: Repetition and Return in Pied-Noir Literature" (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 2003).
[71] Ibid. See in particular Chapters 4, 5 and 6, 165-250.
[72] Fiona Barclay, "Postcolonial France? The problematisation of Frenchness through North African immigration: A literary study of metropolitan novels, 1980-2000" (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Glasgow, 2006). See Chapter 5, 204-240.

they, in turn, helped to shape,[73] and his study of Camus will be referred to in Chapter 1.

Another recent work on *pied-noir* writers examines their differing reactions to the Algerian war, which have been largely neglected apart from the much-criticised views of Albert Camus.[74] In *Les Écrivains pieds-noirs face à la guerre d'Algérie (1954-1962)*, Wolf Albes studies novels and texts by Camus and lesser known *pied-noir* authors – Jean Brune, Roger Curel (the pseudonym of Roger Rosfelder), his brother André Rosfelder, Robert Merle, Janine Montupet, Marcel Moussy, Jean Pélégri, Emmanuel Roblès and Jules Roy – in order to show that Camus, "le «maître de l'Algérie» est allé encore plus loin dans ses réflexions et qu'il a pris des positions beaucoup plus radicales par rapport à la sauvegarde de son pays natal – et de son caractère multiethnique – que beaucoup de ses compatriotes".[75] This work is valuable in its examination of previously neglected writers. However, Albes does not appear to approach his subject matter with objectivity. An opening epigraph from Michel Onfray's 2012 rehabilitation of Camus, *L'Ordre libertaire: La vie philosophique d'Albert Camus* (discussed here in Chapter 1), a dedication to the *pieds-noirs* and the *harkis*, among others, and a "bras d'honneur à toute la meute totalitaire des champions de la repentance à sens unique", sets a certain tone. A preface by Maurice Calmein, founder of the *Cercle Algérianiste* (an organisation which aims to safeguard French Algerian culture), notes the German author's passion for "ce peuple à l'épopée héroïque, tourmenté par une guerre civile cruelle à l'issue pathétique, déraciné dans un exode sans précédent et dispersé dans l'exil".[76] Calmein also positions Albes as an honourary *pied-noir* who, against the incursion of political correctness, understands "l'âme pied-noir et la nature profonde des relations qui unissaient les Européens et les autochtones d'Algérie, et ceux-ci avec les «Français de France»".[77] Our study will aim for a more objective analysis of works by the *pied-noirs* and will also distinguish itself from Albes's study (which focuses on works written before 1962) by examining contemporary as well as earlier narratives.

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[73] John Strachan, "Reshaping the Mythologies of Frenchness: Culture, History and Identity in European Algeria, 1870-1930" (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Manchester, 2006).
[74] Wolf Albes, *Les Écrivains pieds-noirs face à la guerre d'Algérie (1954-1962)* (Friedberg: Atlantis, 2012).
[75] Ibid., 21.
[76] Ibid., 9.
[77] Ibid., 10.

A recent doctoral study of representations of the *pieds-noirs* in literature and film has been completed by Jean Brager.[78] Brager insists on the heterogeneity of the *pieds-noirs*, drawing on Hureau's work to show the history of a diverse settler population.[79] While some literature by *pied-noir* authors is criticised in his thesis for its amnesia regarding colonisation, Brager does not analyse these texts in detail. Instead, he underscores what he considers to be the productive hybrid identity of the Arabic-speaking Jean Pélégri and the Jewish Hélène Cixous as well as outlining what he perceives to be positive representations of "l'âme" *pied-noir* and "la sensibilité *pied-noir*", by, for example, French playwright Bernard-Marie Koltès, *pied-noir* cartoonist Jacques Fernandez and French film director André Téchiné, whose film, *Les Roseaux sauvages*, is referred to in our own study in Chapter 4. Brager's thesis closes with a discussion of authors Laurent Mauvignier and Annelise Roux, whom he believes undermine stereotypes, thereby paving the way for a type of productive, questioning "piednoiritude". The author's emphasis on the hybrid and complex nature of *pied-noir* identity appears to suggest that the settlers as a group are uniquely positioned to access the world of "l'autre". His praise of certain works that show "l'âme" or "la sensibilité" *pied-noir* also evokes a collective identity, while his description of early *pied-noir* writers and the settler population in general as adolescents whose growth was disrupted is problematic.[80] It is perhaps worth noting here that Brager refers to his family's "destin de Français d'Algérie" in his acknowledgements.[81]

Itself the work of a *pied-noir*, Lucienne Martini's *Racines de papier: Essai sur l'expression littéraire de l'identité pieds-noirs* (1997), described as the "Premier bilan de cette littérature spécifiquement née de l'indépendance de l'Algérie", is of particular relevance to our study. Martini's analysis is significant for the vast number of works categorised. It also contains a useful year-by-year bibliography of works published between 1963 and 1995. Those works discussed appear as symbolic *lieux de mémoire* and thus durable markers of an identity which was "violently" affirmed

[78] Jean X. Brager, "Le Minaret des souvenirs: Représentations littéraires, visuelles et cinématographiques de l'identité pied-noir" (unpublished PhD dissertation, Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, 2011).
[79] Ibid. See especially Chapter 1, 12-42.
[80] Ibid., 65-66.
[81] Ibid., 3.

after the exodus.[82] Martini also divides such literature into different phases, which may be usefully referenced here. The first phase, immediately after 1962, appears as a pained and angry reaction to exile, with the publication of witness accounts which were often polemical.[83] Phase two was marked by nostalgia for Algeria as the *Français d'Algérie* strove to recreate a lost world – a "nostalgérie",[84] which Martini states was often confused with nostalgia for a lost childhood, thus marking the appearance of memoirs and autobiographies on idealised childhoods and adolescence. Martini contends that these can be an important step in mourning, although if they continue they can prevent their authors from confronting the present.[85] Testimonies of returning to Algeria are also a part of this phase.[86] The final phase, according to Martini, is one of appeasement and openness involving a more objective transmission of a realistic memory – one which is marked by the appearance not only of scholarly works by the *pieds-noirs* but also of "le roman familial", which seeks to write the saga of the founding fathers and to situate the history of the *Français d'Algérie* within that of France.[87] Martini points to the tendency of novels by *pied-noir* authors to engage with "real life", noting that "si le récit devient parfois fabulation, il reste fabulation sincère, car prenant le passé comme projet, il s'appuie sur la mémoire dont on connaît les possibilités d'altération".[88] She also suggests that writing personal stories is a way of re-establishing the unity of a society structured around the extended family – a unity which was fractured by repatriation.[89] Our own thesis takes up Martini's reference to

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[82] Lucienne Martini, *Racines de papier: Essai sur l'expression littéraire de l'identité Pieds-Noirs* (Paris: Publisud, 1997). See back cover.
[83] Ibid., 6.
[84] Ibid., 44. Martini states that this term originated with Henry de Montherlant, a theory also suggested by Philip Dine, who adds that it appeared in Montherlant's *La Rose de Sable*, which was written between 1930-32 and published in 1967. See Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, 150. Martini and de la Hogue also trace the usage of the term to a 1971 clinical study of the *pieds-noirs* by that title by a Dr Guigon. See de la Hogue, "Les Livres comme patrie", 121. Another *Français d'Algérie*, Jacques Derrida, famously refers to his "nostalgérie" in his philosophical exploration of language and identity, *Le Monolinguisme de l'autre ou la prothèse d'origine* (Paris: Galilée, 1996), 86. For a further discussion of this, see Lynne Huffer, "Derrida's Nostalgeria", in *Algeria & France 1800-2000: Identity, Memory, Nostalgia*, ed. Patricia M.E. Lorcin (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2006), 228-246.
[85] Martini, *Racines de papier*, 6, 44. Here Martini cites the work of Anne Roche, "Deuil et mélancolie dans quelques autobiographies 'nostalgériques' de l'après 1962", *Cahiers de sémiotique textuelle* 4 (1985): 96.
[86] Martini, *Racines de papier*, 7.
[87] Ibid., 7-8, 44.
[88] Ibid., 55.
[89] Ibid., 41.

literature as a sacred link to “la continuité familiale”.[90] The importance Martini accords the family and the “roman familial” is especially significant as our study will analyse representations of the *pieds-noirs* in literature and on-screen using this key paradigm as a means of exploring the construction of memory and the performance of identity. Our discussion will seek to add significantly to the existing body of scholarship by considering representations of the settlers in narratives as actively constructing, rather than simply reflecting, a distinctive “piednoiritude”.

IV The French Algerian Family – A Fundamental Trope

The significance of symbolic familial belonging is an enduring aspect of continuing memory wars, as revealed by a 2012 quotation from Stora: “Le risque existe d’une apparition de mémoire communautarisée, où chacun regarde l’histoire d’Algérie à travers son vécu, son appartenance familiale”.[91] It is also worth noting that the “dynamics of exclusion and inclusion” inherent in the process of colonisation are pointed to by Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler in the introduction to their *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (1997).[92] Indeed, they regard “the age of empire” as being shaped by “tensions between the exclusionary practices and universalizing claims of bourgeois culture”, which regards citizenship as, to use Geoffrey Eley’s phrase, “a faculty to be learned and a privilege to be earned”.[93] Cooper and Stoler suggest that the tensions between the inclusionary and exclusionary practices brought to the fore during the age of empire “are still present today”.[94] Indeed, French Algerian Jacques Derrida has pointed to the exclusionary immigration laws and borders imposed by states.[95] Our thesis takes affective and ideological attachment to the *pied-noir* family as a means of analysing a post-

[90] Ibid., 48.
[91] Stora, “Algérie-France, mémoires sous tension”.
[92] Frederick Cooper and Ann L. Stoler, “Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda”, in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Ann L. Stoler (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), 4.
[93] Ibid., 37, 3. Cooper and Stoler cite Geoffrey Eley, “Liberalism, Europe and the Bourgeoisie”, in *The German Bourgeoisie*, ed. David Blackburn and Richard Evans (London: Routledge, 1991), 293-317 (300).
[94] Cooper and Stoler, “Between Metropole and Colony”, 37.
[95] Dominique Dhombres, “Il n’y a pas de culture ni de lien social sans un principe d’hospitalité; ce penseur estime que c’est au nom de ce principe, pris absolument, qu’il faut inventer les meilleures mesures en matière d’immigration”, *Le Monde*, 2 December 1997. See also Safaa Fathy, *D’Ailleurs, Derrida* (France: Gloria Films, 1999).

independence identity which conforms to this simultaneously inclusionary and exclusionary model. This distinctive identity will be revealed as something to be earned (often through suffering), but which can also be learned through reading literature and watching films. Cooper and Stoler additionally highlight the crucial link between ostensibly intimate matters concerning sexuality and domesticity and the realm of power and politics, revealing the interest policy-makers took in the arrangements of family life during colonial encounters.[96] As Stoler notes, what may initially seem to be private familial attachments were, in fact, crucial to the running of empire, as "connections between parenting and colonial power, between nursing mothers and cultural boundaries, between servants and sentiments, and between illicit sex, orphans, and race emerge as central concerns of the state and at the heart of colonial politics".[97] Despite appearing to be a private matter, family relations and loyalties may consequently be linked to power in the colonial context as well as in today's world, which continues to be influenced by the politics of empire.

Published during the Algerian war, Roland Barthes's *Mythologies* (1957) critiques the myth of a universal human condition or "une famille de l'Homme", which naturalises humanity's actions instead of questioning them.[98] Although his essay does not explicitly refer to colonial rhetoric (which is criticised by Barthes in another essay, "Grammaire Africaine"),[99] its emphasis on the mystification of the family is particularly relevant to our theme. Yet there have been few considerations of this trope in relation to the settlers in Algeria, although the settlers' relationship with metropolitan France had long been evoked in terms of family. An exception may be found in Strachan's examination of the French republican values inculcated in schools in Algeria (in which missionary educators had had a head-start), in which he highlights an attempted reiteration in textbooks of the colonial-metropole relationship as a bond between mother (*la mère-patrie*) and infant, and thus of the European settlers as new members of a French family but also as *étrangers* or foreigners compared with ethnic French settlers.[100] As Strachan notes, however,

[96] Cooper and Stoler, "Between Metropole and Colony", 26.
[97] Ann L. Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), 8.
[98] Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (Paris: Seuil, 1957). See the essay "La Grande famille des hommes", 195-198.
[99] Ibid., 151-161.
[100] Strachan, "Reshaping the Mythologies of Frenchness". See Chapter 2, 87-131. A quotation, 115, from a 1923 textbook, for example, evokes Algeria as a "fille adoptive de la France", as well as mentioning "La race française" and "la population étrangère". Strachan cites Paul Bernard and Frantz

settler children appear not to have accepted Republican values uncritically, as childhood memoirs reveal a feeling of differentiation with regard to the metropole, while Algeria often appears as a mother figure.[101] Algeria as "une femme aimée, perdue" is also mentioned by Stora as a popular theme in publications by the *pieds-noirs*,[102] while Julia Clancy-Smith states that the "*mère-patrie* was a universally utilized concept employed to translate the relationship between rulers and ruled into a language expressing maternal bonds between mother and child".[103] The introduction to the latter volume also states that the settlers "rarely used a language of family or kinship to describe their day-to-day encounters with the Arab and Berber populations", who were instead viewed as "the enemy".[104] The developing concept of a *pied-noir* identity, however, will be seen to describe the Arab and Berber populations as members, although often distant ones, of a French Algerian family, particularly in nostalgic evocations of the colonial past from a position of exile. Our thesis thus complements and builds on Patricia Lorcin's recent study of colonial nostalgia, in which she notes that "The concept of Algeria as an extended 'happy family' is a recurring theme" for the former settlers.[105]

The theme of the *pied-noir* family, encompassing identifiable performances of masculinity, femininity and childhood, may be considered as a reaction to the anti-colonial stance of critics such as Frantz Fanon, who, in his famous treatise, *L'An V de la révolution algérienne* (1959) theorised a new concept of these roles, thanks to the participation of a united indigenous population in the Algerian war. This, in his view, saw a move away from traditional values and the birth of a new "famille algérienne": "une communauté spirituelle qui constitue le bastion le plus solide de la Révolution algérienne".[106] An emphasis on the family may also be considered as a response to negative images of *pied-noir* masculinity in France, as described by Todd

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Redon, *L'Algérie: histoire, colonisation, géographie, administration à l'usage des écoles primaires, des classes élémentaires des lycées et collèges de l'enseignement supérieure* (Algiers: Carbonel, 1937), 128-133.

[101] Strachan, "Reshaping the Mythologies of Frenchness", 122-123.

[102] Stora, *Le Livre, mémoire de l'Histoire*, 185.

[103] Julia Clancy-Smith, "Islam, Gender, and Identities in the Making of French Algeria, 1830-1962", in *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism*, ed. Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1998), 158.

[104] Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda, "Introduction", in Clancy-smith and Gouda, *Domesticating the Empire*, 9.

[105] Patricia M.E. Lorcin, *Historicizing Colonial Nostalgia: European Women's Narratives of Algeria and Kenya 1900-Present* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 177.

[106] Frantz Fanon, *L'An V de la révolution algérienne* (Paris: La Découverte, 2001), 106. See in particular the essays "l'Algérie se dévoile", 16-50, and "La famille algérienne", 83-106.

Shepard in his overview of the lasting consequences of decolonisation on France's national identity in *The Invention of Decolonization* (2006), which is further discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. Tellingly, this trope can also serve to depoliticise colonial history, as is evident from Hureau's claim that: "Le gros oeuvre de l'histoire des pieds-noirs apparaît essentiellement comme un conglomérat d'histoires familiales, similaires dans les grandes lignes. Plus qu'une histoire militaire ou politique, c'est une chronique domestique et prosaïque".[107]

Increasing affective attachment to the family may also be associated with exile. Thus, in an implicit reference to Camus's *L'Exil et le Royaume* (1957), Maurice Benassayag states, twenty years after his departure from Algeria, that his community's identity involves having been a minority in the "royaume" of Algeria, a "*mère* Méditerranée" from which they were "rejetée à peine adolescente", and then being an exiled minority in an unknown France.[108] In consequence, he portrays family and community as having become increasingly significant:

> La famille devait donc subsister comme le seul terrain où l'on n'avançât pas à découvert. La famille constitua le point d'ancrage et les nécessités de l'entraide donnèrent un peu plus de corps à ce lien. On peut avancer, vingt ans après, que cette communauté conserve le sens de la famille.[109]

The "esprit de famille qui perdure" among the *pieds-noirs* has also been commented on by Jordi,[110] while several other scholars reference a metaphorical *pied-noir* family. Buono, for example, states that "Aujourd'hui en France, la collectivité des rapatriés d'Algérie se donne *a priori* à voir comme une grande famille" – a family which is "éclatée, voire décomposée" and in which France appears as a "mère abusive" – themes which resurface frequently.[111] A 1979 publication is particularly striking in its evocation of the family, *Pieds-Noirs belle pointure: Onze portraits de famille*. In the preface to his eleven interviews with well-known personalities who are proudly proclaimed as *pied-noir*, Richard Koubi notes

[107] Hureau, *La Mémoire des pieds-noirs*, 159.
[108] Maurice Benassayag, "Familles, je vous aime", in Roblès, *Les Pieds-Noirs*, 162. Benassayag's emphasis.
[109] Ibid., 164.
[110] Jordi, *Les Pieds-Noirs*, 130.
[111] Buono, *Pieds-noirs*, 9, 29. See also, for example, Michel-Chich's description of an extended family unit in Algeria which was broken by repatriation but which remains a key element of identity, as evidenced by commemorations and get-togethers within the community. Michel-Chich, *Déracinés*, 104-106. Similar imagery can be found in Hureau, *La Mémoire des pieds-noirs*, 117, 102-103. The *pieds-noirs* are described here as orphans of a scattered family on their repatriation and France is depicted as an abusive stepmother.

that despite their diversity, those interviewed "restent conscients d'appartenir à une même famille dont ils portent et honorent le nom".[112] This text is notable for its appendix of other well-known *pieds-noirs*, including "cousins" from Morocco, Tunisia and some of the DOM-TOM, who have excelled in the realms of politics, economics, science, arts, entertainment, the media and sport, as well as those who have died.[113] The publication therefore appears as a means of identifying a *pied-noir* family which is set apart from the metropolitan French but which, as seen by the success in France of the interviewees, has also earned admittance to a broader French community. The inclusion and exclusion which marked the colonial system continue as markers of a *pied-noir* identity in this type of text.

Another striking example of the family trope is the title of Geneviève Baïlac's 1957 play *La Famille Hernandez*, the film version of which was released in 1964. Hureau, describing the play, cites a revealing quotation from Baïlac:

> Le propos intial était de donner à l'«homme nouveau» qui naissait [...] en dépit des politiques, des différences fondamentales, des heurts de nature, un homme que l'on pouvait rencontrer dans la rue avec son langage pittoresque émaillé d'expressions empruntées à toutes les langues parlées en Algérie [...] son verbe haut et son humour méditerranéen [...], le moyen d'expression le plus adapté à sa nature»: le théâtre.[114]

The theatrical performance of a "new" French Algerian masculinity is underlined here while politics is sidelined, as it is in the film version. In this story, set in Bab-el-Oued just before the outbreak of the Algerian war, the extended Hernandez family are part of a broader community who wash their children in the local fountain and willingly share their possessions. This family give all their furniture away when they think they have won money, only for all the neighbours to bring everything back when it turns out they were mistaken.[115] Their difference from the metropolitan French is underlined, not just by their strong accents and theatrical gestures, but by a comment from a new metropolitan teacher, who notes their similarities to but

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[112] Richard M. Koubi, *Pieds-Noirs belle pointure: Onze portraits de famille* (Paris: L'Atlanthrope, 1979), 10.
[113] Ibid., 195-219.
[114] Hureau, *La Mémoire des pieds-noirs*, 332. The influence of different languages on this dialect, known as *pataouète*, and its use in literature has been analysed by David Prochaska. See, for example, David Prochaska, *Making Algeria French: Colonialism in Bône, 1870-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 224-229. Baïlac's evocation of a unifying language spoken by a "new man" also recalls Camus's 1937 lecture on "La Nouvelle Culture Méditerrannéenne" in which Islam and Arabic are elided as Christianity and linguistic unity are presented as unifying features in a new concept of a Mediterranean "famille". See Albert Camus, *Essais* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 1321-1327.
[115] Geneviève Baïlac, *La Famille Hernandez* (France: Films Etienne Baïlac, 1964).

difference from “les méridionaux”: “Ici, elle [la population] exalte, il y a du piment dans leurs veines”.[116] This early post-conflict representation of the *pieds-noirs* therefore stresses a unique identity which appears under threat at the end of the film, when, during an outdoor wedding party, a background radio announces that *parachutistes* are en route to Algeria due to serious events. However, in a recording of a live theatre sequel to the story 25 years later, many of the same actors perform their roles as larger-than-life *pieds-noirs* who still live in a happy community with indigenous Algerians, although this time they are based in an HLM on the outskirts of Paris.[117] This exaggerated performance of identity on-screen and on-stage leads us to consider how an emphasis on the *pied-noir* family may itself be regarded as performative.

V Performing Identity and Constructing a Community

Butler’s concept of gender as performative, as postulated in her seminal *Gender Trouble* (1990), is especially useful for our study. According to Butler, “acts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, are *performative* in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are *fabrications* manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means”.[118] Such acts and gestures relating to gender create “an illusion discursively maintained for the purposes of the regulation of sexuality”.[119] Identity, therefore, is considered to be the result of discourses, which are understood in light of Foucault’s definition of “le discours” as “tantôt domaine général de tous les énoncés, tantôt groupe individualisable d’énoncés, tantôt pratique réglée rendant compte d’un certain nombre d’énoncés” and his view of the power (including both oppression and resistance) associated with the regulation of such statements.[120] For Foucault, then, discursive practices are laden with meaning, as he strives to show, for example, that “parler, c’est faire quelque chose, – autre chose qu’exprimer ce qu’on pense, traduire

[116] Ibid.
[117] Geneviève Baïlac, *La Famille Hernandez* (Théâtre du Gymnase Marie Bell, Paris: Antenne 2, 1987).
[118] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1999), 173.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Michel Foucault, *L’Archéologie du savoir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1969), 106.

ce qu'on sait, autre chose aussi que faire jouer les structures d'une langue".[121] As Sara Mills neatly sums it up: "Discourse does not simply translate reality into language; rather discourse should be seen as a system which structures the way that we perceive reality".[122] With regard to an identity born of colonial processes, discourses may be viewed as particularly significant. As Nicholas Thomas notes: "colonialism has always been [...] a cultural process; its discoveries and trespasses are imagined and energized through signs, metaphors and narratives".[123]

From Butler's analysis, we can conclude that people do not have a pre-existing gender identity: "If gender attributes and acts, the various ways in which a body shows or produces its cultural signification, are performative, then there is no preexisiting identity by which an act or attribute might be measured; there would be no true or false, real or distorted acts of gender, and the postulation of a true gender identity would be revealed as a regulatory fiction".[124] Salih neatly summarises Butler's theory as follows: "gender is not something one *is,* it is something one *does*".[125] It is important to note here that, as Salih explains, while Butler does not argue that the subject is free to choose his or her gender identity as "'The script' [...] is always already determined" within the "regulatory frame", she does argue that the "subject has a limited number of 'costumes' from which to make a constrained choice of gender style".[126] Thus, we have an agency or an ability to disrupt discourse. As Gill Jagger notes: "Since we are products of discourses, language and significations that structure the acts in which we engage and through which we are

[121] Ibid., 272.
[122] Sara Mills, *Michel Foucault* (London: Routledge, 2003), 55.
[123] Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 2. Cited in Philip Dine, "Big-Game Hunting in Algeria from Jules Gérard to *Tartarin de Tarascon*", *Moving Worlds: A Journal of Transcultural Writings* 12, no. 1 (2012): 48.
[124] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 180.
[125] Sara Salih, "On Judith Butler and Performativity", Sage, http://www.sagepub.com/upmdata/11880_Chapter_3.pdf. Date accessed: 23 March 2013. Salih's emphasis. According to Salih, "Butler repeatedly refutes the idea of a pre-linguistic inner core or essence by claiming that gender acts are not performed by the subject, but they performatively constitute a subject that is the effect of discourse rather than the cause of it".
[126] Ibid. Gill Jagger similarly emphasises that the theory of performativity, although it involves an element of theatricality and performance, is based on speech act theory. She cites a particularly illuminating quote from Judith Butler, "For a Careful Reading", in *Feminist Contentions: A Philosophical Exchange*, ed. Seyla Benhabib, Judith Butler, Crucilla Cornell, and Nancy Fraser (New York: Routledge, 1995), 136: "I would argue that there is no possibility of standing outside of the discursive conventions by which we are enabled. Gender performativity is not a question of instrumentally deploying a 'masquerade', for such a construal of performativity presupposes an intentional subject behind the deed. On the contrary, gender performativity involves the difficult labour of deriving agency from the very power regimes which constitute us, and which we oppose". See Gill Jagger, *Judith Butler: Sexual Politics, Social Change and the Power of the Performative* (London: Routledge, 2008), 38.

constituted as subjects, and as ourselves, what we can do is aim at alternative significations in the course of our repetition of these acts".[127] Butler states that performativity is both linguistic and theatrical: "I have come to think that the two are invariably related, chiasmically so, and that a reconsideration of the speech act as an instance of power invariably draws attention to both its theatrical and linguistic dimensions".[128] She also famously gives the example of drag as a potential way of subverting discourse and revealing "the imitative structure of gender itself – as well as its contingency", which thereby reveals "the myth of originality itself".[129] Butler admits, however, that some drag performances are "denaturalizing parodies that reidealize heterosexual norms without calling them into question".[130]

Our study applies the paradigm of performativity to a French Algerian identity which was regulated in a colonial setting, as well as to a post-independence *pied-noir* identity which fabricates a sense of community in exile. Thus, if as Butler suggests, "true gender is a fantasy instituted and inscribed on the surface of bodies",[131] it may be argued by extension that a true *pied-noir* identity, "invented"[132] towards the end of colonial Algeria, is also a fantasy. Benedict Anderson's assertion that 'all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined',[133] suggests that theories of performativity may be applied to communities as well as individuals. Scholarship on "invented tradition" as "a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past",[134] also underlines the performative and regulatory nature of a community's traditions. Additionally, Erving Goffman points to the performance of individuals and "teams" during social encounters in his text, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959). Indeed, a performance, defined by Goffman as "all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other

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[127] Jagger, *Judith Butler*, 33-34.
[128] Sara Salih, ed. *The Judith Butler Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 102.
[129] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 175, 176.
[130] Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*, (New York: Routledge, 1993), 231. Cited in Jagger, *Judith Butler*, 35.
[131] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 174.
[132] This term is used by Savarèse in *L'Invention des pieds-noirs*.
[133] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 6.
[134] Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions", in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 1.

participants",[135] might well be extended to include works of literature and film, which are designed with an audience in mind. In this analysis, performances take place publicly in the "front region" as opposed to the "back region or backstage", where they are "painstakingly fabricated" or where "the performer can relax; [...] drop his front, forgo speaking lines, and step out of character".[136]

Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, summarising cultural theorist Frederic Jameson, describe "texts which metaphorize the public sphere even when narrating apparently private stories, and where 'the personal and the political, the private and the historical, become inextricably linked'".[137] The apparently personal texts studied here, which inevitably evoke the colonial past, are similarly linked to the *pied-noir* community and public perceptions of its history. It is suggested that they thereby contribute towards the edification of a collective memory for this community. Pierre Nora's concept of *lieux de mémoire* investigates sites which are intentionally invested with meaning and are imbued with collective memory by certain groups.[138] Wood, drawing on Nora's work, argues that collective memory is therefore "*performative*" and has some degree of social intent, as opposed to individual memory which is "primarily subject to the laws of the unconscious".[139] For Wood, the term "vector" may be used to "designate the conduits of this performativity, whether these be commemorations, historical narratives, political debates, or other cultural forms", including images and narratives propagated by the media.[140] Like gender and identity more generally, Wood argues that "the representations to which we give the appellation 'collective memory' do not pre-exist their expression at a specific conjuncture".[141] Collective memory, therefore, "testifies to a will or desire on the part of some social group or disposition of power to select and organize representations of the past so that these will be embraced by individuals as their own".[142] Wood additionally draws attention to the intentional (therefore equally

[135] Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (London: Penguin, 1990), 26.
[136] Ibid., 109, 114-115.
[137] Frederic Jameson, "Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Captialism", *Social Text*, no. 15 (Autumn1986). Cited in Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media* (London: Routledge, 1994), 230.
[138] For a summary of Nora's concept, see Nancy Wood, *Vectors of Memory: Legacies of Trauma in Postwar Europe* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), especially Chapter 1, 15-38.
[139] Ibid., 2. Wood's emphasis. Wood also draws on theories of collective memory by Maurice Halbwachs in *The Collective Memory* (New York: Harper and Row, 1980).
[140] Wood, *Vectors of Memory*, 2, 9.
[141] Ibid., 2.
[142] Ibid.

performative) and organised avoidance of some memories, which she calls "*lieux d'oubli*".[143] By the same token, we might usefully consider McCormack's description of memories that are "reconstructed as a function of present needs"[144] and of the "Agency in collective memory [which] can consist of associative actions, writing, scholarship and filmmaking, all of which impacts upon the way the past is represented and remembered".[145] Furthermore, the formation of private and collective memory is intrinsic to individual and group identity, as eloquently summed up by Birgit Mertz-Baumgartner: "the notion of identity depends on the idea of memory, and vice versa; the core meaning of any individual or group identity [...] is sustained by remembering".[146]

The texts and films considered here may therefore be considered conduits of performativity. It is useful to point out at this stage that the texts analysed fall on a spectrum from autobiography to fiction. In some cases, autobiographical elements are downplayed as texts are presented as novels, while in other fictionalised texts, autobiographical elements are foregrounded as the text is marketed as more accurate than history. In some instances it is therefore appropriate to refer to the author, while in others it is more appropriate to refer to the narrator. The occasional possibility of slippage between author and narrator is regarded here as a reflection of the performance of some authors who seek to disguise their proximity to the events described, just as others seek to highlight their texts as a true reflection of their lived experience. With regard specifically to women writing about the Algerian war, the dominance of such a mix of autobiography and fiction has been commented on by Stora, who sees it as a means for the authors to make sense of both personal and collective history.[147] Our study argues, however, that the use of fiction in the works

[143] Ibid., 10. Wood's emphasis.
[144] McCormack, *Collective Memory*, 4. McCormack draws on the work of Maurice Halbwachs in *Les Cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (Paris: Mouton, 1976) and *La Mémoire collective* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950).
[145] McCormack, *Collective Memory*, 4. This quotation draws on the theories of Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan in *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999).
[146] Birgit Mertz-Baumgartner, "Le rôle de la mémoire chez quelques écrivaines algériennes de l'autre rive", in *Algérie: Nouvelles Écritures. Colloque international de l'Université York, Glendon, et de l'Université de Toronto 13-14-15-16 mai 1999*, ed. C. Bonn, N. Redouane, and Y. Bénayoun-Szmidt (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001), 75.
[147] Benjamin Stora, "Mémoires comparées: femmes françaises, femmes algériennes: Les écrits de femmes, la guerre d'Algérie et l'exil", in *L'Ère des décolonisations: Sélection de textes du colloque «Décolonisations comparées», Aix-en-Provence, 30 septembre-3 octobre 1993*, ed. Charles-Robert Ageron and Marc Michel (Paris: Karthala, 1995), 174-175. Stora notes that out of 179 works by *pied-noir*, Algerian and Metropolitan French women, 101 are novels, over half of which are by *pied-noir*

analysed must also be considered as a means of actively constructing a public history and an associated identity. In this regard, novels have been described as "one of the cultural forms through which a society shapes its sense of reality".[148]

The influence of narratives on a community has also been pointed to by a recent edited volume which suggests that all families are social constructs which are performed as a result of narratives.[149] In their introduction, Tina-Karen Pusse and Katharina Walter state that families constructed in stories "are not only a substitution for 'real' families", but also show that "families have never been real; that family, like gender or race, is not primarily based on biological criteria, but has to be performed" – a performance which is based on rules which are subject to change.[150] Furthermore, they point to "the importance of analyzing and renovating the discourses of 'family', which, because of their ubiquity, are too often taken for granted".[151] For its part, this thesis will analyse discourses of family in representations of the *pieds-noirs* which, although ubiquitous, have never been systematically analysed. It will also analyse the performance of a *pied-noir* identity that largely came into being after the term "pied-noir" itself came into use, during the Algerian war. Numerous theories surround the term itself, including its adoption by the indigenous population on seeing the black boots of the French soldiers during the conquest and its link to the wine-stained feet of the industrious settlers – theories which may be popular among the *pieds-noirs* but which critics agree are unlikely, with the true origins of the term remaining in doubt.[152] A theory included in Smith's study, however, suggests that the term was first used as a coded warning to other metropolitan French citizens that the former settlers were not really white, as they had been "tainted" by their time in North Africa.[153] Interestingly, a psychological study of the general health benefits of creating a narrative suggests that "People with

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women while 28 of these novels are openly autobiographical. These works range from best-sellers to those published by the authors or limited to research collections. It is also worth noting that over half the novels by Algerian women are by Assia Djebar.

[148] Diana Holmes, *French Women's Writing, 1848-1994* (London: Athlone, 1996), 11. Cited in Lorcin, *Historicizing Colonial Nostalgia*, 13.

[149] Tina-Karen Pusse and Katharina Walter, "Introduction", in *Precarious Parenthood: Doing Family in Literature and Film*, ed. Tina-Karen Pusse and Katharina Walter (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2013), 1-7.

[150] Ibid., 1.

[151] Ibid., 7.

[152] A thorough examination of the term, which, in its designation of Europeans, seems to have originated in Morocco in the 1950s, may be found in Yacono, "Pourquoi pieds-noirs?", 15-19. See also Jordi, *Les Pieds-Noirs*, 17-24. A further analysis may be found in Martini, *Racines de papier*, 274-275.

[153] Smith, *Colonial Memory and Postcolonial Europe*, 182.

a nonvisible identity [...] benefited more when writing about being a member of the stigmatized group" as opposed to people with a visible, stigmatised identity, who "benefited more from writing about being a member of the general community".[154] We may therefore conclude that in the specific case under examination here, the *pieds-noirs,* as a group with a nonvisible, initially stigmatised identity in France, benefited in the aftermath of the conflict from writing about being members of a *pied-noir* community or family.

Chapter 1 of our thesis focuses on arguably the most famous member of this community, Albert Camus. Camus's Algerian background is studied in order to shed new light on his works. More specifically, the idealised mother-figure is reconsidered as a particularly important theme. The writer's attempts to construct a hybrid, macho masculinity are also examined, as are his efforts to leave behind him a legacy with regard to his community. Chapter 2 investigates works by *pied-noir* women, who occupied an ambiguous position in a male-oriented colonial society and whose voices emerged in works published in the immediate aftermath of the war, which scholars have largely failed to examine. Later texts by both lesser known and well known French Algerian women are additionally analysed. Chapter 3 considers depictions of *pied-noir* masculinity and also reflects on various authors' Camusian constructions of macho, heterosexual outsiders, as well as representations of homosexuality in the colony. Chapter 4 seeks to go beyond the narrow field of study regarding the *pieds-noirs* by discussing the popularity of child and adolescent narrators in narratives. Such works may be regarded as a means of creating a public memory of the *pieds-noirs* as innocent victims, in works destined for both children and adults. They may nonetheless produce a potentially fruitful liminal space from which to discuss colonialism and alternative identities.

For Butler, trying fully to satisfy the norms of gender identity is a Sisyphean task.[155] Interestingly, Camus appears to have pointed to the performance of identity by arguing in his *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* that you can learn about an actor by the characters he plays as "un homme se définit aussi bien par ses comédies que par ses

[154] James W. Pennebaker and Janel D. Seagal, "Forming a Story: The Health Benefits of Narrative", *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 55, no. 10 (1999): 1247.
[155] Judith Butler, *Trouble dans le genre (Gender Trouble): Le féminisme et la subversion de l'identité*, trans. Cynthia Kraus (Paris: La Découverte, 2005), 17. In his introduction, Éric Fassin sums up as follows, "Nouveau mythe de Sisyphe, malgré tous les efforts du monde, nul ne saurait satisfaire entièrement à la norme".

élans sincères".[156] In the same text, he suggests that "peut-être la grande oeuvre d'art a moins d'importance en elle-même que dans l'épreuve qu'elle exige d'un homme et l'occasion qu'elle lui fournit de surmonter ses fantômes et d'approcher d'un peu plus près sa réalité nue".[157] Against this backdrop, we will now consider Camus's attempts to work through a phantasmatic *pied-noir* identity in literature.

[156] Camus, *Essais*, 106.
[157] Ibid., 191.

Chapter 1: Camus, Meursault, Daru, Cormery: The First *Pied-Noir* Men

1.1 Introduction: Camus, Crime and Punishment in the *Pied-Noir* Family

Albert Camus is the *École d'Alger*'s most renowned writer. Yet many critics have effectively ignored his Algerian origins in favour of universalist readings of his works. As Germaine Bree noted in 1960, a legend surrounding the author has tended to transform him into "une sorte de saint laïque qui se serait décerné le rôle de guide moral d'une époque".[1] Attention has nonetheless been periodically drawn to Camus's roots. In *Portrait du colonisé précédé de Portrait du colonisateur* (1957), Albert Memmi criticised the "colonisateur qui se refuse" or "colonisateur de bonne volonté", who recognises the injustice of the colonial system but remains complicit with it and eventually ends up acknowledging "sa solitude et [...] son inefficacité", finding that "il ne lui reste plus qu'à se taire".[2] In an article published the same year, Memmi suggested that Camus, who famously refused to support the FLN's use of terrorist violence in the independence struggle, was exactly this type of good-willed coloniser.[3] Building on this concept in his seminal critique of the author in 1970, Conor Cruise O'Brien emphasised Camus's "estrangement, unreality and even hallucination" as a left-wing colonist who dreamt of colonial Algeria in terms of a unified Mediterranean.[4] In 1993 in his *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said also considered Camus's origins in colonial Algeria, claiming that O'Brien "lets him [Camus] off the hook" by portraying him as a representative of "Western consciousness" and emphasising his "individual experience", as "a moral man in an immoral situation", rather than evoking him as an example of "Western *dominance*

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[1] Germaine Bree, "Camus", *The French Review* 33, no. 6 (May 1960): 542. Bree notes that when asked by American students in 1960 if he considered himself a moral guide for his era, Camus replied: "Pardonnez-moi mais ce genre de jugement me paraît comique... Je ne vis pas sur un trépied: je marche du même pas que tous dans les rues du temps".

[2] Albert Memmi, *Portrait du colonisé précédé de Portrait du colonisateur* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985), 47, 68, 69.

[3] Albert Memmi, "Camus ou le colonisateur de bonne volonté", *La Nef* (12 December 1957): 95-96. Cited in Philip Dine, "Fighting and writing the war without a name: polemics and the French-Algerian conflict", *Aurifex*, no. 2 (2002), http://www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/aurifex/issue2/dine.html. Date accessed: 17 February 2014.

[4] Conor Cruise O'Brien, *Camus* (London: Fontana, 1970), 12-13.

in the non-European world".[5] Writing in 1997, Manghesh Kulkarni, however, described O'Brien's and Said's interpretations as "revisionist".[6] Citing Camus's membership of the Algerian Communist Party in 1935, which had an anti-colonial policy at the time, his support for the assimilationism of the failed Blum-Viollette bill in 1936, and his critical reports for *Alger Républicain* in 1938, on conditions for the Berbers of Kabylia, Kulkarni pointed out that Camus's position on Algeria was more complex than critics have tended to admit.[7]

More recently, John Foley similarly suggests that postcolonial criticisms of Camus engage in "textual selectivity" from an "anachronistic perspective".[8] For their part, two Algerian academics, Aicha Kassoul and Mohamed-Lakhdar Maougal, identify the author as having an "Algerian destiny" rather than identity, and, while highlighting his solidarity with indigenous communities, criticise his judgement with regard to colonial matters by comparing his stance to the anti-colonialism of indigenous writers such as Mohammed Dib, Kateb Yacine and Mouloud Mammeri, as well as the French Algerian poet Jean Sénac, whom they also consider to be Algerian.[9] Conversely, David Carroll's *Albert Camus the Algerian: Colonialism, Terrorism, Justice* (2007), positions the writer firmly as an Algerian and suggests his idealistic aspirations for his birthplace and his denuciation of terrorism and torture are all the more relevant in today's society.[10] Carroll focuses on Camus's works featuring Algeria and this thesis will do likewise. Our study, however, will focus on the writer's developing construction of a *pied-noir* masculinity which positions him as the *père spirituel* of post-independence narratives by former settlers. The primary focus will be on the male protagonists in Camus's first and last published novels – *L'Étranger* (1942) and *Le Premier Homme* (1994). Short stories set in Algeria from

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[5] Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1993), 209. Said's emphasis.
[6] Mangesh Kulkarni, "The Ambiguous Fate of a Pied-Noir: Albert Camus and Colonialism", *Economic and Political Weekly* 32, no. 26 (28 June-4 July1997): 1529, 1530.
[7] Ibid., 1529. See also Hargreaves, who nevertheless notes that Camus's support for assimilation (as opposed to independence), although "unusually well-intentioned [...] by comparison with most *pieds-noirs*", shows his inability "to go beyond the horizons of his French background". Alec G. Hargreaves, "Caught in the Middle: The Liberal Dilemma in the Algerian War", *Nottingham French Studies* 25, no. 2 (1986): 80.
[8] John Foley, *Albert Camus: From the Absurd to Revolt* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's Unversity Press, 2008), 145, 147.
[9] Aicha Kassoul and Mohamed-Lakhdar Maougal, *The Algerian Destiny of Albert Camus*, trans. Philip Beitchman (Bethesda, MD: Academica Press, 2006). The publishers of this book state on their website (academicapress.com) that it is based on an original French manuscript, "Camus et le destin algérien" (2005) and will be published in French in the future.
[10] David Carroll, *Albert Camus the Algerian: Colonialism, Terrorism, Justice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

L'Exil et le Royaume (1957) will also be analysed. Camus's *La Peste* (1947), although largely regarded as a parable about the Occupation which could have been set anywhere, will also be referred to, as will his essays on Algeria in *Noces* (1938) and *L'Été* (1954). The novels studied stand apart from the writer's critical stance with regard to colonial injustice in essays such as those contained within *Actuelles, III: Chroniques algériennes, 1939-1958*.[11] The use of fiction consequently appears to have facilitated Camus's elaboration of a sympathetic settler identity which would come to be known as *pied-noir*.

In his preface to Lucienne Martini's *Racines de papier: Essai sur l'expression littéraire de l'identité Pieds-Noirs*, Jean-Robert Henry alludes to the existence of a literary *pied-noir* family which has been unified with the passage of time.[12] Hence writers like Camus "sont désormais revendiqués comme membres à part entière d'une famille, qui se reconnaît mieux qu'hier dans les grandes *sagas* historiques".[13] Yet the writer died before Algerian independence and the exodus of the majority of the *Français d'Algérie*, whose identity as *pieds-noirs* only became solidified on their arrival in France. Furthermore, Camus's stance on the Algerian war made him an unpopular figure within his own community before he died. The writer was greeted with cries of "Camus à mort!" by fellow *Français d'Algérie* protesters (as well as Muslims) during his unsuccessful appeal for a civil truce in 1956 in Algiers. On this occasion, he was protected by FLN commandos and threatened with abduction by the OAS.[14] According to Butler, "we regularly punish those who fail to do their gender right".[15] We can similarly conclude that those who fail to perform their community's identity correctly will be punished, which would explain the threats made against Camus by fellow French Algerians in 1956, who were unimpressed by his liberal stance.

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[11] Azzedine Haddour comments on the tension between Camus's critical essays and fictional works, noting that the latter "either disavow the issue of colonialism or replicate the thrust of its racist language". Azzedine Haddour, "The Camus-Sartre debate and the colonial question in Algeria", in *Francophone Postcolonial Studies: A Critical Introduction*, ed. Charles Forsdick and David Murphy (London: Arnold, 2003), 66.

[12] See Jean-Robert Henry's preface to Lucienne Martini's *Racines de papier: Essai sur l'expression littéraire de l'identité Pieds-Noirs* (Paris: Publisud, 1997), 3.

[13] Ibid. As an example of such sagas, Henry cites Jules Roy's *Les Chevaux du soleil* series, which, he suggests, catered for the tastes and expectations of the French public.

[14] Emmanuel Roblès, *Camus, frère de soleil* (Paris: Seuil, 1995), 111, 84.

[15] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1999), 178.

Camus's legacy remains a source of contention in both France and Algeria. In 2010, then French President Nicolas Sarkozy's proposal to rebury the author in the Pantheon along with other great French writers was met with resistance and was eventually rejected.[16] Moreover, plans to honour Camus in Algeria on the 50th anniversary of his death were "described either as un flop or invited hostility".[17] The centenary of Camus's birth also went largely unrecognised in both countries.[18] This said, an exhibition planned to take place in Aix-en-Provence for the centenary, in November 2013, sparked controversy when the celebrated Algerian war historian Benjamin Stora was rejected as its official curator in favour of Michel Onfray, author of *L'Ordre libertaire: La vie philosophique d'Albert Camus* (2012).[19] In this tome, Onfray laments what he sees as the neglect of Camus by philosophers in the second half of the twentieth century and contradicts what he calls a negative "fiction sartrienne" surrounding the author, in favour of a portrait of a hedonist, libertarian, anarchist, anti-colonial and anti-totalitarian philosopher.[20] In supporting Onfray, whose rehabilitation of Camus had by then received considerable attention in the media,[21] the right-wing mayor of Aix-en-Provence, Maryse Joissains, was accused of courting a *pied-noir* electorate.[22] Onfray resigned from the project amidst the ensuing

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[16] Lizzy Davies, "Nicolas Sarkozy provokes French left by honouring Albert Camus", *The Guardian*, 22 November 2009. Anonymous, "Controversy surrounds Sarkozy's plan to rebury Camus in Panthéon", France 24, http://www.france24.com/en/20091126-controversy-surrounds-sarkozy'-plan-rebury-camus-panthé/. Date accessed: 3 July 2012. John Lichfield, "Why Sarkozy won't let Camus rest in peace: France's right-wing leader stands accused of political bodysnatching with a plan to move the author's remains to the Pantheon – burial place of the country's establishment", *The Independent*, 5 January 2010.

[17] Peter Beaumont, "Albert Camus, the outsider, is still dividing opinion in Algeria 50 years after his death", *The Observer*, 28 February 2010.

[18] John Dugdale, "Albert Camus centenary goes without much honour at home. Neither France nor Algeria pay much attention to 100th anniversary, leaving job to Google", *The Guardian*, 7 November 2013. Sarah Leduc, "Albert Camus, un centenaire très discret", France 24, http://www.france24.com/fr/20131107-albert-camus-centenaire-discret-fond-polemique/. Date accessed: 24 February 2014. Camus was recognised on a small scale in a joint effort by France and Algeria on the 50th anniversary of Algerian independence, when a plaque was erected at the house where he was born. See Walid Mebarek, "Denis Fada, Universitaire: 'La reconnaissance de Camus ne pouvait attendre plus'", *El Watan*, 31 January 2012.

[19] See Anonymous, "Trois années de tumulte", *Le Monde*, 18 September 2012. Marie-José Sirach, "Quand Aix rêvait d'un Camus sur mesure", *L'Humanité*, 19 September 2012.

[20] Michel Onfray, *L'Ordre libertaire: La vie philosophique d'Albert Camus* (Paris: Flammarion, 2012), 25. Daniel Leconte similarly writes of what he considers to be Camus's posthumous moral victory over Sartre in his *Camus, si tu savais... suivi de Les Pieds-Noirs* (Paris: Seuil, 2006), xli.

[21] See, for example, Paul-François Paoli, "Michel Onfray: L'Ordre libertaire", *Le Figaro*, 12 January 2012. Olivier Todd, "'L'Ordre libertaire. La vie philosophique d'Albert Camus', de Michel Onfray: Sartre-Camus, cessez le feu!", *Le Monde*, 12 January 2012. Grégoire Leménager, "Michel Onfray: 'Albert Camus est un libertaire irrécupérable'", *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 12 January 2012.

[22] As an article in *La Croix* put it, "Soupçonnée d'avoir voulu ménager son électorat pied-noir, la mairie UMP aixoise se tourne alors vers le philosophe Michel Onfray". See Corinne Boyer, "Aix-en-Provence tient absolument à une exposition Camus; Les organisateurs de Marseille-Provence 2013 ont

controversy, but it was decided that it would go ahead from October 2013 until January 2014 (the anniversary of the author's death), this time organised by a team of historians and philosophers.[23] The resulting exhibition received disappointing reviews and seemed to have suffered for its attempts to avoid further debate.[24] Of particular interest to our study is the fact that the new organisers' stated aim for the exhibition positioned Camus within a global family or "fraternité universelle",[25] in a move which, as alluded to in our introductory discussion of Barthes's "La Grande famille des hommes", draws attention away from politics and towards sentimentalism.

Camus's sense of loyalty to a specifically *pied-noir* family is nevertheless undeniable. In 1957, he explained his self-imposed silence on the Algerian war to the secretary of the French teachers' union, Denis Forestier, by stating:

> La plupart des déclarations publiques accumulées dans la métropole se paient en morts, aussi bien arabes que françaises. Toute ma famille se trouve aujourd'hui en Algérie, exposée par la force des choses aux entreprises du terrorisme civil. Je ne puis accepter personnellement de faire quoi que ce soit qui, même de loin, même indirectement, puisse justifier celui qui frappera les miens".[26]

This desire to protect his family would come to the fore publicly in 1957, when Camus won the Nobel Prize for literature. It was while in Sweden to accept the award that Camus replied to an Algerian student's question at Uppsala University by stating: "Je crois à la justice, mais je défendrai ma mère avant la justice".[27] Vilified

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renoncé à une exposition consacré au prix Nobel de littérature. La ville d'Aix-en-Provence reprend le projet dans un contexte chaotique", *La Croix*, 18 October 2012.

[23] Anonymous, "Aix-en-Provence: hommage à Camus, un an après la polémique", *Libération*, 6 October 2013.

[24] Macha Séry, "Exposition: Albert Camus à Aix-en-Provence: autopsie d'un gâchis", *Le Monde*, 8 October 2013. The journalist notes that the exhibition contains "Rien qui fâche".

[25] Anonymous, "Aix-en-Provence: hommage à Camus".

[26] Olivier Todd, *Albert Camus: une vie* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996), 935. Graebner points out that Camus's silence was more a declared intention than a fact as he published articles in *L'Express* in 1955-1956, unsuccessfully tried to bring about a "civil truce", published his collected articles on Algeria as *Actuelles III: Chroniques algériennes, 1939-1958* (Paris: Gallimard, 1958), campaigned privately on behalf of Algerians imprisoned or sentenced to death and worked on *Le Premier Homme* from 1956 to 1960. See Seth Graebner, *History's Place: Nostalgia and the City in French Algerian Literature* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2007), 206-207.

[27] For the full version of the speech, see Todd, *Albert Camus*, 965. David Carroll suggests that in choosing his mother over justice, Camus meant that the end does not justify the means: priority should always be given to human life and individuals should come before ideals. Carroll, *Albert Camus the Algerian*, 97, 104. Orme expresses a similar view, following Jean Sarocchi's argument in *Camus* (Paris: PUF, 1968), 48, that for the author, "It is not a matter of choosing one's mother over justice, but of loving justice as much as one loves one's own mother – and threatening neither". See Mark Orme, *The Development of Albert Camus's Concern for Social and Political Justice: "Justice pour un juste"* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2007), 194. Orme also notes here that

by both sides, including by French intellectuals Francis Jeanson and Jean-Paul Sartre,[28] it would appear that Camus was being punished for failing to perform his identity correctly.

The rejection of Camus by some settlers during the Algerian war may be contrasted with the way in which he has now been reclaimed by the *pied-noir* community. Interestingly, the writer's personal experiences, as well as his works, are cited as proof of his identity. His well-known love of football is significant in this regard, with one *pied-noir* interviewee emphasising that the author's intellectual endeavours were, unlike Sartre's, offset by virile activities.[29] This particular interviewee thus concludes that Camus is his spiritual brother: "en veillissant, Camus m'est devenu beaucoup plus fraternel, parce que je me suis aperçu qu'il y avait cette dualité chez Camus, que naturellement Sartre ne jouait pas au foot".[30] His humble background, attachment to his mother, numerous affairs and sense of "le code de l'honneur nord-africain, la parole donnée", have also been documented.[31] From his life, we can therefore see a number of tropes which would come to form cornerstones of a literary identity which encompasses modest origins, an attachment to the mother and, by extension, distinctively Mediterranean honour codes. These are described by the author in "L'Été à Alger", an essay in the collection *Noces*, according to which "real" men respect their mothers, wives and pregnant women, and do not attack an adversary if their opponent is outnumbered. In his own life, the writer is said to have projected "an image of *pied-noir* machismo".[32] However, according to Butler, "Gender is [...] a norm that can never be fully internalized; 'the internal' is a surface signification, and gender norms are finally phantasmatic, impossible to embody".[33] This gender paradigm may be applied to identity more generally. In consequence, by

Camus's famous statement was not spontaneous as he had earlier expressed a similar view to Jean Amrouche – cited in Camus's *Carnets III: mars 1951 – décembre 1959* (Paris: Gallimard, 1989), 238 – and Emmanuel Roblès – cited in Camus's *Essais* (Paris: Gallimard, 1965), 1843.

[28] For more on the debate between Camus and Sartre, prompted by Jeanson's criticisms of Camus's work in "Albert Camus ou l'âme révoltée", *Les Temps Modernes*, no. 79 (May 1952): 2070-2090, see Haddour, "The Camus-Sartre debate and the colonial question in Algeria", 66-76. See also Herbert R. Lottman, *Albert Camus* (Paris: Seuil, 1978), Chapter 37, 504-516 and Todd, *Albert Camus*, Chapter 40, 764-788.

[29] Cited by Jeannine Verdès-Leroux, *Les Français d'Algérie de 1830 à aujourd'hui* (Paris: Fayard, 2001), 340-341.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Todd, *Albert Camus*, 587. Camus's mother has been described as "the most important woman in his life". See Anthony Rizzuto, *Camus: Love and Sexuality* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998), 2.

[32] John Lambeth, "Review: Camus: Love and Sexuality by Anthony Rizzuto", *South Atlantic Modern Language Association* 65, no. 1 (Winter 2000): 193.

[33] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 179.

stating that, in the literature of the *École d'Alger*, "the mythic hero enacts the fantasms of the *pied-noir* imagination", Rosemarie Jones may be referring to the illusory nature of an identity which could only be fully embodied in literature.[34] This leads us to examine the protagonist of Camus's *L'Étranger* (1942).

1.2 Constructing the French Algerian Outsider

Camus had left Algeria for Paris two years before the publication of *L'Étranger*, following the collapse of his career as a journalist there with *Alger Républicain* due to censorship. However, he had begun working on this novel in 1938, while still in Algeria, and, according to O'Brien, the text was finished before the Occupation of France.[35] Thus, while the novel was published in the context of the Second World War, it is safe to assume that the author was still very much preoccupied with Algerian matters at the time of writing. Indeed, Orme draws attention to Camus's sense of alienation during this period: "By the time of the debarkation of Allied forces in North Africa in November 1942, he [Camus] would be landlocked in France, separated from his family and beloved Algeria".[36] Camus may also have felt a particular sense of alienation as a French Algerian writer based in metropolitan France at this time. According to fellow French Algerian Jacques Derrida, the November 1942 allied landings in North Africa sparked "la constitution d'une sorte de capitale littéraire de la France en exil à Alger".[37] Mohammed Dib has also written of the significance of this moment, in *Le Métier à tisser* (1957), the concluding part of his trilogy about an indigenous Algerian family.[38]

O'Brien points out that the title of *L'Étranger* reflects Camus's status as a "stranger" in Africa and the alienation of indigenous populations as "strangers in that France of which they are legally supposed to be a part".[39] He justifiably links the protagonist of *L'Étranger*, Meursault, to Camus, who used this name as a journalist

[34] Rosemarie Jones, "*Pied-Noir* Literature: The Writing of a Migratory Elite", in *Writing Across Worlds: Literature and Migration*, ed. Russell King, John Connell, and Paul White (London: Routledge, 1995), 128-129.
[35] O'Brien, *Camus*, 31.
[36] Orme, *The Development of Albert Camus's Concern for Social and Political Justice*, 116.
[37] Jacques Derrida, *Le Monolinguisme de l'autre ou la prothèse d'origine* (Paris: Galilée, 1996), 83-84.
[38] Mohammed Dib, *Le Métier à tisser* (Paris: Seuil, 1957), 203-205.
[39] O'Brien, *Camus*, 14.

and who, like the protagonist, worked as a clerk.[40] O'Brien's assertion that the novel presents a mythified colonial Algeria in which the court system does not give precedence to the colonising population, thereby denying "the colonial reality" and sustaining "the colonial fiction",[41] appears to be equally valid. Nevertheless, as we may conclude following Butler's arguments on gender, fantasy or myth is associated with all identities. Said's critique of Camus's fiction might also be considered here, as he suggests it forms part of: "France's methodically constructed political geography of Algeria" which strives to "represent, inhabit, and possess the territory itself" by means of an "imperial gesture" which is "the realistic novel".[42] The very form of novels such as *L'Étranger* is therefore "confirming and consolidating French priority", in Said's analysis.[43] Indeed, the consciously challenging form of Kateb Yacine's novel *Nedjma* (1956), in which the author's decision to write in French was hailed as "le fruit d'une bâtardise assumée", has been read as a response to the deceptive formal simplicity of *L'Étranger*.[44] Yet while Said contends that Camus is promoting a Western (specifically French) construction of colonial reality, our study suggests that he is attempting to work through a personal concept of what would later become, by the time *Le Premier Homme* was a work in progress, a specifically *pied-noir*, rather than French, identity, which places the mother and a feminised Algeria at its core.

Anthony Rizzuto points to the "recurring and incestuous reunion of dead mothers and dead sons" in Camus's work.[45] This is certainly the case in *La Peste*, as Tarrou, who dies before the end of the novel, comments on the likeness between Rieux's mother's and his own, admitting: "Ma mère était ainsi [...] c'est elle que j'ai toujours voulu rejoindre. Il y a huit ans, je ne peux pas dire qu'elle soit morte".[46] *L'Étranger* famously begins with news of the death of Meursault's mother.[47] What has been taken by critics be Meursault's indifference in this regard is not so clear-

[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid., 23.
[42] Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 213.
[43] Ibid., 219.
[44] See the preface to *Nedjma* by Gilles Carpentier in Kateb Yacine, *Nedjma* (Paris: Seuil, 1996), i-v. For the quotation, see v.
[45] Rizzuto, *Camus*, 113, 116. Although the mother in *Le Premier Homme* is actually alive, Rizzuto contends that by withdrawing into her own world, Jacques Cormery's mother "dies to the world", while by returning to her, Jacques "rejoins his mother in death".
[46] Albert Camus, *La Peste* (Paris: Gallimard, 1947), 250.
[47] Albert Camus, *L'Étranger* (Paris: Gallimard, 1942), 10. All subsequent references to this and other primary sources cited are given in parentheses in the main body of the text.

cut.[48] Apart from the narrator's eagerness to see his mother when he initially arrives at the nursing home (10), we might usefully note that descriptions of her habit of silently gazing at him when she was alive (11) appear inspired by Camus's own mother, who was mute and is said to have displayed a "strange inertia".[49] The significance of the mother-son relationship here, and, as Geraldine F. Montgomery points out, in Camus's works going back as far as the first pages of *Carnets* dated May 1935,[50] is consequently worth considering with regard to the writer's personal experience.

Montgomery discusses the Camusian mother in terms of Julia Kristeva's concept of the "chora" – a semiotic, pre-verbal space imbued with somatic and sensorial experiences which may correspond to the period before birth.[51] According to Jean Gassin, this is essentially Camus's "royaume" – an *ante-partum* communion of mother and child.[52] The Camusian maternal figure is regarded by Montgomery as characteristic of André Green's mourning or depressed mother, who becomes psychologically dead to the child, who in turn becomes depressed.[53] The writer's mother was mourning her dead husband as well as suffering the effects of a childhood illness and, therefore, dependent on her own mother, when Camus was born.[54] Thus, Camus's mother, to whom he longs to give a voice, could not liberate herself from her own mother, resulting in melancholic behaviour.[55] Crucially, Camus liberates himself from his mother through artistic expression.[56] Such liberation is vital, according to Kristeva, and may involve eroticising the mother: "Pour l'homme et pour la femme, la perte de la mère est une nécessité biologique et psychique, le

[48] See, for example, Colin Wilson, *The Outsider* (London: Indigo, 1997), Chapter 2, 27-46. Wilson argues that Meursault is completely indifferent to life due to a sense of unreality, but that his imminent death awakens him, albeit too late, to a sense of freedom.
[49] Orme, *The Development of Albert Camus's Concern for Social and Political Justice*, 27.
[50] Geraldine F. Montgomery, "La Mère Sacrée dans *Le Premier Homme*", in *Albert Camus 20: 'Le Premier homme' en perspective*, ed. Raymond Gay-Crosier (Paris: Lettres Modernes Minard, 2004), 63.
[51] Noëlle McAfee also notes that the chora refers to the "early psychic space" of a young infant, before it develops a personal identity. McAfee neatly sums up the chora as follows: "With the term chora, Kristeva describes how an infant's psychic environment is oriented to its mother's body". See Noëlle McAfee, *Julia Kristeva* (London: Routledge, 2004), 19.
[52] Montgomery, "La Mère Sacrée", 66-67. Montgomery cites Jean Gassin, *L'Univers symbolique d'Albert Camus* (Paris: Minard, 1981), 210.
[53] Montgomery, "La Mère Sacrée", 72. Montgomery refers to Green's concept of the "dead mother complex" in André Green, *On Private Madness* (Madison, CN: International Universities Press, 1986), 142-173.
[54] Montgomery, "La Mère Sacrée", 72.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid., 73.

jalon premier de l'autonomisation. Le matricide est notre nécessité vitale, condition sine qua non de notre individuation, pourvu qu'il se passe de manière optimale et puisse être érotisé".[57] Considering Alec Hargreaves's observation that the author's intense "emotional bonds with the French Algeria of his childhood and family" are "embodied above all in his mother",[58] we can build on Montgomery's study to suggest that the sacred maternal kingdom that Camus and some of his fictional characters seek to liberate themselves from and frequently return to is very much associated with colonial Algeria.[59]

Kirsteen Anderson similarly discusses Camus's attempts to free himself from a mother figure who, in her analysis, suffers due to a patriarchal culture which encourages the son to become the "mothering protector of his own infantalized mother".[60] According to Anderson, Camus fails to "live up to the ethical standard set by the idealized maternal figure" and also fails to "free her" from the "imprisoned state" or "living death" in which masculine culture has left her.[61] Guilt develops at this failure and the son "'kills' the mother, in fantasy, both to free her from her suffering and to liberate himself from the constant reminder of her presence and unvoiced voice".[62] Camus's short story, "La Femme adultère" might usefully be cited here as Janine, its French Algerian protagonist, is a striking example of what Anderson terms a woman's "unvoiced but powerfully heard appeal for dialogue, for love, for life", [63] through an erotic union with the land that temporarily appears to bring her back from a deadened state. This is depicted in the following scene:

> Janine s'ouvrait un peu plus à la nuit. Elle respirait, elle oubliait le froid, le poids des êtres, la vie démente ou figée, la longue angoisse de vivre et de mourir. Après tant d'années où, fuyant devant la peur, elle avait couru follement sans but, elle s'arrêtait enfin. En même temps, il lui semblait retrouver ses racines, la sève montait à nouveau dans son corps qui ne tremblait plus. [...] Alors, avec une douceur insupportable, l'eau de la nuit

[57] Ibid., 72. Montgomery cites Julia Kristeva, *Soleil Noir – dépression et mélancolie* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987), 38.
[58] Hargreaves, "Caught in the Middle", 82.
[59] As Dunwoodie points out, the characters Janine and Daru from stories in *L'Exil et le Royaume* (1957) and Sisyphe from *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* (1942) embody a desire for "an Edenic space (usually evoked as a lost paradise)", which for Dunwoodie signifies the colonial desire to occupy. See Peter Dunwoodie, *Writing French Algeria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 194-195.
[60] Kirsteen H. R. Anderson, "La Première Femme: The Mother's Ressurrection in the Work of Camus and Irigaray", *Society for French Studies* 56, no. 1 (2002): 32-33.
[61] Ibid., 33. Anderson notes that on at least one occasion in *Le Premier homme*, masculine culture stifles the mother's desire.
[62] Ibid., 34.
[63] Ibid.

