

Eyes to the South

French Anarchists & Algeria



David Porter

Foreword by Sylvain Boulouque

Eyes to the South:

French Anarchists and Algeria

Praise for *Eyes to the South*:

"Eyes to the South is a unique treasure trove, spanning six decades of French anarchist engagements with Algeria. Porter offers not only a detailed account of the perspectives and roles of anarchist activists and movements, but actually a way to read the larger history of modern Algeria from an anarchist perspective. The story he gives us is invaluable in one part for its empirical richness, in another for being an excellent opportunity to explore the complexities that invariably emerge as anarchist imagination confronts questions of national liberation. Porter's sensitive, learned, and accessible account is highly recommended for anyone wishing to acquire a deeper knowledge of the history of modern Algeria, as well as of the range of anarchist approaches, in both France and Algeria, to the pathways of Algerian politics before and since independence."

—Mohammed Bamyeh, author of *Anarchy as Order: The History and Future of Civic Humanity*

"[Eyes to the South] is an eminently timely book, offering valuable background, a wealth of information, and rich context that Anglophones have had little access to. David Porter leads us efficiently through a complex thicket of events and people, while also guiding us through the essentials of interactivist debates still relevant today. This alternate history of Algeria's struggle to eliminate French rule and transform itself from the inside makes it clear that the grassroots urge to mobilize for social justice in North Africa—and the need for anarchists in colonizing (or neocolonizing) countries to grapple with the liberatory manifestations of these popular uprisings—didn't begin and won't end with 2011's Arab Spring."

—Maia Ramnath, author of *Decolonizing Anarchism: An Antiauthoritarian History of India's Liberation Struggle*

"Thoroughly researched and based not just on French-language studies but also on primary sources, including interviews with militants, Eyes to the South makes a significant and valuable contribution to a small but growing literature analyzing the complex and problematic engagement of anarchists with decolonisation in general, and Algeria in particular. Through its rather modestly named 'background' sections and David Porter's concluding reflections, it also helps fill a huge gap in our knowledge and understanding of the French anarchist movement from 1945 to the present. Highly recommended."

—David Berry, author of *A History of the French Anarchist Movement, 1917 to 1945*

Eyes to the South:

French Anarchists and Algeria

written and translated by

David Porter

Eyes to the South: French Anarchists and Algeria

© 2011 David Porter

This edition © 2011 AK Press (Oakland, Edinburgh, Baltimore)

ISBN : 978-1-84935-076-1 | eBook ISBN: 978-1-84935-077-8

Library of Congress Control Number: 2011936327

AK Press

674-A 23rd Street

Oakland, CA 94612

USA

www.akpress.org

akpress@akpress.org

AK Press

PO Box 12766

Edinburgh, EH8 9YE

Scotland

www.akuk.com

ak@akedin.demon.co.uk

The above addresses would be delighted to provide you with the latest AK Press distribution catalog, which features the several thousand books, pamphlets, zines, audio and video products, and stylish apparel published and/or distributed by AK Press. Alternatively, visit our websites for the complete catalog, latest news, and secure ordering.

Visit us at:

www.akpress.org

www.akuk.com

www.revolutionbythebook.akpress.org.

Printed in the USA on acid-free paper with union labor.

The production of this book was made possible in part by a generous donation from the Anarchist Archives Project.

THIS BOOK is dedicated to those Algerians who courageously fought for an egalitarian and free society from 1954 to the present despite repression by French and Algerian militaries and police, the resistance of self-serving bureaucrats and nouveaux-riches of independent Algeria, the deadly designs of religious zealots and a deeply entrenched patriarchy in all its various forms. The book is dedicated as well to French anarchists who supported those Algerian struggles to the present.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Map of Algeria	j
Acknowledgments	1
Key Initials	3
Basic Timeline for Algeria, 1954–Present.	5
Foreword, by Sylvain Boulouque.	7

Introduction

Personal Introduction	10
Historical Background of Modern Algeria: The Colonial Context and the Anti-Colonial Movement.	13
Anarchist Background.	16
Post-World War II French Anarchists	16
Anarchists and Nationalism.	18
Anarchists in Algeria.	20
Book Organization and Methodology.	23

PART I The Algerian War (1954–1962): Nationalism, Violence, and Revolution

Algerian Background: Realities of the National Liberation Struggle	28
French Anarchism Background: Engagement, Polarization, and Splits.	33
French Anarchist Positions	36
Fédération Communiste Libertaire	36
Daniel Guérin	42
GAAR/ <i>Noir et Rouge</i>	51
Fédération Anarchiste.	57
Albert Camus	67
<i>Témoins</i>	71
Anarcho-Pacifists	76
Anarcho-Individualists.	82

PART II The Ben Bella Regime (1962–1965): Ideal and Reality of Workers’ Self-Management

Algerian Background: Power Struggles and “Algerian Socialism”	90
French Anarchism Background: Support, Younger Visions and Faded Vitality	105

French Anarchist Positions	108
Daniel Guérin	108
GAAR/ <i>Noir et Rouge</i>	119
Fédération Anarchiste.	122
<i>Témoins</i>	128

PART III The Boumédienne Regime (1965–1978): State Socialism and Political Islam

Algerian Background: Balancing Left and Right in	
Consolidating the Regime.	130
French Anarchism Background: New Reflections on Algerian	
<i>Autogestion</i> and the Peak and Aftermath of May–June 1968. . .	135
French Anarchist Positions	137
Daniel Guérin	137
<i>Noir et Rouge</i>	149
<i>La Lanterne Noire</i>	156
UGAC/TAC	159
ORA/OCL/UTCL/OCA	163
Fédération Anarchiste.	169
<i>Anarchisme et Non-Violence</i>	181

PART IV The Chadli, Boudiaf and Zeroual Regimes (1979–1999): Berber and Urban Revolts, Liberalization and Military/Islamist Civil War

Algerian Background: Grassroots Insurgents, Political Reform	
and the “Black Decade” of Violence	190
French Anarchism Background: The Pluralistic Movement	
Sorts Out.	198
French Anarchist Positions	200
UTCL/Alternative Libertaire	200
Anarcho-Syndicalists	211
<i>Infos et Analyses Libertaires</i>	216
Organisation Communiste Libertaire (OCL)	219
<i>Informations et Réflexions Libertaires/La Gryffe</i>	234
<i>L’Oiseau-tempête</i>	247
Fédération Anarchiste.	248
SCALP/REFLEX/No Pasaran	311

PART V The Bouteflika Regime (1999–Present): Horizontalist Resistance and Authoritarian Rule

Algerian Background: Kabyle Insurgency, Assemblies Movement and the “Democratic” Facade	320
French Anarchism Background: Distinct Voices and Identities. . .	328
French Anarchist Positions	332
Alternative Libertaire	332
Organisation Communiste Libertaire.	347
Fédération Anarchiste.	375
Coordination des Groupes Anarchistes (CGA).	393
Anarcho-Syndicalists (CNT-AIT and CNT-F)	395
<i>Le Jura Libertaire</i>	430
No Pasaran.	439
<i>L’Oiseau-tempête</i>	449
Offensive Libertaire et Sociale (OLS).	455
<i>Réfractions</i>	461
Insurrectionist Anarchists	465

Conclusion

Anarchism in Algeria	476
French Anarchists’ “Alternative History” of Algeria.	485
Reflections on the French Anarchist Movement.	489
Reflections on the Anarchist Movement Generally	493
Endnotes	497
Bibliography	560
Index	565

Map of Algeria



- A. Tlemcen
- B. Oran
- C. Chlef
- D. Algiers
- E. Blida
- F. Tizi-Ouzou
- G. Béjaïa
- H. Sétif
- I. Constantine
- J. Annaba
- K. Hassi Messaoud

This file is licensed under the *Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported*, from Eric Gaba.

Acknowledgments

MY THANKS FOR EARLIEST HELP IN THE ROOTS OF THIS EVENTUAL project go back to the 1965–66 assistance of generous mentors at the Algiers Institut d'Etudes de Gestion et de Planification and to numerous Algerians who granted interviews and observation at the time to allow for my understandings of Algerian politics and workers' self-management to really deepen. My insight was further sharpened back in New York, especially by dissertation advisors Immanuel Wallerstein and Dankwart Rustow at Columbia University and through subsequent conversations with Eqbal Ahmad. Both Wallerstein and Ahmad were deeply interested in Algeria and had followed its political evolution closely for a number of years.

At that moment, in the late '60s, the political and cultural dynamics at play in North America and elsewhere could not help but vastly increase my interest in and understanding of anarchism, first stimulated by my exposure to Algerian *autogestion*. From that point to the present, my learnings from anarchists and anarchism have greatly expanded. In this process, for me an especially critical period were my years of research and writing in the late '70s and early '80s about Emma Goldman's tumultuous experience and intense observations during the Spanish Civil War and revolution of the late 1930s. I felt her voice and presence nearly every day. Involvement in this project also resulted in close contact with and encouragement by anarchist historian Paul Avrich, as well as New York anarchists Sam and Esther Dolgoff and Ahrne Thorne, and especially Windsor Spanish anarchists Federico and Pura Arcos. After all these years, Federico's knowledge and intense passion for the 1936 revolution and the anarchist ideal have continued to inspire my own insights and efforts.

Assisting me in various ways in the present effort to re-unite personally my longtime concerns with Algeria and anarchism are David Berry, Ronald Creagh, Marianne Enckell of CIRA in Lausanne, Georges and Martine Fontenis, Anne Guérin, Gérard Lamari, Miguel Martinez, Daniel Mazir, Gilbert Meynier, Frank Mintz, Georges Rivière, Pierre Sommermeyer, Simon Wise and the staff at the Labadie Collection at the University of Michigan Library. None of them are responsible, of course, for any errors in detail or substantive interpretations or conclusions in this work. My thanks as well to my editor at AK Press, Zach Blue, for encouraging and assisting me with this project from its inception several years ago. I remain greatly impressed with the fine efforts and anarchist commitment of all in the AK publishing collective with whom I've had contact.

Finally, my special thanks to my fine longtime compañera Nancy Schniedewind for her endless encouragement, understanding, humor, and

Acknowledgments

patience as I ploughed through those years of translation and editing for this book. As well, my three sons, David, Jesse, and Dan have offered welcome supportive words along the way. Dan, being the youngest and residing at home during the course of the project, has made numerous helpful suggestions for clarifying the purpose and presentation of the text.

Key Initials

A. ALGERIA

AIS	Armée Islamique du Salut
ALN	Armée de Libération Nationale
ANP	Armée Nationale Populaire
AQMI	Al-Qaida au Maghreb Islamique
BNASS	Bureau National d'Animation du Secteur Socialiste
BNBV	Bureau National à la Protection et à la Gestion des Biens Vacants
CADC	Coordination des Archs, Daïras et Communes
CLA	Conseil des Lycées
CNAPEST	Conseil National Autonome des Professeurs de l'Enseignement Secondaire et Technique
CNES	Conseil National des Enseignants du Supérieur
CNRA	Conseil National de la Révolution Algérienne
CRUA	Comité Révolutionnaire pour l'Unité et l'Action
DRS	Département du Renseignement et de la Sécurité
ENA	Étoile Nord-Africaine
FFS	Front des Forces Socialistes
FIS	Front Islamique du Salut
FLN	Front de Libération Nationale
FNTT	Fédération Nationale des Travailleurs de la Terre
GIA	Groupe Islamique Armé
GPRA	Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Algérienne
GSPC	Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat
JFLN	Jeunesse du Front de Libération Nationale
LADDH	Ligue Algérienne de Défense des Droits de l'Homme
MAK	Mouvement pour l'Autonomie de la Kabylie
MALG	Ministère de l'Armement et des Liasons Générales
MAOL	Mouvement Algérien des Officiers Libres
MCB	Mouvement Culturel Berbère
MDA	Mouvement pour la Démocratie en Algérie
MDS	Mouvement Démocratique et Sociale
MIA	Mouvement Islamique Armé
MNA	Mouvement National Algérien
MSP	Mouvement de la Société pour la Paix
MTLD	Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratiques
OAS	Organisation de l'Armée Secrète
ONRA	Office National de la Réforme Agraire
ORP	Organisation de la Résistance Populaire
OS	Organisation Spéciale
PAGS	Parti de l'Avant-Garde Socialiste
PCA	Parti Communiste Algérien
PPA	Parti du Peuple Algérien
PRS	Parti de la Révolution Socialiste

PT	Parti des Travailleurs
RAJ	Rassemblement Actions Jeunesse
RCD	Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie
RND	Rassemblement National Démocratique
SATEF	Syndicat Autonome des Travailleurs de l'Education et de la Formation
SM	Sécurité Militaire
SNAPAP	Syndicat National Autonome des Personnels de l'Administration Publique
UDMA	Union Démocratique du Manifeste Algérien
UGEMA	Union Générale des Étudiants Musulmans Algériens
UGTA	Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens
UNEA	Union Nationale des Étudiants Algériens
UNFA	Union Nationale des Femmes Algériennes

B. FRENCH ANARCHIST ORGANIZATIONS

AL	Alternative Libertaire
ANV	Anarchisme et Non-Violence
AS	Alliance Syndicaliste
CGA	Coordination des Groupes Anarchistes
CNT-AIT	Confédération Nationale du Travail - Association Internationale des Travailleurs
CNT-F	Confédération Nationale du Travail - France
FA	Fédération Anarchiste
FCL	Fédération Communiste Libertaire
GAAR	Groupes Anarchistes d'Action Révolutionnaire
IRL	Informations et Réflexions Libertaires
JL	Le Jura Libertaire
LN	Lanterne Noire
MCL	Mouvement Communiste Libertaire
NF	Non Fides
NP	No Pasaran
NR	Noir et Rouge
OCA	Organisation Combat Anarchiste
OCL	Organisation Communiste Libertaire
OLS	Offensive Libertaire et Sociale
ORA	Organisation Révolutionnaire Anarchiste
REFLEX	Réseau d'Études sur le Fascisme et de Lutte contre l'Extrême-Droite et la Xénophobie
SCALP	La Section Carrément Anti Le Pen
TAC	Tribune Anarchiste Communiste
UAS	Union des Anarcho-Syndicalistes
UGAC	Union des Groupes Anarchistes Communistes
UTCL	Union des Travailleurs Communistes Libertaires

Basic Timeline for Algeria, 1954–Present

- 1954— National liberation revolution begins; creation of FLN; MTLD outlawed and replaced by MNA
- 1955— Major war escalation; huge increase in French army presence in Algeria
- 1956— Leftist “peace coalition” wins French elections; “special powers” voted by French National Assembly for major increase in repression; FLN Soummam Congress and creation of CNRA; French hijack plane with FLN leaders; exchanges of bombings in Algiers
- 1957— French paratroopers launch methodical repression in Algiers; murder of Abane Ramdane by other FLN leaders marks ascendance of Algerian military security force
- 1958— Algiers-originated military coup ends French Fourth Republic, replaced by de Gaulle and Fifth Republic; creation of GPRA (provisional Algerian government), led by Ferhat Abbas
- 1959— De Gaulle announces principle of Algerian self-determination
- 1960— First publicized peace talks; failure of new coup attempt in Algiers; Manifesto of the 121 in France; UN recognition of Algerian right to independence
- 1961— Creation of OAS; failed “generals coup” in Algiers
- 1962— Evian peace accord; national independence; competition for power won with force by Ben Bella-Boumédiénne coalition; flight of Europeans and emergence of *biens vacants*, first wave of workers’ self-management
- 1963— Government expansion and “regularization” of *autogestion* sector; FFS created; Kabyle rebellion
- 1964— First FLN congress and adoption of “Algiers Charter”
- 1965— Boumédiénne-led coup deposes Ben Bella, new regime formed; new opposition group (ORP) quickly repressed
- 1968— First waves of industrial sector nationalizations
- 1971— Nationalization of petrochemicals sector, new major source of state revenue; agrarian reform launched
- 1976— National Charter (new constitution) proclaimed, calls for generalized use of Arabic language
- 1978— Death of Boumédiénne
- 1979— Chadli becomes president
- 1980— “Berber Spring” demonstrations and rebellion, harsh repression
- 1981— First underground radical Islamist guerrilla group (the MIA)
- 1982— Arabization of basic schooling and some university sectors completed
- 1984— Major Islamist demonstration at Soltani funeral; passage of “family code” further legalizing regressive status for women

- 1985**— Rapid drop of world oil prices; creation of Algerian human rights league, LADDH; Chadli embraces economic liberalization/privatization
- 1986**— Huge riots in Constantine and elsewhere
- 1987**— Beginning of IMF-imposed economic restructuring
- 1988**— Huge riots and demonstrations in Algiers and massive repression (“Black October”)
- 1989**— New constitution creates multi-party system and freer press; Islamist FIS launched
- 1990**— Huge separate demonstrations by FIS and FFS in Algiers; FIS sweeps municipal elections; Tewfik Médiène takes command of powerful military security force
- 1991**— New rapid drop in oil export prices; further IMF- and World Bank-imposed economic restructuring; clashes between police and FIS forces; thousands of Islamists imprisoned; FIS decisively wins first round of National Assembly elections
- 1992**— Military coup prevents second election round, Chadli forced out, state of emergency proclaimed; State High Committee formed, headed by Boudiaf; first major armed clashes between Islamists and state forces, strong repression; formation of radical Islamist GIA; Boudiaf assassinated
- 1993**— Escalation of violent clashes; many assassinations of “Westernized” women, intellectuals, journalists, professionals
- 1994**— Zeroual appointed president; first FIS negotiations with regime and other political parties; supposed-GIA attacks in France; restructuring of Algerian external debt with strict IMF requirements
- 1995**— Pact of Rome Platform; Zeroual elected president
- 1997**— Large-scale GIA (and ANP/DRS facilitated) massacres in Mitidja plains; FIS/AIS ceasefire
- 1998**— Zeroual retires
- 1999**— Bouteflika “elected” president; FIS/AIS accepts disarmament; Civil Concord passed in referendum
- 2000**— Amnesty for thousands of AIS militants; GIA and GSPC continue guerrilla war
- 2001**— Insurrection in Kabylia, emergence of assemblies movement; huge march to Algiers
- 2004**— Bouteflika elected to second term;
- 2005**— Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation approved by referendum, allows further amnesties and muzzles critiques
- 2006**— GSPC becomes AQMI, local affiliate of Al-Qaida
- 2007**— Trial of Khalifa financial and business empire symbolizes massive corruption of regime
- 2009**— Bouteflika elected to third term
- 2011**— New wave of riots and demonstrations throughout Algeria and tight repression; continuous demands by political reformers for regime change

Foreword

FAMILIAR WITH DAVID PORTER'S WORK ON EMMA GOLDMAN, I am now greatly pleased to introduce his new book with this foreword. Once again our research paths cross—as a historian and as a political scientist—because I myself have studied Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman after my work on the Algerian war and questions of nationalism and totalitarianism. If our approaches are different, the goal is the same—to understand anarchists' potential difficulty in analyzing situations foreign to their own and in which their influence is rather small. During the nearly two decades in which I worked on these issues, only a small number of anarchists seemed interested. Since then, things have changed a lot, and in recent years anarchist writing has especially increased on this theme. Thus, I am especially satisfied to present this book to the English-speaking public.

The work of David Porter is of major interest for understanding anarchists' relationship with the colonial and post-colonial world generally, and with Algeria in particular. But, as always with good books, it clarifies also a number of subjects that seem at first secondary but that actually are quite important. In effect, anarchist analyses on Algeria have demonstrated major contradictions for more than a century. At issue are how to speak clearly about revolution and freedom, transformation and emancipation, and nation and internationalism. David Porter's work shows how anarchists have been continuously affected by these contradictions. Of the different currents and organizations that comprise the French anarchist movement, some are closer to and others more distant from Algeria and its political issues that today also include themes of history and memory.

Since the middle of the 19th century, the Algerian question regularly haunted French anarchist imagination and ethics, though their genuine engagement on Algerian issues was less since clearly their weight and influence on local reality were quite minimal. If colonization was condemned, in terms close to those of Hannah Arendt—colonization being one of the origins of totalitarianism—it was especially some of its consequences that caused debate. What to make, for example, of European settlers (*colons*) whose own social class called for liberation? In this regard, the debate between the positions of an Albert Camus, son of a genuine working-class European Algerian (*pied-noir*), and of a Daniel Guérin, child of the Parisian upper middle class, shows the nuance of perceptions.

What follows as well—and this represents consistently the debate between Camus and Guérin—is how to confront nationalist revolts when anarchism, by definition, is internationalist and rejects the creation of new states and their new forms of oppression and repression. A third element

of debate follows from the fact that national liberation movements have always tended to transform themselves into totalitarian movements, eliminating their opponents or even their detractors. In the name of peoples' right to self-determination and of anti-colonialism, can anarchists accept this? When a state practices workers' self-management (*autogestion*) while at the same time maintaining religious structures, what possible solution can there be and how can one imagine a liberation freed from religious straightjackets? When the Algerian state becomes a totalitarian structure, what can one do aside from denouncing it and observing clashes between Islamists and representatives of the Party/State since the 1980s—even if the Spring 2011 events may arouse new hopes?

Several final words to the reader before plunging into this story. First, let us hope that this comparative study encourages a French-speaking historian or political scientist, in turn, to examine how English-speaking anarchists have perceived the process of decolonization and the years that followed in that other colonial universe. Important to state as well, David Porter has assembled here all the materials needed to understand the pessimistic people of the black flag, with all their often contradictory interpretations. Additionally, let us note that from this thorough description also emerges the perhaps comforting impression that anarchism resists single-cause analyses and especially single solutions, suggesting that it takes more than a thousand paths to arrive at utopia.

The book offered to us by the author follows simultaneously a chronological and thematic narrative. Quite instructive, it is preoccupied with inscribing each of the facts and mentioned elements in a vast contextual whole, thus avoiding having to refer to other works, and this is not the least of its qualities.

Sylvain Boulouque,
French historian and author of *Les anarchistes français
face aux guerres coloniales (1945–1962)*
June 2011

INTRODUCTION

Personal Introduction

VARIOUS ANARCHIST WRITERS IN RECENT YEARS HAVE NOTED THAT many approaches and issues of “classical anarchism” are or should be increasingly relegated to the archives, and fresh perspectives explored.¹ Much has changed in political, economic, and social conditions and understandings since the generations of the 19th and early-20th centuries. Governments have amassed huge powers of repression with sophisticated surveillance systems and weaponry. The economic realm has vastly transformed with far more powerful multinationals and instantaneous worldwide communications. Social class dynamics are evermore affected by diversionary mass consumer, media, and entertainment cultures. Beyond these immense barriers to grass-roots liberation is new insight on how power relations pervade society at all levels and how personal identities fragment in multiple directions. Both factors alone seem to preclude the potential of grand interpretive and predictive narratives and the potential of a single all-encompassing revolution. On top of all of this is the possible cataclysmic crash of existing political, economic, and social systems through ecological disaster.

It is thus claimed that anarchism and concepts of an anarchist movement must be freshly defined to be relevant to those of the present seeking to maximize personal and social freedom. By definition, the anarchist ideal opposes unchosen constricting structures generally, including intellectual constructs that impede or deter liberatory initiative.

Yet there are certain recurring political issues that persist and challenge each generation of anarchists no matter what degree of change in social contexts or ways that the anarchist problematic are framed. These include the nature and potential of revolution, the use of violence, collaboration with hierarchical or statist forces to achieve temporarily-compatible goals, organizational “discipline,” priority identities for organizing (place, class, gender, or other), priority targets for change (institutionally, geographically, and in daily life), the primacy or not of the “individual” actor, sexism and other hierarchies among activists, the potential of non-Western traditional communitarian models, and the actual small minority status of the anarchist movement—however defined—within broader society.

Examining how these and other continuing generic problems were approached and resolved in past contexts, including by the generations of “classical anarchists,” is therefore as relevant for contemporary activists as debate on these issues was in their historical contexts. With this appreciation of continual recurrence, examining diverse approaches historically contributes to the richness and diversity of current opinions and interpretations. Historical hindsight also helps to weigh the lived implications of

alternative positions. Nevertheless, such lessons only add to the conversation. They cannot and should not be accepted dogmatically as “instructions” from the past;² these understandings underlie the following study of French anarchist perspectives on Algeria from the time of the national liberation revolution (1954–1962) to the present.

On a personal note, it was the Algerian struggle for independence itself that first introduced me, while studying in Paris in the closing year of the war, to the anarchist press and anarchist analysis. The intensity and nature of French anti-colonial and anti-repression struggles at this time were comparable to and linked in many ways with those of the late 1960s in the United States and elsewhere. My Paris experience motivated me to continue closely following Algeria’s political evolution into the post-independence period, ultimately including my graduate field research in Algeria in 1965–66 on the large-scale realm of workers’ self-management. The latter project, in turn, led me much further toward exploring and accepting an overall anarchist perspective. Refining and applying that perspective is inevitably a life-long project. This present book is one additional personal step in that process.

I also consider this book a means for reciprocating those gifts of consciousness given to me by those who courageously struggled for Algerian liberation from colonialism, those in Algeria who fought for genuine workers’ self-management, and those in the anarchist movement more generally. My choice of specific focus on the French anarchist movement logically follows from the tragic reality of French colonialism and its legacy of continued close relationships between the two societies, as well as from the rich history and writings of the French anarchist movement itself.

The book presents a fluid mosaic of actions, writings, and theoretical positions as it follows simultaneously the shifting contexts of Algerian politics and society and the evolving consciousness and organizing of French anarchists in all their diversity. I have no intention of attempting a definitive description and analysis of either the contemporary French anarchist movement or the last six decades of Algerian history. As an outsider from both contexts, I only present evidence I have at hand as I wander through and keenly observe both landscapes. I deeply respect grassroots efforts in each context to maintain and expand human dignity and freedom.

The observations I’ve collected in this work have implications to bring back home as direct challenges to my own life and society. In the same way, the experience of Algeria and Algerians has challenged and affected the French anarchist movement itself as it related to Algeria’s colonial reality, the use of violence, nationalist revolution, workers’ self-management, militarist authoritarianism, privatization and liberal democratic initiatives, the role of religion, the rise of radical Islamic politics, intense military/ Islamist confrontation, traditionalist decentralist political structures, issues of cultural autonomy, and the role of women.

As well, French anarchists had to confront the fact that politics and society in metropolitan France itself were and remain deeply affected by the “blowback” violence and other dimensions of the Algerian war at home (including the military/political coup establishing the Fifth Republic), the issues of a large Algerian immigrant population, the spectre of radical Islamist violence and urban youth riots, and the French government’s increasingly repressive policy justified in the name of “anti-terrorism.”

Ultimately, of course, national boundaries and the notion of separate “societies” and “nations” are artificial social constructs, while interlocking experience and interdependence between peoples worldwide are only increasingly obvious. This reality and the need therefore to understand and communicate better by climbing into the shoes of “others” continues to challenge anarchists like everyone else. Anarchists believe in the universal impulse and language of freedom, but translating its more specific contents and implications across cultures remains an essential work in progress.

Despite the close relationship of France and Algeria, French anarchist attention to Algeria—especially after independence—was sometimes well focused, but often sporadic and impressionistic. It was not the intent of any part of the French anarchist movement to methodically trace, analyze, and critique the evolution of Algerian society. It must also be recognized, especially for non-anarchist readers, that these accounts come from grass-roots, anti-authoritarian vantage points. Unlike more standard works on the history, politics, or sociology of contemporary Algeria, French anarchist voices in this volume give no legitimacy to the state, capitalism, or any hierarchical movements. Their perspective is unique.

Though a significant range of orientations and critical disagreements existed *within* the French anarchist movement at every stage, important insights and conclusions can be found throughout its entire spectrum. This is, I think, as it should be in the anarchist movement since its rejection of imposed dogma is fundamental to all, however strongly the diverse positions held at any particular time. It is only natural that different people, with very different subjectivities produced by the unique experiences and social networks of each, would see and interpret the world differently, despite common commitment to continuous liberation personally and throughout society. This is indeed the positive anarchy of the anarchist movement. Consequently, I have sought to let French anarchists speak for themselves without opinionated intrusion of my own.

In broad terms, then, this book has evolved into essentially an anti-authoritarian introduction to contemporary Algeria, a brief survey of the French anarchist movement since the 1950s, and an exploration of important generic anarchist issues.

Historical Background of Modern Algeria: The Colonial Context and the Anti-colonial Movement

FRENCH COLONIZATION OF THE SEMI-AUTONOMOUS OTTOMAN Empire province of Algeria began in 1830 with a military invasion. Feroocious resistance by Algerian tribes, often united into broad-based coalitions, was savagely repressed by the French military for the next forty years.³ Defeat in the Franco-Prussian War in 1871 led France to “transfer” much of its massive refugee population from Alsace-Lorraine to the freshly conquered and suppressed Algerian countryside, thereby implanting a large European settler population (the so-called *pieds-noirs*) for the first time. Millions of acres of tribal land were confiscated by the colonial regime and distributed to arriving refugees from France. Over the next few decades, the European settler population—expanded by Italian and Spanish refugees as well—increased to about 1 million by 1954, about 10 percent of the overall population of Algeria.

As leading Algerian historian Mohammed Harbi summarizes, the colonial experience overall was “the domination of one people over another through the practice of racism, arbitrary rule [and] open violence,” while also including the unintended consequence of encouraging among part of the elite the ideals of Western democracy and socialism, progressive social policies, and a secularized state. These latter effects, in turn, helped to additionally legitimize, now in Western terms as well, the notion that people have the right to govern themselves. At the same time, colonial economic and social forms of “modernization” were accompanied by servitude and marginalization. “Colonization opened doors only to close them as well.”⁴

Various forms of cultural resistance (including beliefs and practices of Islam, Arabic and Berber languages, stories of heroic resistance, traditional music, persisting long-time patterns of daily life, and freer voices in exile) provided refuge and defense against the racist, violent, and exploitative French presence. But a modern form of anti-colonial politics emerged only in the wake of the Ottoman “Young Turks” movement and the post-World War I Versailles Conference promises of national self-determination for all peoples. However, the first mass movements of Algerian nationalist sentiment came in the mid-1920s and early 30s with the Association of Algerian

Ulema (Muslim scholars) (led by Abdelhamid Ben Badis [1889–1940]) and the Etoile Nord-Africaine (ENA, the North African Star) (led by Messali Hadj [1898–1974]).

The former, influenced by modernizing reformist Sunni religious leaders in the Middle East, dedicated itself to encouraging a mass consciousness of historic Algerian national identity, grounded in Islamic and Arab culture, in an effort to counter the shattering effects of French dominance. The importance of this Islamist component of the growing nationalist movement was typically ignored or underestimated by secular Westerners attracted especially to the modernist socialist and revolutionary discourse of Algerian students and workers in France before and during the Algerian war. Yet Sunni Islam was a fundamental part of Algerian cultural identity; a language and set of reference points entirely separate from and preceding the French colonial presence.

As such, and represented especially in the organizational form of the reformist Ulema Association founded by Ben Badis, it was one of several important, though temporarily subordinate during the war, competing strands of Algerian nationalism that gave inspiration to the anti-colonial struggle. “Pro-independence politics reactivated the religious factor. Islam was both a combat ideology and a social project. The reacquisition of the terms and rights fixed by time, the increasingly lost ‘paradise’ of origins, became more and more vital through religion.”⁵

With the end of the Algerian war in 1962, the Islamist movement thus believed that it had a quite legitimate role to play in determining the nature and direction of Algeria’s post-independence regime. In the minority view of the Islamist activists, political independence and recognition of Islam as the official state religion was only the first step toward removing the immoral social practices (the more liberated role for women and the consumption of alcohol) introduced by the French, as well as the continued cultural orientation toward France as symbolized and encouraged by extensive use of the French language.

It was this next stage of the Algerian Islamist agenda—the social behavior reforms and the ascension of Arabic over French, along with a wider network of mosques—that would lead to various clashes with and accommodations by ruling Algerian regimes as the latter periodically gave greater weight to more secular, French-oriented and socialist-inclined competing political forces through the 1970s. Eventually, in the 1980s, Algerian Islamism would become a broader political channel through which large numbers of neglected, alienated, and oppressed Algerians could find a powerful voice and political leverage.

The secular ENA, aimed originally at immigrant Algerian workers in France, modeled its structure on the French Communist Party, and proclaimed a program of national independence, political freedoms, and social

equality, while acknowledging as well the significance of Islam and Arab identity in Algerian culture.

In 1936, the ENA became the PPA (Algerian People's Party) in temporary coalition with the French Popular Front. Banned by the Vichy French government in 1940, it emerged as the MTLD (Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties) in 1946. A more cautious liberal reformist party, the UDMA (Democratic Union of the Algerian Manifesto), led by Ferhat Abbas (1899–1985), emerged at the same time and gained significant following among “assimilated” Algerians, those with French-language education and posts in the lower civil administration and professions.

Over 130,000 Algerians were conscripted into or voluntarily joined the Free French Army in World War II, playing major roles in campaigns in Italy and southern France. Liberation rhetoric from Allied leaders, together with wartime sacrifices, long-time suffering under the colonial regime, and explicit political organizing by the several nationalist groups led to much-heightened expectations of major change and greater equality in postwar Algeria. Massive V-E Day celebrations throughout the country in 1945 were simultaneously street displays for the first time of a rising large-scale nationalist movement.

However, French General de Gaulle's new coalition government (including a Communist as head of the Air Force Ministry), responded with military repression and unrestrained European militia violence, causing the massacre of tens of thousands in the Algerian northeast. As Mohammed Harbi stated, “the political forces of the [French] wartime resistance movement failed their first test on decolonization, allowing themselves to be taken over by the pro-colonial party.” In his and many others' view, “the Algerian war was really begun at Sétif on May 8, 1945.”⁶

For many Algerians, the 1945 atrocities conclusively demonstrated the impossibility of liberation within the French political structure. For most of the European settler population, the events of May 1945 only hardened defensive pressure on the French government to permit no significant liberalization of the colonial regime. At the same time, some 1,000–1,800 militants of Messali's MTLD (successor to the PPA) formed an underground activist section (the OS, Special Organization) in 1947 to carry out violent attacks on the colonial infrastructure.⁷ Despite arrests of OS activists, their exploits became well known and were increasingly viewed by many as the only route to national independence. By the early '50s, it is estimated that about 20,000 Algerians were militants in the MTLD overall.⁸ In 1954, as the MTLD was banned with the outbreak of the revolution, Messali's new organization, the MNA (Algerian National Movement), was formed.

Anarchist Background

Post-World War II French Anarchists

MOST HISTORIANS OF FRENCH ANARCHISM DEFINE ITS BEGINNINGS in the writings of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon in the 1840s.⁹ Proudhon's "mutualist" approach broke decisively from statism (the assumed need for a state) and promoted the ideal of decentralized economic and political structures in a federalist linkage of worker cooperative associations. Private property resulting from one's own labor would be left intact while economic exchange was accomplished on a non-profit basis by cooperatives and self-employed artisans and peasants. This response to the economic (and political) authoritarianism of early capitalist industrialization was the dominant anti-authoritarian approach in France until the mid-1860s.

In France, from that point until World War II, was a succession of predominant anarchist movement orientations concerning organizational forms and strategies to overturn both capitalism and the state. In succession were the late 1860s–'70s collectivist social-revolutionary approach based on worker collectives rather than individuals as the organizational basis (articulated especially by Russian Mikhail Bakunin);¹⁰ the anarchist communist revolutionary orientation of the late '70s–early '80s, which emphasized a decentralized economic and political federation of local communes (extolled by Russian anarchist Peter Kropotkin);¹¹ and a fresh emphasis on revolutionary working-class organization in the 1890s and early 20th century.

A large-scale revolutionary anarchist-syndicalism and first national anarchist-communist federation¹² developed by World War I. The former saw non-hierarchical federated revolutionary trade unions, with their control of workplaces, as the basis for overthrowing the old society and organizing the new. A three-way split in the French anarchist movement emerged in the mid-'20s between an anarchist-syndicalist revival (CGTSR)—an organizationally more centralized and disciplined revolutionary "party" movement (the "platformist" UACR, 1927–30)—and a "synthesis" Union Anarchiste federation¹³ attempt to lodge anarchists of every tendency under a common umbrella while rejecting proto-Bolshevist centralism. Individualist anarchism was a factor in France as well, side by side with these other usually more influential approaches, but at some periods (such as the late '80s to early '90s and 1905–13) more prominent and spectacular (as with acts of theft and violent direct action) than at others.

In terms of overall effect, these various anarchist tendencies represented, at different points, the predominant orientation of the left (as in the 1860s and 1900s), a substantial influential force (as in the late 1930s),¹⁴

or a minority movement marginalized into an enclave of its own. While anarchist voices were always present in French politics since the mid-19th century, distinct historical contexts have seen their volume and the strength of their receptivity on the left vary considerably.

Though the size of the postwar French anarchist movement by the mid- and late 1950s was dwarfed by comparison with the major parties of the French left—the Communist party (PCF), the Socialists (SFIO), and the eventually emerging French New Left movement—they could still exert some influence on French leftist public opinion through direct action, supportive networks, and propaganda, and by encouraging resistance to the military and assisting the Algerian struggle more directly if they chose to do so.

The first important organizational split of postwar French anarchists occurred in 1952 when the “synthesizing” umbrella Fédération Anarchiste (FA) (founded in 1945) was taken over internally by a faction led by Georges Fontenis (1920–2010) and others committed to focusing on a working-class constituency, a greater appreciation of non-mechanistic Marxist theory, and a model of class-based revolution. Soon evolving into the FCL (Libertarian Communist Federation), this group produced a program closely following the “Platformist” model articulated in the late 1920s by ex-leaders of the Ukrainian Makhnovist movement¹⁵ and several other prominent European anarchists. This model was committed to disciplined, structured organizational principles to assure more focused, efficient, and consistent action, associated also with those on the left more potentially susceptible to anarchist ideas.

According to Sylvain Pattieu, the FCL was composed especially of workers, teachers, and technicians, no more than 200–300 members total, including some Algerians in France.¹⁶ Sylvain Boulouque sees a generational difference as helping to explain the divisions in the French anarchist movement at this time. The FCL represented a generation brought up between the Popular Front of the mid-’30s and the beginning of the ’50s, impressed by the powerful mass organization of the French Communist Party.¹⁷ The average age of FCL militants and officials was about twenty-five.¹⁸ Before the 1952 split, the FA journal *Le Libertaire* printed about 20,000–30,000 copies each issue. By 1959, the FA’s new newspaper, *Le Monde Libertaire*, had close to 1,000 subscribers.¹⁹

By 1954, those of the FA who objected to the new model soon restored, independently, the old broad “synthesis” umbrella organization incorporating less pragmatically oriented individuals and affinity groups for purposes of mutual communication, production of a regular periodical, and a regular series of public speakers and pamphlets. Its long-time more important “influentials” included Maurice Joyeux (1910–1991), Maurice Fayolle (1909–1970) and Maurice Laisant (1909–1991).²⁰

In sharp contrast with the French Communist Party that saw the Algerian nationalist manifestations of May 1945 as the last gasp of Nazism, the new emerging postwar FA, in its first postwar statement on the colonial independence issue explained them, one month later, in the broad context of French colonial history. "We should recall that the human factor has never counted in imperialist policy and that, even in its democratic political history, France never trailed behind, in plundering and enslavement, those fascisms claimed to be the repositories of racism and barbarism." However, while favoring "human emancipation and class solidarity with those who are starving and oppressed," for the moment, the FA chose to abstain from any more precise slogans or guidelines.²¹

Several months later, at the 1945 founding congress of the FA, it was stated that despite full sympathy with the colonized, the leaders of anti-colonial revolts were capitalists and even the people themselves fight only for national, not fuller, liberation.²² In the late '40s and early '50s, responding to anti-colonial uprisings in Indochina and Madagascar, the FA brought a strong anti-militarist and anti-capitalist framework with which to critique French repression and colonial rule more generally. As the Indochina war progressed, the emerging Fontenis-led faction moved as well to more explicit support of the national liberation cause.²³

Anarchists and Nationalism

IN BROAD TERMS, A "NATION" CAN BE DEFINED AND MENTALLY experienced as a form of shared positive identity based on common geography, ethnicity, language, religion, and other cultural traits and/or historical experience. There is nothing more problematic in such a definition than there is in "regional" or "local" identity based on a similar set of traits, though emotional appeals to the "national identity" are more commonly evoked in our "modern" era by politicians and others wishing to arouse support for particular regimes or policies. Social identities are multidimensional. Political differences emerge when a single or several identities are essentialized and prioritized over others. At a philosophical level, anarchists, in principle, reject favoritism for any of them since this would help to legitimize hierarchical relations instead of full equality for all. Anarchist movements frequently organize federations or *syndicats* with specific "national" labels or forms, but always understanding that this is merely a matter of organizing expedience, not superior to an overall internationalist or universal identity and commitment.

However, prioritizing "national" identities, as with a "national liberation movement," historically implies more than simply a convenient and explicit scale of appeal and organizing. In the modern era of centralized states, it implies that a certain political organization and its leaders develop

a claim to legitimate decision-making over or on behalf of all groups or individuals within the particular geographic identity who share at least certain designated traits.

Three primary contradictions with universal egalitarianism thus are inherent with such movements. First, reifying a certain exclusive and privileged identity in contrast to “others” geographically or sociologically outside of the defined “national” borders is the first step toward legitimizing belligerent policy (including war) toward those defined as threatening the “national interest.” Second, a prioritized “national identity” by definition subsumes all other identities (and potential organizing appeals and strategy) within the nation, as by class, gender, race, religion, and so on, and thus legitimizes powerful “anti-patriotic” labels against those who refuse the required deference.

Third, because of its centralizing nature, nationalism legitimizes a certain leadership class to be responsible for defining which traits are included or excluded, which individuals or groups are obstructions to national “progress” or “destiny,” and which are necessary responsibilities (including “patriotic perspectives” and obedience to the national state) for all within the privileged nation. Furthermore, the first and second generations of nationalist leaders usually emerge from those with a more privileged and experienced broader network social position—bureaucrats and native military officers in a colonial system, business elites, intellectuals, labor movement leaders, and so on. These hierarchical dangers of nationalist and national liberation movements are and have been apparent throughout the modern world. Examples are everywhere.

But readily apparent as well is that nationalism is a very powerful myth and ideology capable of recruiting, mobilizing, and uniting millions of people to a “national liberation” or “national defense” populist political movement through appeals to deep psychological emotions. This is all the more true when the trait of “common historical experience” is focused especially on social injustices of colonial racism and exploitation and, ultimately, on severe repression of early stages of “national liberation.”²⁴

Throughout anarchist history, debates were frequent as to how much, if at all—given anarchist commitment to individual and social freedom—to actively support national liberation movements as an essential stepping-stone to fuller social revolution. Ukrainian Nestor Makhno and Korean and Filipino anarchists, among others, saw mobilization opportunities in the radical nationalist sentiments and movements of their day and essentially incorporated national freedom as part of their overall anarchist programs.²⁵

In essence, it is comparable as well to the issue of whether or not anarchists should assist efforts toward political liberalization of authoritarian societies when the goals of most reformers are simply statist liberal democracies. Both issues, ultimately, are subsets of the broader question of anarchists

assisting, in direct collaboration or not, with statist political/social reform as a transitional stage toward broad anti-authoritarian social transformation.

Anarchists in Algeria

SMALL NUMBERS OF ANARCHISTS (OF THE EXPLICIT WESTERN tradition²⁶) were present in colonial Algeria from at least the end of the 19th century, but were almost exclusively among the European population.²⁷ Existing documentation of anarchist presence in post-World War II Algeria or among Algerians in France before 1954 includes (1) individuals—especially Mohamed Saïl—who, though based in France, wrote for French anarchist journals and agitated about colonial conditions and the plight of Algerian workers in France for three decades until the early 1950s; (2) a specific Algerian-based organization, the MLNA (North African Libertarian Movement), composed of a small number of European, Jewish (and possibly native Algerian) individuals with ties to the organized anarchist movement in France; and (3) a number of Spanish anarchist exiles (especially in the western city of Oran) who fled Spain in 1939 upon the victory of Franco's Nationalist forces.²⁸

Mohamed Saïl (1894–1953)²⁹ was born in a small village in Kabylia, a mountainous region east of Algiers, populated for many millenia by ethnic Berbers, the native people of Algeria before the arrival of Arabs in the mid-7th century. After imprisonment during World War I for military insubordination and desertion, he settled near Paris and joined the Union Anarchiste, the principal anarchist organization in France at the time.³⁰ From the early 1920s to his death in 1953, he continuously wrote articles denouncing the misery and repression of French colonialism in Algeria and the only slightly better condition of Algerian émigrés in France, while also organizing committees to defend the rights of the latter.

As well, Saïl joined the French anarcho-syndicalist union, the CGTSR (the Revolutionary Syndicalist General Labor Confederation) in 1929, organized there a separate section of Algerians, and published *Terre Libre* with anarchist André Proudhommeaux from 1934. He volunteered for the International Group of the Durruti Column in Spain in 1936. Wounded in Saragossa, he returned to France and continued his activism, including demonstrating against French repression of Messali's ENA.

Arrested and imprisoned several times in the 1930s and '40s by French authorities, upon each release he returned to militant anarchist organizing among Algerian workers and writing for anarchist journals. After apparently escaping a detention camp during the German occupation, Saïl helped produce counterfeit papers. Following the liberation of France, he sought again to organize committees of Algerian anarchists and wrote further articles for the UA's successor, the *Fédération Anarchiste*.

While demanding in the 1930s that France accord full equality of civil rights between Algerians and French³¹ (Algeria was formally designated as three *départements* of France, but native Algerians were of subordinate legal status—a condition much like blacks in the American South until the 1960s), by 1946 Saïl was urging Algerians to rise up against colonial authority itself in a social revolution to build a society of anarchist federalism.³² He was not averse to taking up arms—as shown in his participation in the Durruti Column and his secret gathering of arms in 1934 to oppose a potential French fascist coup. He viewed traditional rural Algerian society, especially in Kabylia, as culturally embracing though without Western anarchist terminology or anarchist principles of mutual aid, decentralist community organization, and individuality of expression³³—much like the description of anarchist cultural tendencies in Spanish society *before* Bakunin's emissaries arrived in 1868 with the newly formulated explicit anarchist ideology.

Saïl was also atheist and decried the negative influence of rural *marabouts* and Islam generally.³⁴ Nevertheless, based on what he viewed as the deep non-religious nature of Algerian culture, he stated that Algerian liberation from colonialism would never lead to another hierarchical regime. While denouncing opportunistic aspiring national liberation leaders dreaming at the prospect of their own political fiefdoms and material gain, in effect a new political class, Saïl assured his readers only three years before the revolution began that Algerians would never accept alternative nationalist yokes to replace those of the French.³⁵

In Algiers itself, a new organization, the MLNA (North African Libertarian Movement), was formed in the summer of 1950, apparently on the basis of some six to eight pre-existing local groups of anarchists in Algeria and Morocco already affiliated with the Fontenis-led tendency of the French *Fédération Anarchiste* and its newspaper, *Le Libertaire*.³⁶ Its director was Algiers teacher Fernand Doukhan,³⁷ who had participated in the 1949 founding meeting of the OPB (Organization-Thought-Battle) faction in the FA, later to become the FCL (Libertarian Communist Federation). As of September 1954, its secretary was Léandre Valéro.³⁸ In October 1954, the MLNA and the FCL joined the four-month-old Libertarian Communist International, thus linking with Belgian and Bulgarian comrades, the GAAP of Italy, *Ruta* militants from Spain, and *Direct Action* militants from Britain.³⁹

Immediately following the November 1, 1954 outbreak of the nationalist revolution, the MLNA proclaimed its own entrance into the cause.⁴⁰ Though I have found no indication of previous contact by this group with Algerian nationalist militants, apparently from that point on until its suppression in 1957, MLNA members distributed the *Libertaire* newspaper and tracts in Algeria, served as a secret “mailbox” for Messali's new MNA, “collected materials” for the new main nationalist organization—the FLN—and assisted Algerian militants in other ways. At the same time, they communicated to the

latter their own revolutionary perspective, separate from mere national liberation and reformism—a position defined as temporary “critical support.”⁴¹

A third anarchist element in Algeria by the early 1950s was the community of exiled Spanish anarchists, mainly organized in their own groups in the cities of Oran, Algiers, Constantine, Mostaganem, and Blida, and roughly numbering about 1,000 persons.⁴² Most of these anarchist veterans had fled from the Spanish port of Alicante just before Franco’s final victory and settled predominantly in Oran.⁴³ Imprisoned initially (like those who had fled northward from Spain to southern France) as dangerous and potentially subversive militants by the conservative and reactionary French governments of Laval and Pétain, even after the 1943 Allied liberation of North Africa Spanish anarchist exiles who survived faced a precarious legal status. This re-enforced their primary focus on Franco’s Spain rather than the internal politics of France and its North African colonies. Obviously, if Franco’s regime was overthrown, they could return home and continue their efforts at social revolution in the context they knew best.

During the Algerian revolution itself, the vast majority of exiled Spanish anarchists thus took a “non-interventionist” stance. While sympathetic to revolt against the oppressive colonial regime, they also expressed to local FLN leaders their fears that the revolution would only replace French political and economic exploitation with that of Algerians themselves, be encumbered by the heavy conservative weight of Islam, and result in inhuman and racist terrorist attacks against non-combatant *pièdes-noirs*. Nevertheless, such a stance did *not* imply support for the typical racist perspective of most European Algerians. Spanish anarchist exiles also actively opposed the die-hard militant OAS fascists (supported by Franco) from the time of their first appearance in Algeria in 1961. Overall, however, according to Miguel Martínez, “Spanish anarchists could not find in the [Algerian] struggle even the smallest objective for which to mobilize themselves.” Their stance, therefore, was “neither pro-French Algeria nor pro-Algerian Algeria.”⁴⁴ After Algerian independence, the vast majority of these anarchist exiles, along with other Europeans, emigrated to metropolitan France.⁴⁵

As for the post-independence context generally, while there was no organized anarchist movement in Algeria itself, certain Algerians did regard themselves as explicitly anarchist (as discussed in the Conclusion of this book) along with some Algerians in France. Far more importantly, the last five decades in Algeria have seen the emergence of various significant quasi-anarchist social phenomena. These will be discussed in detail in the sections that follow. While much of the more obvious political history during this period is the reality of a repressive, authoritarian regime, as well as that of the gradual rise of oppressive and violent radical political Islamism, there were also strong demonstrations, in part, of an indigenous “cultural anarchism,” as earlier acknowledged by Mohamed Saïl.

Book Organization and Methodology

BEYOND THIS INTRODUCTION, THE BOOK CONTAINS FIVE HISTORICAL sections and a conclusion. The five chronological parts are defined by distinct stages in Algerian evolution from 1954 to the present. Part One covers the period from the outbreak of the armed national liberation revolution in November 1954 to independence in July 1962. For French anarchists, this was obviously their most intense context for relating to Algeria, given the idealism of anti-colonial struggle, the reality of military conscription, the horrors of widespread killings and torture, the opportunity for direct support, and the substantial impact on French politics.

Part Two examines the first several years of Algerian independence under the regime of Ben Bella: the intensity of constructing new political and economic systems, the experiment of widespread workers' self-management, and the increasingly obvious social contradictions and related power struggles. The next section, Part Three, begins with the military coup of June 1965 and follows developments through the course of Boumédiénne's regime down to the time of his death in 1978. This period saw the consolidation of military/bureaucratic rule, the attempt to create an Algerian model of state socialism, and the contradictory rise of influential Islamic and Arabizing currents.

Part Four moves on to the Berber Spring cultural and political revolt, President Chadli's economic liberalization and dismantling of "socialist" pretenses, a grassroots-insurgency-prompted political liberalization experiment with partially "democratic" forms, the rise of a powerful Islamist political movement, a new military coup in January 1992, and a decade of violent confrontation between armed radical Islamists and the military at the deadly expense of the civilian population.