> commença d'emplir Janine, submergea le froid, monta peu à peu du centre obscur de son être et déborda en flots ininterrompus jusqu'à sa bouche pleine de gémissements".[64]

While the above analysis of women's place within terms of patriarchal culture is helpful, the feminised other embodied by the mother, which Anderson calls the "m/other",[65] must also be considered in the colonial context. Christine Margerrison's study of female sexuality in the text is particularly pertinent here.[66] Meursault's girlfriend Marie, with whom he has periodic sexual encounters, is associated with wholesome descriptions of nature, through which she appears as part of "nature's infinite bounty", on offer to men.[67] Since her individuality is denied in this manner, Margerrison argues that Marie appears all the more chaste and pure. Similarly, Rizzuto argues that women such as Marie are presented as flowers that "exist to be collected",[68] and indeed Marie's "visage de fleur" is described by Meursault (59). It is also worth noting that Camus expressed similar views in his essays. In "Le Désert" (*Noces*), for example, he cites women and flowers as a justification for men's existence, from Italy to the beaches of Padovani in Algiers,[69] while in "Le Minotaure" (*L'Été*) he describes a "moisson de filles fleurs".[70] French Algerian women, however, cannot be regarded as being completely chaste in their affinity with nature, as is evident from the aforementioned Janine in "La Femme adultère". In fact, Margerrison argues that indigenous Algerian women in *L'Étranger* may be regarded as having subverted the chaste sexuality of their colonising counterparts.[71] Thus, Meursault's mother, who appears to be involved in a romantic relationship with Thomas Pérez, is linked to the Arab nurse who stands by her coffin. The nurse's disfigured nose may be read as a sign of venereal contagion which indirectly associates her with sexual excess.[72] Marie and Meursault are also judged at the trial as having had a "liaison irrégulière" and to have given in to "la débauche", thereby echoing Raymond's relationship with his Arab mistress, which is considered to be "une affaire de moeurs inqualifiable" (124, 126, 127). As Margerrison points

[64] Albert Camus, *L'Exil et le Royaume* (Paris: Gallimard, 2003), 33-34.
[65] Anderson, "La Première Femme", 32-33.
[66] Christine Margerrison, "The Dark Continent of Camus's *L'Étranger*", *Society for French Studies* 55, no. 1 (2001): 59-73.
[67] Ibid., 61.
[68] Rizzuto, *Camus*, 15.
[69] Albert Camus, *Essais* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 84.
[70] Ibid., 829.
[71] Margerrison, "The Dark Continent", 72.
[72] Ibid., 68-70.

out: “the threat of a treacherous sexual excess is one that taints all women. Only the dead woman may function as an immutable symbol of purity”.[73]

Women, both French Algerian and indigenous Algerian, consequently appear as the “other” in the novel, forming a threat to patriarchal colonial society which may be linked to a fear of miscegenation and to concepts of the potency of the colonised population. The feminised landscape in the text may equally be read as symbolic of the colonial “other”. The contentment Meursault feels when swimming in the sea may therefore be viewed as a short-lived marriage to the country.[74] We might usefully note that the sea is a similar site of brief contentment for Rieux and Tarrou at the height of their battle against the plague.[75] The sea and land also appear as feminised sources of joy in essays contained in both *Noces* and *L'Été*.[76] Nevertheless, Meursault’s mother, pure only in her death, points to the unrealisable ideal of the colony with which she is associated. The protagonist’s thoughts on her as his own death approaches are worth quoting here:

> Pour la première fois depuis bien longtemps, j’ai pensé à maman. Il m’a semblé que je comprenais pourquoi à la fin d’une vie elle avait pris un «fiancé», pourquoi elle avait joué à recommencer. Là-bas, là-bas aussi, autour de cet asile où des vies s’éteignaient, le soir était comme une trêve mélancolique. Si près de la mort, maman devait s’y sentir libérée et prête à tout revivre. Personne, personne n’avait le droit de pleurer sur elle (158-159).

Said reads these lines as staunchly colonial: “We have done what we have done here, and so let us do it again”.[77] It could be argued alternatively, however, that Meursault’s mother’s death represents the death knell for colonial Algeria, a distinct possibility which Camus thus worked out in fiction.

According to French Algerian sociologist Jacques Berque, the end of the colonial regime could be predicted from 1919 and even more so from 1930.[78] Berque

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[73] Ibid., 72.
[74] Camus may be seen here to follow in the footsteps of one of the founders of the *École d’Alger*, Gabriel Audisio, who, as Seth Graebner points out, presents the sea as a female lover, through whom “the Mediterranean male consummates his marriage to his native landscape”. See Graebner, *History’s Place*, 194. For more on the significance of swimming for the French Algerian population as it is portrayed in literature, see Cathal Kilcline, “Constructions of Identity in Mediterranean France: A Study of Sport and other Popular Cultural Forms” (unpublished PhD dissertation, National University of Ireland, Galway, 2009), Chapter 1, 66-120.
[75] Camus, *La Peste*, 231-232.
[76] Camus, *Essais*. See, for example, “Noces à Tipasa”, 55-60, “L’Été à Alger”, 67-78, and “Petit guide pour des villes sans passé”, 845-850, in which Camus writes of his “liaison” with the Algerian land, 848.
[77] Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 224.
[78] Jacques Berque, *Le Maghreb entre deux guerres* (Paris: Seuil, 1962), 417.

contends that "Certains esprits perspicaces" recognised the imminent downfall of the French empire, which was evident from its apogee, in the early 1930s.[79] Similarly, Seth Graebner has convincingly shown that anxiety about the future of colonialism was a significant issue for the French of Algeria by the late 1930s and has pointed to a hint of desperation behind "declarations of triumphalist colonialism" during the 1930 Centenary celebrations.[80] He also states that the intellectuals of the *École d'Alger* knew that the colony was on the verge of failure or had already failed, and that this led to a certain nostalgia in some of their works, as well as the realisation that they had little to be nostalgic about.[81] More broadly, colonialism may be seen as inherently nostalgic. Renato Rosaldo, in his discussion of "Imperialist nostalgia", for example, has commented on the tendency of agents of colonialism to "long for the very forms of life they intentionally altered or destroyed".[82] Significantly, however, the aforementioned *École d'Alger* authors did not simply dwell on nostalgia. As Graebner asserts, their works "contained an analysis of where French Algeria had gone wrong, and of what history they might construct as part of their effort to set it right".[83]

Despite publicly stated hopes about the future of Algeria (for example in *Actuelles III*), Camus revealed his despair in a letter to Jean Grenier dated 4 August 1958:

> Je crois comme vous qu'il est sans doute trop tard pour l'Algérie. Je ne l'ai pas dit dans mon livre parce que lo peor no es siempre seguro (*sic*) – parce qu'il faut laisser ses chances au hasard historique – et parce qu'on n'écrit pas pour dire que tout est fichu. Dans ce cas-là, on se tait. Je m'y prépare.[84]

Orme, also referencing the above quotation, suggests that Camus used writing to confront and overcome his own despair.[85] While *L'Étranger* was written before this, it seems clear that following the 1945 Sétif riots, the author knew that the colonised

[79] Ibid., 418-419.
[80] Graebner, *History's Place*, 191. Graebner notes that at this point, projects of political enfranchisement for the colonised had failed, notably the Blum-Violette bill proposed by the Popular Front government in 1936, while World War II was to bring another mass recruitment from among the indigenous population, together with the 1943 *Manifeste du Peuple Algérien*, in which this population demanded full political rights. Moreover, tensions inevitably rose with the massacre of thousands of Muslims following nationalist riots at Sétif in May 1945.
[81] Ibid., 192.
[82] Similarly, Rosaldo states that Imperialist nostalgia involves people mourning "the passing of what they themselves have transformed". Renato Rosaldo, "Imperialist Nostalgia", *Representations* 26 (Spring 1989): 107-108.
[83] Graebner, *History's Place*, 192.
[84] Albert Camus and Jean Grenier, *Correspondance: 1932-1960* (Paris: Gallimard, 1981), 222.
[85] Orme, *The Development of Albert Camus's Concern for Social and Political Justice*, 195-196.

population would have to be made equal to the colonisers.[86] Indeed, it has been noted that Camus was "always surrounded by the signs of Franco-Algerian struggle" and that the years when he worked on *L'Étranger* "were filled with numerous events punctuating Algerian nationalism's long and bloody resistance to the French".[87] Thus, through Meursault, Camus may be considered to confront his private anguish. Meursault's desperation is evident from his actions. As Anderson suggests, following G. V. Banks, the protagonist commits a form of suicide to get back to his mother.[88] His desire to return to the mother also foreshadows a nostalgia that will become part of a model of *pied-noir* identity which Meursault exemplifies.

In a preface included in the English-language edition of *L'Étranger* in 1956 (dated 1955), Camus stated that Meursault is condemned "because he doesn't play the game".[89] The game it seems Meursault refuses to play is the metropolitan French game. Before his mother's funeral, the caretaker at the nursing home contrasts funeral ceremonies in metropolitan France with those in Algeria. The heat in Algeria means that bodies have to be buried quickly, whereas in France grieving family and friends can mourn for three or four days before the funeral: "A Paris, on reste avec le mort trois, quatre jours quelquefois. Ici on n'a pas le temps, on ne s'est pas fait à l'idée que déjà il faut courir derrière le corbillard" (15). In consequence, Meursault buries his mother the day he hears about her death and returns home the following day in a speedy ceremony which appears to be aligned with Muslim and Jewish practice (according to which burials take place as soon as possible) rather than with metropolitan French traditions. An exaggerated description of this type of speedy burial also appears in *La Peste*, as the narrator (Rieux) notes: "ce qui caractérisait au début nos cérémonies [de l'enterrement] c'était la rapidité".[90] In his autobiographical *Les Oliviers de la justice* (1959), Jean Pélégri similarly mentions the speed with which his father is buried, noting that the ceremony was over by 11 a.m. on the day in question.[91] Thus, although Eamon Maher argues that a slowed-down,

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[86] Ibid., 102. Orme quotes Camus's call for assimilation in *Combat* as cited in Jacqueline Lévi-Valensi, ed., *Camus à 'Combat': éditoriaux et articles d'Albert Camus 1944-1947* (Paris: Gallimard, 2002), 532.

[87] Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 215-216. Said argues that Camus evaded most of this struggle or "in his last years, openly translated [it] into the language, imagery, and geographical apprehension of a singular French will contesting Algeria against its native Muslim inhabitants".

[88] Anderson, "La Première Femme", 34. Anderson draws on G.V. Banks, *Camus: L'Étranger* (London: Edward Arnold, 1976).

[89] Albert Camus, *The Outsider*, trans. Joseph Laredo (London: Penguin, 1982), 118.

[90] Camus, *La Peste*, 160.

[91] Jean Pélégri, *Les Oliviers de la justice* (Paris: Gallimard, 1959), 168, 181.

"Mediterranean" time is at work in Camus's novels,[92] time in fact appears to be speeded up as youth passes quickly and the young, focused on life, bear no sentimentality towards previous generations. Camus's views in essays in the collection *Noces* also illustrate this concept. In "Le vent à Djémila" and "L'Été à Alger", for example, the population appears as a *peuple jeune* which focuses on living life to the full in the present moment rather than dwelling on death in the distant future.[93] Camus further notes in "L'Été à Alger" that "On se dépêche de vivre".[94] Indeed, he claims that in Algiers, "Tout ce qui touche à la mort est […] ridicule ou odieux.[95] Furthermore, he states in this text that cities in Algeria have no past or traditions,[96] a claim he also makes in *L'Été*, most notably in the essay "Petit guide pour des villes sans passé".[97]

Meursault's apparent failure to mourn his mother's death must therefore be viewed within the context of this construction of "French Algerian time" which is similarly speeded up for his boss, acquaintances and friends. His boss is not pleased when he asks for two days off work for the funeral, prompting him to justify his absence by exclaiming: "Ce n'est pas de ma faute" (9). Marie is taken aback to hear his mother has just died but by that evening, "Marie avait tout oublié" (31). After the funeral, his boss merely asks him how old his mother was, after which "c'était une affaire terminée", while his colleague Emmanuel engages in a fun-filled race with him during lunch (30). For his part, Céleste, the owner of the restaurant Meursault frequents, simply asks him if "ça allait quand même" (38) and, after a long conversation about his plans to exact revenge on his mistress, Raymond merely alludes to the death by saying: "c'était une chose qui devait arriver un jour ou l'autre" (47-48). Meursault's decision to make the most of life's pleasures may therefore be viewed as a key part of his identity. Indeed, as Azzedine Haddour has pointed out, he is put on trial for his "passion for life rather than his crime".[98] It is for

[92] Eamon Maher, "The Mediterranean Way: Deceleration and Introspection in the Life and Work of Albert Camus" (unpublished paper presented at Décélération: XIV Colloque annuel de l'Adeffi, Galway, 20 October 2012).
[93] Camus, *Essais*, 61-76.
[94] Ibid., 74.
[95] Ibid., 73.
[96] Ibid., 74.
[97] Ibid., 847-850.
[98] Azzedine Haddour, *Colonial Myths: History and Narrative* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 44.

this passion that he is condemned by a judicial system put in place by metropolitan France.

Through his carefree swimming with Marie, as both enjoy the land, sea, sun and sky (71), Meursault appears to perform his identity as a member of the French Algerian race, described by Camus in the essays cited above.[99] Indeed, his youthful concentration on physical activities calls to mind the observation of another one of Camus's French Algerian characters, Yvars, in the short story, "Les Muets": "L'eau profonde et claire, le fort soleil, les filles, la vie du corps, il n'y avait pas d'autre bonheur dans son pays. Et ce bonheur passait avec la jeunesse".[100] This way of life contrasts with that of the pale-skinned Parisians evoked by Meursault in a negative description of metropolitan France (60). However, the indigenous Algerian population do not appear to share this lifestyle either, as is seen by the way in which the Arab character is eradicated from the beach in *L'Étranger*, an incident referred to again in *La Peste*.[101] Significantly, indigenous Algerians are also noticeably absent from descriptions in "L'Été à Alger" of "des joies saines", such as swimming and sunbathing, which cause the transformation of white skin:

> Quand on va pendant l'été aux bains du port, on prend conscience d'un passage simultané de toutes les peaux du blanc au doré, puis au brun, et pour finir à une couleur tabac qui est à la limite extrême de l'effort de transformation dont le corps est capable.[102]

With this in mind, Kassoul may usefully be cited: "Reading Camus we recognize the places and habits of the *pieds-noirs*".[103] Thus, although Camus maintained that Meursault is executed "pour n'avoir pas pleuré à l'enterrement de sa mère",[104] it seems that he is being judged not only as an existential outsider, but specifically as a character who performs French Algerian identity as conceived by the author.

In consequence, Rosemarie Jones's comments on the typical *pied-noir* protagonist are particularly pertinent as she notes that "the *pied-noir* hero is liberated in time, or more exactly through timelessness. The obligation to rediscover and reiterate the past has been lifted […] the history composed of battles and colonisation

[99] In "Noces à Tipasa" (*Noces*), for example, Camus describes "une race née du soleil et de la mer". Camus, *Essais*, 60.
[100] Camus, *L'Exil et le Royaume*, 62.
[101] We are told that Grand witnesses a conversation about "un jeune employé de commerce qui avait tué un Arabe sur une plage". See Camus, *La Peste*, 57.
[102] Camus, *Essais*, 68-69.
[103] Kassoul and Maougal, *Algerian Destiny*, 7. This statement is from Kassoul's introduction, 1-8.
[104] Cited by John Fletcher, "Interpreting *L'Etranger*", *The French Review* 1(Winter 1970): 163.

dissolves into eternity".[105] Meursault appears to perform as such a hero. He lives in the moment, negating any need to dwell on the past, and projects a virile image through his interactions with Marie and his lack of fear concerning the Arab characters. Tellingly, Roblès, in speaking of Camus's generosity towards his friends, notes: "Meursault, de même, est fidèle à ses amis".[106] In such a description, Meursault appears as a loyal friend to those in his circle, while his act of murder is forgotten. The trial appears as a performance, with each lawyer trying to outdo the other, but crucially Meursault also performs. In blaming his murder of the Arab on the sun he casts himself as a victim of circumstances, while violence in the colonies appears as a result of the heat rather than political or historical reasons.[107] Meursault's stabbing of the Arab character is therefore naturalised, as is Raymond's beating of a man on the tram who questions his masculinity (42).

It may be noted here that Andrea L. Smith reports that the *pieds-noirs* from Algeria often do not consider repatriates from Tunisia to be real *pieds-noirs*, as they did not suffer from the same trauma of a prolonged war and consequently going back to Tunisia has been easier for them.[108] Meursault, in contrast, suffers from being locked up in prison and can be considered, therefore, to be an "authentic" *pied-noir* man – living in the present, generous, virile and victimised – before the term *pied-noir* came into common usage:

> Au début de ma détention, pourtant, ce qui a été le plus dur, c'est que j'avais des pensées d'homme libre. Par exemple, l'envie me prenait d'être sur une plage et de descendre vers la mer. A imaginer le bruit des premières vagues sous la plante de mes pieds, l'entrée du corps dans l'eau et la délivrance que j'y trouvais, je sentais tout d'un coup combien les murs de ma prison étaient rapprochés (101-102).

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[105] Jones, "Pied-Noir Literature", 129.
[106] Roblès, *Camus, frère de soleil*, 23. Roblès also compares Camus to Meursault in their love of sun, sea and physical activity and notes that Camus, like Meursault, worked for a shipping company, 24. Moreover, he notes that both Camus and Meursault showed an interest in outcasts, 29.
[107] Richard C. Keller notes that excessive heat and light were thought to be dangerous for human minds in the colonies and that there had been discussions of "the relationship between race, climate, and madness" since the origins of the psychiatric profession. See Richard C. Keller, *Colonial Madness: Psychiatry in French North Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 124. The word "doolally", which originated in the British army camp in the town of Deolali in India, where Indian summers and monsoon season were believed to send soldiers mad, is further evidence of the perceived links between mental illness and climate. For more on this, see Maj Martin, "The Madness at Deolali", *Royal Army Medical Corps* 152, no. 2 (2006): 94-95.
[108] Andrea L. Smith, *Colonial Memory and Postcolonial Europe: Maltese Settlers in Algeria and France* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006), 165.

Like Daru in the short story "L'Hôte", his honesty is also presented as a significant character trait and, indeed, his "exemplary honesty" in the context of an absurd, dishonest world has been commented upon.[109] Moreover, Smith notes that due to their "double migration" (from Europe to Algeria and back, as in the case of Camus's Spanish ancestors,) the *pieds-noirs* she interviewed in France "saw themselves as more 'immigrant' than any other group in contemporary French society"; while most of those she interviewed were "outsiders" who were isolated from "true" French people. [110] Meursault, having been rejected by a French judicial system to which he refuses to conform, could be considered the original *pied-noir* outsider. During the trial, he is struck by the realisation that "j'étais coupable". (119). He is guilty of killing an Arab and of neglecting his mother, who is associated with French Algeria and the colonial "other". Yet he refuses to apologise and this final, defiant performance again sets the tone for the performance of a macho *pied-noir* identity. Meursault's remark, "et qu'ils m'accueillent avec des cris de haine" (159), was subsequently used as the title of an autobiographical book in which Henri Martinez details his involvement in the OAS.[111] This allusion may be regarded as part of a broader appropriation of Camus by both *pied-noir* militants and those who criticise the OAS, such as the *Association nationale des Pieds-Noirs progressistes et leurs amis*, which, in seeking reconciliation and solidarity with all sides, cites Camus as an examplar who, by his "origines familiales et son parcours", shows that the French of Algeria were not all "des colonialistes exploiteurs".[112]

Meursault's final lines also show him to be at one with the world for the first time: "je m'ouvrais pour la première fois à la tendre indifférence du monde. De l'éprouver si pareil à moi, si fraternel enfin, j'ai senti que j'avais été heureux, et que je l'étais encore" (159). The "fraternal" feeling he alludes to with regard to his surroundings points to his story as a familial drama.[113] Carroll draws attention to Camus's tendency to describe French and indigenous Algerians as part of the same "Algerian family", one that was divided and dysfunctional but yet had a chance of

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[109] Foley, *Albert Camus*, 14. His refusal to lie at the request of his defence lawyer, for example, is cited by Foley.
[110] Smith, *Colonial Memory and Postcolonial Europe*, 135, 15.
[111] Henri Martinez, *Et qu'ils m'accueillent avec des cris de haine: Oran 1962* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1982).
[112] Anonymous, "Il y a 50 ans mourait Albert Camus", L'Association nationale des Pieds Noirs progressistes et leurs amis, http://www.anpnpa.org/?p=166. Date accessed: 6 October 2013.
[113] For Said, ceremonies of bonding with the territory in Camus's work "ironically stimulate queries [...] about the need for such affirmations". Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 223.

being reunited.[114] Carroll also describes the "Algerian in Camus" – "a split or conflict of national, cultural, and political identities that is expressed in his writings in various ways" – a hybridity that, Carroll argues, resists uniformity and leaves Camus receptive to others.[115] This apparent settler hybridity is reinforced by Camus's portrayal of Meursault. Thus, the protagonist of *L'Étranger* is receptive towards both the metropolitan French and the indigenous Algerian population. After talks with his lawyer and the judge, both of whom represent the French judicial system, Meursault has "l'impression ridicule de «faire partie de la famille»" (95); while the Arab prisoners also treat him as one of the family – despite laughing at him when he first arrives and falling silent when he tells them he has killed an Arab, they help him make up his bed as soon as night falls (97) and he professes to feeling "chez moi" (96) in his cell. The Arab prisoners, therefore, do not appear to hold a grudge against Meursault for his actions. Rather, he appears trapped between the two sides from the beginning of the novel, when the nurse hints at his mother's funeral that there is no way out of his broader predicament: "'Si on va doucement, on risque une insolation. Mais si on va trop vite, on est en transpiration et dans l'église on attrape un chaud et froid'. Elle avait raison. Il n'y avait pas d'issue" (27).

Meursault's apparent desire to return to his mother also positions his story as an Oedipal drama which is doomed to end in disaster. Indeed, Meursault has been called the "tragic hero" of a "secular tragedy" by John Fletcher, who interprets the novel as an Oedipal tale (by a Greek scholar) in which the sea is a mother figure that Meursault has a sexual union with, as opposed to a dominant, hostile father-figure sun.[116] By performing as a member of a flawed family, Meursault becomes a sympathetic character, whose act of murder can be overlooked by the reader.[117] He is both an outsider and a member of what would, twenty years later, become an exiled

[114] Carroll, *Albert Camus the Algerian*, 145-146.
[115] Ibid., 8.
[116] Fletcher, "Interpreting *L'Etranger*", 166-167. Other examples given by Fletcher that link the novel to the story of Oedipus include frequent references to feet (Oedipus's name came from having had his feet bound as a baby), the story read by Meursault of the Czech's mother hanging herself (like Oedipus's mother /wife Jocasta) and the fact that Meursault's crime is associated with the impending parricide trial.
[117] Roger Shattuck views the novel as a fable about a citizen who yields to outside pressures to commit an inhuman act, while the sympathetic reader unwittingly becomes a collaborator in this act. While Shattuck's interpretation of the novel involves the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany rather than colonialism, it seems appropriate here to note that the reader is encouraged to sympathise with Meursault and is unlikely, therefore, to blame him (or the *pieds-noirs* in general) for colonialism. See Roger Shattuck, "Guilt, Justice, and Empathy in Melville and Camus", *Partisan Review*, 63, no. 3, (1996): 448. Cited in Kulkarni, "The Ambiguous Fate of a Pied-Noir", 1530.

pied-noir community. He also performs as a victim, whom the majority will not listen to and have made up their minds about. Indeed, Camus went so far as to call Mersault "the only Christ we deserve" in his preface to the 1956 English-language edition of his work,[118] a statement which links this fictional character to that of Tarrou in *La Peste*, who dies as an innocent victim of a plague that he has done his best to combat, in his desire to be a "saint sans Dieu".[119]

Thanks to the creation of a character such as Meursault, Camus has been accepted as a member of a wider *pied-noir* family. Furthermore, it could be argued that in placing a character like Meursault in the public domain, Camus intended (perhaps unconsciously) to leave a prototype *pied-noir* for French Algerians to look to in the future. Pierre Nora certainly interpreted Meursault as a typical *pied-noir*, noting of the murder scene:

> ce tête à tête, un dimanche, sur la plage écrasée de soleil [...] libère une agressivité latente, apparente beaucoup moins le héros au Roquentin de *la Nausée* qu'à tout Français en Algérie. Et la condamnation à mort que Camus inflige pour finir à Meursault, loin d'évoquer on ne sait quel procès kafkéen devient alors l'aveu troublant d'une culpabilité historique et prend les allures d'une anticipation.[120]

The legacy of Camus's protagonist may be seen in how seriously Nora regards Meursault as an example of a French Algerian man. Indeed, Alistair Horne would later note that "'The Outsider' of Camus […] perhaps personifies the *pied noir* mentality better than any other fictional character".[121] We may nonetheless consider a later fictional character, Daru, as part of Camus's literary development of French Algerian masculinity.

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[118] Camus, *The Outsider*, 119.
[119] Camus, *La Peste*, 230.
[120] Pierre Nora, *Les Français d'Algérie* (Paris: Julliard, 1961), 190-191. Nora highlights his different approach from Sartre's existentialist reading of the novel and claims the text may be seen as "l'exact reflet du sentiment vécu de la présence française en Algérie", although he suggests that Camus was an exception who could see a truth that his compatriots could not.
[121] Alistair Horne, *A Savage War Of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962* (New York: New York Review Books, 2006), 52.

1.3 Daru – The Perfect Host

Camus's collection of short stories *L'Exil et le Royaume* was published in 1957, the year after his unsuccessful appeal for a civil truce, at a time when the writer was struggling, as a French Algerian, to be accepted by either side in the Algerian war. The character of Daru, in the story "L'Hôte",[122] has been widely commented upon.[123] Ambiguities in the text, not least the significance of the title's reference to either Daru or the unnamed Arab as either a host or a guest in colonial Algeria, have caused disagreement among critics. Descriptions of the latter character have been considered by some as indicative of Camus's colonialist thought and by others as an attempt to show "the voice of the settler 'idiolecte' used by elements of the French population, *pieds-noirs* or not, to designate, in a condescending and stereotyping fashion, every Algerian as 'Arabe'".[124]

Traits that may be seen as part of Camus's model of settler masculinity may be discerned by studying Daru, whose place in Algeria is established in the story as his birthright. We are informed that he was born on this land and that "Partout ailleurs, il se sentait exilé" (83). His role as an educator of poverty-stricken indigenous Algerian children, to whom he also distributes food, further justifies his presence. Far from being an exploitative *colon*, he lives a simple, quasi-monastic existence, "content [...] du peu qu'il avait" (83). Daru also embodies the limitless generosity and natural hospitality which Camus believed marked out his community from the French.[125] Hospitality as an apparent hallmark of settler identity was viewed with mistrust by Pierre Nora in his analysis of the *Français d'Algérie*.[126] Nora's mistrust notwithstanding, a "sens de l'hospitalité" was also highlighted by Emmanuel

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[122] Camus, *L'Exil et le Royaume*, 81-99.

[123] Kevin Newmark contends that this story and "Jonas" are the two "most [...] highly commented *récits in L'Exil et le Royaume*". Kevin Newmark, "Tongue-tied: What Camus's Fiction Could Not Teach Us about Ethics and Politics", in *Albert Camus in the 21st Century: A Reassessment of his Thinking at the Dawn of the Millennium*, ed. Christine Margerrison, Mark Orme, and Lisa Lincoln (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008), 107-120 (109). Cited in Andy Stafford, "Ambivalence and Ambiguity of the Short Story in Albert Camus's 'L'Hôte' and Mohammed Dib's 'La Fin'", in *Postcolonial Poetics: Genre and Form*, ed. Patrick Crowley and Jane Hiddleston (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011), 224.

[124] Stafford, "Ambivalence and Ambiguity", 232. Stafford's reasoning that Daru's voice is not necessarily Camus's may be contrasted with Dine's view that Daru is Camus's "mouthpiece". See Philip Dine, *Images of the Algerian War: French Fiction and Film, 1954-1992* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 105.

[125] See "Petit Guide pour des villes sans passé" *(L'Été)*, in *Camus, Essais*, 850.

[126] Nora considers his experience of "l'hospitalité aggressive" of the French of Algeria as a deliberate ploy or one of "les premiers philtres du nationalisme algérien". See Nora, *Les Français d'Algérie*, 44.

Roblès twenty years after Algerian independence as "une des vertus les plus foncières des pieds-noirs".[127] It is also worth noting that an exaggerated form of "hospitalité pure et hyperbolique" has been theorised by Derrida as necessary to inspire the fairest legislation, which is nevertheless always to some extent exclusionary with regard to outsiders.[128] Derrida's concept is worth quoting in the context of Daru's actions: "L'hospitalité pure consiste à accueillir l'arrivant avant de lui poser des conditions, avant de savoir et de demander quoi que ce soit".[129] Daru appears to conform to this pure form of hospitality as, when the policeman, Balducci, and his Arab prisoner unexpectedly arrive, he offers to heat the classroom to ensure that they are "plus à l'aise" (84), serves tea to both men and unties the prisoner before asking for any information about the reasons for their arrival (85). Later, he cooks for his prisoner, eats with him and sleeps beside him (91-93), while the next day he provides the man with money and food and grants him his freedom by leaving him on a plateau (98-99). By such acts of generosity, Daru recalls another French Algerian character from the same volume, the previously cited Yvars in "Les Muets", who shares his lunch with his Arab co-worker, Saïd, in a moment of fraternal solidarity.[130] Daru's decision not to hand over the prisoner reveals his subscription to a distinctively Mediterranean masculine code of honour: "le livrer était contraire à l'honneur: d'y penser seulement le rendait fou d'humiliation" (96), and his strength and courage are emphasised by his certainty that "s'il le fallait, il casserait en deux son adversaire" (93-94).

Balducci also demonstrates generosity of spirit and subscribes to a similar code of honour. We are told that he advances up the slope slowly on his horse, "pour ne pas blesser l'Arabe", who is walking alongside him (84). The Arab, we later discover, has slit his cousin's throat in a family quarrel (87). Thus, Balducci, in the opening scene, literally looks down on his prisoner, whom he magnanimously agrees to untie after the journey (85), from the physical as well as the moral high ground. He also gives Daru a revolver (which Daru accepts, despite his professed abhorrence

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[127] Emmanuel Roblès, "Préface", in *Les Pieds-Noirs*, ed. Emmanuel Roblès (Paris: Philippe Lebaud, 1982), 12.

[128] See Derrida's interview with Dominique Dhombres on concepts of hospitality as they relate to immigration and citizenship, including the revoking of the French citizenship of Algerian Jews under the Vichy regime. Dominique Dhombres, "Il n'y a pas de culture ni de lien social sans un principe d'hospitalité; ce penseur estime que c'est au nom de ce principe, pris absolument, qu'il faut inventer les meilleures mesures en matière d'immigration", *Le Monde*, 2 December 1997.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Camus, *L'Exil et le Royaume*, 72-73.

of violence) and admits his shame at tying up any man (89). Furthermore, he informs Daru that he will not denounce him if he fails to deliver the prisoner. Balducci's confidence in Daru's honesty, should he be questioned by the authorities about the prisoner, is summed up as follows: "Tu es d'ici, tu es un homme" (89).

Both Daru's and Balducci's performance of their masculinity places a value on honesty, generosity, honour and thus, by implication, shame. The most significant feature of these characters' identities, however, is that they appear as innocent victims of an administrative system that they cannot control. Despite Balducci's admitted shame at tying up the prisoner, he follows orders as the prisoner has committed murder and "on ne peut pas les laisser faire" (89). Daru, as the protagonist of the story, is a more striking example of a tragic destiny as, having freed the prisoner, he returns to find a threatening message on the blackboard of his classroom: "Tu as livré notre frère. Tu paieras" (99). Despite Daru's good intentions regarding his pupils, he therefore ends up, like Camus at this time, as an outsider, who has alienated both the French authorities and the indigenous Algerian population.

While Daru appears as a tragic victim of circumstance, his prisoner is described in less than flattering terms as having stereotypically big lips and a "bouche animale" (92), and is ultimately guilty of murder. Furthermore, his agency is in doubt as, when let go, he walks towards the police station rather than to freedom. This story has been compared to Frank O'Connor's 1931 short story on the Irish anti-colonial struggle, "Guests of the Nation", in his collection of the same name.[131] Yet, there is an important difference between these texts. While the nationalists, Noble and Bonaparte (the narrator) have bonded with their British army prisoners, Belcher and Hawkins, and wish to let them go at the end of the story, they do not and are unequivocally responsible for their deaths.[132] Daru, however, is excused from his role in the Arab prisoner's unhappy fate and from his role in colonisation as a whole. For this reason, he as been seen as "le vrai héros éthique".[133] Despite his ambivalent attitude towards the indigenous Algerian prisoner, critics such as Carroll also view Daru's offer of shelter to the anonymous murderer as "an *absolute* form of

[131] Stafford, "Ambivalence and Ambiguity", 230 n.30.
[132] Tellingly, the guilt from this episode stays with Bonaparte forever, as the last lines of the story tell us: "And anything that ever happened me after I never felt the same about again". See Frank O'Connor, *Guests of the Nation* (London: Macmillan, 1931), 19.
[133] Jean Sarocchi, "L'Autre et les autres", in *Albert Camus' 'L'Exil et le Royaume': The Third Decade*, ed. Anthony Rizzuto (Toronto: Paratexte, 1989), 95-104 (104). Cited in Stafford, "Ambivalence and Ambiguity", 228.

hospitality",[134] perhaps even the type reflected on by Derrida. In this way, the protagonist's actions are, in Carroll's view "outside or beyond self-interest, sociopolitical differences, political disputes – and even or especially armed conflict", in a gesture that is "antithetical to colonialism".[135] Camus may therefore be seen here as laying the foundations for the public commemoration of a blameless *pied-noir* masculinity, which, as we shall see, was later elaborated on in *Le Premier Homme*.

1.4 Becoming the First Man

A preface by Camus's daughter Catherine to *Le Premier Homme*, published in 1994, explains that the unfinished manuscript of the novel was found in her father's satchel on 4 January 1960, the date of his death in a car accident.[136] In an expanded foreword to the English-language edition, Catherine Camus explains some of the reasons behind the decision not to publish at the time:

> in denouncing totalitarianism [in the Soviet Union], and in advocating a multi-cultural Algeria where both communities would enjoy the same rights, Camus antagonized both the right and the left. At the time of his tragic death he was very much isolated and subject to attacks from all sides designed to destroy the man and the artist so that his ideas would have no impact. In these circumstances, to have published an unfinished manuscript [...] might well have given ammunition to those who were saying Camus was finished as a writer.[137]

This leads us to consider the story of Jacques Cormery as a means for the author to work through his own contested identity. Indeed, Orme suggests that *Le Premier Homme* was written "primarily for his [Camus's] own benefit and for therapeutic reasons".[138] This unfinished story, centring largely on a man's memories of his

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[134] Carroll, *Albert Camus the Algerian*, 75. Carroll's emphasis.
[135] Ibid.
[136] Albert Camus, *Le Premier Homme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), 9. In an interview, Catherine Camus suggests that the unfinished manuscript contains about one third of what Camus had intended to write. See Russell Wilkinson, "Albert Camus: Solitaire Et Solidaire. Russell Wilkinson parle avec Catherine Camus au sujet de *Le Premier Homme* d'Albert Camus", Spike Magazine, http://www.spikemagazine.com/0899camu.php. Date accessed: 7 December 2012.
[137] Albert Camus, *The First Man*, trans. David Hapgood (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1995), vi. Lionel Dubois also suggests political reasons for not publishing the novel at the time of Camus's death: "un livre dont certains passages évoquent clairement la Guerre d'Algérie aurait pu ajouter aux troubles et aux déchirements de cette époque et des années qui l'ont suivie". See Lionel Dubois, "*Le Premier Homme*, le roman inachevé d'Albert Camus", *The French Review* 69, no. 4 (March 1996): 556.
[138] Orme, *The Development of Albert Camus's Concern for Social and Political Justice*, 197. Wood also believes that the emotionally charged elements of the novel allow Camus "to grapple with [...] his

youth, is largely autobiographical. Jacques's mother is called after Camus's mother Catherine or "Vve Camus" (she is sometimes called Lucie in the text), and she is similarly partially deaf and mute. Jacques's teacher M. Bernard is also called after Camus's real teacher, "M. Germain", at certain points of the novel (224, 164) and his own surname was Camus's paternal grandmother's maiden name.[139] Elements of fiction, however, allow the novel's protagonist to be presented as an idealised model of French Algerian masculinity.

In his analysis of machismo or "the cult of the male", Richard Basham describes "socially expected" behavioural ideals for men in Latin countries.[140] A typical macho man has been described as "primarily identified with his mother".[141] Basham's description of the conventional view of women in such societies is worth considering:

> the natural place of the woman is in the home. [...] At marriage she must be a virgin. [...] As a married woman in her role of mother and wife, the woman is expected to be the binding force within the family. She must be absolutely faithful to her husband. She should, however, expect her husband to be unfaithful to her and must overlook it for the sake of the continuity of the family. [142]

In keeping with such codes, Jacques feels an "amour désespéré pour sa mère" (189). He also believes that his loves should be virgins not only with regard to men, but, in keeping with the colonial theme of virginal lands, with regard to the implicitly political and historical past:

> Amours: il aurait voulu qu'elles fussent toutes vierges de passé et d'hommes. Et le seul être qu'il ait rencontré et qui le fut en effet, il lui avait voué sa vie mais n'avait jamais pu être lui-même fidèle. Il voulait donc que les femmes fussent ce qu'il n'était pas lui-même. Et ce qu'il était le renvoyait aux femmes qui lui ressemblaient et qu'il aimait et prenait alors avec rage et fureur (359).

While macho men project an image of their own sexual prowess, wives and mothers "are enveloped in complex patterns designed to deny their sexuality".[143] By the same

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own riven identity". See Nancy Wood, *Vectors of Memory: Legacies of Trauma in Postwar Europe* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), 153.

[139] Lottman, *Albert Camus*, 20. The places which feature in the book also correspond with Camus's life. See Dubois, "*Le Premier Homme*", 556-557.

[140] Richard Basham, "Machismo", *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 1, no. 2 (Spring 1976): 126-127.

[141] Ibid., 127. Basham cites John Ingham, "The Bullfighter", *American Imago* 21 (1964): 96.

[142] Basham, "Machismo", 128-129.

[143] Ibid., 129.

token, Jacques has numerous affairs with women but is reluctant to acknowledge his mother's sexuality by admitting to himself that his older brother was conceived out of wedlock (335).

The ideal macho man also "suffers no injustice without response, and [...] above all, never evinces fear".[144] This corresponds with how Jacques is expected to behave from a young age, as he describes how, at school, "une injure rituelle [...] entraînait immédiatement la bataille, l'insulte à la mère et aux morts étant de toute éternité la plus grave sur les bords de la Méditerranée" (170). Before the ensuing duels or "donnades", the boys must affect "le calme et la résolution propres à la virilité", despite feeling anxious (171). Jacques's childhood memories are also associated with his love of tales of honour and courage (86) and with his participation in traditionally male-oriented activities. Football is described as "son royaume" (99), while he and his best friend Pierre often run to school "en se passant un des cartables comme un ballon de rugby" (229). Hunting is revealed to be a particularly important part of masculine identity as Jacques, who hunts with his uncle, informs us that the male workers in the area were "tous chasseurs" (160). This activity evokes the archetypally heroic colonial pioneer who, for both the British and the French of the nineteenth century, furthered the imperial project by symbolising a "viripotent masculinity which reflected and sustained a natural hierarchical order of superordinate and subordinate masculinities".[145] Jacques's identity therefore goes beyond stereotypical Latin machismo and is associated with a pioneering tradition. In consequence, his childhood efforts to be courageous have an added impetus – he believes he is following in the footsteps of heroic French Algerian settlers. Thus, when Jacques's older brother Louis refuses to fetch a hen in the dark, his grandmother draws on the mythic bravery of past settlers: "La grand-mère avait ricané et vitupéré ces enfants de riches qui n'étaient pas comme ceux de son temps, au fin fond du bled, et qui n'avaient peur de rien" (250). Jacques then feels obliged to complete the task and is duly considered to be "viril" (253).

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[144] Ibid., 127.

[145] J.A. Mangan and Callum McKenzie, "Prologue: Statement", in "'Blooding' the Martial Male: The Officer Hunter, Field Sports and Big Game Hunting", special issue, *International Journal of the History of Sport* 25, no.9 (August 2008): 1057-1079 (1062). This quotation refers to the British context but Dine confirms its relevance for Algeria. Cited in Philip Dine, "Big-Game Hunting in Algeria from Jules Gérard to *Tartarin de Tarascon*", *Moving Worlds: A Journal of Transcultural Writings* 12, no. 1 (2012): 48.

Jacques is associated with the mythical Mediterranean identity promoted by the *École d'Alger*, as suggested by references to his "tribe" as being "comme tous les Méditerranéens" (70).[146] However, Camus's approach to this identity, as revealed in his 1937 speech on a new Mediterranean culture, ignored Arabic and Islam and instead focused on Latin and Christianity, in particular Catholicism.[147] Strachan's analysis of the perceived association between the *pieds-noirs* and Christianity may usefully be considered in this regard. Referring to Weber's consideration of education as a form of "colonization", Strachan draws attention to Jacques's conflicting experiences of learning the catechism and his school education, where his teacher, M. Bernard, disapproves of religion.[148] Strachan reminds us that the Ferry Laws were enacted in Algeria between 1883 and 1888, thus "establishing the basic principles of compulsory, free and increasingly secular education".[149] He regards this as revealing of attempts to Frenchify the settlers, as well as the settlers' continued distinctive identity, including a "limited enthusiasm for *laïcité* and for the political culture of the Republic".[150] A particularly striking representation of this apparent divide between the Christian leanings of the French Algerian settlers as opposed to secular metropolitan educators may be found in *La Famille Hernandez* (1964), which is worth mentioning here. At this film's dénouement, its *pied-noir* protagonists go into a church to pray. A metropolitan teacher follows the group and begins to say the Our Father, despite his claim that he would be ridiculed if his colleagues could see him, "moi qui suis de l'école laïque".[151] Following a close-up of a statue of the Virgin Mary, the characters' prayers are answered, leading to a happy ending for all.

It must be noted regarding Jacques that although he makes his Holy Communion, and his initials "J.C." (39) evoke Christ, he states that he and his family have little time for religion (181). Instead, they follow the religion of life, living in the present like Meursault: "Elle [Catherine Cormery] ne parlait jamais de Dieu. Ce mot-là, à vrai dire, Jacques ne l'avait jamais entendu prononcer pendant toute son

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[146] For more on this identity, see Dunwoodie, who draws attention to the *École d'Alger's* cultural construction of a "'Mediterranean man' [...] as a geographically and culturally redrawn figure cutting across (imperialist) national and cultural boundaries". Dunwoodie, *Writing French Algeria*, 176.
[147] Camus, *Essais*, 1321-1327.
[148] John Strachan, "Between History, Memory, and Mythology: The Algerian Education of Albert Camus", in *France's Lost Empires*, ed. Kate Marsh and Nicola Frith (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2011), 57. Strachan cites Eugen Weber, *Peasants Into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1976), 486.
[149] Strachan, "Between History, Memory, and Mythology, 58.
[150] Ibid., 59.
[151] Geneviève Baïlac, *La Famille Hernandez* (France: Films Etienne Baïlac, 1964).

enfance, et lui-même ne s'en inquiétait pas. La vie, mystérieuse et éclatante, suffisait à le remplir tout entier" (183). This recalls Camus's 1937 essay, in which he sees Mediterranean culture as facilitating the transformation of Catholicism into a "hymne à la nature et à la joie naïve", as opposed to Protestantism, which he considers to be "le catholicisme arraché à la Méditerranée et à son influence à la fois néfaste et exaltante".[152] While Jacques and his family are not religious, Catholic rituals nevertheless form part of their identity: "C'est que la religion faisait partie pour eux, comme pour la majorité des Algériens, de la vie sociale et d'elle seulement. On était catholique comme on est français, cela oblige à un certain nombre de rites" (183). The suffering of Christ is also linked to the settlers. Jacques's birth, after his parents' long journey by horse-drawn cart and his humble cradle of a laundry basket, echoes the nativity scene, positioning him as one who must eventually suffer for the sins of others. His outsider status, his alienation from "l'enfance dont il n'avait jamais guéri" (53) and his tortured realisation that he is on the side of the executioners are all proof of this destiny and appear to make him, like Meursault and Camus himself, an authentic French Algerian man: "Jacques, qui s'était jusque-là senti solidaire de toutes les victimes, reconnaît maintenant qu'il est aussi solidaire des bourreaux. Sa tristesse. Définition" (353).[153]

Desirable features of manhood in Arab communities also feature as a key part of this French Algerian identity. In her discussion of varieties of masculinity in Islamic societies, Linda Jones evokes idealised traits such as courage, loyalty, generosity, truthfulness and mastery of one's emotions, including showing emotion at appropriate moments (for example being moved to tears by a poem),[154] qualities which are also foregrounded in *Le Premier Homme*. Jacques, like Meursault, is loyal, telling his good friend Malan that he would willingly give him all his possessions (44). His generosity is also evident from the chambermaid's surprise, at a hotel in Saint-Brieuc, when he tips her (31). Penny-pinching is frowned upon, as is evident when Jacques's uncle Joséphin is accused of meanness by his other uncle Étienne (133). Joséphin is punished for his behaviour by Étienne, only daring to return to the family home when the latter is not there. Honesty also features as an identity trait.

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[152] Camus, *Essais*, 1323.
[153] This quotation also calls to mind the artist Jonas from the eponymous short story in *L'Exil et le Royaume*, whose choice is to remain "*solitaire* ou *solidaire*". Camus's emphasis. See Camus, *L'Exil et le Royaume*, 139.
[154] Linda Jones, "Islamic Masculinities", in *Debating Masculinity*, ed. Josep M. Armengol and Àngels Carabí (Harriman, TN: Men's Studies Press, 2009), 93-112.

Thus, the young Jacques feels "un bouleversement de honte" (103) when he steals a two franc coin from his grandmother and is also reluctant to lie to get a summer job (285). Mastery of his emotions is equally important to Jacques, as he and some of his classmates refuse to cry when punished by Monsieur Bernard: "Il y avait aussi ceux, dont faisait partie Jacques, qui subissaient les coups sans mot dire, frémissant, et qui regagnaient leur place en ravalant de grosses larmes" (169). When he hears the ending of Dorgelès's *Croix de bois*, however, Jacques is not afraid to show his feelings at the "correct" time: "il [M. Bernard] vit Jacques au premier rang qui le regardait fixement, le visage couvert de larmes, secoué de sanglots interminables, qui semblaient ne devoir jamais s'arrêter" (167).

Jacques is therefore presented as being neither wholly inclined to secularism, nor a conventional Catholic; he is neither French, nor an indigenous Algerian, and yet he is influenced by idealised markers of Arab masculinity. In this way, he embodies a French Algerian man for whom, like Meursault, living in the moment is a religion. Jacques's "appétit dévorant de la vie" (299) echoes Meursault's behaviour, as does his desire for nothing but "la joie, les êtres libres, la force et tout ce que la vie a de bon, de mystérieux et qui ne s'achète ni ne s'achètera jamais" (299-300). Moreover, like Meursault, Jacques's community has no inclination to spend long periods in mourning but, rather, aims to forget death or treat it with humour:

> Quand on disait de quelqu'un, devant la grand-mère, qu'il était mort: «Bon, disait-elle, il ne pétera plus.» [...] Ce n'était pas inconscience chez elle. Car, elle avait beaucoup vu mourir autour d'elle. Ses deux enfants, son mari, son gendre et tous ses neveux à la guerre. Mais justement, la mort lui était aussi familière que le travail ou la pauvreté, elle n'y pensait pas mais la vivait en quelque sorte, et puis la nécessité du présent était trop forte pour elle plus encore que pour les Algériens en général, privés par leurs préoccupations et par leur destin collectif de cette piété funéraire qui fleurit au sommet des civilisations. Pour eux, c'était une épreuve qu'il fallait affronter, comme ceux qui les avaient précédés, dont ils ne parlaient jamais, où ils essayeraient de montrer ce courage dont ils faisaient la vertu principale de l'homme, mais qu'en attendant il fallait essayer d'oublier et d'écarter. […] D'où l'aspect rigolard que prenait tout enterrement. (181-182).

As well as working through a model of masculinity, the author strives to come to terms with the demise of colonial Algeria, which is again associated with femininity. Jacques's relationship with a maternal sea recalls that of Meursault: "La mer était douce, tiède, le soleil léger maintenant sur les têtes mouillées, et la gloire de la lumière emplissait ces jeunes corps d'une joie qui les faisait crier sans arrêt" (64).

It may also be compared with Camus's description of his personal relationship with a feminised landscape and sea in his essay "Noces à Tipasa" (*Noces*): "Il me faut être nu et puis plonger dans la mer, encore tout parfumé des essences de la terre, laver celles-ci dans celle-là, et nouer sur ma peau l'étreinte pour laquelle soupirent lèvres à lèvres depuis si longtemps la terre et la mer".[155] In contrast, Arab women, unlike some of the Arab men, are unnamed and appear as a menacing threat both to Jacques himself and to the colonial system, which does not appear to have conquered them:

> ils [les colonisés] se retiraient pourtant dans leurs maisons inconnues, où l'on ne pénétrait jamais, barricadées aussi avec leurs femmes qu'on ne voyait jamais ou, si on les voyait dans la rue, on ne savait pas qui elles étaient, avec leur voile à mi-visage et leurs beaux yeux sensuels et doux au-dessus du linge blanc, et ils étaient si nombreux dans les quartiers où ils étaient concentrés, si nombreux que par leur seul nombre, bien que résignés et fatigués, ils faisaient planer une menace invisible […] (302).

Moreover, the way they perform their femininity by failing to engage with the coloniser suggests that colonialism is doomed to fail, as observed by Berque.[156]

Jacques's mother, having been born in 1882 (74), is unquestionably associated with the birth of the colony. His conflation of her life and that of his native land is evident from his desire to "se mêler à ce que la terre avait de plus chaud, ce que sans le savoir il attendait de sa mère" (304). Furthermore, Alison Rice observes that as Jacques returns home and embraces Catherine, "The body of his mother is like a country, opening up to the son who comes back to find himself".[157] Rice goes on to state that "the mother serves as a metaphor for the country" in the aforementioned scene.[158] As a metaphor for colonial Algeria, Catherine appears gentle yet mysterious and inaccessible and therefore slightly threatening:

> Il allait dire: «Tu es très belle» et s'arrêta. […] c'eût été franchir la barrière invisible derrière laquelle toute sa vie il l'avait vue retranchée – douce, polie, conciliante, passive même, et cependant jamais conquise par rien ni personne, isolée dans sa demi-surdité, ses difficultés de langage, belle certainement mais à peu près inaccessible (71).

[155] Camus, *Essais*, 57.
[156] Berque suggests that "l'hypothèse coloniale se révèle avoir été sterile à terme" due to the colonised population's ability to turn lessons learned from the colonisers against them in order to revolt. See Berque, *Le Maghreb entre deux guerres*, 412-414.
[157] Alison Rice, *Polygraphies: Francophone Women Writing Algeria* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2012), 93.
[158] Ibid., 94.

Although he desperately wants to, Jacques fails to communicate his feelings to her, but this appears, at least in part, to be her fault. For example, when trying to comfort her after his grandmother calls her a "putain", Jacques tells his mother she looks beautiful but, failing to hear him, she waves him away (137). Although Catherine is depicted as an unearthly Madonna figure, her virginal status before marriage is questioned and her sexuality is exposed by the attention of a male suitor. Her performance of femininity therefore fails to live up to Jacques's image of perfection and like Meursault's mother in *L'Étranger*, she can only become pure in death, a prospect he imagines by conjuring up images of her "visage pincé d'agonisante" (89), and her "visage d'agonisante" (213) although it is agony in turn for him so to do.

Significantly, Jacques's father Henri, whose grave he visits aged forty, is associated with France, where he died as a soldier in World War I, and thus with adulthood. In contrast, Catherine is unequivocally associated with childhood and Algeria: "Chez la mère. Suite de l'enfance – il retrouve l'enfance et non le père" (311). Jacques becomes father to his own father on seeing Henri's grave and realising that, having died aged 29, Henri is now "plus jeune que lui" (34). Rizzuto's examination of this moment in terms of an Oedipal scenario is relevant here, as he suggests that "the son resurrects his father and symbolically kills him in order to achieve independence, a spiritual rebirth above and beyond his biological birth. This act of murder, distinct from a real war with real victims, takes place in the aesthetic confines of a novel, a fictitious murder compensated by a creative act".[159] Rizzuto also maintains that Catherine withdraws "into another world" and thereby "dies to the world and to her son".[160] In this analysis, Jacques, like Meursault, then "rejoins his mother in death" by returning to her in Algeria.[161] However, Jacques gives no indication that he plans to stay with his mother or to withdraw from the world. In fact, given the traumatic circumstances of the Algerian war, he invites her to accompany him to France, but she refuses, adding that she is old and wants to stay "chez nous" (89). Jacques consequently begins to face the prospect of his mother's eventual death. He is thus unlike Meursault in that he does not reject France, where

[159] Rizzuto, *Camus*, 121.
[160] Ibid., 116.
[161] Ibid., 113.

he lives, and he appears to liberate himself more successfully from the mother and, by extension, the motherland.

Jacques's story, through which Camus appears to come to terms with personal identity issues, is considered by some to be a "poignant *Bildungsroman*".[162] It may nonetheless be read as a metaphor for his community. Indeed, according to Edward J. Hughes, this "fictionalized autobiography" was "seen by Camus as typifying the lot of those descendants of nineteenth-century French settlers of Algeria".[163] When the novel was being written, a peaceful resolution to the conflict looked increasingly unlikely. As Strachan points out, "Three weeks after his [Camus's] death, on the streets of Algiers, *pied-noir* 'ultras' erected barricades, killed more than a dozen *gendarmes*, and marked the final, irrevocable separation of French Algeria from metropolitan France".[164] It may thus be argued that the text itself was intended as a *lieu de mémoire* or a conduit of collective memory. A note states that Jacques will seek to "Arracher cette famille pauvre au destin des pauvres qui est de disparaître de l'histoire sans laisser des traces. Les Muets." (338), thereby positioning the text as a forerunner to the post-independence texts which sought to bring the history of the *pieds-noirs* to light, often with a positive slant.[165] This reference to a poor, mute family recalls the coopers of modest means in Camus's short story "Les Muets", thus reiterating a theme of physical and psychological impoverishment, which, as Strachan has persuasively shown, is a significant feature of representations of the *pieds-noirs* by themselves and others.[166] In this way, the reader is encouraged to sympathise with the settlers. A desire to represent Jacques Cormery's story in a certain light can also be seen from notes in the manuscript which show that the author was eager to portray the protagonist as a monstrous outsider (29, 219). This can, at least in part, be attributed to his status as a coloniser who will never be accepted as Algerian by the colonised population and who is also a "corps étranger" in France (53). Barbara Creed, in her analysis of the monstrous

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[162] Wood, *Vectors of Memory*, 10.
[163] Edward J. Hughes, "Building the Colonial Archive: The Case of Camus's *Le premier homme*", *Research in African Literatures* 30, no. 3 (1999): 176.
[164] Strachan, "Between History, Memory, and Mythology", 55.
[165] Daniel Leconte, for example, invokes Camus in his appeal for what he sees as the positive aspects of colonialism to be recognised as well as its faults: "Soyons donc «camusiens» et tentons, alors que l'histoire a désormais tranché, de fabriquer une mémoire commune qui permette aux uns et aux autres de trouver leur compte et de vivre ensemble". See Leconte, *Camus, si tu savais*, xli.
[166] John Strachan, "From Poverty to Wretchedness: Albert Camus and the psychology of the *pieds-noirs*", *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 14, no. 2 (Summer 2013), Project Muse.

feminine in horror movies, draws on Julia Kristeva to point out that: “historically, it has been the function of religion to purify the abject but with the disintegration of the ‘historical forms’ of religion, the work of purification now rests solely with ‘that catharsis par excellence called art’”.[167] Camus’s description of yet another French Algerian outsider may also, therefore, be an attempt to facilitate the purification of his community through a cathartic narrative.

Wood discusses the novel in her analysis of “Vectors of Memory”.[168] She considers the text as “an attempt to mediate between the ‘objective guilt’ of the *pieds noirs* and the heroic myths they nurtured, and to come up with a historical memory that includes all the ambivalences but moderates the extremes”.[169] She further suggests that Camus is striving “not merely to *claim* his place in Algeria’s pioneer mythology, but to restore to the *pied-noir* community the ambivalences of a historical memory that, to its own eventual peril, it had chosen to repudiate”.[170] Debra Kelly similarly argues against reading the text as simply nostalgic, stating that “it is written in the full understanding of the consequences of the Algerian War of Independence”.[171] She contends that the aim of creating a collective memory is to construct “a set of memories for a particular kind of community”, whereas *Le Premier Homme* “does not construct any sort of ‘useable’ collective memory for the future. Since the French Algerians have no future, it is rather a book of mourning. Mourning is a kind of remembering and in Freudian terms, unlike nostalgia, will end in the subject letting go of the loved object so as to become free again”.[172] Camus does appear to be mourning colonial Algeria in the text. However, he also leaves a public legacy regarding the *pieds-noirs* that places little emphasis on settler culpability. We might usefully note here that Butler considers the performance of gender as “a strategy of survival within compulsory systems” which has “cultural survival at its end”.[173] In a similar manner, this text may be regarded as a strategy of cultural survival for a settler population that would soon become exiled *pieds-noirs*.

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[167] Barbara Creed, “Horror and the Monstrous Feminine: An Imaginary Abjection”, *Screen* 27, no. 1 (1986): 53. Creed cites Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 17.
[168] Wood, *Vectors of Memory*. See Chapter 6, 143-166.
[169] Ibid., 153.
[170] Ibid., 161. Wood’s emphasis.
[171] Debra Kelly, “‘An Unfinished Death’: the legacy of Albert Camus and the work of textual memory in contemporary European and Algerian literatures”, *International Journal of Francophone Studies* 10, nos. 1 and 2 (2007): 224.
[172] Ibid.
[173] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 178, 177.

A useable collective memory for the *pied-noir* community is constructed by Camus and an important strategy in this regard is the depiction of the colonial history of Algeria as a family drama. Indeed, the novel has been described as a "colonial family romance".[174] David Carroll notes that, although Camus's father's ancestors "were among the earliest French colonialists in Algeria", the writer "seems to have believed" that this part of the family "consisted exclusively of Alsatians who had chosen to emigrate to Algeria in 1871, after the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian war, rather than live in an Alsace occupied by Germany".[175] As Carroll points out, "This gave a patriotic and republican rather than colonialist justification for his father's family's presence in North Africa".[176] Although most of the early settlers went to Algeria for personal, rather than political reasons,[177] Jacques is similarly depicted as the descendant of a long line of courageous settlers whose presence in Algeria is justified in a similar manner. We are told that his father's family originally came from Alsace as they were fleeing "des ennemis appelés Allemands", while his mother's family came from Mahon in Menorca "parce qu'ils crevaient de faim" (80).

Significantly, Jacques's family is linked to a wider colonising "family" as a settler called Veillard and the local doctor recount the story of the foundation of Jacques's birthplace, Solferino, by Parisian settlers following the 1848 revolution (202-205). An emphasis on their emigration, which, as Hughes has noted, appears as a "socially sanctioned act", and on the difficult circumstances of their arrival, "accords authority to the act of settlement by spelling out the misery of the early European settlers".[178] Through their suffering, they are linked to Jacques's ancestry. The deaths of two-thirds of these emigrants encouraged by France, "sans avoir touché la pioche et la charrue", recalls Jacques's father's death in equally alien

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[174] Wood, *Vectors of Memory*, 154. Wood borrows the term from Stuart Hall's analysis of Claire Denis's film "Chocolat" in his essay "European Cinema on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" in *Screening Europe: Image and Identity in Contemporary European Cinema*, ed. Duncan Petrie (London: BFI, 1992), 45-53 (49).

[175] Carroll, *Albert Camus the Algerian*, 1-2. Lottman also states that Camus firmly believed that his grandparents came from Alsace to Algeria in 1871. However, he notes that while Jean Grenier, in his book on Camus, claimed that the local authorities in Algeria did not have the information Camus needed to research his ancestry, such information is readily available to all French citizens in state archives. Lottman asks: "Pourquoi Camus, dans la quête de son père et du père de son père, ne sollicita-t-il pas le concours des services de l'état civil? Nous ne le saurons jamais". See Lottman, *Albert Camus*, 19-20.

[176] Carroll, *Albert Camus the Algerian*, 2.

[177] Wood, drawing on Jean Meyer's, Jean Tarade's, Annie Rey Golzeiguer's and Jacques Thobie's *Histoire de la France coloniale, Tome 1. Des origines à 1914* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1991), 416, claims that most of the first wave of settlers were "very much individualists" rather than politically motivated. See Wood, *Vectors of Memory*, 157.

[178] Hughes, "Building the Colonial Archive", 178.

surroundings shortly after his call-up to fight for that same country (208, 324). Furthermore, Jacques pictures his father's arrival in Solferino as part of the same pioneering movement of emigrants, despite the fact that his father was born in Algeria:

> Il voyait son père qu'il n'avait jamais vu, dont il ne connaissait même pas la taille, il le voyait sur ce quai de Bône parmi les émigrants, pendant que les palans descendaient les pauvres meubles qui avaient survécu au voyage et que les disputes éclataient à propos de ceux qui s'étaient perdus. Il était là, décidé, sombre, les dents serrées, et après tout n'était-ce pas la même route qu'il avait prise de Bône à Solferino, près de quarante ans plus tôt, à bord de la carriole, sous le même ciel d'automne? (205-206).

In another conflation, Jacques's mother is imagined as part of this same group of emigrant settlers with a tragic destiny:

> et pourquoi Jacques pensait-il à sa mère pendant que l'avion montait et redescendait maintenant? En revoyant ce char embourbé sur la route de Bône, où les colons avaient laissé une femme enceinte pour aller chercher de l'aide et où ils retrouveraient la femme le ventre ouvert et les seins coupés (209).

There is little or no emphasis on colonial violence here, apart from an allusion to the "persécutés-persécuteurs" who were given the lands of indigenous insurgents – "des insurgés de 71, tués ou emprisonnés" (210).[179] Although Catherine Cormery, who is reimagined as one of the first settlers, notes on her arrival in Solferino that "Il n'y a personne" (16), Lottman's more realistic picture may usefully be quoted:

> Si la vie était dure pour les nouveaux venus à la colonie, elle l'était encore davantage pour la population musulmane indigène. Confronté à une mentalité de ruée vers l'or, le gouvernement français avait souvent autant de mal à protéger les musulmans et leurs terres qu'à encourager la colonisation par les Européens.[180]

The story of the Solferino settlers therefore encourages the reader to sympathise with the colonising, rather than the colonised population. Their arduous five-week journey on "*Le Labrador*" (203, 205) evokes both the Mayflower passengers on their way to the New World,[181] and the Acadian settlers, specifically Jacques Cartier's alleged

[179] Dunwoodie, *Writing French Algeria*, 273, comments on the lack of emphasis on colonial violence in this description of settlement as does Hughes, "Building the Colonial Archive", 177.

[180] Lottman, *Albert Camus*, 21.

[181] Wood suggests that Camus's evocation of the "Algerian *Mayflower* myth" here shows not only the hardship faced by the settlers, but also the complicity of French Algerians in a colonial system "built on a bedrock of misfortune *and* their complicity in the oppression of the indigenous population". See Wood, *Vectors of Memory*, 159. Wood's emphasis. However, Camus used comparisons between

description of the Labrador coast as "the land God gave to Cain".[182] In addition to this allusion, explicit references to Cain date violence in Algeria back to this first criminal (209, 345). Thus, the Algerian war appears as a family feud which, perhaps, like the first murderer and the first farmer, Cain, created, or has the potential to create, something positive.

In *Le Premier Homme*, Jacques may thus be regarded as an internal member of the settler community, while the Arabo-Berber population appears as part of an extended family going back as far as Cain. Conversations between Jacques and an Arab friend, Saddock,[183] during the Algerian war, position the latter as a "frère", from whom Jacques is separated by the tragic circumstances of war, but to whom he shows hospitality, in a gesture that echoes Daru's: "il accueille S., le droit d'asile étant sacré" (325)".[184] Other limited references to the indigenous population in the text similarly allude to a fraternal bond between the coloniser and colonised (21, 142, 258).[185] As Dine points out, however, such representations of fraternity are questionable and problematic: "The key notion of a colonial fraternity capable of transcending racial barriers" serves to depoliticise the Algerian war: "the Algerian revolution ceases at the point where Mediterraneanist *fraternisation* commences".[186] Furthermore, despite Jacques's reference to xenophobic men, their behaviour simply appears to be the result of unemployment, which affects both the colonising and colonised population as each individual competes against the next to find work (278). Thus, the relationship between the settlers and the indigenous population is cast as a

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French Algeria and America to justify the French Algerian presence, as the following quotation from "Petit guide pour des villes sans passé" (*L'Été*) implies: "Les Français d'Algérie sont une race bâtarde, faite de mélanges imprévus. Espagnols et Alsaciens, Italiens, Maltais, Juifs, Grecs enfin s'y sont rencontrés. Ces croisements brutaux ont donné, comme en Amérique, d'heureux résultats". See Camus, *Essais*, 848.

[182] Laurel Sefton MacDowell, *An Environmental History of Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012), 25. Dunwoodie notes that *Le Labrador* was the name of the ship on which impoverished Paris volunteers travelled to Mondovi in 1848. Dunwoodie, *Writing French Algeria*, 273.

[183] The name of this character recalls Mohamed Ben Sadock, former vice president of the Algerian assembly and FLN member. Camus privately interceded for Ben Sadock in 1957, as he awaited the death penalty, by writing to the judge in question. For an extract from this letter, see James D. Le Sueur, *Uncivil War: intellectuals and identity politics during the colonization of Algeria* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 121. As Foley notes, however, Camus withdrew his support for Ben Saddok (as Foley spells it) when details of his intercession appeared in the press. See Foley, *Albert Camus*, 162,

[184] Hughes, "Building the Colonial Archive", 178.

[185] The absence of the indigenous population in Camus's novels has been argued by several critics, including, for example, Emily Apter, who contends that the real "First Man" is missing from this novel – "he is an Algerian native, the novel's aborted character *par excellence*". See Emily Apter, "Out of Character: Camus's French Algerian Subjects", *MLN French Issue* 112, no. 4 (September 1997): 513-514.

[186] Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, 176.

familial one in which fighting brothers, particularly in the context of the Algerian war, will eventually reconcile. As the elder farmer Veillard states: "On est fait pour s'entendre. Aussi bêtes et brutes que nous, mais le même sang d'homme. On va encore un peu se tuer, se couper les couilles et se torturer un brin. Et puis on recommencera à vivre entre hommes. C'est le pays qui veut ça." (199).[187]

The Algerian war, in this narrative, is consequently portrayed as a depoliticised "family tragedy".[188] This is evident from the depiction of members of Jacques's immediate family, who may be read as representatives for their community. His poverty-stricken mother and uncle are caught up in the war despite their advanced age, poverty and lack of understanding about the issues. It is thus revealing that Camus considered calling the novel "Adam",[189] presumably in reference to Jacques's uncle Étienne, who has an "innocence adamique" (116). The following question put by Étienne to Jacques underlines his bewilderment: "Dis, les bandits, c'est bien? […] Bon, j'ai dit à ta mère les patrons trop durs [*sic*]. C'était fou mais les bandits c'est pas possible" (145). Moreover, his family (and presumably his Algerian "family" at large), are depicted as being prone to feuds for no apparent reason, just like the Arab's mysterious act of murder in "L'Hôte":

> D'obscures querelles divisaient parfois sa famille, et personne en vérité n'eût été capable d'en débrouiller les origines, et d'autant moins que, la mémoire manquant à tous, ils ne se souvenaient plus des causes, se bornant à entretenir mécaniquement l'effet une fois pour toute accepté et ruminé (134).

Indeed, as in *L'Étranger*, a type of casual violence pervades this macho culture, in which the young Jacques witnesses a man dying of a gunshot wound to his head inflicted by a restaurant owner (150) and a barber cuts an Arab's throat (282).

Also as in *L'Étranger*, this community have a unique relationship with time, which we see through members of Jacques's family, who are "naturellement largement en avance, comme le sont toujours les pauvres qui ont peu d'obligations sociales et de plaisirs, et qui craignent de n'y être point exacts" (273-274). We may

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[187] Carroll argues that this quotation "should not be taken as directly expressing Camus' own thoughts or political beliefs" and that Veillard's views "represent the opposite position from the one Camus took in numerous essays, since they serve to explain away the violence of the war and seem to ignore the responsibility of both the colonial system in general and French, Berber, and Arab Algerians in particular for it". See Carroll, *Albert Camus the Algerian*, 172. However, Veillard's statement, along with other examples of fraternity in the text, leave the reader with an overall impression of the war as an unfortunate familial falling-out.
[188] Ibid., 146.
[189] Lottman, *Albert Camus*, 19.

usefully consider here that concepts of time differ in collective memory. According to Wood, again drawing on Halbwachs, whereas “the discipline of history [...] tends to emphasize the alterity of the past”, collective memory seeks to draw comparisons between the past and present and, therefore, represents time “as continuous duration, and of a subjectivity inscribed within that temporality”.[190] While Wood suggests that public memory seeks to produce “a consciousness of an identity through time”,[191] Jacques seems to suggest a break between his people and linear time, pointing to the cyclical nature of “les empires et les peuples” that have previously passed through Algeria (13). This trope legitimises the French presence and implies an affinity with what the unnamed editors of Kateb’s *Nedjma* refer to as circular Arab thought as opposed to Western linearity.[192] Thus, each generation of French Algerians become the first men in Algeria as the previous generation is consigned to “l’immense oubli qui était la patrie définitive des hommes de sa race” (212).

Paradoxically, the previous generations are not forgotten in this text, as Veillard’s and the doctor’s accounts of the settlers show. Veillard tells Jacques that he knows nothing about his father Henri: “Ici, on ne garde rien. On abat et on reconstruit. On pense à l’avenir et on oublie le reste” (197). Yet the doctor later tells Jacques about his parents’ arrival and about his birth, which is recorded in the “livre d’état civil” (202). Wood argues that Camus shows settlers who deliberately turned their backs on past acts of violence and thereby reveals a specific *pied-noir* relationship with historical time as “a posture embraced by each generation as it resolutely constructs and consolidates an identity exclusively in relation to the present and future”.[193] Camus’s representation of an apparent break between generations of French Algerians and historical time nonetheless appears to be consciously constructed by him as he strives to leave a positive legacy for the settlers. As Hughes notes, “In the oxymoronic style of Camus’s emotionalized appeal, the ‘terre d’oubli’ ‘land of oblivion’ becomes the place of memory, and a would-be cultural void accommodates the *petit colon*”.[194] Given Camus’s emphasis

[190] Wood, *Vectors of Memory*, 3.
[191] Ibid.
[192] For this 1956 preface by the editors, which is absent from some later editions, see Anonymous, “Avertissement”, http://www.limag.refer.org/Documents/AvertissementNedjma1956.pdf. Date accessed: 5 February 2014. As John Erickson remarks, this note on the “non-linear qualities of Arabic thought” serves to “reinforce basic suppositions of orientalist judgement”. See John D. Erickson, “Kateb Yacine’s *Nedjma*: A Dialogue of Difference”, *SubStance* 21, no. 3 (1992): 31.
[193] Wood, *Vectors of Memory*, 159-160.
[194] Hughes, “Building the Colonial Archive”, 186.

on the lack of a collective memory and absence of historical archives with regard to Algeria (314), the reader is consequently encouraged to consider the novel as a valuable way of remembering a community of which Jacques is a sympathetic representative.

1.5 Conclusion

Continued controversies surrounding Camus point to the unresolved legacies of France's colonial past in addition to some of the identity challenges of its former settlers in Algeria. By creating fictional narratives, Camus may be considered to begin to engage with the impact of colonialism and with his own contested identity. The Camusian mother figure, usefully analysed in terms of Kristeva's concept of the chora as well as maternal depression, in addition to the restrictions imposed by patriarchal culture, may equally be considered in terms of the specifically colonial context in which Camus grew up. In *L'Étranger*, both colonising and colonised women appear as a threat to the established order. The death of the mother, who is subsequently idealised, may be read as a means of working through the very real threat of the colony's imminent demise. An attempt to return to the mother may consequently be linked to a nostalgic yearning for the past glories of French Algeria. Furthermore, through Meursault, Camus offers a prototype of outsider masculinity which involves a tragic destiny. This process is continued in "L'Hôte", in which Daru becomes an alienated outsider by virtue of his hospitality. Like Meursault, Daru does not appear to be to blame for the fate of the indigenous Algerian character. In his semi-autobiographical novel *Le Premier Homme*, Camus continues to work through his own contested identity with the creation of another hypermasculine protagonist, Jacques Cormery. Jacques's performance goes beyond Mediterranean machismo due to his pioneering heritage. He is distinguished from the metropolitan French by his affiliation with an unconventional Catholicism rather than secularism and by traits associated with Arab masculinity such as loyalty, generosity, honesty and mastery of one's emotions, thereby appearing as a hybrid of French, Algerian and conventionally French Algerian elements. In this text, the mother is once again associated with colonial Algeria. Jacques's separation from the mother, unlike that of Meursault, appears to be reasonably successful in psychological terms as he

identifies with his father, who is buried in France, and begins to contemplate Catherine's death and the loss of his homeland.

Although Jacques's story may initially appear to be a private narrative, the therapeutic functions of which have been rightly recognised, it also stands as a metaphor for a community whose history its author seeks to bring to light. Jacques's settler ancestors, like those of Camus, are depicted as patriots whose suffering through generations unites them as part of a broader community. Jacques's own family also represents a people caught up in a war that it does not understand. According to this narrative, the indigenous population is part of a cyclical family feud. Furthermore the settlers are linked to their Arabo-Berber brothers by an apparent break with linear time which justifies their presence in the colony as past violence is forgotten. *Le Premier Homme* may thus be considered a conduit of memory, offering a sympathetic view of a population which the reader is exhorted not to forget. It also continues Camus's literary construction of a distinctive model of French Algerian identity. Thus Camus, through Meursault, Daru and Jacques, can represent a phantasmatic hypermasculinity which is impossible to embody in real life; although the writer's professed experience during a day-trip to Tipasa is worth citing here: "Il y a un sentiment que connaissent les acteurs lorsqu'ils ont conscience d'avoir bien rempli leur rôle, c'est-à-dire, au sens le plus précis, d'avoir fait coïncider leurs gestes et ceux du personnage idéal qu'ils incarnent […]. C'était précisément cela que je ressentais: j'avais bien joué mon rôle. J'avais fait mon métier d'homme".[195]

Camus's legacy continues to haunt and his appeal to writers influenced by him is aided by his creation of narratives in which protagonists such as Meursault, Daru and Jacques appear as outsiders who are not responsible for the oppressive structures of colonialism. Instead, they appear in a positive light as part of a French Algerian family, which extends to include the indigenous population and the whole world as an alternately united and divided family, dating from Cain and Abel. The key role of the maternal figure adds to this impression of familial affiliation. In consequence, Camus has been claimed as one of their own by readers from notably diverse backgrounds. His variety of masculinity, with its emphasis on the mother and motherland has earned him admittance into the *pied-noir* community, as a statement

[195] Camus, *Essais*, 60. This extract is from "Noces à Tipasa" (*Noces*).

by one of his readers illustrates: "On était des frères de Camus, je pense que c'est cela qu'il a voulu rendre, l'Algérie, c'est ma mère, c'est sa mère, mais il faut voir au-déla, il y a un lien charnel qui nous attachait au pays et qui échappe à toute notion politique".[196] Significantly, Camus has also been reinvented by Algerian secularists in the 1990s as "a universal freedom-fighter who loved the country of his birth despite his misplaced political allegiances" and as "a code-name for the promulgation of an international democracy movement that would heal the breach between the Islamic world and the west".[197] Thus, according to Apter, Camus has become "a star in the firmament of an Algerian literary heritage inclusive of *pied-noir* writers".[198] Similarly, Kelly, analysing the effect of Camus's legacy on writing by contemporary Algerian women, notes that his "phantasm" visits the writings of Assia Djebar, Maïssa Bey and the Franco-Algerian Nina Bouraoui, among others.[199] For Kelly, these women are linked to Camus through traumatic memories and "a compulsion to bear witness" to suffering through the operation of both memory and the imagination.[200] She also suggests that perhaps "women writers are more ready to collapse the colonizer-cololonized opposition and identify with a man who would have been excluded from full participation in the Algeria constructed by nationalist discourse after independence, just as women would have been, and who has been perceived in an ambiguous position ever since with regard to the country of his birth".[201] Alison Rice similarly comments on Camus's impact on Algerian women writers, noting that Bey and Djebar have both been influenced by "Camus' representations of his native country and his mother", with the autobiographical nature of *Le Premier Homme* having a particularly significant impact, as well as the "voicelessness" and "cloistered" nature of the mother, whom Camus cherishes.[202]

In another example of Camus's wide appeal and in spite of the absence of developed female characters in his fiction,[203] Elizabeth Ann Bartlett uses his works to give an insight into feminism – citing, for example, Camus's advocacy of

[196] Cited by Verdès-Leroux, *Les Français d'Algérie*, 339.
[197] Apter, "Out of Character", 501.
[198] Ibid., 502.
[199] Kelly, "An Unfinished Death", 228. The women's writing cited by Kelly contains explicit and implicit references to Camus's works, including *Le Premier homme* and *L'Étranger.*
[200] Ibid., 225.
[201] Ibid., 228.
[202] Rice, *Polygraphies*, 86, 88, 90, 91.
[203] Camus's plan for *Le Premier Homme*, which he professed to Jean-Claude Brisville, was that it would be his first book in which women, heretofore "mythiques" in his works, would have a major role. See Todd, *Albert Camus: une vie*, 1020.

resistance to oppression and his affirmation of "human dignity, solidarity, friendship, justice, liberation and beauty".[204] Moreover, the title of a 2013 meeting of the UK group, "Women in French" (Leeds, 10-12 May), which aims to promote exchanges between women working in universities in the domain of French and Francophone studies, also has Camusian echoes: "Solitaires, Solidaires".[205] Camus's influence on diverse *pied-noir* writers' constructions of *pied-noir* identity and memory is also worth noting and will be referred to in the following chapters. There, we will seek to expand on Dine's highlighting of "Camus's primordial influence on the subsequent literary imaging of *Algérie française*".[206] Against this backdrop, we may now turn to *pied-noir* women's writing, as a particularly striking field with regard to post-war compositions invoking *pied-noir* memory and identity, at a time when the Algerian war was still taboo. As we shall see, some of these texts were undoubtedly influenced by Camus.

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[204] Elizabeth Ann Bartlett, *Rebellious Feminism: Camus's Ethic of Rebellion and Feminist Thought* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 1.
[205] See especially "Jonas" in Camus, *L'Exil et le Royaume*, 103-139.
[206] Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, 169.

Chapter 2: Performing French Algerian Femininity

2.1 Introduction – (Under)Studying Women in the Colonies

It has been argued that, until quite recently, "Women, whether European or non-European, were rarely singled out as deserving special scrutiny" in studies of empire.[1] Anne McClintock, writing in 1995, pointed out that "male theorists of imperialism and postcolonialism have seldom felt moved to explore the gendered dynamics of the subject".[2] Colonialism has been shown by Edward Said to encourage a "male conception of the world" which tends to be "static, frozen, fixed eternally", and to use highly romanticised images of indigenous women's femininity to subjugate the Orient.[3] Yet McClintock draws our attention to the fact that even "Said's enormously important and influential *Orientalism* does not explore gender as a category constitutive of imperialism".[4] Patricia Lorcin has also pointed out that "To date, the lion's share of research on women and gender in the colonies has focused on the British Empire",[5] a scholarly gap which this chapter will seek to redress.

Recent scholarship has pointed to women's central role in colonialism as intimate family relations "provided the vocabulary for political narratives" and became "sites [...] where racial affiliations were worked out".[6] Some of the ways in which indigenous Algerian women were regarded as a means of achieving colonial

[1] Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda, "Introduction", in *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism*, ed. Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1998), 1.
[2] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 5.
[3] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), 208. The feminisation of the colonised world has also been discussed by David Spurr and Jenny Sharpe, among others. See David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 170. Jenny Sharpe, "The Unspeakable Limits of Rape: Colonial Violence and Counter-Insurgency", in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*, ed. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993), 233. For a study of the feminisation of landscapes and the masculinisation of settlers in the Algerian context, see Yaël Simpson Fletcher, "'Irresistible Seductions': Gendered Representations of Colonial Algeria around 1930", in Clancy-Smith and Gouda, *Domesticating the Empire*, 193-210.
[4] McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 397 n.4. While Said highlights a feminised Orient, McClintock notes that "seeing sexuality only as a metaphor runs the risk of eliding *gender* as a constitutive dynamic of imperial and anti-imperial power", 14. McClintock's emphasis.
[5] Patricia M.E. Lorcin, "Teaching Women and Gender in France d'Outre-Mer: Problems and Strategies", *French Historical Studies* 27, no. 2 (Spring 2004): 296.
[6] Ann L. Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), 210. The centrality of domestic arrangements to the functioning of empire is also explored in Clancy-Smith and Gouda, *Domesticating the Empire*.

domination have also been investigated,[7] as has the political significance attached to their individual identities in the anti-colonial struggle and in an independent Algeria.[8] Yet despite the fact that gender dynamics were, "from the outset, fundamental to the securing and maintenance of the imperial enterprise", colonising women's performance of femininity remains relatively unexplored.[9] McClintock evokes the ambiguous position of colonial women as follows:

> Barred from the corridors of formal power, they [women] experienced the privileges and social contradictions of imperialism very differently from colonial men. [...] [C]olonial women made none of the direct economic or military decisions of empire and very few reaped its vast profits. Marital laws, property laws, land laws and the intractable violence of male decree bound them in gendered patterns of disadvantage and frustration. The vast, fissured architecture of imperialism was gendered throughout by the fact that it was white men who made and enforced laws and policies in their own interests. Nonetheless, the rationed privileges of race all too often put white women in positions of decided – if borrowed – power, not only over colonized women but also over colonized men. As such, white women were not the hapless onlookers of empire but were ambiguously complicit both as colonizers and colonized, privileged and restricted, acted upon and acting.[10]

Thus, while several critics have argued that colonised women were doubly oppressed,[11] McClintock suggests that colonial women were also to some extent oppressed by colonialism, although she does recognise colonial women's simultaneous empowerment as colonisers.

The male-oriented narratives of colonisation have been productively analysed by Kirsten Holst Peterson and Anna Rutherford:

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[7] See, for example, Malek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*, trans. Myrna Godzich and Wlad Godzich (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987). This text was originally published in 1981 as *Le Harem Colonial: Images d'un sous-érotisme*.
[8] See, for example, Frantz Fanon's 1959 essay "L'Algérie se dévoile" in his *L'An V de la révolution algérienne* (Paris: La Découverte, 2001), 16-50. The role of women in the war was also famously highlighted in Gillo Pontecorvo's *La Bataille d'Alger* (Italy and Algeria: Casbah Films, 1966). For a study of women's role in the independence struggle and their subsequent struggle for recognition, see Aoife Connolly, "La lutte des femmes algériennes, 1954-2005: Du mouvement anticolonialiste au mouvement de libération de la femme" (unpublished MA dissertation, NUI, Galway, 2005).
[9] McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 7.
[10] Ibid., 6. This is the conflicted world famously evoked by Doris Lessing, among others, in her social realist novel, *The Grass is Singing* (1950).
[11] Spivak, for example, notes that: "If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow", while Durba Ghosh states: "the term 'native woman' represented the category of indigenous and colonized subjects who were doubly likely to be marginal and oppressed". See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?", in Williams and Chrisman, *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory*, 82-83 and Durba Ghosh, "Who Counts as 'native'?: gender, race, and subjectivity in colonial India," *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 6, no. 3 (2005), Project Muse.

> The colonial world was no place for a woman, let alone a lady; it was a man's world, demanding pioneering, martial and organisational skills, and the achievements of those in the shape of conquered lands and people were celebrated in a series of male-orientated myths: mateship, the mounties, explorers, freedom fighters, bushrangers, missionaries. At a later stage the same skills were used to overthrow colonialism, thus reinforcing the ethos of the colonies as a predominantly male domain, both in reality and in the popular imagination which was both formed by the myths and in turn shaped reality. This male ethos has persisted in the colonial and post-colonial world long after the reality which formed it had ceased to exist. The effect of this on colonial women was no longer a question of 'no place for a woman', since they were palpably there, but of a place denied in the imagination.[12]

The authors' reference here to a male ethos which continues to exist, despite its lack of foundation in reality, evokes colonial nostalgia. Yet despite the implication that women are absent from narratives of colonialism, *pied-noir* women's embellishment of their lived experience in narratives that were maintained throughout colonialism and afterwards was recently investigated in Lorcin's historical study on the subject.[13] The significance of this colonial nostalgia becomes clear from the fact that it is not solely the preserve of the *pieds-noirs*, but encompasses a wider nostalgia for an exoticism centred on a romantic view of the past, gleaned from writers such as Elissa Rhaïs and Isabelle Eberhardt.[14] This chapter continues the corrective work of Lorcin by studying the unique, heretofore largely ignored, contribution of women to the creation of post-independence *pied-noir* memory and identity.

The distinctive performance of femininity in the colonies is highlighted by Beverly Gartrell, citing a guide for colonial officials' wives in Africa published in 1950. She notes that its author, colonial wife Emily Bradley, "realized that the war years had changed the conception of women at home. But an earlier conception had been imported to the colonies in the mental baggage of both men and women and survived there [...] unaffected by trends at home".[15] Thus, "the intensity and longevity" of the view of women's role as helpmate "can best be understood [...] in

[12] Kirsten Holst Petersen and Anna Rutherford, "Foreword", in *A Double Colonization: Colonial and Post-Colonial Women's Writing*, ed. Kirsten Holst Petersen and Anna Rutherford (Oxford: Dangaroo Press, 1986), 9.
[13] Patricia M.E. Lorcin, *Historicizing Colonial Nostalgia: European Women's Narratives of Algeria and Kenya 1900-Present* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).
[14] Ibid., 179.
[15] Beverley Gartrell, "Colonial Wives: Villains or Victims?", in *The Incorporated Wife*, ed. Hilary Callan and Shirley Ardener (London: Croom Helm, 1984), 173-174. The book cited by Gartrell is: Emily G. Bradley, *Dearest Priscilla: letters to the wife of a colonial officer* (London: Parrish, 1950). Gartrell notes that the publication of such a book, which set out normative behaviour for the colonial wife as a "self-denying helpmate", would have been deemed unnecessary "before women's aspirations had begun to stir as a result of their wartime experiences in Britain".

relation to the extreme structural conditions of colonial service".[16] Although her analysis applies to the British presence in Uganda, Gartrell notes that there are likely to be "generic cultural patterns of colonial structures, which showed specific adaptations according to circumstances and tradition within each colony".[17]

With regard to the French context, Alice L. Conklin points to "the differential position assigned to all women – African and European, metropolitan and colonial – as part of maintaining French hegemony overseas in the twentieth century.[18] Janet R. Horne also suggests that women in metropolitan France and the colonies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were expected to preserve traditions and uphold morality within the domestic sphere of family life while being agents of social reform.[19] Horne argues that bourgeois metropolitan women were expected to inculcate their values among the working classes, while colonizing women were expected to do the same in the homes of native women.[20] She notes that even those who supported women's rights at the time favoured a "familial feminism" which idealised the role of women as mothers in the domestic sphere.[21] Thus, the role of French Algerian women in the colonies was to aid France's *mission civilisatrice* by bringing modernity to native homes and spreading hygiene and childcare techniques.[22] This suggests that colonising women's performance of their identities was accorded the utmost importance as symbolic of progress and modernity but also of traditional familial bonds – a paradoxical situation which has been linked to the conflation of nostalgia and modernity.[23] Colonising women would appear to occupy a liminal position in this conception of femininity, as they are linked to both the colonising and colonised populations through their interactions with indigenous women.

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[16] Gartrell, "Colonial Wives", 173.
[17] Ibid., 166.
[18] Alice L. Conklin, "Redefining 'Frenchness': Citizenship, Race Regeneration, and Imperial Motherhood in France and West Africa, 1914- 40", in Clancy-Smith and Gouda, *Domesticating the Empire*, 68.
[19] Janet R. Horne, "In Pursuit of Greater France: Visions of Empire among Musée Social Reformers, 1984-1931", in Clancy-Smith and Gouda, *Domesticating the Empire*, 21-42. Jean Elisabeth Pedersen in her essay in this volume, "'Special Customs': Paternity Suits and Citizenship in France and the Colonies, 1870 - 1912", 43-64, also emphasises the glorification of the role of women as mothers in the domestic sphere in metropolitan France in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, at a time when only French men could vote.
[20] Horne, "In Pursuit of Greater France", 32, 38.
[21] Ibid., 35.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Lorcin suggests that colonial women in French Algeria and Kenya "reproduced metropole patterns of behaviour in an altogether different environment" – a type of nostalgia which "was masked by the activities of modernity". Lorcin, *Historicizing Colonial Nostalgia*, 13.

By early 1962, however, Shepard suggests that "new left journalists presented an Algeria where women were never seen, heard, or even interviewed".[24] In his 1961 essay *Les Français d'Algérie*, Pierre Nora erroneously claims that colonial women were absent from early settlement in Algeria and invokes the "memsahib myth", used by historians and imperialists alike to suggest that white women's arrival in the colonies "played a uniquely destructive role in colonial practice".[25] For Nora, according to Shepard, "pied noir society had transformed its women, rather than becoming civilized by them. Thus, it was not femininity in women that was the problem, but its absence: French Algerians' erasure of what made women different demonstrated how dangerous [as representatives of the ills of colonialism] the French of Algeria were".[26] In Nora's portrait of colonial women in Algeria, their femininity is therefore contested and they are seen to have thwarted potential links between the colonising and colonised populations: "La femme française, parasite du rapport colonial auquel elle ne participe pas directement, même si elle travaille, est généralement plus raciste que l'homme et contribue puissamment à interdire le contact entre les deux sociétés".[27] Moreover, OAS terrorism was represented in metropolitan France at this point as "the emanation of a pied noir society where both women and normal families were absent".[28] If gender is "the effect rather than the cause of a discourse which is always there first",[29] *pied-noir* women's perception of their identities and their contribution to a collective postcolonial memory must therefore be considered in light of negative discourses such as those described by Shepard.

Stora suggests that almost 10% of nearly 2000 works on the war were written by women and that the *pieds-noirs* have been the most prolific of the women writing in French.[30] His analysis of the significance of this literature is worth citing here:

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[24] Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 201.
[25] Ibid. See also Pierre Nora, *Les Français d'Algérie* (Paris: Julliard, 1961), 174-178.
[26] Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, 201-202.
[27] Nora, *Les Français d'Algérie*, 175.
[28] Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, 202.
[29] Sara Salih, ed. *The Judith Butler Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 91.
[30] Benjamin Stora, "Mémoires comparées: femmes françaises, femmes algériennes: Les écrits de femmes, la guerre d'Algérie et l'exil", in *L'Ère des décolonisations: Sélection de textes du colloque «Décolonisations comparées», Aix-en-Provence, 30 septembre-3 octobre 1993*, ed. Charles-Robert Ageron and Marc Michel (Paris: Karthala, 1995), 187, 176. Metropolitan French women were the most prolific writers during the war, during which time very few women in Algeria appear to have been writing or publishing. *Pied-noir* women, however, became the more prolific group from 1963. Of 137 women writers publishing in French mentioned by Stora; 57 are *pieds-noirs*, 15 are Algerian

> Dans la période 1963-1981, la France semble désormais occupée à effacer les traces d'une guerre perdue et de sa présence en Algérie; à liquider des concepts («intégration», «pacification», «assimilation»...); à mettre entre parenthèses ses «années algériennes». C'est le moment où, dans la faible production d'ouvrages consacrés à la guerre d'Algérie, émerge, en force, la parole des femmes pieds-noires.[31]

Women's early accounts of the war are therefore of particular significance regarding conceptions of *pied-noir* identity after 1962. For Stora, this writing is also noteworthy as women are largely observers, rather than participants in war and are therefore in a unique position to question the actions of both sides.[32] He also suggests that women may be responsible for the phenomenon of *nostalgérie*,[33] a view supported by Lorcin's recent study of colonial nostalgia.[34] Women are considered in our analysis as being "especially adept at colonizing the mind",[35] both during and after colonisation, as their role as partners, mothers and custodians of narratives continued.

2.2 Women's Early Narratives – Conduits of Collective Memory

Women are said to have shaped images of the colonial world by creating the homes "in both the individual and collective sense – out of which the narratives flowed".[36] Our study suggests that women's narratives also made a significant contribution to post-independence settler identity. Many of the personal stories which were published during France's perceived historiographical silence on the subject of the Algerian conflict appear to be metaphors for the *pied-noir* community and therefore influence a collective memory which is performative with regard to the themes that are privileged or elided. Francine Dessaigne's 1962 memoir, *Journal d'une mère de famille pied-noir*, is a striking example in this regard. The significance of the

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Muslims, 11 are Jewish and 54 are metropolitan French. Some commentators do not consider the Jewish population to be part of the *pied-noir* community but they are included in our present study as French Algerians at the time of Algerian independence. The Jewish community are also included in texts such as Emmanuel Roblès, ed., *Les Pieds-Noirs* (Paris: Philippe Lebaud, 1982).

[31] Stora, "Mémoires comparées", 177-178.

[32] Ibid., 173-174.

[33] Ibid., 186.

[34] Lorcin, *Historicizing Colonial Nostalgia*.

[35] Glenda Riley, *Taking Land, Breaking Land: Women Colonizing the American West and Kenya, 1840-1940,* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003), 13. Cited in Lorcin, *Historicizing Colonial Nostalgia*, 11.

[36] Lorcin, *Historicizing Colonial Nostalgia*, 196.

Camusian mother figure is developed here as Dessaigne positions herself as a mother within a specifically *pied-noir* family, despite the fact that she was actually born in France, a fact which reveals her conscious performance.[37] In her preface to the 1972 edition, Dessaigne appears as a spokesperson for the *pieds-noirs*, who appear as part of a wider family with similar memories:

> En écrivant ce que je voyais, ce que j'entendais, ce qui m'étreignait le coeur, je devenais, sans m'en douter, les yeux, les oreilles, les coeurs de tous les autres pris par la tourmente au même moment. Mon journal était tellement chargé d'humbles vérités qu'il était celui que chaque mère de famille aurait voulu écrire, le livre où chaque famille française [en Algérie] se retrouvait (i).

All *pieds-noirs* are deemed to have suffered in this quotation, but mothers appear as custodians of such memories. In this manner, the author casts women as guardians of a "true" *pied-noir* identity which is at risk as her community is "loin de la sérénité de l'Histoire et encore plus de la vérité du témoignage" (v).[38]Although she denies that the text was originally intended for publication (7), her decision to publish the diary sets it apart from other war-time journals such as that of Anne Frank, famously published posthumously. The author's admission that she decided to insert into her diary a text written in Paris (where she lived from 1954 to 1956) which retrospectively describes life in Algeria from 1946 to 1954 (14), underlines the selection process at work in this apparently private story. Thus, the text may be considered a "vector" of collective memory as theorised by Nancy Wood,[39] in as much as it seeks to influence perceptions of the *pieds-noirs* and the way their past is remembered at a community level.

Dessaigne states openly in her preface that she wishes to give a voice to her community's memories, which she feels have been ignored in favour of political or polemical debates which distort reality. By seeking to remove politics from

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[37] Francine Dessaigne, *Journal d'une mère de famille pied-noir* (Paris: France-Empire, 1972), 15. Dessaigne admits that she was born in metropolitan France, spent her childhood in Tunisia and arrived in Algeria in 1946 with her husband. Furthermore, she noted in private correspondence to Martini in 1993, "Je ne suis pas Pied-Noir, au sens propre du terme". Martini argues that this gives her an objective perspective, although this view is disproved here. See Lucienne Martini, *Racines de papier: Essai sur l'expression littéraire de l'identité Pieds-Noirs* (Paris: Publisud, 1997), 255.

[38] The perpetuation of this theme may be seen in a letter on the Centre De Documentation Historique sur l'Algérie (CDHA) website fifty years after Algerian independence which states that "La recherche de compromis, ici avec les factions extrêmes de l'anticolonialisme, de l'autre côté de la mer avec les maitres [*sic*] d'un pouvoir autocrate, nous fait régresser dans la construction d'une histoire sereine et objective". See Joseph Perez, "Lettre d'Information du CDHA, Novembre 2012, numéro 19: L'édito", Centre de Documentation Historique sur l'Algérie, http://cdha.fr/sites/default/files/kcfinder/files/ Lettre%20n%C2%B019.pdf. Date accessed: 22 March 2013.

[39] Nancy Wood, *Vectors of Memory: Legacies of Trauma in Postwar Europe* (Oxford: Berg, 1999).

discussions about the end of colonial Algeria, however, the author casts decolonisation as a tragedy. At one point, she likens the situation to tragedies by Corneille and Racine (78), thereby suggesting that the *pieds-noirs* were victims of destiny, who were subsequently rejected by their metropolitan French brothers and sisters:

> Bien sûr, il était trop tard pour changer le cours d'événements qui s'étaient décidés sans nous, mais dont nous faisions les frais. En métropole, seuls quelques amis nous ont ouvert les bras. Notre malheur aurait eu besoin d'un grand élan fraternel de nos compatriotes (ii).

Thus, the *pieds-noirs* are depicted as forgotten victims in a familial drama, with grievances which include Dessaigne's claim that "Un grand nombre des nôtres est mort d'insurmontables difficultés matérielles, de chagrin, de déracinement" (ii), as well as a lack of recognition of, or reparation for, a traumatic departure from "la terre natale perdue" (iv). This public advancement of apparently shared grievances makes a significant contribution to the constitution of a *pied-noir* identity in exile.

References in the text to Algeria's Roman occupiers (71) reiterate some of the markers of settler identity, such as the "myth of *pied-noir* latinity",[40] which, along with the "myth of the eternal Mediterranean", has been commented on as a key trope which was reinforced throughout colonisation by the likes of Louis Bertrand and continues to be evoked today.[41] Dessaigne also continues a familiar articulation of the benefits of France's *mission civilisatrice* through descriptions of, for example, the primitive dwellings of inhabitants of Kabylia (27-28), in contrast to her husband's construction work, which she believes will bring prosperity to the region (20). However, further markers of a *pied-noir* identity in exile are developed, most notably with regard to the naming of the former settlers. Despite stating in her 1972 preface that the term *pied-noir* was relatively new when the text was first published, she suggests at the beginning of the diary proper that it originated in 1830, when the barefoot or Turkish-slipper-wearing native population were surprised by the French soldiers' black military boots (8) – an explanation for the term which would resurface frequently in interviews with the *pieds-noirs*.[42]

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[40] Philip Dine, *Images of the Algerian War: French Fiction and Film, 1954-1992* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 158.

[41] Philip Dine, "The French Colonial Myth of a Pan-Mediterranean Civilization", in *Transnational Spaces and Identities in the Francophone World*, ed. Hafid Gafaiti, Patricia M.E. Lorcin, and David G. Troyansky (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 5.

[42] See for example, Clarisse Buono, *Pieds-noirs de père en fils* (Paris: Balland, 2004), 8.

The myth of "pioneering creation", considered a key trope with regard to the imagery of the settlers,[43] is also elaborated upon as we are informed that the ancestors of the *pieds-noirs* went ahead of French troops and suffered to make Algeria the country it became: "Allant de l'avant, devançant même les troupes, les colons se répandent autour des villes, défrichent, assèchent les marécages pestilentiels, souffrent et meurent" (73). Savarèse's study is worth referencing here as he suggests that the pioneering tradition was invented by the *pieds-noirs* after Algerian independence in order to unite their community against hostile and pejorative images of the *colon* in metropolitan France.[44] This invented tradition places Algeria ahead of France regarding education, infrastructure, agriculture and wine production.[45] The *pieds-noirs* are also depicted in many of these early texts by women as pioneers, not only in colonial Algeria, but in France. In Dessaigne's case, she herself appears as a type of pioneering and specifically reformist historian:

> Ce passé que l'on veut effacer, je vais essayer avec ferveur et respect de le rendre vivant. Je vais le faire en redonnant leur sens aux mots qu'on n'ose plus employer: colon, conquête, entre autres. On a voulu en faire des injures, je vais tenter de les réhabiliter. Je le fais parce que je me refuse à rayer des mémoires et de l'histoire la plus belle oeuvre française, une oeuvre unique dans le monde (71).

A post-independence *pied-noir* identity is associated with suffering; that of pioneering ancestors, but also that associated with the war and subsequent exodus. FLN bombs are described (10), as are other massacres of Europeans (10, 19, 46, 64-65, 68, 202).[46] However, violence perpetrated by French Algerians, including racist attacks or "ratonnades" against the indigenous population (77), is depicted as a response to guerrilla violence and as a manifestation of love for their homeland – another theme which would be reiterated in subsequent discussions of the *pieds-*

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[43] Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, 152.

[44] Éric Savarèse, *L'Invention des pieds-noirs* (Paris: Séguier, 2002). See Chapter 4, 147-182.

[45] Ibid. Savarèse also notes that although the French of Algeria are held responsible for the benefits of colonialism, this pioneering discourse often blames the French administration for inequalities in the colonial system.

[46] Dessaigne's description of the killing of Europeans in Oran by Muslims in December 1960 (10) is depicted in an entirely different light by Algerian film director and writer Mohamed Bensalah, who describes the repression and massacre of Muslims. See Mohamed Bensalah, "11 Décembre 1960: Du devoir de mémoire au devoir d'histoire", Vinyculture, http://www.vinyculture.com/11-decembre-1960-du-devoir-de-memoire-au-devoir-dhistoire-par-mohamed-bensalah/. Date accessed: 26 March 2013. Dessaigne also discusses the massacre of Europeans in Philippeville on 20 August 1955 (46) in what was an anti-colonial insurrection followed by repression, as described by Claire Mauss-Copeaux, *Algérie, 20 août 1955: Insurrection, Répression, Massacres* (Paris: Payot, 2011).

noirs.[47] Although the torture used by the army against the FLN during the Battle of Algiers is not condemned, Dessaigne raises the issue of its use against those suspected of OAS membership. The massacre of such French torturers is therefore portrayed as a necessary form of decontamination ("assainissement"), as the author describes their deaths at the hands of the OAS (138). Moreover, the suffering of the *pieds-noirs* is depicted as being worse than anything experienced by the metropolitan French, including Delphine Renard, the iconic four-year-old victim of an OAS explosion:[48]

> Les journaux de métropole étalent de gros titres. Toutes les consciences se révoltent et les mots cinglants tombent sur «le plastiqueur» de la petite Delphine. Nous n'avons pas été habitués à de tels déchaînements pour les pauvres petits massacrés ici depuis sept ans. La rancoeur submerge la pitié. Nous voudrions pouvoir dire aux journalistes: Et les nôtres? Depuis sept ans, le F.L.N. tue, mutile des enfants volontairement visés par les grenades, les balles ou le couteau, qu'ils soient Français de souche ou Musulmans (146).[49]

Dessaigne's text is included in Martini's analysis of works which provide "paper roots" for the *pieds-noirs* after 1962 and it may be considered as a *lieu de mémoire*.[50] Specific sites of suffering are also commemorated, and are worth discussing here. The most striking example is a heart-rending description of the shooting of pro-*Algérie française* protestors by the French army on the Rue d'Isly in Algiers on 26 March 1962, during a protest in support of OAS activists who, having gained control of Bab-el-Oued, were then surrounded by the army. It has been noted that the Rue d'Isly episode is only well known by specialists because it was recounted in the first works on Algeria published after independence.[51] However, it retains a central place in the memory of the *pied-noir* community,[52] and we can therefore conclude that the writings of female authors in the early days of Algerian independence played a part in this. In her testimony, Dessaigne positions herself as a protector, both of other people and of the truth, as she appears as a reliable witness to

[47] Verdès-Leroux, for example, suggests that the engagement of some of the *pieds-noirs* with or in the OAS was a result of an "amour fou". See Jeannine Verdès-Leroux , *Les Français d'Algérie de 1830 à aujourd'hui* (Paris: Fayard, 2001), 344.
[48] Minister André Malraux was the target of the OAS at the time. For more on Delphine Renard's story, see her memoir, *Tu Choisiras la vie* (Paris: Grasset, 2013).
[49] Renard's suffering is also minimised compared to *pied-noir* girls in Anne Loesch's *La Valise et le cercueil* (Paris: Plon, 1963), 195.
[50] Martini, *Racines de papier*, 253-257.
[51] Savarèse, *L'Invention des pieds-noirs*, 126.
[52] Ibid., 125.

atrocities committed by French soldiers who were trying to "clean up"[53] the streets by wiping out *pieds-noirs*:

> L'armée française, portant l'uniforme français, vise et tire sur des civils couchés. J'ai vu, je peux donc témoigner de cette honte. [...] Je suis couchée dans du sang. [...] Mon mari est allongé devant moi, ses pieds contre mes cheveux. [...] Les soldats, tournés vers la rue d'Isly, l'arrosent systématiquement sur toute sa largeur. Je vois les mitraillettes aller de droite à gauche pour nettoyer la rue. [...] Jamais nous n'aurions cru possible que l'armée tire sur des civils qui n'étaient à ce moment-là et en cet endroit pas même menaçants. J'en porte le témoignage, comme je témoigne que l'armée a tiré sur nous alors que nous étions aplatis sur sol. [...] Je rentre à la maison, dépeignée, les vêtements tachés du sang. Pour ne pas impressioner les enfants, j'enlève ma veste et la roule sur mon bras (166-168).

The author describes the "pèlerinage" that she and her husband, along with many others, undertake the day after the shooting, by returning to the Rue d'Isly where they look for traces of bullets and blood. This street, subsequently renamed in honour of murdered independence activist Larbi Ben M'Hidi, therefore becomes a place of private but also of public memory (169) for the *pied-noir* community.

Some sites are remembered in a way that is revealingly selective. For example, despite the brutally repressed 1945 riots at Sétif which left thousands of indigenous Algerians dead,[54] references to this massacre are noticeably absent, as the town is described as having been created and made rich by colonisation (36). The working class area of Bab-el-Oued is also presented in a positive light, as it was in Baïlac's *La Famille Hernandez*. Thus it appears as the home of an extroverted Mediterranean community whose "origines diverses se sont fondues en un magma coloré qui travaille, crie, s'agite, s'invective et complote dans l'exubérance du tempérament méditerranéen" (173). The Bab-el-Oued community appears as a true family with a biblical sense of justice: "Ce quartier populaire a le sens du clan et le goût du talion" (68). In consequence, any violence perpetrated by its inhabitants is the result of frustrations built up over the course of a long war as the community explodes from having "trop comprimé leur chagrin et leur indignation" (80).

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[53] Desssaigne's use of the verb "nettoyer" appears as an emotive evocation of a type of ethnic cleansing. This choice of verb is striking since Kristin Ross has pointed out that as France began to lose its empire, the colonies were increasingly presented as dirty and backward, while efforts were made to ensure that France was the antithesis of this – clean and modern with homes looked after by efficient housewives. Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999). See Chapter 2, 71-122.

[54] Blanchard and Lemaire estimate the number of dead at between 6,000 and 8,000 as a result of the suppression of riots at Sétif and elsewhere at this time. See Pascal Blanchard and Sandrine Lemaire, *Culture impériale: Les colonies au coeur de la République, 1931-1961* (Paris: Autrement, 2004), 22.

This work may be considered as having contributed to the association of *nostalgérie* with a *pied-noir* identity, as the author expresses her desire to forget her more traumatic memories of her homeland by freezing her positive memories (15), and regretfully describes the sights, sounds and smells of Algiers (17-18). Perhaps more significantly, it leaves an impression that the *pieds-noirs* are a unified population with a "Vocabulaire commun" and an "angoisse commune" (64). Repeated references to the suffering of this community, particularly children, also counteract negative portrayals of the French of Algeria, as the author seeks to "susciter [...] un peu d'amitié pour les «Pieds-Noirs»" (8). The apparently private memories discussed here therefore "perform, produce, and sustain" an identity,[55] which feeds into the public sphere via a text read by a largely *pied-noir* audience.

This leads us to consider other texts published by women in the immediate aftermath of the war as similarly significant conduits of collective memory. Anne Loesch's *La Valise et le cercueil* (1963) is noteworthy for the title's memorialisation of the slogan which prompted many of the settlers to leave Algeria in 1962 – adapted here to signify the death of a settler identity. It is also striking as an early attempt to rehabilitate the image of an OAS activist, in this case her former boyfriend Jean Sarradet, who had died, along with his parents, from asphyxiation caused by a faulty gas heater in France in December 1962. Twenty years later it would be the task of another woman, Micheline Susini, to attempt to rehabilitate the image of her husband Jean-Jacques Susini, a controversial OAS militant.[56] It is also worth noting that Susini's text, *De Soleil et de larmes* (1982), at times appears as a response to Loesch's *La Valise et le cercueil*, particularly as the former casts Jean Sarradet as a traitor.[57]

In the manner of Dessaigne's *Journal d'une mère de famille pied-noir*, Loesch's text is presented as a series of private diary entries, in this case written

[55] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1999), 178.
[56] Only the first volume of Jean-Jacques Susini's own *Histoire de l'OAS* (1963), covering the period of May to July 1961 was published. For a short biography of Susini, see Valérie Morin, "Jean-Jacques Susini", Mémoires Algériennes: Histoire et mémoires plurielles de la guerre d'Algérie, http://memoires-algeriennes.com/jean-jacques-susini/. Date accessed: 30 April 2013. More recently, works have been published about Susini. See Clément Steuer, *Susini et l'OAS* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2004) and Bertrand Le Gendre, *Confessions du n° 2 de l'OAS: entretiens avec Jean-Jacques Susini* (Paris: Le Grand livre du mois, 2012). Susini has now distanced himself from Le Gendre's work. For more on this, see Jacques de Saint Victor, "Jean-Jacques Susini: Confessions du n° 2 de l'OAS", *Le Figaro*, 22 March 2012.
[57] Micheline Susini, *De Soleil et de larmes* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1982), 208.

retrospectively with “la fidélité que laissent les souvenirs brûlants”.[58] J.-R. Tournoux, a specialist in “secret” history, also states on the front cover that it is “un témoignage bouleversant sur le peuple ‘pied-noir’: *un document historique de premier ordre*” (Tournoux’s emphasis). However, it is important to point out that fiction is also used as there are two narrative voices – Jean’s and Anne’s. Of particular interest for the present analysis is a discussion of a *pied-noir* state which, although it never came to fruition, existed in the imagination of Jean, Anne and their supporters, who lobbied for Algeria to become a federation divided into Muslim, Jewish and *pied-noir* territories. Their vision, including plans for a constitution and a flag for an *Algérie pied-noir* (125), recalls Anderson’s analysis of communities as essentially imagined.[59] This imagined federation that might have been suggests a development of the pioneering tradition and the continuation of the myths of missed opportunities which were used by settlers as a self-protective response to the Algerian war.[60] Following independence, however, a *pied-noir* pioneering spirit takes root in France, as Anne describes poverty-stricken, semi-abandoned villages inhabited by country bumpkins and notes her desire to shout at her compatriots: “*Colonisez donc la France, elle se meurt...*” (265, Loesch’s emphasis). A further evocation of this pioneering spirit simultaneously constructs a unified *pied-noir* race:

> Nous fabriquerons notre valeur par nos efforts, par notre rectitude morale scrupuleuse, par notre dynamisme, par nos oeuvres. Nous nous plierons à une discipline d’acier pour ne jamais avoir à rougir de notre race. En France, nous travaillerons, nous construirons pour la France. Mais jamais nous n’oublierons que nous sommes pieds-noirs, tous unis, tous solidaires les uns des autres – tous semblables (259).

Another aspect of this early vision of a *pied-noir* community is the resemblance it bears to Camus’s evocation of a *peuple jeune*, although France appears here as a bad parent, which is noteworthy as it continues to feature as a “marâtre” in discussions with the *pieds-noirs*:[61]

> [Les pieds-noirs] sont les fils d’une race au sang vif qui a un goût de la violence que vous avez eu vous aussi, Français, mais il y a bien longtemps, car vous êtes très vieux et ils sont jeunes... Alors prétendez-vous que le mariage forcé comme celui que vous voulez faire en parents impérieux et

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[58] Loesch, *La Valise et le cercueil*, 11.
[59] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).
[60] Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, 149.
[61] The theme of France as a *marâtre* who abandoned her children surfaces regularly in interviews, according to Verdès-Leroux in her *Les Français d’Algérie*, 377.

> bornés sera le bon? Ne comprenez-vous pas qu'en voyant les choses comme vous voulez qu'elles soient, et non comme elles sont en fait, vous allez provoquer le plus dramatique des divorces? (167-168).

Thus, the Algerian war is again portrayed as a family drama. In this case, however, while the colonised population may be part of the family, they are not portrayed as brothers, but rather as an infantalised spouse who should have obtained independence "Plus tard, devenu adulte" (23).

The 1963 novel by Marie Elbe, the pseudonym of journalist Jeanine Plantié, *Et à l'heure de notre* mort,[62] appears an equally significant early contribution to the public sphere regarding the *pieds-noirs*. Unlike the aforementioned texts, this story is described as a "roman". Yet an expanded 1992 edition rather implausibly suggests that Elbe drew on "une mémoire intacte" of events,[63] and the novel is presented as being true to life. Elbe has stated that her main purpose was to "témoigner au nom des siens avec la rigueur et la crédibilité du journaliste",[64] and this aim is alluded to in an epigraph quoting Roberto Pazzi: "Les étiquettes glissent et il ne reste que la vérité".[65] The novel is presented as a fictional story told by a character called Emmanuelle Soria who, like Elbe, is a journalist from Affreville, suggesting a strongly autobiographical approach. Emmanuelle recounts her own experiences and those of her friend Jeanne Fromenti, interspersed with the stories she overhears passengers telling each other as she waits to board a ship to metropolitan France in June 1962. This structure allows the author to privilege the traumatic departure of the *Français d'Algérie* from Algeria as well as their stories of suffering during the war, all of which become associated with a *pied-noir* identity. References to those who died at the Rue d'Isly shooting on 26 March 1962 are linked with the death of French Algeria and, by extension, with the death of this settler identity (15, 17). Camusian

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[62] The novel was republished for the thirtieth anniversary of the end of the Algerian war as *À l'heure de notre mort*. As Martini notes, the second title minimises the religious connotations of the first (the last lines of a prayer – the Hail Mary) although Elbe claims that the change in title was simply a printing error. Among the differences between both editions of the novel, Martini notes less emotive images and blurbs on the front and back covers of the later edition, along with the suppression of some of the more "violent" descriptions of Arabs (for example "cons de fells" is replaced by "FLN"), as well as the addition of some more references to the distant past of colonisation, all of which, Martini claims, lends a calmer, more serene tone to the novel. See Martini, *Racines de papier*, Chapter 2, 227-252.

[63] Marie Elbe, *À l'heure de notre mort* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1992). Back cover.

[64] Martini, *Racines de papier*, 229.

[65] Pazzi has been praised for mixing history and fiction, with Franco Ricci commenting on his ability to evoke "the coherence of history [which] is emplotted into apocryphal fiction and where the truth of History becomes coextensive with the psychic realities of visionary poets". See Franco Ricci, "World Literature in Review: Italian", *World Literature Today* 64, no. 2 (Spring, 1990): 291-292.

myths such as that of Algeria as part of an "eternal Mediterranean"[66] are also engaged with in descriptions of this shooting, with the suggestion that it was like a "corrida" featuring "Des femmes, des vieux, des gosses" (17);[67] although France is not necessarily a part of this Mediterranean identity as it is evoked as "la mère marâtre" (294). Moreover, the immediacy of the stories recounted by the passengers, as they casually converse and interrupt each other, positions the reader among them and evokes sympathy for their situation. This technique has been praised by Martini, who compares the passengers' anonymous voices to a chorus in a Greek tragedy, which evokes a common destiny in what she considers to be an authentically "*pied-noir*" manner, through a colourful vocabulary and a sense of humour and optimism.[68] However, the positioning of the Algerian war as a tragedy should again be considered in light of the the public record it leaves and the *pied-noir* memory it undoubtedly shapes.

Women appear as being outside the realm of politics in these early texts, as their involvement in the war appears motivated by personal reasons,[69] thereby allowing them to evacuate politics from accounts of colonisation and the Algerian war, with the latter becoming an unexplained and unexplainable tragedy. It is worth noting here that this focus appears personally helpful to the writers involved. Stora suggests that for *pied-noir* women, "Before the malaise became too strong, perhaps it was necessary to attenuate the shock of exile through writing, to fill the void left by the disappearance of the native land, to soften the anguish of vertigo".[70] This comment is particularly apt since writing about personal experiences in an emotional

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[66] Dine, "The French Colonial Myth of a Pan-Mediterranean Civilization", 5. Elbe's references to Roman ruins, the arrival of the settlers in Algeria as Republicans in 1848 and patriots from Alsace in 1879, or later as victims of phylloxera-infected vineyards, as well as references to their pioneering instincts in Affreville and their blood sacrifice for France in both World Wars, stand out as some examples of the reiteration of familiar myths (38, 31, 36-37, 30).

[67] For more on Mediterranean myths associated with taurine culture and the use of the *corrida* image in works on and by Camus and by Emmanuel Roblès, see Cathal Kilcline, "Constructions of Identity in Mediterranean France: A Study of Sport and other Popular Cultural Forms" (unpublished PhD dissertation, National University of Ireland, Galway, 2009), Chapter 4, 212-263.

[68] Martini, *Racines de papier*, 232-233.

[69] Jeanne, the most actively engaged female character in *À l'heure de notre mort*, states she acts as : "les tourments de Gripfix m'importaient davantage que les synthèses politiques" (280), while Anne's motivation in *La Valise et le cercueil* is to help Jean. By comparing her role to that of Madelon (78), Anne further emphasises her role as helpmate. Rearick notes that the character of Madelon was made famous by a song which "celebrated woman in a traditional servant role". See Charles Rearick, "Madelon and the Men – In War and Memory", *French Historical Studies* 17, no. 4 (Autumn 1992): 1016.

[70] Benjamin Stora, "Women's Writing between Two Algerian Wars", *Research in African Literatures* 30, no. 3 (Autumn 1999): 84.

way (rather than about non-affective topics) has been shown by clinical psychologists to bring about improvements in mental and physical health in studies that have been "replicated across age, gender, culture, social class, and personality type", as "constructing stories [...] helps individuals to understand their experiences and themselves".[71] The authors of this study note that the story constructed "can be in the form of an autobiography or even a third-person narrative", thereby suggesting the benefits of writing for these female authors.[72] Furthermore, a study conducted by anthropologist Andrea L. Smith showed that gender differences were evident when discussing the war with *pieds-noirs*. Men recited details from the war in an apparently emotionless fashion, as if reading from a book, which suggested to the author that they were trying to avoid memories of it. Women, however, recounted very personal experiences of the war, expressing the emotion and trauma it caused to them and their families.[73] Anne Roche similarly found that *pied-noir* women's memories focused on the everyday, rather than the political.[74] Apart from the personal benefits of these early texts, however, it is argued that they shaped perceptions of history and identity for their largely *pied-noir* audiences. This leads us to consider the values foregrounded with regard to the performance of *pied-noir* femininity.

[71] James W. Pennebaker and Janel D. Seagal, "Forming a Story: The Health Benefits of Narrative", *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 55, no. 10 (1999): 1243. The authors of this psychological study note that "The [positive] effects of the writing [about emotions] are not related to the presumed audience", 1246.
[72] Ibid., 1249.
[73] Andrea L. Smith, *Colonial Memory and Postcolonial Europe: Maltese Settlers in Algeria and France* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006), 157-158. Smith notes that men and women actively silenced each other when evoking memories of the war and this, coupled with the fact that people sometimes lost control when speaking of their memories, indicated the emotional charge still associated with it. Hence the structured nature of men's narrative showed a concerted effort to contain traumatic memories. She notes that women's narratives "seemed designed to try to convey to me how it felt to live through these various experiences. They were remarkably detailed in reporting the thoughts, feelings, and statements of others and sometimes even entire conversations that had transpired in the past". Smith also suggests that perhaps *pied-noir* men were "more socialized to control emotion than women" and that the "politics of telling" their stories may also have been an inhibiting factor.
[74] Anne Roche, "La perte et la parole: témoignages oraux de pieds-noirs", in *La Guerre d'Algérie et les Français*, ed. Jean-Pierre Rioux (Paris: Fayard, 1990), 526-537.

2.3 Highlighting Hyperfeminity

A particularly striking aspect of Elbe's *À l'heure de notre mort* is the way in which femininity is described. Heels and make-up, which have been described as "the armoury of femininity most typically associated with 'straight' women",[75] are frequently evoked, as is elegant dress despite the difficult circumstances of a brutal war. In a poignant description of an explosion, a sixteen-year-old girl, failing to realise that her legs have been blown off, keeps asking "Maman, et mes escarpins?", having begged her mother for months to be allowed to go dancing in high heels (24). Another story details the fate of Espérance's best friend Liberté, who is killed in Bab-el-Oued aged fourteen, by FLN gunshots, when out buying thread to finish sewing silk dresses that she and Espérance had planned to wear to their first party that evening (193-194). The silk dress is symbolic of a rite of passage for the girls, both of whom, we are told, were named in honour of the Allied landings in 1942.[76] A transition to womanhood, however, is tragically denied to Liberté, who is buried in her dress, while Espérance's mental health suffers (194-195). Moreover, an OAS activist, Gripfix, breaks down on seeing his friend Jeanne's red high heels, as they remind him of his little sister, "[qui] avait la folie des souliers, comme toutes les filles de Bab-el-Oued. – Comme toutes les filles d'Alger [...]. – Comme toutes les belles filles" (264). The importance Jeanne attaches to her appearance is evident as, in the aftermath of the shock of witnessing her friend Martine die in the Rue d'Isly shooting, she is found her polishing her toenails. Her observation, "Le vernis, ça fait soigné [...]. Une petite pied-noir aux ongles roses! [...] Il faut se préparer à mourir en beauté" (249-250), weaves together her identity as a *pied-noir* and as a self-consciously feminine woman in an exaggerated performance which reveals itself as imitative. As sociologist Éric Fassin notes in the preface to the French edition of *Gender Trouble*, "au fond, l'homme qui surjoue (quelque peu) sa masculinité, ou

[75] Moya Lloyd, "Performativity, Parody, Politics", in *Performativity & Belonging*, ed. Vikki Bell (London: Sage, 1999), 204.

[76] Sung Choi argued at a recent conference that the subject of the participation of the settlers in World War II has been much researched by the *pieds-noirs* and that it becomes a site for recounting the weakness of the "Free French" while also highlighting the contribution of the French of Algeria to the fight against the Nazis. Sung Choi, "Remembering the African Army: French Algeria in World War II Memories" (unpublished paper presented at the Algeria Revisted: Contested Identities in the Colonial and Postcolonial Periods: International Conference, University of Leicester, April 2012). Elbe's descriptions of the delight sparked by the Allied landings in 1942 may be considered an early example of the foregrounding of this subject.

bien la femme qui en rajoute (à peine) dans la fémininité ne révèlent-ils pas, tout autant que la folle la plus extravagante, ou la *butch* la plus affirmée, le jeu du genre, et le jeu dans le genre?".[77]

Further incidents during the war similarly reveal gender as performative. For example, passengers waiting to board a ship describe OAS commandos escaping from the French *gendarmes mobiles* during a siege at Bab-el-Oued by dressing as women, with one man using a wig, cushions and dressing gown to pretend he is pregnant, while another pretends to be his midwife (26).[78] This inescapably pantomime drag, however, far from being subversive, serves to reidealise gender norms, just as Butler has stated that some "denaturalizing parodies [...] reidealize heterosexual norms *without* calling them into question".[79] Thus, the scene serves to underline the unusual nature of these men performing effeminately while *pied-noir* women's idealised role as mothers and carers is also reinstated. Stephanie Brown's theorising of women's performance of femininity in terms of kitsch appears justified here. In analysing the artifice associated with the "beautification" of women as opposed to perceptions that men are more "natural", Brown argues that "women have a certain look (one which, to be sure, connotes to-be-looked-at-ness) while men are supposed to just appear, like the inspired art work that springs ex nihilo from the artist's conscousness".[80] Thus, femininity is "always outside the realm of 'art,' limited by its (always presumed) artifice".[81] In this analysis, drag by men can become a camp, "sly celebration of bad taste and vulgarity from a position of privilege", since men can "enjoy a hegemonic superiority that enables them to impersonate the female while remaining male", while femininity, like kitsch, is "desirous of attaining true beauty, but inevitably unable to do so [...] constantly struggling not to parody itself but to be itself".[82] Women's struggle to attain beauty

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[77] Judith Butler, *Trouble dans le genre (Gender Trouble): Le féminisme et la subversion de l'identité*, trans. Cynthia Kraus (Paris: La Découverte, 2005), 17.
[78] This description recalls a similar scene in *La Bataille d'Alger* in which Ali, Djafar, Mourad and Ramel disguise themselves as veiled women. See scenes 118-119, PierNico Solinas, ed. *Gillo Pontecorvo's The Battle of Algiers: a film written by Franco Solinas* (New York: Scribner,1973), 130-131.
[79]Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 231. Butler's emphasis.
[80] Stephanie Brown, "On Kitsch, Nostalgia, and Nineties Femininity", *Popular Culture Association in the South* 22, no. 3 (April 2000): 43-45.
[81] Ibid., 45.
[82] Ibid., 50.

may be regarded as particularly pertinent in light of suggestions that settler society lacked femininity.

It has also been suggested that "cultural specificity is viewed as best expressed in practices that emphasize gender differences".[83] Indeed, the performance of gender and of femininity in particular (in cases where it embodies "the threshold of identity / difference") can be seen as a "key stabilizing principle" of a fragmented community.[84] In consequence, the exaggerated performance of femininity appears as a means of demonstrating, by contrast, the exaggerated masculinity of *pied-noir* men. Gripfix, one of the central male *pied-noir* characters in Elbe's narrative, appears as an example of a macho French Algerian man. Indeed, Jeanne and Gripfix have been identified as typical representatives of *pied-noir* masculinity and femininity.[85] Thus, while women consciously perform femininity through their "beautification", Gripfix's performance as a French Algerian man appears effortless. The colours of what would become the Algerian flag are mapped onto his body, along with traits typically considered as Mediterranean:

> Quand il était petit, il avait pas assez de globules rouges, il était blanc comme la colle Gripfix [...]. En grandissant, il a pris une tête de toréador, verte un peu, et maigre avec des yeux comme des olives noires. Quand il est rentré à l'OAS, il avait l'air du toréador en colère. (63).

Gripfix's mission is to avenge the rape and murder by *barbouzes* of his sister, the evocatively named Angèle. *Pied-noir* women, therefore, are presented as being guardians of a morality which men must protect from forces outside their community. We are even told that with the arrival of American troops in Affreville during World War II, "les pères prirent leurs pétoires pour défendre l'honneur des filles", until they realise that the soldiers' ancestors were also settlers in the 1800s (42). As symbols of morality, *pied-noir* women's femininity appears in contrast to descriptions of female FLN activists such as Djamila Bouhired, who are presented as "des mouques, ces garces, qui venaient les poser les bombes, dans leurs sacs de bain" (21). Moreover, this description of indigenous women serves to foreground men as

[83] Anne-Marie Fortier, "Re-Membering Places and the Performance of Belonging(s)", in Bell, *Performativity & Belonging*, 58. Fortier's study deals specifically with Italian émigré culture in Britain.
[84] Ibid., 57.
[85] Martini notes of the novel that: "Deux figures se détachent car particulièrement représentatives: Jeanne Fromenti et Gripfix, les Pieds-Noirs, l'homme et la femme". See Martini, *Racines de papier*, 234.

both protectors of *pied-noir* women's honour and as virile beings who can conquer willing native women and, by extension, native lands:

> Tu la vois pas, la Djamila Bouhired, en train de venir se risquer dans un milk-bar de Bab-el-Oued? – Elle pouvait rentrer peut-être! Mais avec la bande de bâtards qui traînaient là-bas, elle ressortait plus. Y z'auraient commencé à te la mettre en boîte, à rigoler, à lui faire des propositions et comme l'autre elle aurait eu la bombe réglée pour exploser au quatrième top, elle pouvait pas se permettre de se laisser retarder, et de sauter avec! (21-22).