The final section, Part Five, follows the new Bouteflika regime in its attempts to partially reduce the armed conflict, to continue economic liberalization, to maintain opportunities for massive corruption, to confront renewed demands for Berber cultural recognition, and to establish a further pretense of political democratization. All this in the midst of a massive, prolonged, and largely Kabyle grassroots decentralist insurrection; continued defiance and strikes by grassroots workers; and a never-ending series of local revolts throughout the country.

Throughout all five sections, I include writings that help to clarify particular orientations of specific French anarchist individuals or groups on generic issues, as well as some material on anarchist organizational issues

generally. Relevant to the book's intent as well are samples of ongoing discussion about the situation of Algerian immigrants in France and the related and growing racist and repressive political climate in that country.

I begin each of the five chronological sections with two introductions. First, I provide an overall outline of themes, major actors, and major events in Algeria during the period concerned to clarify the contexts for the ongoing commentary and analysis in the French anarchist writings. Additional background details and relevant additional source materials are provided in footnotes to the anarchist texts.

A second introduction for each section provides a quick overview of the French anarchist movement for that period. Describing broad influences on the overall movement helps with understanding respective positions of the various anarchist activists and writers. It should be obvious, however, that I've not attempted in short introductions to provide comprehensive coverage. Nevertheless, the five chronologically organized sections of the book give primary voice to French anarchists instead of myself.

Within each of the five parts, I present, chronologically, choice writings of each individual¹⁶ or group separately from the others for the full extent of the period involved (four to twenty years) rather than mixing them alongside each other on the basis of chronological date of publication alone. This seemed the most logical organizational approach since it allows readers to identify a more coherent ideological position or perspective for each individual or group. As well, though moving from the selection of writings of one anarchist individual or group to the set of another for the same period means the reader retracing his or her steps each time a new source is followed, some sources, such as Daniel Guérin and the *Fédération Anarchiste*, are far more prolific than others, and it would be jarring and artificial to break up their flow.

Each writing, however, is identified by date, so it is relatively easy to compare the different coverage by other individual or group sources of the same events or issues. As well, the detailed index of names, topical issues, and prominent events will also greatly facilitate particular comparisons and further understanding.

I've also chosen to use extensive paraphrasing along with verbatim translations as a way to shorten passages from articles and books throughout and, sometimes, to provide greater clarity. The limited space of this book, as well as an attempt to cut back on duplicating factual narratives, requires that I often reduce book passages or articles to what seems the more essential content. Unless otherwise indicated, responsibility for translations from French into direct quotations and paraphrased passages is entirely my own. Beyond my own introductory phrases or sentences, passages that are not between quotation marks are nevertheless meant consistently to closely express only the voices of French anarchist writers. I've sought to

be clear when it is my own voice introducing or contextualizing a piece. Each separate article or book passage is also directly cited so there is no confusion of authorship.

A last clarification of form concerns the transition from one article to the next. Often, one article follows another on the same topic and this is an easy flow for the reader. At other points, the next chronological article takes up a very different topic. In the latter case, I've separated the two by a set of asterisks to alert the reader that a new subject is at hand.

Finally, a methodological note on my choice of sources: As previously stated, I make no pretense of offering a comprehensive set of all French anarchist writings on Algeria over the past six decades. To begin with, the written and Web-based French anarchist press is very prolific, and much of it is locally based (and individually based in the case of blogs). To attempt to track down all potential sources would be an impossible task, logistically and in the length of time demanded. Nevertheless, the advent of the Internet and web sites—and French anarchists' determination to use them—allows for a vast amount of periodical research to be carried out directly from a home computer. Though this access is taken for granted by younger readers and researchers, it seems an astounding leap of resource availability for one of my generation. In any case, because of limited space, I had to select what seemed to me the most significant, non-duplicating, and still-untranslated writings from a huge abundance of material.

Fortunately, many of the main (and sometimes minor) French anarchist groups have extensive periodical collections online. Where this was not the case, I benefitted from the almost complete set of *Le Monde Libertaire* issues at the University of Michigan (Labadie Collection),⁴⁷ the fine assistance of the International Center for Anarchist Research (CIRA) in Lausanne, and published anthologies from the Fédération Anarchiste and *Noir et Rouge*. Other books by French anarchist writers, cited in the bibliography at the end, were also used, as well as some supplementary personal correspondence and interviews.

I am well aware, as will be obvious in passages below concerning the French anarchist movement, that a large proportion of the "movement" does not belong to specific anarchist membership organizations. In this sense, my extensive reliance on publications of the latter might be viewed as potentially less inclusive of certain French anarchist perspectives on Algeria. However, in addition to the major practical issue of accessibility (gathering undocumented perspectives from a myriad of local anarchist activists over five decades), my sense is that published writings from the individuals and main anarchist groups that I've selected provide a wide range of perspectives unlikely to significantly exclude other potential French anarchist analyses.⁴⁸ Moreover, as will be seen, even within a single organization's periodical, there is often substantial debate.

Additionally, despite the occasional, apparently significant overlaps between anarchist and other far left perspectives and activism (as with council communism, situationism, and post-situationism), I had to draw a line somewhere on what material to include. I chose to do so between those who seemed wholly or preponderantly to share an anarchist identity and those who did not, even if sometimes the actions or analyses of the latter could be described by some as more anarchist than those of self-identified anarchists.

PART I

The Algerian War (1954–1962): Nationalism, Violence, and Revolution

Algerian Background: Realities of the National Liberation Struggle

IN MARCH 1954, WITH DEEP DIVISION EMERGING IN THE MTL D between Messali's loyalists and reformist opponents (so-called "central-ists"), a third group, the CRUA¹—composed of younger OS veterans and others, encouraged by the imminent French defeat in Indochina, Arab nationalist Nasser's ascendance in Egypt, and independence movements in neighboring Morocco and Tunisia—decided to break with MTL D impasses and plan a military struggle for Algerian national independence. With a few hundred men, the new FLN (National Liberation Front) that it created² carried out a series of attacks on military and police targets, as well as arms depositories, across the country on November 1. The Algerian national liberation revolution was underway.

In the military realm, the FLN struggle against the French consisted of sporadic attacks and significant police and army repression until mid-1955. Major escalation through new guerrilla attacks in the east in August 1955 brought a heavy response by the army and European civilian militia, as in 1945, with up to 12,000 Muslims killed. French army ranks in Algeria escalated to nearly 200,000 by early 1956 and to 350,000 a few months later. (Overall, nearly 2 million French troops were assigned to Algeria between 1955 and 1962.)³ Meanwhile, the French forcibly displaced several million rural Algerians, creating large free-fire zones to prevent civilian assistance to guerrillas. At the same time, French authorities adopted the principle of "collective responsibility" (and punishment) of local civilians for all military casualties caused by guerrilla operations.

Such violent reprisals, in turn, could not help but motivate further civilian support for and further recruits to the FLN army (ALN)—a dynamic undoubtedly understood and counted on by FLN leaders to further convert still-wavering Algerians to the cause of armed national liberation. Thus, some 60,000, primarily poor, peasants had joined the ALN by the end of 1956.⁴ With military arms and supplies sent in from Tunisia and Morocco, the ALN had its greatest military impacts against the French at this time.

Attacks in the capital by a developing FLN urban guerrilla front followed the first French execution of an Algerian militant in June 1956. Back and forth assassinations and bombings began to occur at an ever-greater pace. The fear was so great among local Europeans that, in January 1957,

8,000 paratrooper special forces were sent to Algiers, led by General Massu, to systematically take over repression of FLN militants from the police. New spectacular FLN bombings of popular downtown European gathering places and the FLN's call for a general strike, as well as new UN discussions on Algeria intensified the repression that much more. Carefully organized roundups of Algerian men, especially in the old section of the capital, the Casbah, were followed by massive and methodical use of torture to interrogate prisoners (methods already used by the French for at least two years in the field) and breakdown the structure of the Algiers FLN organization. Such was the nature of the so-called Battle of Algiers. By September 1957, through infiltration and continued repression, the FLN network was decimated. In the same period, the army and police practice of torture began to be publicized in various parts of the antiwar French media.

At about the same time, the French army established well-protected minefields and electrified fence barriers along Algeria's eastern and western borders. Despite some continued rural guerrilla resistance, these barriers essentially excluded from action the newly forming, well-armed FLN "armies of the exterior," based in Tunisia and Morocco, and blocked the previous flows of arms to the interior. Between the effectiveness of the barriers, widespread repression, the removal of rural populations, and creation of Muslim auxiliary forces (the so-called *harkis*), the French military believed that they had essentially defeated the revolution.

In actuality, from 1958 on, political (in Algeria and France both) and diplomatic dimensions of the war became the decisive battlefields. In addition to critical political support from Egypt, and logistical and training bases in Tunisia and Morocco (each independent by 1956), the FLN sought further military supplies from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and diplomatic pressure on France by its NATO allies as well as the UN. The FLN already received recognition at the April 1955 Bandung Conference of Non-Aligned Nations, and, in turn, this support provided more leverage in the UN General Assembly. Both the growing tide of anti-colonial struggles against Western powers in Africa and Asia and publicity against the French army's massive torture and repression in Algeria helped to culminate (after large pro-FLN demonstrations in a supposedly pacified Algiers) in a December 1960 UN General Assembly resolution calling for Algerian independence.

By the time of Algeria's independence in July 1962, the number of casualties from this military conflict was horrendous: a range of 300,000 to 1 million Muslim Algerians killed (of some 9 million in the population), larger numbers of wounded or missing, and 3 million displaced. Another dimension of casualties was the lasting trauma of the widespread and systematic use of torture by the French police and military against combatants and civilian "suspects" alike. At the same time, despite orders from FLN

leaders to avoid attacks on French civilians, such violence by the peasant base escaped control. Among French Algerians, the number of killed or missing was probably around 50,000 to 60,000 (5–6 percent of the estimated *pied-noir* population).⁵ By October 1962, 90 percent of Europeans in Algeria had departed the newly independent country, fearful for their lives, property, and status in a country now run by Muslim “enemies.”

Each side of the conflict experienced major internal battles as well. From early 1955 through the end of the war, FLN militants attacked their fellow Algerians loyal to Messali in the MNA (Algerian National Movement, successor to the MTLD). In France, these rival organizations competed for loyalty among over 200,000 expatriate Algerian workers (a figure that doubled by 1962) who represented a huge reservoir of potential financial support. In Algeria itself, the MNA set up a few *maquis* centers of its own after the first several months, but since the FLN would not tolerate challenges to its hegemony in the armed revolution, the *maquis* were attacked and physically destroyed. Between France and Algeria, this fratricidal struggle resulted in some 10,000 killed and 25,000 wounded.⁶

In the political realm, while fighting the MNA in France and Algeria to assure its pre-eminence and control, the FLN also was wrenched from within by various personal rivalries, by ideological differences, and by suspicions against various elements considered too Frenchified (including those set up by French trickery to *seem* potentially disloyal). For the most part hidden at the time to outside observers, such factional clashes and suspicions of disloyalty (and the insistence on rigid hierarchy and tight discipline) frequently resulted in bloody purges—often blamed publicly on French repression.

Two of these intense internal struggles were especially crucial at the time and each had important implications for independent Algeria’s future. The first concerned a deadly two-pronged competition for supremacy early in the war. On one side were those such as Abane Ramdane (the internal FLN civilian chief by mid-1955) and the internal guerrilla leadership who demanded primacy of *political* decision-making over that of the *military*, and of *internal* leadership over that of those in exile *outside*. On the other side were the struggles of the growing complex in the external bases, primarily in Tunis, of logistical, intelligence,⁷ and military leaders. While the supreme CNRA (National Council of the Algerian Revolution) meeting of representatives of both sides in the Soummam Valley of Kabylia in July 1956 adopted a platform upholding the position of the first group, the actual power relations behind the scenes steadily moved in the opposite direction, especially given French military success in the field by late 1957. At that moment, in fact, making clear the ascendancy of the second group, the leader of the first group, Abane Ramdane, was secretly murdered in Morocco by leaders of the second. This crime culminated the coup, decisively

subordinating any program of populist or socialist nature to the power calculations of the military/security complex from then on to the present.

The second crucial internal FLN struggle in Tunis in the months before independence set the GPRA civilian leaders against the 35,000-strong ALN, which from December 1959 was headed by Houari Boumédiène, a protégé of the military/security complex. When Ben Khedda, the new president of the GPRA, demanded the resignation of Boumédiène in mid-1961, the latter refused to step down and was backed by still-imprisoned FLN leaders Ben Bella, Khider, and Bitat. In the subsequent Summer 1962, weeks after independence, as FLN rival factions sorted out coalitions and clashed with each other, the GPRA and its internal guerrilla force allies were outgunned and out-maneuvered by Ben Bella and Boumédiène's external army—a victorious alliance with profound lasting impact on Algerian politics and society to the present.

What seemed to most FLN sympathizers in France and elsewhere as a united dynamic and inspiring national liberation front committed to a post-independence socialist system in reality was largely a coalition of competing personal and regional cliques and political factions, with leadership for the most part committed only to an independent nationalist and populist regime with greatly enhanced opportunities for personal gain and power. Nevertheless, years of daily suffering through interrogations, tortures, bombardments, forced migration, starvation, and loss of family and friends could not help but increase basic sympathy for the FLN among even non-militant Algerians.

Meanwhile, radical egalitarian expectations inevitably emerged at the grassroots level due to long-accumulated colonial oppression, economic misery, and political exclusion, not to mention the tremendous sacrifices and suffering from those engaged in militant activity. While such radical hopes among Algerian workers in the cities and prosperous *colon* farms implied some sort of modernist socialism, the poor peasantry—the great majority of ALN soldiers—was communitarian in a more traditionalist sense. At the same time, the FLN leadership had no organized accountability to the base within the fractured movement itself, let alone to the grassroots population generally.

In addition to initial efforts by recalled French soldiers and new conscripts in 1955 and 1956 to resist deployment to Algeria, there were four Algerian-based right-wing militant coup or mini-coup attempts to force harsher military policy and thus protect a continuing "French Algeria." The first, in February 1956, was a violently hostile *pied-noir* crowd (many of whom were socialist voters) in the center of Algiers that intimidated and dramatically reversed the policy of visiting Socialist Prime Minister Guy Mollet, who was recently elected as part of a self-proclaimed peace-seeking left coalition in France. A month earlier, a similar threatening *pied-noir*

mob in Algiers helped to cut off efforts there by FLN leaders and French liberals (led by Albert Camus) to establish a truce against attacks on civilian females, the aged, and children of both sides. “Special powers” suspending civil liberties and enabling more “lawful” forceful repression were then voted in, after Mollet’s visit, by the French parliament—with the support of Communist delegates as well. Nevertheless, secret negotiations began between Mollet’s government and the FLN in mid-1956 only to be sabotaged by the military’s hijacking of a plane carrying several subsequently imprisoned top-level FLN leaders.⁸ In November 1956, the French military attack (along with Britain and Israel) on Egypt aimed to depose Nasser, a chief support of the FLN. But US and Soviet opposition halted this aggression and the United Nations in turn agreed to consider the Algerian quest for independence.

The second coup effort was a successful revolt in May 1958 by mass *pied-noir* demonstrators and hawkish generals in Algeria that also threatened direct takeover in metropolitan France unless retired General Charles de Gaulle was brought back to power to strengthen the will and effort of French repression. In the context of a deteriorating Fourth Republic governing coalition, affected in part by the scandals of repression policy in Algeria, the political class in France no longer had the will to confront both the serious threat from Algiers and the imposing allure of the symbolic “savior of Free France.” De Gaulle came to power increasingly dictating his own terms, establishing the political structures of a new Fifth Republic and gradually, over several years, moving toward acceptance of Algerian independence.

A third effort was in January 1960: an attempted Algiers face-off by a coalition of *pieds-noirs* and dissident military (“the week of the barricades”) now opposed to de Gaulle’s moves toward apparent appeasement of the FLN. But this effort, despite considerable bloodshed between rioters and *gendarmes*, and some encouragement from military officers, collapsed after a week when paratroopers and large numbers of civilians failed to intervene on their side. Nevertheless, escaped right-wing activists were to link up with top French military figures one year later to launch the fourth coup effort with a militant OAS (Secret Army Organization). From April 1961 to the coming of independence to Algeria in July 1962, the OAS coalition of right-wing civilians and generals led a campaign of violent bombings and attacks on Muslim and antiwar European civilians in Algerian and French cities alike, as well as an attempted assassination of President de Gaulle himself in September 1961.

French Anarchism

Background: Engagement, Polarization, and Splits

WHILE ALL BRANCHES OF THE ANARCHIST MOVEMENT BY DEFINITION opposed French colonialism as racist, repressive, and exploitative, significant differences emerged concerning the critical issues of “national liberation,” revolutionary violence, and collaboration with hierarchical or statist forces. These differences, in turn, had direct implications for the nature and level of positive support offered to the Algerian revolution. Nevertheless, anarchists were united in opposing French government policies of massive repression and military conscription.

As Sylvain Boulouque and Sylvain Pattieu, respectively, explain, two major distinct orientations toward the Algerian revolution were immediately defined (though there were, in reality, various gradations along the spectrum of response). These reflected the important earlier overall split in the French movement between those who wished to propagate the classic ideals of anarchism without compromising actions (means contradicting the ends), and those who shared similar long-range visions of non-hierarchical society but who wished more vigorously and directly to act for social change in the actual lived political context—thus to propagate ideals through action as well as writing and to move society closer to large-scale social transformation.

Such a split over the nature and potentials of mass political activism between those who feared corruption of the anarchist ideal and those eagerly embracing progressive allies as an escape from anarchism’s usual isolation frequently occurred in the history of the international anarchist movement. Both impulses are easily understandable analytically and psychologically. (Likewise understandable is the typical opposite impulse during periods of mass quiescence when some “purists” of the mass movement period reach out to other potential audiences and some previous coalitionists seek to restore a strong independent anarchist identity.) Both generic tendencies—what I label as “skeptical” and “optimist” poles in their attitude toward the potential for broader social transformation—are further discussed in the book’s Conclusion.

How each side in the divided French movement interpreted the nature of “national liberation” generically and how the latter was presented by the FLN from 1954 on had important implications for how each addressed pragmatic issues of revolutionary violence and collaboration with

a non-anarchist movement. On the other hand, French anarchists of all sides naturally opposed French governmental repression against Algerian militants and civilians alike, and French colonialism generally in theory and practice. Without agreeing on their assessment of the actual Algerian nationalist movement, almost all French anarchists understood that oppressive French rule had to be opposed—for its own sake—whatever the social liberatory potential of an independent Algeria. To oppose and fight both the French government and right-wing forces seeking stronger repression was important in itself. The major disputes concerned terrorist methods of the FLN and views on what a free Algeria would attempt to do without colonial shackles. Both types of judgment then determined how much to actually collaborate directly with the nationalist movement in helping the latter toward independence.

Thus, the evolution of the French anarchist movement was dramatically affected by the intensity of the Algerian conflict, the nature and tactics of Algerian nationalism, and major repercussions of the war in France. One major component, the FCL, was before long decimated by government repression, though some members continued underground efforts to support the FLN. The other major component, the revived FA, refused direct support for the nationalists and was strongly critical of their methods. Nevertheless, though far less activist than the FCL, it took principled positions against French war policy, conscription, and the rising threats of fascism.

Meanwhile, a younger generation of anarchists, intensely opposed to the war, developed its own perspectives, critical of both the FCL and FA, while creating its own independent voice on the war and the larger implications of anarchism. This new GAAR/*Noir et Rouge* tendency added new concerns to the anarchist agenda that would eventually flourish and outflank both original poles in the French social explosion of 1968. Though the French anarchist movement traditionally had a significant pacifist component, as symbolized most prominently by the figure of Louis Lecoin, the Algerian war, and the ensuing conscription of French youth to carry out a violent campaign abroad encouraged a new generation of anarchists to explore the dimensions of anti-militarism and non-violence and their implications for anarchism generally.

The war amplified the voices of leading anarchist intellectuals Daniel Guérin and Albert Camus, though in quite different directions, leading each to seek a viable position in the midst of the brutal conditions in Algeria and the growth of militarist/fascist threats in France itself.

Finally, the relatively unknown figure of Frenchman Serge Michel illustrated how self-identified anarchists could even immerse themselves thoroughly in service to the core of the nationalist movement during and after the national liberation revolution. As a young man, Michel left France for Algeria in the early 1950s and became close friends with leftist writers

and artists. Anarchist by temperament and lifestyle, though never part of an organized anarchist group, he was strongly egalitarian and anti-colonial. Before 1954, he wrote speeches for UDMA leader Ferhat Abbas and journal articles from a pro-Algerian nationalist perspective, hoping that the coming Algerian insurrection would potentially lead to social transformation in France as well. Wartime repression of pro-independence Frenchmen in Algeria forced him to flee at the end of 1955.

By a year later, Michel began direct work for FLN propaganda in Europe, helping to establish and write for the organization's periodical, *Résistance Algérienne*. In 1957, he went on to Tunis to join the editorial staff of the FLN organ, *El Moudjahid*, and to assist in French language FLN radio and film propaganda. After independence, in Algiers, he helped launch the Algerian Press Service and two national newspapers and aided recruitment of Italian filmmaker Gillo Pontecorvo to take on the film project of the important *Battle of Algiers*.⁹

French Anarchist Positions

Fédération Communiste Libertaire

WHILE THE INITIAL ALGERIAN INSURGENCY OF NOVEMBER 1954 shocked the “normality” of the French colonial regime, it did so much less than later on. Only a few hundred militants actually took part in armed actions against police, military, and *colon* targets during the first several months. Nevertheless, the sensitive French anarchist press was quick to assess the potential magnitude and significance of the armed political challenge.

The FCL declared immediate support of the Algerian revolution in its *Libertaire* issues of November 4 and 11 and in a poster and graffiti on walls in Paris and elsewhere in France on November 10. It also organized a protest meeting on December 9 to launch formation of committees to fight against colonial repression.¹⁰ By contrast, the new journal of the post-split-revived FA, *Le Monde Libertaire*, while not minimizing the significance and legitimacy of colonial insurgency, chose a more distant moralizing perspective, given the apparently limited nationalist and almost “religiously fanatic” nature of the movement and the likely exploitative ambitions of its bourgeois leadership-in-waiting.¹¹ According to Georges Fontenis, for its part, the FCL’s own immediate actions and public stance of clear support for the insurrection “‘saved the honor’...of the proletariat and the anarchist movement.”¹²

The FCL argued that “national liberation” was a necessarily progressive transitory stage to an eventual egalitarian society, the same argument its members had applied when critically supporting the Viet Minh struggle against the French in Indochina (the French phase having ended just several months earlier in July 1954) and independence movements in Algeria’s neighboring countries Morocco and Tunisia. As stated by *Libertaire* editor Paul Philippe, “each people has the right to its own total independence. Afterwards, it’s for them to use it for the best. It’s an indispensable step toward an eventual classless society.”¹³

The dynamics of anti-colonial revolt were succinctly stated in the November 10 poster:

Terrorism is not an isolated fact. It is not provoked by the broadcasts of Radio Cairo. The revolt is the consequence of 124 years of expropriations, super-exploitation, repression and massacres. It is the sole hope for the peasants and farm workers paid 250 fr. per day, for the hundreds of thousands of unemployed, for the migrants pouring into the slums...¹⁴

The inevitable result was, as stated in a directly provocative and generally prescient headline in an early *Libertaire* issue: “Algeria: for the *colons* it will be the suitcase or the coffin.”¹⁵

For the FCL, class struggle was the priority, and effectively mobilizing millions of grassroots Algerians to defeat French colonialism in that country would greatly assist momentum toward working-class revolution in both countries as well. The appropriate ends were internationalist—with French and Algerian revolutionaries mutually assisting each other—while also allowing Algerians’ escape from the violent, racist exploitation of the colonial system just as the French Resistance effort was important in liberating France from Nazi occupation during World War II. It was a great opportunity for major revolutionary change, an opportunity superior to what the FCL saw as the non-interventionist ultra-individualism and purist moralism, anti-militarism, and anti-clericalism of the FA,¹⁶ a stance that objectively placed it in the camp “of the exploiters, the oppressors,”¹⁷ “a cowardly capitulation in the face of power”¹⁸ and that was no doubt partly also a product of the “insidious anti-organizing skill” of the FA remnants from which the OPB (the pre-FCL) had broken away.¹⁹

To engage in serious political action instead of abstract moralizing, it was argued, implied the need for an effective political structure. As well, for the FCL itself, an organization with a disciplined revolutionary identity, vigorous opposition to the French colonial war in Algeria provided a welcome form of organizational cement in the face of various internal disputes. As explained by Fontenis many years later:

The smaller an organization, the more it’s cut off from reality, the more it tends to divide and to take pleasure in Byzantine discussions...[w]ithout an intense real activity, demanding full-time full energy toward outside forces, organizational life tends to decompose, the forces of dispersion prevail, personal oppositions and rivalries take over, genuine political conflicts give way to specious speeches and claims of bad faith.²⁰

November 1954 thus simultaneously offered a clear landscape for courageous struggle and renewal of tighter organizational bonds.²¹

The enemy was clear and imagery easily resonated from recent French experience with Nazi occupation. Commenting on the 100,000 new troops and police brought into Algeria “to massacre the Algerian people,” *Libertaire* editor Philippe denounced, in May 1955, the “war crimes” underway:

Soustelle,²² fascist-Gaullist, governor-general of Algeria, and all those who assist him in his task are, for their part, on their way to earn their stripes as “war criminals.” These individuals, in the

context of the “state of emergency,” have just declared that “very severe” measures will be taken when encountering “armed rebels.” In fact, these “very severe” measures consist of shooting immediately without judgment.

Furthermore, he said, the French decision to view villages in the neighborhood of attacks and sabotage “as having collective responsibility for such actions” was reminiscent of the Nazis.

The directors of the repression, the government, the deputies [of the National Assembly] who don’t protest, the working-class leaders who do nothing are taking serious responsibility in the eyes of history: they are transforming themselves into Nazi hangmen or hangmen accomplices! They are on their way to allowing Algeria to be transformed into an immense Oradour-sur-Glane!²³

In implementing its policy to enthusiastically support Algerian revolutionaries, the FCL had to decide not only on a line of praise for “national liberation,” but also on several issues of collaboration politics, on types of direct action, and on measures of self-defense. Future collaboration with non-anarchist groups and principles ultimately would come to include direct action support of Algerian revolutionaries, joint efforts with other political groups on the French left, participation in electoral politics, and endorsement of the use of revolutionary violence itself.

In France and Algeria, Messali’s MTL D was immediately declared illegal after the November outbreak, while Messali himself was already under house arrest near Paris. The French left, including the FCL, naturally assumed (as did the government) that his movement was responsible for the uprising. MTL D militants were well known in France and any contacts with and support of the November revolutionaries, it was assumed, would need to go through them. Immediately following its legal ban, Messali’s MTL D became the MNA and the latter’s statements of apparent support for the insurgency re-enforced French left activists’ belief that the insurgency was organized by the MNA, rather than some other shadowy group. However, the CRUA (Revolutionary Committee for Unity and Action), which organized and launched the FLN, was indeed composed of leading MTL D militants, but these had broken with Messali on the need for immediate direct action.

While Messali was indirectly informed in advance of the planned November insurrection, his leadership was directly challenged and transcended by CRUA leaders who, by 1956, forged a broad alliance of Messali’s MTL D opponents, the reformist UDMA of Ferhat Abbas, the Association of Ulema, and other bourgeois elements within the National

Liberation Front and claimed sole direction of the revolution. French left groups, including the FCL, thus eventually had to choose between rival Algerian nationalist organizations amid the context of bloody fratricide in their competition for funds from émigré workers and bases for maquis operations in Algeria. After initial contact with Messali himself and public (and logistical) support for the MNA, the FCL equivocated between and supported both rival organizations since the difference between them seemed only sectarian, not programmatic.²⁴ By late 1957, the FCL recognized the broad FLN coalition as the predominant Algerian revolutionary movement.²⁵ At that point, the FLN was clearly not simply a working-class or peasant insurgency, but one with a broad alliance of various nationalist social strata with, at best, an unknown but assumed future populist program of some sort for post-independence Algeria.

In France, direct FCL support to the MNA and FLN included various tasks, it helped find and smuggle flags and arms to the MNA maquis in Algeria and provided false identity papers, secret meeting places, transportation, and safe apartments for MNA militants. Beyond its own newspaper, some members also wrote and distributed tracts supporting the revolution, the sabotage of French military equipment, and resistance and desertion by those in the military or facing the military draft. Light arms and clothing were stored and brought across borders. Throughout the war, there were also many direct political discussions with MNA and FLN militants encouraging a social revolutionary content to the insurgency, and Fontenis claims that certain MNA militants were even close to joining the FCL. The FCL group in Maçon found a printer to create stocks of receipt cards for Algerian contributions (gifts or dues) to the FLN in France. They also arranged safe houses and secret border crossings to Switzerland (with the help of Swiss anarchists).²⁶

Among the most controversial of FCL actions was its decision to participate in electoral politics. Specifically, an FCL ticket of Georges Fontenis, ex-Communist party leader André Marty,²⁷ and eight others was created to seek election to the National Assembly from Paris in January 1956. Collaboration with existing hierarchical political systems through voting, let alone through actual candidacies, is a traditionally (and eternally) hotly debated issue in the anarchist movement. Those who favor at least voting sometimes cite Bakunin or Merlino and most of the Spanish anarchist movement itself (in 1936) as proponents of such action in certain critically polarized political contexts.²⁸ Opponents to voting often refer to Malatesta and other major anarchist figures such as Emma Goldman who argued against such “legitimation” of existing political structures since governments by their very nature are exploitative and manipulative.²⁹

Endorsed by an FCL congress in early 1955 as a possible tactic only in the right circumstances, electoral participation was defined as neither a

strategy nor a basic principle. In the context of January 1956, it was argued, participation—including even candidacies for parliament—could be a worthwhile form of class-struggle agitation in the midst of a potentially crucial moment of truth for French policy toward Algeria. The point was not to be elected but to help develop a stronger working-class popular front from below that could more forcefully denounce the entire parliamentary illusion. In any case, at the cost of considerable dissent,³⁰ the ticket gained somewhat less than 2,500 votes—a very low percentage. Ironically, the district included a significant number of naturalized Algerian workers who refused to vote precisely because they rejected collaboration with French political institutions.³¹

In the meantime, responding immediately to the FCL's zealous public message in favor of Algerian insurgents, the French government confiscated the November 11 issue of *Libertaire*, ripped down FCL posters, arrested two of those affixing them to Paris walls, and charged two FCL leaders, including Fontenis, with threatening state security.³² It also forbade a public FCL meeting protesting colonial repression on December 21 and brutalized those who refused to disperse.³³ Such acts of repression were only the beginning of a continuous government campaign to destroy the FCL. Over the next twenty-one months, until July 1956, *Libertaire* was seized seven times at the printer and other issues were sought for confiscation, thus draining FCL resources in the process. Over 200 judicial charges were issued against FCL officials, including their defense of crimes such as murder, theft, and arson; encouragement of military disobedience and revolt; threats against military morale; public attacks against and defamation of government leaders and the police; and threats to state security. One FCL militant, Pierre Morain, was the first Frenchman to be imprisoned for activism against the war (charged, in February 1955, with helping to rebuild the outlawed MTLD), and FCL officials overall served twenty-six months in prison while also being fined 3 million francs.³⁴

The FCL struggle against its own repression, in turn, gained some support among the independent socialist and communist left as, for example, with the creation of a defense committee for Pierre Morain including Daniel Guérin, Claude Bourdet, Yves Dechezelles, and Jean Cassou. Albert Camus added his own support in a letter published in the well-circulated magazine *L'Express*, in November 1955.³⁵

In July 1956, in the midst of a major escalation of military repression in Algeria and massive resistance in France to the transport of draftees, the accumulation of imprisonments and fines led the FCL to go underground. A small group of comrades maintained secret contact and communications with FCL members throughout France and printed a new illegal newsletter, *La Volonté du Peuple*, for distribution at factory gates, railway stations, and metro exits, as well as a mimeographed bulletin, *Les Cahiers de Critique Socialiste*. But many more clandestine FCL members were arrested after a

mid-1957 rapid police roundup when a small FCL group, on its own, blew up the Paris office of the right-wing populist UDCA movement led by demagogue Pierre Poujade.³⁶

The adventure of separate underground organization thus ended. With inadequate funds, no access to public meetings, little circulation of illegal tracts, and steady police pursuit, it became impossible to have any further political role or impact as a separate organization. However, discouragement came not only from state repression.

The mass of French people seemed to accept this ignominious war, the demonstrations by draftees had ceased and the formation of maquis in France proved to be a mirage. Our sole motivation was to bear witness. At least a handful of French would save the honor of the "Country of the Rights of Man" by strongly rejecting the horror of collective assassination of innocents and the horror of torture inherited from the Nazi regime and its Gestapo. To the very end, we brought this bearing witness to the limits of our strength and means.³⁷

In retrospect, some thirty-five years later, FCL leader Georges Fontenis, regretted the 1956 decision, hasty at the time, to go underground. The various police, military, and judicial pressures were but one motivation. The organizational predominance of youth was another, anxious and energized as they were for direct action in what seemed a promising context of developing anti-military resistance maquis, mass support, and potential insurrection in France itself. There was also the romantic allure of revolutionary underground activity derived from the French Resistance against the Nazi/Vichy regime. Thus, Fontenis understood why a majority, including himself, chose that route.

But it also reflected, he said, a larger organizational context, an overall thirst for combat (perhaps fed by the earlier battle within the FA) and vitriolic discourse, the latter no doubt provoking far greater police attention and reprisals than less emotional but equally substantive statements would have caused.³⁸

But it is undoubtedly a law of societies that the more a group engages itself in the path of intervention and action at any price (especially in verbal exaggeration) to keep pace with its lack of power and resulting frustration, the more it refuses to see reality and the more it throws itself forward suicidally.³⁹

According to Fontenis, "FCL officials [were] passionate and it [was] the most passionate among them—sometimes to the point of blindness—who gained an influence difficult today to imagine but which developed in a

period when, especially in the context of anti-colonial struggle, at least in avant-garde milieux, there prevailed a sort of incandescence.”⁴⁰

In broader terms, Fontenis admitted retrospectively that the OPB/FCL “fetishization” of organization was an excessive reaction to the anti-organizational commitment of the FA and no doubt was influenced as well by certain prevailing Leninist concepts at the time. But he also pointed out the influence of “other traditions, other ‘models’ such as a certain Bakuninism, Blanquism and *carbonarism*, models which themselves equally influenced Leninism.”⁴¹ Nevertheless, he was proud that for the first time in many decades, “a libertarian communist organization located in the tradition of the revolutionary anti-authoritarian current of the First International, the revolutionary socialist current of the Bakuninists, the communist-anarchist and platformist current of the 1920s [was] directly engaged with the epoch’s historical course of events.”⁴²

In the meantime, and eventually followed by others, a few other underground FCL members joined some from the French New Left, oppositional members of the French Communist party, some Trotskyists (including Félix Guattari),⁴³ and several groups (including that in Maçon) who had earlier left the FCL and created the GAAR⁴⁴ (in 1955) to collaborate in a new antiwar organization, La Voie Communiste (Communist Road), with a publication of the same name in 1958. Beyond its public face, this coalition organization, in turn, began a new round of underground activities from early 1958 that were directly supportive of the FLN—including assistance to several successful or aborted prison breaks of Algerian leaders.⁴⁵

Within the Voie Communiste group, the majority of ex-FCL members formed their own Action Communiste caucus but also forged closer ties than ever with others on the non-Stalinist left, including those of the particular Trotskyist tendency led by Michel Raptis (Pablo) that was very active itself in supporting the Algerian insurgency.⁴⁶ Some later became quite enthusiastic about “Third World revolution” generally, attracted especially to revolutionary Cuba or Maoist China.⁴⁷ Along with others of the non-Stalinist left, ex-FCL members also participated in demonstrations and meetings in France against the May 1958 Algiers coup by militant *pieds-noirs* and high military officers to bring de Gaulle to power to save their cause. Later, they joined Committees for Defense of the Republic (CDR), formed throughout France in April 1961 to oppose a potential military coup against de Gaulle’s Fifth Republic regime by the fascist military and civilian OAS, based in Algiers.

Daniel Guérin

INCREASINGLY ALIGNED WITH THE POSITION OF THE FCL AND ex-FCL (including Voie Communiste)⁴⁸ during the Algerian war was

prominent left intellectual Daniel Guérin (1904–1988). A strong anti-colonialist from the 1930s and involved in radical socialist and Trotskyist circles until the early 1950s, Guérin had established himself as probably the best-known politically engaged French intellectual critic of colonialism by 1954⁴⁹—perhaps comparable to the position of Noam Chomsky in the US critical left from the 1960s forward. He would eventually become the single most prolific French anarchist writer on Algeria.

Guérin first visited French colonies in Syria and Lebanon in 1927, there learning the brutal and cynical reality of colonial dynamics as practiced by civil, military, and religious authorities alike. He witnessed first-hand the policy of divide and rule. There he also met Emir Khaled, the grandson of Algeria's resistance leader against the original French conquest in the 1830s and '40s, now exiled because of collaboration with the "Young Algerians" movement, the first stage of the modern Algerian movement for national liberation. Guérin also briefly visited Egypt, the British mandate of Palestine, and the French African colonial outpost of Djibouti. After experiencing the colonial reality of French Indochina for several months in 1930 and becoming acquainted with its own nationalist movement,⁵⁰ Guérin returned to France and joined radical anti-colonial voices in his homeland.⁵¹

Active first in the revolutionary syndicalist circle with *Révolution prolétarienne* and subsequently a "Sparticist" orientation of revolutionary socialism influenced by Rosa Luxemburg, Guérin eventually moved to the anti-colonial left-revolutionary wing of the SFIO (French Section of the Socialist International). His shift of groups apparently reflected a desire to gain a more immediate audience rather than any shift of ideology. His prime concern was support for nationalist movements in French colonies. Their representatives in Paris, increasingly recognizing and resenting their subservience to a Comintern policy unwilling to sacrifice its Popular Front objective to a campaign for colonial independence, found in Guérin a Frenchman who shared their priorities.⁵²

Guérin met Messali Hadj in 1934 when the latter offered help from his ENA in opposing fascist propaganda and activity in Paris. Throughout the 1930s, Guérin, like other Western left socialists, debated how best to relate to the developing and sometimes competing national liberation movements in the various colonies around the world. By 1936, Guérin found a distinctive public voice on the issue that articulated the dilemma as well as a tentative answer. The basic problem facing anti-authoritarian socialists from the late-19th century to the present was that, while anti-imperialism was easy to accept, most if not all of the national liberation movements were filled with internal social contradictions, including prominent roles for the local bourgeoisie and large native property owners intent on exploiting their own countrymen once independence was gained,⁵³ with oppressive conservative political and authoritarian religious dimensions of their own.

Guérin said, despite these contradictions we must offer our maximum support as long as these movements contribute both to their own national liberation and to bringing heavy blows against capitalism and fascism in our own home country.⁵⁴ At the same time, Guérin wrote and militated against his own Socialist party, the French Communist Party, and the Popular Front government they were central in for their refusal to endorse any significant reforms in colonial policy (even outlawing Messali's ENA)—a fundamental contradiction when claiming opposition to fascism in Europe since “the naked truth, despite readiness to use democratic phrases, is that colonialism is a sort of fascism before its time.”⁵⁵

For this and other positions, Guérin and his fellow Left Revolutionary militants were banned from the SFIO party in 1938 but then formed their own PSOP (Workers and Peasants Socialist Party), led by Marceau Pivert. In the postwar period, Guérin stayed in touch with Messali's movement, the MTLD (successor to the PPA), and with Messali himself who was in forced detention in a suburb of Paris. Through the PSOP specialist on Algeria and then his own direct contacts, Guérin was far more informed than most on the growing frustration and political alienation of Algeria's mass movement. But he was unaware until later of major splits within the MTLD—between those favoring a more moderate reformist approach, those seeking direct revolutionary action, and those endorsing the latter but only with careful organizing in advance. Complicating the MTLD dynamics was the issue of Messali's charismatic leadership and the unwillingness of some to simply defer to his sometimes unpredictable political line.

In a lengthy article in *Les Temps Modernes*,⁵⁶ Guérin reported his impressions from a three-month trip in late 1952 through Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria. In Algeria, he said, the destructive nature of French colonialism was the longest and greatest. There, the colonizers “tried to kill the soul of this country. It was conquered to make it a settlement colony, to annex it to the metropole.” When it became clear to the French that they could not simply kill off the whole native population, they settled for seeking to “spiritually and morally” break the natives.⁵⁷ Arabic was given the status of a foreign language (even now only 10 percent of native children are schooled) and Islam was monitored and regulated by the colonial regime.

Real power, he said, was in the hands of the nearly 20,000 large landholder settlers. Fascist by nature, their loyalty was to their own well being, not to France generally, let alone the overall population of Algeria. They would rather secede, like the Confederates in the American South, than accept any significant reform in the colonial regime. Indeed, with their ties to large commercial interests and parties of the metropole, they represented the biggest counter-revolutionary force in French politics.⁵⁸ Guérin's warning of this danger for metropolitan French as well as for native Algerians accurately forecast their great influence on the coming political dynamics

of the Algerian war and the inability of France to extricate itself from the colonial relationship without overturning the very institutional framework of the French Fourth Republic, enduring a subsequent wave of fascist terrorism and a new attempted military coup d'état against the government of the Fifth Republic.

Guérin's close personal contacts on the issue of colonialism by the 1950s ranged from liberal reformists such as François Mauriac,⁵⁹ the president of the France-Maghreb [North Africa] Committee of which Guérin was a member, to leaders of various national liberation movements, including Messali Hadj. As well, because of his own prominence as a respected "public intellectual," Guérin would not hesitate in the years to come to directly contact top-level government officials or media editors by letter, by telegram, or in person to express his criticism of repressive incidents and policies.

Apparently organized by the France-Maghreb Committee, within weeks of the revolutionary outbreak in Algeria, a new "Defense Committee for Constitutional and Legal Freedom in Algeria" (including Guérin) established itself and presented an informational meeting on December 1 on current events in that country.⁶⁰ This was only the first new committee of a number that Guérin would join during the next eight years to provide an organized structure for his public stands on Algeria. In turn, Guérin's first apparent written reference to the Algerian revolution, seven weeks into the war, was a brief introduction to his *Temps Modernes* article, to be published in English in *The American Socialist*.⁶¹ Here Guérin confirmed that French colonialism in North Africa was harshest in Algeria and thus likely to experience the greatest explosion, as shown by the "clap of thunder" on November 1 "in an apparently serene sky." Already, he said, hysterical *colons* were demanding a bloodbath, and thousands of Algerian militants had been arrested and tortured.

In the meantime, obviously feeling some kinship with anarchist perspectives despite his deep appreciation of Marxism, Guérin appeared at various anarchist events in Paris and his books were reviewed in the anarchist press of the early '50s. Because of their strong support for national liberation movements in Indochina and North Africa, Guérin then collaborated with the FCL and the Trotskyist PCI (the Internationalist Communist Party, led by Pierre Lambert) in forming a Struggle Committee Against Colonial Repression. When their December 21, 1954 public meeting (Guérin had secured a statement by Messali for the occasion)⁶² was banned, Guérin, Fontenis, and other organizers telegraphed the government in protest and sought, unsuccessfully, to appeal to Interior Minister Mitterand in person.

Guérin served on the defense committee for FCL militant Pierre Morain (along with Fontenis, Claude Bourdet, and others) and contributed several paragraphs to a brochure on his behalf in late 1955,⁶³ in which he

underlined the significance of French workers joining in the anti-colonial struggle as an additional dimension of combat against their own class oppression. Said Guérin, while the two causes are logically linked by the same exploitative capitalist system, Morain's action and the judicial condemnation against him are important symbols of this linkage that to date have not been adequately recognized or acted upon by French workers.

In January 1956, Guérin spoke alongside Sartre, Aimé Césaire, Jean Amrouche, Alioune Diop,⁶⁴ and others at a Paris meeting organized by the Action Committee of Intellectuals Against Pursuit of the War in North Africa. Speaking on the false myth, still propagated by the government, that Algeria was part of France, Guérin outlined the long history of fierce Algerian resistance to the original 19th-century conquest, as well as the resurgence of open Algerian cultural and political nationalism from the 1920s forward. To the dismay of the organizers but greeted enthusiastically by the crowd of largely pro-Messali Algerian workers, Guérin gave special praise to Messali Hadj and his successive political organizations. "We are obliged to recall the historic service that this movement and its founder gave to the cause of Algerian independence." Attempting to support inclusively the entire nationalist movement, Guérin asserted that without the efforts of Messali and his mass movements over the years, "the diverse currents of the present Resistance, engaged in the same struggle and victims of the same repression, would not be what they are."⁶⁵

At the same time, Guérin wrote a book review in *France-Observateur* that refuted and strongly criticized the assertion by Francis Jeanson that Messali would be available as a tool for the French to undermine the FLN. But he also warned French partisans of Messali (such as the Trotskyist PCI) against the opposite suggestion that the FLN was the preferred movement of the French government.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, Guérin was denounced as a supporter in a brochure circulated by the FLN Federation of France of "counter-revolutionary" Messali and his "traitorous" MNA. Guérin, in turn, wrote personally to Messali, declaring his intent to remain absolutely impartial in the MNA-FLN dispute while also urging Messali to make some gesture of unity. A similar letter of impartiality and hope for unity was sent to the FLN.

One month later, Guérin telegraphed UDMA leader Ferhat Abbas in Cairo to express his solidarity with the more moderate Algerian leader for his public announcement of joining the FLN (Abbas had actually joined secretly several months earlier). Personally intervening as well with French leaders, he telegraphed Socialist Prime Minister Guy Mollet⁶⁷ to criticize his February 5 surrender to reactionary *colons* in Algiers, and in late February to Justice Minister Mitterand to express solidarity with Paris students now judicially pursued for an anti-colonialism meeting. A month later, he telegraphed the *France-Observateur* periodical to support an antiwar article by editor Claude

Bourdet that prompted the latter's arrest. Guérin's action led to a police raid on his own Paris apartment. An April 1956 public meeting in Paris to protest government repression against antiwar critics, with Guérin as one of the speakers, was broken up violently by fascist elements and the police.

Guérin admitted the possibility of an oppressive national bourgeois regime in Algeria after independence but, in a letter to old anarchist friends in early 1956, he paraphrased Bakunin's 1870 comments favoring national liberation movements in Eastern Europe:

As long as French troops...trample Algerian land, every wrong will be on our side. Whatever attitude Algerians adopt toward us or whatever they undertake or do against us will be right.... What can we do if the program of the most extreme Algerian democrats is, from our social point of view, reactionary and tending to allow the anti-populist aspirations of the bourgeoisie to triumph? It is for their peasants, not us, to explain this to them. And do we believe we have the right to blame the narrowness of the Algerian program? Hangmen serving the will of imperialism on a foreign land, on Algerian land, that's what we are in reality.⁶⁸

Several months later, Guérin published another passionate article, this time on the Europeans of Algeria, in an issue of the *Nouvelle Gauche* journal.⁶⁹ Describing in turn the relative socio-economic positions of the small minority of European *colon* large landowners, the large percentage of petit bourgeois Europeans (mainly urban and only about 12 percent born in metropolitan France), the "mediating" Algerian Jews (8.6 percent of non-Muslims), and the vast majority of impoverished Muslims, Guérin still expressed some potential for class solidarity to trump racial solidarity in a strong revolutionary anti-colonial coalition, he said, comparable to the Populist movement in the late 19th-century American South. Nevertheless, social and economic privileges for non-Muslims were very real and easily manipulated by the large "feudal" landowners.⁷⁰

The Soviet invasion of Hungary and suppression of its revolution in November 1956 then led some members of the Action Committee of Intellectuals to propose a resolution condemning that action, a move that could have fatally split the organization given its sizeable number of Communist members. However, Guérin responded with a "common front" perspective. While critical as always of the Communist Party, Guérin urged that the resolution be dropped since the sole purpose of the group was to struggle against the Algerian war. On December 31, a little over a month later, appalled and disgusted by escalating French attacks on Algerian civilians in the early stages of the battle of Algiers, Guérin wrote to Mollet and other socialist leaders denouncing the wave of terror unleashed by the government's actions.

Following the October 1957 assassination of leading Messalist trade unionist Abdallah Filali by FLN elements in France, a protest petition was signed by numerous prominent French intellectuals, including Guérin, André Breton, Edgar Morin, Clara Malraux, Maurice Nadeau, Benjamin Péret, Marceau Pivert, and others.⁷¹ A month later, the French Federation of the FLN denounced the protest as “hypocrisy” and “duplicity,” and as signed essentially by “those who never clearly supported the legitimacy of our cause and our combat.” According to this text, the petition even objectively encouraged those who wished to pursue a colonial war of reconquest. Privately, Guérin wrote at the same time to a Trotskyist in Tunis that both the MNA and FLN were at fault, however much he opposed the current wave of assassinations against MNA leaders. In fact, Guérin also saw no meaningful political or social distinction between the two movements.⁷²

Guérin strongly opposed the ascension of de Gaulle in May 1958, through the crisis and threats created by the military revolt in Algiers and the political stalemate of the Fourth Republic in Paris, and viewed it essentially as a fascist coup. He also blamed especially the failure of socialism, “most shamefully with Guy Mollet and Khrushchev, with Suez and Budapest,” as well as those over the decades who maintained the myth of de Gaulle as the savior of French integrity in World War II.⁷³

In an early 1959 speech, published in a militant socialist internationalist journal run by his old comrade Pivert, Guérin clarified more than he had previously his position of “critical support.” While European anti-colonialists typically refrain, out of solidarity, from criticizing the problems and contradictions of national liberation struggles, leaving critiques to those in the colonies themselves, it was wrong to be silent since our basic criterion is genuine movement toward human emancipation and we are all citizens of the world, not of particular nations. It was not a betrayal to speak with courage and lucidity about unsatisfactory aspects of the struggle. Despite the FLN’s heroism and tenacity,

[it] weakens its cause, first by a fratricidal struggle between militants equally struggling for independence and also, one must say, by certain forms of terrorism which perhaps contributed to bringing Massu to power in Algiers⁷⁴ and to set against the Algerian resistance a quite large part of the French people, certain excuses and political faults having been easily and quite diabolically exploited... by the ultras of colonialism.

But the errors, said Guérin, were not simply those of Algerian or other Third World movements and new governments. While political inexperience, difficult conditions of struggle, and the influence of bourgeois leaders were

important factors, the failures of the international workers movement were also crucial. There was little effective solidarity action by workers in the colonial countries and nowhere successful examples of “authentic socialism—of a libertarian socialism, since the objective should be as much to bring freedom as to abolish money privileges.”⁷⁵ As a rather unique and fairer way of spreading the blame while insisting that critiques had to be made, this seemed closer to a more consciously anarchist position than ever before.

Another article by Guérin in the same journal at the end of 1959 enthusiastically reviewed the new work by Frantz Fanon, *L'An V de la révolution algérienne*.⁷⁶ Comparing it to Trotsky's work on the Russian revolution, Guérin viewed it as a highly convincing and admirable description and analysis of internal changes among the Algerian people themselves in the course of revolution. With Fanon's experience of racism as a black colonial subject, and as a committed militant and professional psychiatrist, said Guérin, he brings unique and deep understanding of the wartime “brutal mutation of the Algerian soul.” Archaic and fixed attitudes and social structures gave way, because of the revolutionary struggle, to new dignified self-identities as free individuals. Fanon's account, in effect, directly confirmed for Guérin his overall perspective on the liberating nature of genuine grassroots revolution.⁷⁷ Once again, however, Guérin was forced to avert his eyes from the fierce hatred of FLN supporters for Messali. When Guérin personally met Fanon in Paris in early 1957, Fanon had expressed his wish that Messali would burn in the fires of Hell.⁷⁸

De Gaulle's offer of a vague “self-determination” option for Algeria in September 1959 seemed a complete betrayal in the eyes of reactionary Algerian *pieds-noirs* and their military allies. When street barricades arose in Algiers the following January, de Gaulle seemed paralyzed. At this point, Guérin sent a telegram to the French president himself warning him that if he backed down, he would lose out and would lose France as well. Guérin followed this message with a similar one to cousin Louis Joxe, de Gaulle's advisor, asserting that allowing the *pieds-noirs* to continue their defiance would lose face for the president.