Thus, the performance of *pied-noir* women's femininity serves to differentiate their identity from both politically engaged colonised women and *pied-noir* men, whose "authentic" masculinity contrasts with that of the indigenous population. Algerian women who engage in the war appear as not quite women, while Arab and Berber men who commit acts of violence in the name of independence, such as Yacef Saadi, are feminised or their masculinity is questioned (196, 134). Male *pied-noir* activists, by contrast, are distinguishable by Camusian descriptions of their "santé, leurs muscles, la petite médaille d'or sur leurs poitrines bronzées" and are depicted as "De jeunes bêtes vigoureuses et rigolardes" (222). Later, however, members of the OAS are portrayed by some characters as having been emasculated by their defeat. It is suggested that the OAS decided to "baisser le pantalon" to the FLN (270) and that talks between both organisations was the beginning of unhealthy "épousailles OAS-FLN sur le cadavre de l'Algérie" (276). This idea of an unhealthy marriage links with Ross's observation that decolonisation was frequently evoked as a divorce in metropolitan France at the time, with the former colony now viewed as a wife who was capable of evicting the French, although a "free union" between both countries should instead be encouraged.[86] Such a concept is also mirrored by Anne's and Jean's desire, in *La Valise et le cercueil*, to separate from both France and the indigenous population by creating an *Algérie pied-noir*. Thus, in such literary works published by *pied-noir* women in the wake of Algerian independence, the performance of gender appears to take on a symbolic significance, as texts are used to ensure the "cultural survival"[87] of an imagined *pied-noir* family.

Other examples of evocations of an exaggerated femininity in these early post-independence texts are worth citing here. Anne in *La Valise et le cercueil*, for

[86] Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*, 124-125.
[87] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 177.

example, describes a particularly stressful week spent looking for an OAS activist's body (that of Michel Leroy) as having left her "dans un tailleur devenu poisseux, courant sur des talons éculés" (151) – clearly a deviation from her normal dress code. By the same token, two anecdotes from Dessaigne's *Journal d'une mère de famille pied-noir* are suggestive of an exaggerated femininity: a fashion show attended by elegant young women goes ahead in September 1961, although boutiques in the same spot must close the following day to let the storm of violence pass (97), and a client carefully chooses gloves in the narrrator's friend's shop despite fighting going on just metres away (140). The perpetuation of this emphasis on exaggerated femininity stands out very noticeably in Susini's *De Soleil et de larmes,* published twenty years later. Micheline notes of her time in the OAS, for example, "Tant que je peux être coquette, je ne vais pas me trimbaler en treillis et en pataugas parce que j'essaie de me battre" (176) and she even causes Jean-Jacques to be late for an OAS meeting as she insists on finishing applying her make-up before driving him (231). It is also especially striking in Marie Cardinal's introduction to the 1988 illustrated text, *Les Pieds-Noirs*. Cardinal describes the dress code for the *pieds-noirs* as a complicated art form, which she considers as less about an inherent elegance than about a desire to show "les parties de son anatomie qui le méritaient et à dissimuler ou maquiller les autres".[88] We are told that women would practise the "technique" of their walk by examining their reflections in shop windows (28). Cardinal's descriptions of how they sought to move their posterior in exactly the right way in order not to appear as either a "fille de rien", a "bourrique" or a woman "qui ne trouvera pas de mari ou alors un Francaoui [Française] qui lui fera des enfants prétentieux" (28), suggests a conscious performance of *pied-noir* femininity which may be analysed in terms of kitsch. The continued reiteration of this exaggerated femininity was also repeated in a recent interview, in which a *pied-noir* woman talks with pride of the beautiful outfit she wore to the demonstration on the day of the Rue d'Isly shooting, noting: "Il faut être bien habillé". [89]

[88] Marie Cardinal, *Les Pieds-Noirs* (Paris: Belfond, 1988), 31.
[89] Gilles Perez, *Les Pieds-Noirs, histoires d'une blessure* (France: France 3, 2006).

2.4 Orienting European Identities

We shall now consider ways in which *pied-noir* women have depicted apparent similarities with the Arabo-Berber population as a singular aspect of their identity, making them, once exiled, appear as "Femmes [...] orientales en Europe".[90] Stora suggests that both colonising and colonised women in Algeria were confined to the familial, domestic sphere.[91] His suggestion recalls Eugène Delacroix's famous painting of indigenous Algerian women, "Femmes d'Alger dans leur appartement", as well as Assia Djebar's novel of the same title.[92] In reality, however, colonising women's way of life may not have been as different from that of metropolitan French women as their written testimonies suggest. Stora considers the Algerian war as an "instant du dégagement de l'emprise familiale" for women and describes Susini's *De Soleil et de larmes* as "l'histoire d'une émancipation familiale et d'un engagement politique, doublée d'un roman d'amour".[93] The novel certainly recounts a woman's personal tale of emancipation from her family, but it also appears as a metaphor for a male-oriented society which was apparently influenced by the colonised population, thereby setting it apart once more from the metropolitan French.

As an OAS activist, Susini's evocation of the subversive nature of her political engagement echoes that of Anne Loesch in *La Valise et le cercueil*, which may be usefully referenced here. In descriptions reminiscent of the iconic scene from Pontecorvo's *La Bataille d'Alger*, in which Algerian women become objects of the viewer's gaze as they disguise themselves as Europeans before going outside to plant bombs,[94] Anne evokes moving from the domestic to the public sphere when Jean asks for her help (46). As she sets out on her first mission, we are told that people stare at this young woman in her twenties as she walks through the town (48). When she later arrives at Jean's hideout she describes "des Arabes immobiles, [qui] nous observent fixement" and claims she has a "Sensation d'avoir à évoluer devant un

[90] Danielle Michel-Chich, *Déracinés: les pieds-noirs aujourd'hui* (Paris: Plume, 1990), 64.
[91] Stora, "Mémoires comparées", 182.
[92] Delacroix's "Femmes d'Alger dans leur appartement" was completed in 1834. For an exploration of the painting as a colonialist *lieu de mémoire* which has been invested with new meanings in the postcolonial context by writers such as Djebar, see Zeynep Çelik, "Colonial/Postcolonial Intersections: 'Lieux de mémoire' in Algiers", *Historical Reflections* 28, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 143-162. Djebar's novel was originally published in 1980. See Assia Djebar, *Femmes d'Alger dans leur appartement* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2002).
[93] Stora, "Mémoires comparées", 184, 183.
[94] This film was released three years after the publication of Loesch's book in 1963 but was inspired by Fanon's *L'An V de la révolution algérienne* (1959).

public" (54). Thus, Anne becomes the object of the colonised populations' gaze and therefore appears divested of power, making her determined actions seem all the more courageous.

Micheline similarly evokes colonising women as disempowered, claiming that she was taught to be submissive as a result of a composite macho Mediterranean and Arab culture which values the chastity of women:

> Pour les familles arabes, les adolescentes représentent un avoir. La somme que versera le futur mari, si elle ne sert pas au marriage du frère, remboursera les parents d'avoir mis au monde une fille. Les pieds-noirs ne vendent pas leur fille, mais ils exigent la même soumission. Notre virginité est le meilleur capital pour le placement (10).

This statement is problematic in its evocation of indigenous women who need "saving" from an inferior status imposed on them by colonised men.[95] There is also a suggestion that a reluctance to emancipate *pied-noir* women arises, at least partly, from an unlikely scenario – the powerful influence of Arabo-Berber Algerians over the colonisers, who therefore appear in a sympathetic light. Micheline's identity is further associated with the colonised population as she states that her apprenticeship as a woman began at the age of seven, at which point she began to miss the world of the street, which is associated with indigenous Algerian children in a manner which elides the inequalities that existed between the colonising and colonised populations:

> A mesure que je grandissais, je regrettais les années où je pouvais jouer dans la rue. On formait une sacrée bande. On se battait de temps en temps avec les Arabes, à coups de cailloux, mais les périodes de trêve étaient préférables. Dans ces moments, on pouvait jouer à la cachette chez eux (19).

Her situation also appears as both similar and superior to that of indigenous women as she mentions that a man she is briefly engaged to at the age of seventeen expresses his regret "de ne pas pouvoir me boucler comme les femmes arabes" (25). Given her restricted life, therefore, Micheline claims she enjoys the imposition of a curfew during the Algerian war as it sometimes allows her to stay away from home at night: "Pour la plupart d'entre nous, nous tenons l'échappatoire rêvée, tant les familles nous oppressent. *Inch'Allah* les bombes!" (46-47).

It is worth noting at this point that the life the narrator leads stands in opposition to the societal constraints on colonising women that she highlights.

[95] Spivak describes one of the justifications for colonialism as "white men [...] saving brown women from brown men". See Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?", 92.

Despite her emphasis on the seclusion of women, their submissive role and the value placed on their chastity, Micheline actively participates in the war. Her first act of engagement involves smuggling guns past police and out of government buildings taken over on 13 May 1958 by partisans of French Algeria, during the *coup* which led to the return of Charles de Gaulle as president (58). While waiting to return the guns to their owners, she loses her virginity to an acquaintance called Robert, whose reaction appears to undermine her insistence on the chastity of French Algerian women: "Je ne pouvais pas deviner que tu étais vierge à vingt-trois ans!" (59). She later joins the OAS, transporting documents and weapons and acting as secretary and driver to Jean-Jacques Susini. Moreover, she chooses to fall in love with Jean-Jacques, a married man.

Thus, Micheline's performance of femininity initially appears as subversive. Her active role in the public sphere and her choice of lovers (including a Frenchman whom she visits in Cannes) suggest that she is far from submissive or secluded. As a result of her personal rebellion, in particular her relationship with Jean-Jacques, she is beaten, evicted from her family home and called a "fille perdue" by her mother (133). However, punishment for not "doing" her femininity correctly is not long-lasting, in that her actions do not permanently damage her familial relations and she later moves back home for two to three nights per week (157). There is also a suggestion that societal rules lose their importance for those engaged in the war (192), and Micheline alludes to the fluidity of gender roles during the conflict in general. Consequently, Arab men use veils to disguise themselves as women (92), while indigenous Algerian girls plant bombs, which spurs her into action on her own first mission: "j'ai eu tellement peur qu'il m'a fallu songer aux filles arabes qui plaçaient les bombes, pour que la rage me submerge et balaie l'angoisse" (107). Her descriptions of missions which involve hiding messages in her underwear and her swimsuit (106, 119-120) echo Arabo-Berber girls' apparent use of their femininity to avoid capture by dressing up as European women. Hence, the narrator's performance of her femininity appears, on closer inspection, as an anomaly while she continues to espouse a traditional femininity. Despite her actions, for example, she claims she is insulted when a *parachutiste* she has a brief relationship with offers to rent her an apartment with a view to getting married later: "Tu ne connais pas les filles pieds-noirs: ton offre séduisante pour tes métropolitaines est une insulte pour nous" (67). Moreover, she continues in a domestic role as partner to Jean-Jacques,

although one of the "recipes" she now learns is for a Molotov cocktail (110). Micheline's evocation of her affinity with recipes here echoes the suggestion in a volume on the settler community by *pied-noir* writers that "La cuisine, c'était et c'est encore pour certaines femmes pieds-noirs la justification de leur existence et le moyen d'affirmer un talent".[96]

Significantly, descriptions of French Algerian femininity may not be very different from expected performances of metropolitan femininity at the time. Susan Weiner has outlined the emphasis on feminine domesticity in France during the period in question and the submission of wives to their husbands under the Napoleonic *Code Civil*.[97] She has also pointed out that French women were accorded the right to vote by the government in exile in Algiers in March 1944 "well after most of their European counterparts, just months before the Liberation", and contends that in France during the 1950s, "Feminism was deemed obsolete since women had acquired the vote, a view Beauvoir herself espoused in *Le Deuxième sexe*".[98] Ross has also shown that women in France during the late 1950s and early 1960s were linked to interior space and to the idea of "reenfolding inward – back onto the authentic French life [...] and the private interiority of the domestic" as the role of housewives was elevated with the advent of household appliances.[99] France's pronatalist policies throughout its modern history to the present time have also been well documented.[100] Conversely, Lorcin suggests that "As settler society developed, women took opportunities to move into the public sphere where, in the metropole, they might have been less likely to do so".[101] In her study, colonising women are seen to have come to the fore during World War I and to have "consciously moved into the public sphere using the opportunities the colonial situation provided" in the

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[96] Maurice Benassayag, "Familles, je vous aime", in Roblès, *Les Pieds-Noirs*, 172. See also Irène Karsenty's guide to *pied-noir* cooking in the same volume, "C'était quoi, déjà, les oubliés?", 140-150. The Muslim, Jewish and Christian communities of colonial Algeria again appear as a family here, as Karsenty suggests, 146, that during the various religious holidays, each community would offer cakes or sweets to their neighbours, who would return the favour, a custom she calls "L'assiette des trois religions".

[97] Susan Weiner, "Two Modernities: from Elle to Mademoiselle. Women's Magazines in Postwar France", *Contemporary European History* 8, no. 3 (November 1999): 396-397.

[98] Ibid., 396, 402. Weiner cites Simone de Beauvoir, *Le Deuxième Sexe I* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976), 29 and *The Second Sex*, trans. H. M. Parshley (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), xxxii. De Beauvoir's text was originally published in 1949.

[99] Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*, 89.

[100] See, for example, Marie-Thérèse Letablier, "Fertility and Family Policies in France", *Journal of Population and Social Security* 1, no. 1 (2003): 242-258.

[101] Lorcin, *Historicizing Colonial Nostalgia*, 81.

interwar period.[102] Thus, while there were certainly strict divisions in colonial Algeria, women "could attain wider social recognition in the colony" than in the metropole for the limited positions on offer.[103]

Nevertheless, the portrayal of a femininity which was influenced by Islam in this text and others suggests a privileged realtionship with the colonised population which can work to naturalise the colonial presence in Algeria. Indigenous Algerian women are largely absent from Susini's text but she implies a certain complicity between them and *pied-noir* women against male power when she describes European women borrowing their maids' veils in order to follow wayward husbands (22). Similarly, Anne's femininity in *La Valise et le cercueil* is presented as allowing a maternal relationship with her servant, whose name is tellingly interchangeable Mélanie/Zorah (205). Elbe's *À l'heure de notre mort* goes further in its evocation of a shared feminine pain as Emmanuelle describes visiting cloistered women following the loss of loved ones on both sides during World War II (41). The following scene at an Algiers morgue in Elbe's novel sums up this sorority, which may be compared to Veillard's allusion to a fraternal conflict in *Le Premier Homme* when he states that "On va encore un peu se tuer […] Et puis on recommencera à vivre entre hommes":[104]

> Une Européenne s'est évanouie devant le corps de son fils, à côté d'une mauresque qui n'avait pas encore trouvé le sien. Elle a attrapé la Française, l'a portée dans ses bras jusqu'à un banc, et l'a aidée à revenir à elle. C'est à voir, je vous jure, cette dernière fraternisation! (241-242).[105]

Moreover, the trauma of the war is seen to provoke an archetypally feminine pain. An extract from Dessaigne's *Journal d'une mère de famille pied-noir* is worth quoting in this regard:

> Je n'écris pas un roman, j'en suis incapable. Mais j'écris mon angoisse et c'est elle qui est «utérine». Elle est fondamentale, pleine comme une attente, lancinante comme des douleurs. Elle hurle en moi lorsque je crois mes enfants, beaux, vigoureux et sains, tués ou amputés, déchiquetés par une bombe ou transpercés par une lame. (78).

[102] Ibid., 67-68, 78.
[103] Ibid., 81.
[104] Albert Camus, *Le Premier Homme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), 199.
[105] The politically loaded term "fraternsiation" implies the support of the colonised population for French Algeria and is especially associated with the participation of indigenous men and women in the events of May 1958. This includes celebrations at de Gaulle's return to power and the public unveiling of Muslim women to the cries of "Vive l'Algérie française", as described by Fanon in *L'An V de la révolution algérienne*, 46. The Muslim women described above are thus depicted as having loyalty towards the colony, despite their sons' fight for freedom.

Anne in *La Valise et le cercueil* manifests similar pain when her sister's death causes her to bleed (193),[106] while her closeness to her mother-country allows her to describe the departure of her community as a personally painful abortion: "notre race a été avortée avant même que d'avoir vécu" (12).

Thus, women also appear to have a unique relationship with a feminised Algeria. In *De Soleil et de larmes,* Micheline Susini emphasises the sun and sea, in which she swims every day, thereby evoking a youthful *peuple jeune* who, like Micheline, are fighting for a land with which they have a privileged relationship: "Je me battrai pour mon soleil, pour la mer parce qu'ailleurs je ne pourrai pas vivre" (13). Furthermore, this privileged relationship with Algeria is depoliticised, as the narrator wonders: "Pourquoi faut-il payer si chèrement ce ciel bleu?" (222). Elbe's *À l'heure de notre mort* is similarly Camusian in this regard, as women are seen to offer themselves up as sacrifices to the sun (34, 175), which appears as a male character called Kadour (97). Moreover, it is Jeanne, rather than indigenous Algerians, who embodies Algeria in this novel. Thus, we are told that Julien loves Algeria through her and, in problematic evocations of her that ignore the presence of indigenous women in Algiers, Jeanne is described as having, "Comme toutes les femmes d'Alger [...] la chair mi-pâle mi ensoleillée dessinée par les traces de son bikini" (72, 81). *Alger la Blanche*, which was subsequently described as "Maman la Blanche" by a *pied-noir* writer,[107] is therefore established as living up to its nickname in every sense as it becomes unequivocally liked with French Algerian femininity. Hence, Jeanne is shown to have a privileged relationship with Algiers which allows her to predict its (and her own) death when she leaves for France:

> Alger... qu'est-ce que tu deviendras, quand nous serons partis... Ma belle grande ville, comme nous avons souffert et espéré ensemble, comme tu vas être seule, comme ils vont t'abîmer...». Je lui demande pardon de partir, de la laisser mourir derrière nous... Je me demande si je ne préférais pas mourir maintenant, tiens, couchée contre elle, sur un trottoir... (120).

Private post-independence narratives, therefore, are seen to distinguish *pied-noir* women's identities from the indigenous population, but also to highlight similarities in a way which naturalises their presence in Algeria and differentiates them from the metropolitan population. Such evocations of *pied-noir* femininity were also echoed in later volumes on the *pieds-noirs*. Benassayag, for example, notes the

[106] This scene echoes Marie Cardinal's psychosomatic bleeding in *Les Mots pour le dire* (1975).
[107] Alain Vircondelet, *Maman la Blanche* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1981).

"étrange mélange" that resulted from Europeans living with Arabs and suggests that while metropolitan women were regarded in Algeria as "des putes", French Algerian women would have refused an emperor's advances without the promise of marriage.[108] An interviewee in Michel-Chich's study, meanwhile, contends that: "Les femmes pieds-noirs sont plus émancipées que leurs voisines algériennes, néanmoins elles vivent dans un monde très oriental [...]. Les moeurs d'Alger ne sont pas celles de Paris et la jeune fille pied-noir ne quitte l'autorité de son père et de son frère que pour se soumettre à celle de son mari".[109] Similarly, female *pieds-noirs* more recently have spoken of their restricted position as women in Algeria, which is naturalised by one as the result of the fact that Muslims kept women, described in this case generically as "la Fatma", in the home.[110] Marie Cardinal, recalling Mediterranean stereotypes, has also described colonial Algeria as a world where "La vertu des filles, c'était quelque chose, ce n'était pas la rigolade! Et pas seulement pour les musulmanes. Pour les catholiques et les juives c'était pareil".[111] This leads us to consider women whose background in colonial Algeria may be associated with efforts to critique, rather than idealise, patriarchal social structures. Cardinal, Brigitte Roüan and Hélène Cixous have used personal memories of their ambiguous position in colonial Algeria to attempt to interrogate dominant narratives and may now be usefully examined.

2.5 Finding Feminism and Critiquing Colonialism?

Critics have tended to focus on feminist readings of Cardinal's work, rather than on her origins.[112] However, a consideration of her background in colonial Algeria contributes significantly to feminist readings of her texts, including arguably her most famous work, *Les Mots pour le dire* (1975). This text contains few references to the Algerian war, instead detailing Cardinal's real-life psychotherapy sessions in Paris, and is therefore of interest as an apparent counterpoint to the previously

[108] Benassayag, "Familles, je vous aime", 163, 168.
[109] Cited by Michel-Chich, *Déracinés*, 64.
[110] Perez, *Les Pieds-Noirs*.
[111] Cardinal, *Les Pieds-Noirs*, 20.
[112] Amy L. Hubbell, "(Re) Writing Home: Repetition and Return in Pied-Noir Literature" (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 2003), 10. Despite such narrowly feminist readings, however, Hubbell argues that Cardinal "continually rewrote her homeland from her first published novel in 1962, *Ecoutez la mer* until her last work *Amours...Amours...* in 1998".

examined narratives by *pied-noir* women. It has also been far more commercially successful and reached a wider audience than the texts studied above.[113] In fact, the author's status as a member of the colonising community can tend to be overlooked.[114] As an autobiographical novel, however, it also features descriptions of the author/narrator's childhood in Algeria and difficult relationship with her mother, which require further consideration in light of our present focus on the family.[115] Although narratives of "homeland and family" are particularly striking themes in Cardinal's writing more generally, *Les Mots pour le dire* has been described as a text in which themes of the mother and motherland are "perhaps most salient".[116]

The narrator's evocation of her journey from insanity to sanity in this text must be considered more broadly in light of her position as a member of the colonising population and the work by psychiatrists Frantz Fanon and Bernard Sigg on the trauma and mental illnesses caused to those who inflict violence within the colonial system as well as to victims of such violence.[117] She also has suicidal feelings from adolescence,[118] which can again be linked more generally to colonising identities. We might usefully note here that Butler asserts that all sexual identities are melancholic due to the excluded aspect of our identities (namely homosexuality) created by laws and taboos. She argues that "for heterosexuality to remain intact as a distinct social form, it *requires* an intelligible conception of homosexuality, and also requires the prohibition of that conception in rendering it culturally intelligible".[119] As Bell, drawing on Butler's work in *Gender Trouble*, explains:

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[113] Of the early texts studied here, only Elbe's is still in print.

[114] A review by Lynda W. Schmidt, for example, comments on the book by "Frenchwoman Marie Cardinal". See Lynda W. Schmidt, "Review: The Words to Say It by Marie Cardinal", *The San Francisco Jung Institute Library Journal* 4, no. 4 (Summer 1984): 55.

[115] As Alison Rice notes, the novel is not entirely faithful to real life events. Cardinal's actual therapy was more concerned with her mother's physical abuse than with her mother's attempt to abort her which is focused on in the text, suggesting that the author "demonstrates that she is aware that remaining entirely faithful to lived experience does not necessarily make for compelling works of literature". See Alison Rice, *Polygraphies: Francophone Women Writing Algeria* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2012), 80. In his introduction to a 1993 edition, Phil Powrie also comments on the ambiguous status of the novel, noting that it was clearly marked "roman" on the cover-page of the original edition, although not on later publications, while the back cover of the original and subsequent editions refer to "un cas vécu". See Marie Cardinal, *Les Mots pour le dire* (London: Bristol Classical Press, 1993), xx.

[116] Rice, *Polygraphies*, 61.

[117] Frantz Fanon, *Les Damnés de la terre* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991). See especially Chapter 5, 297-367. See also Sigg's work on the psychiatric troubles of soldiers in the war in his *Le Silence et la honte: Névroses de la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Messidor, 1989), in particular Chapter 3, 43-45.

[118] Cardinal, *Les Mots pour le dire*, 80.

[119] Cited by Salih, *The Judith Butler Reader*, 93. Salih's emphasis.

> the forbidden loved object is carried within the ego, forming part of it. Heterosexual ideals demand that the very possibility of homosexuality be refused by the subject: it is the forbidden path. The possibility that is repressed and refused is to be *continually* refused, and the homosexual becomes thereby 'encrypted' within the heterosexual [...]. This encrypting is melancholic in that it carries the lost or 'forbidden' object with it.[120]

This "lost object" is "both loved and hated"[121] and the performance of gender, therefore, "always involves the process of abjection, renunciation or differentiation", just as "heterosexual femininity requires by definition a relation to masculinity (the desired) and homosexuality (the abjected), as *formational*".[122] This paradigm is one that may productively be applied to the gendered colonial context. Indeed, Butler has suggested that "a culturally instituted melancholia" results from racial taboos on miscegenation, as a class of people "are constituted essentially as the unthinkable, the unloveable, the ungrievable, and that then institutes a form of melancholia which is culturally pervasive, a strange ungrievability".[123] It must be noted that the narrators of many of the aforementioned texts allude to a melancholy or grief which may be considered in this light. Such melancholic tendencies may be linked to what will forever be unavailable to them – an Arabo-Berber identity which would ultimately legitimise their presence in Algeria.[124]

The indigenous population, which the narrator of Cardinal's text cannot emulate, is certainly evoked in the following description of her performance of femininity: "Je les enviais. Je me sentais capable de faire tout ce qu'ils faisaient. Mais je ne le pouvais pas, ce n'était pas des jeux de filles, alors, avec les autres «pisseuses» (comme disait Kader), je cueillais des fleurs et j'arrangeais les cabanes" (67). Furthermore, as the narrator reaches young adulthood, her mother's expectations point to the performance of an identity which will differentiate her, not just from men, but again from the colonised population: "tu ne devras plus jamais rester seule avec un garçon et encore moins avec un homme. Toi qui aimes bien les

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[120] Vikki Bell, "Mimesis as Cultural Survival: Judith Butler and Anti-Semitism", in Bell, *Performativity and Belonging*, 138. Bell's emphasis.
[121] Ibid., 140.
[122] Ibid., 154. Bell's emphasis.
[123] Vikki Bell, "On Speech, Race and Melancholia: An Interview with Judith Butler", in Bell, *Performativity & Belonging*, 170.
[124] Micheline in *De Soleil et de larmes* is another extreme example of such grief as she mentions she tried to commit suicide when she thought that Jean-Jacques did not love her and also alludes to a suicide pact she made with Jean-Jacques towards the end of the war (235, 256).

jeux de garçons il faudra te contrôler. Finies les cavalcades dans la forêt avec les fils de Barded!" (75).

Restrictions imposed on the narrator in her position as a privileged French Algerian girl are further revealed by a recurring dream from her youth featuring a horseman who smelt of the tall grass that grows in tropical climates, "vétiver", as well as of "cuir et [...] crottin" (110). Although the horseman never looks at her, she admits: "Je le trouvais extrêmement séduisant et je savais qu'il connaissait ma présence" (110). She wishes to jump on the horse behind him but the dream turns into a frightening nightmare when, feeling paralysed, she is unable to do so. She also realises: "J'étais incapable d'identifier le cavalier qui n'avait pas de visage pour moi puisqu'il n'avait pas de regard" (110-111). Reliving this suppressed dream in therapy, the narrator concludes that it is about two worlds: the countryside which forms the backdrop to the dream represents the indoor world, "l'univers de ma mère: sans danger, agréable, un peu ennuyeux, un peu triste, sage, convenable, harmonieux, plat" (111). She decides that the horseman, however, represents "l'univers de la rue", a world she unconsciously desired, "celui de l'aventure, de l'homme, du sexe" (111). Jungian analyst Lynda Schmidt confirms this view by stating that horses represent "the masculine animus world of spirit" – a world that the narrator wishes to enter.[125]

It may be argued that this faceless horseman, with whom she can never fraternise, is not just a symbol of masculinity, but of indigenous Algerian manhood. Indeed, Éric Savarèse believes that fear of a faceless *fellagha* enemy, who was physically absent from from all posters and propaganda promoting French Algeria during the war, encouraged many *pieds-noirs* to form an ambivalent perception of Arabs, as they were unable to distinguish between those who formed a part of daily life and the enemy.[126] In light of such research, another nightmare, in which the narrator dreams that three such independence fighters enter an apartment she is in with a group of women, appears especially significant. The narrator is not frightened at first as she favours independence (157). In spite of her wish to talk to the men, however, she finds that destiny ties her to the other women, who drag her back and pray for salvation (157). She begins to feel their fear and remembers stories of "femmes violées et éventrées" (157). As she tries to escape, she realises that the men

[125] Schmidt, "Review: The Words to Say It", 59.

[126] Savarèse, *L'Invention des pieds-noirs*. See Chapter 5, 183-226. A *fellagha* is a fighter for Algerian independence.

are chasing her and is almost strangled by one, who then brings a knife to her neck, before she wakes up. The narrator connects this dream to a childhood memory of a man who tried to rape her when she was walking home from school. Yet she mentions that this man had "des yeux bleus et des cheveux blondasses", which suggests he was of European origin (159). For the narrator, the dream represents a fear of male power and, more specifically of the vulnerability of the female body, which can be harmed by violent penetration or by childbirth (163). However, the specific context of the dream suggests that the narrator was deeply affected, not only by a colonial discourse which cast native men as untrustworthy, but also by war-time propaganda.

This said, it appears that, on leaving Algeria and undergoing therapy in Paris, the narrator liberates herself from colonial and patriarchal discourses, which allows her to understand that she grew up in an unjust and unequal society and that the conflict was more than a (Greek) tragedy:

> C'est maintenant seulement que je me rendais compte que je n'avais jamais vraiment lu un journal, jamais vraiment écouté les nouvelles, que j'avais pris la guerre d'Algérie pour une affaire sentimentale, une triste histoire de famille digne des Atrides. Et pourquoi cela? Parce que je n'avais aucun role à jouer dans cette société où j'étais devenue folle. Aucun rôle sinon donner des garçons pour faire marcher les guerres et les gouvernements et des filles pour faire, à leur tour, des garçons aux garçons. Trente-sept ans de soumission absolue. Trente-sept ans à accepter l'inégalité et l'injustice sans broncher, sans même les voir ! (166).[127]

The inequalities inherent in colonialism therefore appear to have played a role in Cardinal's inspiration for her feminism, as the narrator vows to ensure that power is divided between herself, her husband and her children in order to create a microcosm of the society she desires (168).

Nevertheless, the above quotation appears to minimise her own and women's role more generally in colonialism. Recalling our previous study of Camus, the narrator also conflates both the mother figure and a feminised colonial Algeria, which becomes her "vraie mère" (59), following her mother's admission that she tried to abort her (126). In her exploration of Cardinal's status as a "*mère-écrivain*", Lucille Cairns suggests that the narrator's experience of therapy in *Les Mots pour le*

[127] The narrator's reference to 37 years of submission recalls the 1960 petition signed by 121 intellectuals on the "droit à l'insoumission" of those supporting Algerian independence. For this text and a commentary, see Jean-François Sirinelli, "Algérie, Manifeste des 121. «Déclaration sur le droit à l'insoumission dans la guerre d'Algérie»", *Libération*, 12 January 1998.

dire productively allows her to reject her own mother, in what "may well be construed as a symbolic murder".[128] The narrator's trauma at her mother's attempted abortion coupled with her feminisation of her birthplace also recalls Loesch's description of being aborted from Algeria. In Cardinal's novel, although leaving French Algeria appears liberating, the end of the colony appears as an equally traumatic rupture: "Il me semble que la chose [la folie] a pris racine en moi d'une façon permanente, quand j'ai compris que nous allions assassiner l'Algérie" (59). Moreover, although the narrator links her subsequent psychosomatic bleeding (again evocative of Anne in *La Valise et le cercueil*) to her mother's admission of her attempted abortion, her symptoms did not strike until years after this admission. Developmental psychologist Bruno Bettelheim notes that the narrator's "unwilling mother was 27 years old when she became pregnant" with her and that "this was the age at which her daughter produced continual menstrual bleeding", thereby suggesting that "the daughter's symptoms were the result of her identification with her mother".[129] However, her identification process must also be considered in light of her statement that colonial Algeria was her true mother. Indeed, by the time of Cardinal's incessant bleeding in her late twenties, she had left the country and the Algerian war was underway – which may be seen as a contributory factor regarding her symptoms.[130] A similar link is made by Rice, who contends that the narrator is linked to her country through her blood loss and Algeria's violent past.[131]

Furthermore, the sea again appears as a Camusian mother or lover. When the narrator discovers her husband has been to the beach with another woman, it is the thought of him swimming in the sea – a pastime she has introduced him to – that troubles her:

> Il a cru que c'était l'idée de cette femme qui me blessait. Mais il se trompait. Ce qui me bouleversait c'était d'imaginer le plaisir qui'il avait pris à entrer dans les vagues, à nager au large, à se laisser sécher au soleil, à sentir le sable sous ses pieds nus. C'est moi qui lui avais appris la mer, la plage, le vent

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[128] Lucille Cairns, *Marie Cardinal: Motherhood and Creativity* (Glasgow: University of Glasgow French and German Publications, 1992), 1, 256. Cairns's emphasis.
[129] Marie Cardinal, *The Words to Say It*, trans. Pat Goodheart (London: Picador, 1984), 217-218.
[130] Cardinal was born in 1929, which suggests her bleeding began around 1956. She left Algeria definitively in 1953 to get married, according to her memoir about returning to Algeria twenty-five years later, *Au Pays de mes racines* (Paris: Grasset, 1980), 1. However, in her *Pieds-Noirs*, 11-12, she also describes returning there briefly to give birth to her daughter, without realising that another visit planned for the following Christmas would never materialise, presumably due to the circumstances of the war.
[131] Rice, *Polygraphies*, 71-72.

> chaud, la liberté du corps qui se donne à l'eau, se laisse caresser et porter par elle. Il était d'un pays froid où l'océan est un terrain de sport, j'étais d'un pays chaud où il est volupté (139).

Her reconciliation with her husband is also described in terms of a union with the sea:

> Nous allons entrer dans les vagues. Je connais un passage de sable blanc où tu ne te blesseras pas, où tu n'auras qu'à te laisser aller. Rappelle-toi, mon doux, mon beau, que la mer est bonne si tu ne la crains pas. Elle ne veut que te lécher, te caresser, te porter, te bercer, permets-lui de le faire et elle te plaira encore (143).

The narrator, therefore, is presented as having a privileged relationship with a mother-sea in contrast to her French husband. Indeed, Rice notes that *la mer* represents "the possible connection between Algeria and the mother, the imagined fusion of self and other, as well as resolution of the conflicting forces that tear the narrator in different directions".[132] Perhaps surprisingly, therefore, given Cardinal's apparent support of Algerian independence, representations of a feminised land and sea repeat the often nostalgic Camusian tropes used by the women writers analysed above. Indeed, several of the narrator's memories of her childhood in Algeria are similarly infused with nostalgia, with the forest where she played described as "un paradis", for example (66). Descriptions of a farmhouse built by her ancestor in 1837 (57), and her emphasis on the hard work of "les premiers colons" on "cette terre arrachée à la stérilité" (83), also reiterate the pioneering tradition and suggest a natural continuity of generations that was broken in 1962.

Thus, while Rice argues that, for Cardinal, "the manifestation of her mental illness is *visibly visceral*, and it provides a crucial example of how she has inappropriately incorporated the lessons her mother – and her mother's culture – sought to inculcate in her",[133] exploring this novel suggests that she has appropriately incorporated such lessons with regard to the colonised population. Moreover, while colonial Algeria appears as a site of limitation for women, including the narrator's mother (127), the representation of the colony as a "means of social, cultural, or indirectly political fulfillment that was not readily available in the metropole", has already been highlighted.[134] Cardinal's emphasis on women's restricted role appears to minimise their complicity in the colonial system, while her portrayal of a

[132] Ibid., 72.
[133] Ibid., 65. Rice's emphasis.
[134] Lorcin, "Teaching Women and Gender in France d'Outre-Mer", 303.

privileged relationship with Algeria simultaneously validates their presence there as members of its family. Indeed, Cardinal justifies her decision not to publicly discuss the Algerian war in *Les Pieds-Noirs* by stating that "Les histoires de famille se règlent en famille".[135]

Another possible counterpoint to the above texts is provided by Brigitte Roüan's 1990 semi-autobiographical film, *Outremer (Les enfants du désarroi)*,[136] which centres on *pied-noir* women and, as a film that has been described as feminist and anti-colonial in its depiction of three sisters,[137] is worth considering here. Alison Murray contends that "In part, the story of the syndrome of empire is being written in French contemporary cinema, a site where problems of historical consciousness are worked out, and as such, as [*sic*] both reflective and constitutive of collective memory".[138] The same may be said of films representing the *pieds-noirs*, which often reach a more diverse audience than texts on the subject. Roüan's film is especially significant as it was released to an international audience, having won an award at Cannes.[139] It is also worth noting the spectator's role while viewing films. Butler has spoken of a "performativity to the gaze" which involves a certain construction by the viewer.[140] Building on this idea, Bell has placed Butler's theory and Fanon's "Algeria Unveiled" together to draw attention to the gaze as "an historical deployment that does not innocently respond to visual cues, but that operates as part of a wider *dispositif* that enables cues to be seen as such.[141] What Bell terms the

[135] Cardinal, *Les Pieds-Noirs*, 80.
[136] Carolyn Durham notes that the film draws upon the director's life and that of her mother. See Carolyn A. Durham, "Strategies of subversion in colonial nostalgia film: militarism and marriage in Brigitte Roüan's *Outremer*", *Studies in French Cinema* 1, no. 2 (2001): 89.
[137] Dominique Licops praises Roüan's "feminist, postcolonial" stance. See Dominique Licops, "Re-scripting History and Fairy Tales in Brigitte Roüan's 'Outremer'", *Women's Studies Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2002): 103. Durham also views the film as subversive of colonial discourse. See Durham, "Strategies of subversion in colonial nostalgia film", 89-97.
[138] Alison Murray, "Review: Women, Nostalgia, Memory: 'Chocolat', 'Outremer', and 'Indochine'", *Research in African Literatures* 33, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 235.
[139] A significant number of other films relating to France's decolonisation process were released at this time, details of which may be found in Naomi Greene, *Landscapes of Loss: The National Past in Postwar French Cinema* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 130. Alison Murray also notes that by the late 1980s and early 1990s, a tendency of previous film-makers towards either a colonial or anti-colonial stance was no longer relevant. See Murray, "Review: Women, Nostalgia, Memory", 236.
[140] Judith Butler in an interview with Vikki Bell in which she discusses video footage of police officers in LA beating Rodney King and the attendant "performativity" and "racialization" that goes with viewing the footage. See Vikki Bell, "Performativity and Belonging: An Introduction", in Bell, *Performativity & Belonging*, 6.
[141] Bell, "Performativity and Belonging", 7.

"politics of seeing"[142] would seem especially valid in the case of films featuring the contentious subject of the Algerian war and the *pieds-noirs*. Laura Mulvey's theories on "scopophilia" or the visual pleasure offered by cinema, particularly with the woman as object of the male gaze, and the viewer's narcissistic identification with this gaze ("ego libido") is also useful in this regard.[143]

Outremer is divided into three sections, each of which reveals the same events of 1946 to 1964 from the individual viewpoint of three *pied-noir* sisters. As information is brought to light or elided in each section, the reliability of memory is undermined. Durham considers this non-linear structure as a subversion of "the pretense that colonialism is in any way a progressive movement".[144] Gender roles in the colony also appear to be restrictive for both men and women, as revealed by the narrative. The eldest sister, Zon, pushes her unwilling naval officer husband to ignore his self-confessed "nerfs de femme" and to serve in Japan as she needs to admire him,[145] bringing about his death there and her own, as she appears unable to live without him. Malène (played by Roüan), seeing her husband's lack of interest in the family farm, grudgingly takes over his role. However, she is shot by pro-independence fighters who mistake her for her husband when driving his car. Gritte is not allowed to study medicine and is pushed to marry, becoming a symbol of French Algeria for her fiancé Maxime. She rebels by having a clandestine relationship with an Arab rebel and by getting sick at the dinner-table when racist remarks are made, although she is indirectly punished for her subversive behaviour when her lover is shot dead on his way to meet her during the night. As with the narrator of Cardinal's *Les Mots pour le dire*, Gritte's subsequent exile in France appears as if it may be empowering. In the final scene, Gritte is presented in a wedding gown. When asked by the priest if she will marry a new character, Nicolas, she hesitates and hears her dead sisters whispering to her. Although her final decision is not revealed, it appears as if she may choose not to marry and that she may have a chance to lead the liberated life she wanted.[146]

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[142] Bell, "On Speech, Race and Melancholia", 168.
[143] Laura Mulvey, *Visual and Other Pleasures* (London: Macmillan, 1993). See in particular Chapter 3, 14-26.
[144] Durham, "Strategies of subversion in colonial nostalgia film", 90.
[145] Brigitte Roüan, *Outremer* (France: Paradise Productions, 1990).
[146] Greene points out that Gritte's paralysis at this point may be a sign that she is unable to move on from the trauma of the past. See Greene, *Landscapes of Loss*, 143-144.

Thus, colonial Algeria appears restrictive to men and women and an ironic tone is certainly adopted with regard to Zon's and Malène's efforts to perform as settler wives. However, Butler's concept of the performativity of the gaze must also be considered here in relation to how the viewer may respond to and construct a meaning from cues, based on previous knowledge. Dana Strand, noting the "inherent capacity of images to appear to be what they represent", concludes that "Visual citation [...] despite good faith efforts to avoid complicity, always runs the risk of becoming a gesture of exploitation".[147] It is important, therefore, to consider the visual aspect of the film as well as the narrative. Murray draws our attention to the fact that this type of film "privileges glossy and stunningly beautiful images of landscapes and female bodies", a fact which she believes "invites identification with the gaze of the colonizer, just as the woman as spectacle invites identification with the desiring male gaze".[148] Indeed, she considers such films to participate in "the recommodification of the empire" as "Despite the attempts to pay lip service to certain aspects of colonial realities, the rich colors, sweeping landscapes, and voluptuous cinematography offer up the former French empire as feminized spectacle, a guilty pleasure for a postmodern audience".[149]

A beach scene featuring a bikini-clad Gritte is one such example of glossy land and seascapes combined with images of female *pied-noir* bodies which offer the viewer the type of visual pleasure and identification with the male gaze theorised by Mulvey. Given our knowledge of the extremely violent end of colonial Algeria and the exodus of most *pieds-noirs*, the scene is infused with a certain nostalgia and poignancy that similarly invites identification with the colonising gaze. Moreover, as Greene points out, "Recurrent shots of the ocean that separates them [the sisters] from the mainland, and which renders them a colony that is 'overseas' or 'outremer', serve to underscore their distance, at once emotional and geographical, from France".[150] Their distance and that of French Algeria from the Algerian hinterland is also apparent in such shots. Thus, the visual cues we are given construct an identity that is neither French nor indigenous Algerian and evoke the viewer's sympathy with

[147] Dana Strand, "'Documenting' the National Past in French Film", *Pacific Coast Philology* 39 (2004): 23-24. Strand draws on the work of Thomas Elsaesser in "Subject Positions, Speaking Positions: From *Holocaust*, *Our Hitler* and *Heimat* to *Shoah* and *Schindler's List*", in *The Persistence of History*, ed. Vivian Sobchack (New York: Routledge, 1996), 150.
[148] Murray, "Review: Women, Nostalgia, Memory", 237.
[149] Ibid., 242, 241.
[150] Greene, *Landscapes of Loss*, 146.

regard to the uncertain fate that awaits the women. Furthermore, although racism appears to be condemned in the film, Gritte's Arab lover gets very little screen time. The couple are seen together in very brief, silent sequences which hint at their relationship, including a scene in which the man suddenly appears and aggressively pulls Gritte towards him. As Greene points out, while Gritte's sisters are shown in intimate moments with their husbands, such scenes are absent from Gritte's relationship, which suggests that Roüan may not have been able to conceive of such a union in colonial Algeria.[151] Just as indigenous Algerian characters are noticeable by their absence and/or their anonymity in many of the texts studied, including those of Camus, Gritte's lover's brief appearances depict him as "Mute and spectral", as he is "deprived of those traits that would bring him to life not only as a lover but, indeed, as a human being".[152]

It must also be noted that in an interview, Roüan argued that the characters of the film were "victims of their roles, of preconceived ideas transmitted to them by tradition".[153] By casting the three sisters as victims of events which invade their lives, however, the situation in Algeria again appears as a family tragedy. Indeed, the few references to politics we hear include the family's debates about "les événements", in which they decide the indigenous population will not be able to survive without them, and a scene in which de Gaulle's (in)famous 1958 speech (in which he said he understood the French of Algeria) is broadcast on the radio during a rendez-vous between Gritte and Maxime. Gritte, who we know has helped the liberation cause, is delighted by the speech and, in a moment of dramatic irony, takes it as proof that the future of her community is safe, despite Maxime's warning that de Gaulle is no Prince Charming. The spectator's knowledge of the impending exodus therefore comes into play again as our sympathy for the well-meaning Gritte is aroused. Moreover, as Greene argues, the different perspectives shown in the film, complete with ellisions, "all work to disorient the viewer and to deny him or her the sense of a clearly defined context, an ordered chronology, necessary to a historical overview".[154] Indeed, the cyclical structure of the narrative has been said to fix "the

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[151] Ibid., 150.
[152] Ibid.
[153] John H. Weiss, "Review: *Outremer*", *The American Historical Review* 98, no. 4 (October 1993): 1173.
[154] Greene, *Landscapes of Loss*, 147. As Greene points out, the occasional use of dates means little to a viewer who is not aware of the history of the war.

era of French Algeria with a timeless quality".[155] This structure also recalls depictions in Camus's *Le Premier Homme* of naturalised, cyclical violence going back as far as Cain.

Thus, while Durham suggests that the film parodies discourses on romance and subverts discourses on the colonisation of French Algeria as a "love story",[156] the linking of the three sisters' love lives with the history of the colony is problematic as it reiterates discourse on the colonisation of Algeria as a marriage (even if an unhappy one) between the Orient and Occident. Weiss comments on the "use of the 'Triumph of Love' finale from Gluck's *Orphée et Eurydice* to frame each sister's segment [which] enhances the film's romantic theme",[157] and, although the music appears to be used ironically, it still evokes the story of a couple, thwarted in love, who are destined to be reunited as they cannot live without each other.[158] Furthermore, as Murray argues, films about the colonial past which focus on the feminine "could be read as reactionary rather than progressive, reinforcing the trope of the colonies as 'home' for a natural 'family', the French family that has always existed in the colonial setting", as feminine characters are depicted as "guiltless representatives of the timeless, archaic feminine, as if they had an eternal right to be there".[159] The sound of youths singing French children's songs as the credits roll further evokes a timeless innocence rather than colonial guilt. Durham suggests that "as a final representation of the linguistic and cultural heritage of France" these songs emphasise "both the fact and the nature of *Outremer* as a form of 'national allegory', grounded, like the fairy tale, in fantasy".[160] However, even if the film aims to depict the idea of French Algeria as a fantasy, it is still shown as an idea propagated by French education which affected innocent settler children, with whom the viewer is inclined to sympathise. The film may be consequently regarded as an allegory for the history of the *pieds-noirs*.

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[155] Murray, "Review: Women, Nostalgia, Memory", 239.
[156] Durham, "Strategies of subversion in colonial nostalgia film", 93.
[157] Weiss, "Review: *Outremer*", 1173.
[158] The opera tells the story of Orfeo who descends to the underworld to reclaim his dead wife, who is eventually returned to the upper world with him thanks to the power of love. For a synopsis, see Anonymous, "Synopsis: Orfeo ed Euridice", The Metropolitan Opera, http://www.metoperafamily.org /metopera/history/stories/synopsis.aspx?customid=173. Date accessed: 13 May 2013.
[159] Murray, "Review: Women, Nostalgia, Memory", 238-239.
[160] Durham, "Strategies of subversion in colonial nostalgia film", 94.

Thus, like Cardinal, the director is critical of the effect of colonial society on women, although both seem more concerned with French Algerian rather than indigenous women, as suggested by the following quote from the director:

> I wanted to show people hemmed in by inherited property and preconceived notions, occuping prearranged positions... the men of that time were not allowed to cry, they were placed on pedestals, forced to be virile and magnificent statues... The women were addicted to one man. Such an education creates neurotic women, of which I am one. I was brought up to be married, so of course I never married.[161]

Through this story, Roüan constructs a memory of a disempowered community with which the audience is inclined to sympathise. Against this backdrop, the memoir of a particularly influential woman whose sense of belonging to the French Algerian community is less clear cut due to her Jewish heritage – Hélène Cixous – might now be usefully examined in our consideration of feminine critiques of colonialism.

Cixous was excluded from the colonising population due to her Jewish heritage under the Vichy regime and, according to Hubbell, the author "has never publicly identified herself with other *pieds-noirs*".[162] Indeed, her "écriture féminine" has seen her compared to other well known "French feminists" in commentary which fails to consider her colonial background.[163] It has also been claimed, however, that "Algeria is both everywhere and nowhere in Cixous's writing", of which "virtually the entire corpus [...] could be placed under the sign of exile".[164] As a female, Jewish "Algerian colonial", she has described herself as being "triply marginalised".[165] As with Cardinal, we can suggest that Cixous's sense of marginality in the colonial setting contributed towards her feminist outlook and Yee remarks that "the apparently negative quality of this writing from the margins, from the position of a third party, can be linked directly to the more overtly feminist writings of Cixous".[166] The importance of studying Cixous's fiction in considering her feminist stance is

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[161] *Press Notes, Overseas: Interviews with Brigitte Roüan* (New York: Dennis Davidson, 1991), 3. Cited in Licops, "Re-scripting History and Fairy Tales", 104.
[162] Hubbell, "(Re) Writing Home", 216. For more on Cixous's complex ancestry, including Spanish-speaking Sephardic Jews on her paternal side and Franco-German Jews on her maternal side, see Lynn Penrod, "Algeriance, Exile, and Hélène Cixous 1", *College Literature* 30, no. 1 (Winter 2003): 135-145.
[163] See, for example, Ann Rosalind Jones, "Writing the Body: Toward an Understanding of 'L'Écriture Feminine'", *Feminist Studies* 7, no. 2 (Summer 1981): 247-263.
[164] Penrod, "Algeriance, Exile, and Hélène Cixous 1", 136.
[165] Ibid., 137.
[166] Jennifer Yee, "The Colonial Outsider: 'Malgérie' in Hélène Cixous's *Les rêveries de la femme sauvage*", *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 20, no. 2 (Autumn 2001): 199.

argued by Mireille Calle-Gruber, who calls the exclusion of her fiction from studies of her theoretical writings an "amputation".[167] This leads us to consider Cixous's feminist, anti-colonialist stance in her recent autobiographical novel, *Les Rêveries de la femme sauvage* (2000), which deals specifically with Algeria.[168]

Like Camus's *Le Premier Homme*, this novel deals with the author's childhood in Algeria from the perspective of an adult who left many years before (the first lines of the book come to her in a dream forty years after her departure). The author's childhood is also similarly fictionalised – the "rêveries" in its title cast doubt over what is real and what is imagined, a technique celebrated by fellow Jewish French Algerian Jacques Derrida,[169] who is said to have developed his ideas on deconstruction, requiring the rereading of texts from within, from his "tortured political stance" as a Jewish French Algerian liberal.[170] Cixous's title links the author to eighteenth-century Francophone writer and philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Les Rêveries du promeneur solitaire*.[171] It also connects her to the Arabo-Berber population and to the Algerian landscape, as Algerian writer Kateb Yacine's play, *La Femme Sauvage*,[172] invokes a wild woman which for him represents "la patrie".[173] The "Ravin de la Femme Sauvage", we are also told, is a nearby gorge that the narrator, in a frightening nightmare, dreams her brother will fall down as he rides his

[167] Ibid., 200 n.4.Yee cites Mireille Calle-Gruber and Cixous, *Hélène Cixous, photos de racines* (Paris: Des Femmes, 1994), 14, 16. The amputation trope is frequently used in writing by the *pieds-noirs*. For more on this, see Amy L. Hubbell, "An Amputated Elsewhere: Sustaining and Reliving the Phantom Limb of Algeria", *Life Writing* 4, no. 2 (2007): 247-262.

[168] Penrod notes that, apart from a 1998 essay, "Mon Algériance", Cixous had rarely written anything which dealt specifically and directly with Algeria until the appearance of this novel. Penrod, "Algeriance, Exile, and Hélène Cixous 1", 141.

[169] Rice explains that Derrida identifies Cixous's neologism, "rêvexiste", which highlights the importance of reveries over real events, as a crucial aspect of her writing. She cites Derrida's "H.C. pour la vie, c'est à dire", in *Hélène Cixous, croisées d'une oeuvre*, ed. Mireille Calle-Gruber (Paris: Galilée, 2000), 3-140. See Rice, *Polygraphies*, 78. The fictional element of the novel is also indicated by its publication in the "Lignes Fictives" collection.

[170] Edward Baring, "Liberalism and the Algerian War: The Case of Jacques Derrida", *Critical Inquiry* 36, no. 2 (Winter 2010): 241.

[171] Rice points to the first words of Rousseau's text which make an appearance in Cixous's *Les Rêveries de la femme sauvage* (77): "Me voici donc seul sur la terre...". See Rice, *Polygraphies*, 76-77. Rice also notes, 203-204 n.20, that Leïla Sebbar, who lived near the ravine in question, wrote a collection of short stories called *Le Ravin de la femme sauvage* after the publication of Cixous's novel.

[172] In his detailed introduction to the English edition of *Nedjma*, Richard Howard notes that this play was performed in Paris in December 1962 and January 1963. See Kateb Yacine, *Nedjma*, trans. Richard Howard (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991), xxiii.

[173] Interview with Kateb Yacine on the eve of a staging of *La Femme Sauvage* in Paris (2003). See Gabrielle Rolin, "Kateb Yacine à pied d'oeuvre", Jeune Afrique, http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Articleimp_LIN19013katebervueo0_kateb-yacine-a-pie. Date accessed: 17 May 2013.

bicycle.[174]

Although both the colonising and colonised populations, as well as the landscape, are immediately connected to the narrator, both she and her brother are portrayed as outsiders. Not only are they excluded from both the Arabo-Berber and French Algerian populations, but, as Jennifer Yee points out, they are also excluded from the practising Jewish community, particularly Sephardic Jews, since their mother is a non-practising Ashkenazi; while the death of their father means that the family are further isolated "as the children of a widow in a culture working along strictly patriarchal lines".[175] Thus, Cixous is a member of one of the "Stranger groups" of colonial society which "occupy intermediate positions [...] but [...] are set off to a greater extent from both natives and Europeans by a combination of ethnicity, race, religion, and culture".[176] Hubbell argues that while authors such as Cardinal make use of a "double inclusion" or belonging to both France and Algeria in writing about their identity, writers such as Cixous make use of a "doubling based on exclusion(s)", which allows them the possibility of opening up what Bhabha has called a "third space" from which they can investigate colonial relationships without maintaining power structures.[177] The writer would therefore appear to occupy a liminal space from which she can highlight and critique the construction of a colonial identity.

The author's playful use of language points to the performative nature of identity as the product of discourse, and may be usefully compared here to Georges Perec's neologisms such as "Algéropètes" and "Algéroclastes" (referring to French soldiers) in his anti-war novella on the subject.[178] Neologisms in Cixous's text which subvert the French language, and thus show the pain on all sides associated with the construct of "French Algeria", include words such as "maladie algérie" (16), "Désalgérie" (69), "force malgérienne" (111), and "l'Algériefrançaise" (144), as well as words which show her separation from and desire to be part of the indigenous population, such as "petizarabes" (45, 72) and "inséparabe" (45, 89).[179] Cixous's

[174] Hélène Cixous, *Les Rêveries de la femme sauvage: Scènes primitives* (Paris: Galilée, 2000), 31.
[175] Yee, "The Colonial Outsider", 195.
[176] David Prochaska, *Making Algeria French: Colonialism in Bône, 1870-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 18.
[177] Hubbell, "(Re) Writing Home", 125-159.
[178] Georges Perec, *Quel petit vélo à guidon chromé au fond de la cour?* (Paris: Denoël, 1966), 47, 105.
[179] For a more detailed analysis of these and further neologisms, see Yee, "The Colonial Outsider", 189-191.

subversive text may be compared to Kateb Yacine's use of the French language to create "une oeuvre profondément arabe" in *Nedjma*.[180] Furthermore, she subverts depictions of the former colony as a paradise:

> Aveugles sans yeux par fonte purulente de l'oeil syphilitique et aveugles par purulence de l'oeil spirituel, culs-de-jatte mentaux, hommes sans nez et Français sans odorat, lépreux à conscience chancrée française et Arabes naufragés de l'être, boîtes de conserve rouillées, selles dans les escaliers et au milieu de ça, il y a des lieux paradisiques (106).

Images of a paradisiacal Algiers are shown to be constructed or even "une falisification et une tricherie qui a beaucoup de succès", when, for the narrator, it is "l'Enfer" (40), in which "on ne peut pas faire un pas dans la rue ni entrer dans un magasin sans être instantanément victime complice coupable ou contaminé" (41). Thus, many of the positive memories evoked in the works studied above are undermined. Although the narrator's brother asks her to remove an unsavoury incident from the text, she chooses to include it and when he suggests she calls it "le Paradis Perdu" her retort is that it should be called "L'Enfer Perdu" (120-121). The narrator also cuts short the creation of a "berceau" of nostalgic memories that she and her brother are settling into by evoking death (85).

Harsh colonial realities are alluded to in this text, including a deep-rooted racism against the indigenous population inculcated by the French authorities, as well as anti-Semitism:

> En plus du racisme fondateur français du racisme racine raison socle piliers société culture coutume en plus de cette inoculation congénitale triomphale de cette greffe tout ce qu'il y a de plus réussie et commune dans le monde en plus du classicisme français, en plus de cette morbidité considérée comme une belle santé, bon appétit, il faut ajouter les antisémitismes (43).

Whereas fraternity or sorority and hospitality are emphasised in many of the works studied, the narrator points out that neither she, nor her mother or brother were ever invited into Arab or Berber homes, nor was she, as a Jew, ever invited into her French friend Françoise's home. Perhaps in an allusion to Camus's ambiguous short story, "L'Hôte", the narrator questions whether one can claim as one's country a place where you are not an invited guest: "Un pays où l'on n'est jamais invitée est-ce un pays?" (99). Unlike Daru, the narrator here acknowledges that her role as host

[180] This quotation is from the original explanatory note by the editors of the novel. See Anonymous, "Avertissement", http://www.limag.refer.org/Documents/AvertissementNedjma1956.pdf. Date accessed: 5 February 2014. For the novel, see Kateb Yacine, *Nedjma* (Paris: Seuil, 1996).

cannot be justified as, when handing bread through the bars of her garden gate to a hungry little girl, she recognises that she would have stolen bread if the situation were reversed and suggests that as a member of the colonising population, it is in fact she who has committed theft (113). Furthermore, as Fiona Barclay notes, in her descriptions of waiting for inspiration at the beginning of the text, Cixous appears "welcoming of otherness", while her use of language demands "readerly hospitality" or committed reading.[181] Roland Barthes's theorising of *scriptible* texts, which make readers producers, as opposed to *lisible* texts, which the reader passively consumes, might also be usefully referenced as Cixous's text appears as an example of the former and an antidote to the treacherous simplicity of myths.[182]

As an outsider, the narrator can see what the French cannot (111). As one of very few Jewish girls in her school, she highlights the effect of French education on her schoolmates, who unthinkingly perform their identities as settler girls and who efface the colonised population in a building that resembles (or perhaps once was) a Moorish palace:

> Il n'y avait pas de femmes algériennes, pas de mauresque [*sic*], pas de palais, puisque c'était un palais-changé, dont les occupantes dites jeunes filles avec leur cortège de grandes secrétaires petites secrétaires grande Directrice grands et petits professeurs, répétaient tous les jours sans en être informées donc sans doute avec une efficacité pure de trouble et de pensée le programme intial secret: un plan d'effacement de l'être algérien (124).

They are "acteurs, actrices" whose role is to propagate a concept of French Algeria that includes the "désinfection physique et mentale" (124) of the colonised population. The narrator, who is herself complicit "au camouflage, au déguisement, au semblant, à la feinte, au masque" (149), makes a conscious effort to subvert the colonial gaze by deliberately using a broken camera to take pictures of her teachers and school friends that will never exist. She thereby seeks to "inexist" them: "je les inexistais. [...] Je les regardais du point de vue de l'absence de regard" (149), although her plan fails when her classmates beg to see the photos.

The narrator, as a female who feels excluded from both the colonising and colonised populations, shows melancholic tendencies and mentions suicide several

[181] Fiona Barclay, "Postcolonial France? The problematisation of Frenchness through North African immigration: A literary study of metropolitan novels, 1980-2000" (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Glasgow, 2006), 247-250. Barclay draws on Derek Atridge's definition of "readerly hospitality" in *The Singularity of Literature* (London: Routledge, 2004), 80.
[182] Roland Barthes, *S/Z* (Paris: Seuil, 1970), 10, 14-15.

times in the novel, stating: “Je regrettai que le suicide ne soit pas ma religion. En fin de journée je décidais de quitter l’Algériefrançaise faute d’Algérie” (144). Strict gender divisions in the colonial setting also appear responsible for her unhappiness. This split is evident from her brother’s outraged reaction when his mother gives him a woman’s bicycle for his thirteenth birthday. He compares her gift to a crime, to a definitive act of amputation and to death, as well as complaining that “les Arabes vont bien rigoler” (35). Once he uses it, however, the bike comes to symbolise his effortless hypermasculinity, as it is “plus viril à la fin qu’il était féminin au commencement” (51). The narrator’s movements, in contrast, are restricted. After an initial moment of freedom when she rides the bicyle, she crashes, to the amusement of the neighbourhood children, and never uses the bicycle again, instead retreating into the interior world of her reveries (52). The narrator’s rejection of the bicycle – a symbol of Frenchness and freedom[183] – appears as an attempt to avoid being punished by the local children. Her refusal to ride it may therefore be seen as an attempt to perform “Algerian” femininity. Her decision to leave Algeria seems empowering in this light.

In contrast, the children’s mother appears to adapt well to her surroundings as she is indifferent to the strict ways in which gender must be performed in Algeria: “Toute sa vie elle n’a même pas perçu l’homme, ni le fils, ni la femme, ni la mère” (37). By remaining a widow who does not remarry, the narrator claims her mother faces “l’antiveuvisme, dont nous vîmes surgir les manifestations, une fois mon père disparu” (43). The narrator’s mother comes from a line of German women who are described as showing a “discrète virilité” (91) and whose “manque de rouge à lèvres” (102) is evoked as a lack of pretense and hypocrisy (102) which may be read as a refusal of femininity as kitsch. Along with a refusal to care about race (108), this causes her to be viewed as a “danger moral” (108), for which she is eventually punished (she is imprisoned after the Algerian war, her midwifery clinic is closed down and she moves to France). However, in spite of Cixous’s overt subversion of *pied-noir* stereotypes, descriptions of the mother’s virility, honesty and hard work in

[183] The symbolic importance attached to the annual Tour de France from 1903 is evident from its placement of “French geography, society, and culture” in the public eye in Algeria. See Jonathan K. Gosnell, *The Politics of Frenchness in Colonial Algeria, 1930-1954* (New York: University of Rochester Press, 2002), 95. The bicycle as a symbol of freedom is evoked in Haiffa Al Mansour’s film, “Wadjda” (2012), which tells the story of a young Saudi Arabian girl’s wish to ride a bicycle. For more on this, see Xan Brooks, “Wadjda, Saudi Arabia’s First Female Film is Country’s Oscar Entry”, *The Guardian*, 16 September 2013.

her midwifery clinic recall the rhetoric of pioneering settlers and colonising women's role in bringing healthcare advances to the indigenous population. In the manner of some of the Christian imagery evoked in other texts including Camus's, her mother is idealised as unblemished or "constamment vierge" (110), while her work is portrayed as having been thwarted following independence by a dishonest, greedy, indigenous Algerian woman whom they call Maria or Farida. Maria/Farida, a cleaning woman who was invited by the mother to occupy a vacant apartment in her clinic, effectively takes over the building by denouncing other occupants, including the narrator's mother and brother, to the police. Thus, the narrator's family appear as innocent victims of Maria/Farida's thirst for wreaking revenge on the French of Algeria. Coupled with the narrator's statement that both she, having left in 1955, and her mother, who leaves after independence, were aborted from Algeria (96, 16), Maria/Farida's behaviour seems symbolic of an ungrateful, inhospitable and feminised country.

Indeed, Algeria is feminised and exoticised throughout the novel. Thus, the narrator claims the only way she was able to touch Algeria was through the family servant, Aïcha, the narrator's surrogate mother and wet nurse. The following description of Aïcha evokes Orientalist imagery:

> c'est la seule Algérie que j'aie jamais pu toucher frotter retoucher tâter palper arquer mon dos à son mollet fourrer ma bouche entre ses seins ramper sur ses pentes épicées. Je me niche contre Aïcha depuis ses genoux je regarde ses dents être la blancheur dans le rouge de sa bouche [...]. Je la regarde enlever le voile qui la berce et la barque parmi les barques blanches et dessous c'est une femme qui est-la-femme (90).

The narrator discovers years later that Aïcha's real name was Messaouda and realises that her image of the woman was "une histoire" (94) or a construct. Perhaps for this reason, Rice suggests that the portrayal of Aïcha is more complex than an exoticised depiction of Algeria as she problematises the Orientalist persepctive "by revealing a deep desire to really know *this person*" as an individual, while the "wrong of the misnomer [Aïcha] is rectified in this sincere autobiographical account".[184] Cixous's attraction to Aïcha might, in this light, be compared to the four central characters of Kateb's *Nedjma*, who are also drawn to the mythical Nedjma/Algeria. However, her narrator reiterates the type of discourse which depicted Algeria as a land willing to be conquered by virile men and women such as her mother. While the female

[184] Rice, *Polygraphies*, 68-69. Rice's emphasis.

narrator cannot quite grasp Algeria, her father and brother appear to conquer it through their car and bicycle – evoking previous generations of colonisers whose superior position on horseback was immortalised in equestrian statues – and are thus able to "prendre l'Algérie par la terre" (20). Moreover, Orientalist discourse is repeated in the narrator's description of her desire, aged nine, for a Moorish doll. When her father refuses to buy her the doll, it becomes a symbol of an exotic Algeria that the narrator cannot get close to as well as of the femininity of colonised women (from the point of view of the colonisers), which is excluded from her own identity:

> je veux tout et je veux chaque partie je veux le fin voile de visage, je veux le haïk de lin et de soie, je veux l'agrafe d'argent, je veux les anneaux des chevilles je veux le visage caché je veux les chevilles cachées je veux être l'agrafe et les anneaux je veux le saroual bouffant je veux les jambes cachées je veux être le saroual je veux l'Algérie (135).

The doll episode and the entire book, which begins with the narrator's attempts to recover words written about Algeria after a night-time dream, which she cannot find in the morning, leave the reader with a sense of loss which is associated with Algeria. Indeed, the narrator's statement, "j'ai la nostalgie de ce qui n'existera jamais" (112) evokes the tactical discourse of "missed opportunities" used by *pied-noir* writers from the moment they perceived colonial Algeria to be under threat.[185] Missed opportunities for fraternity are underlined by an episode in which the narrator's father gives a lift to two Arab men in his Citröen shortly before his death. These men become "compagnons bibliques" in the narrator's memory, as the men call her father "frère" (47). The exchange, in which the Arab men speak French and her father speaks Arabic, exemplifies a country in which French Algerians and indigenous Algerians could be equal members of an Algerian family, thus providing an insight into her vision of the society that might have been. Furthermore, although the narrator criticises colonialism and acknowledges her complicity in it, her story still appears as a timeless, family drama involving two innocent children, the narrator and her brother, who suffer through no fault of their own. Thus, her brother's assertion that "Tout préexiste" [...] Sans ascendance ni descendance" (140) recalls Camus's denial of the colonial past in *Le Premier Homme*. Instead of delving into the political reasons for her own and her family's eventual departure from Algeria (apart from criticisms of the French educational system's reification of "l'Algérie

[185] Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, 149.

française”), we are presented with a narrative which Yee has described as a “doomed love story” in which the children “experience Punishment without having committed a Crime”.[186] As so often, and all the more surprisingly in view of the critical eminence of the author, it is the narrator and her family, more so than the under-developed Arabo-Berber characters such as Aïcha, who ultimately appear as victims of the colonial system. As a Jewish girl, the narrator’s victimhood is complete as, unlike her father and brother, she never possessed the land she must leave. Furthermore, while the exotic, motherly Aïcha is dead, it is the bitter Maria/Farida who appears as a symbol of the new, independent Algeria. Thus, although the novel appears as a personal work in which the narrator concludes that writing has helped her to feel a sense of being at home in Algeria both retrospectively and presently (166), she also (whether consciously or unconsciously) constructs a positive memory of Jewish *Français d’Algérie*.

2.6 Conclusion

An analysis of the largely unexplored subject of *pied-noir* femininity suggests the significance of texts published in the immediate aftermath of the Algerian war, which reached readers who were largely from the settler community. Apparently private works published in 1962 and 1963 may be regarded as conduits of performativity which, in the face of a general avoidance of colonial history, consciously organised representations of the past and sought to influence the way it is remembered. Female narrators appear concerned with the personal, rather than the political. However, the intimate has been shown to be inextricably linked with the political in colonial encounters. In this light, personal depictions of the war as a family drama, along with the development of myths surrounding the naming of the settler community, of a pioneering tradition and of unique suffering, take on a political dimension, particularly in view of negative stereotypes surrounding the *pieds-noirs* at the time. Elements of these narratives appear self-consciously selective in their presentation of the past and of a unified community or even a family formed by this past.

In shaping a *pied-noir* identity, early texts by women emphasise hyperfemininity and the “beautification” of women, which reveals gender as

[186] Yee, “The Colonial Outsider”, 190.

performative. This emphasis on a hyperfeminine identity is also sustained in much later narratives. Female characters' efforts to attain beauty may be usefully considered in terms of kitsch. Women's performance of their identities thus appears as a means of emphasising the "authentic" hypermasculinity of *pied-noir* men. The performance of gender among settlers is also differentiated from the colonised population, most notably from those politically engaged in the independence struggle, who are nevertheless evoked as distant members or spouses of a French Algerian family. Female narrators also evoke apparent similarities with the colonised population as personal tales again became metaphors for a *pied-noir* community. Stories of personal emancipation and of sorority with Muslim women as well as a privileged relationship with a feminised Algeria differentiate the *pieds-noirs* from the metropolitan French and naturalise their presence in Algeria. Despite an apparently distinctive traditional identity, however, women's role appears to have been similarly oriented towards the domestic sphere in the metropole, while the colonies indisputably provided opportunities for settler women.

For some women, growing up as part of the settler community inspired a feminist stance and encouraged critcial thinking with regard to the inequalities fostered by the colonial system. Cardinal's *Les Mots pour le dire*, Roüan's *Outremer* and Cixous's *Les Rêveries de la femme sauvage* may thus be considered as important examples of texts which diverge from the others studied. These narratives are more nuanced and critique a system which is linked with mental illness and melancholy, most notably in Cardinal's text on psychotherapy. These texts also highlight the colonial setting as a site of limitation, but colonising women, rather than the indigenous population, are the main focus. In fact, an ambiguous attitude towards the indigenous population is apparent in the case of Cardinal and Roüan. Cixous's text, which requires committed reading, critiques the colonial system most overtly and provides a substantive riposte to narratives which idealise the colony and develop *nostalgérie*. However, all three of the works studied in this section invoke a feminised Algeria which, in the case of Cardinal's text and Roüan's film, is Camusian in its representations of a mother-sea and which for Cixous is problematically represented by an exoticised maid and a doll. Surprisingly, the history of colonisation also appears as a family drama, thereby naturalising the colonial presence in Algeria, in these less obviously pro-colonial texts. Commenting on Cardinal, Donadey Roch suggests that she expresses "ce qu'il y a de tragique dans

la condition féminine”,[187] and the stories analysed depict a situation born of tragedy, rather than politics, in which the female characters appear as victims. They also serve to position *pied-noir* men as uniquely masculine. Constructions of *pied-noir* masculinity will consequently be examined in the next chapter.

[187] Anne Donadey Roch, “Répétition, maternité et transgression dans trois oeuvres de Marie Cardinal”, *American Association of Teachers of French* 65, no. 4 (March 1992): 575.

Chapter 3: Performing *Pied-Noir* Masculinity

3.1 Introduction: (Under) Studying Masculinity

Masculinity is recognised as "the organizing principle for heterosexual and homosexual behaviour",[1] and a concept which "engages, inflects, and shapes everyone".[2] However, Josep M. Armengol and Àngels Carabí note that masculinity "was not examined closely" and "was not seen as something culturally constructed" until recently.[3] We may begin our study of masculinity by referencing its traditional traits, as studied by anthropologist David Gilmore: protection of dependents showing heroism and bravery, providing for dependents, potency/virility and political dominance/decision-making.[4] Gilmore further suggests that: "Whenever people practice warfare or are threatened, you need a heroic male. As soon as you have that, there appears the tendency to dominate over women and [...] *machismo* and everything else that results from it".[5] He also asserts that when males feel oppressed or as if they are "losing", they try to prove themselves by developing hypermasculinity.[6] Demonstrations of hypermasculinity by Arab populations have been considered in this regard.[7] However, constructions of male settlers as hypermasculine must similarly be examined in light of the identity threat posed to them as a minority striving to maintain dominance in the colonial context and as a minority immigrant group following Algerian independence. Since normative masculinity is associated with "power, rationality, assertiveness and

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[1] Michael Kimmel, "Masculinity Studies: An Introduction", in *Debating Masculinity*, ed. Josep M. Armengol and Àngels Carabí (Harriman, TN: Men's Studies Press, 2009), 27. This edited volume was first published in Spanish in 2008 as *La Masculinidad a debate*.

[2] Maurice Berger, Brian Wallis, and Simon Watson, "Introduction", in *Constructing Masculinity*, ed. Maurice Berger, Brian Wallis, and Simon Watson (New York: Routledge, 1995), 2, 7.

[3] Josep M. Armengol and Àngels Carabí, "Prologue", in Armengol and Carabí, *Debating Masculinity*, 9. According to Armengol and Carabí, studies of masculinity appeared in the 1980s. It is important to point out that the study of masculinity does not necessarily involve the study of men and Carolyn Dinshaw draws our attention to recent work on female masculinity by Judith Halberstam, whose book, *Female Masculinity*, was published in 1998. See Carolyn Dinshaw, "Queer Perspectives", in Armengol and Carabí, *Debating Masculinity*, 71.

[4] David Gilmore, "Cultures of Masculinity", in Armengol and Carabí, *Debating Masculinity*, 31-32. Gilmore contends that masculinity codes increase in intensity going down the social scale.

[5] Ibid., 32-33.

[6] Ibid., 39.

[7] Linda Jones, for example, links demonstrations of hypermasculinity in the Arab world to "backlashes" against Western hegemony. See Linda Jones, "Islamic Masculinities", in Armengol and Carabí, *Debating Masculinity*, 107.

invulnerability”,[8] it is worth noting that colonised populations have been represented as embodying the opposite of these ideals.[9] Paradoxically, critics such as Frantz Fanon have also shown that white men simultaneously projected a hypermasculinised image onto black men.[10] David Eng suggests that current cultural issues such as “the feminization of the Asian man” must be considered on a global scale in relation to the legacy of colonialism,[11] and constructions of *pied-noir* men’s identity must similarly be examined in relation to comparisons with or distinctions from stereotypes of the colonised population as either effeminate or hypermasculine.

The ideals of both Islamic and Mediterranean models of masculinity, as discussed in Chaper 1, are also given consideration in this chapter. Thus, *pied-noir* men’s relationships with women – who, according to Basham are expected to play a “binding force within the [Mediterranean] family”[12] – and particularly with their mothers, appears, as in our study of Camus, especially significant. Boys’ relationship with the mother, as outlined by Nancy J. Chodorow in *The Reproduction of Mothering* (1978), is highlighted by Michael Kimmel as being important more generally in studying masculinity.[13] Reflecting on Chodorow’s work, he suggests that boys’ attachment to the mother prior to the Oedipal crisis, as described by Freud, leads to the repudiation of the mother’s identity as this attachment is cut.[14] Thus “modern society is based on men’s repudiation of femininity which brings along a learned contempt for women”.[15] To this theory, Gilmore adds that the human foetus starts off as female and that, psychologically, the identity crisis boys go through may explain why masculinity is seen as a test, with males thinking that they have to “do” something “to be a real man”.[16] The relationship between Mediterranean men and their mothers is seen as especially significant by Gilmore, who states that “the

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[8] Lynne Segal, “Men After Feminism”, in Armengol and Carabí, *Debating Masculinity*, 138. Despite this generalisation, Segal recognises, however, that there is “no timeless, fixed substance to masculinity”.
[9] See, for example, Albert Memmi’s descriptions of mythical representations of the colonised, particularly in “Portrait mythique du colonisé” in his *Portrait du colonisé précédé de Portrait du colonisateur* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985), 101-110.
[10] See, for example, Frantz Fanon’s summary of colonial attitudes: “Nos femmes [assiégées] par les négres. Car le négre a une puissance sexuelle hallucinante”, in his *Peau noire, masques blancs* (Paris: Seuil, 1952), 128.
[11] David Eng, “Race and Masculinity”, in Armengol and Carabí, *Debating Masculinity*, 84.
[12] Richard Basham, “Machismo”, *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 1, no. 2 (Spring 1976): 128-129.
[13] Kimmel, “Masculinity Studies”, 18.
[14] Ibid., 19.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Gilmore, “Cultures of Masculinity”, 36.

mother is often left out" of studies on masculine self-image in places such as Andalusia in Spain (historically linked with North Africa as the centre of Islamic rule in Spain for several centuries), where men are seen to have an ambivalent attitude (misogyny and reverence) towards women.[17] Gilmore argues that it is the mother, not the father, who is the principal educator in childhood. He notes that in Andalusia, "both sexes grow up with almost exclusively female parenting",[18] and that mothers are, for the male, split between being "controlling, repressive, and frustrating" and "nurturing, indulgent, and loving".[19]

The importance of concepts of honour and shame in the Mediterranean context has also been underlined by anthropologists.[20] For her part, Alison Lever argues that the presentation of honour and shame as a typical system of values in Mediterranean societies is in fact misleading.[21] However, discussions of honour from the beginning of the conquest appear to have influenced conceptions of *pied-noir* masculinity, as did constructions of both France and French Algeria as twin inheritors of an ancient Latin/Mediterranean civilisation. Indeed, the story of France's conquest in Algeria has been portrayed as a battle to regain masculine – and specifically Mediterranean – honour, from the moment the Dey of Algiers apparently struck the French consul with his fly-swatter in 1827.[22] Victory in the Algerian war was later posited as a means of "avenging" defeat in Indo-China and re-establishing control over "an overseas empire profoundly affected by the Second World War"[23] – which recalls the ideals of heroic bravery and political dominance described by Gilmore. Furthermore, honour was an issue when the *pieds-noirs* started arriving in metropolitan France towards the end of the war. While some government officials claimed that those arriving were holiday-makers who would eventually return to

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[17] David Gilmore, *Carnival and Culture: Sex, Symbol and Status in Spain* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 74-75.
[18] Ibid., 84.
[19] Ibid., 90.
[20] See, for example, J.G. Peristiany, ed. *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974). For a study of the concept of honour in Algeria, see Pierre Bourdieu, "The Sentiment of Honour in Kabyle Society", 191-241, in the same volume.
[21] Alison Lever, "Honour as a Red Herring", *Critique of Anthropology* 6, no. 3 (December 1986): 104. Lever criticises anthropologists for having "underestimated the complexity and heterogeneity of value systems".
[22] As Seth Graebner notes, the story of colonisation "began with a Muslim's act with historical consequences, an act necessary to justify subsequent developments; however, it then wrote the Arabs out of further participation". See Seth Graebner, *History's Place: Nostalgia and the City in French Algerian Literature* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2007), 225.
[23] Philip Dine, *Images of the Algerian War: French Fiction and Film, 1954-1992* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 109.

Algeria, others suggested that they were "pretending to go on summer vacation in order 'to save face'".[24]

The phrases "t'y es pas un homme", and "la putain de ta mère" may be regarded as the ultimate attacks on honour as "les insultes qu'un pied-noir supporte le moins".[25] The first implies the considerable significance of "les valeurs «viriles»" for male *pieds-noirs*, while the second underlines their profound attachment to the mother, which is not broken until death, according to Maurice Benassayag.[26] *Pied-noir* masculinity is frequently depicted in terms of such extremes. Rosemarie Jones, for example, describes: "a world of men, based on masculine, even macho, priorities, in which the greatest insult consists in questioning another's masculinity".[27] By the same token, Martin Evans describes Jeanson network activist Aline Charby's decision to "leave the *pied-noir* world" and rethink her *pied-noir* identity, as follows: "She explained how the *pied-noir* world was a closed, servile world, profoundly macho and deeply anti-intellectual".[28] Similarly, Maurice, an interviewee of sociologist Clarisse Buono, presents hypermasculine qualities as being a central, fixed aspect of his identity as a *pied-noir*:

> La femme pied-noir était très très fière. Par contre, le pied-noir, il était macho. Moi, par exemple, bon, c'est vrai que je suis pour l'égalité, la parité. Pour moi, la femme est égale à l'homme, mais le pied-noir... c'est mon côté latin qui ressort. C'est même pas l'histoire de macho..., et puis, à la limite, l'homme *pied-noir* a un côté protecteur. [...] Pour moi, c'est quelque chose qui peut pas me quitter. L'homme pied-noir, il a un côté sentimental, c'est un homme de coeur comme tout pied-noir. Il est 'maison' mais la maison, c'est la femme. Personnellement, [...] chez moi, j'aide pas ma femme. C'est pas que je veux pas, c'est que je peux pas [...] Alors ma femme, qui est née à Marseille, qui est marseillaise, elle me dit: 'De toute façon, t'es un vrai pied-noir'.[29]

When describing the immediate aftermath of the Battle of Algiers and the subsequent popularity of the *parachutiste* troops, Alistair Horne alludes to the macho *pied-noir* stereotype in a quotation which also reveals the Algerian war's multiple challenges

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[24] Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 214.
[25] Maurice Benassayag, "Familles, je vous aime", in *Les Pieds-Noirs*, ed. Emmanuel Roblès (Paris: Philippe Lebaud, 1982), 171.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Rosemarie Jones, "*Pied-Noir* Literature: The Writing of a Migratory Elite", in *Writing Across Worlds: Literature and Migration*, ed. Russell King, John Connell, and Paul White (London: Routledge, 1995), 131.
[28] Martin Evans, *The Memory of Resistance: French Opposition to the Algerian War (1954-1962)* (Oxford: Berg, 1997), 55.
[29] Cited by Clarisse Buono, *Pieds-noirs de père en fils* (Paris: Balland, 2004), 94.

to a prevailing *pied-noir* sense of self: “somewhat to the chagrin of the *macho*-minded *pied noir* male, every golden-skinned beauty of Algiers had to be seen with a *para* boyfriend on her arm”.[30]

The *Français d’Algérie* have also been depicted as violent both by their supporters and detractors. In an article that is extremely sympathetic to the plight of the *pieds-noirs* after 1962, they are described as “proud pioneers and fierce warriors”,[31] while Pierre Nora describes them in a similar, although negative vein: “La réalité algérienne est fruste et violente. De la conquête, les colons ont gardé des habitudes militaires”.[32] In his deconstruction of “the caricature of ‘savagery’”, which focuses on the violence associated with Algerians and Algeria, James McDougall underlines the physical, symbolic and psychological violence used by the settlers against the colonised, which they justified by projecting violence as inherent to the indigenous population.[33] His description is worth quoting at length:

> The alterity of violence underpinned a crucial, constitutive reflex common among the European population. While never simply collectively shared by all – one cannot speak of a monolithic and undifferentiated ‘settler psyche’ – it was a powerful presence in widespread socialisation processes and in the consensus of the colony’s internal politics. It remains present, even if only in the form of a cipher, in Camus’ *L’Etranger*, and reached its suicidal acme in the ultra-colonialist terrorism of the Organisation de l’Armée Secrète (OAS). The conviction of a quotidian colonial racism – ‘the Arabs are cut-throats’ – which so effectively held Algerians as invisible to settler society and, when visible, as intolerably threatening, was itself an acute form of symbolic and psychological violence, simultaneously inflicted and endured (as an hysterically internalised fear of the ‘native’) by Algeria’s Europeans. It also served as the unspoken, since self-evident, ground of justification for the spectacular exercise of physical violence against Algerians by both regular armed forces and the settlers’ own militia. This is most obviously visible on a large scale in the reprisal massacres at Sétif and Guelma in May 1945 and later in the OAS death-squad murders of 1961-1962. In these cases colonial violence was a massively and demonstratively disproportionate reaction to Algerian resistance. Not so much the suppression of the actual acts of violent resistance which Algerians had carried out, these spectacles of force were

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[30] Alistair Horne, *A Savage War Of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962* (New York: New York Review Books, 2006), 218.
[31] Alain H. Posteau, “Victims of Decolonization: the Plight of the ‘Pieds-Noirs’ and ‘Harkis’ at the end of the Algerian War and thereafter” (paper presented at the African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, 1980).
[32] Pierre Nora, *Les Français d’Algérie* (Paris: Julliard, 1961), 58.
[33] James McDougall, “Savage Wars? Codes of Violence in Algeria, 1830s-1990s”, *Third World Quarterly* 26, no. 1 (2005): 118.

> ferociously self-assertive pre-emptions of any conceivable resistance, a terrified exorcism of the latent 'savagery' of the 'native'.[34]

Moreover, racist violence in France during the 1970s, particularly in the south of the country, during which at least seventy Algerians were killed, has been persuasively linked to *pied-noir* groups, with Jim House and Neil Macmaster noting that: "Some of the organized killings that peaked in 1973 used plastic explosives and grenades, and were redolent of OAS attacks on Algerians (whether in France or Algeria) during 1961-1962".[35] Violence is worth considering here in light of sociologist Kimmel's contention that acts of aggression can be seen as a way of proclaiming and restoring masculinity that is perceived as threatened.[36] Furthermore, American gun culture has been linked to concepts of American masculinity dating from "myths of the frontier [...] myths of the wilderness" and "castration anxiety", and it has been suggested that gun violence is therefore tolerated as part of Americans' "destiny".[37] This idea of violence as part of the destiny of a pioneering culture conforms to Camus's evocation of casual violence.

Nevertheless, descriptions which cast the *pieds-noirs* as a hypermasculinised violent or warrior people are reminiscent of the ways in which the colonised population was stereotyped. Further stereotypes of the settlers may be linked to the "permissive and exotic space" of North Africa which, according to Richard Keller, psychiatrists believed could lead to possible mental breakdowns among Europeans.[38] Keller also notes that with increased European settlement in the colonies at the turn of the twentieth century, this view fell out of favour, particularly in Algeria, where violence among Arabs was now presented as a matter of race or culture, rather than an influence of the climate.[39] The Arab population was thus cast as an inherently violent race, which was prone to acts of vengeance and violent, often sexual, crimes – a theme which would come to the fore in writing on the Algerian war. Yet it appears that the settlers were also judged on their difference from the metropolitan French from an early stage, and they were therefore also stereotyped by some

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[34] Ibid., 121.
[35] Jim House and Neil Macmaster, *Paris 1961: Algerians, State Terror and Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 285.
[36] Kimmel, "Masculinity Studies", 21.
[37] Krin Gabbard, "Men In Film", in Armengol and Carabí, *Debating Masculinity*, 55.
[38] Richard C. Keller, *Colonial Madness: Psychiatry in French North Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 125. It is important to note, as Keller does, 123, that "colonial psychiatry was a military organism" from its origins, which tried to dominate colonised populations in North Africa.
[39] Ibid.

observers in metropolitan France. During World War I, for example, a study of the Maghreb by two psychiatrists considered not only the native population as "the most thwarted beings, the closest to nature", but also some poor white settlers as "the most defective products of civilization".[40] This study established a racial hierarchy for military service with Muslim men portrayed as being prone to "violent episodes of angry mania".[41] European settlers with Italian and Spanish roots, as well as Algerian Jews, were described as being "more prone to breakdown", while soldiers of "French stock" were considered more robust.[42] Muslim men therefore appear as violently hypermasculine while the non-French European settlers appear effeminate, in contrast to the model of masculinity apparently displayed by the *Français de souche*.

Anthropologist Andrea L. Smith also recounts stories told to her by *pied-noir* interviewees which support the view that they were seen as a separate "African" people, as early as the 1930s.[43] This view of the *pieds-noirs* might usefully be compared to that of Afrikaners, many of whom regarded themselves as "Africans" in a recent study, but were nonetheless "careful to defend against any hint of shared identity with blackness or black Africans".[44] Significantly, one of Smith's interviewees felt that the term *pied-noir* was designed to show that the settlers were to some extent "black" as they had been "tainted" from their long stay in Africa.[45] Moreover, Todd Shepard has convincingly shown that Algerian independence was facilitated by a "growing hatred" of the *pieds-noirs* in metropolitan France at a time when OAS violence was presented as "the emanation of a subtropical subculture that racist and colonial structures of domination had perverted".[46] He also points to the gendering of the *pieds-noirs*, at this time, as "violent males who attacked helpless women and children", such as Delphine Renard and actress Brigitte Bardot, who refused their demands for cash.[47] Shepard also suggests that media representations of "normal and abnormal relationships between men and women, men and men and

[40] Cited by Keller. Ibid., 129.
[41] Ibid., 130.
[42] Ibid., 131.
[43] Andrea L. Smith, *Colonial Memory and Postcolonial Europe: Maltese Settlers in Algeria and France* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006), 182-183.
[44] Cornel Verwey and Michael Quayle, "Whitness, Racism, and Afrikaner Identity in Post-Apartheid South Africa", *African Affairs* 111, no. 445 (2012): 573.
[45] Smith, *Colonial Memory and Postcolonial Europe*, 182.
[46] Todd Shepard, "Pieds-Noirs, Bêtes Noires: Anti-'European of Algeria' Racism and the Close of the French Empire", in *Algeria & France 1800-2000: Identity, Memory, Nostalgia*, ed. Patricia M.E. Lorcin (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2006), 151.
[47] Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, 185-186. For analysis of the *pieds-noirs*, see in particular Chapters 7 and 8, 183-228.

men and children" were central to arguments that cast "abnormal" *pieds-noirs* in opposition to "normal", civilised French society on the cusp of decolonisation.[48] The *pieds-noirs* were presented as being a decadent, deviant, (masculine) race who were not French and, according to Shepard, it was the New Left "that most aggressively demonized the *pieds-noirs*" in the run-up to the Evian Accords.[49] Shifting responsibility for colonisation and the use of violence and torture during the Algerian war away from metropolitan France and on to the *pieds-noirs* was done by presenting settler men as violent, irrational individuals, in much the same way as the colonised population had been depicted in colonial discourse:

> Writers of the New Left recentered their struggle against "fascism" [...] on the OAS and, in an easy elision, on the 'Europeans of Algeria'. Accusations that the *pieds-noirs* were under the sway of neofascistic impulses buttressed a growing assumption that the *pieds-noirs* – like all people from Algeria – were not French. *Pied-noir* fascism also suggested that it was their irrationality and violence that had produced 'French' wartime abuses, such as torture. France needed to stop the *pieds-noirs* by getting out of Algeria, for neither was French.[50]

As Ross illustrates, Fanon claimed at this time, particularly in *Les damnés de la terre* (1961), that colonising men were not whole (and therefore not to be imitated), while simultaneously focusing on new, muscular, colonised men who would achieve "wholeness" through (violent) revolution.[51] Moreover, as the war drew to a close, the *pieds-noirs* were presented by left-wing writers as being "Janus-headed, divided between those obsessed with proving their masculinity and *tapettes*".[52]

Homophobia has been described as "one of the organizing principles of masculinity".[53] In considering the theme of homosexuality it is therefore important to note that, according to Robert Aldrich, by the late nineteenth century it was believed in Europe that homosexuality was "endemic" in the non-European world.[54] Aldrich draws our attention to the words of a writer using the pseudonym Dr Jacobus X in a

[48] Ibid., 186.
[49] Shepard, "Pieds-Noirs, Bêtes Noires", 152.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), 159. See also Frantz Fanon, *Les Damnés de la terre* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991). An evocation of "l'homme nouveau algérien" (as well as allusions to a new type of Algerian femininity and family) may also be seen in Fanon's 1959 text, *L'An V de la révolution algérienne* (Paris: La Découverte, 2001), 12.
[52] Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, 199. Shepard's emphasis.
[53] Kimmel, "Masculinity Studies", 17.
[54] Robert Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality* (London: Routledge, 2003), 1, 5. Aldrich's study reveals the homo-eroticism and homophilia associated with colonial practices, as suggested by the expression "faire passer son brevet colonial" as an initiation into sodomy.

text written in 1893 entitled *L'Art d'aimer aux colonies*: "The Arab is an inveterate pederast, even in his own country, where women are not lacking".[55] Europeans in general, therefore, but in particular the French, "widely believed that all Arabs enjoyed homosexual contacts, both with each other and with foreigners", an idea that appeared to be confirmed by writers such as André Gide, who wrote about homosexual encounters in Algeria.[56] Given the ambiguity surrounding men's sexuality in the colonies, Aldrich's assertion that Jean Genet's play *Les Paravents* (1957) highlights the contention "that sexual ambiguity can, on the one hand, create empathy for the colonised or, on the other, combined with gender insecurity, promote militarism and colonialism, and lead to murderous campaigns to castrate the enemy through assassination",[57] is relevant here in light of the specific forms historically taken by colonial and anti-colonial violence and representations of the colonised, and later the colonisers, as homosexual.

Settler men were portrayed as being sexually deviant and lacking normal relationships with women by Pierre Nora in his personal, rather than historical, analysis, *Les Français d'Algérie* (1961), and by journalists such as Philippe Hernandez during the Algerian war.[58] Shepard argues that Nora's essay shaped "not just New Left analyses but also official media and propaganda", in its implication that the *pieds-noirs*, had "suffered the influence of their Arab milieu".[59] He also suggests that Nora's text was particularly influential in its depiction of the settler population as inherently racist, noting that it shapes the work of intellectuals today.[60] Nora claims that the settlers suffer from a type of racist delirium: "Le délire est tel que la contradiction n'embarrasse personne. La pire haine pour les Arabes peut se transformer en une déclaration d'amour".[61] A similar form of male delirium was hinted at in a broadcast by metropolitan radio station Europe 1 which contrasted the

[55] Ibid., 16. Aldrich's translation.
[56] Ibid., 329.
[57] Ibid., 357-358. For Aldrich, while Genet was an example of the former, "The other option was bloodily exemplified by the practice of fighters cutting off the genitals of men whom they slaughtered and stuffing them into their victims' mouths.
[58] Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, 200-202. Shepard points out that the only femininity Nora identifies, besides what he considers to be that typified by homosexuals, is between the *pieds-noirs* and metropolitan France, with the latter being described as a man supporting a woman.
[59] Shepard, "Pieds-Noirs, Bêtes Noires", 153-154.
[60] Ibid., 153. Shepard quotes, for example, David Prochaska in his *Making Algeria French: Colonialism in Bône, 1870-1920* (1990) as stating that the settlers "blocked social evolution" and Neil Macmaster's argument in his *Colonial Migrants and Racism: Algerians in France, 1900-1962* (1997) that the *pieds-noirs* "injected a particularly virulent strain of racism into French society" after Algerian independence.
[61] Nora, *Les Français d'Algérie*, 46.

calm Muslim quarters with a chaotic Bab-el-Oued, in which "one thousand [European] men, but only men" were visible on the streets, the day after the signing of the Evian Accords; while a government minister spoke of the fearful atmosphere for mothers, many of whom were sending their children (or going with them) to metropolitan France.[62] It is worth noting that counter-representations of the siege at Bab-el-Oued may be seen in works written by *pied-noir* authors. For example, Dessaigne's 1962 account, gleaned from Micheline, her friend's employee, is rich in descriptions of women and children, some of whom die in the gunfire, and who are left behind when the majority of men are taken for questioning by the French army.[63] Yet, in France during the war, instead of "white men [...] saving brown women from brown men," [64] the actions of the French army after the Evian accords appear to have been presented as a case of white men saving *pied-noir* women from violent *pied-noir* men who used brutal terror tactics as members of the OAS.[65]

When the French government could no longer put off facing up to the "psychosis of the exodus", it was obliged to recast *pied-noir* men in a different light.[66] Shepard notes that press reactions to the exodus in metropolitan France in 1962 were varied, although in general the press appeared more welcoming than the people.[67] Faced with overwhelming numbers of repatriates, however, the official policy was to encourage the metropolitan population to welcome them and *pied-noir* men therefore needed to be distanced from previous images of violent, irrational, deviant members of the OAS. Thus, a focus on the *pieds-noirs* now centred on them as male heads of what Shepard calls the "mythic heterosexual family" and, indeed, benefits were initially only accorded to the male heads of these families, thereby discouraging men from staying on in Algeria and possibly fighting for the OAS.[68] According to Shepard, "images of 'whole' families, men with women and children,

[62] Shepard, "Pieds-Noirs, Bêtes Noires", 154.
[63] Francine Dessaigne, *Journal d'une mère de famille pied-noir* (Paris: France-Empire, 1972), 172-177.
[64] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?", in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*, ed. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993), 92.
[65] OAS propaganda at this time also claimed that "The Men Are Staying Put. They Are Ready To Fight". See Shepard, "Pieds-Noirs, Bêtes Noires", 157.
[66] Ibid., 158. Shepard quotes a French officer, Lt.-Colonel Cousin, as using this expression in 1962, which recalls the "rage de partir" described by some of the characters in Marie Elbe's *À l'heure de notre mort* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1992), 203.
[67] Shepard, "Pieds-Noirs, Bêtes Noires", 159. According to Shepard, *Paris-Match*, for example, welcomed the repatriates but letters to the editor in *France-observateur* were filled with criticisms of them.
[68] Ibid., 160-161.

were repeatedly produced to describe the people coming to France", while repatriates were now also posited as members of a Holy Family or as a metropolitan French family who were coming home.[69] As he explains:

> Through the multiple resonances of familial imagery, the refugees were positioned not as violent, but as weak, as themselves children, and as profoundly French [...]. The family – above all the necessary place of males within it as fathers, brothers, and even children – was a privileged trope, mobilized to cleanse the *pieds-noirs* of the OAS stain and to guarantee their Frenchness.[70]

The *pieds-noirs* were now represented as "Europeans" of Algeria who formed part of a combined French and European family.[71] The former "outsiders" had therefore become "insiders", although depictions of them as weak children recall paternalistic descriptions of the colonised population. Against this backdrop, we might now usefully examine opposing constructions of French Algerian men as members of a *pied-noir* family in texts which appeared particularly from the 1970s – significantly, following the lead of the women authors previously discussed.

3.2 From *l'Algérie de papa* to *l'Algérie de maman*

Jules Roy, Emmanuel Roblès and Jean Pélégri were contemporaries of Camus whose writings were linked to the *École d'Alger* movement. As politically conscious writers, their work following Algerian independence is of particular interest for our study of developing constructions of *pied-noir* memory and identity. We may productively begin our analysis by considering Roy, a former air force colonel, who was responsible for the best-selling anti-colonial essay *La Guerre d'Algérie*, published in 1960.[72] This text has been described as having made a significant contribution towards "the shift in metropolitan attitudes away from the previous colonial orthodoxy".[73] Perhaps for this reason, Roy has been described as a "pied-noir-anti-pieds-noirs".[74] Indeed, the writer appears to have been largely rejected by

[69] Ibid., 160-162.
[70] Ibid., 162.
[71] Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, 224.
[72] Jules Roy, *La Guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Julliard, 1960).
[73] Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, 83.
[74] M. Van Renterghem, "Les déchirures d'un juste", *Le Monde*, 4 November 1994. Cited in Lucienne Martini, *Racines de papier: Essai sur l'expression littéraire de l'identité Pieds-Noirs* (Paris: Publisud, 1997), 225.

the *pied-noir* community.[75] His outsider status has been outlined by Catherine Savage Brosman, who states that, from 1960, and considered a traitor by French Algerians, he became “presque un homme sans patrie”, a status highlighted by the title of his memoirs, *Étranger pour mes frères* (1982).[76]

Roy presents *La Guerre d’Algérie*, written between July and August 1960, as taking up where his friend Camus, who had died the previous January, left off. Not only is it dedicated to Camus’s memory, but the author explains that with the latter’s death, he feels a responsibility to return to and write about Algeria, something he is confident his friend and spiritual “frère” would have done on seeing the suffering caused by the war, despite his previously declared silence on the issue.[77] Significantly, however, having witnessed the dehumanising effects of the war on the Arabo-Berber population, Roy, in reference to Camus’s stated preference for his mother over justice, notes that he feels closer to the indigenous population than to his own brother (218), and concludes that “Il ne s’agit pas de préférer sa mère à la justice. Il s’agit d’aimer sa [*sic*] justice autant que sa propre mère” (226).

This text therefore draws our attention to the plight of the colonised population, to their deaths by the thousand during the war and to the French army’s use of torture. It also undermines Mediterranean myths of harmonious cultural intermingling (70). Nevertheless, it is worth noting that on closer inspection, colonisation still appears as a family affair. The war is presented as a lovers’ quarrel between France and Algeria, which are bound, not by children, but by land (201). However, in the case of an eventual “Algérie algérienne”, built by both the French Algerian and Arabo-Berber populations, France becomes a feminised “vieille tante à l’héritage” who will keep her distance from her pioneering nephews (226). Consequently, the conflict is again presented as part of a fraternal feud (209-210). Women’s sorority on both sides is also alluded to (202, 212). Furthermore, a feminised landscape or “womb” becomes a binding force for both the indigenous population and a settler population which is depicted as honest, generous, prone to violence, passionate, courageous and whose actions appear as a reaction to propaganda which demonised the FLN:

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[75] Jeannine Verdès-Leroux, *Les Français d’Algérie de 1830 à aujourd’hui* (Paris: Fayard, 2001), 263-264.

[76] Catharine Savage Brosman, “Les Frères ennemis: Jules Roy et l’Algérie”, *American Association of Teachers of French* 56, no. 4 (March 1983): 579.

[77] Roy, *La Guerre d’Algérie*, 5, 28, 217-218, 223.

> Si mes compatriotes d'Algérie ont des défauts, ils possèdent au moins cette qualité: touchés par le langage direct qu'ils aiment, ils sont capables de générosité dans la violence comme dans la bonté, exactement comme les ratons, puisque c'est du ventre de la même terre qu'ils sont sortis et c'est là qu'ils retourneront. Je serai toujours prêt à pardonner à mes compatriotes d'Algérie parce qu'un sang brûlant coule dans leurs veines. Si la passion les aveugle parfois comme moi, du moins connaissent-ils la passion. J'ai le droit, en ce qui me concerne, puisque je suis des leurs, de les accuser de bévues ou d'injustices et de m'exposer à leur colère. Nés de l'esprit d'aventure et de révolte, ils réagissent sous l'insulte et sont capables de sortir dans la rue, d'aller gueuler sur un forum, ou de prendre les armes pour défendre leurs droits, et je ne comprends vraiment pas pourquoi ils veulent encore à tout prix une Algérie française. On leur fait sans doute peur en décrivant les gens du F.L.N. comme assoiffés de vengeance et de haine à leur égard (225-226).

Thus, alongside the family trope, allusions to the masculinity of the *Français d'Algérie* recall both the macho ideals of courage and virility as well as Arab virtures of generosity, honesty and showing passionate emotion in the correct context. Yet the essay is an appeal to end the war and to negotiate with the FLN, with the author definitively choosing the side of Algerian independence. In taking this stance, Roy was prepared to be rejected by his compatriots (187, 223). The author's increased emphasis on colonisation as a family saga in texts written after 1962 therefore appears surprising and may be considered as an effort to gain admittance to an imagined *pied-noir* community.

Les Chevaux du soleil is the title under which six of Roy's novels published between 1967 and 1975 are grouped, as well as the title of his 1980 twelve-part television adaptation of the novels.[78] The familial structure of both the novels and their screen adaptation encourages our increasing attachment to characters – from the illiterate Antoine Bouychou who first arrives at Sidi Ferruch as a soldier in 1830 and returns as a settler, through his descendants, to the various generations of the Paris family. The saga does not appear to have been popular with Roy's compatriots. One of Verdès-Leroux's interviewees summed up her community's rejection of Roy by stating that he had shown a society based on injustice.[79] While this statement is possibly an allusion to *La Guerre d'Algérie*, another interviewee specifically criticised *Les Chevaux du soleil*, while praising

[78] Roy wrote the screenplay for the television series with Pierre Cardinal and François Villiers. For Roy's revised edition of all six novels, see Jules Roy, *Les Chevaux du soleil: La saga de l'Algérie de 1830 à 1962* (Paris: Omnibus, 1995). For the screen version, see François Villiers, *Les Chevaux du soleil* (France: Koba Films, 1980).

[79] Cited by Verdès-Leroux, *Les Français d'Algérie*, 263-264.

Camus's *Le Premier homme*.[80] Following a reference to Roy's *Les Chevaux du soleil* saga, de la Hogue similarly suggests that some *pieds-noirs* are not acknowledged as such because of their political tendencies.[81] Yet although Roy does allude to colonial injustices in the series, it also appears as a work of nostalgia. This is all the more obvious in his television adaptation, which may usefully be examined here. In addition to its rendering of Roy's narrative of the colonial history of Algeria from 1830 to 1962, the series is of interest for its visual appeal. While a *razzia* (violent raid) by the French army which destroys a village is shown in episode four, most of the violence committed against the colonised population, including torture, takes place off-screen. Furthermore, a scene of a brutal OAS shooting of one man is minimised at it is immediately followed by an FLN shooting of a group of several men (episode twelve). Thus, while the novel version offers more political context, including an insight into de Gaulle's viewpoint,[82] the television series tends to be dominated by visually pleasurable scenes. In this manner nostalgia is facilitated, from the bright red and navy costumes of the soldiers of the conquest to the opulence of the balls held by the honourable character General de Roailles and his wife, who feature in early episodes. This impression is aided by the frequent framing of characters against a backdrop of sunlight. The effect is also reinforced by shots of the bay of Algiers, with its palm trees and skyscrapers, in the final episodes, which give a striking sense of progress when contrasted with the barren landscape of earlier episodes.

The series is semi-autobiographical in its depiction of the Paris family, from which Roy was descended, and in its evocation of Hector, nicknamed Zizi as a child, who represents Roy.[83] The depiction of Hector/Zizi bears similarities to the prototypical *pied-noir* masculinity which, as argued in Chapter 1, Camus also constructed. Zizi's performance of this identity appears effortless in his youth. Born at the end of episode seven (1901), he is, by episode nine (June 1914), a twelve-year-old who lives by the sea with his mother and her second husband, primary school teacher Henri Dematons (who, unbeknown to Zizi, is his biological father). Zizi's affinity with the Mediterranean landscape is especially evident in a scene in which he

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[80] Ibid., 263.
[81] Janine de la Hogue, "Les Livres comme patrie", in Roblès, *Les Pieds-Noirs*, 121.
[82] Roy, *Les Chevaux du soleil*. De Gaulle features in Part 6, "Le Tonnerre et les Anges, 755-951.
[83] For more on the autobiographical details of the story, see Catharine Savage Brosman, "Fiction and History in Jules Roy's Le Maître de la Mitidja", *American Association of Teachers of French* 62, no. 1 (October 1988): 41.

swims in a sparkling blue sea with his Muslim best friend Hassan. A close-up lingers on the boys' bronzed bodies, as they sunbathe and talk of Zizi's love for his cousin Marguerite. This idyllic scene from Zizi's childhood facilitates nostalgia and the viewer's identification with him. It also positions him as a hybrid character who is equally at home with the settler and indigenous communities. By episode ten (1930), Zizi is now an adult – Hector – and a courageous sub-lieutenant in the French army. Another scene at this point is particularly revealing of Hector's membership of his French Algerian clan. During a trip home, we view his bedroom, which is adorned with a crucifix while his wardrobe is full of soutanes (episode ten). This imagery references Hector's past in a seminary and highlights his identification with his Catholic mother as opposed to his metropolitan French father Henri's secular teachings.

By 1956 (episode eleven) however, Hector arouses the suspicion of his family by showing sympathy towards the rebels. He also refuses to stay in the army during the independence struggle due to his objections to the mistreatment of prisoners – a decision which is criticised by his immediate family and by General Griès – another relation – who accuses Hector of wishing to divorce the army. In the final episode, set in April 1961 and significantly titled "Le paradis perdu", Hector arrives in Algeria as a journalist for a left-wing French newspaper. On telling his relatives that he has returned because he was born there, he is told that being born in Algeria does not make him a *pied-noir* but that "Il faut vivre ici". Having distanced himself from his family and the French army, Hector then refuses the invitation of a farm worker, whose nickname, "Meftah quatre", reveals Hector's family's racism, to join the revolution.

Arguably the most significant and visually dramatic scene of the series takes place at this point. When visiting the Paris family tomb, which has been vandalised, he is fatally shot several times in the back. Having provoked the disapproval of both sides in the conflict, the identity of Hector's killer remains a mystery. What is clear, however, is that, as he lies dying on his mother's grave while his hands grasp the Algerian soil,[84] complete with flashbacks of his childhood, Hector, through his

[84] In the novel version, Hector does not make it as far as the tomb and dies grasping the soil at the entrance to the ransacked cemetery. See Roy, *Les Chevaux du soleil*, 931, 941-942.

suffering, becomes a symbol of *pied-noir* identity.[85] Not only will he remain with his mother, but his death on his family's tombstone as the majority of the *pieds-noirs*, including his own family, prepare for exile, means that his body will remain in Algeria, making him, according to his own family's definition, an authentic *pied-noir*. Moreover, the unprovoked attack on Hector, along with the honourable ideals which provoke his departure from the army, leaves the audience with an abiding sympathy for him which tends to efface his culpability in the perpetuation of the colonial system, including the racist attitude he displays when his friend Hassan marries his cousin Marguerite.[86] In a later text, *Adieu ma mère, adieu mon coeur* (1996), Roy explains that Hector's return to Algeria and visit to his family's tomb during the war were based on his own experience and that he wrote of being fatally shot there "comme pour rendre justice aux miens".[87] By fantasising about dying in his homeland, which he does again in this memoir detailing his return visit there in the 1990s (156-157), Roy appears to be striving to fulfil a tragic destiny and thereby become an accepted member of the *pied-noir* family.

An abiding grievance of many of the *pieds-noirs* is the abandonment of family tombs after 1962.[88] *Adieu ma mère, adieu mon coeur* is worth discussing in this regard, as Roy recounts risking his life to visit Algeria during its *décennie noire* in order to put flowers on his mother's tomb, which was raided on Algerian independence (144). As Roy stands at his mother's grave, he addresses her directly at times, reflecting on her fear of Arabs and wondering what she would make of an independent Algeria in which he is protected by Arab bodyguards. It is useful to note that although he admits that his mother and all settlers were wrong in their racist descriptions of Arabs, their attitude was the result of a life which, echoing Camusian descriptions of speeded-up time, was lived quickly, with no time to understand their

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[85] This scene is reminiscent of the fate of the character Pierre Nivel, a *pied-noir* journalist who is similarly shot in Algeria on returning there in the 1990s, at the end of the film *Là-bas mon pays*. Flashbacks to Pierre swimming in the sea and images of the sun as he dies suggest his death in Algeria rights the wrongs of his original departure. See Alexandre Arcady, *Là-bas mon pays* (France: Alexandre Films, 2000).

[86] It is worth noting that after seeing Marguerite and Hassan together, Hector returns to his barracks and almost commits suicide with his gun, thereby suggesting a melancholia caused by his repudiation of Arabo-Berber identities. Another French Algerian character, Angèle Bouychou, tries to commit suicide using a gas cooker when she realises that nothing can come from her love for an indigenous Algerian character, Belcacem.

[87] Jules Roy, *Adieu ma mère, adieu mon coeur* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1996), 154.

[88] See, for example, a recent article on the decade-long efforts of a *pied-noir* association which is working to restore tombs in Algeria, Françoise Condotta, "Cimetières d'Oranie: Une décennie de silence", *Midi Libre*, 18 December 2013.

actions until it was too late (75, 125).[89] His mother is also idealised, with the author insisting that, as an illegitimate child, he was her only sin (115). Roy's position as a "bâtard" is evoked as a reason for his affinity with the indigenous population, also appearing as "bâtards" in the eyes of the *pieds-noirs* (134-135). In this regard, he assures his dead mother that neither he nor Algerians are illegitimate as they are almost brothers after a century spent together, or half-brothers born of the same land (116, 133). Hector's status as an illegitimate son in *Les Chevaux du soleil* has similarly been linked to his understanding of the colonised population's need for recognition and of France's "sin" in occupying Algeria.[90] However it must be noted that Roy's/Hector's birth is depicted as the result of an act of love, thus casting colonial Algeria as a similar creation. By depicting himself as a half-brother to Algerians in *Adieu ma mère, adieu mon coeur*, he also appears as one of the land's unrecognised heirs. Moreover, independent Algeria appears to be putrefying in this text (192). Thus, the real Algeria, for him, is embodied by his French Algerian mother to whom he bids farewell (141, 155). Standing at his mother's tomb, he also evokes his guilt for having chosen justice over his mother, who, unlike Camus's mother, was dead before the Algerian war had started. (141).

Although Roy broached the injustices of colonialism during the war and in subsequent texts, Hector's death on his mother's grave forever cements his devotion to both his mother and his motherland, and thus positions him as a tragic victim. Moreover, although the writer chose justice over his mother in his anti-colonial text, his personal devotion to his mother and motherland are indisputably confirmed by his published description of his post-independence return to Algeria. While he still refuses to condone colonialism in this later text, he declares his love for his family and for the *pieds-noirs* (173). This leads us to trace a similar post-independence move towards the mother in the writing of Roblès.

Seth Graebner suggests that Roblès maintained close relations with the indigenous population from the 1930s and was the first, or perhaps only, European writer in Algeria to have a fully developed indigenous protagonist, Smail ben Lakhdar of *Les Hauteurs de la ville* (1948, first published in serial form in 1947).[91] Ben Lakhdar kills a European character for political reasons in a text which appears

[89] Roy credits Camus, who is alluded to several times in this text, with making him realise that the indigenous population had souls (126).
[90] Savage Brosman, "Les Frères ennemis", 580, 585.
[91] Graebner, *History's Place*, 236-237.

as the antithesis of *L'Étranger*.[92] The significance of this protagonist (who has a French mother and Muslim father) as "the first Arab voice in the history of French Algerian literature", has also been pointed to by Dunwoodie.[93] Graebner further argues that Roblès's writing is uniquely productive as he constructs a Mediterranean identity which had origins in Arab Andalusia rather than in a universalist France, thus facilitating (at least temporarily, in literature) the creation of an inclusive, united identity for both the colonised and colonising populations.[94]

While the works produced by the writers of the *École d'Alger* movement are deemed to have been nostalgic due to a realisation that the colony was doomed to failure,[95] an evolution of such nostalgia has been traced in the writings of Roblès. His autobiography on his childhood, *Jeunes saisons* (1961), is described by Graebner as "nostalgic, simplistic, and ahistorical".[96] However a second fictionalised novel on his childhood, *Saison violente* (1974), which focuses on a narrowly specified time-frame, the summer of 1927, is described by the same scholar as "disenchanted, nuanced, and politically conscious: contemplatively nostalgic".[97] Svetlana Boym defines contemplative or reflective nostalgia as dwelling in "*algia*, in longing and loss, the imperfect process of remembrance", as opposed to an often more problematic phenomenon (linked with ideological projects) of restorative nostalgia which "puts emphasis on *nostos* and proposes to rebuild the lost home and patch up the memory gaps".[98] In light of this definition, *Saison violente* would appear to be a novel which, by focusing on the imperfect process of remembrance, can draw attention to collective memory as performative and allow its politically conscious author to criticise colonialism. The narrator certainly shows solidarity with the indigenous population and draws attention towards anti-semitism. He also draws attention to his nostalgia for "quelque chose qui n'existait pas".[99] Yet much of his nostalgia is focused on a model of French Algerian motherhood which is associated with his motherland. It is worth mentioning at this point that Roblès himself

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[92] Ibid. Graebner points to, for example, Roblès's descriptions of expensive neighbourhoods in the hills, rain and dark nights and Smail's political consciousness as opposed to Camus's descriptions of working class areas as well as the beach, sunny days and Meursault's arbitrary actions.
[93] Peter Dunwoodie, *Writing French Algeria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 288.
[94] Graebner, *History's Place*, 235-244.
[95] Ibid., 191-192.
[96] Ibid., 238.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), 41. Cited in ibid., 12.
[99] Emmanuel Roblès, *Saison violente* (Paris: Seuil, 1974), 182.

discussed the difference between the type of nostalgia for their youth that he and his literary friends experienced as immigrants to France after World War II as opposed to the acute nostalgia of the *pieds-noirs* who are now distant exiles all over the world.[100]

As in texts by Camus, the narrator's mother is idealised in *Saison violente* and appears as inaccessible, chaste and, despite the narrator's own loss of faith, a link to a Christian heritage as her cousin is a priest and, despite being barely literate, she trained to be a nun before her studies were interrupted by a family drama (16). However, his and his mother's Oriental/Arab heritage due to his grandmother's Andalusian identity is also mentioned several times (37, 152, 161) and his mother thus appears as an example of the model of Oriental European femininity analysed in Chapter 2. Thus, the narrator's hard-working mother, who raised him on her own when his father died three months before his birth, appears symbolic of idealised French Algerian motherhood. Both mother and son find it difficult to communicate their feelings to each other and, in an echo of Jacques Cormery's distant relationship with his mother in *Le Premier Homme*, the narrator declares that there was "Jamais de confidences véritables entre nous, jamais d'abandon" (15).[101] Furthermore, the narrator fears he is losing her when she suggests she may remarry: "je perdais ma mère, je croyais discerner dans sa tendresse pour moi une sorte d'usure, d'érosion. Elle m'apparaissait plus lointaine, moins attentive à mon égard" (76). He becomes agitated when he realises that she is not just his mother but a woman and when she begins performing her femininity by wearing lipstick, blusher and earrings (57). Having constructed her identity as a virginal, "pure" woman who is loyal to the memory of his dead father, he is forced to confront the reality that "ma mère était une créature différente de ce que j'imaginais" (17-18). Not only does she fail to live up to her idealised image of her, but he may have to share her with another man. Thus the narrator realises that his image of his mother, who appears symbolic of French Algeria, was an illusion.

By the end of the story, through his love for his friend Véronique, the narrator comes to understand his mother's femininity and her wish to remarry, giving his approval for the match. Significantly, his coming-of-age is associated with a break from his father's settler history. While he initially associates himself with his dead

[100] Emmanuel Roblès, "Préface", in Roblès, *Les Pieds-Noirs*, 11.
[101] Gabriel Conesa echoes this difficulty in communicating with the mother, see below.

father's "passion aveugle pour la vie", he later declares: "Je veux dire que je n'éprouvais plus le même besoin de me relier à lui [mon père] pour me sentir exister, et que je découvrais mon appartenance à la terre avec l'autonomie et la vigueur d'un arbre" (28, 165). A break with his father is consequently associated with the formation of a unique identity and a new understanding of the Algerian land, to which he is rooted. This new identity is also linked with leaving childhood behind and becoming a man, which the narrator does at the end of the novel. However, his coming-of-age is associated with entry into an eternity of unhappiness and with death, possibly that of French Algeria. His entry into manhood is symbolised by horses in what may be an allusion to Roy's *Les Chevaux du soleil*, which reveals nostalgia for a childhood kingdom of sunlight: "je savais que je devrais un jour mourir et, certaines nuits, j'entendais ce galop de chevaux qui saccageaient mon royaume de soleil" (175). Once again, therefore, although the narrator of this story recognises the unjust nature of colonialism, his *pied-noir* identity is associated with a movement away from his father's settler past and an identification with his mother which cements his affinity with his motherland.

The narrator's progression in *Saison violente*, from a need to root himself in his dead father's memory to an understanding of his and his mother's separate identities but nevertheless strong bond, leads us to consider Jean Pélégri. Pélégri's memoir, *Les Oliviers de la justice* (1959, adapted as a film in 1962) focuses on his father's death in Algeria. The text is dedicated to Pélégri's father Michel and to the author's son (also Michel), which immediately evokes a continuity of male generations that, on reading further, are linked to the Algerian landscape, beginning with the narrator's *colon* grandfather.[102] This is the type of Algeria, then, which de Gaulle, the same year that the memoir was published, declared was over in a phrase which has been listed as one of the defining comments of France's Fifth Republic: "L'Algérie de papa est morte".[103] This text depicts the loss of "l'Algérie de papa" using a decidedly more sympathetic tone than de Gaulle, as the narrator's vine-growing father's death is evoked against the backdrop of an Algeria which, in the midst of the anti-colonial struggle, also appears to be sick. Colonialism is criticised in the book, yet the narrator's father appears as a "good-willed coloniser" who treats his staff well and amazes them with the various technological inventions (for

[102] Jean Pélégri, *Les Oliviers de la justice* (Paris: Gallimard, 1959).
[103] Emmanuel Hecht, "Petites phrases de la Ve", *L'Express*, 6 July 2011.

example a radio and a movie camera) that he brings home to his farm after each visit to metropolitan France (51-57). Thus, his father stands as a symbol of a type of paternal, benevolent and progressive colonialism. Indeed, we are informed that for the narrator's father and his staff, life on the farm was characterised by "une grande famille" (124).[104]

The author's sincere efforts to highlight the injustices of colonialism in the above text cannot be doubted. However, it is worth noting that the Algerian landscape, in the wake of independence, is associated, at least on the surface, less with colonial men than with the mother in Pélégri's significantly titled 1989 essay, *Ma Mère, l'Algérie*. In his foreword, the author states that, in what may be his last work, he cannot remain neutral during this "période décisive" in Algeria's history – the increasing violence in Algeria of the late 1980s.[105] He also claims that his text will serve as a mirror for the Algerian people (8). Thus starts his presentation of lessons learned from a feminised Algerian landscape which in fact focuses on the *pieds-noirs* rather than on indigenous Algerians. One of the lessons apparently learned from Algeria – his mother – is his masculinity, which appears as a characteristically hybrid identity evoking the now familiar concept of timelessness, which effaces past history, as well as idealised honour, virility, fraternity and a passion for life:

> nous étions complices, dans un temps immobile et suspendu comme le soleil éclatant de l'été. Et le temps passait, insaisissable, uniforme, dans une communion parfaite avec l'espace de la plaine et la chaleur de l'été [...] nous jouions aux dames et au morpion. Avec passion. Comme si l'honneur de chacun était en jeu. Et souvent avec des injures en l'une ou l'autre langue. Après quoi [...] nous parlions de choses et d'autres, de sexe et de virilité, de champions cyclistes, de chevaux, des femmes toujours cachées et toujours invisibles" (16).

It must be noted that, as with his earlier publication, *Les Oliviers de la justice*, the author criticises injustices committed by the colonial authorities, from the horrific massacre of thousands at Sétif in 1945 (69-70) to the everyday lack of education for the Arabo-Berber population (46-47, 122). Camus is noticeably absent from the French Algerian writers Pélégri lists as kindred spirits in *Ma Mère, l'Algérie* – Roy,

[104] For another critique of this text, see Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, 80.
[105] Jean Pélégri, *Ma Mère l'Algérie* (Algiers: Laphomic, 1989), 8.

Roblès and Jean Sénac[106]– as well as indigenous Algerian writers – Mohammed Dib, Kateb Yacine, Mouloud Feraoun and Mouloud Mammeri (105, 76-77).[107] Futhermore, in what appears to be an intriguingly re-gendered allusion to Camus's inability to choose sides, he notes that his father died speaking Arabic, "Comme s'il m'enjoignait, lui mon père, de ne pas choisir entre lui et la justice" (88). Despite Pélégri's ostensible choice of justice, however, his descriptions of writing in Arabic from right to left in order to think in the other direction and become the "other", suggests an ulterior motive:

> Celle de reconquérir, par l'écriture, un territoire et un pays dont avec les miens je me sentais injustement exclu. Une motivation qui se retrouve, en sens inverse, dans la génération des écrivains algériens précédant l'indépendance, qui, par recours au français dans toute sa magnificence récupéraient à leur manière, par l'écriture et la langue de l'autre, un territoire et des terres volés (95-98).

Thus, the author problematically alludes to the re-colonisation of Algeria through language and casts the *pied-noir* and indigenous populations as equally, even cyclically, disinherited from their own land. He also draws attention to his feeling, from 1961, that "les Pieds-Noirs seraient pris pour boucs émissaires et rendus responsables de tout" (107). The colonisers thus appear to have become the colonised and he states that:

> Ce peuple était le mien. Aussi me paraissait-il nécessaire – à l'intention du public métropolitain – de témoigner pour ces autres frères qui risquaient d'être à leur tour les victimes du colonialisme et des humiliés de l'histoire. Il fallait donc condamner la structure coloniale – mais non les personnes (109).

Moreover, the final pages of the book are devoted to criticisms of independent Algeria (regarding, for example, corruption, censorship and a lack of women's rights), and to allusions to missed opportunities for multiculturalism. Instead of being associated with the narrator's father and, by extension, a virile race, Algeria is now personified as being "Comme une mère" – but a mother who is no longer herself and

[106] A short letter from Sénac to Pélégri dated January 1970 is published in Jean Sénac, *Oeuvres poétiques* (Arles: Actes sud, 1999), 638.
[107] Mouloud Mammeri died in a car crash in 1989, the year this essay by Pélégri was published. Mouloud Feraoun was assassinated by the OAS in March 1962. For further biographical information, see Malika Hadj-Naceur, "Mouloud Mammeri", LIMAG, http://www.limag.refer.org/Textes/Manuref/MAMMERI.htm. Date accessed: 13 February 2014. See also François Nadiras, "Une Biographie de Mouloud Feraoun qui suscite bien des questions", LDH Toulon, http://www.ldh-toulon.net/spip.php?article5501. Date accessed: 13 February 2014.

who, presumably, needs her sons just as much as the author claims he needs her (125).

In *Le Deuxième Sexe* (1949), Simone de Beauvoir famously deconstructs the myth of the "éternel féminin", which sees women trapped in idealised roles associated with, for example, nature (including the sea), motherhood or the motherland at the expense of the individual's experience.[108] Pélégri's choice of title for his later text, coupled with his switch in emphasis from associating Algeria with the father to the mother, may be considered as an attempt to evoke the "eternal feminine", thereby lending normality to colonial men's presence in Algeria. Indeed, as sons of Algeria, the presence of French Algerians in other countries, including particularly France, which is evoked in *Ma Mère l'Algérie* as an inferior "marâtre, une mère dénaturée", (70) becomes abnormal. Pélégri's post-independence shift in emphasis from Algeria as father to Algeria as mother must therefore be considered as a means of lending legitimacy to his settler background, since a focus on the feminine has been seen to reinforce "the trope of the colonies as 'home' for a natural 'family'".[109] In this light, the author's reorientation of Camus's choice between his mother and justice as a choice between the father and justice may serve to reinforce the mother's unquestioned place of belonging. It is also worth noting that Pélégri's *Ma Mère, l'Algérie* is cited by Verdès-Leroux to show what life was like for the *pieds-noirs*, as are works by Camus and Gabriel Conesa – all of whom emphasise the mother.[110] Furthermore, although there is an apparent focus on Algeria as mother by these authors, *l'Algérie de papa* is fondly remembered. Despite their progressive views, all three authors' post-1962 emphasis on the feminine and on the family must consequently be considered as a means of lending their stories authority and as an aligment, despite apparent differences, with Camusian constructions of a *pied-noir* identity. We may now turn to constructions of masculinity after the Algerian war, many of which bear remarkable resemblances to Camus's earlier texts.

[108] Simone de Beauvoir, *Le Deuxième Sexe I: Les faits et les mythes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976). See in particular Section three – "Mythes", 237-408. De Beauvoir comments, for example, on the association of femininity with passive land waiting to be planted with masculine seed or a passive sea which submits to the blazing rays of a masculine sun, 244.