In September 1960, as the government trial of Jeanson network members began, a certain number of intellectuals, including Guérin, were invited to sign a statement denouncing French torture and supporting the right of French conscripts to refuse to fight in Algeria and for others to offer protection and assistance to the FLN.⁷⁹ While Guérin thought its message merely offered moral support and thus was too cautious, this famous appeal known as the “Manifesto of the 121,” though censored from publication at the time, was a traitorous act in the eyes of the government and the right generally. Professors lost prestigious teaching posts, and those in the dramatic arts were banned from state-run radio, TV, film studios, and theaters. Twenty-nine of the signatories, including Guérin, were judicially pursued

for provocation of military insubordination and desertion. Informed that de Gaulle's prime minister Michel Debré each night read the depositions of those accused, Guérin spiced up his own statement by pointing out that they were not assassins, in contrast to those (including Debré) who had killed a military officer in Algiers while attempting to assassinate General Salan with a bazooka.⁸⁰ He also challenged de Gaulle, in a statement to the establishment daily *Le Monde*, to choose clearly between those who defended him in January and those who now attacked both himself and the 121.

In symbolic terms, the Manifesto and its aftermath were significant breakthroughs for the antiwar movement's effort to move opinion in the broader population and gain further international support.⁸¹ They also encouraged an underground organization, Jeune Résistance, to call explicitly for insubordination and desertion and may have helped move de Gaulle himself toward a further step, in November, of re-opening negotiations toward an eventual "Algerian Algeria." Following the April 1961 "revolt of the generals" in Algiers against de Gaulle's policy and the simultaneous disobedience of most rank-and-file French soldiers there to follow their officers' attempted coup, Guérin wrote to the Procurer of the Republic suggesting that since the Manifesto had essentially encouraged insubordination and thus the failure of the coup, the government's charges against the signers ought to be dropped. Indeed, they soon came to an end. Meanwhile, among a minority of the PSU (Unified Socialist Party), Guérin argued unsuccessfully for the Manifesto to be printed in full for party membership.⁸²

Following the vicious police attack on a peaceful march of 30,000 Algerian men, women, and children on October 17, 1961, and the killing, wounding, or disappearance of hundreds that night, another appeal was signed by 229 intellectuals, apparently including Guérin, praising the Algerians' courage, denouncing the passivity of Parisians in the face of racist attacks reminiscent of the Nazi occupation, and demanding solidarity with Algerian workers and opposition to any renewal of similar violence.⁸³

By the mid- to late 1950s, Guérin explicitly articulated a "libertarian socialist" self-identity⁸⁴ despite temporarily participating in the political evolution toward and within the eventual PSU. Though only as one individual, he also facilitated the already-described evolution of FCL veterans toward an explicit attempt to synthesize Marxism and anarchism, an effort culminating in Guérin's direct collaboration with them in founding a new organization, the MCL (Libertarian Communist Movement) in 1969.

Guérin directly supported colonial national liberation movements in and of themselves and as part of the larger international movement toward human liberation. While viewing such struggles and the violence involved as necessary, he hoped that the national liberation revolutionary process itself would provide the momentum, social consciousness, and idealism to continue forth in a "permanent revolution," a broader liberatory social

transformation in the particular society concerned. In this perspective, he was consistent with his 1946 analysis of the French revolution with its “embryo of proletarian revolution” (as described by Marx and Engels) evolving within the larger, better-known context of a bourgeois revolution.

Thus, on the Algerian war specifically, Guérin fully supported military and draft resistance and opposed the French government’s repression of dissent. Beyond this, he urged the ultimate victory of the Algerian liberation movement, whatever his critiques of the violence used toward the French or within the movement itself, of the presence and influence of bourgeois and traditional elements in the FLN coalition, and of the absence of any explicit social revolutionary content in their public statements. His detailed analysis and critiques of the wartime struggle appeared only after independence and are presented in the later section on Guérin’s post-1962 writings.

GAAR and *Noir et Rouge*

IN 1954, ONE OF THE STRONGEST ANARCHIST-COMMUNIST AFFINITY groups, the Kronstadt Group of Paris,⁸⁵ was expelled from the FCL and, a few months later, issued a forceful memorandum in which the FCL was denounced for Bolshevism.⁸⁶ In November 1955, most of the group joined with ex-FCL Maçon and other anarchist-communist affinity groups to form the GAAR, the Revolutionary Action Anarchist Groups. They commenced publishing an influential journal, *Noir et Rouge*, the next March.

Organizationally a much looser federation than the FCL, apparently each group within the GAAR continued its own militant activities. After leaving the FCL, the Maçon group in Burgundy, for example, found a printer for FLN tracts (and actually wrote some of the content!), provided a safe vineyard meeting place for FLN area officials, visited FLN prisoners, helped arrange for their lawyers, and transported FLN funds.⁸⁷ Such activities were sometimes carried out as well in collaboration with French Trotskyists, freemasons, independent secular leftists (as the well-known Jeanson network), members of the Catholic left, and others of the “Voie Communiste” coalition previously discussed.

However, it was with its critical questions expressed in *Noir et Rouge* about both the FCL and the FA, and its determination to develop an anarchist movement true to anarchist principles, actively militant, and sensitive to perspectives of the younger generation, that the new group had its greatest impact. In the first issue (March 1956), it stated directly that *Noir et Rouge* was not a party, but rather “the place to encounter ideas of the young.”⁸⁸ While committed to an activist revolutionary anarchist position, *Noir et Rouge* asserted that “action would be of no value without serious political thought” and, unfortunately, “the anarchist movement and thinking...has stagnated for fifteen years.”

Noir et Rouge intended “to stir up anarchist thought to the maximum” and to knock down some movement taboos, whatever “disturbance this may cause to our habits and traditions.”⁸⁹

Specifically, it criticized both the Marxist deviation experience (FCL) “leading, among other things, to participation in the electoral farce” and the reconstituted FA, founded on the same unsatisfactory base as in 1945. The former demonstrated the danger of trying to organize anarchists’ thoughts and combat by submitting to “a communism less and less libertarian.” The latter demonstrated the flagrant error of wanting to regroup every anarchist tendency “under the cover of a great movement...a brilliant edifice...but whose beautiful façade fails to hide the emptiness of its local groups, an emptiness due to a premature reconstitution without sufficiently re-studied ideological bases.”

Critical of both organizations, *Noir et Rouge* stated that “it is time for anarchists to rid themselves of benevolent paternalism, or, sometimes of authoritarian and quasi-despotic ‘leaders.’” While recognizing the value of the experience of certain comrades, the GAAR, composed largely of younger anarchists, “not guided by the luminous ideas of an impact thinker,” will avoid the “leaderism” danger of “docility in the face of comrades better armed by the pen or speech.”⁹⁰

* * *

In its Summer 1956 issue, *Noir et Rouge* directly and indirectly addressed the Algerian context through five articles. It first criticized the position of certain European comrades in opting for and supporting “lesser evil” democracy over dictatorship in case of conflict between the two, since “democracy” lacks substance without genuine freedom and economic well-being. As well, anarchists should struggle against both forms of oppression without cooptation by “sacred national union” arguments, such as Kropotkin and others advanced during World War I. It is an internationalist commitment to workers’ liberation everywhere, not subservient to national lenses, which ought to prevail.⁹¹

While sketching the stark economic reality of French colonialism in Algeria (such as 2.5–3 percent of *pièdes-noirs* possessing almost 38 percent of total cultivated farmland and less than 25 percent of those European farmers [the *gros colons*] with 80 percent of European-held farmland),⁹² *Noir et Rouge* also drew direct parallels between the colonial context of Israelis over Palestinians and that of the French in Algeria. While sensitive to the courage, hard work, and modernizing productivity of European settlers in both contexts, “all their efforts of sweat and blood, of patience and tenacity,” don’t eliminate the fact of their privileged dependence on the overall support of capitalist colonialism and the poverty and exploitation of the native Arabs and Kabyles forced from their land.⁹³ Another article quoted Nazi

Hermann Göring's famous Nuremberg trial statement on how manipulative and patriotic appeals can always motivate ordinary people to want war, and denounced the French Communist party and its controlled trade unions for serving this type of "patriotic" mission among the French working class in its support of the Algerian war. While admitting that the North African proletariat had become trapped in a nationalist feudalism easily manipulated for future oppression by the new nationalist leadership, it placed much of the blame for the war's prolongation on the Communist party.⁹⁴

Finally, and significantly for a special issue devoted to Algeria, Paul Zorkine contributed a lengthy article on guerrilla warfare as one type of revolutionary struggle. Citing Malatesta, he first argued that "each anarchist action, each anarchist speech, each anarchist proof, each time that authority retreats, each time that the masses organize and accomplish on their own is a step toward and part of the Revolution." Zorkine saw the gradual intensified evolution of liberatory consciousness and experience as setting the stage, in the eventual collapse of capitalism, for armed intervention. Guerrilla war is the natural and well-proven historical insurrectionary form against oppressors with superior resources and armed power.

But partisan warfare, he said, can lead to an anarchist society only if such a force is coordinated but decentralized, voluntary, not under the control of a single party, sensitive to the economic needs of the local supportive population as well as the dangers of reprisals against it, and class conscious enough to avoid cooptive efforts of the national bourgeoisie. Zorkine's primary examples, in this regard, were the anarchist Mahknovista army in the Ukraine and the Durruti Column in revolutionary Spain.⁹⁵ At the same time, as Malatesta made clear, violence necessary for resisting the oppressor's violence contains in itself "the danger of transforming the revolution into a brutal fight without ideals and without the possibility of gaining positive results." It is important to limit violence to strict necessity, never to be used if it violates the liberty of those not oppressing. As for Algeria, while Zorkine predicted a military stalemate yet political victory for the guerrilla war, his various criteria for success and failure (such as cooptation by a national bourgeoisie and excessive violence) could easily be read to predict a tragic post-independence regime.⁹⁶

Within a few more months, in a Declaration of Principles, the GAAR explicitly endorsed the concept that "national independence of the colonial territories should be considered an indispensable condition of social emancipation for it creates, in protecting a people from the repressive apparatus of an imperialist State—all the while weakening that State, the possibilities for this people to make its revolution by suppressing its own exploiters." In no vague terms also, "the State is, by nature, an instrument of domination and therefore cannot serve to bring social progress." Russia tried to use it for a "temporary transition" period with disastrous results, and Spanish

anarchists, by collaborating with Republican and Stalinist politicians within the government, caused the failure of the Revolution and the anti-fascist Civil War.⁹⁷

Following the Algerian war's major escalation in 1956–57, seven articles in its Summer/Fall 1957 issue provided *Noir et Rouge*'s most detailed (and perhaps, at the time, the French anarchist movement's most concentrated) analysis of anarchism's relationship with nationalism. The Algerian conflict was thus placed within a broader framework of discussion, and the arguments of this special issue had obvious strategic implications for anarchists' stance on Algeria.

In its lead editorial, *Noir et Rouge* warned that the disinterest of many anarchists toward national liberation struggles because of their lack of direct connection to social revolution and libertarian communism leads to neglecting "certain of the deepest, most passionate and most rebellious popular movements against injustice, oppression and exploitation."⁹⁸ It states (and armies and religions) that encourage and thrive on nationalist appeals, and it is aspiring individuals and elites of states-to-be who most frequently encourage and organize such appeals and national liberation movements. But it is wrong for anarchists to ignore the deep psychological yearning for strong social identity,⁹⁹ whatever its essentialist and exclusivist limitations and the violence toward others outside the "national" group.

It is within this prioritized, however opportunistically and potentially oppressive, nationalist framework that tremendous popular movement energy and activism can be organized—directed also, in the case of national liberation movements, toward, at least partially, social liberation goals. While "local particularism is not in itself a libertarian goal, against the universal monopoly it constitutes as sane a reaction as individual rebellion against social oppression and national mystification." While anarchists have no other nation than that of liberty and every state is anti-libertarian, "every people is in action libertarian when it rebels."¹⁰⁰ Anarchists should avoid typical leftist ideological imperialism based on a sense of "superior" evolution and methods,¹⁰¹ but should lend national liberation movements "only an eminently critical support."¹⁰²

Specifically on the Algerian war, while facing now the terrors of French repression in their quest for liberty, Algerians will face more serious problems when, after political independence, "they'll have to continue the struggle against their own generals while constructing their country anew." By this date, the FLN seems not much concerned with the post-independence phase since so little is publicized about its economic or political programs while it already significantly builds up its military and administrative establishments. Meanwhile, the longer and greater the repression in Algeria, the higher also the price to the French working class in cost of living and the long-range indebtedness of the French state, ultimately paid by taxpayers.

It may be finally the growing resistance of French workers to this economic price that, as now with the current wave of more militant strikes, finally forces the French state to negotiate with the FLN—if fascist attempts in the name of “public safety” can be avoided in the meantime.¹⁰³

From these various articles in 1956–57, *Noir et Rouge* thus developed guidelines for anarchist activism that seemed relatively straightforward. Whatever its shortcomings in framing the liberation struggle in terms of only a future national state, in the FLN-MNA fratricide, and in the level of violence employed against civilians, the Algerian insurrection was seen as an important effort toward social emancipation that apparently embodied significant and clearly justified aspirations toward cultural affirmation and liberation from colonial racism and economic domination. While the shortcomings would force grassroots Algerians to struggle severely against their new Algerian masters once political independence was gained, anarchists should express solidarity with whatever immediate positive emancipatory goals could be achieved.

However, this support must not extend to encouragement of a new nation-state for its own sake. “The most rapid independence remains the necessary condition to make eventual [international] federalism possible.... Equality of peoples around the planet and their peaceful expansion remain the principal political task of the decades to come, just as the libertarian and collective organization of the economy is the great social task.”¹⁰⁴ Since a quasi-state apparatus was already in formation and no doubt already had the allegiance of large numbers, the second struggle—for a state-free libertarian society—would be a long-range one. Nevertheless, the enthusiasm, popular logistical support, and sacrifice of a great part of the population in the present guerrilla war implied a potential for significant numbers to support future efforts to safeguard the liberatory momentum.

At the same time, they said, French anarchists most effectively could help break the Communist party’s stranglehold on working-class consciousness, support wider and deeper labor strikes, agitate for and support further military and draft resistance, and militantly oppose any effort to install a quasi-fascist regime in France to prolong Algerian repression. Within these realms of critical support and resistance were many potentials for anarchist activity.

In 1958, *Noir et Rouge* returned, though only briefly, to the issue of Algeria. It was clear, said an article, that merely writing more on Algeria instead of direct action will resolve little. For us to declare what the Algerian resistance needs to do to achieve a post-independence anarchist society is of no interest to Algerians who seek direct assistance now in their struggle while saving critiques for later. Because our anarchist perspective does not allow such a deferral for the sake of expedience, we chose to write little more on Algeria since the special issue last year on nationalism.

Nevertheless, *Noir et Rouge* opposes that part of the anarchist movement¹⁰⁵ that uses the pretext of ideological differences with Algerian nationalists to simply withdraw from any engagement on the issue. An equivocal “balancing” opposition to both sides of the conflict leads to “an objective support of ‘French presence’ in Algeria.” While rejecting both nationalism and imperialism, “one cannot knowingly confound exploiters with the exploited, oppressors with the oppressed. For us, anarchists can only be partisans of the destruction of French colonialism in Algeria.” Though not taking up arms ourselves or approving of “butchery,” morally we can only be on the side of the fighting Algerian people. In the midst of the current insane climate of racism and militarism, “even a simple position of principle can and should be reaffirmed.”¹⁰⁶

As underlined by the Manifesto of the 121 and the trial of the Jeanson group, by 1961, underground French resistance networks were in place, some encouraging military desertion and draft evasion and some directly assisting FLN efforts in France. While *Noir et Rouge* did not wish to take a public position for or against this movement, it nevertheless devoted an extensive article to analyzing its nature and potentials.

Understanding that people join this effort for a variety of motivations, said the article, it generally represents a negative orientation—against colonialism or fascism or exploitation overall—with no common agreement on a specific program to unite those who resist. Personal circumstances can influence one’s stand. A middle-class student, for example, rejecting his own class identity and “searching for several years in vain among leftist groups for an echo of his rebelliousness and purity,” might one day have a chance conversation with an Algerian student and recognize “that everything he thought and looked for as a youth was there to live and perhaps die for.”

The situation for twenty-year-olds who desert or evade the military now is usually quite different, suggested the writer, from those of the past who did so out of a clear broader ideological commitment against social exploitation. Desertions today seem more a kind of unanalyzed, instinctive, and healthy human reaction that causes the young to draw from themselves, individually, the courage to desert, without the support of belonging to a resistance group.” Twenty year olds today can choose either to accept or refuse. But the former means also “to accept the rules of the game of a rotten society, pretense, good manners...mediocrity, lying, careerism, to be a flunky today while hoping to be a boss in the future.”

Beyond the individual courage needed to take the decisive first step, said the writer, one needs a group to sustain oneself through mutual support. “Jeune Résistance” was formed to provide this support and to encourage collective desertions in order to resist the Algerian war and fascism. But “Jeune Résistance” also seems unduly optimistic that “the Left” will come to understand and assist it. “Respectful as they are of their own

responsibility, of legality, of routine, of universal suffrage and voting... leftist organizations are not ready to prefer pure ideals to their own scheming, action instead of petitions, struggle instead of comfort."

In fact, the author states, because they've already made the difficult choice of liberty through their refusal, these young resisters "make anarchism without even knowing it (an anarchism that many self-declared anarchists would not have the courage to make.)" It is not to recruit them that we say this, but to put them on guard against those who would try to coopt them. Instead of moving now into leftist parties, they need among themselves to more fully analyze their own refusal and its implications for "the other domains of social, political, and economic life.... Having reviewed the life courses offered to them at twenty years of age, they could logically conclude the need to totally refuse society, by calling it entirely into question." It is then with joining and leading the class struggle, not with parties, churches, or politicized trade unions, that this new generation of resisting youth will find their place.¹⁰⁷

Fédération Anarchiste

THE TRAUMATIC SPLIT IN THE FA IN 1953 BARELY GAVE TIME FOR non-FCL members to reorganize themselves and their new journal, *Le Monde Libertaire*, by the date the Algerian war broke out. Anarchist-communists Maurice Joyeux,¹⁰⁸ Maurice Laisant, and Maurice Fayolle were leaders in the effort to create this new version of the FA umbrella network, now minus the revolutionary anarchists of the FCL and the latter's future offshoot GAAR. The three Maurices led and articulated a more centrist anarchist organizational position between the centralized and disciplined Marx-interested anarchist-communists of the FCL and those of the anarchist individualist wing.

This centrist anarchist-communist orientation valued a loose federation of affinity groups and individualist anarchists, with the journal itself, an internal bulletin, an annual congress, annual dues, and a central office as the main dimensions of coordination and communication. In the rejuvenated FA, decisions of the congress could occur only by unanimous votes, thus assuring that these centralized aspects would not intrude on the essential autonomy of FA groups and individuals.

Joyeux was not eager to resume the umbrella "synthesis" nature of the earlier FA because this significantly weakened the potential for a strong anarchist program, presence and influence in the left—indeed a major issue for those earlier attracted to the OCB/FCL effort led by Fontenis. Though the constitutive congress of the new FA in late 1953 included no more than fifty, mostly older, delegates, only a minority were individualists. Nevertheless, through adoption of the unanimous decision-making rule, the latter

had significant influence. Joyeux accepted this because of the need, as he later explained it, to prevent another future infiltration and takeover effort by those attempting to fuse “nonsecular Marxism” with anarchism—such as those influenced by Communist Sartre, Daniel Guérin, the *Socialisme ou Barbarie* group, and the Situationists.¹⁰⁹

In his terms, this broad FA coalition would prevent youth from the extreme left from laying their eggs, like the cuckoo, in their neighbor’s nest. Part of the problem was anarchist use of the word “communism,” a term used by Kropotkin but then corrupted by the Russian Revolution and the Soviet Union, thus becoming a semantic “Trojan horse.” As Joyeux saw it, an additional, more centralizing “safeguard” for the revived FA was establishment of a small “Association for the Study of Rationalist Philosophies” of a few FA influentials, including Joyeux, Fayolle, Laisant, and several individualists, to legally own and thus preserve the property of the FA from potential usurpers.¹¹⁰



While Joyeux and other anarchist-communists wished a more determined FA position on issues and activism, in effect this was only possible through individual affinity groups, such as Joyeux’s “Groupe Louise Michel” of Paris, and assertive articles in *Le Monde Libertaire*.¹¹¹ In the columns of the latter, therefore, the perspectives of this movement branch toward the Algerian insurrection were best clarified.¹¹²

As mentioned earlier, the FA’s first public reaction on Algeria appeared in an article by Fayolle in the issue of December 3, 1954. This ran in only the third month of the new *Le Monde Libertaire* and staked out a more distant and critical support of the Algerian revolt, a position basically remaining the same throughout the war. The great majority of Algerians, he said, had a horrendously low standard of living and lacked any political rights. Such a plight in the midst of a modern sector maintaining the comfort of the *colons* and enriching capitalists should be harshly condemned. The pretense of defining Algeria as simply three *départements* of France, thereby attempting to hide its colonial nature, was “an imbecility or a joke of doubtful taste.” Of course, as throughout the colonial world, including the rest of North Africa, the native population in such conditions predictably and inevitably would rise up against their oppressors. “Those who refuse to accept the evidence are either unconscious, mad or criminal.” Fayolle denounced the French government, French nationalist journalists, “super-patriots,” and Marxist imitators for their ignorance, repressive policy, or slavish opportunistic “militancy.”

Despite the fully justified anger and revolt of colonized Algerians, it is impossible, he said, for anarchists to universally support nationalist

movements that wish to create new national boundaries, that are imbued with a religious spirit close to fanaticism, and that will no doubt result in delivering the native proletariat to exploitation by its own bourgeoisie. "These sterile struggles retard especially the great and inevitable social transformation from which alone can emerge a hospitable world." As Malatesta earlier made clear, the Marxist insistence on a national liberation stage before permitting and proceeding to social liberation is "deceitful" and a "fatal error." While the Algerian proletariat has "our sympathy," it should not sacrifice its new strength simply to replace the Gospel with the Koran, or to change masters, or to close itself behind new frontiers. As for the issue of violence, those of the French army and police who shed blood to assure French control are criminals; on the other side, the Algerian insurrectionists are no more "outlaws" or "terrorists" than those who, a few years before in France, justifiably carried out an underground and always savage struggle against Nazi occupation.¹¹³

Essentially equating Algerian and French nationalisms as political manipulations of the masses, the FA recognized, in another article many months later, both the legitimacy of Algerian grievances and the predictable, though tragic, harnessing of social emancipatory goals to the maneuvers of nationalists, thus directly conflicting with the trend of growing globalization. Despite its appeals for broader Algerian vision in its journal and in direct conversation with Algerians in France, the FA recognized that its main impact would be through pursuing a policy of "revolutionary defeatism": to oppose French repression and to end the war as soon as possible, no doubt with the achievement of Algerian national independence. At the same time, the "only real solution would be through a social revolution in France extending itself throughout the ex-colonies and fused together in a common march toward the conquest of liberty and well-being of the peoples of France and native societies."¹¹⁴

The immediate task, then, according to a retrospective description decades later, was to stop the spread of military repression in Algeria and fascism in France. Using its "special powers" law, the Socialist-led and Communist-supported government of Guy Mollet in 1956 imprisoned militants, seized journals, and encouraged a climate of brutal fascist bands supported by the police. Through *Le Monde Libertaire* articles, posters, participation in demonstrations, and meetings organized by the revolutionary far left, FA activists denounced military repression, torture, and a rising fascist climate, while supporting the resistance of recalled soldiers and new conscripts—including helping to delay troop trains departing for Marseille and developing an escape route to Sweden for some anarchist resisters.¹¹⁵ (Importantly, though, as contrasted with the FCL and GAAR, apparently there was no direct material or logistical support for the FLN itself.)

Against the coup d'état bringing de Gaulle to power in May 1958, the FA asserted itself in writing and with demonstrations to encourage workers to mobilize a massive riposte to the rising threat of an explicit fascist regime and prolongation of the war. Despite objections from “purist” members, the FA joined in a Revolutionary Action Committee alongside the Trotskyist PCI (Lambert wing), the CGT steelworkers' union, and the Committee of Action and Coordination for Workers Democracy. The headquarters for the coalition committee was at the FA office. The new committee posted a “Workers Alert” sheet on the walls of Paris and in suburbs against the National Assembly's “Law of Exception.” By factory and street militance and revolutionary organizations, it said, not by suppressing liberty, the war would be ended by the French people.¹¹⁶

In *Le Monde Libertaire*, Maurice Fayolle denounced the so-called “socialist” politicians whose successive governments, through their cowardice and refusal to punish the crimes of the military, paved the way for this “military-fascist adventure” in which more than one military officer “dreams of stepping into the shoes of Franco.” The present regime has refused to seek support from the popular masses and is now at the mercy of a “police force contaminated by fascist elements,” the arrival already in Paris of the first unit of parachutists from Algeria and the threat of more to come. The ultras, former Vichy collaborators, colonialists, and racists are all delirious with the prospects of bringing de Gaulle to power. To counter the insurgent “public safety committees” of Algiers, we should form committees of vigilance and committees of revolutionary action and be ready to take to the streets, even illegally if needed.¹¹⁷

In the same issue, Maurice Laisant suggested that if the politicians were serious about “saving the republic,” they could “immediately demobilize all the French soldiers called to Algeria and leave the officers with stripes without money, men, guns, without a drop of gasoline, to go settle matters with the armed Algerian militants.” On the other hand, they could capitulate to the illegal path, which de Gaulle, like Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, will undoubtedly choose.¹¹⁸

At the same time, Maurice Joyeux represented the FA in a Committee for Defense of the Republic, created by leftist parties to organize a demonstration in Paris against the fascist threats. Disappointingly, the demonstration against the return of de Gaulle drew only 200,000 at the most, an average turnout for such occasions and not enough to stop de Gaulle's momentum to office.

Several months later, responding to de Gaulle's subsequent plebiscite to approve the new Fifth Republic constitution, an article condemned the state-controlled TV and radio propaganda machine in his favor while police brutality faces his opponents. Proposed is a constitution that will give a second chance to fascism after the fall of the Vichy regime. “De Gaulle

is already surrounded by those who arranged the May putsch.” It is now up to the workers to defeat this plan.¹¹⁹ Through the course of de Gaulle’s several subsequent voter referenda, as he gradually changed course on Algerian policy, the FA encouraged abstentions since peace was the only issue and any new political formula (such as de Gaulle’s *autodétermination* [self-determination]) was a political ambiguity used to further consolidate power and delay the end of the war.

By 1960, the tone of the FA’s anarchist-communist perspective on the war seemed slightly changed. The FA congress of that year passed a resolution that recognized the inevitability of Algerian political independence and said that “it is not sufficient for anarchists to express platonic wishes for the conflict’s end nor to attribute equal responsibilities to the FLN as those of the French for continuing the conflict. Despite the nationalist character of the Algerian rebellion (which was unavoidable), we cannot remain absolutely neutral. We must emphasize our moral support to the fighters and make contacts with them whenever possible, thus letting them understand that there is a path different from forming a bourgeois state.”¹²⁰ Nevertheless, FA writer Louis Chavance was clear that while Algeria would get its independence one way or another, the question now was the quality of the new context. “What the FLN proposes is far from the liberty fought for by internationalists, by Muslim trade unionists who [FLN] killers sometimes assassinated.”¹²¹

An article by André Devriendt the following year, responding to Belgian anarchist writer Hem Dey,¹²² provided further clarity. “If it concerned only choosing between Ferhat Abbas [leader by then of the FLN-established Algerian Provisional Government, the GPRA] and de Gaulle, there would, of course, be no problem. We have not chosen between two governments. We’ve chosen the camp of oppressed people in revolt, those who, for over a century, have been insulted, robbed, and reduced to misery in their own country.... We are with those who have been ‘forced’ to use violence.... They are not anarchists, they carry out a war of national independence. And how could it be otherwise?”¹²³

In late 1960, Maurice Joyeux, best-known leader of the FA and himself an imprisoned draft resister during World War II, added his name to the “Manifesto of the 121” (along with several other anarchists) supporting military resistance and the activity of the Jeanson network of FLN collaborators on trial. While not addressing the Jeanson network issue, Joyeux explained that draft resistance was obviously a responsible position in a context where top-level French generals mutinied against their government (the January 1960 revolt in Algeria) and where no successive regimes or politicians or even Marxist parties had succeeded in ending the war. In fact, he saw the Declaration as only restating a traditional anarchist position on the right of individuals and workers collectively to refuse to submit to war.

“The Manifesto of the 121 effectively sensitized a public opinion that slept for six years, unwilling to hear anything.”¹²⁴

The FA denounced de Gaulle’s use of an aristocratic and demagogic plebiscite on two ambiguous formulas for Algeria’s future in January 1961. Offering equally obscure alternatives pleasing to both right and left forces in French politics, and threatening to retire if a “yes” vote was not gained, it said, de Gaulle hoped to further legitimize his role as the sole determiner of policy and to further delay an obviously necessary settlement with the FLN. While the latter doesn’t represent all Algerians, it is the party with which France is at war. “If you vote ‘no’ to the irritable and stubborn old man, you will re-enforce the camp of the fascists and it is obviously this that ‘left’ politicians and their ‘attendant’ trade unionists count on to lead you to vote for a formula that keeps in place a man whose foreign policy serves some and whose presence reassures some others who are incapable of facing up to him.” Because of this false choice, the FA campaigned for mass abstention. “We refuse to indulge in a plebiscite for a man whose concession rules prolong the Algerian war. We refuse to play the game of leftist or rightist politicians.”¹²⁵

At the same time, Joyeux once more addressed the challenge to be faced in post-independence Algeria, on this occasion surprisingly concerned as well with the potential fate of Europeans in that country. Joyeux acknowledged that heavy repression against Algerian rebels since 1945 forced the latter to strengthen their ability to endure by borrowing powerful myths of nationalism and bourgeois democracy from their oppressor. But equality will be the key to completing the revolution. The colonial capitalist regime divided inhabitants against each other, providing relative racist privilege to Europeans, but in return denying them the relative economic status of their peers in France. Alongside the forced servitude of Muslim Algerians, the majority of Europeans has worked for their living for dozens of years and thus belong to the land as well.

Observing the class and race situation in Algeria, he said, the “essential goal of the revolution must be full equality first of all! Nothing can be built, nothing can flourish, nothing can endure on this land without the most complete equality between those of different communities and between those of the same community....Equality of political rights, equality of expression of philosophical thought, equality in the conditions of existence!” Economic equality will become reality only “through the division of huge properties or in their collective exploitation and then the participation of workers of every race in the management of the large economic complexes.” Despite the sometimes ignoble behavior of the million Europeans, most will remain in Algeria and should not be held collectively responsible, subject to pogroms and violence. Inequality between the races and rejection of Europeans into a ghetto would only invite new forms of Western intervention, eager to resume lost privileges.

To accomplish all of this, through “a largely decentralized collectivism, a federalism of large cities and communities,” requires rejection of the dangerous myths of nationalism, religion and bourgeois democracy. From what was known of the FLN leadership, however, Joyeux doubted that such a solution would be achieved. Instead, Algeria’s likely future will be “one more Arab state, where classes, races, religions, investor interests, the schemes of adventurers and politicians confront each other, and have spoiled the Middle East.”¹²⁶

Abstaining from direct engagement with and support of the FLN, as practiced by the FCL and GAAR, FA anarchist-communists such as Joyeux thus strikingly retained their distance from and pessimism about the Algerian revolution despite understanding and sympathizing with the revolt against colonialism. In Joyeux’s view, despite being only “an infinitesimal drop of water in the tempest around the war,...the FA helped to create a bit of working-class unity against de Gaulle and his followers in its pursuit.”¹²⁷

But others, especially younger elements in the FA, felt closer affinity with the Algerian struggle and the immediate issues at stake for the FLN. Said one writer, despite changing opinion in France, important problems remained to be solved through negotiation: the future of French military bases (especially the giant naval base at Mers-el-Kébir), control of the Sahara and its oil exploitation, the future orientation of Algeria in the cold war, and the status of Europeans remaining in Algeria after independence.

“While Algerians want an accord, they will not want to agree too quickly in order to guarantee their future. It is important for the GPRA to take account of the unspeakable sufferings of this whole courageous but miserable people who are a great example for the world....For those of the maquis and direct action, for those of prisons, *hébergement* and *regroupement* camps, for all those who struggled in misery, fear, foul deeds, and torture, the end of the war will be a beginning. They will have to start up again at zero. It will be Year 1 of freedom, but also of hard work. Everything must be built or rebuilt. A new society to create, while giving it a soul formed through the struggle and suffering.” However, they also “risk finding new chains and slavery. Will they succeed in constructing the new society we dream for them and which they deserve so well?”

Important in changing French opinion, said the writer, were reactions against the April 1961 “generals’ revolt” as well as the growing knowledge about widespread use of torture by the French in Algeria. “The Algerian war dragged along. After the Indochina war, equally absurd and which caused it such pain, France slowly but surely exhausted itself. The new bloody burden was too heavy to carry. By its lies, its methods, its tortures on top of the horrors of every war, the ‘thing’ degraded it and corrupted its soul.”¹²⁸

With the April 1961 revolt, said a new article, “the most repugnant face of fascism was revealed.” “From the moment when the stormy sky risked to burst forth a rain of centurions, at the anguished appeal [for citizen resistance to a feared invasion] by [Prime Minister] Debré, ... we ran through the night to gather men of courage.... In this battle, our FA was constantly present,” issuing a press release, coordinating with trade unions and other anarchists and establishing offices for the latest information and effective networks. Though the generals failed in this plan to gain obedience from rank-and-file soldiers and to invade France itself, and though the working class set aside its wage disputes “to mix itself in the quarrel among those who vied for the position of exploiting them,... [the people] lost once again, since the government emerged with extra power to use against the criminal generals but which, if needed, could easily be used against the workers.” Now that the rebellion has failed, full liberties should be established, including arms for the people, as the proven last resort against seditious gangs. “Also, each citizen, as the supreme protector of the society, should gain an equal share of all the revenue and resources of the nation.”¹²⁹

The failed coup of April 1961 was followed by the trial of two of its generals, Challe and Zeller. Both, unsurprisingly, justified their action by their objections to government policy in Algeria. But even most of the officers who refrained from following the generals did so not from loyalty to the state but from simply weighing opportunistically which side had the best chance to prevail. For both Joyeux and Laisant, most important was the collapsed mystification of the military as an embodiment of courage, honor, and loyalty to the nation and state. In effect, the trial of the two generals became the trial of the army and military caste more generally. Importantly as well, the several days of April confrontation made abundantly clear that it was the mass of common soldiers, men of the people and not of the elite, who refused to side with the rebellion, thus causing it to fail. Likewise, in metropolitan France, it was the common people appealed to by a desperate government that demonstrated its refusal to accept a military dictatorship.¹³⁰

Nevertheless, the tough bargaining continued and the Evian peace talks¹³¹ broke off as each side assessed its strengths and objectives. Said an FA writer, understanding de Gaulle’s intent to grant Algeria’s independence only to seek a new neo-colonial domination for its own profit and understanding how both the United States and the Soviet Union sought to replace France’s special role with Algeria, the GPRA sees its bargaining position strengthened with perhaps independence, like Yugoslavia, from both major blocs in the offing. This would be “the Algerian Revolution’s only chance to find original solutions and where the anarchist movement could find a field for its ideas.” Having found all the elements needed to develop a strong sense of nationhood, having harnessed a common moral and physical misery to develop a dynamic consciousness producing a revolution without

reliance on a bourgeois class at its origin “permits hope for bold measures. There isn’t a revolutionary militant who doesn’t nourish the hope to see the fight for political freedom now swing over toward social revolution. It seems logical that, because of its popular origins, the movement will not be satisfied with an independence that it knows is not an end in itself and that it will do everything to radically change the Algerian economy.”¹³²

As the end of the war drew near, clashes on the editorial board were no doubt heated since, compared to Joyeux’s deep skepticism, other FA voices expressed strikingly optimistic views. This was clearly the tone of a *Le Monde Libertaire* article in October 1961. In the eyes of its author, because bourgeois reformist Ferhat Abbas was replaced by Ben Khedda as head of the GPRA, because the GPRA itself was revealed to be accountable to a National Council emanating from all elements of the revolutionary struggle, and because the FLN Tripoli Program of August was ideologically committed to socialist approaches after independence, the diplomatic mask of the Algerian struggle was finally replaced by an open commitment to social transformation. De Gaulle had hoped for a neo-colonial relationship such as that with black francophone Africa, a relationship like that of a factory owner with his company union. But these hopes were now checked and de Gaulle had been forced to give up the oil-rich Sahara, a key element of his plan for continued French enrichment.

More enthusiastically yet, the author saw the Algerian social revolutionary commitment as potentially “overturning Africa from top to bottom and perhaps even western Europe.” In fact, he says, the reaction of the “Left and the West toward the Algerian revolution is the same as toward the Spanish revolution in 1937.” Certainly, he admits, “the Algerian revolution is not *a priori* anarchist. It includes, however, certain signs of full democracy and its methods are rich in learnings in more than one respect.” Its ideology was “forged in the struggle itself, the same as its structure, and this from nothing.” From direct action at the grassroots emerged a movement that forced all political parties and politicians to join in and this was even more than the anarchist Spanish CNT could accomplish. The National Council of the Algerian Revolution “represents a new form of democracy which can be called ‘dynamic’ in the sense that it was forged and exists through the struggle.” It was indeed an avant-garde revolutionary council of this sort that Camillo Berneri advocated in Spain as an alternative to the class collaboration of many anarchists.¹³³

As the Algerian revolution gathered final [political] momentum and de Gaulle slowly and painfully began to grant concessions toward full independence, the organized fascist product of the April 1961 revolt increasingly spread throughout metropolitan France in the form of the OAS. Stated “Walter,” the author of a December 1961 *Le Monde Libertaire* article, extortion fundraising, “OAS” graffiti on countless public walls,

hundreds of plastic bombings and eighty National Assembly deputies openly proclaiming sympathy for the OAS while the regime seemed only passively to resist—all were signs of a new potential putsch. Ex-prime minister Mendès-France suggested that France now was in greater danger of civil war than ever before. The *LML* writer stated bluntly that “the root of the problem was in the very nature of the regime,” the plebiscitary dictatorship itself originated from the same forces and a military coup three and one-half years earlier and still composed in part by officials sympathetic to the cause of “French Algeria.” Through the regime’s inability to negotiate effectively for Algerian independence or to counter OAS action decisively, “fascism has practically taken over the state apparatus well before Salan’s entry to Elysée [the presidential palace].”

As before, he said, the only effective potential obstacle to the fascist takeover is by mobilizing the working class to militant action. Class consciousness is written off by sociologists who see the calming effects of mass consumerism and paid vacations. The mass mobilization potential of the Communist party is consciously avoided by its leaders except for occasional petitions and demonstrations. Nevertheless, “Walter” called for an alliance of revolutionary working class forces to take the offensive against fascism, and the whole traditional social and republican order that protects it, through an unlimited general strike and occupation of factories.¹³⁴

Apparently because of the defiant analysis and challenge of the above article, the December issue of *Le Monde Libertaire* was seized by the government without explanation. At the same time, one of its street vendors was attacked by an OAS gang.¹³⁵ Not to be intimidated by these events, “Walter” renewed his analysis and challenge in February 1962. He reminded readers of Malatesta’s warning that factory owners and soldiers don’t distinguish by party cards which workers to exploit or to shoot. Unfortunately, Malatesta’s warnings were not heeded by Italian workers, and a split working class allowed Mussolini’s fascism to walk into power in 1921. Similarly when trade unions and left parties call for only a fifteen-minute strike and to benefit a “sacred national union” against the OAS, they only play the game of de Gaulle, the precursor to and facilitator of the end-point fascist coup. When anarchists who wish a more direct challenge are treated as provocateurs, when the Algerian proletariat itself is not recognized as “class ally against fascism,” the potential revolutionary power of the French working class is lost. “Berneri was right: to win the war against fascism, one must make revolution.... Without doing so, the war against fascism will inevitably be lost.” Effective unity should be class-based, with the spontaneous creation of workers’ and peasants’ councils to fight, as Malatesta suggested, not only fascism but also the State, Capital and the Church.¹³⁶

In early 1962, the FA helped to organize one of the rare public meetings against the OAS, gaining participation as well from all parties of

the left. The FA's overall stand against the war and fascism was not unnoticed. Members had "distributed thousands of posters and tracts," and the FA bookstore had distributed banned books on French torture.¹³⁷ In March 1962, the Paris office of *Le Monde Libertaire* and its bookstore were completely destroyed by a powerful OAS bomb. But rather than scaring off supporters, in fact, the bombing brought a new wave of subscriptions for the newspaper, which almost paid for the damages done by the explosion.¹³⁸

Albert Camus

WHILE DANIEL GUÉRIN APPROACHED ANARCHISM FROM A MARXIST position, the more famous writer Albert Camus (1913–1960) came to a broadly libertarian perspective, arguably close to and overlapping with anarchism,¹³⁹ from an existentialist anti-Marxist radical humanistic liberalism. By 1948, veteran militant André Prudhommeaux presented Camus to an anarchist group as an anarchist sympathizer.¹⁴⁰ Though never formally labeling himself as such, Camus's basically anarchist orientation for the next twelve years seemed clear. While his theoretical stance is therefore of great relevance, his personal European Algerian origin and identity also immersed him deeply in dialogue about Algeria and the war until his accidental death in 1960.

Camus's clearest and best-known libertarian (anarchist) statements are found in his famous book *The Rebel*, published only three years before the outbreak of the Algerian insurrection.¹⁴¹ Its perspective directly anticipates much of the rebellious dynamic of that future upheaval, while also containing a prescient, severe critique of its authoritarian and violent failures.

To describe implicitly the colonial context,

There is, in fact, nothing in common between a master and a slave; it is impossible to speak and communicate with a person who has been reduced to a servitude. Instead of the implicit and untrammelled dialogue through which we come to recognize our similarity and consecrate our destiny, servitude gives rise to the most terrible of silences....¹⁴² Since the man who lies shuts himself off from other men, falsehood is therefore proscribed and, on a slightly lower level, murder and violence, which impose definitive silence.¹⁴³

Concerning acceptable goals and methods of revolt,

Far from demanding general independence, the rebel wants it to be recognized that freedom has its limits everywhere that a human being is to be found—the limit being precisely that human being's

power to rebel.... [I]n no case, if he is consistent, does [the rebel] demand the right to destroy the existence and the freedom of others.... He is not only the slave against the master, but also man against the world of master and slave.¹⁴⁴

On the issue of revolutionary violence,

Rebellion, when it emerges into destruction, is illogical. Claiming the unity of the human condition, it is a force of life, not of death.... The consequence of revolt...is to refuse to legitimize murder because rebellion, in principle, is a protest against death....¹⁴⁵ If an excess of injustice renders [insurrectionary violence] inevitable, the rebel rejects violence in advance in the service of a doctrine or a reason of State.... Authentic acts of rebellion will only consent to take up arms for institutions which limit violence, not for those which codify it....¹⁴⁶ Revolution with no other limits but historical expediency signifies unlimited slavery.¹⁴⁷

For a realistic example of effective non-nihilistic rebellion, Camus cites,

Revolutionary trade unionism [syndicalism]...[which, in our century] is responsible for the enormously improved condition of the workers from the 16-hour day to the 40-hour week.... Trade unionism [Syndicalism], like the masses, is the negation, to the benefit of reality, of bureaucratic and abstract centralism.... If [rebellion] wants a revolution, it wants it on behalf of life, not in defiance of it. That is why it relies primarily on the most concrete realities—on occupation, on the country village, where the living heart of things and of men are to be found.¹⁴⁸

More explicitly yet, Camus evokes the ideal of the anarchist movement:

On the very day when the caesarian revolution triumphed over the syndicalist and libertarian [anarchist] spirit, revolutionary thought lost, in itself, a counterpoise of which it cannot, without decaying, deprive itself....¹⁴⁹ Authoritarian thought, by means of three wars and thanks to the physical destruction of a revolutionary elite, has succeeded in submerging this libertarian [anarchist] tradition. But this barren victory is only provisional, the battle still continues.¹⁵⁰

Further commenting on his book in 1952, Camus asserted his confidence in the potentials of non-nihilistic anarchism:

Anarchism has a ready-made fertility on condition that it rejects without hesitation everything in its tradition or even today which remains attached to a nihilistic romanticism that leads nowhere.... I will continue to criticize it, but it is that fertility that I thus wanted to serve.

As to the overall goal of his book,

The only passion which urged on *The Rebel* is precisely that of rebirth.... I believe that the society of tomorrow cannot do without [anarchist thought]. I am certain that it will be recognized, once the useless fuss about the book has disappeared, that [the book] has contributed, whatever its faults, to making that thought more effective and, at the same time, to strengthen the hope and opportunity for the last free men.¹⁵¹

In this last decade of his life, Camus spoke and wrote passionately on the Spanish anarchist movement and its accomplishments in the late-'30s civil war and revolution. He also wrote articles in *Le Libertaire* and *Le Monde Libertaire*; was on the editorial board for the anarchist journal *Témoins* with Gaston Leval and André Prudhommeaux, among others; spoke at various anarchist gatherings; and assisted anarchist Louis Lecoin's campaign to support conscientious objectors (COs).¹⁵² In turn, like Emma Goldman in the 1920s when she denounced Soviet oppression, Camus's postwar anti-Communism caused his rejection by the pro-Communist French left as an objective tool of reactionary capitalist forces.

Already as an Algiers journalist in the late 1930s, Camus had described the extreme poverty and misery of the native population in colonial Algeria and collaborated with the PPA of Messali Hadj. In the same prewar period, he edited and wrote for a daily Algiers newspaper, *Le Soir Républicain*, including a defense of the right to conscientious objection and an overall analysis of French politics "perfectly in tune with contemporary anarchist analysis."¹⁵³ Following the French massacre of many thousands of Muslim Algerians in May 1945, Camus was quick to denounce, in the columns of the *Combat* newspaper, those humiliating colonial conditions and repression that lead inevitably to revolt. He continued on numerous occasions from then until the late 1950s to condemn the economic and social oppression and lack of political equality of the Muslim majority.¹⁵⁴

But Camus's vision, opposed as he was to authoritarianism generally and to the existing form of French colonialism, was for a truly egalitarian, multicultural society in which each group was enriched by the presence of the other in a genuinely democratic context drastically different (though not fully independent) from metropolitan France. In his view, there was

no doubt that the one million *pieds-noirs*, most of whom had deep multi-generational roots in Algeria, fully deserved an equal place in the future of that country. The tragedy for Camus was that his political and cultural vision was shared by only, at best, small minorities on each side.¹⁵⁵ Increasingly, as the war and its polarizing effects progressed, the chances for realizing this vision in his homeland rapidly retreated to zero. Measured by his overall moral position against political violence and coercion as well as by his positive ideal vision for Algeria, each day of the war was received as a personal blow. “I am very anguished by developments in Algeria. This country today is caught in the back of my throat and I can think of nothing else.”¹⁵⁶

In his non-fictional writings on Algeria after 1954, Camus consistently denounced FLN-MNA fratricide,¹⁵⁷ the horrendous violence toward both *pied-noir* and Muslim civilians, the French use of capital punishment against FLN militants even when convicted of civilian murders, the pursuit of war by France and the FLN generally, French leftists who complained justifiably about the French use of torture but who were silent about FLN civilian attacks, and the French government’s refusal to recognize CO status for those refusing the military draft. As well, he also testified in court on behalf of FCL activist Pierre Morain in 1955.¹⁵⁸ Most notably, Camus returned to Algiers in January 1956 to present privately and publicly to FLN leaders and liberal French Algerians his proposal for a bilateral truce agreement against any further killings of women, children, and the aged. While apparently accepted by FLN leaders in Algiers (including Abane Ramdane), the proposal was never considered seriously by the French government, and the public meeting itself was attacked by a violent mob of thousands of *pieds-noirs*.¹⁵⁹

After this, unable to bridge the gap between the two sides, Camus for the most part remained silent for fear of encouraging either party. A year later, in December 1957, Camus went to Stockholm to receive the Nobel Prize for literature. At this occasion, he replied to an Algerian student critical of his failure to engage with the cause of Algerian national liberation. While the wording of his reply was consistent with his previous condemnations of terror against civilians, it scandalized much of the French left when later reported, being interpreted as reflecting merely his own unyielding European Algerian roots. Repeating his commitment to “a just Algeria, where the two populations can live in peace and equality” and with a “fully democratic regime,” Camus also denounced “a blind terrorism, in the streets of Algiers, for example, and which one day may strike down my mother or my family. I believe in justice, but I will defend my mother before justice.”¹⁶⁰

Part of his antagonism toward the FLN stemmed from his absolute opposition to terrorism against civilians generally. But another part apparently related to his friendship with Messali Hadj and his sense that the MNA was

filled with valuable cadres for Algeria's future¹⁶¹ and was open to a more tolerant position on the future status of French Algerians. Camus advocated a federation for Algeria short of independence but guaranteeing full economic and political equality for both French and Algerian communities.

As his friend, Algerian teacher and writer Mouloud Feraoun (1913–1962) (who was later assassinated by the OAS) reported, while he and Camus agreed in their critiques of the needless sufferings of civilians and the abysmal situation of Muslim Algerians, Camus was too rooted in a Eurocentric perspective. “Camus refuses to admit that Algeria could become independent and that he would be forced to show a foreign passport each time he returned—he who is Algerian and nothing else.” However despicable the unjustified attacks against civilians, said Feraoun, “I would like them [Camus and his friend Roblès] to understand those of us who are close to them and so different at the same time. I would like them to put themselves in our place.... Those who are in charge of French sovereignty in this country have treated me as an enemy since the beginning of these events.... [I am asked] to defend the cause of France at the expense of my own people, who may be wrong but who die and suffer under the scorn and indifference of civilized countries.”¹⁶²

Témoins

CAMUS CLOSELY COLLABORATED WITH THE ANARCHIST LITERARY review, *Témoins* (“Witnesses”), published by poet Jean-Paul Samson (1894–1964) from 1953 to 1964.¹⁶³ While published in Zurich, Samson's place of residence,¹⁶⁴ the magazine was clearly aimed mainly at a French, rather than broadly francophone, audience.¹⁶⁵ It covered a wide range of cultural topics and with some original creative writing, but also contained considerable explicit political commentary more from a philosophical or ethical than activist perspective.