[109] Alison Murray, "Review: Women, Nostalgia, Memory: 'Chocolat', 'Outremer', and 'Indochine'", *Research in African Literatures* 33, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 238-239.

[110] Verdès-Leroux, *Les Français d'Algérie*, 57, 77, 265, 371, 392. Roblès is also mentioned, 97, although this is in relation to his preface to his 1982 text, *Les Pieds Noirs*, in which he does not mention the mother.

3.3 The Making and Unmaking of Macho Men

Journalist Gabriel Conesa's memoir, *Bab-el-Oued: notre paradis perdu* (1970), may be considered a conduit of collective memory due to the author's intent to rehabilitate the settlers' time in the colony, as stated on the back cover of the book: "S'il s'adresse d'abord aux Pieds-noirs, son ambition est de toucher tout le monde et que chacun se dise: «Ces Pieds-noirs, j'aurais aimé les connaître quand ils étaient encore vivants»".[111] Self-conscious references to authors from the French Algerian tradition such as Camus, Louis Bertrand, Musette and Gabriel Audisio position the author within a familiar literary group (7, 73, 119, 121). In a similar manner, references to, for example, the Rue d'Isly tragedy and to a family of brothers who were the children of Bab-el-Oued (205, 37, 23) evoke a unique community formed by a shared traumatic history. The author also weaves a narrative of a colonial Algeria in which gender roles were distinctively different. This text is thus worth considering as one in which the author consciously strives to shape perceptions of *pied-noir* masculinity.

The following description is especially noteworthy for its echoes of Meursault's performance of masculinity in Camus's *L'Étranger* – specifically his acts of violence, passion for leisure pursuits and refusal to pause to mourn his mother's passing:

> Peuple jeune, faussement sommaire, épris de distractions saines, rapide à s'enflammer et aussi à dégonfler par le rire ou le commentaire les passions d'un sang généreux parce que méditerranéen et mêlé. C'était aussi l'allure décidée de ceux qui ayant rendez-vous avec le temps ne peuvent s'arrêter pour contempler le chemin parcouru, un peu comme ces coureurs qui partis en tête ne doivent plus se retourner pour ne pas se désunir (177).

Furthermore, the maternal figure is once again a key trope with regard to *pied-noir* masculinity. Conesa's overt assocation of his mother's birth and death with colonial Algeria is worth citing here:

> Ma mère et l'Algérie ne sont qu'une seule et même personne. L'une et l'autre ont commencé à vivre vers 1885. Ensemble elles ont grandi et ont servi la France; ensemble elles sont passées du néant à l'épanouissement. Aujourd'hui à quatre-vingt-quatre ans, elles retournent ensemble au néant (9).

[111] Gabriel Conesa, *Bab-el-Oued: Notre paradis perdu* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1970).

The familiar lack of communication between mother and son recurs and we are informed of the mother's lack of tenderness. However, Conesa's mother (and French Algeria) is credited with having inculcated in him his masculinity as a member of a nascent race: "C'est elle qui, sans un mot, m'a appris à préférer le courage à la mollesse, la lutte à la discussion, la pudeur virile aux effusions, toutes ces vertus indispensables aux peuples à peine esquissés, aux races encores contestées" (14).[112]

Conesa reiterates the resolutely masculine world of colonialism as femininity is almost entirely absent from his descriptions of Bab-el-Oued. Descriptions of his mother do not immediately evoke traits associated with femininity, there is no description of his wife (despite a brief reference to his wedding and the birth of his son) and we are told that cafés were meeting places for men, into which "les femmes ne pénétraient qu'accompagnées" (156). Indeed, paradoxically, although Algeria is associated with his mother, he decides that when it comes to Bab-el-Oued, "en dépit de son étymologie qui le voudrait du féminin, je n'ai pu jamais en parler qu'au masculin" (221).[113] The glory of being a man in this world is explained by the author, who underlines the virility of men as heads of families in which women, unlike men, were expected to remain chaste until marriage (84-85). Moreover, although Bab-el-Oued was a European quarter, its inhabitants appear as hybrid men born from behaviour learned on both sides of the Mediterranean, with, for example, an energetic use of gesture learned from both "les Arabes" and the Italians (85), although it must be noted that indigenous men are largely absent from the text.

Women from the colonised population are mentioned but, as suggested regarding Camus's works, they appear more as symbols of a feminised colonial "other" – alluded to here in their role as "les putains de la Casbah" (63). The narrator's description of the prostitutes' habit of chatting amongst themselves between clients as creating "une ambiance détendue, familière et presque familiale"

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[112] Gilmore's assertion that Mediterranean mothers tend to be the main educators in childhood may be recalled here. See Gilmore, *Carnival and Culture*, 84.

[113] Bab-el-Oued is frequently translated as "la porte de la rivière", although it is worth noting that it is actually masculine in Arabic. In contrast with Conesa's representation of a masculine Bab-el-Oued, see Alain Vircondelet's description of the areas of Bab-el-Oued and Belcourt as part of a mother's arms, which clasp the heart of Algiers and welcome the sea. Alain Vircondelet, *Alger Alger* (Martel: Laquet, 1998), 18. As with Conesa's representation of the siege at Bab-el-Oued, however, Vircondelet suggests that women were a rare sight, except for those who briefly hurried to get supplies from bakeries. This short text, published during a wave of Islamist violence in the 1990s, repeats what are by now familiar themes with regard to masculinity, with references to, for example, Algiers as a kingdom for boys such as himself, for whom they were their mother's world, to the sea welcoming their bodies and to the creation of a certain type of man – one who lacks complexity, who is a "premier homme" and who becomes an "étranger", 69-72.

(64) effaces the exploitation and subjugation of these women, although military imagery is used to evoke the men's "conquest" in this regard:

> Beaucoup d'entre nous ont fait là [dans les maisons closes] [...] leurs premières armes, grâce à cette prostitution bon enfant et qui osait dire son nom. D'ailleurs, à leur manière les maisons étaient un des lieux où soufflait l'esprit. Les jeunes gens y allaient en bande, avec la ferme intention de rire, et en repartaient rarement déçus" (65).

Regarding this naturalisation of the practice of prostitution by indigenous women, the observations of Emmanuel Sivan, in his study of popular culture amongst the settlers from 1890 to 1920, are worth noting:

> The Casbah was made into a *quartier réservé* for the commercial and hygienic convenience of the Europeans, was managed (in part) by European entrepreneurs and served a hypocritical European clientele. And last, but not least, nowhere was it mentioned that the 'depraved' religion of Islam forbade prostitution and that girls were driven into this profession not because of innate perversion but by the impoverishment resulting from *l'oeuvre colonisatrice*.[114]

Contrary to suggestions, cited by Shepard, that women were absent from this world,[115] their few appearances here suggest the author's view that they are simply occupying their rightful place – in brothels for colonised women or raising children for colonising women – at a simpler time when, in the author's nostalgic (re)construction of events, they did not even dream of demanding equal rights (85). Colonial Algeria consequently appears as a place where people, including the colonised population, knew their roles.

While the colonised population is largely effaced, *pied-noir* masculinity is, like colonial Algeria, idealised.[116] Both boys and men are seen to participate in leisure activities such as cards, football, dog fighting, *corridas* and, due to the "réactions capricieuses" (102) of bulls in Algeria, *charlotades* (parodic, exaggerated performances of *corridas*).[117] In this way, they perform their masculinity

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[114] Emmanuel Sivan, "Colonialism and Popular Culture in Algeria", *Journal of Contemporary History* 14, no. 1 (January 1979): 37.

[115] Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, 201.

[116] Significantly, section two of the novel is called "Souvenirs du paradis".

[117] Despite Conesa's construction of Algerian bulls as capricious and lacking nobility (102), Oran has been identified (along with Tangier, Casablanca and Melilla-Ceuta) as one of the four major centres of bullfighting in North Africa in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. See Elisabeth Hardouin-Fugier, *Histoire de la corrida en Europe du XVIIe au XXie siècle* (Paris: Connaissances et Savoirs, 2005), 202; cited in Cathal Kilcline, "Constructions of Identity in Mediterranean France: A Study of Sport and other Popular Cultural Forms" (unpublished PhD dissertation, National University of Ireland, Galway, 2009), 236.

appropriately, as the following description of football illustrates: "Il ne suffit pas d'être robuste, rapide et courageux pour jouer au football. Il faut quelque chose de plus: une adresse diabolique, une subtilité de renard et un don qui ne s'explique pas, celui de sentir, d'agir, de s'exprimer avec ses pieds comme un danseur" (65). Against representations of them as perverse or violent elsewhere, the inhabitants of Bab-el-Oued during the siege therefore appear as a *peuple jeune* who engage in healthy distractions. By way of contrast, the *coup* of 13 May 1958 is described as ending a French regime that could not decide if it was a boy or a girl (188) – a problem *pied-noir* men do not appear to have.

Moreover, the reader is left with the overall impression that this naturally joyous population's identity as *pieds-noirs* is now closely linked to their suffering:

> Il y a quelques années, nous ne connaissions même pas cette expression [pied-noir] et si on nous avait dit que nous étions des Pieds-Noirs, nous aurions haussé les épaules et songé aux Indiens d'Amérique du Nord. Mais au fil des années de désespérance, elle s'est, en s'imprégnant de larmes et de sang, chargée de signification. Au fur et à mesure que nous gravissions notre chemin de croix, que les coups pleuvaient sur nos reins et nos têtes et que les calomnies et les insultes nous marquaient comme au fer rouge, nous prenions conscience de devenir quelque chose de différent, différent des autres Français et différent de nous-mêmes" (200-201).

In addition to the Christian motif foregrounded here, this suffering is evoked as the result of fratricide, a divorce from France (189-190) and a story of thwarted love (190). The *pieds-noirs* are posited as children who are very different from their metropolitan French brothers, with each group having been brought up by a separated mother and father (78). Masculinity appears infused with extra significance for the colonising brothers of this feuding family, as Conesa describes his gender as being both a mark of distinction and a straitjacket "[qui] pèse sur tous les actes, les pensées et les moments de la vie" (84-85). He nevertheless contends that the world belongs to those who perform an exaggerated masculinity or who "brandissent leur orgueil de mâle comme un drapeau" (121). On publishing this memoir eight years after Algerian independence, the author consequently appears to be waving the flag for French Algerian masculinity, the idealisation of which is enabled by the "death" of the colony.[118]

[118] As mentioned above, the author's note on the back cover states that he would have liked readers to have known the *pieds-noirs* when they were still alive; the third section's title, "Le coup de grâce", also alludes to their death.

Other post-independence (re)constructions of *pied-noir* masculinity are similarly Camusian and Roblès's *Saison violente* is worth briefly returning to as another example in this regard. The narrator's preoccupation with honour and revenge, including through supernatural means learned from his Andalusian grandmother, situate him within an Arabo-Mediterranean world (23-24, 149-150). Here, we are told, "la séparation des sexes s'opérait tôt" (53), as part of an Iberian tradition that prevented boys and girls from mixing (100). Furthermore, the Spanish-dominated city of his birth, Oran, appears to be the preserve of men at night, as women are rarely seen out but are present in love songs and therefore remain "invisibles-mais-présentes" (116). As with Conesa's text therefore, women and men are presented as having had clearly defined roles, while descriptions of the narrator's and his childhood friends' efforts to catch a glimpse of the prostitutes of "les rues chaudes" (68) underline their attempts, from a young age, to perform as macho men for whom women are objectified. There are also familiar references to his and his friends' sporting prowess as they play football and practise wrestling, boxing, jujitsu, and weightlifting (79-80, 132).

Since the narrator of this novel is rejected as being only half-French (111), it has been suggested that the text is especially productive as "Emmanuel finds himself in a position analogous to that of a French-educated Arab or Amazigh faced with the impossible demand to assimilate".[119] Indeed, this rejection is described, in Camusian terms, as exile from the kingdom: "«cinquante-pour-cent» m'atteignait au vif tant, à mes yeux, cette expression marquait la volonté de me laisser à la porte, de m'empêcher d'entrer dans le royaume" (111). Yet, unlike most indigenous Algerians, he is a French citizen and has the opportunity of receiving an education which enables him to claim an affinity with French culture and knowledge of "Louis XIV et Robespierre, Racine et Michelet, la Loire et la Beauce, Molière, Balzac, Hugo!" (112). Indeed, the narrative dwells on Christian and Jewish French Algerians, rather than the Arabo-Berber populations. In this way, the narrator and his friends evoke a *pied-noir* masculinity which differs from the many texts which focus solely on settlers with a Christian background. Nevertheless, casual displays of violence associated with the weather (the story takes place in the heat of summer) echo Meursault's act of violence in *L'Étranger*. The narrator's friend Marco further

[119] Graebner, *History's Place*, 240.

embodies violent, unpredictable masculinity (55-56) which may again be associated with a pioneering destiny. Moreover, the narrator's entry into adulthood comes about through a violent act – he is beaten during a demonstration to show solidarity with the Jewish population and protest against racism. In consequence, *pied-noir* masculinity is once again constructed in association with innocent suffering and unhappiness.

A text which appears to be a radical departure in its depictions of masculinity from those of Conesa and Roblès, yet published in a similar timeframe, might now be analysed – French Algerian author and screenwriter Daniel Saint-Hamont's *Le Macho* (1979). This novel is part of a series which recounts the adventures of a *pied-noir* boy and his family.[120] Its title appears as an ironic allusion to depictions of the *pieds-noirs* as a hypermasculine race and what we have come to recognise as traits typically associated with *pied-noir* masculinity are comically undermined in the text. Thus, instead of the glorification of bronzed, youthful, virile Mediterranean bodies,[121] we are told by the narrator that he is a thirty-two year old whose youth is fading, that he has difficulty speaking to girls and that his looks are nothing to speak of, as he has greasy skin and wishes he were tall, blonde and blue-eyed.[122] The novel further subverts Camusian constructs as the narrator's mother is not idealised; nor is his father. Early in the novel, the narrator informs us that he learned cowardice from his mother and mediocrity from his father (21). Like the narrator of *Saison violente*, he also comes to realise that his mother is not "la Femme des Femmes, la Sainte des Saintes", and that she is a woman as much as she is a mother (251). Conventional representations are further undermined as instead of joyfully engaging in life's pleasures, the narrator appears to be an anti-social pessimist who cannot remember a single happy event in his life (65, 22). As an exile in France, his former home, Algeria, is associated not with *nostalgérie* but with stunting his development.

Familiar representations of engaging in casual violence are also comically undermined. When, for example, a woman on the street insults the narrator, he claims he would have hit her except he took pity on her when she told him she knew

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[120] The series starts with *Le Bourricot* (1974) and *Le Coup de Sirocco* (1978) and concludes with *La Valise à l'eau* (1981) and *Et le Sirocco emportera nos larmes* (2012). For more on *Le Coup de Sirocco*, see Chapter 4 of our study.

[121] Another counter-representation of *pied-noir* masculinity may be found in Pélégri's descriptions of his dying father in *Les Oliviers de la justice*, although his father's weakened, aged state appears unnatural here.

[122] Daniel Saint-Hamont, *Le Macho* (Paris: Fayard, 1979), 13, 26-29.

karate (81-82). Similarly, he says nothing to his love interest Marie-France, whose name symbolically evokes her metropolitan French identity, when she insults his sexual performance, despite admitting, "assassiné j'étais! Sauf que la blessure elle était intérieure" (59). When he feels he is losing face in front of Marie-France as he converses with her friends, he describes himself as "le sanglier prêt à charger", but again takes no action (106). Instead, he ends up running away when Marie-France throws a glass ashtray at him becaues of his sexist comments (117-118). His problematic plan to sleep with Marie-France again "envers et contre tout", if necessary taking his colleague Sex Machine's advice to use force, is also thwarted as Marie-France laughs at his fumbling confessions of love and openly questions his macho status (158, 160). In consequence, considering the narrator's avoidance of violence and fear of being alone in his apartment after dark, as illustrated by his "tic" of checking under his bed (64), his idea of idealised French Algerian masculinity would be impossible for him to embody: "L'homme il doit courir les djebels, il doit transpirer, se cacher, tuer des animaux pour manger, tuer des autres hommes pour le plaisir (ou pour leur prendre leur femme)" (18). Hence in this novel, the narrator's attempts to convince us of his hypermasculinity prove unsuccessful.

Moreover, the whole novel appears as a pantomime-like performance, as the narrator addresses his audience in an attempt to draw them into the narrative and encourage them to sympathise with his often outrageous points of view (214, 147-148). It is also worth noting that when the doorbell interrupts his speech to Marie-France, he states: "Au théâtre, tellement c'est banal comme interruption qu'un auteur il oserait plus la mettre dans sa pièce" (269). By drawing attention to the fictional nature of the novel in this way and to the narrator's attempts to prove his "macho" identity, the author points to performativity. The narrator himself commits to a theatrical performance as a typical *pied-noir* son by bringing his mother his dirty laundry from Paris. When she complains, he informs the reader: "C'est une petite comédie entre nous. Si je l'y [*sic*] avais rien donné à laver, elle aurait rien dit, mais elle aurait eu de la peine" (182). Similarly, every time he leaves home, he participates in his mother's performance of "L'ambiance-départ" (233), which consists of codified behaviour, including "le troisième acte" in which his mother shares some moments alone with him (237). Following the tenderness that Marie-France has shown him, however, he appears willing to abandon his macho

performance, at least temporarily, noting: “De temps en temps, un homme a le droit de craquer, non? Il a le droit de laisser tomber le masque!” (165).

Unlike many of the novels studied, conventional *pied-noir* masculinity appears in this novel as something that should not be emulated. Having left Marie-France’s guests at a fondue party horrified due to his sexism (106), the narrator later blames his upbringing for such restrictive conceptions of masculinity and femininity. While we cannot necessarily trust the narrator, his impression that values learned in Algeria had a negative impact on his development appears to be borne out by later discussions with his *pied-noir* friends Paulo and Simon (a similarly macho character who is also, paradoxically, gay), who are equally unlucky in love due to what they all eventually recognise to be selfish behaviour. Furthermore, the narrator maintains that he and all *pied-noir* men have a complicated attitude to sex which is associated with their mothers and the colonial context:

> Nous autres, le sexe le plus compliqué du monde on a... Un record comme ça, on s’en passerait bien, mais c’est la vérité. Pour savoir les raisons, c’est difficile. Mais je crois que tous, ou presque, on a eu une mère comme ma mère, et qu’on s’est jamais remis du traumatisme. En France, évidemment on a compris qu’on n’était pas tout à fait normaux, mais c’était trop tard [...] Vous mettez [...] cinq types [pieds-noirs] ensemble, vous leur servez l’anisette et la kémia, vous installez un magnétophone, et vous leur demandez de parler des femmes. Une heure après, sur la bande, vous entendrez un vrai catalogue de perversités. Pas de grandes perversités, bien sûr, mais des petites choses qui compliquent la vie. […] Le troisième, il a jamais oublié la première femme qu’il a niquée: la petite Mauresque qui faisait le ménage à la maison, alors il enroule sa femme dans un drap pour faire comme si c’était un voile, etc., etc. (35-36)

The narrator of *Le Macho* therefore reiterates depictions, described by Shepard, of French Algerian men as perverse or abnormal. He admits that he contemplates sexual violence against women, although he would never act on such thoughts (88). Sexuality is nonetheless linked to consensual violence in the narrator’s encounters with a *pied-noir* woman, Ginette.

It is only following a conversation with Ginette, a married mother with whom he is having an affair, that the narrator claims to understand that women and mothers are people. His sudden, comical renunciation of *machismo* at this point again underlines his performance of masculinity as a mere charade. However, a symbolic association of the domestically-oriented Ginette with colonial Algeria and of the liberated Marie-France with the metropole echoes the now familiar concept that the

pieds-noirs were influenced in their behaviour by their *milieu* and its colonised population. Nonetheless, as seen in the previous chapter, women in metropolitan France in the 1950s and early 1960s, during the narrator's youth in Algeria, were also associated with domesticity. Men's mobility during the same period is suggested by their iconic association with cars.[123] The narrator's suggestion that Ginette's submissive role differentiates her from French women may not, therefore, be accurate but it naturalises the situation of the colonised population which, significantly, is not addressed in the novel.

The narrator's projection of a hypermasculine identity onto his work colleague, Sex Machine, whose country of origin he does not bother to find out, believing him to be from "la Martinique ou La Réunion" (144), is equally problematic. His descriptions of this colleague echo descriptions of the "puissance sexuelle"[124] of North African men in colonialist and ethnographic rhetoric. He further implies that Sex Machine is morally lacking by alluding to his supposed use of black magic (142). The narrator's views here could be taken as an ironic undermining of such views by the author, just as the narrator's sexist views on gender roles are undermined throughout the novel. Yet Sex Machine's performance of masculinity appears to confirm such stereotypes, as he boasts of having slept with at least a thousand women,[125] and says he hits them if they give him trouble (144-145). Sophie Watt, in her study of some of the films made by Alexandre Arcady, which include two films co-written by Saint-Hamont (*Le Coup de Sirocco* and *Le Grand Carnaval*), points to racist constructions of indigenous characters,[126] and the same criticism could be levied at this description of "Sex Machine". Thus, despite an apparent subversion of stereotypes of *pied-noir* masculinity in the text, a *pied-noir* identity is once more differentiated from that of colonised populations, although paradoxically aligned to indigenous populations in the case of femininity.

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[123] Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*, 97.

[124] Fanon, *Peau noire, masques blancs*, 128. Emmanuel Sivan, citing, among others, an 1871 text by Auguste Pomel quoted in Philippe Lucas and Jean-Claude Vatin, *L'Algérie des antropologues* (Paris: F. Maspero, 1975), 130, notes of the colonised man that "the more swarthy his complexion, the more sexually-driven he was supposed to be". Sivan, "Colonialism and Popular Culture in Algeria", 36.

[125] Sex Machine's statement recalls Georges Simenon's famous claim, in conversation with Federico Fellini in an article which was published in *L'Express* in February 1977, that he had slept with ten thousand women. This article is cited in Alain Bertrand, *Georges Simenon: de Maigret aux romans de la destinée* (Liège: C.É.F.A.L, 1994), 229.

[126] Sophie Watt, "Alexandre Arcady and the Rewriting of French Colonial History in Algeria", in *France's Lost Empires: Fragmentation, Nostalgia, and la fracture coloniale*, ed. Kate Marsh and Nicola Frith (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2011), 75.

Furthermore, while the situation of the colonised population of Algeria is effaced in the novel, the colonising population appear in a sympathetic light in one of the narrator's few references to Algeria's violent past, involving a childhood memory of a bomb exploding in the cinema during a screening of *Moby-Dick* (185).[127] This shocking memory is followed by the evocation of a uniquely *pied-noir* experience of time(lessness), which, once again, obviates the need to discuss colonial violence, of which, we can assume, judging by his performance of masculinity, the narrator is not himself guilty: "J'ai l'impression que tous les gens de chez nous, en leur enlevant la Terre, on leur a aussi enlevé le Temps, et que leur horloge intérieure ne s'est jamais vraiment réparée" (185-186). A bathetic tone here and throughout ensures our sympathy lies with the narrator. Conversely, a generalised prejudice against the *pieds-noirs* is suggested by Marie-France's one reference to the Algerian war, which draws on negative images of exploitative *colons* whose main aim is to "faire suer le burnous": "De toute manière, les Algériens sont beaucoup plus heureux aujourd'hui. Vous les avez trop fait souffrir" (100-101). Despite this type of prejudice, the narrator is desperate to win (Marie-) France's approval and to fit in, or as he puts it, evoking the type of humour later used by Bruce Feirstein in his satirical *Real Men Don't Eat Quiche* (1982): "autour d'une fondue, je passerai inaperçu" (273).

The narrator may also be considered a picaresque character, following in the footsteps of Musette's extremely popular French Algerian rogue, Cagayous, the hero of a series of tales originally published between 1891 and 1920.[128] As suggested by William Granara, picaresque characters also played a significant role in Arab fiction, from the classical Arabic *maqama*, which had overlaps with the picaresque novel, which reemerged in the nineteenth century and was given a modern reworking from the 1930s.[129] Granara notes that picaresque characters, including the character Si Mokhtar in Kateb Yacine's *Nedjma* (1956) provided "an appropriate literary landscape for Arab nationalism(s) on the rise", as "The picaresque ethos encapsulates the political and psychological displacement of the modern North African who tries

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[127] The narrator's personal repression of the traumatic colonial past also appears as a national repression, as hinted at by Marie-France's disinterest in hearing about his life in Algeria (101).

[128] For detailed analyses of *Cagayous*, see David Prochaska, "History as Literature, Literature as History: Cagayous of Algiers", *The American Historical Review* 101, no. 3 (June, 1996): 670-711. See also Sivan, "Colonialism and Popular Culture in Algeria", 23. Sivan notes that *Cagayous* anthologies and other *Cagayous*-style texts were published between 1971 and 1972, at which time plays by imitators of Musette's style continued to be staged.

[129] William Granara, "Picaresque Narratives and Cultural Dissimulation in Colonial North African Literature", *The Arab Studies Journal* 11, no. 2 (Autumn 2003/Spring 2004): 41-56.

to maneuver his way through the oppressions of political and religious authority, poverty, and social stagnation".[130] Moreover, some critics during the 1960s commented on the revival of the picaresque genre more generally, with one identifying characters in novels by Camus (as well as Malraux, Silone, Moravia and Graham Greene) as "picaresque saints".[131] In the case of *Le Macho*, the narrator, as in most of the texts studied so far, is from a humble background, views society from the bottom up and appears marginalised – many of the traits evoked by a picaresque character.[132] Moreover, his use of *pied-noir* slang in the novel recalls the *pataouète* style favoured by the character Cagayous. His speech patterns also echo the type of speeded-up "*pied-noir* time" noted in our earlier discussion of Camus. Indeed, Hureau has commented on the rapidity of speech by *pieds-noirs*, including the use of shortcuts and the placement of the most important aspect of the sentence at its beginning.[133] More importantly, however, like the picaresque hero, the narrator of *Le Macho* appears as a likeable rogue. Just as picaresque characters created by indigenous Algerian writers served to evoke the displacement of colonised populations, the narrator here, as an outsider who struggles to adapt to perform his masculinity correctly in metropolitan France, evokes sympathy for the *pieds-noirs*. Thus, while this novel appears to unmake the models of idealised masculinity seen in texts by Conesa and Roblès, it still reinforces *pied-noir* difference with regard to the performance of gender.

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[130] Ibid., 54.

[131] W.M. Frohock, "The Failing Center: Recent Fiction and the Picaresque Tradition", *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 3, no. 1 (Autumn, 1969): 63-64. Frohock disagreed with critics of the day who employed the word "picaresque" to describe contemporary fiction, including American critic R.W.B. Lewis, who he notes used the term "picaresque saints".

[132] Frohock defines a traditional picaresque novel as "a kind of pseudo-autobiography of a special kind of miscreant hero, [with] a simple episodic form, a perspective that saw society from the bottom up, and a report on life that recorded many adventures and rapid changes of fortune in a wryly ironic style full of satirical overtones". Ibid., 62.

[133] Joëlle Hureau, *La Mémoire des pieds-noirs: de 1830 à nos jours* (Paris: Perrin, 2010), 272-273. The example given by Hureau is: "Honte j'ai de sortir".

3.4 *Pied-Noir* Pride: Pioneering Sexuality

Le Macho features one of the few representations so far of *pied-noir* homosexuality – the narrator's no less macho friend Simon, whose hint that the *pieds-noirs* who hate him have repressed their own homosexuality (128) echoes Butler's theorising on repressed homosexuality as a loved and hated lost object. The narrator's shock at discovering that a *pied-noir* could be gay and his comment that "L'air plus viril que lui on pouvait pas avoir!" (128) together underline a desire to stress normative heterosexuality. Representations of homosexual *pied-noir* men by French Algerians appear to be rare, although a latent homosexuality in *L'Étranger* and "L'Hôte" has been suggested.[134] It is worth pointing out that homosexual or otherwise "deviant" indigenous characters feature in some of the works studied thus far. For example, the narrator of Cixous's *Les Rêveries de la femme sauvage* recounts an unsettling incident as a young girl with a door-to-door cheese-seller, "Yadibonformage" [*sic*].[135]

A transgender French Algerian is mentioned in Roblès's *Saison violente*, in the case of a woman who cannot have children but who later adopts an orphan with her husband (31, 177). The discovery that this "woman" actually has underdeveloped male genitalia suggests the performative nature of gender, but this character appears to reidealise gender norms as her quarry-worker husband is unfaithful and abuses her while she remains a devoted, faithful housewife, accomplishing, we are told, "tous les devoirs d'une véritable femme" (31). There is also brief mention of homosexuality in Elbe's *À l'heure de notre mort* which is worth mentioning here. When talking about how girls stay with their mothers for life, some characters mention that this is also true of gay men and the example of a local fortune teller, who was happy to have a gay son, is invoked: "Mme Estrella, la cartomancienne, elle avait un fils coulo,[136] elle était bien contente. Celui-là, à l'OAS, y l'avaient mis dans l'action psychologique sur les CRS".[137] As a homosexual *pied-noir* man, this

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[134] Dunwoodie cites a "sexual charge" in the scene in which Daru goes to bed with his prisoner and with regard to *L'Étranger* cites J.L. Stamm's article, "Camus's *Stranger*: His Act of Violence", *American Imago* 26, no. 3 (1969): 281-290. See Dunwoodie, *Writing French Algeria*, 233-234.

[135] Hélène Cixous, *Les Rêveries de la femme sauvage: Scènes primitives* (Paris: Galilée, 2000), 114-115.

[136] The pejorative nature of this term for a homosexual speaks for itself, although a dictionary of *pied-noir* expressions states that the term has now become "une insulte gratuite et relativement gentille". See Léon Mazzella, *Le Parler pied-noir: mots et expressions de là-bas* (Paris: Rivages, 1989), 39.

[137] Elbe, *À l'heure de notre mort*, 191.

character's close relationship with his mother suggests he is performing his masculinity in an acceptable manner while his sorry end (he is bled to death by the FLN and his body is thrown on a rubbish heap) also casts him as a suffering *pied-noir* outsider. However, the reference to his deployment, as a homosexual, against the CRS in the psychological wing of the OAS simultaneously serves to reidealise the normative heterosexual masculinity of *pied-noir* men, while casting metropolitan French men as deviant. Against this backdrop, we may now turn to texts by two homosexual writers, Jean Sénac and Lucien Legrand.

Aldrich has commented on the lack of scholarly work on homosexuals in the colonies, a field which has been especially neglected by almost all historians of the French empire.[138] French Algerian poet Jean Sénac is cited by Aldrich as a significant figure in this regard who has received little previous attention.[139] Like Jean Genet, Sénac's anti-colonialism has been linked to his homosexuality.[140] Sénac's political views are also said to have grown "out of his lived experiences as a *pied-noir*", making him especially relevant to our study.[141] Sénac, like Genet and indeed Roy, had a contested identity as an illegitimate child.[142] He was subsequently alienated by his position as an anti-colonial, homosexual *pied-noir* man. Sénac's identity thus diverges from conventional constructions of heterosexual hypermasculinity and Katia Sainson notes that he struggled for over a decade "with the fear that his non-normative identity was an obstacle to be overcome".[143] Indeed, Sainson draws attention to the poet's conclusion, in his 1954 journal, that his homosexuality was "against all nature".[144] Sénac, throughout his lifetime, sided with the oppressed under both the pre-independence and post-independence authorities in Algeria;[145] this is a stance which perhaps grew from this experience of marginalisation. It is worth noting that the poet's construction of his pre-independence identity as Algerian (rather than French Algerian) differed from his

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[138] Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality*, 3, 6.
[139] Ibid., 8. There has been a recent resurgence in interest in Sénac in Algeria and France. For more on this, see Danielle Marx-Scouras, "The Specter of Jean Sénac", *L'Esprit Créateur* 43, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 45-57.
[140] Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality*, 2.
[141] Ibid., 375.
[142] Sénac, born in Béni-Saf near Oran in 1926, was the illegitimate child of a Spanish-origin mother. Ibid., 376.
[143] Katia Sainson, "'Entre deux feux': Jean Sénac's Struggle for Self-determination", *Research in African Literatures* 42, no. 1 (Spring 2011): 33.
[144] Ibid., 38.
[145] Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality*, 376, 378, 391.

portrayal of himself from 1964, as he began to emphasise his status as a *gaouri* (non-Muslim foreigner or infidel), although continuing to call himself Algerian, in texts which allowed him to "continue to speak for those with no voice" in post-independence Algeria.[146] It seems that Sénac's construction of his identity as an outsider enabled him to come to terms with his homosexuality, which he publicly discussed for the first time in his 1968 collection, *Avant-corps*.[147] However, this identity also positions him alongside many of the constructions of suffering *pied-noir* masculinity already studied, which leads us to examine how his depictions of masculinity coincide and contrast with those of the other male writers studied thus far.

Sénac's upbringing has been compared to that of Camus, who regarded him as a friend and even as a literary "son", although the pair fell out in 1956 due to their differing views regarding Algerian independence.[148] Sénac's decision to join the Algerian nationalists meant that many settlers considered him as a traitor, although Aldrich notes that he was "associated with other *pieds-noirs* sympathetic to Algerian nationalism".[149] Unlike the majority of the *pieds-noirs*, the poet, who had been based in France during the Algerian war, moved back to Algeria (specifically Algiers) after independence. He may thus be considered a *pied-vert*, defined by Savarèse as a *pied-noir* who lived on in Algeria post-1962.[150] *Pieds-verts* were also joined by *pieds-rouges*, left-wing Europeans, particularly French citizens, who went to live in the newly-independent country with the intention of contributing to the construction of a marxist state.[151] However, despite an initial position as an adviser at the Ministry of Education, the poet was refused Algerian citizenship and grew increasingly critical of the post-independence government, eventually being dismissed from his job at *Radio Alger* for these criticisms in 1971.[152] He was murdered in 1973, by which

[146] Sainson, "Entre deux feux", 33, 45, 36.
[147] Ibid., 36. For a recent edition of poems from *Avant-Corps* see Sénac, *Oeuvres poétiques*, 463-503.
[148] Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality*, 376. According to Aldrich, Camus helped Sénac to publish his first work and adressed the poet as "mi hijo" (my son in Spanish) when they corresponded.
[149] Ibid., 375-377. Aldrich notes that, among other activities, Sénac's work for the FLN involved helping to organise a clandestine printing press for the Algerian nationalist newspaper.
[150] Éric Savarèse, *L'Invention des pieds-noirs* (Paris: Séguier, 2002), 227.
[151] For more on the *pieds-rouges*, see Catherine Simon, "Algérie, les années pieds-rouges", LDH Toulon, http://www.ldh-toulon.net/spip.php?article3495. Date accessed: 1 October 2013.
[152] Sénac had also been been dismissed from broadcasting by the French government in 1954 due to his nationalist views. See Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality*, 377-378.

stage he was almost destitute.[153]

Unlike some of his fellow French Algerians, Sénac's stance in favour of an independent Algeria was clear from the early days of the Algerian war. Many of his poems written during the conflict served as testimonies to the suffering of the indigenous population and their struggle for freedom, and thus offer a critique of colonialism.[154] A scathing attack on colonial society from his *Carnets* dated 7 July 1954, before the onset of the war, gives a flavour of his position:

> L'orgueil, l'aveuglement des Européens d'ici est insensé. Il n'y a rien à attendre d'eux, rien. Il faut les placer devant le fait établi et leur donner à choisir: l'Algérie ou le départ. Je ne crois pas à une autre solution. Ils sont trop assurés de leur supériorité raciale (morale, physique, humaine).[155]

An extract from a poem from the collection *Matinale de mon peuple* (1961) entitled "Paix en Algérie" (1957) may usefully be quoted as a further example of Sénac's stance:

> Qu'ils sont beaux les porteurs de nouvelles! / Ils diront: 'Paix en Algérie!' / Nous saurons qu'Henri Alleg est libre, / Djamila Bouhired vivante! / (O lumière plus violente / que l'électrode des bourreaux, / que l'éclat des couperets à l'aube!) / [...] Nous saurons que le jour se lève / triomphalement, / et qu'un sang neuf se lève, / veines et pipelines, / pour animer le corps du peuple.[156]

In his *Lettre à un jeune Français d'Algérie* (1956), Sénac puts forward his idea of a future independent Algeria where Arabo-Berber Algerians and French Algerians would live: "Avant toute chose, il faut que tu saches, et cela de façon irrévocable, que si je n'ai jamais conçu l'Algérie sans eux [la population indigène], je ne peux désormais non plus la concevoir sans toi".[157] Colonial injustices are harshly criticised in this text and Sénac insists that French Algerians will have to give up

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[153] Ibid., 376, 379. The circumstances of Sénac's murder remain a matter of some debate. Aldrich notes that for Sénac's adopted son, Jacques Miel, it does not seem likely that Sénac was murdered for political reasons (although this theory was suggested by critics such as Jean-Pierre Péroncel-Hugoz in his 1983 publication, *Assassinat d'un poète*), but rather by a former lover. According to Sainson, for Algerian writers such as Rachid Boudjedra and Assia Djebar, Sénac's death was the result of Islamist fundamentalism and his death "has come to represent the fate of the Other in postcolonial Algeria. See Sainson, "Entre deux feux", 33.

[154] Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality*, 380-381. One such poem cited by Aldrich, "La Patrie" (1954), undermines nostalgic depictions of colonial adventurers.

[155] Jean Sénac, "Jean Sénac: Carnets inédits (extraits)", in *Algérie: Un rêve de fraternité*, ed. Guy Dugas (Paris: Omnibus, 1997), 847.

[156] Sénac, *Oeuvres poétiques*, 335.

[157] Sénac, "Jean Sénac", 849.

their privileges.[158] He also invokes the construction of a new Algeria, once again elaborating on the pioneering tradition, to suggest that the *Français d'Algérie* could serve to unite the Orient and Occident. Such imagery recalls the union of Occident and Orient envisaged by the Saint Simonian movement in Algeria in the nineteenth century, although it must be noted that their model of association rather than assimilation was still based on the concept that the Occident was superior.[159] An extract below reveals the poet's construction of a variety of masculinity that includes both Arabo-Berber and French Algerian men, a unity which the Orient appears to have chosen:

> L'Algérie se fera avec nous ou sans nous. Mais, si elle devait se faire sans nous, je sens qu'il manquerait à la pâte qui lève une mesure de son levain. Si l'Algérie avait délibérément choisi l'Orient et un mode de vie oriental, je penserais que c'est son droit et que nous n'avons rien à dire. Mais si l'Algérie reste attachée à l'Orient, elle a néanmoins choisi un ensemble de structures qui relèvent de l'Occident, et c'est pourquoi je reste persuadé que, vieux Occidentaux, cette révolution nous concerne, que nous avons un rôle à jouer dans cette nation et que nous avons, nous aussi, un certain nombre de briques à apporter à l'édifice commun. Ainsi, tout en participant à la vie de la nation, nous recevrons à notre tour un sang jeune et une vigueur réveillée [...]. Je crois que l'Orient et l'Occident ont besoin de se rajeunir et d'incarner ensemble une idée neuve de l'homme. L'Algérie devrait être le creuset de cette culture et de ce message pacifique.[160]

Hervé Sanson, writing of Sénac's dedication of *Matinale de mon peuple* to both European and Arabo-Muslim pro-independence revolutionaries such as Fernand Yveton and Mustapha Bouhired, notes that this gesture "entend ainsi poser un principe d'équivalence et performer la société métissé que les textes et déclarations du FLN reconnaissent".[161] Sénac's aspirational vision of masculinity thus differs from that of other *pieds-noirs* during and after the conflict as it includes, not just cultural but physical intermingling. The normal colonial code, as quoted by Jean-

[158] Ibid., 851.
[159] Abdallah Zouache, "Socialism, Liberalism and Inequality: The Colonial Economics of the Saint-Simonians in 19th Century Algeria", *Review of Social Economy* 67, no. 4 (December 2009): 453.
[160] Sénac, "Jean Sénac", 850-851.
[161] Hervé Sanson, "Jean Sénac, citoyen innommé de l'Ailleurs", *Insaniyat: Revue algérienne d'anthropologie et de sciences sociales*, no. 32-33 (2006), http://insaniyat.revues.org/3432#text. Date accessed: 28 February 2014. The collection is also dedicated to Sénac's "frères" and "soeurs" and to the millions of others "qui ont fait la patrie algérienne", thereby reiterating a discourse on fraternity (and sorority). For the *Matinale de mon peuple* collection, see Sénac, *Oeuvres poétiques*, 251-339.

Jacques Jordi in an interview, is worth referencing in contrast: "En Algérie on est tous frères mais on sera pas beaux-frères".[162]

Nevertheless, many of the themes evoked in Aldrich's portrait of Sénac's *oeuvre* – perpetual exile, the absent father,[163] the importance of the mother figure (as actual mother and as a symbol of Algeria), and images of the Mediterranean[164] – are suggestive of works by more conventional *pied-noir* writers. His preoccupation with fraternity between the two populations, a theme he spoke about in correspondence with Roblès, Pélégri and French Algerian artist Jean de Maisonseul,[165] in which he signed his name using a shining sun,[166] is also familiar. The following extract from Sénac's novel, *Ébauche du père* (1989), for example, highlights the role his mother (and perhaps motherland) played in his concept of a hybridised Algerian cultural identity:

> Maman, je vous aime, maman, vous étiez païenne! Que n'avez-vous pas été, sans le savoir et le sachant! Catholique, israélite, adventiste, musulmane et guèbre, adoratrice du soleil.[167] Et parfois hindoue et libre-penseuse. Et tout cela sans le chercher, sans le savoir, du bout de l'âme, et chaque fois profondément. Oh combien! La liberté, c'est vous qui me l'avez apprise![168]

Moreover, Aldrich notes that the poet "proudly claimed his *pied-noir* heritage" and admits that extracts from the poem "Pieds-noirs, mes frères" serve as both "an indictment [of] and a tribute to European settlers".[169] References in the latter poem (as cited by Aldrich) to colonial wrongs still allude to Sénac's poor ancestors and the

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[162] Jordi is interviewed in Gilles Perez, *Les Pieds-Noirs, histoires d'une blessure* (France: France 3, 2006).

[163] For more on this theme, see Sainson, "Entre deux feux", 40. Sainson notes that in *Ébauche du père*, the missing father figure is linked with the poet's sense of marginalisation and shame.

[164] Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality*, 379.

[165] Camus publicly came to Jean de Maisonseul's defence when he was arrested in January 1956 following his involvement in Camus's unsuccessful appeal for a civil truce. Masionseul's arrest is said to have been prompted "following pressure from 'colonialist mileus'". See Aicha Kassoul and Mohamed-Lakhdar Maougal, *The Algerian Destiny of Albert Camus*, trans. Philip Beitchman (Bethesda, MD: Academica Press, 2006), 275-276.

[166] Guy Dugas, "Les auteurs", in Dugas, *Algérie*, 991. Sénac's concept of fraternity (and sorority) was in line with his vision of a socialist Algeria, as exemplified by a poem written in 1963, "Citoyens de beauté" (published in *Citoyens de beauté* in 1967) which extolled the Algerian revolution. See Sénac, *Oeuvres poétiques*, 399-404.

[167] According to Richard Losch, a Guebre, otherwise known as a Zoroastrian, is a follower of Zoroastrianism, a religion founded by the Persian prophet Zarathushtra Spitama. Of particular importance to followers of this faith is the worship of fire, which symbolises light and the god Ahura Mazda, who is associated with the sun. See Richard R. Losch, *The Many Faces of Faith: A Guide to World Religions and Christian Traditions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 13-16.

[168] Cited in Sanson, "Jean Sénac", 127. Sanson suggests that Sénac's non-conformist attitude was learned from his unmarried mother, who was herself marginalised and ignored colonial hierarchies.

[169] Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality*, 381-382.

hard work undertaken by settlers, while the *pieds-noirs* are exhorted to become new pioneers in the adventure of building an independent Algeria.[170]

Furthermore, celebrations of the beauty of Algerian youth, which Aldrich notes "appear even in his most *engagé* collections" and frank references to sex (which became more explicit from the later 1960s, when Sénac was growing disillusioned with the changes in Algeria),[171] recall previously seen idealised, and even Orientalised, constructions of a youthful Algeria, although this time with an emphasis on homosexuality. The *Diwâan du Noûn* cycle of poems (1968),[172] for example, evokes "Adolescents dont la seule mémoire / provoque un orgasme farouche".[173] Moreover, Aldrich notes that Sénac's "'tricks' were often teenagers who lacked access to women".[174] While the former suggests that "Sénac's eroticised regard of young men in Algeria helped direct his perspective on the country as these youths "were the ones for whom and with whom he wanted to make the revolution, make love and make his poetry",[175] this type of discourse elides an imbalance of power that exists between young people and adults and between the colonised and colonising populations. Sénac's sexual encounters with adolescents may be compared here to those of writers such as André Gide and François Augiéras, who could be said to have engaged in "sexual colonialism" in North Africa.[176]

Aldrich's analysis of Sénac's descriptions of homosexuality in his poems is worth noting here:

> Sexual attitudes and behaviours in Sénac's Algeria [of the 1950s and 1960s] allowed him to find casual partners and lovers in the streets of working-class Bab-el-Oued, outside the cinemas of Algiers's *grands boulevards*, at the beach of Pointe-Pescade or lounging around the Place Bugeaud. Contacts were easily established with ebullient *pieds-noirs* and sociable Arabs, coffee

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[170] Ibid., 382-383.
[171] Ibid., 386.
[172] These poems were published in a collection: *Avant-Corps: précédé de Poèmes Iliaques et suivi de Diwân du Noûn*.
[173] Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality*, 386. Aldrich notes that the poet's style of writing here, which Sénac called "corpoème", merged the body and poetry. For more extracts from *Diwâan Du Noûn*, inspired by the poet's view from his balcony of young people at Pointe Pescade beach in Algiers, see Sénac, *Oeuvres poétiques*, 505-536.
[174] Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality*, 389.
[175] Ibid., 390.
[176] Ibid., 342. Aldrich goes as far as to suggest that Augiéras could be regarded as a paedophile by today's standards, 353. The homosexual encounters of American writers in North Africa have also been explored in relation to colonialism. See Greg Mullins, *Colonial Affairs: Bowles, Burroughs, and Chester Write Tangier* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002).

or a shared meal helping to bind new friendships.[177]

The sexual climate of colonial and early post-colonial Algeria therefore appears healthy and "tolerant" compared with what Aldrich describes as the "moralistic regime" of the Algerian government of the 1970s.[178] Indeed, Sénac's increasing disillusionment with post-independence Algeria is associated with a decline in sexual prowess, as seen in the following line from "Des vierges vont se donner" (1967), published in *Le Mythe du sperme-Méditerranée* (1967): "Tout est foutu – les comités de gestion, le rire, nos érections?".[179] Furthermore, a quotation from "La Course", contained within the same collection – the title of which evokes Algeria as part of a sexualised Mediterranean territory – suggests the poet's desire for sexual unions with indigenous Algerian men rather than with blonde "civilised" men:

> Tu parles de cheveux blonds, de poitrines / Civilisées. Je ne comprends / que le sexe qui vrombit à vide sur les rocs. [...] Et des noms: Ahmed! Mahrez! Kamel! Antar! / Oh, encule-moi! O Youcef, j'ai sucé jusqu'au Coran / Ta course [...] Je ne comprends / Que le ciel et la mer accouplés, jumeaux.[180]

The type of union alluded to here may be an attempt to "perform" a type of idealised "société métissée", to use Sanson's phrase. This said, indigenous Algerian men lose their individuality in this extract, which also evokes physical and, with regard to Islam, verbal violence. The above descriptions of a union between sky and sea are also Camusian in tone. French Algerian journalist Jean Daniel's opinion (summarised by Sainson) is consequently worth considering: "as a European and a Christian, Sénac chose to ignore that the Arabo-Muslim dimension of the Algerian independence movement was irreconcilable with Sénac's universalism".[181] As with Camus, and perhaps because of his universal vision which never came to pass, Sénac has recently been reclaimed as Algerian, precisely the identity that eluded him when he was alive, by some Algerian intellectuals writing in the wake of the violent *décennie noire*, while he has also been the source of renewed interest in France.[182]

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[177] Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality*, 388.
[178] Ibid., 389.
[179] Sénac, *Oeuvres poétiques*, 542.
[180] Ibid., 540-541.
[181] Sainson, "Entre deux feux", 34.
[182] Marx-Scouras notes that Sénac has occupied a central place in recent writings by Rachid Boudjedra, Assia Djebar, Christiane Chaulet-Achour, Jamel-Eddine Bencheikh as well as in newspapers such as *Libération*, Le *Monde*, *Alger Républicain*, *El Watan*, *Liberté*, *Algérie Actualité* and *La Tribune*. She also comments on his status as a "political martyr". See Marx-Scouras, "The Specter of Jean Sénac", 45.

By admitting his homosexuality (with the publication of *Avant-Corps*), Sainson claims that "Sénac emerged from his own period of self-determination no longer masking his true self, no longer performing verbal drag, by producing poetry in which he shied away from acknowledging the complexities of his identity".[183] As previously noted, "In imitating gender, drag implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself – as well as its contingency".[184] Verbal drag (which Sénac eventually resists) must also, therefore, highlight the imitative nature of the lived and literary performance of normative heterosexual *pied-noir* hypermasculinity. Sénac's open descriptions of homosexual sex are of particular value as they were "rare in French literature of his time",[185] and the lack of representations of homosexual *pieds-noirs* in earlier texts and films must also be considered in this light. This leads us to examine a more recent representation of homosexuality in colonial Algeria.

The production of picture postcards of Algerian women by French photographers in the early 1900s illustrates the demand for sexualised or even fetishised images of indigenous Algerian women.[186] The type of descriptions referred to by Aldrich of men's experiences of homosexuality in the colonies also suggests the fetishisation of such experiences for readers in the metropole, for whom the Orient could be reimagined as a place of permisiveness.[187] Lucien Legrand's 2011 *Autobiographie d'un pied noir gay*, retrospectively, perhaps even nostalgically, appeals to constructions of North Africa as a site of licentious behaviour, as the jacket blurb informs us that "Très tôt, Lucien a su qu'il était homosexel. Très tôt aussi, il a attiré les hommes et s'est donné à eux. Simplement, sans culpabilité, au hasard des rencontres et de ses désirs".[188] Homosexual encounters in colonial Algeria are therefore naturalised, but not when it comes to colonising men, as the back cover goes on to inform us: "la société coloniale de l'après-guerre n'était pas spécialement ouverte, et le machisme régnait dans le monde pied noir... Mais Lucien ne s'est

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[183] In his autobiographical *Ébauche*, Sénac admitted to using verbal "travestis" or drag in order to avoid revealing his true identity. Cited by Sainson, "Entre deux feux", 46, 41-42.

[184] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1999), 175.

[185] Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality*, 388.

[186] See Malek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*, trans. Myrna Godzich and Wlad Godzich (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987).

[187] According to Aldrich, for example, Gustave Flaubert wrote to a friend about his experimentation with sodomy in Egypt while André Gide's novels featured descriptions of homosexuality in a North African or classical Mediterranean setting. Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality*, 329-363.

[188] Lucien Legrand, *Autobiographie d'un pied noir gay* (Paris: Publibook, 2011). The title of this autobiography and the jacket blurb use the spelling "pied noir" although "pied-noir" is used throughout the main text.

jamais refusé le droit d'être lui-même". Normative *pied-noir* masculinity is thus reiterated, despite a further reference to the book as "iconoclaste" and to its breaking with clichés (back cover).

Legrand appears to have been marginalised within his own family and wider colonial society. Born in 1938 in Algiers, he states that he only became legitimate when his parents married, following his father's first wife's suicide, in 1943 (10, 20). His relationship with his father was fraught as, failing to perform his masculinity in accordance with his father's expectations, he was beaten and forced, as a child, to fight another boy who called him a "pédé" (29-30). This difficult relationship with his father prompted him to run away on two occasions and, according to the author, gave him a mental disorder and provoked thoughts of suicide (33). Rejection by his extended family and schoolmates in Algeria is also described (48, 20). Despite the author's emphasis on his outsider status, however, some familiar tropes recur. Thus, although he claims he did not enjoy football, which set him apart from other boys, he describes his manner of dodging the ball (in his role as goalkeeper) as a "passe de corrida" (25) – a technique that implies a skill associated with Mediterranean bullfighters, which still positions him within the the type of normative masculinity performed by many of the *pied-noir* characters studied above. He also underlines his position as the head of his family for most of his adult life and his close relationship with his mother. Legrand consequently describes his desire to protect his mother from his violent father, who forced her to have up to ten backstreet abortions (27-28, 56). The author's reverence for his mother is coupled with what appears as a misogynistic attitude towards other women in the novel, including his sisters. He notes, for example, that his sisters accused him of trying to "imiter le paternel" as he used to order them inside when he saw them chatting to friends (39). He also criticises a sister, who has a new baby and is studying, for not cooking and shopping for her husband (156-157). We must therefore question his claim that he is not "misogyne", particularly as he continues "mais il faut reconnaître que ce sont les femmes les plus virulentes" (182).

Legrand's descriptions of his personality also echo the rhetoric of *pied-noir* men as adventurous and passionate: "j'étais aventureux, spontané, enthousiaste, extrêmement impatient, gai, passionné, et doté d'un esprit vif – tellement vif que mes paroles allaient plus vite que mes pensées [...] Je disais tout haut ce que les autres pensaient tout bas" (131). His pioneering spirit in France is also implied by

descriptions of his many different jobs and businesses, as he works his way up from being his father's painting apprentice, following military service during the Algerian war, to becoming joint owner of a restaurant/hotel/bar in France. Furthermore, descriptions of his many different homosexual liaisons from a young age in Algeria, but also in France and on his other travels, at a time when homosexuality was taboo, position him as a type of sexual pioneer. A similar emphasis may be seen from discourses surrounding a recently released documentary by director Sébastien Lifshitz, *Bambi* (2013), featuring a transgender French Algerian, born as Jean-Pierre, who became an iconic cabaret star in Paris called Marie-Pierre or Bambi, having left Algeria in the 1950s. Bambi is justifiably described as "l'une des pionnières sur le chemin des hormones et de la chirurgie"[189] and as "une pionnière" at a time when the word transsexual "n'existait même pas encore".[190] Here again, descriptions of Bambi's journey from her small village of Les Issers in colonial Algeria to her discovery of "nouveaux territoires", and references to her tenacity and determination are suggestive of the pioneering spirit of the *pieds-noirs*.[191] Furthermore, since Paris becomes the site of "une liberté énorme",[192] *pied-noir* identity is differentiated once again from a more liberal metropolitan French identity.

Similarly, homosexuality, which the male members of his family – his father and uncle – can never accept, is presented as being particularly taboo because of Legrand's identity as a *pied-noir*. Yet homosexuality was also frowned upon in metropolitan France at the time. According to Sainson, a law was voted by the Assemblée Nationale in France in July 1960 "that identified homosexuality as a 'social plague' and "clamped down on those public acts described as 'being against nature with an individual of the same sex'".[193] Saint-Germain-des-Près may have been "a center for European gay culture" during this period, but a journal called *Arcadie*, founded in 1954 with the aim of gaining acceptance for hidden homosexuality, still referred to the mistreatment of homosexuals: "the fact remains that in the eyes of the representatives of the law too often even today, the homosexual is treated as an animal to be slaughtered. The fact that in France, just

[189] Noémie Luciani, "Bambi à voir; Marie-Pierre, transsexuelle, ex-reine du Paris by night", *Le Monde*, 19 June 2013.
[190] Anonymous, "'Bambi', quand un petit garçon d'Algérie devient femme d'exception", AFP, 14 June 2013, LexisNexis. This quotation is from the director.
[191] Ibid. Quotation from the director.
[192] Ibid. Quotation from Bambi/Marie-Pierre Pruvot.
[193] Sainson, "Entre deux feux", 39. Sainson cites Frédéric Martel, *Le Rose et le noir: les homosexuels en France depuis 1968* (Paris: Seuil, 1996), 72-73.

two years ago, a senior civil-servant was able to announce on the radio that the hunt for homosexuals was going to be intensified in Paris, seems incredible [...] for many we are still vile creatures [...] that need to be crushed".[194] Legrand himself also refers to prejudice against homosexuals in France. For example, he mentions lesbian government officials who marry men as a cover (99, 205). He also acts as if he is a heterosexual man on several occasions to avoid discovery by his metropolitan French friends and colleagues, revealing the performativity of gender as he notes: "je jouai le jeu" (114). Furthermore, he feels compelled to resign from a job in Paris in the early 1980s when his homosexuality is discovered, particularly in light of recent publicity about AIDS (189), and also experiences prejudice when he and his partner open a restaurant in Arville in the Loire Valley (202-203).

Despite encountering such prejudices in France, the author emphasises the particular difficulties of being a "pied noir gay" and evokes a macho *pied-noir* culture, epitomised by his father, "le parfait *macho*" (45). As seen by his efforts to act like a heterosexual man at a friend's wedding or on a work night out, Legrand shows an awareness that gender identity is a construct. Indeed, his many performances in drag with his homosexual friends, including a "wedding" to Gillot in October 1969 near Fontainebleau, at which he wears full bridal dress and signs an imitation "livret de famille" in front of the wedding guests, who, we are told, all adopted a role for the day, again shows the imitation involved in the performance of gender (144-148). While the performance of such a ceremony almost forty-five years ahead of France's first gay marriage on 29 May 2013, following the adoption of the Taubira law on "mariage pour tous",[195] may be read as a resistance to ideals of gender, the narrator's choice of enacting femininity by wearing a wedding gown, tiara, wig and make-up is again suggestive of a camp performance of femininity reminiscent of kitsch, as opposed to the "art" of masculinity.

Given the author's conscious construction of gender identities, this text may be regarded as a conduit of collective memory in the manner of many of those studied so far – with the construction of a postitive image of Legrand coming to represent the *pieds-noirs* in general. Significantly, the indigenous population is

[194] Sainson, "Entre deux feux", 39. The article cited is by Jean Remo, "Corydon dans le monde", *Arcadie* (13 January 1955): 34.

[195] Anonymous, "Le premier mariage homosexuel a été célébré en France", *Le Monde*, 30 May 2013. An opponent of this law, Dominique Venner, who committed suicide at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris in protest against it, was a former OAS militant. See Anonymous, "Suicide d'un écrivain d'extrême droite à Notre-Dame, hommage de Le Pen", AFP, 21 May 2013, LexisNexis.

largely absent from this text.[196] Despite the author's personally difficult childhood, he claims that life was pleasant before the Algerian war, in a description which fails to acknowledge the suffering of the colonised population, and instead emphasises his disapproval of the conflict:

> La guerre d'Algérie a été une désolation pour les pieds-noirs et les Arabes, car on vivait dans une harmonie parfaite; les Français avec leur gaieté, leur acharnement, leurs conseils; des rapports de bon voisinage, des amitiés nouées entre les hommes, sous un ciel qui n'épargnait ni les un ni les autres; dans la voix, dans les gestes, dans les attitudes des pieds-noirs, il y avait l'Orient. Nous étions des gens de toute sorte avant qu'un malheur commun nous modifie au long de ces huit années de tumulte (57).

The author's decision not to go into detail about the horrific atrocities committed on both sides during the Algerian war here is significant. Despite a reference to his half-brother's mental breakdown after six months of military service, from which he never recovered, this is linked to his brother's family history rather than to the violent history of Algeria's past, which is not discussed in the book. Moreover, an explanation of the *pied-noir* word for a metropolitan French person – "pathos" – (spelt "patos" in other texts) and of the Rue Michelet in Algiers as being the equivalent of the Champs-Elysées in Paris (63, 47) suggest a non-*pied-noir* target readership. A reminder that the author of this autobiography is an ordinary man "qui pourrait être vous, avec cette simple différence que ses préférences ont pu ou peuvent déranger certains" also suggests an attempt to win sympathy.

3.5 Conclusion

Discourses on settlers in Algeria, from the colonial psychiatry of the 1900s to Pierre Nora's treatise and press articles during the Algerian war, suggested a defective performance of masculinity compared with that of metropolitan French men. *Pied-noir* men have been cast as hypermasculine or homosexual, sometimes in line with an opposing rhetoric on colonised men, conceived firstly as effeminate or hypersexed and secondly, during the decolonisation process, as men who became "whole" through revolution. Towards the end of the Algerian war, *pied-noir* men's role was

[196] Despite the author's emphasis on the taboo nature of homosexuality among *pied-noir* men, all of his frequent homosexual encounters in Algeria (and afterwards) are with men who have European names. Furthermore, the narrator's references to non-European characters appear to be racist in tone (42, 75, 140, 171, 182).

recast in France, as they apparently became heads of heterosexual families needing refuge in France. However, *pied-noir* masculinity continues to be associated with violence, which may sometimes be naturalised as part of a pioneering culture and may also be considered as a response to identities under threat.

An examination of writing by some writers of the *École d'Alger* initially shows significant differences from Camus's style. In earlier works, Roy declares his choice of justice over his mother, Roblès subverts the narrative of *L'Étranger* and Pélégri criticises colonialism while focusing on the positive attributes of his father's benevolent form of settlement and agriculture. Texts written by these authors post-1962, however, reveal a surprising shift in focus, through a reassertion of a Camusian emphasis on the French Algerian mother and motherland, evoking Algeria as the natural home for the country's exiled and, in the case of Roy, illegitimate, sons. In this way, the authors appear to confirm their membership of a *pied-noir* family dispersed throughout France and the world. The mother's undisputed place in colonial Algeria also facilitates a nostalgic evocation of *l'Algérie de papa*, despite an ostensible distancing from previous generations of *colons*.

An examination of works by French Algerian men also reveals the construction of a distinctive model of masculinity, the idealisation of which was enabled by the end of colonial Algeria. Conesa's overt attempts to rehabilitate the settlers in collective memory evoke a colonial world of simpler times when boundaries were not crossed and gender roles were clear. His depictions of exaggerated masculinity are again linked to the mother, to virility and to suffering. Similar constructions of masculinity are revealed in Roblès's text, the title of which foregrounds casual violence. This text diverges from others in its references to an Arabo-Mediterranean identity, although it focuses on Jewish and Christian masculinity, which is again associated with innocent suffering. Saint-Hamont's text initially appears as a new departure from such constructions of masculinity. Conventional hypermasculinity is undermined by the narrator, whose pantomime-like performance draws attention to the game of gender and suggests that *pied-noir* masculinity should not be emulated. Once again, however, his identity is differentiated from both the metropolitan French and former colonised populations, while *pied-noir* femininity is again aligned with that of indigenous Algerian women. This likeable picaresque character avoids violence which, along with his efforts to fit in, again creates sympathy for the *pieds-noirs*.

Our study of representations of and by homosexual *pieds-noirs* is especially significant as this is a neglected field. Depictions of a macho homosexual, of a transgender wife who is biologically a man and of a mother's homosexual son, are apparently rare examples of non-normative sexuality which in fact reidealise distinctive gender roles. Sénac, by writing openly of his homosexuality, is of particular importance as his personal marginalisation enabled him to develop an anti-colonial stance and to continue siding with the oppressed after Algerian independence. Despite his critiques of colonialism, however, themes such as the fraternal or sexual union between the colonising and colonised populations are sometimes Camusian and, when younger Muslim men are objects of desire, problematic. The poet's tragic end also positions him as a real-life *pied-noir* outsider who is now of interest in both France and Algeria. His vision of masculinity is at least inclusive of the indigenous population and is valuable as a rare insight into homosexuality which reveals to be performative the heterosexual hypermasculinity insisted on by many *pied-noir* men. A more recent depiction of *pied-noir* homosexuality, however, appears to appeal to reconstructions of the colonies as sites of fetishisation while simultaneously emphasising the heterosexual hypermasculinity of colonising men, for whom homosexuality was taboo. The homosexual author of this text continues to reinforce normative macho masculinity as a devoted son to his mother and head of his family. The pioneering tradition is once more developed, this time to encompass sexual pioneering. While femininity is revealed as performative, *pied-noir* masculinity appears as true "art" in this narrative. Furthermore, this personal autobiography may be regarded as a conscious effort to influence perceptions of the *pieds-noirs* more generally as this male outsider again appears anxious to win our respect. There are, however, figures who are not bound by codes of normative masculinity (or femininity), namely child and adolescent narrators. We may usefully examine constructions of identity by and about such characters in our final chapter.

Chapter 4: Performing Childhood and Adolescence through French Algerian Narrators

4.1 Introduction: Constructing Childhood and Adolescence in Life and Literature

This chapter will examine the significance of the many voices of child and adolescent narrators in works which continue to emerge within the now familiar framework of the *pied-noir* family. It has been argued that performativity "extends beyond gender to include age, class, and ethnicity".[1] Like gender, childhood and adolescence may therefore be regarded as performative. With regard to childhood, Patricia Pace is worth quoting, as she suggests that it is:

> like gender [...] a biological category; however, childhood, like gender is also psychological and social and therefore constructed in and through signifying practices. What theorists have taught us about understanding the gendered body may also speak to our notions of childhood: that is, the child's body is not expressive, correlating to some essential biological reality. Following Judith Butler's influential work on gender as performance, the child's body is 'performative, ... effectively constitut[ing] the identity [it] is said to express or reveal'.[2]

Children and childhood memories can be seen as ahistorical.[3] However, while "We are accustomed to thinking of childhood as separate from historical processes" and of the child's body as "allied with nature, fixed and authentic", in fact "as with anyone's body, there is no direct access to the child's body except through language".[4] We can thus conclude that "Language does not literally call the child into being but 'it is by being interpellated within the terms of language that a certain

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[1] Nicole Brugger-Dethmers, "Cross-Dressing and Performativity", in *Contemporary Adolescent Literature and Culture: The Emergent Adult*, ed. Mary Hilton and Maria Nikolajeva (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), 77.

[2] Patricia Pace, "All our lost children: Trauma and testimony in the performance of childhood", *Text and Performance Quarterly* 18, no. 3 (July 1998): 234. Pace cites Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory", in *Performing Feminisms: Feminist Critical Theory and Theatre*, ed. Sue-Ellen Case (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1990), 279.

[3] Graebner suggests that "Childhood memories may be ahistorical by their very nature". See Seth Graebner, *History's Place: Nostalgia and the City in French Algerian Literature* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2007), 239.

[4] Pace, "All our lost children", 234.

social existence of the body first becomes possible'".[5] As Pace further suggests, "descriptions of childhood affirm that the subjectivity engaged with what we term the 'private' – image, memory, identity – emerges from and within public, social and historically fluctuating formations like the family".[6] In this way, just as speech act or discourse informs the performance of gender, it also informs the performance of the child and, perhaps more significantly here, of the adult writing as a child narrator.

Jacqueline Rose suggests in her seminal work on children's literature that this genre is "one of the central means through which we regulate our relationship to language and images as such".[7] Indeed, Rose's argument (published in 1984) recalls Butler's later declaration that (gender) identity is "a regulated process of repetition",[8] as the former highlights "language itself as the means through which subjective identity, at the level of psychic and sexual life, is constituted and then imposed and reimposed over time".[9] This leads to the "constitution of the adult as a subject, a process which the adult then *repeats* through the book which he or she gives to the child".[10] Following Rose's analysis, we can suggest that works about or for children can perform a constructed "fantasy of childhood", as the language used becomes "a means to identity and self-recognition" for adults as much as for children.[11]

Adolescence is also performative, as suggested by changing concepts of its duration. Psychologist Jeffrey Jensen Arnett argues that adolescence is not only starting earlier, but ending later as "roles such as marriage, parenthood, and stable full-time work" are delayed "until at least the mid-20s".[12] Arnett calls the period from the age of eighteen to twenty-five "emerging adulthood", a phase conceptualised as "the age of identity explorations, the age of instability, the self-focused age, the age of feeling in-between, and the age of possibilities".[13] Similarly, with regard to literature, Mary Hilton and Maria Nikolajeva state that "The terms 'adolescent' and 'Young Adult Fiction' are both cultural constructions that share

[5] Ibid. Pace cites Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 5.
[6] Pace, "All our lost children", 235.
[7] Jacqueline Rose, *The Case of Peter Pan or The Impossibility of Children's Fiction* (London: Macmillan, 1984), 138-139.
[8] Sara Salih, "On Judith Butler and Performativity", Sage, http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/11880_Chapter_3.pdf. Date accessed: 23 March 2013.
[9] Rose, *The Case of Peter Pan*, 141.
[10] Ibid. Rose's emphasis.
[11] Ibid., 138-139.
[12]Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, *Adolescence and Emerging Adulthood: A Cultural Approach* (Boston: Prentice Hall, 2010), xii. This text was first published in 2001.
[13] Ibid.

some of present day society's most painful anxieties and contradictions".[14] They contend that psychologist and educationalist Stanley Hall, who first used the term "adolescence" in 1904, "constructed the now taken-for-granted disjuncture between child and adolescent upon which writers and artists have elaborated".[15] Moreover, they point out that, since long-term memories are unreliable, adult writers using the adolescent voice "articulate an imaginative reconstruction of the past based on their subsequent life experience", a reconstruction which may also be "affected by the author's ideological, educational or aesthetic project".[16] In this way, constructions of adolescence in literature are "a very powerful ideological tool, although it is only recently that the critical eye has begun to turn to it".[17] Julia Kristeva's views on the liberating "open psychic structure" facilitated by re-creating adolescence through literature are also worth quoting here: "The writer, like the adolescent, is the one who will be able to betray his parents – to turn them against him and against themselves – in order to be free".[18] Hence, performing adolescence through literature is a potentially helpful way of encouraging readers to consider the legacies of colonialism, among other societal issues. As Hilton and Nikolajeva note:

> Through sympathetically portraying the alienated pains and pleasures of adolescence, through *enacting* adolescence with all its turmoil, writers bring young readers face to face with different forms of cultural alienation itself: the legacy of colonialism, political injustice, environmental desecration, sexual stereotyping, consumerism, madness, and death.[19]

Kimberley Reynolds also points to the "radical potential" of literature featuring young people, suggesting that the genre contributes to the "social and aesthetic transformation of culture by [...] encouraging readers to approach ideas, issues and objects from new perspectives and so prepare the way for change".[20]

Regarding the *pieds-noirs*, the potentially fresh outlook of a younger generation's testimony has been outlined by Anne Roche who noted, having interviewed those over fifty, that "de jeunes pieds-noirs, nés en Algérie mais l'ayant

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[14] Mary Hilton and Maria Nikolajeva, "Introduction: Time of Turmoil", in Hilton and Nikolajeva, *Contemporary Adolescent Literature and Culture*, 1.
[15] Ibid., 1-2.
[16] Ibid., 11.
[17] Ibid., 8.
[18] Julia Kristeva, "The Adolescent Novel", in *Abjection, Melancholia and Love: The Work of Julia Kristeva*, ed. John Fletcher and Andrew Benjamin (London: Routledge, 1991), 8, 14.
[19] Hilton and Nikolajeva, "Introduction: Time of Turmoil", 1. Hilton's and Nikolajeva's emphasis.
[20] Kimberley Reynolds, *Radical Children's Literature: Future Visions and Aesthetic Transformations in Juvenile Fiction*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), 1. Cited in Georgie Horrell, "Transgression and Transition", in Hilton and Nikolajeva, *Contemporary Adolescent Literature and Culture*, 49.

à peine connue, peuvent avoir une approche tout à fait différente [...] autrement identitaire”.[21] Futhermore, Roche’s research indirectly points to a child’s outlook as the most likely site for engagement with the history of the colonised population, as she notes: “Si les enfants jouent avec les petits Arabes, les relations chez les adultes, qui ne sont pas nulles, sont vectorisées de façon précise: il y a moins échange (du moins dans ce qui est verbalisé du témoignage) qu’apport, qui va généralement dans le même sens”.[22] Lynne Huffer, however, draws attention to a “recent trend in French letters, where France’s double shame – for the violence of its colonial practices and for its subsequent refusal to remember them publicly – is mitigated by the rendering of history through the child’s innocent gaze”.[23] Pointing to the public function of apparently private texts, she suggests that:

> recent evocations of *pieds-noirs’* childhoods allow their innocent protagonists to lament the loss of a preindependence and preterrorist Algerian *métissage*, where a plurality of cultures and languages peacefully coexisted in the childhood world of play. Further, through the gaze of childhood, the violent rupture of the Algerian War is attenuated by the perception of the innocent witness who is caught in the conflict but in no way responsible for it. The lack of responsibility associated with the perspective of childhood provides a convenient lens through which France can gaze nostalgically toward colonial Algeria. Indeed, this innocent, *prepoliticial* gaze allows France to romanticize the 130-year period of its colonial domination; in the persona of the child at play, the colonizer becomes, in the words of Alain Vircondelet, “almost ‘Arab’” himself.[24]

It must be noted that the propensity for writing about childhood in France, and the link of this genre with colonialism, is not a recent phenomenon. Rose draws attention to the “long-established links” between children’s literature and colonialism,[25] while Isabelle Nières-Chevrel links adventure books for children specifically to the construction of the British and French empires.[26] Writing about childhood may also be regarded as a contribution to the tradition of children’s literature. Indeed, France fares well in Nières-Chevrel’s overview of works that contributed significantly to a genre that was “born” in 1860, referencing eighteenth-

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[21] Anne Roche, “La Perte et la parole: témoignages oraux de pieds-noirs”, in *La Guerre d’Algérie et les Français*, ed. Jean-Pierre Rioux (Paris: Fayard, 1990), 536.
[22] Ibid., 528-529.
[23] Lynne Huffer, “Derrida’s Nostalgeria”, in *Algeria & France 1800-2000: Identity, Memory, Nostalgia*, ed. Patricia M.E. Lorcin (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2006), 230.
[24] Ibid. Huffer’s emphasis. Huffer cites Alain Vircondelet, “Le retour des sources”, in *Une Enfance algérienne*, ed. Leïla Sebbar (Paris: Gallimard, 1997), 229-243.
[25] Rose, *The Case of Peter Pan*, 50.
[26] Isabelle Nières-Chevrel, “Avant-Propos”, in “L’invention du roman pour la jeunesse au xixe siècle”, special issue, *Revue de littérature comparée* 4, no. 304 (2002): 417.

century authors such as Madame Leprince de Beaumont and Arnaud Berquin and nineteenth-century authors such as Julie Gouraud, the Comtesse de Ségur, Louis Desnoyers, G. Bruno, Hector Malot, Mme Woillez and Victorine Monniot.[27] Similarly, Hardwick notes that "The literary form of the *récit d'enfance* is particularly established in French literature".[28] Indeed, while it lacks status as a clearly defined genre in English, there has been greater theoretical study of the *récit d'enfance* in France.[29] Lecarme stresses the autobiographical nature of this genre, but Jacques Noiray, as summarised by Hardwick, understands the term as "applicable to all texts which follow the exploits of a child protagonist".[30] Hardwick, who considers the genre as a "semi-autobiographical account of childhood experiences, typically ending in adolescence", draws our attention to works such as Jean-Paul Sartre's *Les Mots* (1964), Georges Perec's *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* (1975) and Nathalie Sarraute's *Enfance* (1983).[31] By writing semi-autobiographical works about childhood, *pieds-noirs* are, therefore, partaking in a French literary tradition which emphasises childhood in its engagement with processes of recollection, as exemplified by the childhood experiences narrated in Marcel Proust's renowned multi-volume work, *À la recherche du temps perdu* (1913-1927).[32] As shown in the previous chapters, this type of engagement with youthful recollections has been continued by the likes of Camus, Roblès, Pélégri, Cardinal and Cixous.

Novels of adolescence also appear as a significant genre in French literary history. Justin O'Brien, writing in 1937, commented on the interest shown in

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[27] Ibid.

[28] Louise Hardwick, "The Rise of the récit d'enfance in the Francophone Caribbean", in *Postcolonial Poetics: Genre and Form*, ed. Patrick Crowley and Jane Hiddleston, *Francophone Postcolonial Studies* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011), 170.

[29] Ibid., 170-172. Hardwick notes Richard Coe's term for this genre as "the Childhood" in his seminal work, *When the Grass was Taller: Autobiography and the Experience of Childhood* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984). Hardwick, however, prefers the term "childhood memoir".

[30] Jacques Noiray, "Le récit d'enfance dans la littérature maghrébine de langue française", in *Le Récit d'enfance: enfance et écriture*, ed. Denis Escarpit and Bernadette Poulu (Paris: Sorbier, 1993), 103-113. Cited in Hardwick, "The Rise of the récit d'enfance", 174.

[31] Hardwick, "The Rise of the récit d'enfance", 170. Hardwick notes that this tradition was also taken up by postcolonial writers such as Aimé Césaire and Frantz Fanon, whose respective *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* (1939) and *Peau noire, masques blancs* (1952) contain passages reflecting on childhood. She argues that the *récit d'enfance* became the "genre of choice" for authors from the Francophone Caribbean from the 1990s and links the rise of this genre there to, among other factors, the emergence of the *créolité* movement, which emphasised the significance of the child's interior gaze in balancing out the alienating exterior gaze.

[32] Marcel Proust, *A la recherche du temps perdu 1: Du côté de chez Swann – A l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs* (Paris: Gallimard, 1954). See particularly Section 1, "Combray", 3-187.

adolescence in French literature published from 1890,[33] with a particularly significant number of such novels published in France between 1920 and 1930, which he believed could be explained in part as a "microcosmic portrait of the post-war world" during a turbulent and contradictory time in France's history.[34] O'Brien, citing Albert Thibaudet, notes that the challenge of the novelist of adolescence is "to bring order out of the chaos without entirely suppressing the confusion which is such an essential part of any picture of adolescence".[35] It is therefore not surprising that in trying to bring order to the Algerian war while remaining faithful to the confusion of the day, *pied-noir* authors have also identified with the voice of adolescents. For O'Brien, the publication of confessional novels by authors between 1920 and 1930 enabled a cathartic farewell to be bid both to adolescence and to the chaos of the 1920s, leading to a "period of full maturity" for French literature.[36] For the *Français d'Algérie*, writing about adolescence may also be a cathartic way of dealing with a turbulent past.

The use of young narrators may also be a means of confronting personally traumatic memories. Indeed, children's literature critic Peter Hunt, citing Lewis Carroll as an example, believes that "a good way of exorcising demons about your own childhood is to write a children's book".[37] Evoking the past from a young person's viewpoint also facilitates productive possibilities as, particularly during times of political tension, children can enunciate viewpoints that adults may be restrained from voicing. Furthermore, Martini argues that descriptions of childhood by the *pieds-noirs* are "les plus éloignés de la polémique [...] les plus sincères et à

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[33] The publication of Orientalist painter and travel writer Eugène Fromentin's novel *Dominique* in 1862 is worth noting as a particularly early example of a narrative about adolescence. Robin MacKenzie notes that this novel could be read as a *bildungsroman* due to its theme of maturity. See Robin Mackenzie, "Maturity and Modernity in Fromentin's *Dominique*", *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 35, no. 2 (Winter 2007): 352. Fromentin's accounts of his trips to Algeria were published as *Un Été dans le Sahara* (first published in the *Revue de Paris* in 1854) and *Une Année dans le Sahel* (1859). For further biographical details, see Eugène Fromentin, *Dominique* (Paris: Flammarion, 1987), 337-339.

[34] Justin O'Brien, *The Novel of Adolescence in France: The Study of a Literary Theme* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937), 208. Similarly, Hilton and Nikolajeva trace the origins of the novel of adolescence in the Anglophone world, which shows the interior lives and existential angst of teenagers as well frequently revealing the problems of society, to the Second World War, after which, "Writers [...] began to reject the sentimental tradition and the invisibility of teenage interiority in twentieth-century literature for the young". See Hilton and Nikolajeva, "Introduction: Time of Turmoil", 6.

[35] O'Brien, *The Novel of Adolescence in France*, 85.

[36] Ibid., 211.

[37] Peter Hunt, "Introduction to Children's Literature" (unpublished paper presented at the Children's Studies Programme, National University of Ireland, Galway, 27 January 2012).

travers lesquels on doit pouvoir trouver les représentations les plus spontanées”.[38] Jacques Lecarme, referenced by Hardwick, also points to “a greater degree of freedom than one might expect from other autobiographical forms” and to “the genre’s capacity to elicit candidness, and its potency as a vehicle for satire and criticism”.[39] The possibility of a critical review of the past may allow for what Nancy E. Virtue calls “critical witnessing”, which facilitates the Freudian “working through” of trauma, as opposed to the obsessive re-enactment of traumatic events without “real critical confrontation with the past”, which is “compulsively relived without allowing for mourning and for a healthy reinvestment in life”.[40] The “working through” of trauma, however, according to Dominick LaCapra, involves “not definitive closure or full self-possession but a recurrent yet variable attempt to relate accurate, critical memory-work to the requirements of desirable action in the present”. [41]

While our study of Cixous’s memoir of her childhood cast doubt on the suggestion that she makes use of a “doubling based on exclusion(s)” to investigate colonial relationships without maintaining power structures,[42] the liminal position of young narrators, between infancy and adulthood, may open up such a “Third Space”.[43] Narratives of childhood experience may equally be said to occupy a liminal space between past and present, as suggested by the famous opening line of L. P. Hartley’s semi-autobiographical classic, *The Go-Between* (1953): “The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there”.[44] Homi Bhabha, who, like Butler,

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[38] Lucienne Martini, *Racines de papier: Essai sur l’expression littéraire de l’identité Pieds-Noirs* (Paris: Publisud, 1997), 8. Although Martini refers here to “des autobiographies d’enfance”, she includes semi-autobiographical works such as Roblès’s *Saison violente*.

[39] Hardwick, “The Rise of the récit d’enfance”, 172. Hardwick draws here on Jacques Lecarme, “La Légitimation du genre”, in *Le Récit d’enfance en question*, ed. Philippe Lejeune (Paris: Université de Paris X, 1988), 21-39.

[40] Nancy E. Virtue, “Memory, Trauma, and the French-Algerian War: Michael Haneke’s *Caché* (2005)”, *Modern & Contemporary France* 19, no. 3 (August 2011): 282-283. Virtue draws on Dominick LaCapra, *History and Memory after Auschwitz* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 45.

[41] Virtue, “Memory, Trauma, and the French-Algerian War”, 282-283. Virtue cites LaCapra, *History and Memory After Auschwitz*, 42 here.

[42] Amy L. Hubbell, “(Re) Writing Home: Repetition and Return in Pied-Noir Literature” (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 2003). See Chapter 3, 125-164.

[43] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994). See also Jonathan Rutherford, “The Third Space, Interview with Homi Bhabha”, in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 207-221.

[44] L. P. Hartley, *The Go-Between* (London: Penguin, 1997), 5. It is worth noting that the narrator of this story becomes aware that childhood is performative on his thirteenth birthday, as he realises that he has been “playing a part, which seemed to have taken in everybody, and most of all myself [...] All the time at Brandham I had been another little boy and the grown-ups had aided and abetted me in this

suggests that "Terms of cultural engagement [...] are produced performatively", suggests that the "interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy".[45] Bhabha further argues that it is "the 'inter' [...], the *in-between* space – that carries the burden of the meaning of culture" and that "makes it possible to begin envisaging national, anti-nationalist histories of the 'people'" so that "we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves".[46] Works by authors performing an identity that is between infancy and adulthood and between past and present therefore seem well placed to reassess the legacy of colonialism without imposing a discourse of binary oppositions and colonial hierarchies, and have already proved popular with indigenous populations. Indeed Jane Hiddleston, referring to Hardwick's study of the rise of the *récit d'enfance* in the Francophone Caribbean from the 1990s, states that "narratives of childhood from Martinique and Guadeloupe served the specific purpose of allowing their authors to reflect on colonial society with a new, inquiring approach, as if with the naive gaze of the child".[47]

Yet, for Rose, the child is presented as having unique access to "a primitive or lost state" and as "a pioneer who restores these worlds to us, and gives them back to us with a facility or directness which ensures that our own relationship to them is, finally, safe". This construction of the child as "an ultimate beginning where everything is perfect or can at least be made good",[48] appears to go hand in hand with constructions of pioneering settlers at the origin of colonial Algeria. Indeed, Rose's contention that "the child is constantly set up as the site of a lost truth and/or moment in history, which it can therefore be used to retrieve",[49] suggests that literature involving child narrators is an obvious choice for those wishing to retrieve a lost French Algeria, particularly an idealised one that never existed. Roderick McGillis further claims that in children's literature, "children continue to be the subaltern [...].

[...] They like to think of a little boy as a little boy, corresponding to what their idea of what a little boy should be – as a representative of little boyhood [...] They even had a special language designed for little boys" (228).

[45] Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 2, 4.

[46] Ibid., 38-39. Bhabha's emphasis.

[47] Jane Hiddleston, "Introduction", in Crowley and Hiddleston, *Postcolonial Poetics*, 7.

[48] Rose, *The Case of Peter Pan*, 138.

[49] Ibid., 43.

In short, adults are the colonizers and children are the colonized".[50] Similarly, Perry Nodelman, paraphrasing Edward Said's discussion of Orientalism and the Orient, suggests that representations of childhood are "an adult style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over childhood",[51] with an aim to "teach children how to be childlike by providing them with appropriate images of childhood" while, paradoxically, also teaching them how to be adults.[52] The use of young narrators by *pied-noir* authors may consequently be seen as an attempt to re-colonise or doubly colonise Algeria, through literature and by influencing the attitudes of potential younger as well as older readers as France's "memory wars" continue.[53] Indeed, literature aimed at children has been criticised for its tendency to give way to "la fable ou [...] l'allégorie".[54] Furthermore, Shaobo Xie suggests that "children and indigenous natives share much in common, and they have been frequently compared with each other".[55] Indeed, the "savage" was compared to a European child on a scale of evolution used by colonial psychiatrists.[56] In consequence, just as many *pied-noir* women writers evoke their marginalisation and lack of power, so too do adult authors speaking through child narrators, who cannot be held responsible for the actions of adults and who can be made to appear on an equal footing with the colonised population of Algeria.

Adolescent and child narrators must also be considered as a link to the theme of the *Français d'Algérie* as a *peuple neuf* who were prematurely forced from their homeland. This *peuple neuf* trope may be traced back to the writings of Louis

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[50] Roderick McGillis, "'And the Celt Knew the Indian': Knowingness, Postcolonialism, Children's Literature", in *Voices of the Other: Children's Literature and the Postcolonial Context*, ed. Roderick McGillis (London: Routledge, 2000), 224-225.

[51] Perry Nodelman, "The Other: Orientalism, Colonialism, and Children's Literature", *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 17, no. 1 (Spring 1992): 29. Nodelman draws here on Jacqueline Rose's arguments in *The Case of Peter Pan*.

[52] Nodelman, "The Other", 33.

[53]One educational graphic novel aimed at children, for example, attempts to shape readers' understanding of the war and perhaps also to regulate the performance of childhood, as we are told that all populations in Algeria got on well before the conflict and boys' and girls' games from the period are divided along distinct gender lines. See Gilles Bonotaux and Hélène Lasserre, *Quand ils avaient mon âge...Alger 1954-1962* (Paris: Autrement, 2002). For a general analysis of graphic novels on Algeria, including the *Carnets d'Orient* series by French Algerian cartoonist Jacques Ferrandez, see Martini, *Racines de papier*, Chapter 5, 201-214.

[54] Philippe Jean Catinchi, "Comment dire le monde; Si le roman sait surfer sur l'air du temps, l'actualité peine à penetrer la production des albums jeunesse. Pourtant l'évocation d'une question d'histoire ou de problèmes de société conduit à forger l'outil critique nécessaire à la prise de conscience du futur adulte. État des lieux", *Le Monde*, 29 November 2002.

[55] Shaobo Xie, "Rethinking the Identity of Cultural Otherness: The Discourse of Difference as an Unfinished Project", in McGillis, *Voices of the Other*, 14.

[56] Richard C. Keller, *Colonial Madness: Psychiatry in French North Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 127.

Bertrand, who described the youthful adventures of a nascent French Algerian race, most notably through the character of Rafael, in *Le Sang des races* (1899).[57] The tropes of youth and Adamic innocence may similarly be identified with Camus, as discussed in our analysis of *Le Premier Homme*. His descriptions of young couples deciding to get married by exchanging engraved sweets in "L'Été à Alger" (*Noces*) paints a memorable portrait of "le peuple enfant de ce pays".[58] Young narrators also facilitate fairytale imagery, which could potentially either reiterate or subvert myths associated with French Algeria. The concept of colonial Algeria as a "paradise lost" may additionally be considered in terms of the inevitable passing of childhood. Hilton and Nikolajeva suggest that when adolescent narrators are introduced to key issues such as death and sexuality, "childhood is over, and there is no way back to Arcadia".[59] Works featuring young narrators consequently seem a particularly apt way of exploring nostalgia for a "paradise lost". According to Svetlana Boym, "nostalgia appears to be a longing for a place, but it is actually a yearning for a different time – the time of our childhood".[60] She also describes nostalgia as "a sentiment of loss and displacement, but [...] also [as] a romance with one's own fantasy".[61] Revisiting childhood may therefore perpetuate fantasies about the past in a form of restorative nostalgia or engage with a reflective nostalgia which, despite dwelling on loss, acknowledges that memories are imperfect.

The texts analysed, involving a mixture of child and adolescent narrators, may be considered "adult children's literature", a phrase used by Rita Bouckaert-Ghesquiere to denote the blurring of boundaries, particularly since the 1970s, between childhood memoirs aimed at children and those aimed at adults.[62] The stories discussed in this chapter have autobiographical elements and their themes are linked to the four main themes of such novels, as defined by Bouckaert-Ghesquiere: "war experiences; growing up in another culture; traumatic family experiences; and

[57] Louis Bertrand, *Le Sang des races* (Paris: Paul Ollendorff, 1899).
[58] Albert Camus, *Essais* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 72.
[59] Hilton and Nikolajeva, "Introduction: Time of Turmoil", 12.
[60] Svetlana Boym, "Nostalgia and Its Discontents", *The Hedgehog Review* 9, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 8.
[61] Ibid., 7.
[62] Rita Bouckaert-Ghesquiere, "Looking Back. The Rise of the Autobiographical Novel in Children's Literature", in *Genres as Repositories of Cultural Memory: Vol. 5 of the proceedings of the 15th congress of the International Comparative Literature Association*, ed. Hendrik Van Gorp and Ulla Musarra-Schroeder (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), 441. The author contends that the rise in autobiographical children's literature after World War II and the growth of the genre from the 1970s is due to war children becoming adults and a changing, more open and realistic society which treats children in a more adult way.

nostalgic memories", with the "experience of loss" appearing as "a basic thread" throughout.[63] The "therapeutic function" of such writing, particularly for authors who have experienced war, must be considered as well as the assertion that those dealing with war and aimed at children are more nuanced and "avoid explicit judgements".[64] Texts featuring young narrators appear as part of a world-wide phenomenon of works involving a "lost land", which, despite elements of nostalgia, are praised for lifting "the anonymity of the past by throwing light upon a few faces out of a nameless crowd".[65] Such praise for focusing on childhood experiences counterbalances to some extent the suggestion that novels featuring *pied-noir* childhoods tend to focus on their victimhood. Against such conflicting views, we may now study works featuring candid young narrators whose stories simultaneously facilitate fable and allegory.

4.2 *À la recherche d'une vérité perdue*: Seeking Sincerity or Colonising Consciousness?

We may usefully begin this section by examining perhaps one of the best known representations of the *pieds-noirs* in France, Daniel Saint-Hamont's *Le Coup de Sirocco* (1978), which is part of the series of novels that includes *Le Macho*. The novel was released as a commercially successful film in 1979 with a young Patrick Bruel, himself a *pied-noir* who went on to become a pop star, in the lead role.[66] Roger Hanin, also a *pied-noir*, starred as the protagonist's father. The film version was especially popular among the former settlers, who "applauded or wept" as they viewed it.[67] Perhaps more significantly, Branche notes that during a general "apaisement des mémoires" at this time, it disseminated knowledge about the *pieds-noirs* to a wider audience who had previously regarded them as, at best, very distant cousins: "Le cinéma eut, à partir de là, un rôle important de passeur, présentant à l'ensemble des Français ces cousins d'Algérie encore mal connus".[68] However, Branche contends that films such as this also encouraged the emergence of nostalgia,

[63] Ibid., 443.
[64] Ibid., 444, 450.
[65] Ibid., 451, 461.
[66] For the film version, see Alexandre Arcady, *Le Coup de Sirocco* (France: Films de l'Alma, 1979).
[67] William B. Cohen, "The Algerian War and French Memory", *Contemporary European History* 9, no. 3 (November 2000): 490.
[68] Raphaëlle Branche, *La Guerre d'Algérie: une histoire apaisée?* (Paris: Seuil, 2005), 24-25.

which minimised the inequalities of the colonial situation.[69] Similarly, Sophie Watt contends that the narrative produced by the film (as well as other films directed by Saint-Hamont's collaborator, Alexandre Arcady) can be considered "as part of a gradual nostalgic rehabilitation of France's colonial past in French popular culture".[70] Significantly, Watt points to the overlapping of the personal history of the protagonists of the film with that of France's regretful colonial loss.[71] *Le Coup de Sirocco*, the personal tale of one *pied-noir* boy, is therefore regarded as having played a significant role in the (re)construction, not just of a *pied-noir* identity, but of France's broader colonial and postcolonial self-image. Furthermore, while the story is a mixture of fiction and autobiography,[72] parts of it have been taken as fact, with Jean-Jacques Jordi, for example, citing the novel to illustrate the difficulties faced by the *pieds-noirs* on their arrival in France in 1962.[73]

Saint Hamont's original text, to which the film is largely faithful, will be studied here.[74] The same narrator from *Le Macho* features, although his adolescent voice dominates in this earlier book, which is set in the immediate aftermath of the Algerian war and follows his family's repatriation from Algeria to France. The narrator mentions towards the end of the novel that he is telling his story almost twenty years after the events in question.[75] Yet events are relayed with immediacy through the adolescent viewpoint, often in the present tense. Moreover, the protagonist appears, in his adult incarnation, as an eternal adolescent or emerging adult, as he still balks at the thought of a committed adult relationship, claiming he is now in love with a married woman who has four children, whom he does not love

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[69] Ibid., 25.
[70] Sophie Watt, "Alexandre Arcady and the Rewriting of French Colonial History in Algeria", in *France's Lost Empires: Fragmentation, Nostalgia, and la fracture coloniale*, ed. Kate Marsh and Nicola Frith (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2011), 69.
[71] Ibid.
[72] The film has been described as autobiographical in articles discussing its director, Alexandre Arcady. See Souad Ben Slimane, "Ce que le jour doit à la nuit en chantier - Et pourtant ça tourne!", *La Presse (Tunis)*, 16 June 2011. Anonymous, "Points forts. Carrière", *Midi Libre: Les journaux du Midi*, 15 September 2012. The film's close resemblance to the novel and the fact that Saint-Hamont co-wrote the screenplay would suggest that at least part of these autobiographical elements came from Saint-Hamont's text.
[73] Jean-Jacques Jordi, *Les Pieds-Noirs* (Paris: Le Cavalier Bleu, 2009), 80. Jordi cites the narrator's description of his family being overcharged by a taxi, followed by an SNCF worker's refusal to give them a "repatriate's discount" on their arrival in France.
[74] While the novel begins with the narrator's departure from Algeria, a notable difference in the film is, apart from a change of name for some characters, the addition of thirty minutes of opening footage revealing key events in the narrator's life from his birth in 1945 – an element which adds to the nostalgic feel of the movie by encouraging the viewer to identify with the narrator's homeland.
[75] Daniel Saint-Hamont, *Le Coup de Sirocco* (Paris: Fayard, 1978), 185.

(148). Although the narrator of the film version begins by telling us he is now thirty, the rest of the film similarly privileges his adolescent gaze as it is told in a flashback. This adolescent voice suggests the narrator's physical and emotional liminality, not just between childhood and adulthood but between his past in colonial Algeria and his present in metropolitan France, although it must be noted that there is no engagement in this liminal space with indigenous Algerians, who are largely absent from the story. Indeed, the naturalised association of this *pied-noir* family and couscous, which they hope to introduce to a French clientele, is significant as there is no mention of the product's origins among the Arabo-Berber population and it instead appears as a marker of *pied-noir* identity.[76]

The narrator's identity is marked by what appears as an exaggerated performance of the egocentrism cited by psychologists as a trait of adolescence,[77] which allows for several of the many comic moments in the novel. Two "prototypical representations of social cognitive processes during adolescence", according to the theory of adolescent egocentrism, are: "the imaginary audience", which refers to "adolescents' tendency to believe that others are always watching and evaluating them" and "the personal fable", which refers to adolescents' belief that they are "unique" and "special".[78] Interestingly, both the imaginary audience and personal fable labels have been described as "twin constructs" that have appeared in psychological studies for over thirty years, which categorise adolescent thinking as "faulty, biased, and/or fantastical" but which have "not been substantiated with empirical data".[79] However, the narrator's performance conforms to these constructs. Indeed, he exemplifies a self-involved adolescent who is conscious of an audience that is, at least partly, in his imagination, as can be seen from his interior monologue as he walks the streets of Paris, imagining he is in a race: "Je faisais le reporter, je

[76] Ethnologist Victoria M. Phaneuf, having studied cuisine habits of North African and *pied-noir* associations, notes that the former tend to serve "traditional" dishes at public events and world-wide dishes at private events, while the reverse is the case for *pied-noir* associations. One possible reason for this is that members of the public could easily question the provenance of some of the dishes claimed as *pied-noir*, particularly couscous, which is generally considered a North African dish. See Victoria M. Phaneuf, "Negotiating culture, performing identities: North African and Pied-Noir associations in France", *The Journal of North African Studies* 17, no. 4 (2012): 682.

[77] Psychologist Lesa Rae Vartanian refers to "The long-standing and often-cited theory of adolescent egocentrism" in her article, "Revisiting the Imaginary Audience and Personal Fable Constructs of Adolescent Egocentrism: A Conceptual Review", *Adolescence* 35, no. 140 (Winter 2000): 639.

[78] Ibid.

[79] Ibid., 640.

décrivais comment j'étais le premier, comment j'avais laissé tous les autres concurrents derrière, à au moins vingt-cinq kilomètres" (49).

Performing his "personal fable" enables the narrator to ignore societal conventions and to comment frankly on the taboo subject of the war in a humorous, often disarming manner. For example, he draws comparisons between his fear of marrying his girlfriend Monique and his fear of a bomb blast in Algeria (182-183). Moreover, he claims that "la perte de l'Algérie" was only a minor sin compared to his refusal to sleep with Monique (185). He also draws attention to the French army's use of torture, absurdly linking it to his personal experience of his mother's ability to obtain answers:

> L'armée en Algérie elle a raté une grande chance: c'est de ne pas avoir utilisé ma mère dans les interrogatoires. Avec elle, les parachutistes jamais ils auraient eu besoin de faire des tortures, ou des choses terribles comme ça, pour que les fellaghas parlent. Le plus grand chef fellagha, on l'aurait laissé une journée avec ma mère, seuls dans un bureau, à la fin il aurait griffé la porte pour appeler la sentinelle en pleurant, en sanglotant: «Je vais tout vous dire, je vais tout vous avouer, mais faites partir cette femme. Dites au général avec la moustache qu'il a gagné...» (201).

The casual acceptance of the torture of the indigenous Algerian population from an adolescent's viewpoint raised, in the late 1970s, the repressed spectre of France's troubling colonial past. Indeed, the topic of torture during the Algerian war, brought to attention in Henri Alleg's *La Question* (1958),[80] which was banned shortly after publication, did not become a matter of national debate until 2000, with Louisette Ighilahriz's decision to publicise her experience of being tortured by the French army, first in the press and the following year in an autobiography.[81] Furthermore, as the narrator watches his father following conman Louis Bonheur through a wasteland that will supposedly house their new business, he humorously refers to another taboo subject – the *harkis*, a group virtually unknown in France until riots broke out in the Bias Camp east of Bordeaux in May 1975[82] – noting: "On marche dans la boue et les fondrières comme une patrouille de harkis" (159), while he also casually likens

[80] Henri Alleg, *La Question* (Paris: Minuit, 1961).
[81] Florence Beaugé, "Torturée par l'armée française en Algérie, Lila recherche l'homme qui l'a sauvée", *Le Monde*, 20 June 2000. See also Louisette Ighilahriz, *Algérienne: récit recueilli par Anne Nivat* (Paris: Fayard, 2001).
[82] Claire Eldridge, "'We've Never Had a Voice': Memory Construction and the Children of the *Harkis* (1962-1991)", *French History* 23, no. 1 (2009): 88-89.

Monique's rejection of his sexual advances to the imposition of "des zones interdites, comme l'armée en Algérie" (67).

The narrator's preposterous comparison of personal interactions with his girlfriend and parents to the still painful and at the time neglected subject of the Algerian war is facilitated by his youth and his exaggerated performance of the adolescent egocentric "personal fable". His suppression of genuinely traumatic experiences from the war is hinted at through these statements as well as by his admission that leaving Algeria is too painful a subject to discuss with his best friend Paulo (118), thereby reflecting the unresolved trauma of the war at a national level, which has been labelled the "Algerian Syndrome" by Jo McCormack.[83] Thus, despite a lack of engagement with the former colonised populations in the novel, some realities of uneasy colonial and postcolonial relations are here inscribed upon France's present. Additionally, the young narrator's comical undermining, through his cynical commentary, of the type of idealised youth and Adamic innocence we have seen in the works of Camus, for example, serves to distance the novel from conventional tropes.

The narrator hence appears as a site of truth but his frequently comical candour works to disguise the link that the reader is encouraged to draw between his personal story and that of the *pieds-noirs* in general. As Dine comments: "the young narrator's disabused commentary on events would seem to provide a counter to more conventionally lachrymose versions of the settler diaspora", although it simultaneously evokes a "bathetic approach to the community's suffering", which echoes myths in other works.[84] This *pied-noir* boy from a modest background may consequently be regarded as a representative of his community as he struggles to fit in following a traumatic departure from Algeria. In this way, his adolescent angst sympathetically evokes the alienation and nostalgia of a population in exile, as is evident in the following extract:

> Je suis seul maintenant, et j'ai froid dans le noir. [...] Pourquoi j'ai cette sensation d'être à la fois si proche et si lointain? D'être moi-même et un autre? Tout a basculé [...] On m'a volé les mots du soleil! Qu'il est long, ce voyage. Qu'elles seront longues à apprendre toutes ces habitudes de l'exil. Qui connaîtra jamais, dans la recherche aux souvenirs, la hauteur du mur

[83] Jo McCormack, *Collective Memory: France and the Algerian War (1954-1962)* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2007), 169.

[84] Philip Dine, *Images of the Algerian War: French Fiction and Film, 1954-1992* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 174.

> immense qui nous sépare du vieux pays? Qui sentira le poids des morts abandonnés, la terrible filiation interrompue? (222-223).

Furthermore, the sources of the narrator's family's misfortunes are represented as stemming from villainous characters who would not be out of place in a fairytale – Charles de Gaulle, France and French conman Louis Bonheur. The narrator's father, for example, states that "de Gaulle... c'est lui qui nous a mis dans le malheur", (29) while the narrator blames de Gaulle for the shooting dead of his compatriots on 26 March 1962 in Algiers: "Quand il s'ennuyait, il disait: «Je m'ennuie, tuez-moi quelques dizaines de Français d'Algérie...» Alors l'armée mitraillait les gens rue d'Isly" (108). France is also represented as a wicked character. His family's initial reception in France, where they are mistaken for beggars, is described as the ultimate rehearsal or "répétition" for "la fin du monde" (33) and their arrival in the country is also blamed for his mother's depression. His humorous comment – for instance, "on était là comme des coulos à aimer la France, à lui donner notre coeur, et elle, un coup de pied au derrière elle nous donne comme récompense" (105) – also portrays the *pieds-noirs* as victims of a cruel system. The ironically named Louis Bonheur, having gained the trust of the family, tries to con the narrator's father, Lucien, before finally insulting him when he fails to secure a loan by Bonheur's deadline. This final insult casts the former colonisers as colonised: "Les ordres c'est vous qui les recevez, vous êtes né pour ça, vous êtes un petit. Allez donc manger votre couscous dans votre douar" (218).[85] Furthermore, the narrator's position as an outsider evokes many of the literary representations of outsiders already studied, including that of Meursault in *L'Étranger*. Indeed, his affinity with the Camusian family is evident from his decision, in an echo of Camus's preference for his mother over justice, to choose both his mother and speech patterns that are associated with *pied-noir* identity:

> Dans notre langue, tout était si mélangé qu'on savait plus très bien où le français s'arrêtait et où l'arabe commençait. «C'est tellement vulgaire», disaient des Français. Si la vulgarité, c'est d'être obligé de plus parler comme ma mère, alors oui, je suis vulgaire: je choisis ma mère (106).

The narrator's parlance, together with his candid and often comical descriptions, invite a comparison with the equally informal and humorous observations of the young narrator of *L'Enfant pied-noir* (1994) written by Algiers-

[85] A *douar* is a North African settlement in which dwellings usually consist of tents.

born author, painter and sculptor, Élie-Georges Berreby. In this later novel, published over thirty years after Algerian independence, French identity, of which language is conventionally the primary constituent, is again differentiated from that of the settlers:

> Pour avoir une bonne note en rédaction, il ne faut jamais perdre de vue Victor Hugo. Si on écrit à l'école comme on parle entre nous, les maîtres, les pauvres, ils ne comprennent rien. Pas même le mot "mancaora", ils connaissent. Avec eux, il faut dire: "école buissonnière". Pareil que la marquise de Sévigné. A force à force [*sic*], les rédactions, je m'applique à les écrire en français de France. Mais en dehors de l'école, je parle normalement.[86]

Martini includes this novel and Jean-Noël Pancrazi's *Madame Arnoul* (1995), discussed below, as part of a new era in works by *pied-noir* authors which go beyond the pain of the loss of Algeria and which are therefore more easily accepted and understood by a wider audience.[87] That *L'Enfant pied-noir* won the "12/17" literary award for authors of literature for adolescents is suggestive of its appeal.[88] The context of increasing Islamist violence during what is now known as Algeria's *décennie noire* must also be considered, as must the author's intention that the work would be pedagogical and aim of showing his own adolescent son that despite his "manque de tout", he had a happy childhood.[89] Like the previous novels studied, this work is best considered as semi-autobiographical. The front cover informs us that the text is a "roman", while the back cover insists that "ce savoureux récit d'une enfance à Bab-el-Oued se double d'une authentique témoignage sur une époque charnière des relations entre communautés pied-noir et algérienne", thereby implying that this fictionalised version of events is a type of "true history" in the manner of Peter Carey's novel, *True History of the Kelly Gang* (2000).[90] Moreover, the author's website informs us that, "Né à Alger entre les deux guerres, Élie-Georges Berreby a narré son enfance dans *L'ENFANT PIED-NOIR*" [*sic*].[91] While the author was already working as a travelling salesman and freelance journalist at the outbreak of the Second World War, according to his website, the young narrator, Joé Bari, was

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[86] Élie-Georges Berreby, *L'Enfant pied-noir* (Arles: Actes sud, 2007), 22.
[87] Martini, *Racines de papier*, 45.
[88] Anonymous, "Raymond Plante (Quebec) prime à la Foire du Livre de Brive", AFP, 7 November 1994, LexisNexis.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Peter Carey, *True History of the Kelly Gang: A Novel* (London: Faber, 2002).
[91] Anonymous, "Élie-Georges Berreby, un homme pluriel", Berreby, http://www.berreby.net/accueil/index.html. Date accessed: 21 August 2013.

born later, beginning his story just before his ninth birthday in the early 1950s and ending it with the departure of his mother, sister and brother to Spain after the outbreak of the war as he chooses to stay in Algeria with his grandmother.

Joé stands in contrast to the adults in the book who, we are told, tend to avoid the truth (85). His sincerity points to adults' hypocrisy, including that of his aunt Gladys, whose patronising attempts to "educate" Joé by making him neglect his studies in order to complete chores (87, 95) recall Madame Quinson's attempts to "civilise" the narrator of Roblès's *Saison violente*. Young Joé is also presented as being wiser than the adults in his life. Hence, he asks questions where adults blindly follow, as shown by his comments on his grandmother's unfailing belief in the powers of an ancient holy rabbi:

> La franche vérité, l'histoire de Tata Annette me trouble. Ce saint rabbi bar Yohai, s'il guérit ma mère, fait revenir mon père et nous procure un appartement moins humide, obligé je serai de croire en lui. Mais ce saint rabbi, il a guéri Tata Annette pour la laisser dans de terribles difficultés alimentaires, avec un mari qui buvait son travail et dans un logement trop petit. Va comprendre (58).

Joé's liminal position, symbolised here by his status as the son of an Italian-Catholic father and Jewish mother as well as by his position between childhood and adulthood, appears productive in enabling him, thanks to his own developing sexuality, to broach the subject of homosexuality among the settler population which, as we saw in the last chapter, is an uncommon topic in literature featuring adult *pied-noir* narrators. Joé implies that homosexuality is acceptable if it is discreet (and consensual) and hints at sexual experimentation by his older friend Salviat, who later dates Joé's sister Françoise:

> Dans le quartier, les enculeries sont discrètes. J'en connais un qui se le fait mettre le soir dans l'ancienne gare. Il aime ça, mais il se ferait tuer plutôt que de l'avouer. C'est Salviat qui nous a confié le secret. J'en ai déduit qu'il y allait de temps en temps (111).

Moreover, Joé's beloved cousin Cécile is possibly in a homosexual relationship, as he notes that: "Elle vit et travaille avec une amie libraire. La vérité, ces deux femmes, elles s'entendent comme des amoureuses" (60). However, during the Algerian war, Salviat is shot in the head by a childhood aquaintance of the boys called Bouzid Belhouch, when playing in a first division football match, having scored three goals (198). Cécile is also shot in the head by the "Front

révolutionnaire" in a case of mistaken identity, as she leaves her bookshop (202-203). The unhappy fate of these two characters may be read as an allusion to the intolerant climate of the future independent Algeria and to the fate of openly homosexual public figures such as Sénac. Furthermore, Salviat, as a successful footballer, is reinscribed within conventional *pied-noir* masculinity. In describing a former classmate from an impoverished background, Roland Koby, who was forced into prostituting himself to sailors by his mother's partner (110-111), Joé appears to further emphasise normative heterosexuality. Indeed, the shame of Roland's situation causes him to commit suicide, and in a final note to his teacher he explains that: "Pour moi, il est plus facile de partir que de rester" (111). This particular boy's tragic story again appears as an allegory for the *pieds-noirs* as a community.

Depictions of *pied-noir* men as homosexual and/or perverted during and in the immediate aftermath of the Algerian war, are therefore simultaneously contradicted and confirmed in a way that reiterates normative gender roles while nevertheless implying a tolerance of discreet difference. Interestingly, there are two deviant settler adults who prey on children in the story: Roland's mother's partner, a Cretan who, in addition to forcing the boy into prostitution, we are told, engages in sexual relations with both mother and son "sans se gêner" (111); and an old Maltese shopkeeper who unsuccessfully tries to lure Joé into his bedroom in exchange for cash (16). Joé also gets to know a cruel young bully, Pinto (whose sidekick is the aforementioned Bouzid Belhouch), who aims to run a brothel when he is older and who procures young boys and girls for pimps (79). However, these characters may be taken as representative of an exploitative minority in a colonial world of innocent children such as Joé. There is also a hint that Pinto's behaviour has been negatively influenced by the proximity of his home to the Casbah and its inhabitants: "Pinto, il n'est pas comme nous. Il est de la rue Rovigo, la rue qui monte le long de la Casbah. [...] Tous les macs, toutes les putes, il les connaît" (79).

This sort of comment leads us to consider Berreby's pedagogical aim. The narrator's humorous, engaging commentary works to encourage sympathy with the *pieds-noirs* among a readership which is likely to be largely adolescent. Furthermore, the first section, "La mer", is Camusian in tone as Joé describes his joyful pursuits of swimming and playing football in Bab-el-Oued with his similarly impoverished

friends.[92] Rival streets later join forces to form a football team that includes an indigenous Algerian, Ali Yaya, thereby suggesting a potential for fraternal harmony. Significantly, this is disrupted when the team's important "revenge match" against a rival team largely made up of indigenous Algerians is cancelled on a symbolic date – 1 November 1954 – as the team's sponsor, Joé's friend Nono, dies. The absence of Joé's father also has Camusian echoes, as does his ambiguous relationship with his mother, who does not understand him. Thus, in an echo of Camus's famous statement, "J'ai mal à l'Algérie", in "Lettre à un militant algérien" (1955),[93] the narrator poignantly informs us that "J'ai mal à ma mère". Throughout the novel, young Joé exhibits tenacious, resourceful qualities as he struggles to feed his family, an aspect of the story which contributes to pioneering imagery. Furthermore, he is presented as being poorer than some indigenous Algerian shoe-shine boys (*yaouleds*), who threaten him when he sets up as a shoe-shine boy himself, and by a group of delivery boys who carry their clients' shopping baskets to and from the market (*yaouleds porteurs de couffins*). He therefore appears equal to or in a worse position than the indigenous population as class issues, rather than racial tensions, are foregrounded in an echo of works by Camus, Conesa and Roblès.

Conventional constructions of *pied-noir* masculinity also recur here through the narrator's emphasis on violence. Violent action is evoked as a requirement to ward off a greater evil as the narrator explains that he had to beat up the boy who insulted his mother on the day of her operation: "Nous, on sait que pour éloigner le mal il faut faire pisser le sang. A savoir ce qui se serait passé à l'hôpital si Arnaud n'avait pas saigné" (106-107). This emphasis on violence as a necessity may be compared with Camus's description of boxing in his essay "Le Minotaure ou la halte d'Oran", in the collection *L'Été*.[94] Joé's reaction to his mother being insulted – he goes "Maboul" (96) or mad and is seized by a "rabia" (106) or rage – is also suggestive of the now familiar hot-headedness of *pied-noir* men as well as their profound attachment to the mother. His superstitious consideration of violence as a necessity may also be linked to the attitude of the narrator in Roblès's *Saison violente*, who catches ants in a tube, hoping that on the seventh day of their

[92] The title of Berreby's play, *Jonas*, mentioned on his website as the work through which he became known in France after the Algerian war, also echoes Camus's work, specifically his short story "Jonas" in *L'Exil et le royaume* (1957).
[93] Albert Camus, *Actuelles, III: Chroniques algériennes, 1939-1958* (Paris: Gallimard, 1958), 125.
[94] Camus, *Essais*, 824. In his consciously Mediterraneanist description of boxing in Oran, Camus proclaims: "à Corinthe, deux temples voisinaient, celui de la Violence et celui de la Nécessité".

imprisonment, his mother's cruel former employer will be doubled over in pain.[95] In Hureau's study, the *pieds-noirs* are said to be a superstitious people, influenced by different religions and by both saints and marabouts.[96] Joé's belief that a neighbour, Mme Mesguish, can use magic to ward off an envious "mauvais oeil" (44) and Nono's burial of a doll on the advice of a witch, in order to free Joé from the burden of his father's sins (151-152), similarly evoke the merging of European and African traditions, also suggesting the necessity of symbolic acts of aggression where real ones are impossible. The use of violence in the colonial setting is therefore naturalised in the novel. Indeed, as in the case of Camus's *Le Premier Homme*, violence is evoked alongside biblical references to Cain, who committed murder but who was also the first farmer. In this case, Joé, as the only sibling to be told that his father killed his fascist brother in Italy, feels burdened by the family secret and lives in fear that he in turn will kill his brother, Dany "Comme Caïn a tué Abel" (73).

Moreover, fairytale elements of the novel appear to show a potential paradise that has gone wrong, thus perpetuating fantasies about Algeria's colonial past. Joé is uprooted from his home and friends in the second section of the book, "Putain de sa mère!", and treated as an outcast both at his new school and by Gladys, whose behaviour recalls that of an evil stepmother. The third section, "Le soleil dans les yeux", sees the narrator's blossoming friendship with Gladys's wealthy young adolescent nephew, Nono, whom the narrator christens "Bouddha" and who possesses an almost mystical ability, helped by his privileged background,[97] to solve Joé's problems: "avec deux doigts entre les dents, [il] pouvait siffler le destin et lui ordonner de réviser ses coups" (183-184). When the narrator's ally dies from typhus fever on 1 November 1954, an event with a clearly symbolic function, his passing is followed by a downward spiral of death and destruction at the outbreak of the war, including the narrator's own attempt to drown himself on learning both of Nono's death and, through reports of the uprising, that Algeria is in reality a colony. However, Joé cannot be held responsible for his childish belief in the fairytale of "la

[95] Emmanuel Roblès, *Saison violente* (Paris: Seuil, 1974), 149-151.
[96] Joëlle Hureau, *La Mémoire des pieds-noirs: de 1830 à nos jours* (Paris: Perrin, 2010), 298-300.
[97] Nono's father funds nationalist revolutionary leader Messali Hadj and Nono informs Joé that his family have already moved a large bulk of their assets out of Algeria. The perceived ability of a minority of *gros colons* to buy their way out of trouble while the *petits blancs* suffered is thus emphasised. This point is made most notably in the television version of *Les Chevaux du soleil* (episode 11 – "Le Tonnere et les Anges"), in which we see an impressively vast expanse of land and a villa that has been untouched by the war. When the villa's owner refuses to help his neighbours, they conclude that he is funding the FLN.

plus grande France”. Despite Joé’s apparently inherent truthfulness, fairytale elements and a poignant tone reinforce the notion that Algeria might have been improved if the reality about its colonial status had been acknowledged sooner. In Joé’s case, his mother’s refusal to recognise Algeria as a colony causes the break-up of his parents’ marriage. Furthermore, Joé’s initial inability to see Algeria as a colony is naturalised by his youth and inexperience. Once again, therefore, one boy’s personal story appears as an allegory for a French Algerian family.

Hélène Gadal’s novel, *Petite pied-noir deviendra grande* (2002), published during France’s continuing “memory wars” of recent years, might usefully be compared here to both Saint-Hamont’s *Le Coup de Sirocco* and Berreby’s *L’Enfant pied-noir* as a child’s sincere and engaging voice again appears to perpetuate unchanging models of communal identity. This text is presented as a personal *lieu de mémoire* for the author, with an explanation on the back cover stating that Gadal, who left Algeria at the age of eleven, wrote it for her daughters: “Lors d’un séjour dans la ville d’enfance de mon mari, alors qu’il nous montrait tous les lieux qui l’avaient vu grandir, j’ai réalisé que je ne pourrais jamais parcourir avec mes filles ces endroits qui ont tant compté pour moi. C’est pour elles que j’ai eu envie de raconter mon enfance”.[98] However, the narrator’s story, which is told by a *pied-noir* girl called Jacqueline from the day of her seventh birthday, through to her departure for France on her eleventh birthday and her initial experiences of exile, may again be taken as a conduit of collective memory.

Jacqueline’s view facilitates humour and the development of conventional tropes as she confuses fairytale, myth, imagination and reality. For example, she regards the story of her grandparents’ meeting, as told to her by them, as “mieux qu’un conte de fées” (29). This family legend features her impoverished grandfather, Hector, whom she explains was often barefoot, “ce qui même pour un Pied-noir est très douloureux” (29). Jacqueline recounts Hector’s rise to success and difficulty finding a suitable wife or “chaussure à son pied”, an expression used by the adults which she believes “peut s’expliquer par le fait qu’il n’en avait pas porté pendant longtemps” (30). Her grandfather eventually marries the narrator’s metropolitan French grandmother, Marguerite, following his military service in World War I, and the story therefore has a happy ending, as Marguerite grows to love Algeria and its

[98] Hélene Gadal, *Petite pied-noir deviendra grande* (Paris: Théles, 2002).

inhabitants. However, while Jacqueline's comically literal understanding of her grandfather's search for the right "chaussure à son pied" ironises the fact of her grandfather's perpetually bare feet, both the pioneering spirit of the *pieds-noirs* and their blood sacrifice for France – another key *pied-noir* theme – are still reinforced here. Furthermore, a reader not familiar with the history of the settlers would be inclined to believe this likeable character when she informs us that the *pieds-noirs* got their name from indigenous Algerians because of the black shoes worn by the colonisers (9).

Fairytales are again foregrounded. Jacqueline's allusion to Sleeping Beauty during her baby brother's christening both underlines a harmonious present and creates a sense of foreboding with regard to the future: "Me voilà transposée dans mon conte préféré: La Belle au bois dormant. Les bonnes fées font don à cet enfant de toutes les qualités. Un sentiment d'inquiétude m'envahit. L'affreuse fée va-t-elle se manifester elle aussi?" (18-19). The *fellaghas*, in their struggle for independence, later intrude upon her generally happy world as they are the subject of adults' anxious conversation and become, for her, the embodiment of bad fairies, while Charles de Gaulle appears, through the eyes of the young narrator, as a traitor for negotiating independence, having implied his intention to fight for *Algérie française* with his famous "Je vous ai compris" speech in Algiers in 1958:

> J'entends de plus en plus parler d'un certain général venu de Gaule, qui a levé un jour ses grands bras et de sa voix chevrotante (même lorsqu'il ne parle pas à la TSF) a declaré qu'il avait tout compris. Il y a aussi les fellaghas et au début j'ai cru qu'il s'agissait de fées là-bas, cachées dans les collines. Mais ces fées-là ne nous veulent pas de bien. Et le général il s'appelle de Gaulle, c'est son nom. D'abord on pensait que c'était un ami mais il a retourné sa veste et une veste de général en plus, avec beaucoup de galons. C'est si compliqué à comprendre et il ne faut pas poser de questions! (61).

The above quotation, which foregrounds the narrator's naiveté, may be read as a metaphor for her community, which consequently appears as an innocent *peuple jeune*. Furthermore, her emphasis on the significance of distinctive gender roles from a young age reiterates Mediterranean ideals of motherhood and concepts of honour and shame which may at this stage be taken as literary markers of a communal *pied-noir* identity. Thus, at the age of seven, she claims that she and her nine-year-old sister Lisa have already begun their "apprentissage de bonnes mères de famille" (12), while she is keenly aware that the baby her mother is expecting at the beginning of

the story must be a boy for the sake of the family's honour (9). A close relationship with indigenous Algerian women also appears as part of her performance of childhood, for example with the family's maid, Keltoum, whom she imagines is her mother, and her best friend at school, Malika. A characteristic accent is presented as a further marker of the narrator's identity, which is a source of mockery when she enrols in school in France (90). The distinctive nature of this identity is also evident through the narrator's reference to typical *pied-noir* expressions, such as the following, which points to both an inherent optimism and modest expectations: "tant qu'on a un croûton de pain et de l'oignon, la vie vaut la peine d'être vécue!" (93). Moreover, as in *Le Coup de Sirocco*, the introduction of couscous, as well as merguez, to France is presented as a result of *pied-noir* heritage (94).

While Joé's family in Berreby's *L'Enfant pied-noir* includes both Catholics and Jews, Catholicism is privileged here. Thus, Jacqueline's parents are said to have met and married thanks to the Church, as her father and mother were looked after by the same minder as children, while their parents went to mass. The family's re-enactment of a live crib, with Lisa using their great-grandfather's cane to act as Joseph and the new baby, Marc, playing the role of the baby Jesus, echoes the nativity scene in *Le Premier Homme* and constructs the identity of the settlers in terms of well-intentioned pilgrims. Furthermore, their identity is differentiated from the metropolitan French as Jacqueline notes that her parents, ever loyal to their beliefs, do not send them to a secular school near their new home in France, instead choosing a convent school at some distance from where they live (89). Her statement on life in Algeria: "Dimanche = religion + famille" (37) also reiterates the family as a key feature of *pied-noir* identity. Religious occasions, such as Easter and First Holy Communions, as well as holidays, involve a large extended family. Indeed, there are numerous references to her extended family in the book, with the narrator claiming that a "vraie famille pied-noir" consists of countless cousins of all ages (24), and noting, on her arrival in France, that the *pieds-noirs* have family everywhere (80).

It is the presence of her extended family along with another crucial marker of their identity, a pioneering spirit, which enables Jacqueline and her immediate family to look forward to their future in France, as they decide to "«prospecter», chercher un nouveau chez-nous, une terre d'accueil, pionniers à leur tour comme avant eux leurs grands-parents" (85). Thus, unlike many of the the other novels studied, this one ends on a distinctly hopeful note as the narrator appears ready to adapt to life in

France. At the close of the novel, Jacqueline wakes up full of youthful energy and, on visiting her parents' new vineyard with "toute la famille", proclaims:

> Les vers de Lamartine que Félicie m'a tant fait répéter me reviennent en mémoire: *Et la famille, enracinée sur le coteau qu'elle a planté, refleurit d'année en année.* Voilà c'est là notre nouvelle terre et je sens que je vais l'aimer elle aussi (95, Gadal's emphasis).

In this way, Jacqueline and her family display a French identity that is constructed through literature and a love for the land and vines, but they also perform a uniquely *pied-noir* identity which is marked by entrepreneurial spirit, Christianity as opposed to secularism and an emphasis on the family as a key site of affective and ideological investment. Furthermore, her performance as a child enables her to construct a positive memory of the *pieds-noirs* without addressing the still contested political and historical situations of the colonial past. This leads us to explore narratives that are more productive in terms of addressing societal issues.

4.3 Productive Possibilites in Performance

Virginie Buisson's *L'Algérie ou la mort des autres* (1978) might usefully be explored as a potential counterpoint to the above texts. Its title recalls Jean Guéhenno's critical reflections on World War I, in which he served, in his *La Mort des autres* (1968).[99] Buisson's work has been described as autobiographical and its author as a *pied-noir*.[100] However, the author was born in 1944 in France and lived there until the age of 10.[101] This novel, written in the voice of a young girl who moves to Algeria from France at the age of eleven, is perhaps best considered, like most of the works studied, as semi-autobiographical. Its significance in disseminating information about the war is suggested by its continued publication in

[99] Jean Guéhenno, *La Mort des autres* (Paris: Grasset, 1968).
[100] Benjamin Stora, "Mémoires comparées: femmes françaises, femmes algériennes: Les écrits de femmes, la guerre d'Algérie et l'exil", in *L'Ère des décolonisations: Sélection de textes du colloque «Décolonisations comparées», Aix-en-Provence, 30 septembre-3 octobre 1993*, ed. Charles-Robert Ageron and Marc Michel (Paris: Karthala, 1995), 175. The book is also mentioned in Bouckaert-Ghesquiere's list of autobiographical children's novels. See Bouckaert-Ghesquiere, "Looking Back", 449.
[101] Virginie Buisson, *L'Algérie ou la mort des autres* (Paris: Gallimard, 1981). See the introductory biographical note.

collections aimed at women, children and adolescents.[102] Furthermore, the brief biographical note at the beginning implies that writing the narrative was personally cathartic for the author:

> Toute la guerre elle a vue, elle n'a rien demandé, elle disait comme ça pour elle, un jour j'écrirai un livre, il s'appellera *La mort des autres*. Elle a dit cela pendant quinze ans. Aujourd'hui il est là comme on le dit d'un enfant nouveau-né. Il est là et elle est au monde.

Buisson's laconic style, using phrases she describes as "taillées jusqu'à l'os",[103] is unusual. As mentioned in Chapter 2, both Roche and Smith have noted gender differences when interviewing male and female *pieds-noirs* about the Algerian war. Both recount women's particular tendency to focus on personal events in an emotional manner.[104] Smith suggests that men's contrasting tendency to recount events from the war as if reciting from a book, and without connecting them to their personal lives, suggests an active avoidance of memory which she contends, drawing on Stora's work in *La Gangrène et l'oubli* (1992), inhibits healing.[105] We might usefully note here that according to clinical psychologist and trauma specialist Kathleen Young, recounting traumatic experiences in a way that is disconnected from emotion does not promote healing.[106] However, while drawing on emotion is beneficial in allowing people to move on from traumatic events, such narratives work to "distort our recollection" of the relevant events.[107] Perhaps by not engaging emotionally with the subject, Buisson's narrative may therefore be considered to be a more reliable portrait of the war presented from a young girl's point of view. The liminal space between words and *les non-dits*, which, like the responses of Smith's male interviewees, appears indicative of repressed trauma, is also reflective of the narrator's by now familiar position between childhood and adulthood. Her outsider

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[102] The novel was originally published as part of La Pensée sauvage's "Espaces féminins" series, then republished in 1981 with illustrations as part of a "Folio junior" collection and again in 2012 as part of Gallimard Jeunesse's "Scripto" collection for adolescents.

[103] Buisson is cited by Geneviève Briot and André Cohen Aknin, "Des écrivains et la guerre d'Algérie", http://briot-cohenaknin.hautetfort.com/tag/virginie+buisson. Date accessed: 8 November 2011.

[104] Andrea L. Smith, *Colonial Memory and Postcolonial Europe: Maltese Settlers in Algeria and France* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006), 153-159. See also Roche, "La Perte et la parole", 531-533.