Reflection on the Algerian war and related topics came from the same liberal humanist anarchist roots as Camus. Strongly anti-Communist (and thus, like Camus, regularly denouncing apologists for the Communist party or Soviet regime), *Témoins* also despaired at and criticized the erosion of liberty and practice of freedom in the West. “Who knows, amidst the crowd of lobotomized and ideologues, if a handful of witnesses is not today, however precarious the feeble means permitted us, one of the only ways to restore, however modestly, the reality of man? Or is this already asking too much? A means in any case, less ambitiously, although not at all resigned, quite the opposite, for measuring the cataclysmic march replacing civilization.”¹⁶⁶

Said another article, explicitly, what protects the West, no longer with a monopoly of nuclear arms, from totalitarianism is “the permanence of individual freedoms that liberals try to maintain and that anarchists try

to enlarge,” and that would be dangerous and even fatal for Stalinist occupation. “[Thus,] anarchists have an essential role to play in defending the West, a role that can’t be played by anyone else...a role that consists of maintaining and, if possible, enlarging, day after day, the difference between West and East, a difference that is our sole hope in this world...” In contrast to Marxist and fascist totalitarianisms, which seek to eliminate anarchists, and despite occasions when anarchists need to use “means of resistance more tragic than simple dialogue...there is a sort of natural alliance between anarchist ultra-liberalism and liberal infra-anarchism.... Liberalism and libertarianism have the same recourse: to foment individuality.”¹⁶⁷

Similarly, long-time anarchist and *Témoins* collaborator Gaston Leval argued that, for anarchists, it’s not a question of choosing to be for the USA or the Soviet Union. “It is to choose for the greatest possibilities for freedom, revolutionary development and the future. If this coincides with the interests of one of the two blocs, it’s not our fault.”¹⁶⁸ (In terms of the principle of collaboration, then, though on nearly opposite sides of the anarchist spectrum, *Témoins*’s preference to collaborate with left liberals was comparable to FCL or GAAR collaboration with those on the Marxist far left.)



From the summer of 1955 to the end of the war, the essential position of *Témoins*, unsurprisingly like that of editor Camus, was to despair of halting the downward spiral of tragic violence in Algeria, especially the bloody terrorism against civilians on both sides; to denounce the hypocritical self-serving rhetorical rationalizations of the FLN and French military alike; and to warn of the real danger (as in Spain in 1936) of the colonial army in North Africa crossing the Mediterranean to impose a fascist government in the home country.

In the summer of 1955, Samson endorsed the call by *L’Express*¹⁶⁹ editor Jean Daniel for an equitable peace, but with increased anxiety observed that it was perhaps too late.¹⁷⁰ Distancing from and denouncing both sides in the Algerian conflict, with only the slightest hint of sympathy for the Algerian cause, Samson in the same issue condemned both the terrorism of the colonial forces and “that, overall less criminal but no less lamentable, of the African nationalists supported by...Moscow.”¹⁷¹

Two years later, *Témoins* published an excerpt from a speech by Camus on March 15, 1957 in Paris. At that time, Camus denounced one-party regimes of the right and left as totalitarian and unable to change. “This is why the only society able to evolve and liberalize, the only one that deserves our critical and active sympathy is one where party pluralism is institutionalized.... This alone allows us today to denounce torture, disgraceful torture,

as despicable in Algiers as in Budapest.”¹⁷² At the same time, Samson rejected the notion of “collective responsibility” on either side as a stupid and infamous simplification, just as when it was applied to all Germans in Hitler’s time. It is foolish to think that the crimes on the French side could be stopped by voting. One could also claim that “the courageous Arab, equally constrained by the *colons* and by FLN blackmail, but who abstains from denouncing what he knows of the latter’s intentions, is also ‘collectively responsible,’ and the French paratroopers who murder him could say that it is justified. To pose the problem in those terms is to condemn it to never leaving the circle of violence and blood.”¹⁷³

A more specific denunciation of the FLN, far from the critical support given by other anarchists, appeared in the Spring 1958 issue. “Because oppressed Algerians are men just like others,” it said, “our overall human truths apply to them as to others, despite their treatment by the colonial empire.” The article quotes approvingly from a letter from *Témoins* collaborator Prudhommeaux in *Noir et Rouge*: “A demand for independence has a humanely liberating [AP said “anarchist” in the original] potential only if it excludes any idea and practice of segregation, of expulsion of minorities, of doctrinal conformism, of political monopolization (in short, of purges), and of foreign barbarism...” As to FLN treatment of its own people, “no terrorism was needed to detach Hungarians from the occupier and to force them to support an insurrection. In Algeria, and in the metropole, FLN murderers use coercion and terror especially toward their own Muslim brothers. They verify the anarchist understanding that the worst oppressor of the individual is always, when rival groups fight for power, the group to which he belongs.”¹⁷⁴

From early on, *Témoins* viewed the war also as a threat to whatever freedom remained in France itself. In mid-1955, Samson already saw potential parallels with the experience of Spain two decades before, referring to “the threat of an eventual ‘operation Franco’ which could one day be launched from French-controlled North Africa toward metropolitan France.... Events rush along and we greatly risk seeing tomorrow either a ‘southern’ secession or even a taking possession of all of France by a certain *caïd* whose name is being whispered.”¹⁷⁵ A year later, Samson discovered, to his great surprise, upon traveling throughout France, that virtually no one wanted to acknowledge that the country was at war or was aware of the beginning of the plague, as in Camus’s *La Peste*.¹⁷⁶

By three years later, de Gaulle indeed had come to power through pressure from the Algeria-based French army, and the full implications of this coup and new regime were still unclear. Initially, Samson was convinced that in fact a fascist coup was underway, as in Spain twenty-two years earlier. With fascism on the offensive and with the Fourth Republic’s “shaky democracy” calling for help “from all those who valued freedom,”

the apparently black and white situation made the choice at that moment quite simple. But on reflection and as the days went by, he said, the choice became more complicated. In fact, the Fourth Republic seemed to lack any institutional power to save itself: The army in France would not fight the French army in Algeria. Only with a broad common front of the masses could effective resistance be offered. But this would open the door to Communist domination as the best-organized force, and a subsequent red fascism of its own, as in Hungary two years earlier; and then a coup d'état by the army in response. In reality, only de Gaulle, the old enemy of Vichy sentiment in French Algeria, had the possibility, by no means a certainty, of preventing the rise of either form of fascism—red or black. From a “critical humanist” perspective, resisting apparently easy but risky historical analogies, Samson thus opted for temporary non-resistance to and continuing critique of de Gaulle as the least of three evils. If de Gaulle himself became trapped by those who launched the coup, Samson pledged to assume responsibilities in the struggle that would follow.¹⁷⁷

The risk of this choice was underlined, said Samson, with de Gaulle's choice of Jacques Soustelle for Minister of Information and the latter's formation of a “Union for French Renovation,” a potential dangerous precursor in France itself of the “Public Safety Committees” of Algeria, formed by the military there to precipitate the political crisis and coup of May 1958. Samson also quoted de Gaulle supporter Georges Bidault who ominously stated that if forced to choose between the Republic and Algeria, he would choose Algeria.¹⁷⁸

Three years more into de Gaulle's regime, Samson found the political situation still quite dangerous. Responding to the latest of the Algiers putsches (of which he foresaw potentially more to come) and “despite the myth of the victory gained over sedition by the unanimous nation, we had to note that General de Gaulle is...the *only* real obstacle to the installation of fascism. Understood that the immense majority of the country gave a sigh of relief when the Algiers directorate collapsed. But what did the country do, what could it do? To go, as invited by what everyone knew was a joke, ‘by foot and by car’ to face off the SS disguised as paratroopers?... We were all at heart with de Gaulle. But that was the extent of our ‘resistance.’” Our people “were absent, except perhaps at the acute hours of crisis, ...and in a perpetual state of abdication.” Though a magazine like *Témoins* is only “one grain of sand” among numerous beaches, everyone should try to speak clearly about present dangers instead of accepting the political game as it is.¹⁷⁹

The reality of the fascist potential was also underscored, for Samson, several months later in the October 17, 1961 “truly criminal violent repression” by Paris police of a non-violent street march by 30,000 Algerians protesting against the arbitrary and discriminatory evening curfew of

Muslim workers and the growing wave of violent repression generally.¹⁸⁰ "In the progressive descent from the verbal words of grandeur, the nation that gave birth to the rights of man each day repudiates more of its soul; the coming of racism to metropolitan France, such as seen unleashed this Autumn right in Paris at the time of the police raids, marks a new ominous step. And though no one today dares to adopt the inept slogan of 'Algeria is France,' the progress of evil, given the little done to stop it, will cause us one day to discover that France is Algeria." "Our role is to help people become bitterly conscious of the bloody folly where not only some madmen want to throw us but, worse yet, for which they delude themselves that they will find enough of us to be accomplices."¹⁸¹

In November 1960, Samson explained his decision not to co-sign the Manifesto of the 121.¹⁸² While contrary to many, including French judicial authorities, who read the text as encouraging draft resistance and aid to the FLN, Samson (like Guérin) saw it, at least explicitly, as only acknowledging the reasonableness of such a decision. However, he refused to sign it because it seemed to link necessarily the two types of actions. In his view, it was unfair and counter-productive to thus apparently unite the moral and political conscientious decision of the young draftees with those who, contrary to Camus's just writings, had naïve beliefs in the FLN, or of those like Jeanson and Sartre who sought a supposedly beneficial political catastrophe. This unfortunate linkage provided an easy pretext for some to cry treason while also discouraging non-Communist trade unionists, student movements, and the young generally from working on the essential goal of ending the war. Official recognition, finally, of the right to refuse arms would be a most worthy accomplishment of these last years of tragedy.¹⁸³

Amplifying further on the nature and consequences of those who support the FLN for ulterior reasons, Samson wrote in March 1961 of their "politics of the worst,"¹⁸⁴ which led them to give unconditional support to FLN theses and methods. "Although their good faith is surely not questioned, these pure ideologues, less concerned in the end, as justly pointed out, with the fate of people in the underdeveloped countries than with 're-launching the revolution' through subversive possibilities linked with the huge present transformations in the Third World, voluntarily neglect the threat of innumerable infantile sicknesses that await the former colonies in our time of their liberation: super-nationalism, Jacobinism, and even... fascism." At the same time, Samson acknowledged that, despite some disagreement, he found *The Wretched of the Earth*, the final work of dedicated Algerian revolutionary Frantz Fanon, an excellent source for explaining the deeper causes and logic of nationalist revolution.¹⁸⁵

The final paroxysm of violence in Algeria in the spring of 1962 motivated Samson to write sympathetically of the distress of European *pieds-noirs* and the disorientation and anguish of non-fanaticized Muslims caught

between the “idiotic long war,” the abrupt peace negotiated with the FLN alone, the massacres of the OAS, and crimes of the FLN. While by no means justifying OAS atrocities and urging destruction of that “gang,” Samson claimed to understand the source of General Salan’s motivation in leading it: the neglect and de facto abandonment of the European minority. Though previously rejecting the notion of collective responsibility, in this case Samson accepts it—including responsibility by French anti-colonialists—to *prevent* the long war and to *abandon* the *pieds-noirs*.

He blamed de Gaulle the most since the French president used “ruse after ruse, enigma after enigma” to fool both his original supporters in French Algeria and those in France who came to rely on him to bring an end to the war. Eventually, de Gaulle brought not peace but a “fraudulent liquidation inevitably generating all the current horrors.” And all of this was to assure his own and French glory, not the necessary policy of decolonization. Samson warned as well of the great danger of further encouraging the OAS in the short range by already deciding against Salan’s execution and over the longer range by assuring a massive influx of *pieds-noirs* into metropolitan France, “quite capable of spreading their virus of resentment and understandable despair, little by little, to a formidable quantity of European French.”¹⁸⁶

Anarcho-Pacifists

PACIFIST ANARCHISTS, JUST LIKE OTHERS IN THE ANARCHIST movement, participated in coalition committees, meetings, and demonstrations with non-anarchist elements (Trotskyist, left Christian, and liberal groups and individuals) committed to ending the war, supporting draft evasion, and military insubordination and resistance. Contrary to probably most anarchists, however, anarcho-pacifists were opposed to providing support or encouragement for an armed struggle for independence as part of their larger commitment to oppose (almost) all war generally.

While the anarchist movement internationally and historically was opposed in principle to war, support for national liberation wars (such as described above among the FCL and GAAR), for armed civilian resistance to foreign occupation (as with anarchists, such as Camus and others, who participated in the French Resistance), for social revolution (as in Russia, the Ukraine, Mexico, and Spain), and even for statist armies (as exiled Spanish anarchists with the Free French Army in World War II or Kropotkin in favor of the Entente in World War I) demonstrates that political non-violence was by no means a solid historical anarchist commitment. Beyond these examples of “legitimated” social violence were numerous acts of anarchist individual violence (assassinations, bombs, etc.) though by only a small minority, despite the stereotyped violent images of anarchism promoted by political movements and parties opposed to it.

The anarcho-pacifist position, therefore, stands relatively distinct as a tendency making fewer, if any, exceptions for violence mentioned above. While anarcho-pacifists could potentially be found among anarcho-syndicalist or anarchist-communist ranks, they often as well chose to remain unattached to group affiliations either because it was hard to uphold that position among those who differed or because of a more anarchist-individualist orientation, which found most types of continuous group activity too binding.

Also, a clear majority of pacifists historically were not anti-state anarchists. While significant pacifist movements were rooted in France even before World War I, anarchists were only a small part of their ranks. This was also the case during the Algerian war.

While it is impossible to measure the overall influence of the French pacifist movement during this period, detailed and well-documented research found "886 desertions, 420 conscientious objectors, and 10,831 acts of military insubordination and other manifestations of disobedience" involving about 12,000 soldiers or draftees or about 1 percent of the number called upon to serve in the French army during this time.¹⁸⁷ The author of this research distinguishes three distinct periods of anti-militarist action during the war.¹⁸⁸ The years 1955 and 1956 saw various growing manifestations of disobedience by those veterans re-called to active service because of the war—including stopping troop trains from proceeding toward Marseille. From 1957 to 1959 were more isolated individual actions of insubordination or outright desertion, and the development of supportive networks to facilitate underground existence and transport across French borders. From early 1960 on emerged much broader French dissension approving the recourse to military disobedience, culminating in the Manifesto of the 121 in September 1960 and the movement to legalize a formal status of conscientious objectors.¹⁸⁹

Despite the less-publicized activity of anarcho-pacifists during this period, enough examples exist to document the distinctiveness of this position in the anarchist spectrum. Among such individuals are Louis Lecoin (1888–1971), Nicolas Faucier (1900–1992), Maurice Laisant (1909–1991), Pierre Martin (1912?–1988), Louis Simon (1900–1980), André Bernard (1937–), Simone Larcher (Rachelle Willissek) (1903–1969), May Picqueray (1898–1983), and Emile Véra.¹⁹⁰

No doubt the most famous French anarcho-pacifist at this time was Louis Lecoin, whose first direct action against war and the military was his refusal, as a drafted soldier in 1910, to participate in violent repression of railroad strikers. Lecoin was almost continually imprisoned until 1920 because of continual insubordination and publication of antiwar tracts. A consistent and energetic anarchist activist between World Wars, he helped lead the French campaign to save Italian-American anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti from execution and strongly opposed the anarchist Platformists in

the late 1920s. With Nicholas Faucier, he created and led a Free Spain Committee to provide material support (munitions, living supplies, and medical goods) for revolutionary Spain.¹⁹¹ Lecoin's willingness to help supply arms, in this context of defending a developing social revolution, obviously contradicted a pure pacifist position.

In retrospect, while denying a belief in "revolutionary defeatism," he also cautioned young militants about the potential compromising and impossible contexts of even apparent revolutionary situations, given the experience in Russia and Spain where social revolutionaries had to combat "left" forces as well as those on the right. In the case of Spain, he wondered if it might not have been better to let Franco's forces succeed with their coup without armed opposition, since his victory would have been only temporary—Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin would not have intervened—and many thousands, "the future of anarcho-syndicalism," would not have died.¹⁹²

This position also was consistent with his stance in early 1936, before that civil war and revolution, when Lecoin told a trade union meeting that even if it could be shown that "by going to war my [anarchist] ideal would have a chance to take shape, I would even then say NO to war. For one doesn't build our dreamed-of society on piles of bodies; one doesn't create beauty and endurance with people who are physically and morally weakened and sick."¹⁹³

After the fresh experience of Spain, Lecoin's pacifist position further solidified. In the summer of 1939, he helped to organize a well-circulated manifesto signed by trade unions, political and philosophical organizations, and pacifist groups against French participation in a war motivated by imperialist rivalries. This, plus a subsequent "Immediate Peace" tract written and circulated by Lecoin, signed by about thirty individuals, and appearing ten days after France entered the war against Germany, assured Lecoin's prosecution by the government and a prison term of two years.

After the war, he published a new anarcho-pacifist magazine, *Défense de l'Homme* (Defense of Man). While continuing his explicit commitment to anarchism, he did not directly participate in the FA except for occasional commentaries for the post-split *Le Monde Libertaire*. His views on war were unchanged. The destruction and over fifty million dead in World War II confirmed for Lecoin all of his prewar fears, and he refused, in retrospect, to change his earlier position in favor of any of the belligerents. (In the early 1950s, some elements in the FA denounced him as a wartime collaborator because of his absolute neutrality, but Lecoin strongly rejected that assertion.)¹⁹⁴ This perspective, in turn, led him similarly to oppose the war-mongering of both sides in the new Cold War. Despite Stalinist Russia's "most frightful dictatorship of modern times...one doesn't exterminate people to change them, to rid them of their gnawing vermin. One doesn't kill to learn to live."¹⁹⁵ Lecoin also at this time strongly criticized

the FA position supporting national independence movements in Tunisia and Morocco as contrary to anarchist principles.¹⁹⁶ Lecoin was on better terms with the renewed FA after the split and, in early 1962, led a solidarity rally on behalf of the FA after its bookstore/headquarters bombing, also contributing significant funds from his magazine toward its reconstruction.¹⁹⁷

In January 1958, in the midst of the Algerian war, Lecoin founded a new pacifist publication, *Liberté*, as part of his new campaign to gain legal status for conscientious objectors.¹⁹⁸ After several years of writing, meetings, and demonstrations for the cause (gaining collaboration as well from Abbé Pierre, André Breton, and others, along with anarchist comrades including Camus, Faucier, and Emile Vêran), he decided to push the CO issue more decisively as the war concluded in 1962 by launching, at age seventy-four, a personal hunger strike. After moving toward a near-coma state following a fast of twenty-two days and with impressive domestic and international publicity and appeals by many to the French government, he finally obtained a promise to introduce the proposed law in parliament. But passage of the statute was delayed by de Gaulle's regime for over a year, forcing a new round of the public campaign and Lecoin's threat of a renewed hunger strike. Eventually, it was approved with compromised wording and punitive provisions at that, only in December 1963.¹⁹⁹ By now with a major international reputation, Lecoin was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 and 1966.²⁰⁰ His anarcho-pacifist associate, Nicolas Faucier, summarized the significance of Lecoin's action as an anarchist model of individual action and means consistent with the ends, comparing it favorably to the "propaganda by deed" actions of vain anarchist terrorist attacks in the 1890s, however brave and self-sacrificing their authors:

This time it concerned a non-violent act on the part of a man who, by putting his life in danger against arbitrary authority and repression and on behalf of his pacifist ideal, had broken the barrier that prevented examining the situation of conscientious objectors and brought a decision better than could have been done solely by a media campaign and meetings to move and sensitize public opinion.²⁰¹

Nevertheless, while FA militants united in backing his hunger strike campaign, before and afterward a number expressed the same opposition to depending on the state to legalize CO status as Lecoin himself had stated in the 1920s. Some also opposed the "cult of Lecoin" and the heavy reliance on statist individuals and the media to accomplish his goals.²⁰²

Pierre Martin was another anarcho-pacifist recruited to assist Lecoin's decisive direct action. Martin himself went to prison in 1939 for conscientious objection and was a militant member of the War Resisters International. In the late 1940s, Martin led a voluntary development work camp in

Kabylia, Algeria, there meeting and encouraging teacher Mouloud Feraoun to publish his writing. He later worked as a teacher in the Ouarsenis region of northwestern Algeria until forced out by French authorities around 1954. Back in France, he co-founded *Liberté* magazine with Lecoïn and Emile Vêran and collaborated for three years before returning to Africa. In 1960, he participated in an attempt to block nuclear bomb testing in the Algerian Sahara with a truck caravan and then a personal hunger strike in front of the French embassy in Ghana. For the latter action, Ghanaian president Kwame Nkrumah praised him as a “hero of Africa.” Martin also assisted in the Non-Violent Civil Action (ACNV) project in Spring 1961, described below, to support draft evader André Bernard in Nangis, France. Later, he co-organized, with individualist anarchist Louis Simon, the Pacifist League of Action.²⁰³

Maurice Laisant began pacifist activism in 1935, co-directing with brother Charles, the Center for the Defense of COs in December 1936. Participating in a wartime underground anarchist congress in Toulouse in 1943, he helped organize the postwar FA in 1945. After the 1953 organizational split, he also helped organize the new FA. An editor of *Le Monde Libertaire* and its specialist on militarism issues, Laisant became secretary-general of the FA in 1957, a post he occupied until resigning in 1975 in protest of the FA’s new endorsement of greater structure and emphasis on class struggle. In 1952, he became assistant secretary of the Free Forces of Peace. In that capacity, in January 1955 the French government fined him 12,000 francs for having signed an earlier poster calling for a French ceasefire in Indochina. After Camus’s death in 1960, in his elegy entitled “The Pacifist,” Laisant recalled how, before the court on his behalf, Camus, “with his customary calm and courage, testified before the robots of justice and his speech passed above their heads and their understanding.”

A clear statement of Laisant’s anarcho-pacifist position on the Algerian war, which condemned both sides, was *Le Monde Libertaire*’s May 1960 reproduction of the “Free Forces of Peace” appeal for an immediate peace:

For six years, with whatever label one chooses, war has raged between France and Algeria.

For six years, it’s proceeded, encouraging blind terror from one side, disgraceful torture from the other—as confirmed by the International Red Cross.

For six years, men of both camps have died because of general indifference.

For six years, the rejected promises of a “CEASE-FIRE” remain without effect.

The self-determination policy proclaimed on September 16th gives hope for an end to hostilities that must, sooner or later, conclude.

But today, the French government, as well as the FLN, exalts the pursuit of a war that both sides know has no end.

The Free Forces of Peace, with no political ties and foreign to all intrigues, asserts that it is France that should initiate a "CEASE-FIRE" since it is the colonial conquest, the stupid racism and the spite of privilege that made this war inevitable.

All of you who approve of our position should impose this IMMEDIATE PEACE.²⁰⁴

While Lecoin, Faucier, Martin, Laisant, and Emile V éran all represented an older generation of anarcho-pacifists, André Bernard was one of the new recruits produced in part by the Algerian war itself. Already participating in a Bordeaux FA group when only fourteen, Bernard decided in advance that he would not be drafted into the army.²⁰⁵ In October 1956, he exiled himself to Switzerland. Several months later, he informed the French war minister, "I am devoted to a non-violent and internationalist libertarian socialist ideal. I recognize the right of no one or the State to dispose of me. I wish to work for a world of mutual aid, justice, fraternity, and free conscience."

In Switzerland, he discovered an anarcho-pacifist group led by André Bösiger (1913–2005) that supported draft resisters and further encouraged his convictions. He also participated in founding the International Center for Anarchist Research (CIRA).²⁰⁶ After briefly participating in "Jeune Résistance" (rejecting it as prioritizing anti-colonialism over anti-militarism) and a stay in Belgium, Bernard returned to France in early 1961 in contact with and actively supported by the ACNV. The latter, he decided, he could work with since it was not religiously based. Temporarily sheltered and "protected" by ACNV militants (a number of whom, including Pierre Martin, claimed to be "Bernard" when the military came to arrest him), Bernard finally went to trial for draft evasion and was imprisoned for twenty-one months.²⁰⁷

From then on, he actively engaged in the anarchist movement, creating (with his wife Anita and others) in 1965 a new periodical, *Anarchisme et Non-Violence*. Its first issue presented clearly the basic orientation of its founders. Though anarchist before being non-violent, and not wanting to promote a new tendency within the anarchist movement, they believed that anarchism implied non-violence in the pursuit of its goals. While past anarchist attempts at propaganda and confrontation with government authority have sometimes used violence, they said, these would not be condemned and perhaps had some justification in the circumstances and levels of consciousness involved. In any case, social structures "are essentially statist; they cannot be maintained without authority and violence." For anarchists to oppose this violence with violence of their own only legitimizes the former. Besides, violent insurrection has no chance against the huge forces

of repression and psychological conditioning. Thus, “non-violent methods appear to be the means most conforming with anarchist theories; they provide strength without the authoritarian results of violence.... Non-violence is no more essentially religious than violence is anarchist or atheist.”²⁰⁸

It should be noted that for Bernard, as for others in this section, the term “pacifist” is loosely applied to those who would prioritize activity against war and militarism. Also, pacifism is not the same as militant non-violence, a subject well discussed in Bernard’s “Non-violence et pacifisme integral,” a later article in the same periodical.²⁰⁹ Consistent with this distinction is the contrast between the solely abstract, vague, and non-activist “philosophical pacifism” of many who use that label and the militant use of non-violence toward particular social goals that, in the anarchist perspective, leads to a transformed non-authoritarian society. This critique of mere “philosophical” commitment without activism has frequently been applied to many individualist anarchists who at best opt for an “activism” of personal or lifestyle freedom instead of incorporating the latter within a broader dynamic of social liberation that makes “personal freedom” more possible.

Anarcho-Individualists

THE CENTRAL CONCERN OF PURE ANARCHO-INDIVIDUALISM IS full development of each person’s capacities by escaping from and removing others’ use of oppression through state, religious, or other forms of group authority (including that of anarchist organizations), or as individuals. What is freely offered in cooperative or voluntarily contracted relationship also can be freely withdrawn. While concerns for individual fulfillment are important for all anarchists, anarcho-individualists are a distinct tendency by virtue of their priorities, their reluctance to subordinate their individual goal to group responsibilities and concerns and their emphasis on accomplishing their objectives in the here and now.

In the French context, anarchists of this persuasion have traditionally emphasized anti-clericalism and respect for personal sweat equity more than a pretended viable stateless liberatory capitalism as promoted by right-wing libertarians in the U.S. As already mentioned above, anarcho-individualists who chose to participate in the FA were quite capable and willing to cooperate with anarchists (and others) on critiques of existing social oppression so long as their own sense of autonomy was not compromised. Thus, a choice to write or demonstrate in opposition to the Algerian war or militarism generally was thoroughly consistent with an individualist position. However, it is the concentration of some on “individual liberation” to the disdain or exclusion or even at the expense of others that especially rankles other anarchists. In the latter category would be individualist

behavior, such as a violent direct action, which creates a “bomb-throwing crazy anarchist” stereotype that succeeds in marginalizing the larger movement from grassroots consideration or in providing more excuses for massive state repression.

By nature, perspectives of anarcho-individualists are as diverse as their personalities and temperaments, so there are no programs articulating their beliefs as a group, such as those for anarcho-communists or anarcho-syndicalists. Nevertheless, at the time of the Algerian war French anarcho-individualists had several prolific writers in their ranks and several journals in which to express their positions. Among the former were Emile Armand (1872–1963), Charles-August Bontemps (1893–1981), Pierre-Valentin Berthier (1911–), Georges Vincey (1900?–1960), and Manuel Devaldès (1875–1956). While Armand’s *L’Unique* and Lecoin’s *Défense de l’Homme* were primary outlets for anarcho-individualists, both Vincey and Bontemps wrote articles for *Le Monde Libertaire* and these two, as well as Berthier, helped organize and participate in the postwar FA and its re-birth in 1953.

Armand, no doubt the best-known and longest-writing figure of this tendency, produced a wide range of writings from 1897 to the 1950s and edited two especially influential journals of anarcho-individualism, the prewar *L’En Dehors* (1922–1939) and the postwar *L’Unique* (1945–1956). By Armand’s definition, anarcho-individualists were a-moral, a-legal, and a-social: that is, not bound by external and conventional morality, laws, or social pressures. They constructed their own personal and sometimes group ethics, often more demanding than those of outside society; their own sometimes harsher personal interior codes and sanctions against those who violated personal commitments; and their own voluntary social relationships and agreements.²¹⁰

The anarcho-individualist, according to Armand, “has rid (or has attempted to rid) his brain of all abstract or metaphysical ‘phantoms’ that haunted it when it floated with the social mainstream.” He “repudiates violence, imposition, and constraint, thus refusing to be exploited, duped, insulted, or made inferior.” He has “a horror of brutes, idiots, hypocrites, money-mongers, schemers, swindlers, boors, the prostituted, skunks, and bitches of every sort and every nature, behind whatever ideology they hide themselves.”²¹¹

From this perspective, it is obvious that anarcho-individualists such as Armand would have no respect for colonial rule or social exploitation generally. At the same time,

individualists are not revolutionaries in the systematic and dogmatic sense of the word. They do not think that a revolution, any more than a war, can lead to a true improvement of individual life. In

revolutionary times, fanatics of rival parties and schools are especially preoccupied with domination and to achieve it they destroy with a violence and hatred which often neglects the enemy armies. Like a war, a revolution is comparable to a fever during which the sick person acts very differently from his normal state. History shows us that revolutions are always followed by retreats that cause deviation from their original goal. It is with the individual that one must begin. It is from individual to individual that the notion must be first spread that it is criminal to force someone to act differently from what they believe useful or advantageous or agreeable for their own protection, development, and happiness—whether this crime is committed by the State, the law, the majority, or an isolated person.²¹²

Despite the strong emphasis of anarcho-individualists on personal liberty and small-scale association, Pierre-Valentin Berthier illustrated the inclination of some to be actively engaged in specific political critiques on national and international issues. Writing at the time of the Mollet government's massive military escalation in Algeria, Berthier, a close collaborator with Lecoq in the latter's two journals, as well as a writer for *Le Monde Libertaire*,²¹³ forthrightly condemned French actions, anti-colonial terrorism, and Soviet repression in Hungary, all within a framework of condemning statism more generally.

Berthier opened a November 1956 article pointing out the “monstrosity” of states that have power to stop individual bloodshed while also forcing individuals to commit murder against “enemy” persons because of their self-serving quarrels with other states. “To itself alone the right to order your death and mine, to teach us the technique of assassination, to make us excel in it, and to employ such talents for its own purposes.” Despite the fine preaching of ideals from the Bible or *Das Kapital*, there is no condemnation of these perpetual sacrifices by the State. Berthier compared the October 1956 French aerial kidnapping of Ben Bella and other FLN leaders²¹⁴ with the Soviet capture of a Hungarian revolt leader proclaimed a valuable negotiator earlier on the same day. “And the worst is that the governments that ordered these acts of treason and duplicity, or that profited from them and applauded them afterwards, create schools where morals are preached and faculties where the law is taught, while justifying these immoral and illegal actions by solemn imperatives such as pacification and dictatorship of the proletariat.”

Furthermore,

aspiring state leaders already carry within them all the defects of power that they hope to exercise; in the opposition or in jail, they don't reject them, to the contrary! Those who, in Kenya, wished to

force fate by massacring whole villages, by mutilating women and children; those who, in North Africa, killed teachers and lighthouse keepers, assassinated highway travelers, burned farms and schools, whom do they obey? For the goals of whom are these frightful things carried out? They obeyed future politicians, they worked for the aspiring State leaders. Oh! These gentlemen, the cream of well-cultured Muslims or blacks of good society, the elite of the “evolved,” refined intellectuals.... These intellectuals? True intellectuals, authentic men of letters, do not send out assassins to stalk and kill professors and doctors.

At the French elections in January 1956, said Berthier, Socialists such as Mollet and others of the “Republican Front” promised the most pacifist program. But “everything is permitted when one loves power: permission to lie in order to conquer, permission to betray in order to keep it. One sends a thousand tanks against Budapest after promising to evacuate it; one sends 300,000 men against the Arabs after being elected because of promises to negotiate peace with them.”²¹⁵

Four months later, while criticizing French repression in Algeria, Berthier also directly addressed the issue of nationalism and again condemned the use of terrorism, while differentiating its use by anarchists at the turn of the century from that employed by those who support further exploitation. While critical of Algerian nationalists, Berthier regarded French military repression, even if successful against the wave of FLN “infantile and savage” terrorism in Algiers, as ultimately pointless because it would fail “to stop the effervescence of spirits or help conclude the crisis caused by antagonisms too long suppressed.”

The nationalist principle, said Berthier, can be viewed in three different ways. Some adopt a national identity and oppose its interests against those of other countries. Others, such as Marxists, opportunistically use it when it's in their own advantage politically while otherwise rejecting it. But he and others of like mind reject the principle, even if sometimes it has a partially positive historic role and temporarily may have certain revolutionary potentials. It ultimately causes more harm than good. “A people would gain more from skipping that stage and going directly to a federalist society instead of burdening itself with flags, patriotic hymns, border posts, and monuments to the dead.” Thus, while defending the anti-colonial cause, Berthier rejects Arab nationalism while calling instead for a cease-fire, a grassroots union of workers in both countries against their common exploiters, an end to racial prejudice, and establishment of equality in living conditions.

To accomplish such goals, he said, would mean an end to Algerian terrorism, a tool of the nationalist movement designed to polarize Algerian sentiment against the French rather than gaining sympathy and support

among the French people. Because of terrorism, the vast majority of French people cannot support the cause of Algerian independence, as shown in the lack of substantial objection to hundreds of thousands being sent to repress the rebellion. “It is impossible to identify with those who rush to thoughtless massacres; who send fourteen-year-old street urchins to plant bombs under stadium stands; who assassinate teachers and doctors; who burn crops and schools, chop down trees, and strangle livestock; who stop a bus on a highway and murder all non-Muslim men, women, and children passengers. While nationalist politicians deny ordering such crimes, they alone could stop them, but refuse to do so.”

While terrorist methods have been rejected by the anarchist movement for a long time, he added, it is wrong to make a parallel between their employment by some anarchists many decades ago and the present actions of nationalist movements. The targets of the former were chief exploiters of society—the kings, emperors, or presidents—not teachers, doctors, children, the aged, and common people. Or agents of oppressive parties, as in the revolutionary contexts of the Makhnovista or Spanish revolutions.

“We believe that individual independence and harmonious federation of peoples requires repudiation of racial prejudice and religious and political exclusivism and demands peace, not terrorism, in order to triumph.”²¹⁶

Collaborating also with Lecoïn’s *Défense de l’Homme* magazine and with the FA, anarcho-individualist Charles-Auguste Bontemps²¹⁷ presented in the same period a more abstract perspective but still with relevant implications for the Algerian war. About revolutions generally, Bontemps emphasized how idealistic explorers of revolution in the 19th and early 20th centuries ultimately failed, but that their next-generation “disciples” continued, despite opposition to religion, “to keep their mystical belief and [misguidedly] seek their white elephant [revolution].” However justified by a people’s blocked progress, revolution “is a dangerous reaction, a reversal of evolution.” Anarchists must not get trapped by “the fetishism of words. It is not words that count, but their content in a given epoch and the circumstances at hand.”²¹⁸

While strict anarcho-individualists are “excellent in their dissection of human nature” and provide the strong foundation and cutting research method of anarchism, he said, anarcho-individualists can no longer pretend to act separately from society. Even the spread of their propaganda depends on several technological social networks of communications and transportation, their very physical survival is a socially arranged system of production.

Anarchists’ proper role in a revolutionary context is to state reality as it is.

Too open to alternatives to inspire slogans with one blow, too reasonable to appear original, demanding of each an effort to inform and educate oneself, their audience was and remains limited. That

takes nothing from the fact that by this minority spirit, animating a pestering propaganda and questioning opposition, anarchist ideas become effective, acting within the specific context and stimulating evolution. Without these clarifications, revolutions get stuck on bad terrain and we know what will follow. It's the unrewarded but very passionate role of an anarchist to clear the air. He has the vocation for it, the right conditioning, because he avoids the retractions that social ambitions impose.²¹⁹

It is the role of lucidity, he said, examining the whole picture, that makes the anarchist "unbearable among the fixed torch-bearers as well as among pragmatists, cheaters and schemers who take nothing from reality but that which they can exploit." But this role can only be exerted if anarchists rethink and renew their approaches to make their principles apply to evolving reality.

"Beyond our individual moral positions, we cannot be indifferent to human suffering, to injustice, to stupidity especially. They scandalize our minds, they move us because they affect our fellow men, they awaken our defense reflexes because we are threatened by them individually." Though only a minority, we should act through affinity groups with common goals and tasks. In daily life, our action should be to constantly intervene with an anarchist spirit everywhere, to find solutions that provide for the most liberty and that reject authoritarianism. "If the lion is the king of beasts, the master of them all is the tiny microbe."

"It is in the nature of things, in the nature of men, in the unwinding of history that revolutions be betrayed." Twentieth century revolutions always have international implications and will cause direct or indirect interventions by outside States. "When armaments have become what they are, when economic pressures are all-powerful, a revolution proceeds like a war. Must we recall Spain, Indochina, Hungary, North Africa, and others? It is thus political before being social, with all that this condition brings in hierarchical organization, compromise and surrenders."

In the revolutionary context, said Bontemps, anarchists "can only be freelancers, detached activists trying to minimize sectarianism and socializing while maximizing freedom." Because activist anarchists in such contexts are typically eliminated by the revolutionary "politicos," they must conceal themselves and network rather than lead. "Any other behavior is illusion and vain sacrifice." Though accepting revolutionary justifications when no other option exists, we can't accept "that they become imperatives and deceptions, that the slogans of peoples' liberation rejoin the slogans of national defense.... Violent revolution, civil war, costs too dearly in human lives, in atrocities, in works of art and thought that it destroys." Accepting revolution as sometimes an accident impossible to avoid, it is up to

anarchists to state that it is not an ideal. “The revolutionary ideal is a prejudice like others that one exploits like others in the name of the people, but at the expense of the people.”²²⁰ In short, according to Bontemps and with clear relevance for the Algerian insurgency of that period, revolutions (including struggles for national independence) were social tragedies—sometimes avoidable, always with horrific costs—that anarchists should only try to ameliorate, but should never idealize.

However related by certain underlying anarchist principles to those like the FCL, the GAAR, Guérin, and even some in the FA who extolled the concept and potentials of revolution, the anarcho-individualist position of Berthier and Bontemps was at the same time a strong “realist” critique of its potential. It was far from the “critical support” position of those anarchists willingly supplying arms, money, or safehouses and other aid to Algerian militants in France.

PART II

The Ben Bella Regime (1962–1965): Ideal and Reality of Workers’ Self-Management

Algerian Background: Power Struggles and “Algerian Socialism”

BY THE TIME A CEASE-FIRE WAS ANNOUNCED ON MARCH 19, 1962, Algeria's population was wounded, traumatized, and exhausted. Not only had the Muslim 90 percent suffered huge numbers of deaths, injuries, tortures, and relocations, it now also came to experience a final paroxysm of chaotic months-long retaliatory violence from many of the soon-to-be-uprooted 10 percent *pieds-noirs* and right-wing military, especially in the OAS. Muslim urban armed response was not surprisingly forthcoming. Instead of the usual vacations of some *pied-noirs* to France during the summer months, 90 percent of that population, as well as many tens of thousands of Muslim collaborators (*barkis*) left precipitously for permanent exile. The country was exhausted, but with the promise of peace and the end to colonialism, Muslims and their few European allies in the country were elated.

But peace was not yet at hand. With the long-standing rivalry dividing thousands of guerrilla forces of the interior and much larger and better-armed ALN military forces of the exterior, as well as with power conflicts between the GPRA and other external FLN leaders, the wartime coalition of expediency exploded in a desperate new struggle for political supremacy. Importantly, in March, France released from lengthy wartime imprisonment five of the FLN “historic leaders”—Ahmed Ben Bella, Hocine Aït-Ahmed, Mohamed Boudiaf, Rabah Bitat, and Mohammed Khider—all determined to resume major roles in determining the country's future.

Ben Bella, a decorated soldier in the French army in World War II, had directed the MTLD's OS in western Algeria in 1949, was imprisoned in 1952, and later escaped. From Cairo, he helped launch and represent the FLN until his aerial kidnapping and imprisonment in 1956.¹ Aït-Ahmed was a former MTLD/OS leader from Kabylia who, like Ben Bella, also went to Cairo in 1954 and was captured and jailed by the French in 1956.² Boudiaf³ and Khider,⁴ also based in Cairo, likewise were longtime PPA/MTLD/OS militants kidnapped with the others in the same French operation. Bitat, also a veteran of the PPA/MTLD and OS, was the first leader of the Algiers guerrilla region in November 1954. He was arrested and imprisoned in early 1955.⁵

As stated by Mohammed Harbi, “even before the [March 1962] cease-fire, the FLN had...become a fiction that covered over the rivalries of the official [GPRA/FLN] political apparatus and personal ambitions.”⁶ At the

grassroots level within wartime Algeria, serious socialist ideological preparation was virtually absent. Frantz Fanon's *Les damnés de la terre* [*The Wretched of the Earth*] was published in late 1961 and was obviously thus too late for wide distribution within Algeria, even if French military control and mass illiteracy had not been factors. Apparently, Fanon did have, however, a significant audience among Algerian leaders and younger officers in the exterior military.⁷ Though not specifically advocating workers' self-management, Fanon's two principles of humanizing labor and genuine mass participation in decision-making⁸ could be logically interpreted to legitimize it later on.

The frenetic pace and personal and political anxieties of the last stage of the war, however, were no doubt the predominant factors at this time. The annual CNRA gathering of Algerian leaders, in Tripoli, Libya in May and June 1962, brought the various conflicts to a head without any well-organized faction capable of asserting clear social revolutionary guidelines. Part of the agenda was to choose a new FLN political bureau; the latter, in turn, would choose National Assembly members who would then select a new government. The meeting nominated (without completing a formal vote) all seven of the released leaders and several others for the bureau.

At the same time, while needing a political program for post-independence Algeria, the clearest available guidelines of social revolutionary content (written by the FLN Federation of France) were not even considered.⁹ Nevertheless, the populist program adopted called for agrarian reform with some land redistribution and the formation of democratic producer cooperatives and some collective state farms with worker participation in management and profit sharing. It also spoke of the intention to take over and plan the economy with involvement of the workers. As well, reflecting the internal FLN split, it strongly attacked the bureaucratic record of the GPRA, its "paternalistic petit-bourgeois attitudes," and its failure to root out feudal behavior and fiefdoms within its own ranks, while at the same time ignoring "democratic education among the militants and the people."¹⁰

Despite nominal GPRA assumption of government power on July 3 in Algiers—with little military protection to back it up—two months of political maneuvers and military clashes ensued before the "Tlemcen coalition" of Ben Bella and his most important ally, the Army of the Exterior (36,000 men) led by Houari Boumédiénne,¹¹ was acknowledged as victor and heir to the new state. Boumédiénne had left Algeria in 1952 for studies in Cairo, then entered the maquis in western Algeria in early 1955. After becoming a colonel and commander of one of the six internal military zones (wilayas), in 1960 he was named to lead the overall ALN General Staff in Tunisia. Having clashed with the GPRA, he brought the well-trained and armed ALN forces of the Exterior to join Ben Bella's anti-GPRA coalition and became Minister of Defense and later the first vice president.

In the meantime, and even before independence, in the months of chaotic final clashes between Muslims and *pièdes-noirs*, European owners and managers departed the scene leaving no effective government in place. By the time Ben Bella's initial government was installed in September, well over a million acres of farmland, several hundred small industrial units (most at the artisan level), and many urban shops, hotels, and restaurants comprised the original sector of abandoned properties (*biens vacants*).

In many cases, property desertion was ambiguous. Doors were locked at the factory, shop, or farmhouse, but workers were told that *le patron* would return. Often a European or Muslim foreman was given responsibility for maintaining and safeguarding the property. In other cases, emigration to France was calculated months in advance, and appropriate preparations thus taken. Unpaid bills accumulated, inventories depleted, tractors were sold to remaining farmers, removable machinery was sent back to France, and the last cash from operating funds was used to buy plane or boat tickets to cross the Mediterranean. Some also sold or rented entire economic units to remaining Europeans or collaborationist Muslims, while others nihilistically destroyed all records and equipment possible before leaving the country. Meanwhile, especially in the countryside, as the absence of owners became conspicuous, property began to be divided up by neighboring farmers or squatters or opportunistic schemers, and equipment, such as tractors, was damaged or stolen.

Workers in a wide swath of farms, factories, and the service sector across the country thus began to occupy and re-launch these economic units as best they could with few resources of their own, except years of work experience and observation.¹² This was a first wave of more or less spontaneous and pragmatic workers' self-management (*autogestion*)—motivated primarily by the need of already knowledgeable and immediately affected workers to continue gaining livelihood. There is no evidence of explicit advanced socialist, let alone anarchist, ideological socialization of the workers directly concerned, calling for a system of *autogestion*.

Nevertheless, those involved were primarily an experienced, increasingly specialized wage-earning workforce in the most modernized sectors of the urban and rural economies. Some also had experience in collective labor disputes going back as much as a decade before the war. Even without management training, such workers had at least a sense of modern techniques, of their own competence, and how the roles of each depended on one another. From past experience, they understood the dynamics of labor exploitation. Their emerging class consciousness, therefore, was an additional factor in their willingness and readiness to assume collective responsibilities at the productive unit level.¹³

Some, in the industrial sector, as workers in France, might have experienced the more limited model of *comités d'entreprise*. Others, in either

urban or rural units might well have drawn also from their sense of traditionalist village communitarian decision-making. Beyond all of this was no doubt a general sense of justice in taking over properties developed in the colonial period on the backs of Algerian labor and, in the case of modern farms, in re-taking Algerian land originally expropriated by the French. In the context of a successful and immensely difficult long struggle to throw out the colonial regime, all of these factors came into play.

As well, in a minority of cases during the summer, some representatives of the nationalist trade union (UGTA), the FLN, local army units, or local officials also provided assistance. Among these forces, UGTA was by far the most involved and supportive. During the war, the exterior leadership in Tunis had a special study commission to examine agrarian issues, and a Tunis seminar for UGTA militants in 1959 studied agrarian reform and cooperative structures. More importantly, for at least the last four years of the war, UGTA militants traveled widely and were offered training sessions by the various host countries. Especially in China, Cuba, and Eastern Europe, they had the chance to observe model cooperatives and various structures for worker decision-making in state agricultural and industrial enterprises.¹⁴ The Yugoslav model of workers' self-management, among those observed and studied, was given particular attention. By December 1961, UGTA's journal called for a massive agrarian reform concerning 90 percent of land held by Europeans in Algeria with gradual socialist collectivization: state support and peasant acceptance of lands, labor, and the means of production into state farms or communes. In this process, it said, peasants should be involved through democratically elected local committees in confiscation, redistribution, supervision of exploitation, and management of the common means of cultivation.¹⁵

Thus, from the ceasefire forward, in addition to asserting more autonomy from the FLN, UGTA pleaded the cause of *biens vacants* workers before the GPRA, *wilaya* chiefs, the Ben Bella-led coalition and the transitional Provisional Executive before a new government could be established. The central office urged local branches to actively promote the emergence of self-management and publicized the significance of this sector as early as mid-August 1962 in its publication, *L'Ouvrier Algérien*. Thus, by that time, as in the Mitidja and Chelif valleys of central Algeria, for example, UGTA officials were directly involved in facilitating *autogestion* farms. One outside observer noted, by early September, "the excellent campaign by UGTA to transmit those farms, factories, and workshops abandoned by their European or other owners to democratic collectives, or worker councils."¹⁶

The eventual scope and size of this radical decentralized socialist sector was unprecedented in a newly independent country. Aside from the self-management sector in Yugoslavia—an existing model more influential at the

time than any other among Algerian proponents of self-management—it was the largest such attempt anywhere in the world at that time. Perhaps more importantly, it presented an apparently actualizing model of deep social revolution far beyond mere national independence and with an apparently strong momentum of its own. For observers at some distance, this seemed the fulfillment of Fanon's prediction of the jealous revolutionary aspirations of the self-sacrificed masses now that the war was over, the beginnings of the social revolution called for as well by French anarchists critical until then of the apparently limited national independence goals of the FLN.

Ben Bella himself apparently had no immediate understanding of or inclination toward supporting this sector. But with the unexpected permanent exile of European owners and managers, and with the initial urging of certain advisors and UGTA leaders, he gradually realized pragmatically that for the sake of maintaining productivity in the more modern economic realm and to provide himself a certain additional transitional political constituency independent from his military support, he needed to offer some state legitimization to the new sector, at least until a more permanent status could be established.

On September 4, Ben Bella appeared at the Forum in Algiers to announce that the summer political crisis was over, though only after three weeks more was his government formally installed. Several days earlier, the transitional Provisional Executive (presumably with Ben Bella's full approval) announced formation of a new agency, the BNBV (National Office for the Protection and Management of Vacant Properties), to supervise the proper disposition of the massive sector of *biens vacants*. In early October, Ben Bella stated that the BNBV was already drafting appropriate legislation to reflect the government's official policy. He also authorized this team of top advisors—some Algerian and some *pieds-rouges* (foreign radicals) and now attached to his prime minister's office as well—to develop a longer-range plan by which to stabilize and potentially expand, through direct government intervention, this workers' self-management sector.

Algerians Mohammed Harbi and Abdelkader Maachou, and Greek Trotskyist Michel Raptis (Pablo) were probably the commission's most influential members. Beyond these three, other leading members of the BNBV—largely recruited on the basis of personal acquaintance—tended to be products either of the wartime UGTA leadership or from the team of wartime French legal defenders of the FLN.¹⁷ Harbi was a young nationalist activist studying in Paris when the war broke out, and he eventually rose to the highest committee of the FLN Federation in France, becoming responsible for information. In 1958, he left France to serve in two substantial roles in the GPRA. He served as a top-level advisor to Ben Bella from 1962 to the 1965 coup, especially important in promoting the *auto-gestion* sector and socialist policy more generally. He was the editor of the

regime's radical *Révolution Africaine* periodical in 1963–64 and promoter of the party's Algiers Charter in 1964.¹⁸

A teacher by profession, Maachou became first secretary of the exiled UGTA in Tunis during the war and later the secretary of Ben Khedda's GPRA cabinet. He was the director of the BNBV and its successor, the BNASS, concerned with the fate of the original *biens vacants* sector and the formalization and support of the workers' self-management realm throughout Algeria.

Michel Raptis was a founding member of the Trotskyist Fourth International in 1938, becoming one of its principal leaders (as "Michel Pablo") after World War II. In the early '50s, he supported the contested view that the best revolutionary potentials were in Third World areas and thus led a network of European Trotskyists directly involved in gun production and the printing of counterfeit French currency on behalf of the FLN. Already asked before independence to study and recommend policies for Algerian land reform, he became an economic advisor to the BNBV/BNASS and remained an influential advisor to Ben Bella through most of the latter's regime.¹⁹

From this time on, the BNBV and its April 1963 BNASS successor played a critical role in *autogestion* policy recommendations, propaganda efforts, and direct coordination, animation, and supervision. The first two results were late October decrees that provided for elected management committees for every deserted farm and invalidated every *bien vacant* sale, rental, or other transaction since July 1 unless approved by local officials. Two weeks later, Ben Bella announced that nearly 3 million acres of land would thus be added to the *autogestion* sector, though it is certain that a good percentage of this was already under the control of self-management committees. A November 23rd decree expanded these earlier measures to the realms of industrial, artisan, and mining *biens vacants* as well.

Despite these initial steps, assistance in credits, materials, marketing, and technical support—let alone assurance of fair elections, clear delineation of structures and responsibilities, became objective priorities throughout the *autogestion* realm. As well, some form of defense was needed against ambitious locals who wished to enrich themselves through privatization. But however apparently committed its advocates were to *autogestion* success, *the very decision to move the state further into the structure, dynamics, and support of this sector set up a predictable confrontation with the principle and reality of control from below.* The BNBV authors of the subsequent 1963 "March Decrees" put forth a generic workers' self-management model that, on the surface, appeared to provide a huge dynamic sector of grass-roots deep democracy. But the Decrees were a blended model, no doubt partly because of Ben Bella's own political ambitions to exploit the sector to enlarge his own independent base of legitimacy and power, as well as the obvious desire of statist generally (socialist or otherwise) to prevent any

major alternative non-statist realm of society from maintaining and enhancing an independent and potentially threatening field of activity.