[105] Smith, *Colonial Memory and Postcolonial Europe*, 153-159.

[106] Kathleen Young, "Talking vs. Processing in Trauma Therapy", http://drkathleenyoung.wordpress.com/2011/06/09/talking-vs-processing-in-trauma-therapy/. Date accessed: 31 July 2013.

[107] James W. Pennebaker and Janel D. Seagal, "Forming a Story: The Health Benefits of Narrative", *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 55, no. 10 (1999): 1251.

status is further cemented as she is a "patos" (12), who belongs to neither the Arabo-Berber nor *pied-noir* communities.

The narrator destabilises stereotypes of childhood by drawing attention to conventions which she chooses to conform to in order to avoid punishment, noting:

> Il y a tout un code que je découvre petit à petit, d'abord il faut manger, obéir, ne pas traîner en faisant les courses, ne pas répondre à ma mère, donner mes jouets à mes frères, aimer être à la maison (25).

Moreover, she is adept at performing childhood and adult femininity as the occasion requires. Thus, she escapes from the role to which she is consigned "en jouant les sacristains" at the local church (30), where she quickly finishes her chores in order to spend time with the soldiers who are camped next to the presbytery. She also performs as a dutiful child in advance of a date with a soldier, noting that on the day in question, she is generous with her brother, helps her mother, avoids answering back, clears her plate and dresses in the clothes her mother picks for her (54-55). The narrator then changes her clothes in the church bell tower and puts on nail polish for her date (55). She also pretends to a boyfriend, Daniel, that she is seventeen when she is barely fourteen (47). Her ability to act a certain age therefore reveals that "Age, like gender, is shaped by a society's expectations and the performance of a populace to achieve what can be approximated as normative behaviour".[108]

The narrator's position as a young outsider who can perform both childhood and adulthood, and who is not, therefore, merely a symbol of youthful innocence, also appears as a helpful means of engaging with all sides in the war. Her detached descriptions of what she sees and hears convey the horrific torture perpetrated against Algerians, which her younger brothers are oblivious to and the army wives support. As with John Boyne's *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* (2006),[109] the realisation that such cruelty is possible becomes all the more shocking for the reader when viewed through the eyes of a young narrator:

> Sur le moment j'ai cru que quelqu'un s'était fait mal. Mais les femmes se sont mises à rire. Les enfants ont arrêté leurs jeux. Quelqu'un a deploré que les caves ne soient pas mieux isolées et que les interrogatoires se fassent l'après-midi. Les cris sont devenus prières. Les femmes ont rangé leur tricot, déplacé leur chaise et se sont installées plus loin. Les enfants ont suivi. Mes frères ont continué à jouer avec des fourmis. C'était juste après la sieste. Le sirocco s'était calmé; il restait la chaleur de la terre et la poussière rouge sur

[108] Brugger-Dethmers, "Cross-Dressing and Performativity", 84.
[109] John Boyne, *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* (London: Definitions, 2007).

> les murs. A l'heure du goûter, ma mère nous a rentrés. Elle a fermé les fenêtres sur les cris (56).

While the allusion to the Sirocco wind in *Le coup de Sirocco* evokes the turmoil of adolescence and of the Algerian war for *pied-noir* families, the reference to the passing of the calm Sirocco above is suggestive of the effects of a deliberate violence against the colonised population. Indeed, the presence of elderly women and children at the gates of the military base in which their loved ones are imprisoned (57) emphasises the impact of the war on indigenous families. Furthermore, like young Bruno's juxtaposition of normal family life in Boyne's *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* with the lives of the concentration camp prisoners on the other side of the fence, the narrator's description of being sent to fetch wine from a basement that is filled with prisoners begging for water dramatically highlights the mistreatment of prisoners:

> Ma mère m'a envoyée à la cave chercher du vin. J'ai descendu les marches, je n'ai pas supporté les corps entravés et je me suis sauvée, des hurlements plein le corps. Les caves étaient pleines de prisonniers, ils passaient leurs mains à travers les barreaux et réclamaient de l'eau (66-68).

Having heard someone crying out while being tortured, the narrator, the next day, asks a shepherd what "Bouyoukh" ("Papa") means (56). The implication that this young girl has heard another young person being tortured further emphasises the horror of the situation. Indeed, this scene recalls the torture of thirteen-year-old Saïd Ferdi by French soldiers, as described in his autobiography, *Un enfant dans la guerre*.[110] Despite excuses by the adults, who justify torture by citing brutal attacks against Europeans by the colonised population, the young narrator in Buisson's text links this violence to colonial injustice, through which children die of hunger:

> «Parmi eux [les prisoniers], il y a peut-être ceux qui ont coupé le sexe des soldats de Bousken.» Qui les a éventrés, pour quelle colère? Et les quinze cercueils alignés dans le jardin de l'église et le mépris des Européens et des enfants morts de faim dans un gourbi adossé à la ferme d'un colon.[111] La vérité éclatait (68).

Thus, the young narrator draws attention to the difficult situation of the colonised population and to the "racisme ordinaire, quotidien" (15) that she is taught

[110] Saïd Ferdi, *Un Enfant dans la guerre: témoignage* (Paris: Seuil, 1981), 42-43. This autobiography of a young boy captured by French soldiers and incorporated into their army is praised by Michel del Castillo, in his preface to the text, for its "candeur douloureuse", 5, and by various critics on the back cover, including Jules Roy, for bringing to light the horror of war from a child's perspective.
[111] A *gourbi* is a hut or simple dwelling.

as a child in Algeria. Moreover, the colonial administration is portrayed as being complicit in confining Muslim women to the domestic sphere as the narrator's parents withdraw her from a girls' primary school (where she is the only French pupil) due to the teacher's sole emphasis on keeping house and on knitting and sewing (17, 24).[112] The narrator's relationship with Nance, a teacher in the boys' primary school next door, can also be seen as an indictment of France's *mission civilisatrice*, despite the young narrator's romanticised vision of their trysts in his classroom after school. The narrator's fairytale romance, during which she feels "riche et généreuse, prête à tous les partages" (35), jars with the image of the school teacher's abuse of his position to take advantage of a young primary school girl: "Il disait: «Je veux que tu sois à moi.» Je ne comprenais pas bien, mais sa violence m'effrayait un peu lorsqu'il m'embrassait" (35). Furthermore, having abused his position, Nance suddenly announces that he is leaving for France and his sudden abandonment of her and Algeria prefigures the end of colonialism. Her descriptions of some of the soldiers' treatment of women and children also undermine the narrative of the French civilising mission: "Ils ont arraché en hurlant le voile des femmes, renversé les couffins de ceux qui avançait mal, éventré les charges des bourricots, répandu la semoule" (69). Thus, in the apocalyptic scenes at the end of the novel, it seems as though the spell of French Algeria has been broken as the narrator claims that her love story with the sea, which she previously considered her most certain relationship (76), is over: "La mer a perdu ses sortilèges" (88).

The war is also seen to provoke the sudden end of the narrator's childhood biologically and psychologically. When a soldier asks if he can kiss her, she does not dare to say yes although she wants him to, and in the next paragraph she notes in

[112] Diane Sambron suggests that proclaimed efforts by colonial authorities to emancipate indigenous Algerian women were in fact an attempt to cut the FLN off from an invaluable feminine base. See Diane Sambron, "La Politique d'émancipation du gouvernement français à l'égard des femmes algériennes pendant la guerre d'Algérie", in *Des hommes et des femmes en guerre d'Algérie: Actes du colloque international des 7 et 8 octobre 2002 à l'auditorium du CNRS, Paris*, ed. Jean-Charles Jauffret and Charles-Robert Ageron (Paris: Autrement, 2003), 226. Gouda and Clancy-Smith further suggest that efforts to educate indigenous women were born of a fear of the intermarriage of westernised indigenous men with settler women, a threat that would be reduced if indigenous women were educated for future marriages with indigenous men. Fanny Colonna contends that indigenous men were similarly educated so as to be neither too far from their own culture nor too close to the colonising culture, in order to maintain a distance between the colonising and colonised populations. See Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda, "Introduction", in *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism*, ed. Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1998), 17. See also Fanny Colonna, "Educating Conformity in French Colonial Algeria", in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), 346-370.

typically laconic style that he was killed in an ambush (58). In an echo of Marie Cardinal's bleeding, her trauma manifests itself in physical bleeding as she begins to menstruate (59). The novel might usefully be compared here to Marie-Jeanne Perez's *Gouttes de sang* (1991), which focuses on a *pied-noir* girl's "long awaited first experience of menstruation" during the Algerian war.[113] This strategy of privileging the child's view and the intimately feminine against the backdrop of the liberation struggle of the indigenous population may be said to destabilise "the apparent certainties of the colonial situation [...] particularly its foundation on a set of binary oppositions: inside/outside, male/female, Self/Other, colonizer/colonized, civilized/savage".[114] The defamiliarising sexuality of the young protagonist of *Gouttes de sang*, who, in a role-playing game plays an Arab rapist,[115] may be linked to the equally disturbing precocious sexuality of the narrator of *L'Algérie ou la mort des autres*. Buisson's novel thus subverts conventional depictions of what Rose considers to be a "fantasy of childhood" in literature.[116] Although the narrator's childhood definitively ends when she witnesses the death of Jacques (a young *pied-noir* conscript with whom she falls in love) at the hands of *Algérie française* activists (92-93), she does not look back to idealised childhood innocence. Buisson's text does not, therefore, perpetuate nostalgia and does not appear as an attempt to "recolonise" Algeria through literature.

The possibilities opened up by the novel of adolescence for exploring mental instability have been noted by critics,[117] and this issue is also alluded to here. On seeing the soldiers carrying a tarpaulin, which she is told covers the tortured body of an Algerian, the narrator takes her first "cachets de l'oubli" (89). Just as Holden Caulfield's famous narrative from an apparent asylum appears to be the result of the sick behaviour of adults,[118] the narrator of this story ends up "absente" and perhaps spends some time in hospital, stating that she remembers a brown corridor and crawling on tiles, before leaving for France in September 1962 (93). This narrator's mental instability also recalls that of Cardinal, as well as Fanon's and Sigg's work on

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[113] Philip Dine, "(Still) À la recherche de l'Algérie perdue: French Fiction and Film, 1992-2001", *Historical Reflections* 28, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 259-260.
[114] Ibid., 260.
[115] Ibid., 259-260.
[116] Rose, *The Case of Peter Pan*, 138.
[117] Hilton and Nikolajeva contend that "Given its high degree of instability, the intuitive imaginative possibilities open to writers who seek to get inside the adolescent mind can extend its framework beyond the range of normality". See Hilton and Nikolajeva, "Introduction: Time of Turmoil", 14.
[118] See J.D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye* (London: Penguin, 1958).

the trauma caused to those who inflict colonial violence, in addition to those on whom it is inflicted. It is useful to point out here that the narrator's complicity in this violence is implied by her failure to intervene when she witnesses a soldier forcing a bottle of beer into the mouth of a young indigenous girl,[119] and when she fails to engage with the prisoners in her basement who cry out for water (66-69). Her active participation in colonial violence is also evident when she joins a soldier in trampling on some yellow melons (significant as a racist evocation of Arabs) and then eating one in front of an old Arab man the soldier has been harassing (50-52). Her unease at the repudiation of the colonised population is particularly evident when she destroys a can of paint that is being used by the soldiers to mark a cross on every *gourbi* (hut) in the village during a census (50). In consequence, this text differs from the narratives studied above as the narrator's mental instability is overtly associated with colonial injustice.

This novel's engagement with the trauma caused to both sides during colonisation may be considered as part of a cathartic process. We may now turn to another representation of childhood that has a similarly restrained style, Algerian-born author Jean-Noël Pancrazi's *Madame Arnoul* (1995). The appeal of this later novel to a wider audience is evident from the awards it has received.[120] This may be attributed to the fact that, like Buisson's *L'Algérie ou la mort des autres,* this text does not dwell on emotions and does not, therefore, appear polemical. Again, it may be considered semi-autobiographical.[121] The young narrator appears as another outsider who is largely alone except for the company of a neighbour who becomes his second mother. This is the eponymous Madame Arnoul, herself an outsider who arrived in the small town of Batna in the Aurès from Alsace as an adolescent.

The narrator's performance of masculinity is of particular interest to our study as it varies from the normative heterosexuality emphasised in the majority of works studied so far. It is useful to point out here that sociologist Michael A.

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[119] This description recalls the brutal torture of Muslim women such as Louisette Ighilahriz, who described being raped with objects by French soldiers during the war. See Ighilahriz, *Algérienne*, 113.
[120] According to the Société des gens de lettres, Pancrazi won the Prix Maurice Genevoix, Prix Albert Camus and Prix du Livre Inter for this novel. See Anonymous, "Biographie de Jean-Noël Pancrazi", Société des gens de lettres, http://www.sgdl.org/culturel/les-prix-litteraires/les-prix-de-la-session-de-printemps/575. Date accessed: 4 October 2011.
[121] The novel's autobiographical elements are pointed to by William Cloonan and Jean-Philippe Postel, "From maison d'édition to librairie: The Novel in 1995", *The French Review* 69, no. 6 (May 1996): 908. The novel is described as "En partie autobiographique" by Alawa Toumi, "Review: Madame Arnoul by Jean-Noël Pancrazi", *The French Review* 70, no. 2 (December 1996): 354.

Messner, drawing on recent scholarship, suggests that the performance of gender by children varies according to the social context.[122] He notes that "children are active agents in the creation of their own worlds – often in direct or partial opposition to values or 'roles' to which adult teachers or parents are attempting to socialize them".[123] He further contends that while "gender varies in salience from situation to situation [...] these varying moments of gender salience are not free-floating; they occur in social contexts such as schools and in which gender is formally and informally built into the division of labor, power structure, rules and values".[124] By the same token, the narrator's performance of childhood in *Madame Arnoul* gives him more freedom to perform masculinity as he chooses, particularly as he is frequently away from the social context of interaction with a wider group. Thus, he describes tender sexual interactions with another boy, Jean-Pierre Vizzavona, although he admits that in public he feigns nonchalance when returning from Jean-Pierre's house (40-41). Moreover, Jean-Pierre's later romantic relationship with a girl is witnessed by the narrator when both are involved in group activities with their contemporaries – at a Holy Communion party and on another occasion when the group enjoy increased freedom from their parents, who are preoccupied by the worsening situation of the war (50, 56). Thus, it appears that non-adults like Jean-Pierre are afforded the freedom of not performing normative heterosexual masculinity, depending on the social context. This suggestion is also made by the *pied-noir* character Henri in French director André Techiné's film *Les Roseaux sauvages* (1994), which uses the adolescent gaze to approach France's painful colonial legacy with regard to *pied-noir* and metropolitan French youths, although not the Algerian population.[125] In the privacy of their boarding school washroom in

[122] Michael A. Messner, "Barbie Girls Versus Sea Monsters: Children Constructing Gender", *Gender & Society* 14, no. 6 (2000): 765-784. Messner's discussion draws particularly on the work of Barrie Thorne, *Gender Play: Girls and Boys in School* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1993).
[123] Messner, "Barbie Girls Versus Sea Monsters, 765.
[124] Ibid., 766. As well as drawing on Barrie Thorne in his *Gender Play* here, Messner draws on R.W. Connell, *Gender and Power* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987).
[125] Adolescents again appear as a site of truth here as the film suggests that adults can learn tolerance and flexibility from a younger generation. Close-ups of their bodies and the landscape as they play sport and swim invite pleasurable viewing rather than a reflection on the grim realities of war. Although this award-winning film was popular with French audiences, another critically acclaimed film which evokes the realities of the conflict for all concerned through the gaze of a young indigenous Algerian boy was less popular. This second film, *Cartouches gauloises* (2007), was made by Mehdi Charef, writer and director of the successful and respected film *Le Thé au harem d'Archi Ahmed* (1985). For viewing figures of Téchiné's 1994 film see Anonymous, "Les Entrées à Paris", *Le*

South-West France, Henri tells François, who is younger and whom he suspects of engaging in homosexual activities: "À ton âge, je faisais pareil, j'en ai bien profité. C'est normal, c'est la vie".[126] For the narrator of *Madame Arnoul*, his parents are "trop tolérants, ou insuffisamment pieux, pour le croire vraiment" when a priest to whom he confesses his "plaisirs clandestins" informs them that he is a pervert (42). It appears that his youth is a factor in his parents' decision to ignore his failure to "do" masculinity correctly.

Once again, the narrator's youth enables him to draw attention to the shocking violence of war. He criticises the violence committed by the authorities as he describes, for example:

> le soir où il m'avait semblé distinguer des dizaines de corps enflamés qui dévalaient les pentes de la montagne d'Aïn Timor avant de basculer et de disparaître dans le noir des anciennes carrières de marbre, le vent de soufre, de bois et de chairs brûlés qui atteignait la terrasse me glaçait d'une colère impuissante et triste (55).

We also feel his shame and disgust at colonial injustice as he continues:

> J'étais envahi par une honte désemparée lorsque, sur le chemin du lycée, je voyais la masse silencieuse des musulmans derrière les rouleaux de fils de fer barbelés. Les soldats les fouillaient un à un, soulevaient leurs gandouras avec le bout des fusils,[127] juste pour exhiber la nudité de leurs corps grelottant de peur et de misère, avant de les obliger à monter sur les plate-formes des camions qui les conduisaient vers les «centres d'hébergement». Les bâches retombaient derrrière eux comme des rideaux de mort (58).

The narrator questions the concept of Latin Africa as evidence of the "«grandeur» dont [...] nous étions les héritiers", by rejecting this premise during a school trip to a Roman amphitheatre (99). He is haunted by the sight of female detainees working in paddyfields during this same trip, fearing his beloved Madame Arnoul may be among them, following her arrest due to suspected activities on behalf of the liberation movement (100). His youthful viewpoint also serves to criticise the OAS, as he describes understanding the significance of the mysterious acronym on witnessing an old Arab lady being shot (104-105).

Moreover, the narrator underlines the performative aspects of adults' behaviour. Indeed, he alludes to a perceived need to perform an exaggerated

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Monde, 1 June 1995. For statistics of ticket sales for Charef's 2007 film, see Anonymous, "Le Cinéma; plus de 3 millions de ratatouillophiles", *Le Parisien*, 14 August 2007.

[126] André Téchiné, *Les Roseaux sauvages* (France: Studio Canal, 1994).

[127] A *gandoura* is a long tunic.

masculinity due to France's loss of Indo-China as he notes that his uncle Noël is, "de retour d'Indochine [...] avide, sans doute, de se retrouver sur la terre d'une autre colonie où il pourrait encore régner" (34). This concept of powerful masculinity is undermined when the narrator's father and Madame Arnoul's husband join the "unités territoriales" and set off to guard a road – their ill-fitting uniforms and embarrassed air imply that their behaviour is not natural, as the narrator notes: "ils avaient plutôt l'allure de soldats de comédie montant vers un décor de fortins et un ciel de guerre imaginaire" (81-82). The performance of the army is also shown to be theatrical and even meaningless as, when the soldiers suddenly depart without warning, he states that their rubbish "semblait l'élément de décor d'une représentation finie" (101). Similarly, he suggests that the colonising women's exaggerated make-up is an indication of a performance that is revealed as such in the horror of war, as Madame Arnoul, newly released from prison, mocks them for their "fards outranciers de femmes qui s'efforçaient de masquer leur peur et, s'éloignant vers les allées Bocca, devenaient les sosies hagards et désarticulés des mannequins qu'elles avaient joué à être lorsqu'en cette saison elles défilaient devant la villa du juge de paix en arborant leurs nouvelles tenues d'été" (117-118).

Both Buisson's *L'Algérie ou la mort des autres* and Pancrazi's *Madame Arnoul* may therefore be regarded as genuine attempts to engage with the undeniable trauma of the war on both sides. A youthful view is particularly helpful in tackling the issue of torture and subverting stereotypes of childhood and gender, which are shown to be performative, as well as destabilising normative heterosexuality. This said, the narrator of *L'Algérie ou la mort des autres* invites Edward Said's critique of Orientalism with her romanticised descriptions of Arab women (17, 33, 42). Her fear that those close to her – Jacques and her family – will die, hence her fear of "la mort des autres" referred to in the title of the book, also suggests an overarching sympathy with the metropolitan French and French Algerian populations (86). Historic events, when occasionally referred to, further suggest a prevailing sympathy with the settler population.[128] The young narrator of *Madame Arnoul*, meanwhile, appears Camusian in his desire not to choose sides, expressing his unease when some classmates attempt to transform him, "à mon insu en porte-parole d'une cause à laquelle je

[128] There are oblique allusions to rejoicing on 13 May 1958, the effective military coup that led to de Gaulle's return to power, as well as to the rebel Generals' failed putsch in April 1961 and the Rue d'Isly shootings (35-36, 83, 85).

n'étais pas prêt à adhérer" (59). Through his friendship with a classmate, Mohammed Khair-Eddine,[129] he also points to a potential fraternity between the colonising and colonised populations in an imagined, very French model of the Republic:

> une petite république à deux, une enclave de paix, un pays rêvé où il n'y aurait que des classes à l'infini, où la seule rumeur serait celle du crissement des craies sur les ardoises et les seuls drapeaux ceux destinés à fêter les élèves qui, montant sur une tribune, tiendraient leur diplôme de bourse blotti contre le coeur (97).

Significantly, the narrator's friendship with this character undercores the difficult future awaiting Algerians as Mohammed despairingly asks: "Pourquoi vous partez?" and looks at the narrator with "un regard de clairvoyance attristée – devinant peut-être, déjà, les dérives, les intolérances et les amnésies d'une société nouvelle à l'écart de laquelle il se plaçait d'avance" (131). Furthermore, the narrator's premature loss of innocence, as symbolised by his actions as a go-between for soldiers and indigenous Algerian maids (in an echo of the famous L.P. Hartley novel cited above) and his self-professed identity as an eternal "enfant perdu" (138) upon leaving Algeria still suggest that this tragic outsider may be read as a representative of the *pied-noir* community.

4.4 A Lasting Legacy for the Next Generation

Works focusing on French Algerian childhoods continue to be published. A more recent offering, *La Petite fille sur la photo: La guerre d'Algérie à hauteur d'enfant* (2012), by journalist Brigitte Benkemoun, which received considerable attention in the French media, is worth considering briefly here.[130] In some reviews, this book on

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[129] This name may suggest the Moroccan poet and novelist Mohammed Khaïr-Eddine, who wrote in French due to his education but in so doing revolted using "guerrilla linguistics". This writer's sense of disenchantment with the political situation following Moroccan independence has been documented. See Lynne Rogers, "The Guerilla Linguistics of Mohammed Khaïr-Eddine", in *Writing the Nation: Self and Country in Post-Colonial Imagination*, ed. John C. Hawley (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996), 108. Comparisons between Khaïr-Eddine's and Kateb Yacine's "dynamitage systématique de la langue française" are drawn by Charles Bonn. See Charles Bonn, "Paysages littéraires algériens des années 90 et post-modernisme littéraire maghrébin", in *Paysages littéraires algériens des années 90: Témoigner d'une tragédie?*, ed. Charles Bonn and Farida Boualit (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999), 8. The narrator's friend's name also recalls Khaïr Eddin, one of the Barbarossa brothers who reigned in Algiers during the sixteenth century. For a historical account of the brothers, see Charles Farine, *Les Barberousse: Deux frères pirates au XVIe siècle* (La Rochelle: La Découvrance, 2007). Farine's text was originally published in 1869.

[130] See Gilles Chenaille, "Dossier: La sélection littéraire du mois d'avril: La petite fille sur la photo, de Brigitte Benkemoun", *MarieClaire*, 19 July 2013. Anonymous, "Plus de cent livres pour le 50e

children who left Algeria in 1962 is situated as part of a timely decision to "donner la parole aux enfants",[131] and a younger generation's will and ability to break taboos on the Algerian war are underlined.[132] Yet works by Buisson and Pancrazi, both of whom left Algeria at a young age, suggest that taboo-breaking texts were published as far back as the late 1970s.[133] Benkemoun is a *pied-noir* of Jewish extraction. In *La Petite fille sur la photo*, she investigates her own family history and interviews others, including well-known figures such as Benjamin Stora, who left Algeria aged eleven, Jean-Jacques Jordi, who left aged seven and Jacques and Bernard Attali, who left aged twelve. Benkemoun's text diverges from nostalgic evocations of Algeria as she reveals that her parents did not dwell on the past, erased traces of their accent and encouraged her to believe that leaving Algeria as a family when she was a child had a positive "effet aubaine".[134] This book does not attempt to rehabilitate colonialism but it does encourage sympathy for the *pieds-noirs* as the author seeks to deconstruct her family's narrative and uncovers details which were previously unknown to her, such as the deaths of many settlers at Oran on 5 July 1962. By the same token, an emphasis on the particular trauma caused to children – such as Nicole Guiraud, a ten-year-old victim of the 1956 Milk Bar bomb in Algiers (interviewed by the author), and the tearful *pied-noir* girl in the newspaper photo which prompted Benkemoun's initial decision to research the subject – contrasts with the famous image of young Delphine Renard. Benkemoun's initial disappointment on her arrival in Algeria fifty years after independence and her departure, when she does not encounter the Camusian community which she had imagined, is of particular interest as it serves as a significant example of Camus's legacy with regard to a younger generation of *pieds-noirs* (178).[135] This leads us to consider a final text as a radical break from the

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anniversaire de la fin de la guerre d'Algérie", AFP, 4 February 2012, LexisNexis. Estelle Devic, "Algérie: une photo et deux destins réunis", *L'Indépendant: Les Journaux du Midi*, 30 October 2012.

[131] Edith Serero, "Brigitte Benkemoun Pleure Ô Pays Bien-Aimé", *Paris Match*, 24-30 May 2012.

[132] See, for example, François-Guillaume Lorrain, "Les enfants brisent le silence; Algérie", *Le Point*, 15 March 2012. Lydie Steurel, "Les derniers tabous de la guerre sans nom", *Marianne*, 24 March 2012.

[133] For details of Pancrazi's youth, see Jérôme Garcin, "Jean-Noël Pancrazi se souvient de l'Algérie", *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 29 March 2012.

[134] Brigitte Benkemoun, *La Petite fille sur la photo: La guerre d'Algérie à hauteur d'enfant* (Paris: Fayard, 2012), 29.

[135] Of her encounter with her friend's sister, Zohra, Benkemoun notes: "j'espérais trouver un double ou une lointaine cousine qui m'aurait prouvé, comme l'écrivait Camus, qu'un «même ciel, une nature impérieuse, la communauté de nos destins [auraient] été plus forts [...] que les barrières naturelles ou les fossés artificiels entretenus par la colonisation»". She is disappointed, however, by the fact that Zohra wears the hidjab. Benkemoun's quotation is from *Cahiers Albert Camus* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987), 39.

others studied, both linguistically and culturally. Claire Messud's *The Last Life* (1999) is set in France and America. The original publication of this novel in English before its translation into French as *La Vie après* (2001), attests to its appeal beyond a *pied-noir* audience. Nevertheless, it bears the hallmarks of narratives by a previous generation of *pieds-noirs*, including Camus, and is consequently worth studying here.

While many of the texts studied purport to be "true histories", Messud insists that *The Last Life* is not autobiographical.[136] Yet Carolyn A. Durham notes that: "The autobiographical nature of the novel is clearly in part a question of interpretation, since Messud's father and paternal grandparents were of *pied-noir* origin; she also spent the summers of her childhood and adolescence in the South of France, although she was essentially raised in Canada and Australia".[137] Critics such as William H. Pritchard have also commented on the "autobiographical feel" of the novel,[138] which suggests its resemblance to the other accounts of young adulthood studied. The young narrator of this story grows up in France and later goes to boarding school in America, where, according to a biography on the front page, Messud herself now lives.[139] The narrator of this text, having never been to Algeria, is thus distanced from the previously examined young narrative voices, who poignantly evoke personal experiences of the war of independence. Furthermore, the novel has been described as "the traditional nineteenth-century bildungsroman" as well as an "allegory of France".[140] More specifically, however, the novel may be read as an allegory for the *pieds-noirs* as a community and the continued identity and memory politics with which they are associated.

The novel fits in with "the powerful metaphor that has been set up around young adult experience", according to Hilton and Nikolajeva, as contemporary novels link "society's turbulence, its most pressing and disturbing issues, with the adolescent's quest for identity in coming of age".[141] In this case, the narrator's name, Sagesse, evokes the concept of youth as a site of wisdom from which society's problems can be exposed. Sagesse occupies a familiar liminal space between

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136 Carolyn A. Durham, "Mosaics of the Might-Have-Been: Metaphor, Migration and Multiculturalism in Claire Messud's The Last Life", *Journal of Narrative Theory* 32, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 181.

137 Ibid., 200, n.2. Messud also discusses her *pied-noir* father and grandfather in her article, "Camus & Algeria: The Moral Question", *The New York Review of Books*, 7 November 2013.

138 William H. Pritchard, "Fiction Chronicle", *The Hudson Review* 53, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 141.

139 Claire Messud, *The Last Life* (London: Picador, 1999).

140 Durham, "Mosaics of the Might-Have-Been", 182, 191.

141 Hilton and Nikolajeva, "Introduction: Time of Turmoil", 9.

childhood and adulthood. Although she reveals that she is a "history of ideas" (375) graduate student at Columbia University, she claims that she has been living a largely interior life up until now and her admission, at the end of the book, that she feels ready to open up and reveal her true self to a man for the first time – a newly arrived Algerian immigrant called Hamed – appears to symbolise her imminent entry into adulthood, which, as noted by Hilton and Nikolajeva, is marked in novels of adolescence by grappling with death and sexuality. Her voice, which focuses on a year in her life from almost fifteen years old to the aftermath of her father's suicide shortly before her sixteenth birthday, appears replete with possibilities for coming to a new understanding of the world – a process which is denied to blissfully unaware children and world-weary adults, although she is self-consciously aware that such possibilites are also frequently missed by adolescents due to their lack of maturity:

> Adolescence [...] is a curious station on the route from ignorant communion to our ultimate isolation, the place where words and silences reveal themselves to be meaningful and yet where, too young to acknowledge that we cannot gauge their meaning, we imagine it for ourselves and behave as if we understood (32).

As the daughter of a French Algerian father and an American mother, Sagesse also occupies a liminal space between cultures and she acknowledges, when she decides to go to boarding school in America as her sixteenth birthday approaches, that she "won't belong" in America any more than she belongs in France, despite having lived there all her life (333). Moreover, Messud imagined the characters conversing in French and then translated their dialogue into English, resulting in a difficult task for its subsequent French translator, who described "French resounding through the sentence" of the original version.[142] Thus, Durham notes that the novel "unfolds in an intermediary and multilingual space, at once and in-between France, America, and colonialist Algeria".[143] Furthermore, she points out that the reader is trapped in a liminal space by the structure of the novel, which comprises flashbacks and flashes forward.[144]

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[142] Durham, "Mosaics of the Might-Have-Been", 180.
[143] Ibid. Durham argues that the space between the original version, *The Last Life*, and the French version, *La Vie après*, allows us an insight into both the French life that Sagesse will reject and the American life that she will turn towards.
[144] Ibid., 189.

Sagesse, therefore, is ideally placed to harness what Kristeva calls the "open psychic structure" of the adolescent state,[145] as well as her linguistic and cultural hybridity, to highlight society's issues. In this case, Sagesse's attempts to deconstruct the myths that she has been told about her *pied-noir* family since she was a child draw attention to the significance of apocryphal histories about the colonial past. From the beginning of the novel, Sagesse underlines the unreliability of her personal history, noting:

> The beginning, as I take it, was the summer night of my fifteenth year when my grandfather shot at me. In this way every story is made up, its shape imposed: the beginning was not really then, any more than was the day of my brother's birth, or, indeed, of mine. Nor is it strictly true that my grandfather shot *at me*: I was not, by chance, in the line of fire; he did not know that I was there. But it was an event, the first in my memory, after which nothing was the same again (2).

Having also reminded us that "Stories are made up, after all, as much of what is left out" (8), the narrator's personal story points to what Wood calls collective "*lieux d'oubli*",[146] or the deliberate avoidance of some memories, as well as to the performative nature of her family's and society's collective memory. She must, for example, distil the mythical versions of tales about her paternal *pied-noir* grandfather, Jacques LaBasse, told by her grandmother "with reverent indulgence", and those "repeated with a sneer" and with a different slant by her American mother in order to "cull the essence of the man, who was so resolutely divorced from them [the stories] in his own person" (55). While her grandmother "wove a narrative out of the lives of the LaBasses" and her mother "unravelled these stories [...] and put them together again another way, with a different, darker meaning", she observes both women joining forces as her grandfather goes on trial for injuring one of Sagesse's friends, having shot at a group of youths while they took a night-time swim in his hotel's pool without his permission. During the trial, both women weave the family stories "even tighter" so as "to keep the family whole" (192-193). Sagesse also admits that events are "filtered, by faulty memory, into a shape that is now useful to us" (290), and that certain people do not fit into the family's pioneering narrative, but rather fragments of relatives are "pressed into the mosaic of my grandparents' path [...] a way simultaneously to remember and to forget those who fell by the wayside,

[145] Kristeva, "The Adolescent Novel", 8.

[146] Nancy Wood, *Vectors of Memory: Legacies of Trauma in Postwar Europe* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), 10. Wood's emphasis.

who were lost on the road to the Bellevue [Hotel] and success" (289). This text is therefore unusual in consciously drawing attention to the manner in which narratives of memory are woven to unify a *pied-noir* community in exile.

Sagesse also points to the performative nature of identity. Her mother, knowing little about France's colonial history, projects a certain concept of French identity onto her *pied-noir* husband when they first meet, deciding he is a "male Marianne" (216). Thus, identity appears as what Butler calls a "regulatory fiction"[147] – one which Sagesse herself also performs, according to what the social context requires. As a "shape-shifting" (136) adolescent, she consciously performs when interacting with her boyfriend Thibaud, noting that their conversation seems to be a rehearsal of memorised lines (87). She also performs differently depending on which American relatives she interacts with, when on a summer trip, and when in the company of pot-smoking teenagers she befriends during the trial, who are also playing a role. Furthermore, when she moves to America to attend boarding school after her father's death, she is "determined to master my guise more enchantingly than my mother had hers" (358).

The narrator's reference to drag with regard to her American mother's efforts "to impersonate a Frenchwoman" is particularly noteworthy as perhaps a self-conscious allusion to Butler's theorising on the imitative nature of gender identity: "something in her face, in the shape of her head or the way that she held it, gave away her foreignness, the way a transvestite is betrayed by her wrists or the line of her back" (7). Vicki Bell, drawing on Butler, emphasises the performance of gender as a form of mimesis that is necessary for cultural survival.[148] The compulsion for mimicry may also be regarded as part of the legacy of colonialism, as both the colonised and colonising populations sought to mimic certain codes of behaviour for the cultural survival of each. As Homi Bhabha states in his essay, "Of Mimicry and Man", "mimicry emerges as one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge",[149] with mimicry of the colonising population by the colonised appearing as both "resemblance and menace".[150] Much like Butler's gender-centred concept of drag, mimicry can therefore highlight the constructed

[147] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1999), 175.
[148] Vikki Bell, "Mimesis as Cultural Survival: Judith Butler and Anti-Semitism", in *Performativity and Belonging*, ed. Vikki Bell (London: Sage, 1999), 133-161.
[149] Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 85. For the whole essay, see 85-92.
[150] Ibid., 86.

nature of colonial identities, as "The *menace* of mimicry is its *double* vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority".[151] *The Last Life* appears to be a self-consciously postcolonial text in so far as Sagesse draws attention to her mother's mimicry of what she believes to be French culture. Her mother was strongly encouraged in this regard by her mother-in-law but the identity she mimics is revealed as an imitation of a *pied-noir* identity which itself appears as an outdated construct from the colonial era: "Not till too late did she realize that the recipes and expressions she had so studiously mimicked, until they inseparably constituted her French self, were the antiquated trivia of an Algerian life no longer extant, or rather, existing only in such households as her own, and as a result of virtuosic mimicry all round" (224). Sagesse's searing gaze therefore enables her to point out the artifical nature of identities which Bhabha might describe as being born of "colonial power and knowledge".

The constructed nature of *pied-noir* identity is also alluded to by Sagesse's anecdote about her grandmother's comments on a traditional cake, *la mouna*. Although her grandmother perceives this cake as a distinguishing marker of her identity, she admits that she does not like it, but rather "the idea of it". Yet she seems taken aback when Sagesse suggests that Zohra, her housekeeper in France, might like to take it home. The older lady's statement, "I think they like stickier cakes, as a rule" (279), implies that persistent efforts to mimic an identity informed by colonialism have lead to the maintenance of such power structures in postcolonial France. One friend of Sagesse's grandparents, Madame Darty, similarly reiterates the binary oppositions of the colonial situation when she states that Arab teenagers "get their fun from terrorizing us" (275). By the same token, Sagesse's grandfather, Jacques, expresses xenophobic views which exclude his American daughter-in-law, his grandchildren and even himself, as a *pied-noir* of Italian and Maltese extraction, from a "pure" French identity which he nevertheless believes he represents. His exaggerated nationalism may be taken here as an example of what Clarisse Buono calls "surassimilation", as some *pieds*-noirs, having represented France abroad, felt themselves to be patriotic representatives of a "pure" nation, which paradoxically affirmed their own cultural difference.[152] Thus, when commenting on the deaths of

[151] Ibid., 88.
[152] Clarisse Buono, *Pieds-noirs de père en fils* (Paris: Balland, 2004), 41, 61.

three young people who acidentally kill themselves when the bomb they had planned to use in a French nightclub frequented by Arabs blows up, Jacques, exclaims:

> the FN's [*Front National'*s] not the problem [...]. It's just a symptom of the problem. Of the problems. Plural. The problems that this nation faces, overrun with immigrants – Arabs, Africans, the English-speakers, all of them – our culture assailed on all sides. Our children, for God's sake, building bombs for no reason! And our government – this decrepit, farcical liar who fancies himself emperor [Mitterrand] – our government has nothing to say about it, nothing at all! (24).

Sagesse's narrative is therefore particularly productive in revealing the constructed nature of *pied-noir* memory and of identity and its potential, in its exaggerated form, for facilitating xenophobia. This said, the narrator ultimately comes down on the side of the former settlers. When, bereft of friends, she begins reading up on Algeria, she concludes that the *pieds-noirs* continue to pay the price for believing an illusion maintained by the French administration:

> France's error made flesh, the *pieds-noirs*, and with them, the *harkis*, were guilty simply for existing. In the national narrative, my father's family was a distasteful emblem, linked by circumstance, not only to the vicious undeclared war of their homeland, but in dark historical shame to the collaborationists of Vichy and, further back still, to the ugliest excesses of the Dreyfus affair. St. Augustine and Camus might have been Algeria's most celebrated offspring, but the former colonials' most vocal champion, at that late date, was no Algerian at all, was Jean-Marie Le Pen [...]. This was the political voice of my grandfather's people – and inevitably, of my father's too – the bitter grizzling of those who fought for Catholicisim and a nostalgic ideal of France, a pure France that would, and did, label me 'foreign' for my American mother (my *pied-noir* father, on the other hand, was foreign only to the great majority). My family believed in a country that could want no part of them, would rather they had been gloriously martyred in Algeria, memorialized in a curly arch or two at metropolitan intersections, and conveniently forgotten (240-241).

The positioning of *pied-noir* families here as scapegoats for colonial history is familiar, as is their associated link with the exceptionally difficult situation of the *harkis*. In the above quotation, historic anti-Semitism in France is also underlined, while far-Right politician Jean-Marie Le Pen's non-*pied-noir* identity is contrasted with the humanism of Algeria's "offspring" – St Augustine and Camus. Moreover, the *pieds-noirs* who follow leaders such as Le Pen appear to be successfully mimicking (or, to borrow Buono's term, "overassimilating") an exclusionary concept of French identity which is underscored by the nation's current practices – not just its treatment of immigrants from the former colonies but also its distaste for the former

settlers and its desire to erase them from the national narrative through processes of memorialisation that constitute what Wood calls *lieux d'oubli* rather than Pierre Nora's famous *lieux de mémoire*.

Thus, Sagesse draws attention to an urgent need for the French nation as a whole to confront its colonial past, while the book's publication appropriately if coincidentally coincides with France's belated official recognition of the war. Indeed, the unfavourable lives of characters of Algerian ancestry in the novel, for example Sami who is expelled from school, his girlfriend Lahou who aborts their baby and the aforementioned Zohra, who lives in an HLM on the far side of town, may be taken as a result of the "boomerang" effects of colonialism. However, Sagesse ultimately appears to excuse the *pied-noir* population from their role in the colonial past. Indeed, her side has been chosen since the beginning, when, during her elderly grandfather's trial, she realises that she cannot choose her friends over family and compares her situation, "where every choice was wrong", to that of Camus (182). The trial of a *pied-noir* for a rash act of violence may be a self-conscious attempt to remind us of Meursault in *L'Étranger*, and indeed the novel is peppered with references to Camus, as well as to St Augustine. Of particular significance is Sagesse's reiteration of the myth of lost opportunities by imagining a Camusian scenario for her father's secret half-brother born to the family's maid in Algeria, about whom the family have no information but whom she christens Hamed. In the narrator's vision, Hamed's only chance of happiness would have been to have grown up with her father, Alexandre. During the Algerian war, the half-brothers would then have seen the situation through each other's eyes and, if this had happened on a large scale, the outcome of the war would have been different: "Camus' dream – the city of white stone flashing in the sunshine while its life, a fully lived, multichromatic life providing common succour to every shade and faith and diverse history of the Mediterranean basin – might have been possible" (324). References here to Algeria's *décennie noire* – a period which Sagesse feels would have made a chosen life in Algeria impossible for Hamed, and to racism in France which she feels would have made life in France difficult had he emigrated after the Algerian war, appear to condemn both nations for missed opportunities for harmony (322, 320). Sagesse, in her vision of a possibly fraternal relationship between the coloniser and colonised, goes as far as to allude to the possibilities for *métissage*. Thus, she notes that Saint Augustine was of Berber and Roman origin. Furthermore, she highlights a "myth, or

perhaps fact" involving a group of nuns who landed at Ténès, west of Algiers, in the nineteenth century and wed local men when they found few living women left in the town, which had been swept by an illness (324).

Sagesse also emphasises her family's "burden of Original Sin" (1), which is symbolised for her by her severely mentally and physically disabled brother, whose name, Etienne Parfait, positions him as a permanent site of lost perfection. Moreover, this burden applies to the *pied-noir* community more generally as she notes that it was St Augustine of Hippo (later Bône, now Annaba) who theorised the concept of Original Sin and hence made it a communal possession: "Ours, as a personal heritage, a gift indeed, most particularly for us, the Europeans of North Africa, was the doctrine of Original Sin" (174). The *pieds-noirs*, therefore, and particularly young Sagesse who is distanced from Algeria, appear to shoulder the burden of colonial wrongs despite not having personally sinned in this regard. Moreover, despite her recognition of colonial Algeria's violent beginning or "blood-soaked soil" (324), her reiteration of the pioneering myth emphasises the courage of early settlers, such as Tata Christine, a "solo traveller" who spent the final days of her life acting as a *sage-femme* to remote tribes in the Algerian wilderness (93-97). References to another relative, Serge LaBasse, whose farm was razed to the ground in 1955 (286), similarly portray the settlers in a sympathetic light, while his surname, which is also Sagesse's, points to a humble, lowly background. Her grandfather Jacques's rapid rise to success with his hotel business in France following the Algerian war, where "On new soil" he aimed to "accomplish in five years what others took ten to achieve" (54), also suggests the perpetuation of pioneering qualities through the generations, as does her own ability to adapt successfully to life in America.

An apparently ironic allusion to *pied-noir* devotion to the mother figure which goes back as far as St Augustine and is therefore "a cultural characteristic of the *pieds-noirs*, if you believe our historians, right up there with the *soubressade* and siestas" (175), nevertheless reiterates the Camusian model of *pied-noir* masculinity. Masculinity is also linked to violence and a death-wish. Thus, Sagesse's description of her grandfather's violent outburst when he shoots at her friends (immediately after which she describes his life in Algeria), her father's attempted suicide on his repatriation to France, and his eventual suicide years later, facing his "invisible [Algerian] home on the far side of the ocean" (238), are all linked to a *pied-noir*

identity that is adversely affected by the loss of the motherland. Indeed, Sagesse portrays suicide as being a particular fate of *Français d'Algérie*, noting that both St. Augustine, who banned suicide, and Camus asked "whether life was worth living; and both answered 'yes' with a desperation and a defiance that can have been born only of 'no'" (213). While Sagesse comments that St Augustine and Camus faced their temptation and that "It plays" on her own mind, she claims: "It played louder still in the ears of my father, born with Africa in his blood from both sides, and left to live, without revolt, in [*sic*] a dispassionate and alien border" (214).

The adolescent narrator in this novel therefore highlights the trauma associated with the violence of the Algerian war and with leaving Algeria, which is shown to filter down to the next generation. As in our earlier study of Marie Cardinal, the atmosphere in Sagesse's home causes trauma that physically manifests itself in boils which break out all over her back and also in panic attacks. The adolescent viewpoint proves very effective here in drawing attention to France's need to confront its enduring colonial legacy and to the constructed nature of identities born of colonial discourse. Sagesse's struggle with her identity is linked with France's problems at a national level, including racism, and her questioning of family narratives also draws attention to communal narratives as factitious. However, Sagesse's own story ultimately portrays the *pieds-noirs* in a sympathetic light. While this young girl feels in some way responsible for the ills of colonial history and wishes, as a fifteen-year-old, she could enter a family painting of Algiers, where she "would have altered the course of history" and "willed Camus' dream of a paradise on earth", (291) she has clearly herself done nothing wrong. References to lost opportunities, Original Sin and tragic *pied-noir* masculinity, as personified by the suicide of her father and the trial of her elderly grandfather, evoke what are by now familiar themes with regard to memory and identity. However, history appears to repeat itself when, for example, Sagesse mentions Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the "cordoning of Europe [...] as a means of closing out definitively the other worlds, the second and third" (291-292). In consequence, the reader is forced to quesion whether we are all responsible in some way for neocolonial actions which repeat colonial mistakes. Indeed, she insists that her family's stories "aren't our stories alone. They seep outwards. Hairline seepages, perhaps, but perceptible, if you look closely" (375). Thus, in "the suicide of Mitterrand's loyal lieutenant Pierre Bérégevoy", Sagesse sees that of her father, and in "the War Crimes trial, much later, of Maurice

Papon", she sees a *pied-noir* like her grandfather (375). In trying to address her history, Sagesse therefore prompts us to question our own. This novel is perhaps the most effective of those examined in this chapter, in engaging with the enduring impact of colonialism as a whole.

4.5 Conclusion

The tendency of *pied-noir* authors to write of their youth from the late 1970s on must be considered as a reflection of a French literary tradition in which the *récit d'enfance* and the novel of adolescence has long been established. This trend is also part of a general rise in autobiographical adult children's literature after World War II and a surge in its popularity since the 1970s. Moreover, the four main thematic groupings of such autobiographical texts, as outlined by Bouckaert-Ghesquiere – i.e. those foregrounding a broken childhood due to war, a lost land, a wounded childhood due to personal or family circumstances and childhood memories – are all suitable lenses through which to examine the personal and collective trauma resulting from the Algerian war. It is useful to remember that childhood and adolescence are social constructs, as are their portrayal in works by adult authors. However young voices can be used very effectively in literature as a means of considering societal issues in a fresh light and with particular freedom and candour. In confronting colonialism, they can strive to open up a "Third Space" from which to engage with all sides in the Algerian war, thereby avoiding what Bhabha calls a "politics of polarity". This said, performances of childhood and adolescence in literature can also facilitate nostalgia, which may be either reflective or, less helpfully, restorative. Such fictive performances may also attempt to regulate readers' performance of their own identities and thus their perceptions of historical events. In this way, the former colonising population may be cast as an innocent *peuple neuf*. Rose's assertion that children's literature constitutes the identity of both the adult and child through language is of particular significance here and for our study as a whole as works aimed solely at adults equally appear as conduits of collective memory which inform the performance of identity.

Texts featuring sincere young narrators facilitate both fable and allegory. One of the best known representations of the *pieds-noirs*, Saint-Hamont's *Le Coup de Sirocco*, serves as an example of a tale which tends to be perceived as representative

of the wider story of the exodus. The narrator's exaggerated adolescent egocentrism facilitates his performance of a personal fable whereby taboo topics on the Algerian war are humorously brought into focus with regard to the narrator's personal life, thus alluding to a personal and national suppression of trauma. However, although the narrator's cynical attitude appears to undermine previous representations of Adamic innocence, he ultimately appears as a Camusian outsider whose suffering, nostalgia and alienation may be read as representative of that of his community. The narrator of Berreby's *L'Enfant pied-noir* has a similarly frank and humorous style. While this allows him to broach the topic of homosexuality, conventional masculinity is nonetheless reiterated. The narrator of Gadal's more recent *Petite pied-noir deviendra grande* also demonstrates an engaging sincerity but equally emphasises discrete gender roles including a characteristic femininity that centres on future motherhood and a close relationship with indigenous women. The central roles of a pioneering destiny, Catholicism and family in her life might also be taken as indicative of the *pied-noir* community as a whole.

In contrast, some of the texts studied reveal the productive possibilities opened up by young narrators. The restrained, dispassionate style of Buisson's *L'Algérie ou la mort des autres* and Pancrazi's *Madame Arnoul* may not necessarily promote personal healing for the authors, but these texts nevertheless appear as part of a cathartic process as they destabilise familiar narratives. The narrators of both texts subvert stereotypes of childhood and gender and draw attention to colonial injustice and violence. Buisson's text is particularly effective in highlighting torture and it also undermines France's *mission civilisatrice*. Moreover, fantasies of childhood, which can encourage nostalgia, are undermined, most notably by the narrator's precocious sexuality. This text further stands out as the narrator's mental instability is overtly linked to trauma caused by the colonial system. Pancrazi's text is also particularly effective as the narrator's performance of masculinity diverges from conventional representations, while adults' exaggerated masculinity and femininity are critiqued. Nevertheless, neither text is free from some of the more familiar tropes which depict the *pieds-noirs* in a positive light, and indeed the narrator of Pancrazi's novel may be read as a tragic Camusian outsider.

Camus's legacy continues to affect a younger generation of writers who grapple with their *pied-noir* heritage. Benkemoun, in *La Petite fille sur la photo*, foregrounds the lasting trauma caused to those like her who left Algeria at a young

age in 1962 and creates a sympathetic portrait of her community. While the author's parents sought to erase details of their colonial past from memory, her sense of identity is revealed to have been influenced by concepts of a Camusian community. It is also worth noting here that her initial impressions of colonial Algeria are informed by stories told during dinners with relations as well as by the story of the fictional Hernandez family discussed in our introduction to this thesis, as she imagines Algeria to be a place where "Espagnols, Juifs, Bourguignons, Arabes, Gitanes et Alsaciens vivaient ensemble dans une sorte de sitcom à mi-chemin entre *Plus belle la vie* et *La Famille Hernandez*" (11).[153] Modern texts therefore continue to echo initial post-independence depictions of the *pieds-noirs*. Messud's *The Last Life* is thus significant for its cultural and linguistic break from the other narratives analysed in our study. It also diverges from other novels as the author insists that it is not a true history, while the narrator is distanced from a war which happened before her birth. It appears to be the most productive of the works studied, both in its deconstruction of family and community myths and its revelation of the deliberate avoidance of memories. It also appears to be self-consciously postcolonial as it points to the performative nature of identities, to mimicry and to the enduring impact of colonialism, in which we must all question our role. Nonetheless, xenophobia demonstrated by some settlers appears as the result of an exaggerated effort to perform an exclusionary French, rather than *pied-noir*, identity. This novel also repeats some familiar tropes involving Original Sin, lost opportunities for fraternity and a pioneering spirit, with the *pieds-noirs* appearing as scapegoats and, in the final analysis, as members of a family, inaugurated by St Augustine and epitomised by Camus. Furthermore, the narrator's tragic family history may be taken as a metaphor for a *pied-noir* community in which trauma continues to filter down to the next generation. Perhaps most significantly for our study, her mother's and grandmother's practice of weaving stories to unite a family in exile reveals the ways in which *pied-noir* memory and identity continue to be constituted in post-independence narratives.

[153] *Plus belle la vie* is a French soap set in a fictional neighbourhood in Marseille featuring different families of diverse backgrounds.

Conclusion

Competing memories of France's colonial past, particularly with regard to the troubling legacy of the Algerian war, highlight an enduring "complex posterity",[1] which is further complicated at the national level by the initial suppression of the conflict and contemporary depictions of a modern, postcolonial France. Perhaps unsurprisingly, therefore, the former settlers, as living reminders of *Algérie française*, have remained to some extent underexplored by academics. Against the backdrop of enduring stereotypes and analyses which tend to have been conducted by them or their descendants in order to win a place in the national narrative, our study takes its place alongside recent efforts by French and non-French academics to re-examine this population from a nuanced viewpoint.

Examining the significant corpus of narratives by *pied-noir* authors through the prism of the family draws attention to the politics of inclusion and exclusion which characterised colonial encounters and which continue to shape policies within nations, even the most hospitable of which, as Jacques Derrida points out, enforce controlling frontiers.[2] More specifically, this study reveals a renewed investment in the inclusion-exclusion model by many of the settlers following Algerian independence and also points to some of the ways in which the domestic and deeply gendered politics of colonialism crossed over into post-independence constructions of a communal *pied-noir* identity. Our emphasis on the family is particularly helpful in facilitating an investigation of models of masculinity and femininity for the former settler population as well as their representations of childhood and adolescence. Furthermore, this analysis suggests that the *pied-noir* family took on increased significance following 1962 as a means of unifying a community in exile.

Nevertheless, an examination of a broad range of works by the *pieds-noirs* shows that this frequently essentialised "community" is made up of individuals who were continuously renegotiating their identities in response to personal and political

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[1] Henry Rousso uses this term to describe memories of Vichy France in his *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France since 1944*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 79. This work was originally published in 1987 as *Le Syndrome de Vichy: (1944-198-)*.

[2] Safaa Fathy, *D'Ailleurs, Derrida* (France: Gloria Films, 1999). See also Dominique Dhombres, "Il n'y a pas de culture ni de lien social sans un principe d'hospitalité; ce penseur estime que c'est au nom de ce principe, pris absolument, qu'il faut inventer les meilleures mesures en matière d'immigration", *Le Monde*, 2 December 1997.

concerns, over which the Algerian conflict and its aftermath did not necessarily take precedence. Indeed, while the *pieds-noirs* have been cast as macho males and anti-intellectual figures, this thesis reveals varying literary and filmic constructions of gender, childhood and adolescence, as well as pointing to a wealth of significant French Algerian figures who engaged with universal issues. Albert Camus, who is renowned for his philosophy of the absurd and concern with social justice, Marie Cardinal and Hélène Cixous, both known for their feminism, or the homosexual anti-colonialist Jean Sénac, for example, were clearly influenced by thinking from outside this community while at the same time illustrating tensions within it. Indeed, the contested identity of Camus, who was recently deemed to be "un écrivain brûlant" in France as well as in Algeria,[3] is suggestive of the complex processes of identity renegotiation that began for the settlers once the colony's demise became increasingly likely. This process continues today. That said, our examination of a variety of individual engagements reveals striking similarities as regards some of the themes privileged, with an emphasis on the conflict as a family affair recurring in works by eminent as well as lesser known authors. In fact, many later and even contemporary works are reminiscent of early narratives, including Camus's variety of masculinity and his positive depiction of pioneering settlers in *Le Premier Homme*. Camus's continuing contribution to a collective memory and his position as a *père spirituel* to many may be discerned from the following message in a 2006 documentary on the *pieds-noirs*: "'Les Pieds Noirs, histoires d'une blessure' doit énormément à la lecture du 'Premier homme' d'Albert Camus, à la rencontre avec celle qui l'a publié et qui a été un fidèle soutien dans notre travail: Catherine Camus".[4]

Our study also reveals broader trends over time in the type of works produced since Algerian independence, which may now be discussed by way of a conclusion. Following Camus's death in 1960, women's early post-independence texts were particularly significant given the official silence on the war in France at the time. Apparently personal narratives published from 1962 may be read as metaphors for the *pied-noir* community, as their authors appear to see themselves as custodians of

[3] Benjamin Stora and Jean-Baptiste Péretié, *Camus Brûlant* (Paris: Stock, 2013), 10.
[4] Gilles Perez, *Les Pieds-Noirs, histoires d'une blessure* (France: France 3, 2006). This text features on a DVD extra, "Albert Camus et l'Algérie: Interview de Catherine Camus". In this interview, Catherine Camus discusses a way of life in Algeria which is similar to that evoked by the author. She notes that "On était de plain-pied avec la vie", that there was a "forte imprégnation du présent" and that "Il n'y a pas de la séparation de l'âme et du corps chez nous".

memory, consciously differentiating the *pieds-noirs* from Arabo-Berber Algerians and the metropolitan French, and foregrounding certain themes which continue to shape collective memory today. Some works by feminists such as Cardinal, Roüan and Cixous disrupt the narratives woven, although not as much as we might expect since colonial history still appears to be a tragic family drama between a mother and her daughter, between sisters and their lovers, or between a Jewish family and an unattainable motherland. Men's voices from the 1970s reveal that, following their settlement in France, an attachment to the family and the mother(land) was reaffirmed, most notably by writers who had previously been known for their progressive stance with regard to the indigenous population. Sénac, who continued to live in Algeria, provides a significant divergence from conventional depictions of normative French Algerian masculinity, although his murder in 1973 and disillusionment with the post-independence government position him to some extent as a *pied-noir* outsider. Finally, this thesis highlights the preponderance of texts focusing on childhood from the late 1970s, which may be considered part of a French tradition and an international trend. The surge of young narrative voices is, however, especially striking from the 1990s – some thirty years after the end of the conflict – and may be considered in light of the ability of child and adolescent voices to draw attention to societal issues, including a troubling colonial past. Thus, some of these novels use the benefit of hindsight, facilitated by candid young protagonists, to engage with the trauma caused to the colonising and colonised populations by an unjust system. They must also be considered, however, in the context of increased violence in an independent Algeria, which can be either overtly or obliquely criticised by depictions of happy childhoods under the colonial system. Furthermore, some of these works seek to influence a younger generation's perceptions of colonial history and of the *pieds-noirs*, who are cast in a positive light.

Thus, despite Rosemarie Jones's suggestion in 1995 that *pied-noir* literature was dying,[5] as well as Martini's suggestion that an initial angry phase had been followed in turn by works of *nostalgérie* and a final, more objective and open phase that includes the *roman familial*,[6] our study suggests that an objective phase has not

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[5] Rosemarie Jones, "*Pied-Noir* Literature: The Writing of a Migratory Elite", in *Writing Across Worlds: Literature and Migration*, ed. Russell King, John Connell, and Paul White (London: Routledge, 1995), 138.
[6] Lucienne Martini, *Racines de papier: Essai sur l'expression littéraire de l'identité Pieds-Noirs* (Paris: Publisud, 1997), 6-8, 44.

necessarily been reached. It also unravels some of the processes by which apparently private stories may influence public perceptions of the former settlers and contribute to constructions of an identity which was "invented" as Algerian independence became increasingly likely. In consequence, while our introduction to this thesis invoked Jean Brager's use of the term "piednoiritude" and contention that certain texts reveal a *pied-noir* soul,[7] our analysis suggests that many narratives by the former settlers do not reflect a communal identity but rather seek to create one. For many of the authors studied, forming a narrative of familial memory and identity is undoubtedly therapeutic. Indeed, as suggested in our introduction to this thesis, those with non-visible stigmatised identities benefit more from writing about being a member of the stigmatised group, rather than of the wider community.[8] This would suggest that once the *pieds-noirs* or their descendants no longer feel stigmatised, an affective and ideological emphasis on a French Algerian family narrative will become less important and may even disappear. For the moment, however, the trope continues on-screen and in print, suggesting a continuing desire to preserve a distinctive communal affiliation.

The lasting impact of France's colonial past has been linked more recently to the frequently banned controversial comedian Dieudonné, whose next DVD will apparently be filmed in Algeria.[9] Following the recent publication of an investigative book about the unresolved disappearance of communist activist Maurice Audin in 1957 after his arrest by French authorities, one article suggests, on the subject of France's history as regards Algeria, that "Des traumatismes individuels perdurent, mais aussi collectifs. Dans les blancs de la mémoire, se nichent les ferments du racisme. Ils alimentent aussi des ressentiments au long cours qu'un Dieudonné exploite".[10] Comparative studies of works by *pied-noir* and Algerian writers, particularly on the theme of memory and identity, might be one way in which scholars could deconstruct stereotypes regarding the former colonising and colonised

[7] Jean X. Brager, "Le Minaret des souvenirs: Représentations littéraires, visuelles et cinématographiques de l'identité pied-noir" (unpublished PhD dissertation, Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, 2011).
[8] James W. Pennebaker and Janel D. Seagal, "Forming a Story: The Health Benefits of Narrative", *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 55, no. 10 (1999): 1247.
[9] Sandrine Chesnel, "Dieudonné annonce le tournage de son prochain DVD en Algérie", *L'Express*, 21 January 2014.
[10] Anonymous, "Le long cheminement d'une affaire d'État; un geste magistral reste à accomplir pour que l'affaire Maurice Audin soit un révélateur et, aussi douloureuse soit-elle, le terrain de nouvelles rencontres", *L'Humanité*, 9 January 2014.

populations and promote an inclusive national narrative amidst residual resentment and continued "memory wars" that, as Stora points out, can tend to pit opponents according to their "appartenance familiale".[11] A recent study of children's literature is unusual in this regard as it considers works by immigrants from the Maghreb more generally alongside the *harkis* and the *pieds-noirs*.[12] This type of approach points to significant possibilities for new forms of identification. The reclaiming of Camus and Sénac by some Algerian writers from the 1990s offers further scope for such comparative work and suggests the potential opening up of a Franco-Algerian identity that includes the former settlers as well as the indigenous population. Moreover, Franco-Algerian author Leïla Sebbar as well as writers of the "beur" community, itself a relatively recent construct, are said to convey in their literature "Forms of collectivity [that] are created not according to rigid concepts of community and difference but through fluctuating combinations of singularity, specificity and relationality".[13] This flexible approach to a collective identity which is in reality fragmented could prove particularly productive for *pied-noir* writers, were it to be adopted in their creative writing.

A recent text which was published on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Algerian independence and was jointly penned by an Algerian author and a French journalist who spent five years of her childhood in Algeria is suggestive of such a fluid form of communal belonging; that is particularly striking as it includes both sides of the colonial divide: this is Karima Berger's and Christine Bey's *Toi, ma soeur étrangère* (2012). In this text the two women, born the same year, but kept apart by the colonial system, discuss and engage with each other's singular points of view, particularly memories of their childhoods and concepts of identity. Camus's shadow once again hangs over this text as he is defended by Christine and criticised by Karima.[14] Significantly, the narrative woven here goes beyond the one-way hospitality featured in Camus's "L'Hôte", as each makes a sincere effort to open up to the other. In the words of Karima: "Je suis ton hôte et tu es la mienne".[15] Familial identification is approached on this occasion from a stance of mutual respect which

[11] Benjamin Stora, "Algérie-France, mémoires sous tension", *Le Monde*, 18 March 2012.
[12] See Anne Schneider, *La Littérature de jeunesse migrante: Récits d'immigration de l'Algérie à la France* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2013).
[13] Jane Hiddleston, *Reinventing Community: Identity and Difference in Late Twentieth-Century Philosophy and Literature in French* (London: Legenda, 2005), 213.
[14] Karima Berger and Christine Ray, *Toi, ma soeur étrangère: Algérie-France, sans guerre et sans tabou* (Paris: Rocher, 2012), 82.
[15] Ibid., 45.

facilitates commonalities and difference. Karima's optimistic vision for a narrative of Algeria's colonial history that includes not just multiple voices but also multiple languages is a fitting way to end our study as it points to potentially fruitful dialogue and reconciliation:

> je rêverais d'un livre sur l'Algérie écrit à la façon de ces livres de calligraphie chinoise qui se déplient de page en page: une page écrite en arabe, l'autre en face en français, l'autre encore en berbère... une littérature à explorer et recueillir les fruits qu'elle féconderait en chacune de nous, dans sa langue, dans sa culture.[16]

[16] Ibid., 140.

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