March 1963 was a new political context. The French government, determined to act by the letter of the Evian peace accords, defiantly carried out nuclear tests in the Sahara, exactly one year from the signing of that agreement. On the domestic front, UGTA, with a membership of around 200,000 (slightly less than 10 percent of the estimated active workforce), no longer represented an independent-minded organizational threat to the regime since FLN leaders flagrantly violated its relative autonomy and democracy by imposing a new compliant leadership at the UGTA national congress in January. Those who did not withdraw but filled official posts from the national level on down were often sheer opportunists taking advantage of the existing vacuum. For months afterward, demoralization and apathy toward the trade union structure were common throughout the working class of both urban and rural Algeria. Ben Bella was thus motivated to find a new source of populist grassroots support. Additionally, he was concerned with continuing to outflank major competitors Mohamed Boudiaf and Hocine Aït-Ahmed on the left and preparing for a showdown with Mohammed Khider, his main rival still within the FLN leadership.

Specifically, the three March Decrees outlined a detailed set of structures and processes for the whole *autogestion* realm²⁰ and launched a twelve-month period of large-scale official encouragement, marked by widespread nationalizations and significant efforts to install the structure of self-management. The first decree clarified further the legal status of *biens vacants* enterprises and added the government's intent that any other enterprises in the future falling idle or failing "to function normally without good cause" (viewed as economic sabotage) would be added to the same *bien vacant* category and thus subject to the same provisions.

The second decree applied the specific self-management structure to all *bien vacant* units except those deemed by the prime minister as of such national importance that they would be managed by alternative state structures. This text also provided specific details on the composition and responsibilities of the various *autogestion* organs involved. The most inclusive decision-making body was the Workers' General Assembly, which was composed of all regular workers in the enterprise present for at least half a year (thus excluding seasonal workers). Decisions would be made by secret ballot and majority vote, and meetings would take place at least once every three months and also as requested by at least a third of the members. The general assembly would adopt the unit development plan within the framework of the national plan; adopt annual programs specifically for equipment, marketing, and production; approve work-organization arrangements; and approve final accounts.

Units with at least thirty workers would have an intermediary body, the Workers' Council, which would have at least three members, plus an additional member for every fifteen workers, all to be chosen for three-year terms from the ranks of the general assembly and at least two-thirds to be directly involved in production. It would meet at least monthly and also as requested by at least one-third of its members. The workers' council would approve internal regulations, the purchase or sale of equipment, and medium- or long-term loans and decide, within guidelines, on admission of new regular workers (with preference for war veterans or victims of repression). It would elect and check on the management committee to counteract any tendency of the latter toward bureaucratization and a resulting apathy of the workers.

This management committee, with three to eleven members (at least two-thirds directly involved in production), would meet at least monthly and as the unit President deemed necessary. The latter would be selected from the management committee's own ranks, preside at all unit decision-making meetings, countersign all financial documents, and represent the unit in external relations. The committee itself would be more directly involved in internal regulation, formulating the annual development plan and developing programs for marketing produce and for purchasing raw materials and equipment.

Importantly, within each enterprise would be a state-appointed director, automatically a voting member of the management committee and with substantial power of his own. He would assure that the enterprise complied with the national plan, the proper level of regular workers, and proper inventories and accounts. Under the president's authority, he would assume responsibility for daily unit operations and keep the minutes for all unit decision-making bodies. The director should possess the personal and professional qualifications for his position and would be *nominated or dismissed by the relevant supervising state agency* (such as ONRA, the National Office for Agrarian Reform) and the Communal Council for the Animation of Self-Management.

This last body would group together all management committee presidents in each (or several) communal jurisdiction(s), along with representatives of the FLN, UGTA, the ANP, and the communal administrative authorities. This local council would assist in the creation and organization of *autogestion* bodies, help that sector's workers to understand and deal with issues of self-management, and coordinate activities of all area *autogestion* units.

The third March decree regulated the distribution of revenue in enterprises under self-management between levies to the national community and payments to the workers in each unit. The latter consisted of basic wages (fixed by the supervisory agency according to functions and norms of minimum productivity), production-bonus payments for individuals and

work teams that exceeded minimum productivity norms, and a potential remainder to be shared generally, as decided by the workers' council or general assembly. Funds to the outside would cover any unit financial liabilities and would also contribute to a national investment fund and a national fund for balanced employment. The latter would lead to richer regions contributing to employment in poorer ones and employment of the greatest number of seasonal workers. Both national funds were to be defined later in more detail and with worker participation in their management.

Filling the picture beyond the March Decree texts were the various government supervisory agencies (such as ONRA, the Ministry of Industry, national offices for the tourist service and transport sectors, etc.), the BNASS, and the supposed generic political socialization and worker defense roles for the FLN and UGTA.

By economic standards alone, the dimensions and implications of Algerian *autogestion* were extremely bold. With the regime's several additional rounds of nationalizations by the end of 1964, the *autogestion* sector included approximately 2,800 to 3,100 units, with between 500,000 and over 700,000 workers of the minimum estimated active workforce of 2.2 million males. Farms were by far the most numerous self-management units, reflecting Algeria's predominantly agrarian economy. These rural units accounted for about 65 percent of the country's farm product and about 16 percent of the GNP. They occupied the most productive 6–7 million acres of the 17.5 million cultivable acres in Algeria. By mid-1965, between 10 and 15 percent of industrial workers and units belonged to the self-management sector (10,000–20,000 workers and 423 units respectively). In addition, numerous units in the realms of transport, tourism, and other services (butcher shops, grocery stores, bakeries, laundries, etc.) were organized, at least nominally, according to self-management principles.²¹

In political terms, it was clear that Ben Bella had indeed tapped a source of at least temporary widespread popular enthusiasm, encouraged all the more by a series of mass rallies and speeches glorifying the sector, as well as volunteer service campaigns to assist self-management enterprises in cities and the countryside. In a May 15, 1963 speech, for example, Ben Bella promised that "every guarantee is provided to assure that this institution lives and develops itself; no one may hinder it with impunity.... [We are determined] to prevent the March 1963 decrees from becoming dead letters and self-management from becoming a ritualistic form empty of any genuine democratic and effective content.... Take self-management in your own hands. No force on earth can prevent its taking root and bearing fruit to the fullest in our liberated Algeria."²²

But the inherent contradictions of the *autogestion* sector's formal structuring, ambiguous (at best) commitment (including Ben Bella's), and hostility to the full logic of workers' self-management from most elements in the

regime, and the lack of effective grassroots defense of the sector forced the *autogestion* realm to the defensive by early 1964, simply to retain the gains it had achieved. With sufficient legal ambiguity and state dependence and without *autogestion* workers and advocates having a large coordinated grassroots organization of their own, the promised government assistance, legal legitimization, and state-sponsored expansion came at a very high price. In reality, the sector evolved far more toward a top-heavy centralized state socialist system of decision-making than toward the anarchist model of a coordinated confederation of self-governing local workplaces and communities.

At individual unit level, the March Decree model with its periodic, well-supervised elections, regular meetings, and truly shared responsibility and accountability, in practice, proved quite vulnerable. Only a small minority of units abided by the guidelines, with management committee presidents and state-appointed directors increasingly taking charge through authoritarian decisions of their own. Wages were often unpaid for weeks at a time, and units increasingly lost any significant control over supplies of provisions, credit, and marketing.

The BNASS was the only authorized national group focused entirely on and responsible for proper functioning of the *autogestion* sector's outlined structure. While broadcasting nearly daily radio messages ("The Voice of Socialist Algeria") in 1963, explaining and encouraging the proper functioning of the self-management structure,²³ this animation agency was allocated only eighteen supervisors for field assistance (nine for industrial units) and just a handful of automobiles nationwide.²⁴ As a result of intense bureaucratic resistance, the independent BNASS was closed down by the end of 1963, its broadcasts prohibited, and its cadres dispersed between the Ministries of Agriculture and National Economy (Industry).²⁵ Added to this reality were the regime-instituted partial pacification of UGTA, the very limited existence of dedicated *autogestion*/socialist-oriented grassroots FLN cadres, and the virtual non-existence of communal councils.

In truth, workers in the vast majority of *autogestion* units were thus left with little outside help to defend the actualization of workers' self-management against hostile forces, both internal and external. Thus, for example, the BNASS broadcast of August 7, 1963 spoke of the enemies of *autogestion* not only among the ex-owners and the rich more generally, but also of

the cloud of little bureaucrats who can't accept that workers can decide for themselves, democratically, how to manage the farms and factories. *Autogestion* is constantly endangered by the arbitrary and illegal interventions of these little bureaucrats, who are often officials of the local administration, the SAPs [the local agricultural technical support units], or other government services. They thereby gravely deform self-management by emptying it of content, by intimidating

workers, by breaking their creative spirit and by setting up all sorts of obstacles for the management of farms and factories.²⁶

Inevitably, for many workers, the transition to a consciousness of *autogestion* from past hierarchical economic structures and the context of prevailing capitalist mentalities in the more modern sectors was difficult and hesitant. With the appearance of post-colonial opportunism and bureaucracy more generally in the larger society and in daily lived experience with external authorities, it is understandable how some workers sought to exploit and manipulate their peers. Such behaviors within, as well as from outside forces upon which units depended, also clearly discouraged and alienated many others from a militant defense of self-management principles, while encouraging more individualistic attitudes.

At the same time, there were enough relatively successful examples of *autogestion* practice at the unit level to encourage many workers to articulate and act upon an increasingly radical and determined consciousness in defense of workers' self-management on their own. Several examples in the industrial realm included Les Boissons Réunies (bottling plant, El Asnam), SEMPC (flour mill, Tiaret), Manufacture Algérienne de Bonneterie (nylon stockings plant, Ighil Izane), C.M.C.O. Zabana (construction material plant, Oran), Huileries Moderne d'Algérie (cooking oil plant, Algiers), and Ets. Mahrez (plumbing installations, Algiers); in the transport realm were Transports Col. Lotfi (Algiers) and Autocars Blidéens (Blida); and in agriculture, the domains Benkheira Abdellah (Cherchell), Zair Houari (Les Andalouses, near Oran), and Amar Bouchaoui (ex-La Trappe) (Staoueli, near Algiers).²⁷

In these best of cases where, for one reason or another, the necessary supportive political and economic supporting infrastructures were available, the radical faith in self-management proved fully justified. Workers regularly participated in the managerial decision-making process, production was at least maintained and usually expanded, labor productivity and worker payments increased as did the size of the workforce. The social welfare of workers improved and there was a general increase in political awareness and solidarity. In broad terms, however imperfect, the improvised and organized movement of self-management successfully saved and made use of a very significant part of Algeria's productive capacity during a chaotic administrative and economic transition period, despite major deficiencies of equipment, inventories, supplies, and credit.

Perceiving their successes and seeking to safeguard against authoritarianism in local units, demands were made for the genuine implementation of the communal councils, mandated in March, and for similar bodies at regional and national levels. One proposal was for a separate worker self-managed ministry through which to mediate relations of the *autogestion* sector with the state.²⁸ Others proposed creating an advocacy journal that

would be responsible to various specialized commissions elected by workers throughout that particular sector. The beginnings of such an effort were seen in the publication of five issues of the *Bulletin de l'Autogestion*, the product of a self-managed Algiers printing cooperative, in 1964 and 65. In the meantime, UGTA's newspaper, *Révolution et Travail*; the regime-sponsored socialist periodical *Révolution Africaine*; and the daily *Alger Républicain* gave considerable coverage to successes and problems of the sector.²⁹

Especially important, as well, were appeals for regular regional and national congresses of delegates from every enterprise in each major self-management realm (agricultural, industrial, etc.). In fact, the important potentials of distinct sector-wide self-organization were convincingly demonstrated by several such attempts. National congresses of self-management peasants and industrial workers, in October 1963 and March 1964 respectively, made absolutely clear that the self-management sector was inadequately assisted by the state, malfunctioning or non-existent in applying the internal structure and dynamics called for in the March Decrees, and often directly sabotaged by local, regional, and national interests opposed to the very principle of workers' self-management.

At the congresses, delegates from various units came together for the first time and publicly (before state and party officials and their fellow delegates) proclaimed their enthusiasm for the *autogestion* principle and their anger and frustration about those inside and outside of the sector who were sabotaging the experience. In the process, delegates recognized themselves and the sector as a potentially united and revolutionary political force which, better than any other in post-independence Algeria, exemplified the egalitarian and social transformative ideals and aspirations so many had brought to the long and difficult anti-colonial struggle.

A second round of national congress meetings in December 1964—in this case to form an *autogestion* farmworker trade union (FNNT, the National Federation of Farmworkers)—saw the same frustrations, now all the deeper in the absence of positive change and because bureaucratic officials of ONRA³⁰ attempted to pack and dominate the congress itself. Significant levels of radical grassroots political critique and solidarity were registered again, as in the comments of Boualem Hamdache, a self-management farmworker from Ain-Temouchent, and the enthusiastic reactions he provoked:

[Remarks after denouncing the salaries of local officials, assigned to help the sector, compared to the poverty of regular and seasonal self-management workers.] Brother Ben Bella liquidated Ben Gana and Borgeaud. And ourselves, we should liquidate the bourgeois elements that direct us. And Brother Ben Bella should help us against these wolves. Give us democracy and we will show you how we will defeat them. [Delegates then rose together and chanted: "We

will defeat them, we will defeat them!”] Officials told us: “Support us; otherwise we’ll teach you a lesson.” Brothers, why this? Why today do we still have this dictatorship over us?... Long live socialism! Long live workers of the land! We want the truth! **Down** with oppressors! [The workers rose up, chanting and dancing; their turbans unraveled. A delirious atmosphere prevailed. They repeated by rhythmic chants the slogans proclaimed by Hamdache.]³¹

Once again, however, the potential of this radicalized worker political consciousness to become a significant proactive political force was diminished by the failure to form an independent organization of its own.

Despite the regime’s attack on UGTA autonomy and democracy in January 1963 and subsequent demoralization within the ranks, new syndicalist interest emerged out of the climate created by the March Decrees and from the spreading *autogestion* movement and its congresses. Additionally, there were simply too many workers experienced in trade union activity (at least in France) to accept for long the regime’s attempted cooptation. The heterogeneous UGTA leadership thus saw it in its own interest to become both more active itself and more tolerant of dissent from activist elements below, though communication between grassroots local UGTA units and the national office was generally quite irregular. By late 1964, a wave of unauthorized strikes (especially in the public sector), the obvious increasing discontent of trade union cadres with existing UGTA leadership, and his desire for new civilian allies, all led Ben Bella to take trade union matters into his own hands. Though he was involved in planning the second national UGTA congress and a tentative new leadership, however, he was forced at the March 1965 meeting to accept a third alternative set of leaders from the ranks of those who had expressed somewhat sharper critiques. Nevertheless, this potential source of new dynamic strength and support for the self-management sector, among its other concerns, came late in the life of the Ben Bella regime.

It was the post-independence FLN, now in the nominal role of a governing political party, that supposedly had the preeminent role of ideologically supporting self-management and being the watchdog over state agencies responsible for its support. It supposedly could provide a needed mediating and coordinating function tilted toward self-management at the local level as well as in national policymaking. However, as mentioned above, the wartime FLN was a loose coalition of local clans and rival alliances with little ideological commitment beyond national independence. There were hints of a populist socialist program in the Tripoli Program of 1962, while statements from individual spokesmen such as Frantz Fanon and in the wartime publication *El Moudjahid* suggested a more coherent socialist commitment. But in reality, by 1964, the new FLN was still structurally and

ideologically incapable of providing programmatic direction and support for the regime and for self-management specifically—even if *the fundamental contradiction* of coordinating centralized state support for decentralist socialism could be overcome.

Reformulating party mission and reconstructing party organization thus became priority tasks for those concerned with providing the regime with a strong grassroots civilian base, capable of more effective and coherent mobilization of popular energies. Over several months, radical leftist Mohammed Harbi; the presidential advisor assigned to encourage this FLN transformation;³² Abdelaziz Zerdani; and perhaps several other similarly-minded associates like Hocine Zahouane³³ drew up a detailed programmatic document for accomplishing these general goals, subject to approval at the first party congress in April 1964. Conceptually, this proposed Algiers Charter not only laid the ideological and structural grounds for a dynamic populist organization that would inherit the revolutionary leadership reputation of the wartime FLN; most importantly, it also promised to endorse committing all needed resources to support the self-management sector and, in fact, as Algeria's special and unique path to revolutionary socialism, to encourage the spread of self-management structures and practice through all sectors of society. It also specifically described the emerging anti-socialist bureaucratic bourgeoisie as the most dangerous threat to the continuing social revolution.

As an audacious vision of radical transformation and direct democracy, those Charter sections that concerned self-management appealed to the radical revolutionary reputation and accomplishment of Algeria's successful struggle for independence, a continuity from wartime sacrifices to the development of a new post-colonial society apparently finally fully responsive to the grassroots population. This was the peak of legitimization and encouragement of a self-management society, a uniquely revolutionary program never before endorsed by any regime anywhere in the world. Said Ben Bella at this time, "Everyone should understand that [*autogestion*] was gained through the greatest struggle of the workers and that it has done more for the influence of Algeria than all the declarations and speeches on revolution and socialism."³⁴

The variegated collection of delegates to the party gathering, a majority of whom were hostile themselves to the full implications of *autogestion* socialism, though without their own alternative, nevertheless accepted the radical ideological statements, and as well insisted on revisions emphasizing Algeria's Arab and Islamic heritage and a modified stance on international affairs.³⁵ In addition, despite the proclaimed ideal of a party composed of militants dedicated to workers' self-management, its very concept as a pre-eminent "democratic centralist," "avant-garde party" and the reality of a paucity of committed cadres ready, willing, and able to replace the existing

mélange of cliques and factions mostly hostile to self-management were quite sobering limitations, to say the least. Pragmatically reflecting his realistic sense of the actual balance of forces at that time, Ben Bella accepted nine military representatives on the seventeen-person FLN Political Bureau.

While radical principles in the Charter indeed encouraged Algerian proponents of the self-management principle and sector, the post-congress FLN remained as relatively unstructured, uncommitted, and insufficient as before. Meanwhile, as demonstrated in the FNTT *autogestion* worker congress of December 1964, the private and organized interest rivalries within the regime from the national to local levels continued as well, thus preventing any substantial progress toward Algiers Charter objectives. In effect, its *autogestion* commitment was an audacious model on paper only, with a fully dedicated self-management-oriented party (ultimately, by its logic, implying a quasi-anarchist orientation) unable to be realized except at best through a long-range struggle.

Finally, in June 1965, Ben Bella's essential military partner in the post-war regime, Houari Boumédiène, managed a largely bloodless coup to eliminate the unpredictable president and, in his eyes, the latter's quixotic and potentially dangerous search for an independent coalition and populist legitimacy and base.³⁶

French Anarchism Background: Support, Younger Visions, and Faded Vitality

DURING THE FIRST SEVERAL YEARS AFTER ALGERIAN independence, the French anarchist movement displayed initial exhaustion and organizational continuity, but then also new energy, direction, and generational change. No doubt some burnout resulted from the intense years of activity during the war, including the threats of fascism and the reality of violence in France itself.

At the same time, issues of non-violence and Third World revolution, which emerged so dramatically during the Algerian war, now gained momentums of their own among many in the anarchist ranks. These issues, combined with emerging generational clashes and renewed disputes over the FA's purpose, organization, leadership, and hostility to any hint of Marxist theory, produced within several years new groupings and challenges in and outside of the FA. Simultaneously, the GAAR/*Noir et Rouge* group became an important alternate and independent source of anarchist thought.

Meanwhile, during this same period, Daniel Guérin maintained his close interest in Algeria and became the movement's leading published commentator on developments in that country.

As mentioned in the Introduction, French anarchism had a tradition of anarcho-syndicalism going back many decades. The specific post-1945 activity of this current is outlined in Parts III–V below. The essence of this orientation is the belief that the working class (not confined to factory workers) is the main potential revolutionary force capable of bringing the downfall of capitalism and the state. It does this through taking control of the various units of production while simultaneously neutralizing the forces of state repression. To accomplish these tasks, the working class should be organized in federated unions, structured horizontally by anarchist principles.

Full worker self-management of the economy, including all productive units, can only occur once the state and capitalism are dissolved. Nevertheless, the processes of worker self-management and overthrow of the old order are interlocked and proceed necessarily at the same time. Though not necessarily in one single event (*"le Grand Soir"*), social revolution is greatly accelerated through the means of the general strike. Schmidt and van der Walt emphasize that there is no sharp division between anarchist communism and anarcho-syndicalism. Instead, it is more a matter

of emphasis and priorities for the revolutionary process and emergence of the new society.³⁷

What confronted French anarchists as they witnessed *autogestion* emerging in post-independence Algeria was a sort of partially functional equivalent of a general strike, in the sense that workers took over productive units throughout the country and economy. While not organized beforehand in structures of revolutionary unions and without explicit ideological commitment to revolutionary syndicalist perspectives, the developing *autogestion* sector from the initial spontaneous wave to the more organized expansion in the months that followed affected a quarter of the entire Algerian male work force. Theoretically and to some extent genuinely, workers were called upon to elect and hold accountable their own unit management, link with other *autogestion* units in the same area, contribute some surplus revenues to the community, and assure their own ongoing income.

While, on the one hand, this was accomplished without prior organizational bonds, on the other it seemed to confirm the ideological assumption of anarcho-syndicalists that a sometimes only latent revolutionary working-class consciousness could, in certain favorable contexts, erupt in apparently spontaneous waves of self-organization and general strike. In the Algerian case, of course, the exceptionally favorable catalysts were the final culminating months of the successful national liberation war and the massive departure of *pieds-noirs*.

At the same time, the weakness of preparatory syndicalist consciousness, despite its rapid development among some once the *autogestion* sector was confronted by enemies, as well as the vulnerability of the sector for lack of a clear overall program and its forced dependence on the new state, quite definitely contradicted the traditional anarcho-syndicalist model for the development of workers' self-management. In Algeria, the basic issue became whether and how enough social revolutionary consciousness and working-class self-organization on the large scale could be developed *after autogestion was in place* in order to successfully animate and coordinate the sector itself and to protect it in continual confrontations with hostile bureaucrats, the military, and other classes in the society that sought its demise.

As it was, without a strong revolutionary syndicalist organization to protect and enhance worker democracy, the sector was forced instead to depend for support and coordination on a state superficially committed ideologically to its success, but operating, in most respects, behind the scenes for its failure. Beyond this, from an anarchist-syndicalist perspective, was the absence in Algeria of any organized anarchist movement that could assist in educating workers, developing their unions, and expanding the influence and impact of *autogestion* principles throughout the whole community.

These, then, were the obvious challenges faced by French anarchist observers as they described and analyzed the larger significance of Algeria's experience of *autogestion* in the years before and after 1965.

French Anarchist Positions

Daniel Guérin

NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE FOR ALGERIA ON JULY 3, 1962 brought to the surface the bitter and bloody clan rivalries within the political and military organizations of the FLN that had persisted largely out of sight for years. Daniel Guérin had been shocked and appalled at the MNA-FLN fratricide in France and Algeria, as well as FLN use of random violence against French civilians during the war. But in solidarity with the goal of national liberation from colonialism, in his public speeches and writings, he remained silent about their reality.³⁸

The several weeks of budding civil war between rival politico/military coalitions, in the Summer of 1962, apparently solidified Guérin's distrust and enmity toward FLN leaders. In private correspondence to an old Algerian friend, Guérin made clear his views on the counter-revolutionary perils ahead. Placing the Algerian danger within the larger context of movements and leaders in France and the West generally who had led potential or actual revolutions astray, he denounced the leaders of the Algerian revolution as "Jacobins and authoritarians. Since the CNRA Tripoli meeting [May-June 1962], everyone, without exception, had flagrantly violated democracy many times. The single party is a swindle." To the contrary, he saw the Algerian people at the grassroots as politically well-educated by seven years of war. This was proven by the spontaneous pro-FLN demonstrations in Algiers and elsewhere in December 1960 and in their present spontaneous demonstrations denouncing the nascent civil war.

This people thus has no need to be teleguided from on high by providential men. It simply needs, in everyday life, a complete apprenticeship in democracy. And not just parliamentary democracy, but especially democracy at the base. In each locale, in each enterprise, in each military unit, it should elect committees of struggle and control and prepare to administer itself on its own, to take in hand its own destiny. All the rest is only demagoguery and dictatorship.

... You should make the land of Algeria a fertile experience of true socialism, that is of libertarian socialism.

I have no confidence in your leaders, whoever they are. But I have always had confidence in the depth and authenticity of the Algerian revolution.³⁹

By late 1963, Guérin's message seemed to have been remarkably prescient in its assessment of the capabilities and priorities at the grassroots and the reality of Algerian political leaders. Guérin himself first visited postwar Algiers in mid-June 1963 for a several-day conference on non-governmental aid. As he described it ten years later, given the fact that two of his good left internationalist friends, Harbi and Raptis, were then close counselors of Ben Bella, he was at the time over-optimistic about the latter's genuine socialist commitment. In fact, he wrote afterwards, neither his past history, his political training, nor the role he played in the Algerian revolution prepared Ben Bella for that ideological orientation. On top of this was the fact that he was more or less, by virtue of his drive-to-power coalition with the army, now essentially Boumédiénne's prisoner. At a personal level, even at the time of the June 1963 conference, when Guérin shook the hands of the two leaders at the entrance, "the closed face of [Boumédiénne] gave me goose bumps when I put my hand in his."⁴⁰

Guérin traveled throughout Algeria in November of the same year, reporting observations to Ben Bella himself in early December. Guérin produced a small book in early 1964, *L'Algérie qui se cherche* (*Algeria Searching for Itself*), based on a series of earlier articles about the trip.⁴¹

Writing this account, Guérin said, because Algeria is so poorly understood or so disfigured, he especially criticized the French left for its paternalistic disinterest if Algeria failed to follow its chosen models. The country must be understood dialectically, there are contradictory forces at play with the outcome still undecided. For this reason, as during the war itself, Guérin offered his "critical support" to the regime, despite his severe critiques in mid-1962.

Above all, said Guérin, Algeria is still traumatized by war, colonialism, and impoverished social and economic conditions. At the top, the old wartime competition between rival clans continues, but ordinary people welcome whatever relative calm and governmental stability they can get. Workers at the base have proved their self-management abilities and the viability of this alternative to capitalism. Yet, because of a low material base of this underdeveloped country and its lack of militant libertarian socialist traditions, as in Spain of 1936, the self-management sector has yet to produce its own ideology, and Algeria is not yet able to generalize the model. The FLN is too organizationally split, bureaucratic, and absent to fill a role in positively raising political consciousness, but these deficiencies also prevent it from braking the creative mass initiatives.⁴²

It was especially the workers' self-managed farms and factories that inspired Guérin during his late 1963 visit and to which he devoted slightly more than half of his book. While admitting that the *autogestion* sector was still a "pilot experience" in its "embryonic stage," Guérin described Algerians of this realm as having overall proved their ability to meet the

high responsibilities of their “historic task.” The Algerian self-management experience, he said, “by merely its contagious example, can move international socialism in a new direction.” “It will surmount its hardships. It is irreversible.” In Algeria, there are no heavy political machines with authoritarian ideologies by which “to paralyze the creative initiative of the masses. In empirical Algeria, the threshold of authentic socialism, of socialism from the bottom up, has been easily crossed, the opening has been made.”⁴³

With fairness, and despite this apparent optimism, when describing the formal model for self-management as proclaimed in the March Decrees, Guérin also cited many dangers to the sector, ample reasons for a reader to foresee a negative outcome. Among them were the lack of clarity and threats concerning adequate compensation for the workers themselves and their unit self-investments (versus payments to national funds for both investment and greater employment). As Guérin pointed out, the claim by some that self-management workers were “privileged,” compared to those without land or jobs, was obviously true in one sense, but their hard efforts and sacrifice to re-launch the enterprises, let alone their objectively critical effort to develop a unique socialist sector generally, must not fall prey to demagogic attacks by those who were hostile to the experiment (like the centralist Bolsheviks in Russia in 1918–19) or those who had their eyes on self-management funds for their own non-productive reasons. Already, for example, the police and military apparatus consumed about 35 percent of the national budget.

While often motivated by genuine efforts to assist *autogestion* units’ economic viability, common interferences by outside agents (of local government, the FLN, and state agencies such as from the ministries of agriculture and industry) demonstrated a failure to comprehend—if not a political hostility toward—the political requirements (autonomous worker decision-making) for genuine self-management. Nevertheless, Guérin already recognized Algeria’s need for an overall agrarian reform—beyond the modern farm sector workers benefiting from the March Decrees—to absorb and give hope to those peasants of little or no productive land, to rural former combatants, and to the seasonal farm workers not included in the self-management structure.

Guérin identified two major types of opponents to the regime and to the self-management socialist experience specifically: Newly rich or petit-bourgeois opportunists were ready to denounce any perceived failing of the governing coalition and to sabotage self-management. At the same time, an explicit “leftist” political opposition often concealed what actually were continuations of historical clan rivalries within the nationalist movement. Admittedly, this second group had legitimate targets—such as many demonstrations of authoritarian behavior (“relatively reactionary and dictatorial traits of the governing team”),⁴⁴ including a larval military dictatorship

and the domestication of UGTA ("one of the most grave deficiencies of the Algerian revolution"). But Guérin sharply criticized FLN "historic leaders" Hocine Ait-Ahmed, Mohamed Boudiaf, and Belkacem Krim⁴⁵ for demagogically attacking admitted problems or improvisations of the *autogestion* sector in the same breath as their global indictment of the regime with other legitimate issues. Objectively, the two sets of oppositions collaborate in their desire to overthrow the regime.

While Ben Bella attempts to re-launch soon a more functional, less divided and opportunistic FLN, Guérin said, this effort toward a party "of cadres, not of the masses" is over the heads of a basically apolitical and skeptical Algerian people. Though a positive outcome of the coming party congress [scheduled for April 1964] would be welcome, "the future of independent Algeria is going to rely more on three other much more concrete theaters around *autogestion*, agrarian reform, and industrialization."⁴⁶

Beyond his primary focus on workers' self-management, Guérin identified three social issues already quite significant just a year after independence and of critical importance in the evolution of Algeria in the years to come: youth alienation, the cloistering of women, and the official political use of Islam. Young Algerians (over half the population under twenty years of age) had few outlets, he said, for their energies and potential idealism. Having lived through the sacrifices of the war, in touch with the outside world at least through their transistors, and banned by legal and religious restrictions against alcohol and easy social contact between sexes, the young were bored and needed vital outlets for their energy. Guérin proposed a volunteer civil service corps drawing on youthful socialist idealism and organized from below.

Recognizing that the anti-colonial struggle temporarily led large numbers of women to take back the veil and reject more European-style public behavior, Guérin saw the cloistering of most women and their educational neglect as a heavy medieval weight against Algerian progress, in sharp contrast with the small minority of women's emancipation advocates in the UNFA⁴⁷ and the wives of professionals and those in the political class. Similarly, he saw the proclamation of Islam as Algeria's official state religion and the puritanism implied as an unfortunate and unneeded political calculation designed, most likely, to discourage the potential release of antisocial behavior following the long war, rather than to appease the small traditionalist bourgeoisie or even, as an anti-colonial reaction, to save the ancestral soul of the new nation.

As Guérin pointed out, it was the anti-social behavior of the political leaders in their nascent civil war that contrasted sharply with the coolness and reason of the masses. He was encouraged by the recent public statement that the new party would be laicist, since there is no such thing as an authentic revolutionary socialism founded on religion. In Guérin's view, it

was wrong to believe, as do some historical materialists, that “superstructural” progress in realms such as the roles of women and religion, must wait for further economic development and a socialist Algeria. “I believe instead that the Revolution forms a whole and that to succeed it must attack simultaneously, not successively, all the retrograde sequels of the past.”⁴⁸

The final chapter of Guérin’s book was titled “Ben Bella, Lucky Algeria.” In this mostly uncritical adulation of the Algerian president, Guérin wandered furthest from a critical anarchist perspective. While earlier identifying and warning against outside oppositions as well as significant bureaucratic, conservative, authoritarian, and opportunistic interests *within* the regime, Guérin defined “the ascetic, moderate, and wise” son of a peasant, Ben Bella, as the major arbiter in Algerian politics. It was his role to steer Algeria between the reality of grassroots self-management socialism and the various strong political forces determined to overthrow this original socialist experience, this very potential for Algeria’s further emancipatory advance. Far from his total denunciation of all FLN leaders in 1962, Guérin saw Ben Bella alone as presently “the guarantor of self-management,”⁴⁹ thus defending the integrity of Algeria’s unique future promise. “Despite the indefatigable efforts that he deploys, his administration, his subordinates, at every level, disserve if not betray him.” It was his wise and tactful initiative that at critical moments arbitrates between various competing interests and “saves his country” and “re-launches the Revolution when it wears down.”⁵⁰

At this time, Guérin never acknowledged the fundamental contradiction, inherent in the March Decrees model, of a massive grassroots liberatory experience becoming dependent on its institutionalization and support by the state (or eventual party and trade union). The closest he came to admitting this tension and the implied vulnerability of Algeria’s unique socialist path was at the very conclusion of his book. As he stated, with prescient realism, when Ben Bella took power in 1962 thanks to the army’s support, “he contracted a heavy debt toward Colonel Boumédiène,” a debt that is increasingly constricting. “Between an opposition that doesn’t disarm and the first vice president of the council [Boumédiène], who simultaneously keeps him from making peace with it and is needed to protect him against its enterprises, the Chief of State will still know difficult moments. To surmount them, he will need all of his tact and all of his energy.” Then returning to his anarchist antithesis, he offers, “Algeria searches for itself, certainly, and it will search for itself yet for a long time. But in President Ben Bella its historic luck is already found.”⁵¹

Guérin’s apparent adulation here raises the obvious question of whether a more honest public assessment in his 1964 book would have subtracted from his proclaimed “critical *support*” or should “critical support” instead have required more definitive analysis of the fundamental contradictions at that time? Adulation of Ben Bella and Guérin’s overall optimistic tone were

a disservice to that French reading public and those movement activists most likely to be supportive of workers' self-management.

Guérin revealed after the 1965 coup that he had also had to remove his critical January 1964 essay about the Algerian military⁵² to prevent the book's seizure in Algeria. Though making that crucial concession, it apparently also took the personal intervention of Ben Bella himself to allow the book to be sold in the country. Guérin had committed the sin, unforgivable to the military, of revealing the largely hidden political division between Ben Bella and the army.⁵³ The issue raises again the basic question, relevant during the Algerian war as well, of the very concept of anarchist "critical support," which represses expression of the full "critical" half of that stance. Otherwise, what is distinctly anarchist in the critique itself and what interpretive groundwork is laid for retrospective anarchist analysis of Algeria and self-management in the future?

Indeed, for this adulation, Guérin admitted later that he was mocked and criticized by the Situationist International.⁵⁴ While situationists were themselves hierarchical organizationally and dogmatic in tone and substance toward virtually all others, their proclivity for a "council communist" model brought their vision of post-revolutionary society close to anarchism.⁵⁵ In the post-coup May 1966 issue of their periodical, the Situationist International suggested that Guérin's lavish praise for Ben Bella stemmed from his vain prostration before power: Guérin "was mad with joy" from speaking with such a great man. "Over a cup of tea he met the 'world-spirit' of *autogestion*."⁵⁶ At the same time, from his own partisan perspective, still-exiled Messali Hadj strongly criticized Guérin's support of Ben Bella, whom he regarded as a usurper of his own rightful role as political leader of Algeria.

On the other hand, the post-independence French-Algerian Friendship and Solidarity Association (ASFA), under Communist influence, argued that Guérin was too negative in his comments, as in suggesting that *autogestion* internal elections were not always democratic. At the time, however, Guérin defended his critiques as the best support of *autogestion* and all the more felt justified after reading the strong attacks by Zahouane and Harbi against gross bureaucratic manipulations by the ministry of agriculture and ONRA to sabotage the new farmworkers' trade union, the FNNT.⁵⁷

Nevertheless, even after publication of his book, Guérin continued to closely monitor and critique Algerian developments. In a series of thirteen articles published between January 1964 and May 1965 among *Combat*, *L'Action*, *La Révolution Proletarienne* (all syndicalist publications), and *Le Monde Libertaire*, Guérin's careful, detailed, substantive focus provided grist for an increasingly critical perspective. These articles later provided the bulk of his post-coup book, *L'Algérie caporalisée? (Is Algeria Ruled by the Military?)*.

In January 1964, even before publication of *L'Algérie qui se cherche*, he described the post-independence ALN as “a state within the state,” with no trace of an egalitarian revolutionary structure and only a minority of authentic veterans of the maquis. The new “mercenaries” are submitted to “a totalitarian-type psychological and political conditioning.” While socialist in orientation and responsible for the new regime’s ability to nationalize European properties and provide jobs, its brand of socialism is the hard, authoritarian-type socialism of Mao. The army, he says, totally distrusts civilians, and vice versa. While defenders of the ALN’s size and huge budget argue that the army is “the only truly organized structure” in Algeria, which it is, Guérin suggested that it would be better to organize civilian structures like a mass party or authentic syndicalism.

Houari Boumédiénne, he said, is inscrutable, and one doesn’t know if he simply advises Ben Bella or has him under surveillance. Owing his rise in the Army of the Exterior to FLN intelligence chief Boussouf,⁵⁸ he joined Ben Bella in the Summer 1962 race for power when he lost his position by decision of Ben Khedda’s GPRA. Once part of the new governing regime as Minister of Defense and later Vice Premier, Boumédiénne had steadily amassed more power, including gaining the appointment of some of his protégés to ministerial positions (including Abdelaziz Bouteflika⁵⁹ as Foreign Affairs Minister and Ahmed Kaïd⁶⁰ as Minister of Tourism). Ben Bella, in turn, attempted to counterbalance Boumédiénne’s military power by appointing a trusted colonel, Tahar Zbiri, as head of the army. Boumédiénne’s further consolidation of power followed a show of force against a nascent Kabyle revolt, a military clash with Moroccan forces in the Sahara, and a quashing of Ben Bella’s negotiations with civilian opponents Hocine Aït-Ahmed, Belkacim Krim, and Ferhat Abbas as potential balances to the weight of Boumédiénne in his regime.⁶¹

Concerning the March 1964 congress of a thousand industrial self-management workers, Guérin was greatly impressed with the participants’ consciousness and their will to re-launch the Algerian revolution. Unrestricted by the government, the workers “severely indicted the diverse non-socialist or inadequately socialist aspects of the regime, of the upper administration riddled with reactionaries, and even of the Party and the UGTA.”⁶²

According to Guérin, the gain from this congress was “the entry of the Algerian proletariat into Algerian politics.” Beyond articulating their immediate needs, they clearly wished to participate in the coming FLN Party congress. While insisting on this role, the delegate from the Frantz-Fanon cooperative⁶³ also demanded representation of the workers’ self-management industrial sector in the National Assembly. As one worker expressed, “Another revolution to launch concerns the economy and politics. The socialist revolution begins only today.” Said Guérin, “They sketched out on their own the broad lines of an Algerian socialism, with a clarity and

audacity that apparently puts them well ahead of their political and trade union leaders.⁶⁴

Among the articulated demands of delegates, he said, were an end to privileges and authoritarianism by certain management committee presidents and state-appointed directors and technicians; restraints on the private sector to prevent their sabotage of industrial *autogestion*; the need to sweep out reactionaries at the highest level of administration; an end to customs delays, high taxes, and corrupt favors for private interests concerning necessary imports for industrial operations; more presence and positive assistance from UGTA and FLN cadres; effective formation and functioning of local communal councils (before attending to those at the regional level); and timely and adequate worker remuneration. Showing a "remarkable democratic vigilance," said Guérin, delegates also criticized the way that the congress bureau and commissions themselves were selected, as well as their authoritarian behavior in excluding some from speaking or by not seriously considering issues raised by the delegates.

Several weeks later, the FLN Party congress provided an important context with which to measure the country's political progress. In the released theses to be considered by the congress (as proposed by the preparatory commission led by Mohammed Harbi), the existing workers' self-management experience was described as Algeria's opening toward socialism, with full self-management throughout the economy and society as Algeria's ultimate goal. Said Guérin in summarizing this line, "With *autogestion* begins the rise of liberty." Nevertheless, *autogestion* advocates in the FLN leadership proceeded cautiously in order to unmask its open and hidden opponents—those in the state and party bureaucracy as well as anti-socialist traditionalists. For the latter, stated Guérin, heavy concessions were made concerning religion, morality, and culture, which emphasized the progressive face of Islam and opposition to cultural cosmopolitanism while neglecting the plight of women and youth. Concerning bureaucratic adversaries, the theses identified their dangerous origin in the special conditions of the underground national liberation war, with "its hierarchical privileges, authority based on blind obedience," and established rival fiefdoms, all of which were hostile to popular participation and socialism.

Herein as well, said Guérin, was also the danger of a single-party system resulting in confiscation of the revolution by one caste in favor of its own private interests and making the party "a single organ of political police." To transform the present state, which was dominated by reactionary forces, into a state dominated by socialist forces, Harbi wished to prioritize starting from below by establishing communal councils (accessible to the self-management units) and a popular militia. But this priority was compromised in the pre-congress theses by the strength of anti-socialist forces who insisted on communal councils being only able to express themselves under

state and party control, while popular militia, in turn, would be controlled by the army. Similarly, while the theses spoke of the demagogic dangers of multi-party systems and while Harbi spoke in vague terms of transforming the party by basing it on *autogestion*, the party would still by itself choose candidates for the National Assembly. At the same time, and for now, the *autogestion* sector was still just a minority of the population.

In sum, said Guérin, contradictions around preparations for the party congress only reflected the larger contradictions of the society. “The socialist option, though courageously offered, is still a fragile plant, and conservatism is tenacious. Class struggle divides the party congress just as it does all the time within the institutions of the regime. The desired pouring forth will only come about when the socialist sector has consolidated and grown, and self-management workers will have finally developed their own ideology, the day when ‘scientific socialists,’ presently still rather isolated despite Ben Bella’s support, will come together with conscious workers.” Based on what he heard expressed at the industrial *autogestion* congress several weeks before, Guérin believed that a socialist revolutionary avant-garde was not far from emerging.

In actuality, the party congress itself was shrouded in secrecy, far from being public. Beyond apparently helping to legitimize the personal power of Ben Bella, Guérin believed, its various compromises and trade-offs reflected the various competing civilian and military clans of the regime. While the resulting Algiers Charter maintained an opening to the socialist future foreseen by Harbi and others of the FLN left, Harbi himself was left out of the new party political bureau in favor of various ministers, military officers, and heads of political clans. In short, as Harbi understood, the FLN will be incapable of moving toward the socialist option until there emerges “an avant-garde composed of intellectuals, students, and industrial *autogestion* workers,” perhaps joined, as well, by the elite of well-trained returning émigrés from France and elsewhere.⁶⁵

Two months later, in a book review of Gérard Chaliand’s *L’Algérie est-elle socialiste?*⁶⁶ for *Le Monde Libertaire*, Guérin had an opportunity to summarize more clearly, in the Algerian context, the nature of his “libertarian socialist” perspective compared to Chaliand’s more orthodox top-down “infallibly dogmatic” Marxist revolutionary party. While agreeing with Chaliand’s description of the administration ranks being largely “corrupt or insolent, with bourgeois aspirations and opposed to socialism” and his description of the FLN in terms similar to his own, Guérin was still hopeful for an eventual socialist breakthrough based on the growing socialist consciousness of *autogestion* workers. Chaliand saw the latter as developing only a group capitalist mentality and the whole sector inevitably soon to be absorbed into a state capitalism more fitting as a “transition stage” to a more authentic socialism in the future. From his libertarian socialist view,

however, Guérin saw, based on their own lived experience, a critical collective consciousness developing among *autogestion* workers which, it was reasonable to believe, would eventually overtake the strength of the statist and bourgeois bureaucracy to become the leading political force in Algeria.⁶⁷

Three months later, in October 1964, Guérin admitted further erosion of revolutionary potential in favor of the anti-socialist new rich and profiteers who used the mask of anti-Marxist Arabo-Islamism.⁶⁸ Gaining a first advantage at the April party congress, this conservative force now succeeded in pressuring Ben Bella to remove Harbi as editor of *Révolution Africaine*. This was highly significant, said Guérin, since this leftist weekly had forcefully, under Harbi, unmasked the enemies of the regime and *autogestion*. As the apparent principal author of the Algiers Charter, his firing “casts doubt on the sincerity and future chances of this too beautiful program.” Either he was set up, for demagogical reasons, to write the Charter, but with no intent to implement it, or the hidden hostile forces that emerged at the congress are now in the process of rendering moot this program. The presence of a relatively independent socialist weekly was essential for the clarification and evolution of a revolutionary left force. “For the left wing of the FLN to be able to express itself freely was a counterweight to the totalitarian deviation of the regime.... Without that safety valve, the regime risks freezing in a sterile conformism.”

As for Harbi himself, he said, “brilliantly intelligent and cultivated...he has wasted his talents and energies in playing the role of ‘Father Joseph’ to Ben Bella, in lending him his pen. He was too involved in the upper ranks of the inner circle to find time to organize, at the grassroots level throughout the country, a socialist avant-garde. He fell because, from his own fault, he was nearly alone.” Nevertheless, even without him, this avant-garde is moving to be born. Though the right-wing current is much stronger for the moment, its very insolence helps to radicalize the more conscious workers and students. Among hopeful signs are the appearance of the *Bulletin Intérieur de l’Autogestion*, providing a linkage among different *autogestion* units, and over the past several months, a new turn toward class struggle in the UGTA leadership and emergence of grassroots critical workers and peasants to join the FLN local organizations. “The question is whether the left forces can find the methods and perseverance to organize and to find capable men in their own ranks to give it impetus.”

In a November 1964 article,⁶⁹ Guérin continued to see in Algeria essentially a zig-zag Bonapartist regime, with Ben Bella continually playing a personal power game, sometimes to the right, sometimes to the left. Thus, while a dynamic and democratically minded young prefect of Grande Kabylia was forced out of his post as too threatening to the FLN bureaucracy, Harbi remained a counselor to Ben Bella and apparently influenced the latter to publicly denounce neo-colonial threats to Algeria’s control of its

own oil resources and to advocate workers' co-management in national industrial enterprises instead of a "state capitalist" formula.

Two months later, Guérin observed an audacious written demand, by a leading army-protected anti-socialist in the regime, for a true Algerian "Arab-Islamic socialism that refuses class struggle, forbids the abolition of classes [and] respects private property." As he pointed out, though the actual writer of the article in the Arabic edition of the UGTA periodical was jailed for two days by orders of Hocine Zahouane, the leftist FLN political bureau Orientation official, the person encouraging the article, Safi Boudissa, a UGTA national secretary and long-time friend of Ben Bella, was shortly thereafter rewarded with the post of Labor Minister.

Earlier in the year, in the FLN preparatory commission for revising the Algiers Charter, leftist elements decided to use ambiguous compromising language in order to save, at least on paper, as much of the socialist program as possible. While Guérin would have preferred their directly confronting the conservative anti-socialists in order to unmask their activities and position, the left feared that they would lose everything through confrontation. But the continual compromising, said Guérin, only promoted further confusion by "hiding the true nature of a heteroclite regime and [putting] people to sleep with fallacious promises." Guérin also noted that Ben Bella admitted several weeks earlier that none of the demands articulated at the two national *autogestion* congresses had yet been met. On the other hand, he promised that a new round of agrarian reform would bring further lands into the *autogestion* sector.⁷⁰

As disappointed as he was with the misleading patchwork of a party, Guérin saw "the moment of truth" publicly displayed at the December 1964 founding congress for the FNTT, the new agricultural workers' union.⁷¹ Anticipating more critiques and demands by *autogestion* farm workers if this second congress imitated the one in October 1963, the regime decided instead to structure the 200,000 workers of that sector into a new federation of UGTA. But still fearing a more intense and organized radical pressure from below, said Guérin, the "tutelary" Ministry of Agriculture (headed by Ben Bella's friend Ali Mahsas) and its subsidiary National Agrarian Reform Office (ONRA) harassed and interfered with local organizers and directly interceded in the December congress by packing it with their own bureaucratic officials.

Bitter struggles between the two sides ensued, with angry denunciations of the bureaucrats by *autogestion* workers and demands for application of the March Decrees and the Algiers Charter.⁷² Ben Bella, however, defended Ali Mahsas as a long-time militant, and an ONRA official was selected as the FNTT secretary-general. As important as these denunciations from below were, Guérin also underlined the great significance of Hocine Zahouane's dramatic public critiques in the press of the bureaucratic

maneuvers before and during the congress. Imposing bureaucrats in the midst of genuine productive workers in the new FNTT, said Zahouane, was “simply a change in the form of exploitation,” comparable in nature to the earlier exploitation of slaves, feudal serfs, and laborers under capitalism, and had nothing to do with socialism.⁷³ For Guérin, this was,

the first time that the class struggle, which for a long time went on within the quiet of the political bureau, has appeared in full daylight. For the first time, the socialist wing, led by Hocine Zahouane, Mohammed Harbi, and Zerdani had the courage to openly take on its responsibility.... Supported solidly by the self-management workers of the socialist sector, those who march forward engage the battle—a battle that could well lead to a break within the “single party” where, for too long, the sincere partisans and the shifty adversaries of socialism have cohabited amidst confusion and lies.

Just five months later, on June 19, 1965, Guérin’s prediction of a split came true.

GAAR/*Noir et Rouge*

THE WARTIME GAAR/*Noir et Rouge* GROUP MAINTAINED A perspective of critical support emphasizing the significance of lifting the yoke of colonialism while warning against FLN state-builders as replacements. Some members participated in clandestine support activities for the FLN, some in Jeune Résistance, but these involvements were chosen individually, not as a group.⁷⁴ Without optimism for major social transformation in the post-independence period, GAAR/*Noir et Rouge* nevertheless believed that certain Algerian elements had been so politically matured by their arduous grassroots struggle that they would insist on at least some significant degree of egalitarian social change.

Composed of workers and intellectuals of various ages, GAAR members viewed *Noir et Rouge* as a context for reflecting on and critiquing the role of anarchism in the actual conditions of the day. It critically analyzed the left intelligentsia while trying to avoid its pseudo-literary erudition, as well as the typical fixation on organizational issues and cronyism common to many anarchist publications.⁷⁵

As the war moved toward conclusion, GAAR/*Noir et Rouge* members split over the issue of autonomy from the FA. Both sides of the division continued to reject a notion of anarchist orthodoxy that relied on the saints and taboos of the traditional conformist anarchist movement. Both sides thus insisted on the need to re-assess the meaning and best relevance of anarchist principles in the new international contexts and for the younger generation

less affected by (decreasing) Communist dominance of the French left and more affected by issues of alienation from the materialism of postwar French society. Both sides were especially impressed with the further potential of Third World confrontation with the colonial and neo-colonial West, despite understanding the plots of Third-World aspiring statist elites.

After certain GAAR success in organizing among other anarchists and the far left against the May 1958 coup, some were convinced that solely publishing *Noir et Rouge* was too confining, too neglectful of the benefits of activist engagement itself in developing deeper anarchist reflection. They thus transformed the GAAR into a new *Fédération Anarchiste Communiste* (FAC) and began negotiations with the FA itself. This group, including Paul Zorkine and Guy Bourgeois, decided that the greatest potential for developing larger numbers of critical anarchist explorers and activists lay within the FA. It thus joined the FA in 1961 and, with others of like mind already within, formed an internal anarchist-communist tendency known as the Union of Anarchist-Communist Groups (UGAC).⁷⁶ The other group, only a half dozen in number from 1962 until the 1967 Nanterre student movement influx,⁷⁷ persisted with publishing *Noir et Rouge* alone and became known simply as the group by that same name. In turn, according to Christian Lagant of the group, the 1961 split actually facilitated a clear rejection of “anarcho-communism” as an orthodoxy itself, not to mention “the notion of anarchism itself as a ‘social’ ideology, as a dogma.”⁷⁸

In a remarkably cogent two-part article in 1961 on “The Difficulty of Being Anarchist,” presaging critiques by later anarcho-feminists and others, Lagant also emphasized that, while organizational issues were important for building a significant anarchist movement, they were often put forward mistakenly as a greater priority than encouraging personal attitudes and behavior consistent with anarchist ethics. “One can create the most perfect organization and call it anarchist. Nothing to it. If militants compose the organization but don’t act genuinely as anarchists, it will be whatever one wishes to call it, but not anarchist. To create the organization before creating anarchists is like building a house by beginning with the roof—walls and foundations coming later.”

Attempting to “demystify” some anarchist militants’ attraction to building a movement base in order “to change the world,” Lagant suggested that “every individual led to anarchism and consolidated in anarchist ideas is already by itself a victory and irreplaceable gain and that, after all, an anarchist of value is perhaps as precious for the progress of the anarchist ideal as ten individuals to whom one gives only an anarchist veneer.” The desire to have an anarchist impact on the world, especially frustrating given the tiny size of the movement, often leads to organization and action for their own sake, to reliance on overly self-confident “thinkers” or “leaders” of greater speaking and writing ability who, themselves, seek adulation as

well. "We will never be impressed with someone who owns hundreds of theoretical books and, even if they've been read, fails to tolerate a more obscure or younger comrade who thinks differently from himself and who dares to say so!" To encourage an uncritical anarchist clientele or to abstain from thinking for oneself are two sides of the same coin. Both are fatal violations of anarchist ethics, thus weakening the movement from within.⁷⁹

At the end of 1964, *Noir et Rouge* began to systematically examine comparative experiences of workers' self-management, thus no doubt reflecting in part the attention that model gained from current events in Algeria. While *Noir et Rouge* did not specifically analyze or comment publicly upon Algerian *autogestion* in detail until after 1965, Bulgarian Todor Mitev and Jean-Pierre Poly were the ones within the group most clearly following Algerian developments.⁸⁰

Nevertheless, *Noir et Rouge* remained concerned enough with issues of underdevelopment and the Third World to discuss both in the journal during this period. In two 1962 issues, the magazine gave detailed attention to the Cuban experience under Castro, with positive and negative critiques both. The praise for Cuba scandalized, among others, veteran French anarchist Gaston Leval, which led to his denunciation of *Noir et Rouge*'s support for a totalitarian regime that had itself persecuted a vital Cuban anarchist movement among numerous other opponents.⁸¹

Building on its earlier articles on critical support for Algerian national liberation, a June 1962 article further developed this theme to apply to underdeveloped countries of the Third World more generally. Writer Théo [Todor Mitev] welcomed the ever-growing political consciousness of the Third World oppressed and the crumbling of colonialism since World War II. But these very significant trends raised important questions as well concerning the key role and process of national liberation and the nature and prospects of "liberated" society once long-term oppressors are thrown out. While recognizing that the "national ideal continues to be an important motor in countries that don't yet have national independence," racial or religious unity could be just as significant a political ideal and would be just as problematic.

Liberation, he said, "thus concerns content, not an etiquette, a developing sharper and sharper human and social consciousness of the sense of equality and refusal of domination." And societies that call themselves "socialist," such as Nasser's Egypt and Castro's Cuba, are not necessarily socialist by our understanding, especially since that term is used so commonly throughout the world. But at least "raising the curtain of colonialism" forces the exploited to directly face their compatriot exploiters. At

the same time, gaining material support from Communist countries (as did Algeria with Soviet arms) potentially leads to cooptation of a nation's political leadership and loss of its revolutionary momentum.

While European workers were stymied by the anti-revolutionary orientation of Communist parties, understandably "they try to transpose their hope, idealization and enthusiasm instead toward transforming underdeveloped countries and the liberatory aspirations of those peoples." This attempt to find one's own youth and revolutionary "exaltation" through the liberatory expression of others, through international solidarity, easily leads as well to "a certain lack of critical judgment" and a simplified dismissal of relevant social struggles and "underdevelopment" in one's own country. "In placing the problem in far off countries, one gives it an abstract, almost exotic aspect."

A further problem, he said, is that all of this is within the present context of East-West Cold War and every move by Third World peoples becomes thus significant for its implications for the two imperialist blocs. As with the present debate on Cuba, even anarchists are led to defend one position or another in terms of a lesser evil—the Soviet Union or the West—and thus to accept and praise political developments that only compromise the anarchist ideal. Instead, anarchists should highlight the cracks of liberatory effort in each system, such as the workers' councils in 1956 Hungary, "to confirm the existence of a different path," especially for underdeveloped countries.

Because colonialism was a system of obvious super-exploitation, liberation movements rejecting it inevitably bind social justice and egalitarian aspirations along with those of nationalism. Therefore, said Théo [Todor Mitev], as opposed to some anarchists, "we reject a position of judging and thus staying aloof from the Algerian struggle on the basis of its nationalism alone." At the same time, "we refuse to subordinate our activity to that struggle, to identify ourselves tightly with their combat, since it has and does present an ambiguous nature and we try to place an activity by different perspectives." Rejecting our subordination or tutelage, we believe that Third World peoples' liberation is the work of the people themselves and we should only present the anarchist ideal and principles, still relatively unknown, as a possibility.⁸²

While thus implying a curiosity and critical support toward the grass-roots movement underway, the specific implication of this orientation toward Algeria's first years of independence would be provided by *Noir et Rouge* only after 1965.

Fédération Anarchiste

WITH WHAT APPARENTLY WAS A DIRECT REPLY TO LAGANT'S article on the difficulty of being an anarchist, an article by the same title

appeared several months later in the FA's *Monde Libertaire*, defensive in tone and substance. The writer agreed with Lagant that the sense of isolation and tiny presence in the political field often leads some to seek deviations in anarchist definition (in either Marxist or liberal directions)⁸³ in order to "modernize" the ideology and movement and allow its influence to reach more people. Alternatively (and perhaps here targeting Lagant), with "morbid conservatism" some are led to a sterile, purist position of "guardian of the faith, draped in a fetishist mysticism" based on contemplation, preaching humility, and judging others by a so-called ethics that is no more than a lay version of Judeo-Christian morality. Rejecting both deviations as "parasites of anarchism," the writer sees anarchist militance itself as brutal. "Anarchism doesn't dispense itself as a threat, but as a bomb, the most beautiful that could be."

Instead of orienting oneself toward a speculative abstract utopia of the future and attempting to become the purified ideal man to fit that image, he said, anarchist militance is properly grounded in the present stage of human evolution and economic reality. And anarchist ethics should reflect these realities in thought and actions most conforming to the anarchist ideal.⁸⁴ While an abstract statement of its own, the article seemed intent on validating, against critiques of both sides, the contested role of the FA "orthodox" leadership, most especially that of Maurice Joyeux.

While the written critique by another anarchist publication, *Noir et Rouge*, could be dismissed at a distance by writing an article of opposing perspective in *Le Monde Libertaire*, the challenge posed by the entrance of GAAR veterans and the formation of the UGAC tendency within the FA posed a much greater perceived threat. According to Joyeux's later account, 1962 and the years that followed were not easy for the FA. "Its ranks were full. Some who had left us earlier, slamming the door, now returned. The Algerian events first and those of Cuba afterwards brought to us turbulent young people among whom were our eternal anarcho-Marxists wanting to serve themselves in order to revive the old politicians' dream of transforming our movement into a political party, preferably Marxist, but simply with a touch of anarchist morale that sounded better in the salons."⁸⁵

At the same time, UGAC tendency members were enthusiastic about the first waves of spontaneous *autogestion* in independent Algeria and helped to spread awareness of their significance among others on the anti-authoritarian left, as in the PSU and various associations of solidarity with the Third World. Unfortunately, in the eyes of UGAC, "most anarchists in 1962 were blinded by the fact that the FLN was 'nationalist.' [For them,] *autogestion* thus had no value."⁸⁶

But, in 1960, stagnation of the FA had already been acknowledged and criticized internally by one of its more influential figures, Maurice Fayolle, a chief editor of *Le Monde Libertaire*. That year, the interior bulletin of the

FA stated forthrightly that “nothing proceeds as we would like it to within our Federation, which in fact exists only on paper. Aside from the very active two or three in Paris and the Bordeaux militants, groups either don’t exist or, because of their small memberships, have no real life.” Circulation of the FA journal was at its lowest level ever at 1,300 copies.⁸⁷

Fayolle, at the 1960 FA congress, blamed stagnation on the paralyzing basis on which the FA was founded in 1953: the refusal to clearly define itself, given the presence of anyone who claimed the anarchist philosophy, and the refusal to give itself any meaningful structure for action except as a haphazard and ineffective place of encounter for very diverse thinking, sometimes of a directly contradictory nature. Without more precise goals and adequate organization, he said, the FA failed to keep its own members and discouraged others from joining. The FA should thus either drop its pretence as an effective umbrella for all groups and tendencies or transform itself into a well-structured organization with a focused substantive ideology. Citing Guérin, Fayolle saw the mounting interest of more young people in “libertarian socialism” as a good opportunity for a seriously revised organization to develop and “to seek human solutions to the problems of our time.”⁸⁸

Nevertheless, despite the presence of UGAC and the pleas of Fayolle, a majority at FA annual congresses rejected any change and Joyeux continued regularly to denounce UGAC as simply the latest attempt by anarcho-Marxists to infiltrate and take over the FA for its own deviationist purposes.⁸⁹ French anarchist historian Biard remarked that the FA’s overall activity at the time hardly suggested a dynamic organization, confining itself as it did primarily to conferences and selling newspapers. Finding little attempt by the FA to influence the political, social, or trade union scenes, “the FA seemed to live in a sealed-off world.”⁹⁰

The presence of UGAC, however, encouraged greater diversity in *Le Monde Libertaire* articles during the early ’60s, as shown in the strong exchange there, as in *Noir et Rouge*, concerning a proper perspective toward the Castro regime in Cuba. While “Ariel” wrote in praise of Castro and his supposed efforts to lead Cuba toward a libertarian socialism, Gaston Leval denounced Ariel’s naïve misreading of the Cuban regime, his intentional avoidance of Castro’s repressive methods (“a little Stalin”), and his failure to see the dangerous ascendance of the Communist party.⁹¹ Joyeux, in turn, deplored the myths among young anarchists that saw Castro and Guevara as revolutionary heroes of a triumphant utopian revolution. “These judgments on Cuba resembled others of the same vein, those that praised the virtues of the FLN where one spoke of [supposed] anarchists in the Algerian maquis.”⁹²

In June 1965, the FA annual congress passed a resolution condemning “the Castro-Communist dictatorship, which used terror and oppression to strangle the Revolution and imposed a statist counter-revolution that

smothered the aspirations of the Cuban people for freedom.” It also denounced “those who fight against Castro only to re-establish in Cuba a fascist dictatorship or a regime in the pay of the United States.”⁹³

* * *

Le Monde Libertaire gave less attention to Algeria than one might have expected, given UGAC’s presence and despite the intensity of the Algerian war and its centrality in French politics for eight years, as well as Algeria’s new issues of social transformation and massive experimentation with workers’ self-management.

Maurice Joyeux’s apparent first article on Algeria following independence focused entirely on Kabyle writer Mouloud Feraoun, who was assassinated by the OAS only a few months earlier. Feraoun’s *Journal* covered the deepening conflict from 1955 to 1962, and Joyeux especially valued the latter’s unusual ability to transcend his personal identification with the Algerian cause in order to fairly describe multi-dimensional motivations of each protagonist, while rejecting all historical falsification and both sides’ rationalizations of indiscriminate savagery. “Thrown into the melee, this deeply cultured Kabyle, finding himself squarely between the cry of his people and the Western civilization that nurtured him, Mouloud does not forget that he is an artist.” Through his beautiful writing, “he proclaims his love of the just and rejects that community of wolves confronting them.” This work, said Joyeux, signifies the birth of literature of his people. At the same time, Mouloud Feraoun is “one of the greatest French-language writers.”⁹⁴

In the same January 1963 issue was an article on “the Algerian counter-revolution,” headed by a Louise Michel quotation, “power is cursed.” While emphasizing that everyone admired the gutsy courage and audacity of the Algerian popular insurrection that included the poorer peasants, students, and workers then or formerly in France, the armed ALN militants must not be confused with the FLN politicians of the GPRA. While the former and the million or so dead Algerians forged a program tending toward social revolution from their own blood, the transformation of Ben Bella’s career from earlier armed revolutionary militancy to present-day political manipulator has ominous implications for Algeria’s future. His acceptance by and reward of Ferhat Abbas is indeed symbolic of Ben Bella’s evolution. We can now understand why the militants of Wilayas III and IV were so apprehensive about him and his clique of ambitious politicians.

Furthermore, said the writer, his replacement of UGTA and UGEMA leaderships, plus his outlawing of the PRS and the Algerian Communist party, signifies the rejection by Ben Bella, Khider, Abbas, and their allies of the pursuit of social revolution. While knowing that social revolution doesn’t come from political parties, the regime’s outlawing of these two

organizations demonstrates its “blind and drunken pursuit of power,” its fear of “communism” or “social revolution,” and its desire to make arrangements with capitalists of the banks, French oil companies, and other colonial interests. The forced imposition of new leaders on the UGTA imitates the behavior of Franco in Spain. And, as in Spain, Algeria’s leaders should be aware that a reaction will come.⁹⁵

Two months later, René Fugler commented on a special issue of the revue, *La Nef*, about the history of the Algerian war. While noting the continued ideological confusion of the French left provoked by that conflict, and by the anticipated socialist politics cast aside by the Ben Bella regime, he was especially impressed by journalist Jean Daniel’s argument that French militants and intellectuals had been in contact solely with Algerian modernist elements—trade unionists, students, and workers in the FLN Federation of France—and thus had failed to understand “the primordial importance of the Arabo-Islamic element in the independence struggle.” Daniel and writer René Delisle, he said, emphasized that the Algerian movement gained its momentum and strength from a context of Middle Eastern Arab nationalist assertiveness and the grassroots desire of the poor peasantry to restore its traditional values. An Algerian socialism could only develop within these bounds, not by the artificial designs of misguided French leftist intellectuals. Fugler recommended these articles for their information and the problems they raised.⁹⁶

Remarkably, despite all the developments and publicity concerning Algeria’s large and unique *autogestion* sector, by mid-1963, *Le Monde Libértaire* still failed to mention, critically or otherwise, this potential opening to larger social revolution. Instead, for the July issue, Joyeux wrote a review of the PRS platform brochure, criticizing its Marxist orientation, its state socialist economic plan, and its failure to discuss secularization or free expression. At the same time, Joyeux seemed uninformed about the party itself or the fact that its leader was Mohamed Boudiaf, one of the “historic chiefs” of the Algerian revolution. He stated that essentially the PRS critique boiled down to the fact that they, instead of the Ben Bella coalition, should be in power. “If the Party of Socialist Revolution came to power, one could predict that the Algerian people would experience the same type of regime as in Eastern Europe or Cuba, made even worse by the insufferable straightjacket imposed by Islam.”⁹⁷

Only in March 1964 did the publication acknowledge the positive *autogestion* initiative, albeit only indirectly and with two words. In its “International Information” section, it called attention to a January article in *Le Monde* that described the “crisis in *autogestion*” in the Oran region. The latter article portrayed the quite positive experience of self-managed farms in that area in their first years due to the enthusiastic and capable initiatives of the peasantry. It then blamed negative results of this second year entirely

on the bureaucratic impositions and incompetence of the state tutelary ONRA and SAP agencies, as well as local FLN and UGTA officials, and described the disillusionment of the self-management workers concerned. Said the *Le Monde Libertaire* columnist, "We cite [this article] in its near entirety because it illustrates the spite with which, once again, a State tries to break the *positive impulses* of the workers [emphasis mine]," as shown before in the attitude of the Cuban government toward its peasantry.

To its credit, in the absence of any informed observations of its own, *Le Monde Libertaire* ran two detailed articles in 1964 by Daniel Guérin, "Le congrès F.L.N. devant l'option socialiste"⁹⁸ and "L'Algérie est-elle socialiste?,"⁹⁹ both of which later were included in Guérin's post-coup anthology, *L'Algérie caporalisée?*, and were discussed in the section on Guérin above. The only other discussion of Algeria in this period was again inspired by Guérin—Joyeux's praising review of the latter's earlier anthology, *L'Algérie qui se cherche* (also discussed above). Despite Joyeux's sharp critiques in other contexts of Guérin's attempts to synthesize Marxism and anarchism, here Joyeux referred to Guérin as his friend and to the "indispensable" book as "helping us to understand...with admirable objectivity" the post-independence realities of Algeria.

While clearly denouncing the traditional nature of the bureaucracy, the army, and an ambitious bourgeoisie in the re-making, said Joyeux, Guérin becomes passionate when describing the rural *autogestion* sector's "development of an instinctive socialism, a revolutionary socialism, a socialism of 'contact,' a federalist socialism," as well as similar experiences in the industrial realm. He shared Guérin's enthusiasm for "this experience of an authentic socialism" that provides such hope "and not only for the Algerian people." While questioning Guérin's judgment about Ben Bella, the opposition, and Islam, he granted that Guérin provide clear information by which to make responsible critiques. Though Joyeux still viewed the origins and nature of Ben Bella's regime negatively, he acknowledged Guérin's view that the *autogestion* sectors might provide a breakthrough to transform Algerian politics.¹⁰⁰ Only time would provide the outcome. At least in this review and in the space provided Guérin for his two substantial articles, *Le Monde Libertaire* offered a glimpse of the positive scope and significance of Algerian *autogestion* that it deserved.

Nevertheless, the UGAC tendency, in its March 1962 critique of the FA, mentioned the disinterest of a large number of FA militants in the Algerian struggle as an example of "an absence of realism incompatible with the revolutionary movement's effectiveness." But their efforts to revitalize the FA and to gain more space in *Le Monde Libertaire* to express their perspective were blocked by the non-UGAC leadership, including Joyeux. By 1965, a meeting of frustrated UGAC members declared themselves an autonomous FA organization. While still wishing to rally other anarchists,

UGAC now aimed, as well, to emphasize constructing a broad front of left revolutionaries.¹⁰¹

Témoins

CONTINUING ITS WARTIME DENUNCIATION OF THE FASCIST LEGACY left by the “French Algeria” cause, a few months after Algerian independence, *Témoins* despairingly pointed out that the “useless, abominable Algerian war [continued] to impose on us its nightmare, specifically in the realm of military ‘justice.’ Whether to taunt the regime, which made peace in Algeria, or to show its tolerance still to the ‘French Algeria’ cause, military courts over the past few months have demonstrated very one-sided partiality.” The article sharply contrasted the ten-year prison sentence of “friend and comrade” Michel Boujut (who publicly evaded the draft¹⁰² just months before the peace) with a two-month suspended sentence for a soldier who deserted his unit in early 1962 to work for the OAS in Oran. Meanwhile, another soldier, Noël Favrelière, was condemned to a death sentence in 1956 for deserting his paratrooper unit to save his prisoner from planned assassination, and still received no amnesty in the months after the war’s end.¹⁰³ In the next issue, the magazine followed with a manifesto, signed by Sartre, Claude Bourdet, François Maspero, and many others, demanding total rehabilitation for the many militants still in prison, who actively engaged in supporting the Algerian people or who refused to fight in the war.¹⁰⁴

Editor Jean-Paul Samson’s first and apparently only substantive commentary on post-independence Algeria was quite critical despite his stated awareness of the difficulties of the situation and his intention to avoid easy arrogant judgments. Denouncing Ben Bella’s “personal dictatorship modestly baptized as a presidential regime,” Samson refused to approve that regime’s “declarations of friendship for the odious Nasser; the highlighting (by Ben Bella himself) of the question of Israel as a priority problem; [and] the adoption of the one-party regime, of which Boudiaf’s arrest is only the logical consequence.”¹⁰⁵ He also offered no mention of more positive traits of independent Algeria, including at least the spontaneous phase of workers’ self-management.

PART III

The Boumédienne Regime (1965–1978): State Socialism and Political Islam

Algerian Background: Balancing Left and Right in Consolidating the Regime

THE PRAGMATIC COALITION OF BEN BELLA AND BOUMÉDIENNE dated back to the summer of 1962 and the competition for power against the GPRA and its interior guerrilla force allies. Though they shared a mutual goal at the time, it was, like the FLN coalition generally during the war, primarily a matter of convenience and mutual assistance. Ben Bella, projected by the wartime French media as the preeminent FLN leader, had a definite charismatic ability to connect with the grassroots. As a militant OS veteran, one of the original FLN “historic chiefs” of the revolution, and a prisoner of the French for nearly six years, his credentials for leadership seemed as good as anyone’s. By contrast, Boumédiénne, despite his prominent military role beyond Algerian borders, was largely unknown within the country and was the ascetic opposite of charismatic. But with the army, Boumédiénne had a far greater and critically important base of power.

While both apparently shared similar domestic and foreign policy orientations, Ben Bella sought to outflank Boumédiénne with leftist populist rhetoric, more openness (eventually) to UGTA and Algerian Communist party roles, and precipitous radical policies, while the latter sought allies hostile to Ben Bella’s secular socialist appeals. At the same time, each attempted to solidify his power by securing crucial posts for allies in the government and FLN party—with Ben Bella as well increasingly accumulating various ministries for himself personally. The less mercurial Boumédiénne was quite aware of the intent behind Ben Bella’s maneuvers and finally decided to resolve the threat by removing the latter from power completely in the June 19, 1965 coup. While Algerians were surprised and some quite hostile to the event, street opposition in the capital was minimal¹ and only Oran and Annaba had significant protest demonstrations.

The new post-coup regime had many of the same top officials, though a more obvious military presence, and in the short run gave more lip service and even some more coherent support to UGTA and the self-management sector, while blaming Ben Bella for inconsistency and mismanagement in all areas of policy.² At the same time, a nascent new left opposition party, the ORP (Popular Resistance Organization)—organized shortly after the coup by Harbi, Zahouane, leaders of the already-outlawed Algerian Communist party, the president of UNEA (the National Union of Algerian Students)

and the national secretary of the FLN Youth—soon saw many of its leaders and members arrested.³

Over the next several years, the new regime was caught up in the same balancing act between rival personalities, groups, and clans as its predecessor. Though Boumédiène and the ANP were now explicitly the dominant force, within the military there were critical strong rivalries between *ex-wilaya* chiefs and those whose strength derived from the earlier army of the Exterior (including a sub-group of officers trained in the French army who eventually defected to the ALN before the end of the war). As well, there were various ministerial holdovers from Ben Bella's cabinet. Gradually, Boumédiène, whose coup was unpopular at the beginning, gained more confidence, and rival individuals and forces left the broad coalition or were pushed aside.

While Boumédiène strongly disliked Marxism-Leninism and the role of foreign Trotskyists, like Raptis, in influencing Algerian revolutionary socialist ideology under Ben Bella, he believed that the overall revolutionary reputation and proclaimed that socialist goals of Algeria were still highly important for the new regime's legitimacy. While emphasizing more the supposed Islamic roots of socialism, in part to encourage counter-balancing forces against secular leftists, Boumédiène was not willing to discard the socialist label for his government and program. Importantly, whatever the difficulties of the *autogestion* sector, he could not afford to immediately abandon the already-compromised self-management model so much at the core of the Algerian socialist experience to date. To do so would have threatened his own claim to legitimacy and invited the wrath of a still relatively autonomous UGTA and *autogestion* workers themselves. Pragmatically, it was also realized that there were simply not enough trained state managerial cadres to immediately take over the self-managed units. For this policy realm, as for others, Boumédiène promised to follow the same general course as before, but without the irrational and personally manipulatory zigzags of his predecessor.

Thus, the new regime promised—though endlessly delayed implementing—long-articulated reforms to facilitate credits and marketing and to increase the power of self-management committees.⁴ But there was no effort to enforce the March Decrees through required procedures such as regular unit elections and meetings of the general assemblies. As well, some at the top level of state were clearly hostile to self-management and wished to turn over such enterprises to the private sector, to “cooperatives” for ex-combatants, or directly to state management. Thus, gradually and haltingly over the years, the self-management sector was piece by piece transformed into state-run industrial enterprises, collectivized but hierarchical state farm units, more centralized and consolidated *autogestion* farms, or privatized farms and factories.

In 1968 there reportedly existed 1,953 self-managed farms with about 137,000 permanent workers compared to four years earlier when the same land had 2,284 farms and about 220,000 full-time workers.⁵ The sector produced about 90 percent of wine and citrus fruits and 60 percent of market crops.⁶ A 1971 study of the *autogestion* sector in the rich Mitidja farm belt found that the vast majority of workers in these units lacked knowledge of why particular decisions were made and were essentially entirely disengaged from the process, regarding themselves solely as wage-earners of the state. A majority apparently wished to either migrate to the cities for factory work or return to a system of individual small farms. It was thus not surprising that productivity had decreased.⁷

Meanwhile, this gradual dismantling of the self-management sector and other anti-labor policies led to increasing confrontation with UGTA. While the leadership of the latter attempted to avoid direct clashes with the regime, more militant elements in the organization were discouraged by the “state-capitalist” policy changes, increasing efforts by the regime to criticize and dominate UGTA and the overall anti-left repressive context. Membership declined and many cadres joined the underground opposition.

While the new regime proclaimed once again the need to restructure and develop a strong and exclusive FLN avant-garde party to help guide and assure Algeria’s socialist evolution, the same weakness and incoherence of efforts continued as before the coup. While the reformed party would be used to facilitate domination of UGTA, the student organization, and other groups as needed, there was no willingness to permit its autonomy whatsoever from leaders of the regime.

Above all, for Boumédiénne, it was the state that represented the interests of the society as a whole, it was the embodiment of the people’s will to develop more effectively through socialism, and the army was the guardian of the state. “The anti-state activities of some groups, for him, were a colonial legacy. Boumédiénne believed that [justifiable] resistance to a colonial state engendered the spirit of anarchy.... What came from this was a spirit of revolution against all forms of authority and power. This spirit of revolt, however, must disappear in the face of the national state.”⁸ And if specific interests of groups did not recognize this need for orderly subordination, the military (especially the SM, the military security force, or secret police) was available to assure that independent voices did not get out of hand, through torture, if it chose.

By 1971, Boumédiénne had sufficiently consolidated and stabilized his rule⁹ to launch a major new technocrat-directed “socialist” policy of oil and natural gas nationalizations and high-priority investments in heavy industry.¹⁰ With the combination of substantial energy sector revenues (tripled between 1967 and 1972)¹¹ and concentrated industrial development, the regime sought to create a state-directed economic development break-

through that could achieve the nationalist goal of eliminating foreign aid and costly imports and eventually filter down to benefit the majority of the population. Despite heavy investments, however, poor planning, the lack of personnel trained for sophisticated technology, and failures to achieve balanced inventory and marketing systems resulted in huge cost overruns and under-capacity usage, substantial dependence on foreign firms, and a large increase in foreign debt.

Agrarian reform was also launched in the early '70s, and 1.5 million acres of large private landholdings were nationalized and redistributed to newly established collective socialist villages for the poor peasantry. Boumédiène used strong rhetoric against the traditionalist rural bourgeoisie and allowed leftist PAGS¹² activists to help mobilize youth and students in volunteer rural work brigades. While the larger goal here was to boost agricultural production to the point of assisting the industry-focused development plan, the same inadequate agrarian infrastructure and local political/administrative support as plagued the *autogestion* sector, combined with peasant hostility to low market prices and hierarchical operations, caused this policy to fail as well. Indeed, Algeria now became more dependant than ever on food imports.

Internationally, Boumédiène gained popularity with his continued socialist and militant revolutionary rhetoric. While the military coup initially cooled Algeria's revolutionary reputation in the Third World, the regime gradually re-asserted itself in the foreign policy realm, especially through strong anti-Zionist rhetoric and armed support during 1967's Six-Day War, continued militant support of the Palestinian cause in the 1973 war and afterward, and Boumédiène's 1974 UN speech, in which he demanded reparations for colonialism. At the same time, however, the regime increasingly closed off avenues for meaningful participatory grassroots decision-making in any realm of the economy, politics, or society while further strengthening the hold of powerful military clans over the government and state-run economy. While schooling opportunities substantially expanded, an especially impressive gain for females, it was increasingly due to the state's import of thousands of teachers from Egypt and other areas of the Middle East. This new element, plus the government-sponsored spread of new mosques throughout the country,¹³ provided what the regime perceived as an acceptable, non-threatening realm for participatory energies at the grassroots level.

Contrary to the Ben Bella regime, post-coup emphasis on Islamic instead of foreign definitions of socialism encouraged new, more conservative sources of political support, as did the heavy, nationalist-motivated emphasis on linguistic Arabization of education.¹⁴ However, while the regime conceded certain social measures to appease religious sentiments,¹⁵ its new 1976 constitution (the National Charter) asserted the modernist proposition that

the only way Islam could renew itself was through socialism. Meanwhile, a radical underground Islamist movement began to organize and gain popularity in the 1970s because of its strong criticism of Boumédiénne's "atheistic" socialism and attacks on private property, and because of its demands for a return to government and society founded on genuine Muslim principles.¹⁶

The nationalizations, agrarian reform, educational opportunities, revolutionary rhetoric, and greater political stability had provided Boumédiénne some lingering popularity by his death in late December 1978, but his legacy also included the scandalous, self-serving enrichment of leading regime figures (not him personally), inadequate response to exploding demographics, mass rural migration to cities, large unemployment, a poor housing supply, and the widespread development of urban slums. Furthermore, Boumédiénne's tight political control, opportunistic use of FLN and UGTA organizations as mere top-down props of the regime and heavy dependence on the SM secret police left many stifled, exploited, and suffering Algerians to become increasingly disenchanted.

Additionally, policy emphasis on Arabization and the marginalization of the Berber language as supposedly undeserving of national recognition gradually helped to inflame the cultural and political sentiments of the Berber population as well.¹⁷ But Boumédiénne's partial appeasement of Islamists was insufficient to prevent a growing radicalization of many in that movement. Sixteen years after the successful culmination of the national liberation struggle, Algeria faced ever-deeper contradictions. Control was still fully in the hands of an authoritarian elite and the rhetoric and halting steps toward an empowered grassroots population realistically dead.

French Anarchism Background: New Reflections on Algerian *Autogestion* and the Peak and Aftermath of May-June 1968

IN THE MID- AND LATE 1960s, TENSIONS ABOUT PURPOSE, organization, and leadership within the anarchist movement came to a head in the wider context and dynamics of major labor unrest and large-scale antiwar, New Left, counter-culture, and student upheavals in French society more generally. Eventually, the May-June Days of 1968, with their openly radical demands and activism by large proportions of the population (including a prolonged general strike¹⁸), would no doubt be the high watermark for the popularity and circulation of anarchist or quasi-anarchist themes throughout France. This was partly the result of deliberate activities and propaganda of younger anarchists in locations of critical influence (as in the March 22 Nanterre movement) and, more substantially, the genuine resonance of anti-authoritarian and egalitarian political and cultural themes and their repetition among millions of workers and other alienated individuals. The sudden prevalence and public discussion of anarchist and more broadly anti-authoritarian ideas and visions provided a huge jolt to the existing anarchist movement and energized French anarchists for many years, despite the disappointing immediate political outcomes.

In many ways, the next two decades saw a sorting out and prioritizing of the legacies of 1968. While the *Fédération Anarchiste* persisted much as before, new groups and new theories were more present and influential than ever. At the same time, the much larger orthodox Communist party lost much of its previous influence, especially among the youth, severely discredited as it was by the Soviet repression of the 1968 Prague Spring and the party's intentional braking of worker defiance and potential revolutionary momentum against the Gaullist regime in May and June of that same year.

For some anarchists, specific interest in independent Algeria evolved from initial excitement over workers' self-management and the regime's promotion of Third World revolution to later disillusionment because of the 1965 coup and the more obvious authoritarianism and statist version of socialism that resulted. For others, the dénouement of the Ben Bella regime was nothing more than was expected from the 1950s on. While reference was made to some particular events or issues in Algeria for the

decade and a half after 1965, for the most part, that country was relatively neglected.

Nevertheless, initial anarchist enthusiasm for at least the *model* of *autogestion*, if not its actuality in Algeria, continued to provide some inspiration and momentum for rapidly propagating the self-management theme for many areas of French society in the dynamic context of 1968. The very fact of the attempt at *autogestion* in Algeria, as well as its somewhat spontaneous eruption from grassroots workers themselves, despite the sector's inadequacies and the coup, encouraged at least some French anarchists to believe in the model's viability as a social practice consistent with long-term anarchist ideals. For much of the next decade, the French anarchist movement, as others on the French left, devoted great attention to the potentials and practice of self-management. In this sense, along with the movement's great concern with Third World revolution, the influence of Algeria on French anarchists, however little acknowledged, was still substantial.

French Anarchist Positions

Daniel Guérin

BOUMÉDIENNE'S MILITARY COUP OF JUNE 19, 1965 AGAINST BEN Bella was a genuine shock for most foreign observers, including those of the French left. Even Guérin, who was far closer to the scene than most, did not expect a dénouement of this sort so soon, though his numerous articles in the eighteen months before the coup articulated an ever-growing class split within the political system and increasing influence by Boumédiénne and anti-socialist forces within the government. In 1973, Guérin admitted that despite the tone of his pre-coup articles describing an intensifying clash, he had been over-optimistic about the outcome. "But without optimism, where would be revolutionary voluntarism? And wouldn't being pessimistic at the moment of action be a paralyzing defeatism?"¹⁹

Nevertheless, with other French leftists, Guérin immediately involved himself in solidarity efforts for Ben Bella, for leftists of his regime, and for others who were soon arrested and imprisoned in unknown locations, like Ben Bella himself, after their somewhat futile attempt to launch a clandestine opposition organization.

In November, Guérin finished a twenty-page analysis of the deeper nature and evolution of politics in the Ben Bella period, the nature of and reasons for the coup, and the leading traits of the new Boumédiénne regime. As a sequel to his first book on Algeria, Guérin's *L'Algérie caporalisée?* used this essay as an introduction to his series of twelve articles written for French left journals from January 1964 through May 1965, plus documents on *autogestion*, agrarian reform, and workers' control, as well as the first post-coup proclamation by the ORP.

Said Guérin, the strength of the military component of the post-independence regime derived obviously from the fact of armed struggle for national liberation. He pointed out, however, that those who did most of the fighting, the *maquisards* of the interior, were more like partisans of feudal enclaves and were largely dissolved into civilian life or into the regular army after the war. The traditionally structured "regular" ALN consisted primarily of the thousands of soldiers and officers in the Army of the Exterior, based across the Moroccan and Tunisian borders and largely without access to the interior after the French created electrified fences along each. As a strong military potential, and with organization and leadership appointed primarily by FLN intelligence chief Boussouf, it was the only well-organized and disciplined political force ready for a decisive role in the immediate post-independence summer of 1962. Its main rival was the

FLN-organized GPRA, the Tunis-based hodgepodge “more-or-less phantom government, stuffed with careerists and opportunists, out of touch with the Algerian people, possessing significant funds, and taking it easy in vain comfort.”²⁰

While the GPRA attempted to remove ALN leader Boumédiénne from his post in June 1962, the latter, he pointed out, struck an alliance with the ambitious and popular historic chief Ben Bella, who the French media had presented as the leading FLN chief after his kidnapping in 1956. This alliance of convenience overthrew the returned GPRA in Algiers.

As Guérin had hinted already in his January 1964 essay on the army,²¹ which almost prevented distribution of his first book in Algeria, “in fact, as one knows better now, Ben Bella never had a free hand during nearly three years, he was the instrument, the prisoner, the hostage of Boumédiénne.” He “could do nothing without the support of the army,” which also assured its presence—beyond Boumédiénne himself as vice prime minister—with various ministerial and other administrative officials “loyal, above all, to the army.”²² Already, by 1963, said Guérin, Ben Bella confided with Nasser that Boumédiénne was plotting against him.

In turn, he said, Ben Bella attempted to free himself gradually from military control through various means: his charismatic speeches, his popular identification with *autogestion* initiatives, his use of persons on the radical left (as personal advisors or top FLN officials), his creation of a new police force separate from military security, and his attempt to develop a reinvigorated FLN and popular militias. As well, his energetic and well-publicized Third World revolutionary positions, his attempt simply to play off political clans and individuals against each other, and ultimately his gathering up of more ministerial posts for himself were aimed at further personal autonomy. But having fully infiltrated the civilian administration and assured the failure of democratic party restructuring, Boumédiénne tightened control at every stage.

Guérin saw the Ben Bella-Boumédiénne team as “resting essentially on the fact that the overall political objectives of the two were not fundamentally different. One and the other tried to maintain Algeria in a fragile equilibrium between two forces, both of them equally menacing for each other: on one side, the counter-revolution of native landholders who never accepted that they were prevented from putting their hands on the *biens vacants* and who never pardoned the spoils, vexations, or menaces they were subjected to. On the other side was the enthusiasm with which beneficiaries of *autogestion* had greeted the socialization measures and the strong pressures they exerted, judged as premature, to enlarge their scope.” Though Ben Bella would flirt with the left to seek some maneuvering room of his own, Boumédiénne would do the same with the right. Objectively, they had a common overall purpose. Shockingly, given his earlier praises

of Ben Bella, Guérin then equated the two: "Boumédienne, like Ben Bella, intended to exercise a Bonapartist and totalitarian dictatorship over the Algerian people" midway between the two extremes.²³

According to Guérin, the final precipitating causes of the coup were Ben Bella's attempt to take over the foreign ministry from Boumedienne's protégé Bouteflika, and his inquiry with de Gaulle's government about its position in case of a show of force between himself and Boumédienne. But by that time, Ben Bella had already lost much of his popular appeal. Demoralization and depoliticization had set in among those in the avant-garde *autogestion* sector, who felt manipulated and deserted by Ben Bella's opportunistic promises and betrayal of the left. As well, hopes among the poor peasantry were deflated by a continually stalled agrarian reform. The only immediate grassroots reactions to the coup were spontaneous but relatively small demonstrations by women and youth.²⁴

In the first few months, he said, the post-coup regime basically maintained the general policies of Ben Bella's government despite the newly installed "Council of the Revolution." Nevertheless, Guérin compared Algeria's situation with the dynamics of the French Revolution after the fall of Robespierre—the gates were now opened by the Algerian Thermidorians to a flood of counter-revolutionary pressures. Leftists in the party and administration (including *pieds-rouges* from abroad) became fair game for arrest and torture now that their sometimes-protector patron had been overthrown. Though UGTA militants were threatened into submission, they managed to show some degree of independence, as in an October editorial unconditionally supporting *autogestion*.²⁵ And Guérin still hoped for "the pressure of organized UGTA workers and *autogestion* workers of the cities and countryside to prevent Colonel Boumédienne from taking broad steps of an openly anti-socialist policy."²⁶ Indeed, the need to avoid both open privatization and the destruction of *autogestion*, combined with the absence of an adequate number of cadres for a statist management of the economy, could lead, he thought, to increasing economic slowdown and collapse of the regime. "Fifteen days after the putsch, production had fallen about 40%. Algeria worked only in slow motion."²⁷

Concluding his post-coup essay, Guérin considered it "a bit schematic and sterile" to simply denounce Ben Bella "from a healthy but a bit simplistic anarchist perspective" as no better than Boumédienne. The Ben Bella era was still seen by the masses as a time of significant popular measures and critiques. There was sympathy for Ben Bella's personal fate, arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned without adequate explanation. Guérin found significance even in contrasting the faces of Ben Bella and Boumédienne—the first, "friendly and human," the second, "closed and cunning"—as a symbolic statement of their respective programs in the public eye. "Ben Bella, by his very face, abundantly reproduced in the clandestine flyers of the

opposition, is a deep wedge in the dictatorship of June 19. The inhuman treatment inflicted on him does more damage to the usurper than all the oppositional speeches, tracts, and programs.”²⁸

Nevertheless, said Guérin, critiques should be made of the “errors, weaknesses, and failures of the defunct regime,” but the critiques should be constructive to avoid such problems in the future and “to hasten the formation of a more conscious, consequential, and stronger revolutionary avant-garde.” In this spirit, “critical support” should be given to the ORP. Despite “their hostility to the military dictatorship,” the Algerian people are now exhausted and traumatized by over ten years of struggle and repression and post-independence deceptions. Their new struggle against “the propertied class and bureaucrats” will be long and arduous. But the base of the army is composed of sons of the poor peasantry and is thus still opposed to grassroots repression. Likewise, there are many young officers who are “convinced socialists, who would rebel if the military regime becomes openly counter-revolutionary.” Finally, as well, he found it hopeful that even the present regime was filled with mutual hatreds.

In an additional section of his 1973 *Ci-gît* account of his own activity in Algeria after independence,²⁹ Guérin spoke in more detail about the ORP post-coup opposition, the Boumédiénne regime’s repression of these and others on the left, and of Guérin’s own solidarity efforts for these victims. The ORP’s original proclamation, written by Zahouane and Harbi, was issued by the former on July 28, 1965, barely a month after the coup. By September, “hundreds of militants were arrested...for their real or imaginary participation in the ORP.” Guérin stated that Algerian victims (including those of European origin who opted for Algerian citizenship) represent a variety of ideologies (he mentioned no anarchists) and a great variety of occupations. Some were officials of UGTA, the JFLN, UNEA, and regional federations of the FLN, and many were specialized workers, “the finest flower of the Algerian proletariat.” Under significant international pressure, a first several dozen were brought to regular trials by November. It was there that the scandalous detailed record of their torture began to be revealed.³⁰

Said Guérin, apparently the same torture methods were now used by the Algerian military security forces that were learned from the French repression of Algerians—but claimed now as a new, improved version. Some who were victims under the French now assumed the torturer role themselves. In Guérin’s view, this was the most serious indictment of the national liberation struggle itself, “the social and human bankruptcy of the FLN. Authoritarianism in its leadership, committed to expediency, content to oppose violence with violence even to the point of fratricidal violence, it had neither the time nor the desire to forge a new Algerian man.... France left a legacy of the deadly poison of torture, but the FLN did not know how to secrete its antidote.”

From September 1965 until his decision to quit in 1972 because of excessive Communist interference, Guérin was assistant to Robert Merle, the president of the Committee for the Defense of Ahmed Ben Bella and the Other Victims of Repression in Algeria. The committee carried out an extensive petition campaign, published a dozen information bulletins and two brochures, and made numerous appeals to Third World heads of state, the UN Human Rights Commission, and various other public bodies and the press, and by the early '70s, succeeded in gaining freedom for all of those arrested in the summer of 1965 except Ben Bella himself. While maintaining excellent personal relations with Henri Alleg,³¹ despite Guérin's many differences with Alleg's fellow Communists on the committee, he finally left the group in the early '70s, deciding that "the attitude of the Communist party and the CGT [the Communist-led trade union federation], having contributed to causing the failure of a revolution [May 68] only two fingers away from overthrowing Gaullist power, forbade him henceforth from any collaboration with them whatsoever."

Despite these efforts against the Boumédiénne regime's repression and despite understanding Boumédiénne's braking role before 1965, Guérin still willingly and directly congratulated Boumédiénne and his regime for Algerian intervention in the June 1967 Six Days War between Israel and the Arab countries, and for its struggle in early 1971 to achieve further independence through nationalization of its oil reserves.³²

During the early stage of the post-coup period, in late 1965, Guérin also published his important broader work, *Anarchism*.³³ In preparation for months, if not years, the book no doubt fed into and was informed in part by Guérin's ongoing research and reflection on Algeria. Its theoretical section introduced ideas central to anarchism, while another part ("In Search of a New Society") outlined more specific economic and political models put forth by Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin, and Malatesta. Of equal importance was the section on "Anarchism in Revolutionary Practice." Here Guérin understandably focused primarily on the self-organization of workers in the Russian and Spanish revolutions, with detailed discussion of obstacles (such as the need for coordination between self-managed units) and contradictions (including participation in the highest levels of the state by advocates of self-management) in many respects already identified by Guérin in his specific writings on post-independence Algerian *autogestion*.

Guérin's concluding chapter to the original 1965 edition then attempted briefly to explicitly identify those ongoing workers' self-management issues as they related to the current contexts of Yugoslavia and Algeria. While describing the theoretical model more or less common to each (he pointed out Algeria's conscious borrowing of the Yugoslav legislative model), such as the significance of links between units at the communal level and the

tutary roles of the state, Guérin also was very clear about the heavy hand of state bureaucrats, the sometimes elitist control of decision-making by a few workers, isolationist “proto-capitalist” behavior of some units, and the lack of an authentic and autonomous trade union movement “independent of authority and of the single party, springing from and helping to organize the workers themselves, and animated by the spirit characteristic of Spanish anarcho-syndicalism.”³⁴ Such a trade unionism, he thought, would greatly help to moderate the centripetal and centrifugal forces toward centralism and excess autonomy respectively. Guérin was also quite forthright about the extremely difficult political cultures in which self-management experiments were attempted:

In these countries, self-management is coming into being in the framework of a dictatorial, military, police state whose skeleton is formed by a single party. At the helm there is an authoritarian and paternalistic authority that is beyond control and above criticism. The authoritarian principles of the political administration and the libertarian principles of the management of the economy are thus quite incompatible.³⁵

The object of the bureaucracy of the totalitarian State “is to infringe upon self-management, reduce its powers, and in fact absorb it.”³⁶ The experiment “is being tried in an authoritarian framework that is repugnant to anarchism.... There is always the danger that [self-management] will be devoured by the cancer of authoritarianism.”³⁷ Indeed, he said, it was still quite fragile in Algeria where a leading party proponent of self-management, Hocine Zahouane, was removed from power by the military coup.

Despite all the negatives, however, Guérin emphasized what *autogestion* had accomplished for the involved workers, the societies of which they were a part, and the international socialist revolutionary movement more generally. Self-management

has, in fact, shown itself quite dynamic in the countries where experiments are being carried on. It has opened up new perspectives for the workers and restored to them some pleasure in their work. It has opened their minds to the rudiments of authentic socialism, which involves the progressive disappearance of wages, the disalienation of the producer who will become a free and self-determining being. Self-management has in this way increased productivity and registered considerable positive results, even during the trials and errors of the initial period.³⁸

Additionally,

it appears in practice to have the merit of enabling the masses to pass through an apprenticeship in direct democracy, acting from the bottom upward; the merit of developing, encouraging, and stimulating their free initiative, of imbuing them with a sense of responsibility instead of perpetuating age-old habits of passivity, submission, and the inferiority complex left to them by past oppression, as is the case under state communism.³⁹

Guérin was hopeful that Proudhon's 1848 minimal libertarian model of a "progressive reduction in the power of the State, parallel development of the power of the people from below"⁴⁰ might be deeply informed by contemporary experiments in self-management as in present day Algeria.

In his postscript for the 1970 English-language edition of this book, a year after his co-founding the Mouvement Communiste Libertaire (MCL) with Georges Fontenis and others,⁴¹ Guérin went on to underline, on the basis of the May 1968 revolt in France, the significance of self-management as a concept and experience toward the revival of anarchism. This revolt attacked all bosses—in universities, factories, and trade unions alike.

This unexpected explosion burst like a thunderclap, contagious and devastating, and was very largely libertarian socialist in character.... It put everything in question, all accepted ideas, all existing structures; it repudiated the professional monologue as much as the authoritarianism of the employers;...in a few weeks it passed through a lightning apprenticeship in direct democracy, in the dialogue of a thousand voices, in the communication of all with all.⁴²

Most importantly, said Guérin, one "magic" guide for a new society, the idea of self-management, presented itself throughout all debates and discussions in this "revolution so profoundly libertarian in spirit." The idea "has become lodged in people's minds, and it will emerge again sooner or later."⁴³ As one of the well-known older radical intellectuals in France, Guérin played a significant role at the time, and before this, in developing this consciousness.

By the time of his *Ci-gît* assessment of the Ben Bella regime in 1973, Guérin's judgment concerning the regime's policy on *autogestion* and socialism was much less nuanced: "His 1963 opening toward *autogestion* and socialism lasted as long as roses. He quickly returned to the compromising and bitter haggling that, since 1954, had characterized the FLN. Only with words did [Ben Bella] denounce the French-type torture inflicted on the regime's opponents by his underlings and the military." Ben Bella's balancing game "in the end favored only the right." Like Robespierre in the French Revolution, "[Ben Bella] himself sawed off the branch on which he was dangerously perched."⁴⁴

By now, Guérin was ready to accept the situationists' 1966 critique of Mohammed Harbi's role as well. While Harbi was the theoretician of *autogestion*, the situationists asserted he was "there in the offices of power only by grace of the prince." As "the court poet," they said, "he saw *autogestion* defended not by himself but only by the mediation of Ben Bella.... But who did he count on to defend Ben Bella?... Who protected [Harbi's] protector?... History showed that Harbi, and all who thought like him, were mistaken."⁴⁵

As well, by 1973, the Boumédienne regime had greatly consolidated itself and Guérin updated his general views on the new context in Algeria in an expansive footnote to the reproduced "L'Algérie Caporalisée?" essay in his *Ci-gît* anthology.⁴⁶ Guérin granted that Boumédienne had gained some popularity in the meantime, though not at the level Ben Bella once had, and that he also had a firmer political control. Factors in this evolution were the omnipresent and harsh military police, "'socialist' demagoguery" relying on a still scarcely accomplished agrarian reform, and "a series of bureaucratic nationalizations succeeding or superposing themselves on *autogestion*."⁴⁷ Contributing also to the regime's stability, he thought, were a "revolutionary" foreign policy, including (largely verbal) anti-Zionist support for the Palestinian resistance, Russian military arms, French neo-colonialist technical support, American financial and commercial aid, and a certain degree of clear economic gain derived from oil and natural gas revenues.

Also by 1973, Guérin was ready to expand in detail upon the theme, first passionately implied in 1962, that the post-independence weakness and failure of the Ben Bella regime and thus the threats and barriers to *autogestion* were rooted in the nature and evolution of the FLN itself from 1954 on.⁴⁸ Guérin's 1973 *Ci-gît* extensively examined a wide variety of colonial and decolonizing issues over his career as an activist and engaged writer. Among the various such contexts discussed, Guérin gave more attention to Algeria than any other country, including 127 pages devoted to a new account of the stages, major forces, and dynamics of the Algerian revolution from 1954 to 1962. Much of his overall narrative derived from a limited number of sources, including five books by Yves Courrière and individual works by Amar Ouzegane, Charles-Henri Favrod, and J.-C. Duchemin. Guérin supplemented information from these accounts with his own rich stories of participation as a radical public intellectual in various meetings, petitions, and private conversations throughout the eight years of the war.⁴⁹ Many detailed interpretive comments were also provided by Guérin's private correspondent, Mohammed Harbi,⁵⁰ Ben Bella's earlier admired leftist counselor.

However useful this 1973 sketch of the war, especially striking in Guérin's account was how the ultimate victory of national independence was tainted by deep tragedy. In contrast with the explaining, inspiring, supportive engagé wartime articles and speeches of Guérin included in the

book, his narrative repeatedly recalled the horrendous suffering of civilians and combatants alike. This was partly, he said, the result of the FLN's strategy of mobilizing civilians through heavy French repression, a strategy repeatedly demonstrated throughout the war. As well, Guérin, in his heaviest indictment yet, made clear the deeply flawed roots of the struggle in at least five dimensions.

First, he said, was the failure of French working-class movements (especially the Socialist and Communist parties and the powerful Communist-led CGT trade union) to recognize and work to rectify abysmal colonial conditions in Algeria from the time of the French Popular Front forward, including the sad farce of a Socialist-led and Communist-supported government elected in 1956 on a peace pledge but then mandating a hugely intensified repression instead. Second was the fact that progressive evolution of French policy toward Algeria instead ultimately depended on an anachronic conservative quasi-monarch (de Gaulle) brought to power by reactionary *pieds-noirs* and rebellious French military officers. Inherently, this was a hugely contradictory regime in which struggle and vascillations between these interests and those of a less-encumbered, more liberal, and modern state significantly delayed progress toward Algerian independence and brought even a low-level civil war to France itself through OAS activity during the final year.

Third, said Guérin, was a horrendous civil war *within* the war on the Algerian side—a bloody fratricide, also manipulated by the French, in both Algeria and France. This split between the loyal Messalist MNA and the FLN originated in the headstrong leadership of Messali, the move to reformism by many Messalists in the wake of fierce French repression after World War II, and the impatience of militants anxious to replicate the decolonizations of Indochina and neighbors Morocco and Tunisia.⁵¹ In turn, this inter-party fratricide was complimented by intense and deadly personality and power conflicts within the FLN, which were not grounded in any essential ideological difference.

Finally, he argued, was the basic fact that neither the FLN nor the MNA expressed any clear egalitarian social program beyond the right of Algerians to independence. This grossly devalued the great wartime sacrifices by millions, especially the peasantry, by closing off future social mobility, advances in life quality, and meaningful political participation. In effect, the sufferings of the war begat great sufferings in the post-independence period as well because of the very structure and pragmatic power-centered ideology of Algeria's political leadership against the French. Here, Guérin's conclusion was his most consistent with anarchist principles.

[The war] had to drag behind it a whole parade of massacres, of barbarous and often useless, not to speak of immoral, violence,

though questioned by the clearest minds in both camps. On top of this was the [violent] settling of disputes between Algerian brothers. The FLN demanded national unity, no doubt to push aside the colonial occupier, but this served too well the interests of bourgeois and petit-bourgeois profiteers. It closed itself into a tight nationalism, prioritized over stingy social relations, where the rich consent to give a hand, momentarily, to the poor, the better to take later from them their revenge and to substitute a new bourgeois, military and bureaucratic feudalism for that of the colonialists. Finally and especially, the length and the horror of the ordeal left behind a battered people, deprived of their best sons, physically and morally exhausted, a ravaged country. Furthermore, the terrible constraints exerted by the FLN to force Algerians, under threat of death, to bring their meager savings and their blood to the national cause, at least partly removed from the Algerian revolution its purity and spontaneity. Hierarchically led from the top with iron discipline, it only too superficially associated the people in the struggle. With the close of the war, the rank-and-file was insufficiently convinced that this victory was its own. Only very partially did it have the will to prolong the struggle and consolidate it by participating with its own hands in building socialism from independence.

As the whole decolonizing enterprise had been conducted with an iron fist by various personalities whose relations—far from genuinely “collegial”—had been destroyed by ferocious and murderous rivalries; as the war treasury taken from the pockets of the poor had been dilapidated, confiscated and disputed between unscrupulous gangs, the people, marginalized to the end, could only witness without power the score-settling of its supposed historic chiefs.

At the same time, Guérin returned to the “support” dimension of his consistent “critical support”:

[However,] far from me to think that the whole effort commenced by the November 1st, 1954 insurrection was vain and sterile.... The Algerian revolution, despite all its blunders and its limits, if only in proving the military impotency of a great colonial power and the inexhaustible bravery of the humblest of the colonized, has written a new chapter in the history of human liberation.

As well, he said, if true working-class internationalism had not been weakened by the Communist movement, “a unity of true revolutionaries on both sides of the Mediterranean, as hoped for in 1936, could have brought about, without such carnage, an independent and socialist Algeria.”⁵²

Guérin's own role during the war, self-described as a radical presence within a series of antiwar and anti-repression committees and petition drives, was that of a strong moral critic and booster, not an organizational activist. His *Ci-gît* collection sharply contrasted his growing awareness of the extent of Algerian tragedy (as shown through the personal memories of that period) with a consistent upbeat public activist voice. While Guérin's writings during this period sometimes emphasized the need for the "critical" side of "critical support," more often his deeper acknowledgement of the tragically flawed roots of the revolution tended to be expressed privately, as when he denounced MNA-FLN fratricide in separate letters to each organization or in his letters to an old Algerian friend ("Abdellah") immediately after independence.

The change from a tone publicly supportive in wartime to harsh critic seemed to typify Guérin's relationship to "progressive coalitions" more generally. During the war, as during the Ben Bella period, Guérin was quite supportive publicly of the FLN and Algerian progress overall. He wanted to encourage, not obstruct, and his expertise on Algeria as a respected public intellectual motivated Guérin to cooperate in various committees and petitions with political partners significantly distant from his own anarchist beliefs. At the same time, he believed that his own private telegrams and letters to even conservative officials, as high as de Gaulle himself, might have fruitful impact.⁵³

Once Algerian progress seemed to halt, as with the June 1965 military coup, Guérin's public commentary became far more harsh—as demonstrated in the 1973 *Ci-gît* narrative itself. In turn, Guérin's 1979 work, *Quand l'Algérie s'insurgeait*, repeated virtually unchanged his 1973 narrative of Algeria at war. Possibly, however, his elimination of a harsh one-sentence 1973 reference to Boumédiène in his conclusion reflected a slight shift of Guérin's view of the latter's regime because of a perceived partial progress in social and economic policy.⁵⁴ But in so editing, Guérin seemed willing again to compromise his deeper anarchist orientation.

As Guérin attempted to articulate an ever-clearer synthesis of what he saw as the best of Marxism (freed from authoritarianism) and the best of anarchism (freed from an anti-organizational bias and simplistic understanding of the role of the state in modern society), he helped form with FCL veterans (such as Fontenis) the MCL (Libertarian Communist Movement) in 1969, then moved to the OCL (Organization of Libertarian Communists) in 1971, the ORA (Revolutionary Anarchist Organization) from 1973 to 1976 (the OCL was for him too sectarian and the ORA too ultra-leftist while refusing to engage in militant union organizing⁵⁵), and finally the UTCL (Union of Libertarian Communist Workers) in 1978. The latter was expelled from the ORA in 1976 because of its priority emphasis on syndicalist action. Guérin remained in the UTCL until his death in 1988.⁵⁶ While

none of these organizations gave much attention to Algerian events and dynamics during this period,⁵⁷ the theme of *autogestion* remained continuously prominent in Guérin's writings and speeches—in part, one must assume, because of his close immersion in Algeria's promise and sad realities of the early 1960s.

During the same post-1968 period, Guérin's anti-colonial critique and activism turned inward as well. With much of the activist left, he focussed on domestic French racism and discrimination against immigrants from ex-French colonies, including Algeria. With especially large immigration in the 1960s and early '70s (over 3 million), new workers concentrated in skilled and semi-skilled jobs in the automobile and construction sectors, and many were relegated to the poorest slums around Paris and provincial cities.⁵⁸ In the social explosion of 1968 and its immediate aftermath, marginalized immigrant workers were seen no longer as simply additional numbers to support French unions but as a force capable of independent radical action.

In this context, Guérin's new emphasis on "interior decolonization," as he called it,⁵⁹ had direct class-struggle implications as well, which, like his previous emphasis on exterior decolonization, could be viewed as a potential catalyst for a transformational French working-class struggle more generally. Again, as before, Guérin was not one to recognize national boundaries, but maintained his hopes for dynamic radical class politics.

Guérin responded with letters of individual encouragement, financial help, letters to French government officials and foreign embassies, petition-signing, committee participation, and lending his own name as "director" to provide legal protection for at least two immigrant worker publications. The latter, including *Le Paria* (1969–70) and *Al Kadihoun* (1972–74), increasingly defined the terms of immigrant communities' own struggles, their particular situations of low wages, poor housing, racism, attacks on their civil rights, and threats of expulsion (especially for the *sans-papiers*, the illegal undocumented immigrants). While such activities did not single out those of particular national origins, Guérin's actions clearly provided some benefit to Algerians in France as well as to others.⁶⁰ At the same time, Guérin's direct aid to non-anarchist publications and his 1981 support for foreigners' right to vote (as his backing that year for Mitterand in the presidential race itself)⁶¹ were consistent with his general support of the Algerian revolution and post-independence Algerian regimes, a willingness to compromise overall anarchist principles and remain unbound by orthodox dogma.

A final Guérin article concerning Algeria appeared in 1983, in *Lutter*, the periodical of the last anarchist group to which he belonged, the UTCL. In this case, he denounced Mitterand, whom he voted for in 1981, for pardoning and restoring full privileges to eight French paratrooper generals, including Raoul Salan and Edmond Jouhaud, who were involved in the attempted Algerian putsch of 1961 and the subsequent OAS carnage.⁶²

Noir et Rouge

THROUGH THE SECOND HALF OF THE '60s, THE SMALL *Noir et Rouge* collective continued to follow its own path of research and writing on a wide variety of topical and theoretical issues, committing to doing so from an independent anarchist-communist perspective and critically examining or rejecting traditional anarchist movement icons and taboos alike. One of its major focuses, from 1964 on, was the phenomenon of workers' self-management. While conceptually and historically a longtime emphasis of the anarchist tradition, the term itself began regularly appearing in the mainstream and radical press especially in the early '60s, coinciding not by accident with the emergence of Algeria's experience with workers' self-management.

Before 1964, *Noir et Rouge* had published articles on the Spanish Revolution (including discussion of its anarchist collectives), Russian soviets, and workers' councils in Yugoslavia. In the latter case, Paul Zorkine, the exiled Yugoslav co-founder of *Noir et Rouge*, in 1959 wrote a critical exposé on the myth of "worker control" and the reality of state power. Critical as well of "a certain left" that sees the Yugoslav model as a revolutionary institution, Zorkine stated that workers are essentially pawns of state decision-makers in all important realms. "They can't control the management of the economy without having essential rights of free speech, free assembly, and free organization: the idea even of workers' councils is incompatible with the state apparatus."⁶³

No doubt the significant Algerian *autogestion* experience during the Ben Bella period was an additional factor that led to *Noir et Rouge*'s dedicated focus on the problems of that model from late 1964 forward.⁶⁴ Beginning with a June 1965 study of three anarchist collectives in Spain, followed by assessments of Yugoslavia's experience and "contemporary autogestion," *Noir et Rouge* proceeded from June the following year through late 1967 to discuss *autogestion* in Algeria in several of its issues. Various of these materials were then issued⁶⁵ as a well-circulated 1968 pamphlet, *Autogestion, État et Révolution*. With the same title, a book compilation of these discussions, plus description and analyses of French *autogestion* in May–June 1968, *autogestion* in Czechoslovakia (1968), Russia (1917–1921), and Italy (1920), and an overall conclusion, was published by *Noir et Rouge* in 1972.⁶⁶

In broad terms, *Noir et Rouge* presumed, with supporting evidence from the various contexts, that the deepest type of workers' self-management could not survive and flourish in peaceful coexistence with the state and a capitalist private sector. The logic of worker control of individual enterprises demanded, as well, reliable access to supportive marketing, raw materials, and financial and technical services. State (and ruling party) and capitalist decision-makers in those areas inherently seek to maximize their own power, thus can only be hostile to a spreading model and ethos of

direct democracy that threatens that power. Likewise, worker self-managed units must coordinate together to establish and assure these various essential services and to avoid competitive dynamics that would force a decline of wages or quality or livelihoods themselves.

Grassroots workers, said *Noir et Rouge*, are inherently competent to run the economy. But *autogestion* will only succeed if it emerges from both (1) a major political/economic crisis causing transformative consciousness and the will to abandon the old hierarchical political and economic system in favor of direct responsibility, and (2) continued expansion of the *autogestion* realm until it engulfs the whole economy. True *autogestion* thus implies and emerges from ongoing revolution. “Coexistence is a fraud. If one wants to suppress the state apparatus, it must be done violently and systematically, in the first days. To wait until the sector gets stronger before confronting it is unrealistic since it is only at our mercy for a short period of time. To tolerate it in the name of ‘democracy’ is to tolerate the oppression by some in the name of all: *the state is not a political opinion, it is a system of repression.*”⁶⁷

The destructive phase is crucial since “the more the initial shock and armed struggle will have destroyed the state and the ownership class, the more *autogestion* will have the time and the need to extend itself and to organize itself, which is essential to its maintenance and its definitive success.”⁶⁸ According to *Noir et Rouge*, the various historical examples of worker self-management, including in Algeria, though failures by these criteria, were important and hopeful models for demonstrating what workers *can* envision and accomplish, as well as the various important obstacles in their paths.

On the other hand, said *Noir et Rouge*, examples of “workers’ self-management,” “workers’ control,” and “co-management” *within* capitalist and “socialist” state systems allow only limited boundaries of worker decision-making and are encouraged or tolerated by the ruling class to help productivity, dissipate worker alienation, and sooth class resistance. To deter the working class from pursuing genuine *autogestion*, the ruling class will try “propaganda, superficial satisfactions and smokescreen institutions. If needed, it will even offer a ‘theatrical revolution.’ It could well offer us a shabby *autogestion*, or a co-gestion arrangement where workers have the right to cry alongside the patron if the business doesn’t go well, can advise on the color of paper in the bathroom, and can organize their own work in order to produce more obediently.”⁶⁹

It is crucial, they said, for anarchists to ask critical questions about the limits, contradictions, and failures of various historical examples of self-management experiences to date, however inspiring their efforts, in order to advance revolutionary possibilities in the future. In a 1966 article further reinforcing the importance of a critical perspective, *Noir et Rouge* criticized

the religious-like adulation of specific revolutionary events or movements, such as the 1956 Hungarian insurgency, the Algerian revolution and *autogestion* experience, the Spanish revolution, and the Dutch *provos*.⁷⁰ While respecting the efforts and sacrifices of individuals in all of these contexts, anarchists should maintain healthy skepticism and not succumb to uncritical glorification and myths. At the same time, revolutionary contexts such as these should not be ignored out of hand, from a “purist” perspective, because they contradict certain anarchist principles.⁷¹

Within and reinforcing this analytical framework, *Noir et Rouge* engaged in a specific assessment of Algeria’s *autogestion* experience.⁷² According to *Noir et Rouge*, *autogestion* initially emerged spontaneously in 1962 as workers and peasants responded to the flight of European *pieds-noirs* and abandonment of their farms, factories, and service sector units. The farmland was there and had to be worked or no crops would appear. With the support and encouragement of UGTA, the newly organizing regime of Ben Bella decided that this *fait accompli* was a lesser of evils. By fall 1962 and March 1963 decrees, it thus created the regulatory frameworks that both legitimized and inserted state control over the *autogestion* sector. “With official consecration came State control.”⁷³

While this regulatory system addressed the *autogestion* realm generally, they said, its terms effectively reduced the legitimate role and vision of most *autogestion* workers (a category limited as well to only permanent workers) to a general assembly of only their own farm, factory, or services unit. While theoretically the assembly could review and approve the budget, internal work rules, and the production plan, in fact the decrees secluded this base level of decision-making by unit hierarchies of a workers’ council (for larger units), an elected management committee, a management committee president, and a state-appointed director. The higher the level in this hierarchy, the greater the powers, and there was no provision for timely recall of worker representatives. Fatal to Algerian *autogestion* as well was the total lack of worker control beyond the level of each unit. Even when the state asserted its responsibility to coordinate financing, technical assistance, marketing arrangements, and sector plans overall, it filled these roles primarily with bureaucrats largely committed to sabotage the *autogestion* sector for their own and other private interests. Otherwise, it simply left the *autogestion* units to completely vie for themselves amid the better-financed and better-connected capitalist market.

They noted that relative negligence and hostility toward the *autogestion* sector were consistent from the Ben Bella period into the ’70s. Since Boumédiène and his organized military force were part of the state ruling class from 1962 on, the 1965 coup against Ben Bella “simply ‘purged’ elements seen as non-useful or burdensome.”⁷⁴ Contrary to the assertions of some, such as the Trotskyist Michel Pablo and the post-coup Algerian

ORP left opposition group, the Algerian state regime before, as well as after the coup was not a revolutionary, but rather a repressive “socialism.” “The sabotage of *autogestion* became more evident [after the coup], along with many other things, and one would have to be really blind not to see that from 1962 to 1968, it is the same Algerian state that reinforces itself, composed of the same technical personnel, run by the same social strata.”⁷⁵

In effect, they said, rather than relying on the potential inspired productivity and solidarity of *autogestion* workers to accumulate capital for the vast needs of this country impoverished by colonialism, the regime relied on French support, on wheat from America to fend off starvation (in exchange for permitting heavy American oil industry investment), and on Russian military arms. “In Algeria, the choice was thus agricultural *autogestion* or American wheat. The workers chose *autogestion*—Boumédiénne, the inflated army, and the new capitalists chose American wheat. The bourgeois ‘realists’ preferred to present *autogestion* as an ideological fantasy of no interest and with no influence on economic development.”⁷⁶

Said *Noir et Rouge*, the legal recognition (and therefore boundaries) of *autogestion* left it constrained between a powerful private sector and state enterprises, and subject to market dynamics. “There is nothing more to do in this case but acquire as much profit as possible, even to the detriment of other factory councils, if necessary. It is the reappearance of profit and ambitious capitalism, with the difference that there are now, with the same capacity, dozens of owners instead of one.”⁷⁷

The *Noir et Rouge* study presented detailed accounts (at least one based on a personal visit) of the experience of several farm and factory units as well as various statements from congresses of farm and industrial *autogestion* workers themselves. Failure in most units to have self-management decision-making bodies outlined in the decrees, actual decision-making concentrated most often in state-appointed directors and sector coordination bodies (such as ONRA for agriculture), failure to assure necessary market, finance, and technical support, and resistance against further expansion of the sector itself (as including temporary workers and those with marginal farms)—all were fundamental weaknesses that left the sector vulnerable to continued erosion and worker despair. Corruption and mismanagement of farmers at the regime level, as well as heavy priority spending for the military, also prevented reinvestment for more effective support for *autogestion*.⁷⁸ *Noir et Rouge* thought it a reasonable estimate that 8,000 families (out of a 1964 population of 10.5 million) comprised the dominant military and bureaucratic ruling class and absorbed up to 40 percent of the Algerian GNP.⁷⁹

Moving from the “passionate socialism” of Ben Bella to the “temperate socialism” of Boumédiénne, they said, has made the status of “permanent worker” in the agricultural sector more subject to the whim of state authorities and has increased the dominant role of unit directors. The 1970

Charter of Agrarian Revolution stated that *autogestion* is only a preliminary phase. In the industrial realm, the number of *autogestion* units has diminished from 450 in 1963 to about 225 in 1965, while the state sector has significantly increased (though nationalized enterprises are of the “mixed” status found in capitalist countries, with great latitude given to the privileged military-linked patrons, such as Ben Tobbal⁸⁰ and Chanderli,⁸¹ chosen by the regime). “Thus, a group of great clerks, of petit-bourgeois origin, is installed in the state apparatus, linked to a strong nationalized sector, like a fortress. This group leaves to the old Algerian bourgeoisie, previously tied to the colonialists, a part of the [private] industrial sector and its farm properties, thus obtaining its support or neutrality.”⁸²

In conclusion, *Noir et Rouge* found that the Algerian *autogestion* experience had definite positive accomplishments, beginning with the original spontaneous will to self-manage in the absence of state and capitalist bosses. “The care that its enemies gave to officializing, suffocating, and repressing it shows the importance they gave to it. Its enemies, from beginning to the end, were those who Algerian workers violently denounced as ‘bureaucrats,’ the Algerian state.” Importantly, “the worst problems envisaged by those who feared an expanding *autogestion* uncontrolled by the state—economic disorganization, industrial pillage, and feudal enclaves—are the very problems everyone sees as encouraged by the state as it reinforced itself.”⁸³

While admiring the revolutionary rhetoric in parts of the Algiers Charter, *Noir et Rouge* questioned how many in the FLN really believed it. And among those who did,⁸⁴ they wrote, “many still believed that the state could be conserved alongside *autogestion*, the new emerging society, and that the state could gradually rid itself of its authoritarian content. They thus accepted without protest that the emerging state could legalize *autogestion*, giving it its sectors of responsibility. In exchange, the emerging state could consolidate itself without serious trouble.”⁸⁵ But an *autogestion* sector, just like anarchism, can’t survive without attacking that which is hostile to it. “It must expand or wither away; it can’t expand without confronting the state; the sooner the better since when a state is created, it never stops strengthening itself.... [T]he state’s life is the death of *autogestion*.”⁸⁶

What *Noir et Rouge* saw as the lack of genuine theoretical support in Algeria for the deepest meaning of *autogestion* was crucial. Spontaneous takeovers and initial re-launching of production, they said, can only go so far. Pre-existing propaganda in favor of *autogestion* would strengthen the initial wave and subsequent expansion of this sector, but in itself would not lead to revolution. *Autogestion* and revolution must occur simultaneously. To prolong and organize both over the longer-range would require theoretical elaboration, a plan, and a vision.⁸⁷ For the transitional problem of selfish enterprises, *Noir et Rouge* also saw the need, “according to the economic and social evolution of the collectivity,” to create a collective

control and potential sanctions. In the long-run, “the solution must probably be sought in the ‘socialist restructuring of man,’ as Wilhelm Reich put it: the liquidation of neuroses as a prerequisite for the emergence of a socialist, cooperative, self-management ethic.”⁸⁸



Noir et Rouge’s ongoing study of *autogestion* in the mid-’60s made the collective especially sensitive to hierarchical institutionalizing emerging more dramatically in the French anarchist movement in 1967.⁸⁹ Invited as observers to the FA annual congress in Bordeaux, the *Noir et Rouge* group witnessed a sharp confrontation between the remainder of the UGAC faction and younger anarchists on one side, and “old guard” leaders Maurice Joyeux and Maurice Laisant and their allies on the other.⁹⁰ The outcome was the exodus of a dozen groups from the FA to various existing organizations, including *Noir et Rouge* and the eventual March 22 Movement of the Nanterre campus of the University of Paris,⁹¹ with some overlap between the latter two groups.

The half-dozen *Noir et Rouge* activists until then represented a younger generation and a more critical voice than the FA “old guard” and were well-respected for their rejection of anarchist icons and taboos, including their editorial critiques of the FA leadership.⁹² The anarchist dissidents from the Bordeaux congress and others of similar perspective were welcomed for their “more global, dynamic, and dialectical views,” especially since the existing *Noir et Rouge* collective felt itself becoming too stale, caught up in routine and limited in outlook. With these new elements, by late 1967 and early ’68, *Noir et Rouge* became a much larger “Non-Group Group,” oriented more toward immediate action than distancing articles for publication. It was also dedicated “to break with the classic notion of a group, to show that a new form of organization is possible, one where discussion and rotation of tasks, decided collectively, could and should occur.” After working through this model more theoretically during the winter months, this non-group group was ready for more concrete action in the spring.⁹³

In the political explosion of May–June ’68, members of *Noir et Rouge* were extremely active in many capacities, and one activist speculated that the new organizational model may have contributed to the various forms of activism that emerged so vigorously at that time.⁹⁴ Because of media fixation especially on the role of Nanterre student leader Daniel Cohn-Bendit and the overlap between anarchist members of the March 22 Movement and *Noir et Rouge*, the latter achieved a sort of mainstream notoriety as the intellectual/activist center of the May upheaval.⁹⁵ Along with this assumption came the accusation, from both mainstream media and the FA “old guard,” that *Noir et Rouge* was a “Cohn-Benditist,” “anarcho-Marxist” organization.

While admittedly open to relevant fresh revolutionary ideas, including from certain members of the ICO, other council communists, and activist friends in the March 22 Movement, *Noir et Rouge* denied the cultist label of “Cohn-Benditism” with its connotation of a dilution of basic anarchist principles. *Noir et Rouge* admitted to being much closer to open-minded decentralist Marxists with libertarian ideas than to “official” anarchist organizations having a quasi-Leninist concept of organization.⁹⁶ But *Noir et Rouge* never proposed, as they saw Guérin do, a sort of mixture of Marxism and anarchism, “since certain cocktails seem to us too indigestible.”⁹⁷

Given the focus of this book, details on the origin, evolution, and dynamics of the May–June 68 revolt will not be discussed,⁹⁸ but the movement’s unexpected sudden and rapid spread beyond the Nanterre campus to link with a large portion of French society seemed to confirm anarchist confidence in a latent underlying radical social consciousness, which, if institutional barriers had been weak enough, could have developed the first genuinely revolutionary transformation of a modern industrial society. Concerning the core theme and manifestation of French *autogestion* during May–June 1968, the later *Noir et Rouge* book emphasized the importance especially of the well-publicized mid-May occupation and self-management of the Nantes Sud-Aviation factory.

It was immensely helpful, it said, in spreading the concept among millions who had never conceived of such a possibility, though the number of units actually engaged in workers’ self-management beyond strike/occupation/self-defense committees—that is, in actual production—was very small. Also, for the most part, even the notion of *autogestion* most popularized—given the resistance of established trade union hierarchies, industrial managers, and the government—was of a reformist, individual unit, worker-participation type, easily accommodated within capitalist society, not a global revolutionary concept.⁹⁹

Nevertheless, for a few weeks, the radical anti-hierarchical themes of self-determination and a new convivial egalitarian society were pervasive throughout various dimensions of French society. The lived experience of this atmosphere and the suddenly revealed radical consciousness behind it gave immense new energy and sustenance for many anarchist activists for years to come.

Ultimately, the *Noir et Rouge* non-group group model failed, apparently because of a significant split between the newer, young activists, who were committed to pragmatic anti-ideological spontaneous action rather than the vision of *Noir et Rouge* veterans and the tedium of maintaining and developing an ongoing magazine.¹⁰⁰ The collective reverted to its old organizational model and continued on for another two years, in 1970 publishing its final issue. In part, it said, *Noir et Rouge*’s very success was a cause

of its decline, since it had come to be seen as a vanguard institution, which it was unwilling in principle to be. Added to this were a lack of agreed coherence in ideological and work effort in the group, general burnout, and a sense that young militants were into various organizing efforts elsewhere and less interested in theory.¹⁰¹

La Lanterne Noire

FOUR YEARS LATER, AND FOR FOUR YEARS, SOME OF THE OLD *Noir et Rouge* group, including the late '60s Nanterre student leader Jean-Pierre Duteuil, along with non-Marxist elements from the ICO, joined together to publish a new magazine of anarchist critiques, *La Lanterne Noire* (*The Black Lantern*).¹⁰² While only one of its ten issues¹⁰³ contained even the barest explicit reference to Algeria, there were several thematic discussions that carried over from earlier concerns of *Noir et Rouge* that themselves had explicitly related to that country. During its four years of existence, it was as strongly committed as *Noir et Rouge* had been to an independent, non-doctrinaire anarcho-communist perspective.

Also like *Noir et Rouge*, especially those younger militants who joined it in the late 1960s, the *Lanterne Noire* collective was more publicly attentive to negative dynamics within the group. These included internalized authoritarian micro-scale manifestations of the state, patriarchy, class divisions, and power struggles traditionally criticized by anarchists at the level of larger society. Internal struggles over these issues led to about half of the original eight or nine members leaving and, for some who remained, continued frustration at their inadequate resolution—such as the non-rotation of tasks in the group.¹⁰⁴ Sensitivity on such issues was due at least in part to consciousness and critiques articulated in the simultaneous rise of the French women's liberation and other autonomous movements of previously marginalized constituencies.¹⁰⁵

This much-heightened discussion of internalized micro-level oppression among even anarchists typified a whole new political dimension by now commonly accepted as an important part of the generalized critique of authority. Thus, *Lanterne Noire* stated that *organization* in itself was not problematic for the anarchist movement, but rather the internal *dynamics within* the organization, whether at the affinity group level or broader regional or national structures. Of course, the smaller the scale of the structure, the easier it was potentially to critique and eliminate oppressive behavior.¹⁰⁶

More focus on the micro-level also led *Lanterne Noire* to become more sensitive to real-life encouragements of and obstacles to individuals' radicalization of consciousness. As well, it showed the difficulty of making clear assessments concerning the "reformist" or "revolutionary" nature of individual or group acts of rebellion in personal or social realms.¹⁰⁷ It also

helped to break through the false conception of a supposed “publishing vs. activism” dichotomy, heightened in 1968 and after, since a more sensitive and self-reflecting comprehension of lived dilemmas at the micro-level permitted a more accurate and thus useful spread of ideas and analyses across the movement—far more potentially than wall posters, abstract slogans, demonstrations, and graffiti.¹⁰⁸

Lanterne Noire also was more sensitive to the importance of liberation struggles in many dimensions of daily life. It criticized those who condemned as counter-revolutionary “every attempt of individuals and groups to take charge here and now of the various partial aspects of their daily lives.” Every such movement front, including those for ecology, regionalism, feminism, homosexuality, transport users, health care consumers, psychiatric patients, and factory workers, is a form of “‘syndicalism’ that limits or negates revolutionary impact and permits that ‘much more absorption by the system to the extent that it demands only an improvement. But to stop with this critique alone leaves only purely ‘politician’ or ‘economic’ concepts or revolution.’” Any individual is a part of at least several of these groups. “This is the reality that we live, and we don’t see how or where else the struggle can proceed except in placing oneself always at a level of generalization and abstraction that no one can recognize in the midst of the daily class struggle.”

It said the challenge instead is to find, through practice, ways in which such fronts are interrelated and then to move forward toward “a global political project.” For there is always a larger political goal involved in such fronts, whether acknowledged or not, and it is manipulative for their leaders to pretend otherwise. *Lanterne Noire* did not adhere to historical determinism as did many on the far left. Rather than viewing “the present period as a decline of capitalism when communism will become possible and necessary,” *Lanterne Noire* sees the “mode of production and domination as becoming more elaborate through state capitalism and techno-bureaucracy. Communism is possible but not more than before.”¹⁰⁹

Meanwhile, *Lanterne Noire* retained the *Noir et Rouge* distrust and critique of the “vanguard,” centralist, and “triumphalist” leadership pretensions of any group within the anarchist movement generally, since it always represented a state-in-formation.¹¹⁰ *Lanterne Noire* also criticized the polemical desire of some left groups, including some anarchists, “who think that the most essential task of the class struggle is to attack neighboring or nearby groups. This tradition perpetuates itself among all groups pretending to be the sole representative of the proletariat and for whom, consequently, the other can only be in the camp of the bourgeoisie, thus an enemy.” At the same time, the deep content of anarchism means that some disagreements will exist. But while the right to criticize within the movement exists, one need not base this on some doctrinal purity.¹¹¹

In general, *Lanterne Noire* seemed to prefer an information-sharing and coordinating network or federation (more structured in periods of greater social crisis) of anarchist affinity groups, related as well to the new plethora of anti-authoritarian “autonomous groups.”¹¹² By the time of its last issue in 1978, *Lanterne Noire* announced its move to closer coordination with the Organisation Communiste Libertaire (OCL) and a potential new revue.¹¹³



Throughout its four years of issues, *Lanterne Noire* apparently mentioned Algeria only once—and as a negative example, along with Vietnam, of the authoritarian and exploitative regimes in new Third World countries produced by a national liberation army.¹¹⁴ Nevertheless, *Lanterne Noire* discussions of two topics—*autogestion* and terrorist violence—implicitly added to earlier *Noir et Rouge* articles on Algeria.

The theme of *autogestion* was prominent in this decade of French politics. As *Lanterne Noire* stated, “The word ‘*autogestion*,’ in the past confined to small political sects, has become a fashionable word, served with every sauce, seen even as a subject of quarrels between parties, large and small.”¹¹⁵ This attention was partly a legacy of the 1968 revolt and partly also a result of similar workers’ self-management upheavals since then in Portugal, Poland, and Italy. But the interest in *autogestion* was also intensified because of the well-publicized Lip watch factory takeover by workers in Besançon in 1973.

Lanterne Noire criticized each political party’s or group’s attempt to parasitically use the strike and takeover to its own advantage, coopting the events for its own political agenda. *Lanterne Noire* saw Lip, just as May 1968 and subsequent *autogestion* phenomena in the three other European countries, as proof both of its revolutionary potential and of capitalism’s ability to co-opt it for its own reformist objectives. In none of these cases did workers’ consciousness lead them to carry out the full logic of an *autogestion* revolution. When the momentum slowed down and stopped in the face of institutional resistance and limits of consciousness, capitalism and the state (assisted by reformist trade unions) incorporated a limited sphere of *autogestion* into their own overall frameworks. Nevertheless, *Lanterne Noire*’s discussion of Lip specifically, including an effort to imagine themselves in the shoes of Lip workers, facing their real choices and risks, offered a sensitive analysis of nuanced worker motivations, in some ways more insightful on this score than the previous *Noir et Rouge* discussion of *autogestion* in Algeria.¹¹⁶

Concerning ambiguities in the meaning of *autogestion*, said one writer, if the term is spoken of or achieved in the context of “a complete destruction of the state, the end of division between manual and intellectual work, the suppression of classes and the achievement of equality among everyone, and the end of wage-labor and private property,” it is clearly

a revolutionary goal. "We have no recipes for its achievement, we don't know if one day it will happen.... We are of course concerned since we know that our project is not engraved in history." But we also know that an *autogestion* that "accommodates itself to the state, technology produced by capitalism, capitalist or techno-bureaucratic market relations, and technical and social division of labor is only a means for capitalism to survive."¹¹⁷

Similarly, while *Lanterne Noire* discussed terrorist violence (assassinations, suicide bombings, etc.) by small Palestinian, German, Italian, and Japanese small groups in the '70s, it offered a more critical and psychological analysis than *Noir et Rouge* had ever offered in discussing Algeria during the war. Not differentiating between the violence of small-group terrorist activities and mass-based national liberation movements, *Lanterne Noire's* especially strong critique concerning terrorists' inherent authoritarian fascist/statist mentality in the dehumanizing objectification of victims was comparable to Camus's position during the Algerian war.¹¹⁸ As an inherent critique of FLN terrorism, it certainly implied a stronger prediction of Algeria's post-independence authoritarian regime than *Noir et Rouge's* critical wartime support of Algerian national liberation had ever allowed. It also previewed anarchist responses to radical Islamist terrorism in Algeria in the 1990s.

UGAC/TAC

TIRED AND FRUSTRATED BY THE TENSION-FILLED RELATIONSHIP with the rest of the FA,¹¹⁹ UGAC broke off in 1964 to develop its own wholly independent actions and alliances. These were especially motivated by strong attraction to Third World insurgency as an important context for potentially significant revolution, just as with the earlier enthusiasm of some of its members, such as Guy Bourgeois, for the Algerian revolution while members of the FCL, the GAAR, and the early *Noir et Rouge* collective. With the aim of helping to encourage this revolutionary momentum, in 1966 the group formed a solidarity front coalition with Maoists and the international Trotskyist tendency led by Michel Raptis (Pablo), the former advisor to Ben Bella. Similarly, UGAC in the same year published a hundred-page brochure, "Letter to the International Anarchist Movement," in which three most important positions were advanced: the need to go beyond the quarrels of Marx and Bakunin in order to develop a mass revolutionary front, the increasing significance of the anti-bureaucratic *autogestion* model among even some Marxists, and the need to support unconditionally Third World national liberation movements (as in Vietnam and Angola), as well as post-independence social revolutionary efforts such as those embodied in the Algiers Charter of 1964.¹²⁰

As well, some UGAC militants participated in the new CLJA (Liaison Committee for Young Anarchists) formed in 1964–65 with others from

the Spanish Anarchist Youth organization (FIJL) in France, the FA, *Noir et Rouge*, and the JL (Libertarian Youth). Among its first activities was to call a conference of young European anarchists in Paris in 1966, assembling twenty-nine groups from six countries. Along with easily anticipated agenda items such as the Vietnam War, Third World insurrection, elections, trade union organizing, the anti-Franco struggle, and anarchist organization, also important was the focus on issues of youth, alienation, work life, depoliticization, and society's attempts to coopt young people into its materialist consumptionist lifestyle. At this meeting, leading figures were Daniel Cohn-Bendit and Jean-Pierre Duteuil, later leaders of the critically activist Nanterre March 22 Movement in 1968. The Provo movement in Holland was seen as an inspiring model, a new form of activism going beyond traditional organizations and incorporating anti-consumerist and ecological values. While useful in developing closer contacts among anarchist groups, the rather ephemeral CLJA also, especially through Cohn-Bendit and Duteuil, created and animated a new anarchist organization for university students, the LEA (Anarchist Students Liaison), which concentrated on themes such as education policy and sexuality.¹²¹

From 1967, UGAC also began publishing its own magazine, *Perspectives Anarchistes*, which transformed two years later into *Tribune Anarchiste Communiste* (TAC). While actively participating in events of May–June 1968, the thirty to forty militants of UGAC at this same time co-initiated, as the TAC group, an attempt to form a broad revolutionary front, the MR (Revolutionary Movement), this time with Communist party dissidents; ex-FCL militants including Georges Fontenis; militants and leaders of the Trotskyist ex-JCR (Revolutionary Communist Youth); militants of the Pabloist Fourth International Trotskyist tendency; and various unaffiliated individuals.¹²² But clashes soon developed over each component's priority orientations and efforts at leadership, leading to its dissolution in 1971. It was replaced by a new Center of Communist Initiative (CIC), which the next year joined a Liaison Committee for Socialist Self-Management (CLAS) that included the PSU, Pabloists, and Christian socialists to promote *autogestion* in France.



While TAC was involved with other left organizations in pursuing a revolutionary *autogestion* program, its articles in the decade to follow referred back to the Algerian experience as one of its roots. In early 1972, TAC published an article, "The Conditions of an Autogestion Revolution," in the periodical, *Autogestion et Socialisme: Etudes, Débats, Documents*.¹²³

TAC asserted two principal points in its article: (1) *Autogestion* itself does not emerge fully from a revolution and needs a long process of

ever-greater achievement; and (2) a revolutionary organization is needed to facilitate the emergence, continuing protection, and expansion of *autogestion* in the society. TAC traced major attempts at *autogestion* back to the anti-state principles of the Paris Commune in 1871. "But under-estimation of capitalist society's means of resistance and old ways of thinking have been a weakness that, to the present, have led to defeat or prevented convincing results." As May 1968 demonstrated, "the question of how to pass from one form of society to another is still the order of the day." Clearly, socialist statism is not the answer since "it reproduces hierarchy and maintains alienation." Marx's *Capital* sufficiently explains why a capitalist regime "cannot function without exploitation, thus condemning all reformist efforts."

Said TAC, even when a revolution immediately replaces owners and managers of enterprises with management by the workers themselves, that is only the beginning. To continue production, enterprises need access to equipment, raw materials, money, credit, and markets. With these needs and considering disparities of development within the same society, there is still much to work out to remove the economy (as well as realms of health, education, public services, etc.) from a capitalist character. Rather than relying on state controls and mechanisms to accomplish these tasks, *autogestion* must extend to the political realm from the beginning of the revolution. Only when all components of society, from individual production units to those of defense, are organized by *autogestion* principles will the community instead of the state be fully in control.

Because this struggle to generalize *autogestion* from its original locations must take perhaps quite a long time, it said, an avant-garde revolutionary organization committed to and organized by *autogestion* principles is essential. After May '68, "the Cohn-Bendit brothers thought that there was no need for organization of any sort and that the masses' spontaneity would be sufficient[; that] political organizations co-opt, slow down, and sabotage the movement." But it was "the absence of a precise political line defined by an avant-garde political movement advocating *autogestion* in its program" that allowed the stopping and sabotage of direct worker control in the Russian and Spanish revolutions, as in France of May '68.¹²⁴ At the same time, an unchallengeable Leninist professional leadership of an avant-garde party quickly became identical to the state, thereby assuring continuing hierarchy and alienation.

With regard to the specific Algerian experience, said TAC, "Algerian revolutionaries have presented this problem and considered it only imprecisely in the Algiers Charter and without finding a solution. However, in fact the Algerian state slowed down *autogestion* and fought against it while the Ben Bella government supported it. Incapable of going beyond the screen of a classic state structure, the government was defeated."¹²⁵ TAC found that Yugoslav Communists also recognized this problem but had

not discovered a way to prevent the forces of nationalism, bureaucracy, and management from sabotaging *autogestion* in that country.

The “platformist approach”¹²⁶ seemed to *TAC* an appropriate third option between spontaneism and a centralist avant-garde party. Beyond education and propaganda activities, it advocated that the avant-garde “should exert ‘ideological leadership,’ which means to fight against everything that shackles direct workers’ self-management, and to create the conditions for its achievement.” It must not, however, “exercise ‘political leadership,’ substituting itself for the political power of the masses.”

In the present context, said *TAC*, the French Communist party was objectively still the avant-garde, but “its program does not match the aspirations of the masses for direct power” and prevents *autogestion* from developing. The solution for now is to encourage what is presently only “a subjective avant-garde consisting of the most conscious militants. We must learn how to lead them to organize themselves. We must learn how to rally the majority of revolutionaries, including those who have not yet seen the need to quit the Communist party.”¹²⁷

By 1975, *TAC* functioned only as a magazine, still working toward an authentic *autogestion* independent of Bolshevik or social-democrat orientations and toward a movement to promote it.¹²⁸ The May 1980 issue demonstrated the persistence of these themes, devoting over half of its fifty-two pages to several articles on the importance, meaning, and relevance of *autogestion* to the anarchist movement. Decrying the disarray and confusion in the class struggle of the 1970s, and the tendency of many in the anarchist movement to avoid theory in favor of lived experience, *TAC* was also encouraged by the frequent positive references to the *autogestion* concept since 1968 and the resonance of that concept with traditional anarchist perspectives. “All power to the workers” was a constant anarchist theme going back to the First International of the late-19th century. And anarchists in Kronstadt, the Ukraine, and especially Spain created widespread working models of *autogestion*. But not until the Yugoslav experiment from 1948 forward was the actual term *autogestion* employed.

Said *TAC*, a next important step in the spread of the concept and model came from Algeria. In 1962, despite the absence of any reference to workers’ self-management in wartime FLN programs, after *pieds-noirs* abandoned their lands, “Algerian peasants took them over and put them to work collectively, without any thought of returning them to small private farms. There, the movement corresponded to libertarian schemes.... Since then the Algerian state has liquidated or at best disfigured the movement.” Immediately after the Algerian war, militants in the FLN support network of

Jeune Résistance, who soon after formed UGAC and later TAC, were especially attentive to and enthusiastic about the new *autogestion* movement and advocated its importance in Third World solidarity associations.¹²⁹ In turn, UGAC organized a visit to Yugoslavia in 1967 to study that country's form of *autogestion* and published a thirty-six-page special issue of *Perspectives Anarchistes* on the overall topic.

In the subsequent context of widespread French enthusiasm for *autogestion* themes and beginning experiments in May–June 1968, UGAC/TAC militants were much better positioned than more traditional anarchists, as in the FA, to promote the *autogestion* model. As argued in their first publication that year on *autogestion*, the purist model of workers' self-management was indeed identical with the notion of workers' power long promoted by the anarchist movement. The fact that dissident Marxist and socialist currents, such as the Pabloists, oppositional Communist party members, and the PSU, were so enthusiastic themselves about *autogestion* offered an unusual opportunity for common revolutionary fronts, as described above. It was their central theme of *autogestion*, clearly inspired in part by the spontaneous action of Algerian workers and peasants, that provided a core identity and purpose for TAC in its activity from that period on.

To help define *autogestion* in its fullest sense, to reveal and oppose those in political parties and trade unions who wished to co-opt it for their own hierarchical purposes, to urge the anarchist-communist movement generally to fully embrace *autogestion* as a strengthening focus and entrée into grassroots worker consciousness, and to join others of the left who were committed to strong *autogestion* organizing—these were TAC central themes through the 1970s and beyond.¹³⁰ When TAC ceased publication in 1982, it was immediately succeeded for two years by a magazine called *Contre Pouvoirs pour l'Autogestion* (*Counter-Powers for Self-Management*). Veterans of TAC eventually, in 1991, joined a new gathering of anarchist-communists, Alternative Libertaire (Libertarian Alternative).¹³¹

ORA/OCL/UTCL/OCA

AS MENTIONED ABOVE, IN 1960, MAURICE FAYOLLE, ONE OF THE three “Maurices,” the most important and long-time leaders of the FA, presented to the annual congress a serious critique of the existing Federation in organization, vitality, ideological coherence, political activity, and outreach, especially to the young. While not sympathetic to those, as in UGAC, who were more open to certain Marxist concepts and language, he insisted on a stronger (while still non-hierarchical) organization and revolutionary commitment. At the same time, through most of the 1960s, he maintained his opposition *from within* the FA. His 1965 *Reflections on Anarchism* gave detailed attention to these themes.

By the 1967 Bordeaux congress, however, a new internal crisis appeared when certain new elements gained entrance to *Le Monde Libertaire's* editorial board, printed articles more favorable to Third World developments and situationism, and were subsequently removed by bureaucratic manipulations of the “old guard” FA leadership.¹³² Because of this arbitrary tactic and the inability to resolve differences satisfactorily within the FA structure, several groups and individuals (including Duteuil) left the FA to join other groups, such as *Noir et Rouge*, or to form their own. However, disturbed by this hierarchical intervention in the newspaper, Fayolle and some south Paris FA groups remained in the group but did move finally, during the international anarchist congress in Carrara, Italy, in August 1968, to form (with other FA groups in southeastern France) a new internal “tendency” to be called the ORA (Anarchist Revolutionary Organization), with its own newspaper, *Les Insurgés*.

The immediate purpose of ORA was to assure that the International of Anarchist Federations would continue to function.¹³³ The FA majority, led by Joyeux, in turn removed ORA members from all official positions, thus accelerating the split. Initially favoring a “platformist” organizational orientation, ORA remained opposed to alliances, such as favored by *TAC*, with hierarchical left groups. By 1970, it included some fourteen groups throughout France and sold 1,500–2,000 copies of its newspaper, *Front Libertaire des Luittes de Classe*.¹³⁴ In that same year, Fayolle died and ORA broke completely from the FA.

The first several years of ORA's independent existence saw a complex and confusing variety of internal debates, splits, expulsions, and ultimately failed negotiations with the Fontenis-led (with Guérin) MCL (Libertarian Communist Movement).¹³⁵ While some, now freed from the FA ban on Marxist flirtation, moved on to Maoist or Trotskyist groups, others, new to anarchism, were welcomed and soon began influencing ORA's self-definition by their local activism in neighborhoods, workplaces, and schools. By 1975, ORA had about a hundred groups throughout France and, from 1973, began to develop a much more coherent ideological orientation.

Said historian and ORA member Biard, rejecting “bourgeois, humanist anarchism,” FA passive traditionalism, and *TAC* “avant-garde” and revolutionary coalition fronts, ORA placed greatest emphasis on *autogestion* as both the appropriate post-revolution model and the pre-revolution organizational strategy. Social revolution meant destruction of the state and prevention of any state-like substitute during a post-revolution transition period. *Autogestion* in the pre-revolution period meant organization of worker resistance and solidarity by local struggle, and strike groups developed by workers themselves in individual enterprises within various sectors of the economy (railroads, postal service, schools, etc.) completely separate from the various trade unions, as well as worker neighborhood groups

concerned with quality of life issues, such as health facilities, adequate housing, recreational opportunities, and so on. Through self-organization in these contexts, workers would prepare themselves more adequately to assume full self-management responsibility during and after the social revolution.

In the pre-revolution period, he said, the role of ORA would be to encourage and participate in such local self-organized efforts without attempting to lead them directly as an avant-garde. ORA would thus be "strictly limited to the function of coordination, information, support, and defense in struggles of the exploited classes." At the national and local levels both, ORA thus gave great attention to *autogestion* in separate brochures and regular periodicals.¹³⁶

At the congress of Orléans in 1976, ORA became OCL (Libertarian Communist Organization) as a further indication, however symbolic, of its aversion to any overlap of identity with the FA and other diverse groups with an explicitly anarchist label. At the same time, another internal split was formalized with creation of a smaller UTCL (Libertarian Communist Workers Union) by a network of young workers experienced in the large strikes of 1974 in the banking, postal, and railway sectors. The latter criticized the tendency in 1968 and afterward to believe that revolution was imminent. Instead, they believed, revolutionary anarchism needed to take account of the contradictory daily reality of workers' lives and needed a presence in trade union activity. They therefore opposed OCL's student majority, "ultra-leftism," and anti-syndicalist bias and also called for an anarchist organization that, while committed to *platformist* principles, would experiment with the *autogestion* and federalist forms and content that it advocated for a socialist society more generally.¹³⁷

According to Georges Fontenis, those of this new orientation were part of a welcome "rediscovery by anti-authoritarian revolutionaries of the basics of class struggle, necessarily through the course of their own combat, thus separating themselves from the incantations of a dogmatic anarchism in fact contaminated by bourgeois liberal thought." OCL groups, apart from those in the Paris area, rejected "platformism," opting instead for a decentralized federation with strongly shared ideological commitment and continued activist participation in local-based workplaces as well as neighborhood and other grassroots movements. Said Fontenis, by rejecting militant activity within the trade unions, the OCL "evolved quickly toward a certain spontaneism inspired by so-called 'autonomy' groups. They rejected in principle the need to theorize while in fact theorizing a 'new mass movement.'" In turn, this ex-ORA majority considered those creating the UTCL as "demonstrating 'a hysterical workerism' and wanting to create a 'hard and pure' organization based on Trotskyist models."¹³⁸

During the same period, another anarchist group, OCA (Anarchist Combat Organization) began its own publication, *Lutter*, and its evolution

over several years led to uniting with UTCL in 1979. OCA originated from those with a more organizational concern from a larger organization, CA (Anarchist Confrontation), the latter largely composed of anarchist communist affinity groups that left the FA in 1971, rejecting “all dogma” and wishing to apply anarchist principles in movement relations and their own lives. OCA had a more traditional “triumphalist” perspective, emphasizing the importance of the coming crisis of capitalism to bring forth a successful revolution, and the need for anarchists to be ready to assume their historic tasks. It also regarded trade unions as the means by which workers were integrated into the capitalist system.¹³⁹

The fourth issue of OCA's *Lutter* contained several articles specifically on Algeria. The first of these warned against the continuing temptation to call the current Algerian regime “progressive,” in the face this time of that government's solidarity with the Polisario Front justifiably seeking independence for Western Sahara from Morocco and Mauritania. In the context where Polisario activists had kidnapped eight French mining technicians in May 1977 (two of whom died), the mass media launched a sordid campaign against Algeria, including attacks against the Algerian émigré worker population in France.¹⁴⁰ Nevertheless, said OCA, this despicable campaign should not prevent us from recognizing the true nature of Boumédienne's regime and “especially the struggle of Algerian workers against the aggression of state and private capitalism and toward true socialism.”

The article reviewed the spontaneous implantation of *autogestion* after the war and how the Ben Bella regime was forced to recognize this living reality in industry and the countryside with a formal legalized structure. Nevertheless, control of this sector by the state gradually gained strength, “even though its development was incompatible with *autogestion*.” This process was facilitated by structural factors, such as the inherited flaws of colonialism and the level and type of economic development by then in place. Politically, the process was facilitated by “the absence of an autonomous organization of *autogestion* forces” and the overall consolidation of the state. Thus, *autogestion* has become simply a framework for state capitalist exploitation or, as the regime calls it, “socialist management.”

An accompanying quote from a Boumédienne interview in the mid-'70s helped to prove the point: “[*Autogestion*] is a product of degenerate Marxism-Leninism. This vague concept would lead only to the degeneration of the state. Developed societies themselves haven't succeeded in defining *autogestion*. How could an illiterate society like ours, only recently concluding an armed struggle and still composed of feudal enclaves

inherited from the war, now apply *autogestion*? There is not yet adequate mass consciousness, the world of labor is not yet ready.”¹⁴¹

This increasing domination by the state was clear in other realms as well, said the article. Despite the heavy sacrifices of the population during the war, which motivates strong expectations for social progress, the regime has used various methods to try “to contain and channel” the grassroots social movement. These include demagogic populist speeches, “realist” reforms against the popular will, diversion of revolutionary energies toward anti-imperialist and Third World-centered foreign policy, and complete control of mass workers’, womens’, and student organizations. The clear objectives of the state bureaucracy are, in the short term, construction of a strong state and, over a longer range, installation of state capitalism.

But Algerian industrialization, it said, has by now produced a young and increasingly combative working class, with its own interests contradicting those objectives, thus complicating the bureaucrats’ agenda. “This is abundantly proved by the impressive number of illegal strikes that presently shake the regime.” An official 1971 charter and code of socialist management of enterprises proclaimed the role of trade unions in state units as mobilizing workers toward ever-greater productivity, while conceding a legitimate protest role in the smaller private sector.

Despite these barriers, it reported, in July and August 1977, numerous strikes broke out among bus drivers, railway workers, dockworkers, and garbagemen. While the Algerian press blacked out any coverage of these struggles, UGTA leaders diverted attention by preoccupying themselves publicly with international issues. Meanwhile, the cost of living in Algeria is about the same as in France, while wages are only a bit more than half the French level. At the same time, the gap in income and daily life conditions between workers and bureaucrats in Algeria is the same as between workers and owners or CEOs in France, and unemployment is quite large. The article then quoted an older electrical worker justifying the recourse to strikes:

We didn’t make war for independence alone, but also for a revolution.... Afterwards, my income was still bad, but at least I wasn’t a slave of Europeans.... Upon returning from the maquis, one saw those who had been exiled in Tunis and Tripoli now installed luxuriously in the beautiful villas of the fleeing Europeans; they were forced out at gunpoint. When they moved in, my wife, my three kids and myself lived in a very small two-room apartment.... To go on strike is difficult, of course, but as long as we’re not divided, we can force at least a minimum.¹⁴²

A second OCA article addressed the regime’s repressive policy toward youth, women, and Kabyles. Since 1962, the Algerian population has

expanded from 12 million to 18 million, which means a tremendous number of youth. While making some substantial effort to increase schooling opportunities, the regime, which also spends amply for the army, preached austerity, family, and religious values and tried on occasion to enlist youth in volunteer campaigns to help harvest campaigns in the countryside.

For women, it said, information on birth control scarcely existed. While colonialism, imperialism, and neo-colonialism have had negative effects on the situation of Algerian women, surely Islam and all of its reactionary values supported by the state have had significant negative impacts as well. Article 2 of the 1976 constitution declared Islam the state religion. "In reality (and by law since polygamy is accepted), women have no real decision-making power in Algeria." Only by women organizing themselves independently will any real change occur. But to date the women's movement has been controlled and bureaucratized by the state.

As for the Kabyle situation, it was noted, Article 3 stated that Arabic was the official national language and that the state would work to generalize its use at the national official level. To Kabyles, however, such a policy envisaged the disappearance of their native Berber language and thus, in effect, was a form of state racism. Despite Kabyle's substantial proportion in the overall population,¹⁴³ the Berber language was not taught at any level. "Unable to learn how to read and write their own language, how could the regime expect young Kabyles to fight and perhaps die for the Sahrawi people? One needn't remember the support Kabyles gave to Algerian history and culture. This is presently a very explosive issue in Algeria, which will certainly have definite repercussions in the years to come."

To conclude, on the basis of these analyses, the OCA urged anarchist workers to accept certain tasks, a program of action toward Algeria:

To denounce the contradictory nature of the Algerian state: "progressive" in foreign policy, while conservative, bureaucratic, and anti-labor domestically;

To put forward a clear analysis of the reality of *autogestion* in Algeria;

To inform public opinion about the social and working-class movement especially in Algeria;

To develop solidarity with workers in struggle;

To do everything to assist development of the anarchist movement in Algeria, presently an object of systematic repression;¹⁴⁴

To support Kabyle demands concerning the affirmation of their specific cultural identity.¹⁴⁵

By a presentday OCL account, the 1976 division between UTCL and OCL was immediately followed by a growing split between those Paris militants of a more centralized bent who were attracted to “autonomist” myths imported from Italy, and those in about twelve OCL groups elsewhere in France. The “autonomist” phase favored by Paris OCLers, according to this account, once again revived the “workerist” privileging of years earlier, especially emphasizing young working-class urban rebels and “the mythification of riot as the critical location of class confrontation.”¹⁴⁶ By 1979, *Front Libertaire* magazine had disappeared and the new decentralized network of OCL groups outside of Paris launched a new monthly, called *Courant Alternative*. At the same time, Paris OCLers cooperated in joint tracts with the council communist group “Pour l’intervention communiste” (PIC).

According to Jean-Pierre Duteuil, long involved with OCL, one of the decentralized organization’s essential orientations is the rejection of reforms as a means to transform society.

Thus we would favor moments of rupture over integration. We are opposed to parliamentarism as well as participation in any form of lengthy delegated power...and in any form of state, even in transition. These moments of rupture develop at the heart and over the course of social movements. We consider that our role in these movements is to fight for their autonomy by denouncing all forms of institutionalization and tendencies in that direction, by introducing links between these movements, in struggling against certain of their aspects that tend to reproduce the dominant order.

As we bring revolution back as top priority, said Duteuil, at the same time we reject the faith of old revolutionary movements in technical progress and the sciences. “This ‘progressive’ vision of history has misfired and should be fought.” The same with the ideological legacies of the French Revolution based on citizenship and democracy.¹⁴⁷

Meanwhile, UTCL militants, still adhering to a platformist organizational perspective, emphasized intervention within enterprises and trade unions and in other social struggles where other extreme left organizations were also present. In 1991, UTCL would merge with other organizations into a new *Alternative Libertaire* (AL) that persists to the present.

Fédération Anarchiste

IN ITS FIRST ARTICLE ON ALGERIA AFTER THE COUP, *Le Monde Libertaire* offered little analysis of its own. Instead, it quoted extensively from Algerian editorials supporting the new Council of the Revolution

while noting the continued praise of Ben Bella by the student association UNEA and the Amicale des Algériens in France and Europe. It questioned whether any of the organizations or newspapers truly represented Algerian opinion, noting that average Algerians were left again simply to observe the maneuvers of another faction from above. On the other hand, after quoting newspaper critiques of Ben Bella's personal accumulation of power, the writer questioned whether, objectively, Algerians really lost anything by the coup. The writer suggested that "a solution" might be to go beyond nationalism and establish a North African federation, but then admitted that the nature of all three regimes made such an arrangement unlikely.¹⁴⁸ In the same issue, a brief article on the need to keep trade unions separate from political parties used the Algerian case as an example. Because the Ben Bella regime replaced independent UGTA leaders with its own, the newly servile organization lost the confidence of workers and was thus, as the only potential oppositional force, incapable of mobilizing mass opposition to Boumédiénne's coup.¹⁴⁹

In the second of only three substantive articles devoted to Algeria during the thirteen years of Boumédiénne's reign, *Le Monde Libéraire* in November 1965 provided its first analysis of the new government. Observing that the June 19 coup provoked no popular backlash, the writer surmised that this was at least partly because the new rulers' political orientation was not entirely clear. While their first statements proclaimed commitment to socialism and against the personality cult and corruption of Ben Bella, further clarification was provided several weeks later by the army publication *El Djeich* in asserting that the Algerian revolution was rooted in the national realities of its own history, the Arabic language, and Islam. The latter article went on to state that Algeria was not an experimental ground for "imported socialism" and that Algerians were not guinea pigs. Algeria had no need for the stateless politicians who surrounded Ben Bella.¹⁵⁰ A month later, the official newspaper, *El Moudjahid*, revealed the apparently complete dismantling of the subversive, largely foreigner network, which was supposedly composed of Trotskyists and anarchists attempting to impose on Algeria a bloody "revolutionary" violence and regime based on prisons and murder.

The *Monde Libéraire* writer agreed that the oppositional ORP was a minority of Westernized intellectuals, some of European origin but with Algerian citizenship, without any grassroots support. It contained a variety of leftists, "members of the Algerian Communist party, Trotskyists of diverse organizations, and non-dogmatic socialists" who had no legal outlet for expression. But the new regime used its publicized repression as an occasion for "arresting everyone it could find who opposed the new rulers and to intimidate everyone who might have been tempted to do the same."

At the same time, he said, a new editorial in *Révolution Africaine* warned that those *autogestion* units that annually squandered huge sums

would be forced to close or transform themselves. And other ominous warnings for the future of the *autogestion* sector, already continuously sabotaged by state bureaucrats and Islamic traditionalists, appeared in coded words in the UGTA's journal. In August, an enterprise abandoned by its owner and taken over by the workers was instead restored to its "owner." As well, *autogestion* farm workers in the El Asnam area had not been paid for three months and a thousand workers had gone on strike in another region. However, no such developments were reported in the government-controlled national press. In the meantime, said the writer, luxury retail sales in Algiers were flourishing, thereby pleasing, among others, "those who profit from the new regime who know how to harmonize the joys of Islam with European products."

Said the writer, Boumédiène easily suppressed the ORP and oppositional elements within UNEA and the FLN Youth organization. At the same time, he controlled the army, police, media, and some UGTA officials. Thus, "the struggle is becoming more precise: on one side, workers victimized by statist directors and capitalist bosses, and on the other side, the state with its military and bureaucratic apparatus, supported by the profiteers of 'socialism' and by religion, and flirting as well with international capitalism."¹⁵¹

In 1966, Maurice Joyeux underlined his wartime position on Algerian national liberation in his review of *Les torturés d'El Harrach*.¹⁵² Calling attention to the preface by Henri Alleg, he reminded readers that Alleg's earlier book on torture by the French military during the Algerian war became an important motivating factor in developing French opposition. What is now atrocious is that the new book addresses the same practice in Algeria today. "Yesterday as today, they arrest and imprison, they rape, they torture, they murder. The executioners have changed their social rationale, nationalism has replaced colonialism, socialism has replaced capitalism. Torture has remained, permanently, as evidence of the monstrous fraud perpetuated in the name of the most noble sentiments that push men to the forefront when their dignity is trampled upon."

Bitterly confident that he was absolutely correct in his wartime stance, Joyeux "can't forget the unreflective enthusiastic youth who threw themselves into action for a noble cause, the liberation of an oppressed people, forgetting a past that provided the same old illusion of petit-bourgeois nationalism, the assassin—just like the worst imperialism—of the poor classes." In fact, reading this work along with Alleg's account reinforces his conviction "that neither bourgeois liberalism nor centralist socialism are steps in the path of human liberation, but simply different forms by which one class oppresses another." Torture is the ultimate recourse of class domination. This book, like Alleg's, provides further evidence of "contemporary socialism's great deception when, by playing the nationalist card, it abandons its initial commitment to the liberation of mankind."¹⁵³

The third and last assessment of Boumédiénne's regime was two years after the coup, in May 1967. This was by far the most original and extensive set of observations, based as they were on a personal five-week "tourist" trip in Algeria and motivated by the writer's sense that anarchists should not remain indifferent about the fate of the Algerian revolution. The writer's first impression, even on board the boat to Oran and continued throughout the visit, was the oppressive condition of women. Everywhere, except in Kabylia, the vast majority of women wore the veil (about 90 percent in Oran), because of Islam, one's reputation among others, and the demand by men for women's submission.

Said the writer, with the encouragement of Ben Bella's campaigns to remove the veil, some women were hopeful that some degree of liberation would develop after independence, but after the coup such campaigns were ended and opportunities for female militance in committees and leagues were cut off. Without outside work opportunity because of general unemployment (except in Kabylia where the men traditionally migrate to cities or abroad), a woman's role is limited to raising a family or, if lucky when young, pursuing one's studies. "We could be astonished that such a problem exists in a country that just experienced revolution. But we must remember that the Algerian revolution touched neither religion nor taboos. Thus no social progress could be hoped for."

For children, noted the writer, the government developed the commendable policy of largely free vacation colonies at the beaches ever since independence. Illiteracy is still a major issue. Only 4 percent of Algerians can read or write in Arabic and a large number are illiterate in both Arabic and French. More recently, schoolchildren are learning both languages, but apparently teachers still use the whip to motivate learning.

The most serious problem, according to the writer, is massive unemployment (70 percent of men), to a great extent due to inadequate economic development during the colonial period and lack of time since then to provide new opportunities. Since unemployment benefits from the state don't exist, whole extended families of fifteen or twenty persons may depend on a single individual's modest wage of 300 francs¹⁵⁴ per month in conditions where the cost of living is about the same as it is in France. The main job opportunities for the unemployed are office worker, police, and the military.

While some Algerians nostalgically referred to the colonial period as offering more jobs or encouraging Europeans to come and set up new enterprises, said the writer, such thoughts were probably not serious, but expressed "deep social discontent. Numerous Algerians sense that something isn't right, that they were deceived." However, Algeria's economy has a solid base in agriculture where production in the old *colon* sector seems as strong as in the past. The rich artisan sector could also become an important realm of growth. The same is true of tourism, since Algeria has important

resources of climate, beaches, and Roman ruins. Hotels are in a nominally self-management chain.

"It's impossible to come to Algeria and not be interested in the *autogestion* experience." Thus, the writer visited two such efforts on this trip. The first was at Ténès, a small village 100 kilometers from Algiers. The director of the farm unit there spoke of the difficulties of maintaining farm equipment, marketing the produce, having too much unskilled labor, and being over six weeks behind in payment to the workers. Compensation is 10 to 25 francs per day depending on the level of skill, thus there is no pretense of payment according to need. The director stated that workers there viewed *autogestion* as simply a change of bosses and that their only concern was to make demands. Given the situation and the boss-like attitude of the director, this seemed justified.

A second *autogestion* unit visited was the "ex-Marshall Juin" farm, now run by war veterans without a director. While all eighteen regular workers shared equal wages, they also employed others at 10 francs per day, a fact that seems to challenge the whole principle of workers' self-management. The writer believed that *autogestion* units throughout the country have contradictions similar to these two experiences and that therefore "Algerian *autogestion* is only an illusion." While the first year after independence saw workers take over the land and cultivate it without the state's involvement, in the following year the state took things into their own hands. "They transformed the beginnings of *autogestion* into nationalization, something very different. The initiative of the peasantry was stopped at the beginning stages. Leaders did not want the war of independence to be transformed into social revolution. The failure of *autogestion* shows that they succeeded."

Algerians' present attitude toward politics, the writer asserted, shows that "the revolution ended once the *colons* were chased away." Personal conversations revealed a general disengagement politically. This had several reasons, including the lack of any opportunity for opposition to show itself and share its ideas, "the complete collapse of revolutionary spirit," and other priorities such as feeding one's family. Of course, political activism might help to resolve the latter concern.

In general, concluded the writer, Algeria is still heavy with traditions—as demonstrated in the situation of women, the importance of artisan activity, and the fact that in Kabylia the village chief has more authority than the mayor or policeman. "Traditions are the strongest brake on social progress and yet it is on these foundations that the country will develop. We must admit that we're presented with a civilization totally different from our own, a fact never grasped by the *colons*." But even acknowledging this difference in values, one cannot ignore "the harmful effect of religion, which keeps women in conditions from another era." The myth of *autogestion* should also be abandoned despite the continued use of that term on public

signs. Along with authoritarian practice in schoolrooms, we should “denounce the gang of politicians who lead the country. Finally, we must conclude that if the Algerian people are still under the hold of all these forms of moral or physical repression, it is because the independence war was not followed by social revolution.”¹⁵⁵

Along with the sparse coverage of post-coup Algeria, *Le Monde Libertaire* also ran numerous articles during this period about the situation of Algerian immigrant workers in France, either directly or in the context of discussing North African and foreign immigrant workers more generally. While not concerning the specific confines of Algeria, the issues involved were of great importance to Algerian society.

Algerian workers were the largest single component of the immigrant workforce in France. In 1972, the government estimated about 754,462 Algerians; 694,550 Portuguese; 589,926 Spaniards; 588,739 Italians; 194,296 Moroccans; 106,846 Tunisians; 99,867 Poles; 65,218 Yugoslavs; approximately 65,000 Africans (not including the three countries mentioned); and 120,000 to 150,000 from French overseas departments or territories.¹⁵⁶ About 41 percent of Algerian workers in 1973 worked in the building trades and public works.¹⁵⁷ Importantly, despite typically low wages, Algerians in France sent millions of francs (at least several millions of dollars) annually from their earnings back to Algeria. In 1973, for the largest part of the population, having no access to benefits from Algeria’s huge gas and oil export revenues, this source of income was highly significant.¹⁵⁸

Having lost about 1.5 million people during World War II, said one writer, official French policy became to encourage population growth through both family incentives and immigration. For the first decade through 1955, foreign immigrants made up about 14 percent of the French population. For the next two decades, the immigration growth rate was about 51 percent,¹⁵⁹ however, in 1974, the French government severely restricted further immigration except on the basis of bilateral accords. The Algerian government, reacting to this threat as well as to the poor “neo-colonial” treatment of its citizens in France, threatened in turn to repatriate all Algerian workers. At this point, the foreign population in France numbered over 4 million or about 7.7 percent of the total population.¹⁶⁰

As the same *Le Monde Libertaire* writer explained, foreign workers faced contradictory French reactions from the time of their arrival. On the one hand, French capitalism welcomed the new labor force to provide the sweat for the hardest jobs in the economy and a surplus labor pool to keep down wages and other work conditions generally. At the same time, new arrivals boosted the relative social status of native French people while

becoming the targets of individual and institutional racism in their daily encounters and living conditions. "The society made of them a sub-proletariat, serving as a cheap labor supply and exhausting them at the workplace, then in the evening sending them to their slums and ghettos." During bad economic times and unemployment, they are then the victims of right-wing demagogic racist campaigns.¹⁶¹

Another article reported the words of an Algerian interviewed in 1967: "As a worker I'm given respect or at least tolerated. French people no longer want to do the kind of work we do. Outside of the job, aside from necessary contacts with shopkeepers, I have no relations with French people. We relate among fellow North Africans. Unfortunately, this contributes to people thinking of us as a clan by which they condemn us all." We could easily adapt to French life, but there's a wall of prejudice preventing this—the image of Arabs as "dirty, vicious and lazy." There are many reasons for this and all of them are ridiculous. "In the end, he said, French racism is very subtle, all with smooth manners, not with clear and categorical opposition as with American racism toward blacks."¹⁶²

Housing conditions were "inadmissible." In 1972, over half of immigrant workers lived in single rooms with over five persons, two-room apartments with over six, and three-room apartments with over eight. Two years later, it was estimated that at least 700,000 to 800,000 lived in slum neighborhoods, for the most part in dilapidated or condemned housing or hostels and unlicensed hotels.¹⁶³ In 1978, *Le Monde Libertaire* ran a lengthy interview with a leader of the several years-organized struggle by residents of the major Sonacotra workers' hostel chain and their supporters in the Paris region. The vast majority of residents were North Africans, especially Algerians. At about 257 francs per month, residents rented a room of five meters square in which the bed occupied most of the space. Plywood walls with open gaps between rooms at the floor and ceiling made privacy virtually impossible, even though two persons might share one room. Six stove burners and one bathroom served every six rooms. One common activities room for each hostel might contain a TV, a bar, and a pinball machine—all to serve 150 people. As well, lights went out at 10p.m. Managers were frequently racist and/or authoritarian, and complaints by residents easily led to expulsion.¹⁶⁴

Despite such conditions, said a *Le Monde Libertaire* writer, some Algerian workers in this period emigrated to France with political motivations. The same Algerian above interviewed about racism underlined this factor as well. When he saw who had written up the FLN socialist program for independent Algeria and who was going to apply it, "I saw very quickly that we fought one dictatorship only to fall under another one. It was at that moment that I decided to leave Algeria." He felt well justified in his decision since the Algerian people soon lost their illusions. Like

every other revolution to date, this one failed to reach its goals. “There is nothing to Algerian socialism except its name.” Exhausted by the war and watched by the police, “people want simply to find a job, feed their families and find some peace.” But there were no jobs in Algeria. “The state bureaucracy created unbelievable chaos in administering the country: inhuman bureaucracy where the newly privileged united together to bleed the working class. This explains why so many workers leave for countries where paying jobs exist.”¹⁶⁵



As mentioned above, the 1960s saw various anarchist-communist splits from the umbrella FA organization due to a variety of factors, including new generational sensitivities and concerns, as well as ideological differences on Third World insurgencies, on the nature of local activism, on the lack of tighter structure and ideological coherence, and on editorial and organizational freedom from the centralizing control of traditionalist leaders such as Joyeux and Laisant. The FA encouraged and provided educational access to sources of traditional anarchist writings as well as continuing anarchist commentary for ongoing issues of the day.¹⁶⁶ But it was perceived as too stubbornly resistant to new approaches and interpretations of anarchist issues and activity.

As one young FA anarchist at the time expressed it, the organization was too oriented toward “sentimentalism and memories. Being exposed daily to other revolutionary tendencies, young anarchist-communists were scarcely interested in the sentimental speeches or theoretical incoherencies of certain old monks. Especially after Daniel Guérin’s book [*Anarchisme*] came out—finally a serious work on the subject—they felt it was necessary to do something.” “It became more and more impossible to work, lost in an ‘individualist-naturalist-pacifist’ milieu of anti-Marxist sectarianism” in the FA.¹⁶⁷

Previously discussed distancing by UGAC, ORA, and others in 1967¹⁶⁸ were among the most dramatic of the FA changes in the late 1960s. But most spectacular was the transformation of the Nanterre FA group (created first by Duteuil, then joined in 1966 by Daniel Cohn-Bendit) into a broader anti-authoritarian March 22 Movement in early 1968. Beyond its important catalytic role, among others, in precipitating France’s May–June 1968 events, it also intentionally provoked a frontal clash with the “orthodox” FA (and its international allies) at the international anarchist congress in Carrara, Italy, in August of the same year. There, Cohn-Bendit, as an “observer” member of the British delegation, directly challenged more traditional elements of the international movement, including FA, from the perspective of the spontaneous (and especially youthful) direct

action experience of the spring revolutionary events in various countries, not only in France.

In the words of Biard, the “Cohn-Benditist” position “was a global challenge of the ‘anarchism of papa’ and apparently sought to substitute new concepts in its place.” Specifically, in criticizing the conduct of the congress, Cohn-Bendit denounced the fact that “it turned its back on the spontaneity that, in our view, is the key of Revolution.” He viewed as wrong the attempt by the traditional anarchist organizations to close in on themselves and to be constantly fixated on “the eternal debate between Bakunin and Marx.... We defend no Marxist government, all are oppressors in the Bolshevik image since 1917, but we fight on two fronts and denounce, since this is where we live, oppression in Western society. For us, the problem is not Marxism and anarchism, it is to discover and put to work the most radical methods to bring revolution.” At the same time, he denounced the collusion of certain anarchist exile organizations, including the Cubans, with the CIA.¹⁶⁹ The congress majority, in turn, criticized spontaneism through the traditional lens of anti-Marxism and maintaining the purity of the anarchist movement.¹⁷⁰

Concerning the May events in France, French anarchist historian Jean Maitron contended that traditional anarchist organizations did nothing to prepare this movement, that they didn’t live it, and that during and after the events, their groups did not grow in size.¹⁷¹ However, militants of the ORA tendency (still in FA at the time) apparently actively participated in the construction of barricades and the Sorbonne occupation and gained a significant new number of student militants because of their position. At this point, ORA created leaflets with its own name and without reference to FA.¹⁷² As well, Joyeux stated that, after the conclusion of his FA Louise Michel Group’s annual fundraising gala, attendees also proceeded to assist in the “night of the barricades” (May 10, 1968). Additionally, he said, FA had a presence in the Sorbonne occupation and subsequent demonstrations.¹⁷³

Indeed, in the weeks after the May–June events, Joyeux and other *Le Monde Libertaire* writers abundantly praised the student activists’ role. “A handful of youth, their heads full of noble dreams, their hearts enormous.... It took only an angry cry, a gesture of revolt and motivated refusal by a handful of students to provoke the proletariat into a struggle that no one believed in anymore.... Students alone posed the true roots of the problem: for them, present society itself must be rejected and, in a frenzy of destruction, they brought into question its economy, its structure and its morality of behavior.... In reality, the students rendered a great and marvelous service in bringing back the old [revolutionary] language and in marching under the folds of the black flag.... This was nice, of course, and in the streets people applauded in support of that aspect of the demonstration, symbolized by anarchy, or rather by a certain notion of anarchy.”¹⁷⁴

Said Joyeux, "What students wanted was to construct a different society, not only economically, but also morally. What they didn't want was to make up with their enemy. What they wanted was a socialist society of an anarchist nature, even if they gave a different meaning to that term than our own. What they refused was to content themselves with reforms bringing to power the lesser of evils within a capitalist society.... The students' struggle at the barricades was exemplary."¹⁷⁵

Even after the angry exchanges at the Carrara international gathering, an *Le Monde Libertaire* article conceded that Cohn-Bendit's critique of traditional FA methods of struggle might be correct. But "the March 22nd comrades as well as ourselves and others have made and will make mistakes in assessments and methods of struggle. However, the diversity of these forms of combat is a guarantee for anarchy to better approach the truth. This can be healthy as long as it doesn't lead to sordid struggles between clans and that it keeps itself at the level of passionate but fruitful discussions."¹⁷⁶ And despite certain critiques of the Cohn-Bendit brothers' book, *Le gauchisme* [*Obsolete Communism: The Left-Wing Alternative*], Joyeux found it to be "an excellent work of demolition against present society, its left and right both, its economic and trade union structures."¹⁷⁷

A blunter and harsher description of student activists was expressed by Joyeux, retrospectively, years later. The "deviation" of spontaneism, he said, was tied with the attraction to Marxism as simply one more dimension of adolescent transitional revolt for middle-class youth soon to be seeking the career world of their class. For the anarchist movement specifically, Joyeux and other traditionalists thought, this also was manifested more significantly in the "intellectual vagabondage" current of "hippies and beatniks," the individualist ethos of doing whatever one wants, claiming affinities with Max Stirner instead of Marx, but threatening whatever little anarchist structure there was.¹⁷⁸ In Joyeux's view, "perfect love" between the Nanterre anarchist group and the FA existed for only an instant, but long enough "for us to perceive that these urchins, following the best traditions of the petit-bourgeoisie they came from, asked for everything and gave nothing."

Their "deep thinkers," he said, were under the spell of situationism and rejected the FA as "stupid jerks." Their "shock troop" March 22 movement proclaimed itself anarchist but in fact "had nothing anarchist about it," which they would admit only afterwards.¹⁷⁹ "From the revolutionary festival succeeded the return to their class of origin."¹⁸⁰ By seeking to revolt by new values, [the students] gave great joy to the bourgeoisie by "rejecting class relations, which are eternal truths." In perceiving that "the classic revolutionary movement was frozen, they tried to destroy 'History' in order to make something 'new,' without understanding that principles [of antagonistic class relations] remain unchangeable even if the means employed follow the evolution of the society in place."¹⁸¹ Nevertheless, Joyeux

still had some praise: "The beautiful gift that these youth gave to the youth of tomorrow" is hope—through revealing "the permanent presence of humanitarian and libertarian thought in the hearts of men."¹⁸²

According to Biard, after the departure of critical groups from the FA in the late '60s, the next few years saw the same old organizational issues of responsibility for managing the journal, the role of the "tutelary" association, and the constantly postponed resolution of basic principles and structures of coordination. By his account, two FA groups in the Paris region (one headed by Laisant, the other—the Louise Michel Group—by Joyeux) and a supportive series of provincial groups in Bordeaux, Nantes, Marseille, and Saintes provided the basic stability and orthodoxy of the FA, resistant to declaring more than minimal overall structure and common principles.

The Louise Michel Group consistently had about fifty members, with a stable core of about a dozen, and had some financial autonomy from the FA generally. By contrast, over a four-year period in the early '70s, Biard counted only about 28 of 117 FA groups mentioned in *Le Monde Libertaire* that existed as genuinely functioning groups for all four years. Each year saw the disappearance of at least 21–26 percent of groups from the previous year.¹⁸³ In turn, Jean Maitron estimated that in 1971 the FA had about 200 to 300 members (compared to about 600 members in other anarchist organizations) and about 650 to 700 subscribers to *Le Monde Libertaire*. He estimated about fourteen to thirty-five functioning groups between 1962–71.¹⁸⁴



In the mid-70s, Joyeux wrote a detailed article/brochure on the subject of *autogestion*, including numerous references to Algeria.¹⁸⁵ This was one more indication, however critical it was of the Algerian experience, of how the latter impacted the French anarchist movement.

Joyeux dismissed most *autogestion* discussions in France at the time as opportunistic political ploys by socialist and communist politicians seeking left voters or by technocratic managerial reformists seeking higher productivity and deflation of worker militance through coopting the desire for more autonomous workplace decision-making. Genuine *autogestion* implied full worker economic and political equality within the workplace, within the necessary infrastructure supporting enterprises, and in all broader economic and political decision-making throughout the society. Joyeux denounced the reformist illusion that real *autogestion* can be accomplished incrementally within a capitalist system or even within any post-revolutionary society with a "transitional" state regime, since those who command hierarchical power economically or politically will never relinquish it voluntarily.

Thus, he said, genuine *autogestion* can only be accomplished through genuine revolution that abolishes the state and hierarchical ownership and management in the economy. In his view, though contemporary French workers usually appeared too pacified by generations of social conditioning and more recent consumerist rewards, the May '68 experience demonstrated (as it did in 1936) that massive strike waves and factory occupations were possible.¹⁸⁶ In the right political context of significant worker discontent and temporary government paralysis, strikes and occupations could potentially move on, if done quickly, to the next stage of actual worker-managed resumption of production and to creation of worker-managed economic infrastructure that would support the overall economy.¹⁸⁷ At least the latter, and probably the former, he said, would only be accomplished by revolutionary trade-union networks not dominated by internal hierarchy or "left" political parties.

With this orientation, Joyeux criticized as well "oppositional Marxists" who sought to define *autogestion* by reference to certain aspects of Algerian and Yugoslavian experience, since "the bureaucratic perspectives that praise these experiences have limited their views to a model that maintains centralization and hierarchies without any relationship to the anarchist concept of socialism." Those who have written theoretical articles and books on *autogestion* have failed to draw clear and realistic conclusions about those "brilliant" theoreticians and left and far-left political parties who "with evident bad grace have let these experiences develop with the expectation that they would fail. And in writing that, I'm thinking especially of the reactionary government of Algeria, which certain 'naïve persons' wanted us to regard as a revolutionary government."

Joyeux regarded Guérin "an authentic revolutionary Marxist touched by anarchist spirit," as one who mistakenly conceived of an *autogestion* that could exist simultaneously with a gradual step-by-step elimination of competition, market dynamics, pay-by-work-accomplished, and so on. His "libertarian Marxist" regime, like every Marxist party having or having not taken power, would put off such eventual transformations until later, including those invoking state and class privileges. "Algeria, like Yugoslavia, dear to Guérin, are truly revealing examples." Workers' motivation to take responsibility in such "transitional" contexts would be dampened with retention of privileges for the new political and economic managerial cadres. Marxist proponents of *autogestion* in fact would be unwilling to sacrifice for socialism their privileged positions awaiting them on graduation from university. "I must say, for my part, that the Chinese experience of sending these revolutionaries in frilled shirts to dirty their hands a bit in a mine or factory should be adopted by the workers' movement of our country." Sustained dedication to the task of *autogestion* would only be maintained, despite the obvious spiritual and creative satisfactions involved, in a situation

of complete transformation in which hierarchy has been abolished. Otherwise, worker resignation to the constraints of class, implanted by many decades of adaptation, would neutralize whatever initial enthusiasm was created by apparently overthrowing the old regime.

"It is enough to follow the turmoil caused in *autogestion* countries that, like Algeria and Yugoslavia, maintained class economic distinctions within enterprises, to understand that *autogestion* can become a rich mine vein for clever ones who seek there their gains just like the bourgeoisie in 1789 sought theirs in political liberty." Likewise, he said, an *autogestion* revolution must be global, incorporating all industries and services and exchanges between them, "or there will not be direct, real effective *autogestion*. In Israel as in Algeria, a small *autogestion* sector could exist or rather be tolerated by the leadership class for purposes of propaganda, while corrupting inside to the point of disappearance when the regime thinks it useful. And this experimental sector, in any case, will be limited to agriculture or marginal sectors."

Said Joyeux, "workers' councils are spontaneous. They are jubilant. They express what is inscribed with golden letters in the heart and soul of peoples. In the midst of social combat, they are unanimous expressions. But born from anger and hope, they die when difficulty and doubt take over." When the complexity of tasks appears, when fatigue and doubt set in, this is the moment that the "dictatorship of the proletariat" or some other such hierarchical regime formula sets in. Only a revolutionary trade-union-type coordinating network would be capable of moving worker capability and consciousness to the new context of self-management.

Anarchisme et non-violence

AMONG OTHER DYNAMICS AFFECTING THE ANARCHIST MOVEMENT, the Algerian war brought together individuals with two overlapping non-violent perspectives: anarchists (especially from FA and Jeunes Libertaires) who wished to focus on the non-violence implications of the anarchist tradition and those who, in their revolt against the war's state-promoted violence, came to discover and endorse anarchist ideology. More specifically, one of the more important locations for this encounter was the French pacifist Community of the Arc of Lanza del Vasto, a religious-based group strongly inspired by Gandhi. The common commitment in this context, said one participant, was "to publicly oppose those Algerian colonial war events and all of their consequences that attacked human dignity: tortures, violation of consciences, distressed youth, ferment of civil war, and rebirth of fascist and racist tendencies." As well as they could, they sought "to promote solutions outside of the infernal cycle of violence." While avoiding divisiveness in the immediacy of the crucial antiwar struggle, those of

an agnostic or atheistic perspective felt constrained by the spiritual nature and self-sacrificing implications of the Arc community, despite respecting its commitment to non-violent activism.

Once beyond that context, those who wished further to explore the implications of non-violence within the overall anarchist framework formed a new anarchist group and revue, *Anarchisme et non-violence* (ANV), which saw thirty-three issues between 1965 and 1972. (With the eleventh issue, ANV became an associated publication of the War Resisters International.) By the end it had nearly 400 subscribers and printed several thousand copies per issue and, apparently, had more influence on young non-violent activists than it did on long-time anarchists.¹⁸⁸

Over the course of its eight years, altogether about fifty people were involved in different ways with the ANV group and revue, usually about thirty at any one time. Though spread throughout France (and several in Belgium and Switzerland), network members maintained good contact through dozens of internal bulletins and two or three gatherings a year.

One of the striking traits of ANV's evolution, like the experience of some other French anarchist organizations in this period, was the significant attention given to issues of hierarchy within the group. Conscientiously, ANV attempted to equalize the expressive roles and opportunities of all through development of a commonly accessible vocabulary, attentive listening, and non-monopolized discussion. Nevertheless, despite the fact that no one attempted to accumulate undue power, issues based on "irrational, emotional, and character factors," reported one article, caused problems. Among these was the fact that apparently, for some, the group and the revue were objects of psychological attachment or security, thereby causing defensive resistance to serious critiques, and there were disagreements as to whether the group relations and mutual learning should have precedence over magazine production or vice versa.

Additionally, it was said, there was too little opportunity for serious discussing each group member's efforts to practice non-violence in political work or daily life. By the end, each member pursued their own reflection and research on anarchism and non-violence without an effort to pursue these collectively. There was the practical issue of how to avoid "leaderism" when veterans had to focus on conveying knowledge to new arrivals instead of deepening their own explorations. Related to this was the very question of how much selectivity to use in opening the group to those interested in joining. This also affected the ability to revise the statement of basic principles for the group. Despite the fact that, as one person stated, ANV was the only pole remaining in the anarchist movement (after the disappearance of *Noir et Rouge*) for promoting and facilitating a non-dogmatic anarchism; by the end some felt too confined by the two principal orientations of *Anarchisme et Non-Violence's* title

and wished to explore a more global analysis based more on situationism or council communism.¹⁸⁹

As mentioned earlier,¹⁹⁰ the general assumption of ANV was that the deepest meaning of anarchism implied non-violence and that this aspect of anarchist politics and culture had been too little explored. For anarchists to challenge the violence-maintaining social structures and the state with violence of their own essentially would provide collaborating legitimacy for the former and degrade the very ideal of anarchy. Thus, ANV was dedicated to studying the nature and forms of violence to better understand it and ways to better encourage its disappearance. This implied examining not only violence between states but also “within the military and by churches, exploitation of the colonized and proletariat [as well as] in certain forms of teaching closer to catechism than reflection, in the abuse of children by some parents, [and] the dictatorship of the lover or husband...”¹⁹¹

While ANV was open to a variety of expressions in its exploration of anarchism and violence, one of its early articles demonstrated the extent to which participating writers felt free to challenge traditional anarchist orientations. In a “Plea for a New Approach,” Lucien Grelaud directly confronted those in the movement who mistakenly feared the new group for its supposed openness to religion and its supposed more esoteric and hermetic commitment to only working toward individual perfection. Grelaud disputed the stereotype but then also asked anarchists generally whether in reality the overall anarchist movement is not “a clique and a nursery of irrelevance.” Indeed, for example, “no contemporary anarchist, no anarchist group today has influence over the labor movement and trade unions.” Extending further his demand for a reality check, he called attention to the movement’s common habit of believing in “a revolution transforming capitalist society into an anarchist society with a magic wand” and that anarchists were the only ones capable of carrying out a full revolution.

“Let’s be more modest,” he said. “It is actually ridiculous to believe in an anarchist revolution or even any revolution at all in our hyper-centralized societies. It seems impossible presently to believe in a brusque change since this would deny the complexity of the social organism and its evolution.” Against this reality, there are no essential differences with Marxists and other social progressives. We should be working side by side with them toward “more well-being, justice, and liberty.” “Without capacity or possibility for a revolution, we should take into account these exterior forces and help them in their daily actions.” Given our very modest numbers, we should “let go of the stage of intellectual speculations, leave aside our vague plans of future societies and try to draw from social reality the maximum possible, without forgetting our aspirations for ‘something different’ and more satisfying.” Rather than maintaining our inaction and our isolation from the masses, we should join with them in their struggles for better lives

since “we live among them, we are an integral part of them and we have no right to underestimate or scoff at them.”

Grelaud thus called for anarchist participation, including taking effective responsibilities, in all relevant contexts, such as trade unions, cooperatives, public associations, and the family planning movement, “supporting the spirit and going beyond the action of these movements.” The point is not to proclaim from ivory towers that such-and-such a movement is bourgeois or reformist, but to actively engage in these contexts to help create more fulfilling lives, while still making self-management and revolutionary demands. “Our strength, our presence will impose it in the future not with hollow and pseudo-learned words, not with well-done journals and revues without readers, not with ridiculous and administrative congresses with empty discussions and vain resolutions, but with positive, concrete actions in the name of whomever and whatever, and even anonymously if needed.” Along with this, we should acknowledge the inadequacy of our violent negativity in revolutionary rhetoric, always lagging behind real revolutions, as in Algeria, and only demonstrating the inconsistency of our approaches in meeting the complex problems of the modern world. Instead of being a brake in discouraging new ideas, the anarchist movement should be in the avant-garde.¹⁹²

Several months later, Michel David presented an anarchist self-image surprisingly prescient of future “post-anarchist” discourse. Basically, he argued that each person is a multiplicity of subjectivities, that the world is perceived and judged in infinite ways by the billions of different “multiplicity” persons, a world “ready to explode from this bubbling of ideas...” Nevertheless, “the servility of some, the domineering of others leads them to unending chaos. Yesterday, Indochina, Hungary, Algeria; today Greece, Vietnam, and even India, where non-violence proved itself before. Whether in wars or revolutions, the notion of individuality is scoffed at, trampled on. To preserve the ideas of some, the thoughts of others are abolished, outlawed, and these bleating herds who go to bloody slaughter without even a beginning of revolt, a gesture of pulling back, kill and die with indifference, in indifference.” But killing or dying is a finality for the cause of fleeting ideas that may mean nothing to me tomorrow.

And the value I have for my own life, said David, must imply a similar value for the lives of others. Those murderers such as the state, “the most monstrous of assassins,” must be made to disappear. Likewise, official morality forces its message on everyone and gradually kills off all vitality. Vote, marry, have a lot of kids, work hard to support them, buy on credit, go to war. Faced with this “phenomenal repressive apparatus,” revolt of the critical individual becomes increasingly rare. But despite the difficult and exhausting struggle to reverse the generations of brainwashing, we must continue the effort. In doing so, anarchists, with so few numbers, must get

rid of sectarianism and work with others who “fight to preserve some aspects of everyone’s individuality, of respect for others.” Even if the results are illusory, the state survives, and the anarchist society never comes, one must act even so, “for oneself first, but also always so that some individuals float, not letting themselves drown in the calm floods of imbecility.”¹⁹³

On the theme of revolution, Lucien Grelaud insisted, following the lead of anarchist theoretician Elisée Reclus, that revolution follows evolution, a time of preparation through libertarian militant education, growing sophistication about social and economic issues, preparation of skilled and dedicated organizers gradually immersed in transforming society for the maximum liberty and self-management of all, thus avoiding the recourse to violence until now thought necessary to accomplish revolution.¹⁹⁴ In Grelaud’s view, revolutionary violence, “while perhaps seeming more radical, is ineffective and reserved to unconscious, reactionary, and repressed persons, lacking the most basic respect for right and the lives of others, consciously or not authoritarian, ready to impose by every means a new authority that, however beautiful, would never be for us more than a new reason to oppose it with all our strength.”¹⁹⁵

While Grelaud’s was an implicit critique of the Algerian revolution, among others, Marie Martin sought to engage the Algerian experience more directly with a discussion of Frantz Fanon’s theme of the necessity for violence in a national liberation revolution. Focusing on Fanon’s assertion that violence in this context not only had a strategic political purpose but also, and importantly, an intuitive necessary key to psychological liberation of the colonized, Martin posed the anarchist alternative of revolution through militant non-violence. She stated that Fanon mistakenly assumed that a non-violent liberation struggle would be based on a fear of bloodshed and thus produce only a severely compromised “independence.” But a militant non-violent liberation movement, formed by a long process of education and practice, and using economic boycott, autonomous organizing, and self-management, would be equally committed, if not more so, to social transformation.

No doubt with the Algerian example among others in mind, she stated that while the violent approach might seem more effective in the short run and also with a liberating psychological effect helping to mobilize for social liberation after independence, that would only hide its longer-range harmful and uncontrollable effects. “Fanon here commits his most serious error in underlining the unifying, mobilizing, totalizing character of violence. For the appetite for violence leads to the appetite for power” and also promotes a messianism of violence, as applied to Fanon himself in the Third World. Ultimately, however, while sure of her own theoretical correctness, Martin acknowledged that it was not for those who were privileged from the colonial relationship and in whose name oppression

and exploitation was carried out to judge the liberation method of the colonized. In essence, she agreed with Fanon that violence was rooted in irrational impulses and it was understandable, however detrimental in the long run, for those who live in desperate circumstances that violence was the chosen approach.¹⁹⁶

Unlike many anarchist journals, let alone those of the left more generally, *ANV* printed some of its internal debates as well as critiques from the outside. A good example of the latter was anarchist René Furth's assessment of non-violent anarchism and *ANV* itself as ultimately a form and "the sole active current" of Bontemps-type individualist anarchism. Furth essentially agreed with Fanon (and Georges Sorel) in the "revolutionary concept of revolution" that identified a creative and mobilizing dynamic resulting from a direct successful clash with the existing power structure. Out of the puncturing or collapse of the latter's veneer of "reality" emerges a new consciousness of alternative, liberating possibilities and the energy and imagination to establish the bases for a new social order.¹⁹⁷

"Such a dynamic," he said, "does not happen without violence, neither in its beginning, its extension, nor its defense." For example, if *autogestion* became possible, it would be only because a violent break with the old order allowed new creative energies, solidarity, and imaginative solutions to emerge. Reversing the previous equilibrium would permit "the passionate enthusiasm, improvisation, rapid and often contradictory decisions to be made in the fire of action." Motivated partly by irrational forces such as "anger, apocalyptic dreams, and apparently insane hopes," as in the May Days of France, "these mass movements, by the vigor of their impact and their contagious force, can provoke situations that previously would have seemed totally improbable.... A new image of life and happiness surges forth."¹⁹⁸

To set forth this dynamic requires a violent clash, but it need not be through bloodshed, as May '68 well demonstrated, nor need it necessarily result in civil war. Much depends on the level of consciousness already achieved beforehand, said Furth, and in this he would seem implicitly to agree with the general *ANV* and overall anarchist movement position on the importance of long-range political education and organizing experience. Indeed, he saw the positive potential as well of bringing the insights of psychoanalysis and Eastern teachings to better examine and channel positively the unconscious impulses behind the façade of individual rationality. However, in contrast with *ANV*, he understood these overall revolutionary dynamics as a collective phenomenon, not as the culminating assemblage of rationally motivated individuals proceeding step by step toward ever-greater sector-by-sector transformations. This latter approach is a "reformist concept of revolution," easily diverted or co-opted by the existing power structure along the way.¹⁹⁹

(right) Kabyle women demonstrating on behalf of victims of government repression, 2001.



(left) Young Kabyles denouncing the "murderous regime," 2001.

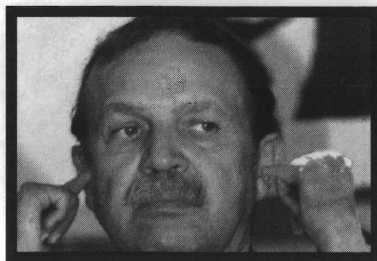
(right) A young Kabyle defying gendarmes in the 2001 Kabyle insurrection.



(below, left) A local Kabyle village assembly.



(below, right) President Bouteflika's response to grassroots grievances.



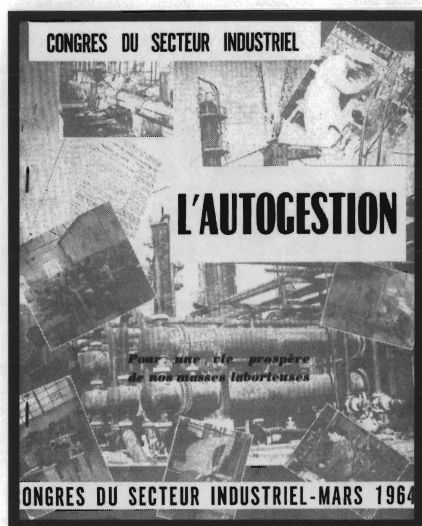


(above, left) *Le Monde Libertaire's* (FA) December 1998 cartoon comments on the Algerian military's massacres of civilians while disguised as Islamist guerrillas. The soldier shouts at his wife: "What's going on? I have a massacre at 3 o'clock and my disguise as an Islamist isn't even washed!"

(above, right) *Alternative Libertaire's* February 1998 cartoon reveals the violent logic of radical Islamists. Says one to the other, "When I saw him pull out his typewriter, I knew that it was him or me!"

(below) *Courant Alternatif's* (OCL) December 1995 cartoon portrays the de facto anti-democracy alliance of supposed enemies, radical Islamists and the Algerian military. Says the Islamist, "What unites us is stronger than what divides us." In agreement, the military officer states, "We have the same ideas on democracy."





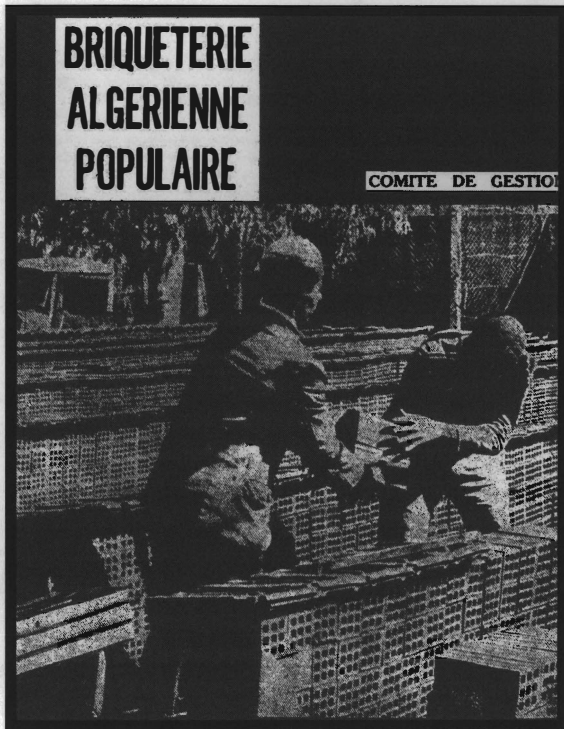
(above, left) Front cover of the program for the congress of industrial self-management workers, Algiers, March 1964.



(above, right) 1964 ad for a worker self-managed vegetable cannery in the Oran region.

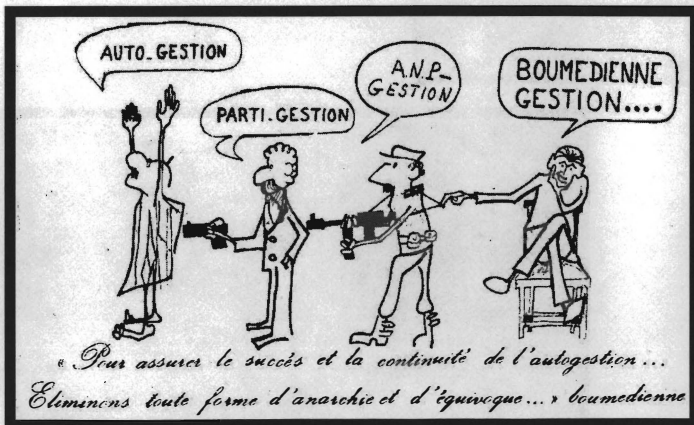


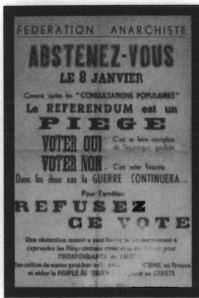
(right) First issue of an independent publication, the *Bulletin Intérieur de l'Autogestion*, by and for the workers' self-management sector, mid-1964.



(above) 1964 ad for a worker self-managed brickyard in Koléa, near Algiers.

(below) Cartoon in the Boudiaf-led opposition CNDR's April 1966 bulletin depicting the authoritarian approach to workers' self-management under Boumédiène. The latter is quoted: "To assure the success and continuity of self-management... we must eliminate every form of anarchy and ambiguity."





(above) FA poster calling for abstention in de Gaulle's January 8, 1961 referendum as a means to halt fascism and to assist Algerians to gain independence.

(right) FCL poster demanding independence for Algeria, just days after the November 1, 1954 outbreak of the Algerian national liberation revolution. It explained the causes of the revolution, expressed solidarity with Algerian workers and Messali's MTL D, and called for an end to repression. The poster was immediately seized and FCL militants arrested.

VIVE L'ALGERIE LIBRE !

Une répression sauvage s'abat sur l'Algérie
De nombreux travailleurs algériens sont surveillés ou arrêtés.
Le M.T.L.D. et son journal "L'ALGERIE LIBRE" sont interdits.

Le Gouvernement Mendès-France et la presse peuplée à gages courent d'injures et de calomnies les

Résistants Algériens,

A cette campagne de haine destinée à canaliser les masses coloniales, nous répondons :

Le terrorisme n'est pas un fait isolé, n'est pas provoqué par les émissions de la Radio du Caire.

La révolte est la conséquence de **124 ans d'expropriations, de surexploitation, de répression, de massacres.**

Elle est le seul espoir des fellahs et ouvriers agricoles à 250 fr. par jour, des centaines de milliers de chômeurs, d'émigrés refoulés vers les bidonvilles, s'engageant dans une lutte à mort pour l'indépendance, c'est-à-dire contre le colonialisme exploiteur.

Tous unis, malgré les mensonges des uns et le silence des autres (les grands partis dits ouvriers), nous manifesterons notre **solidarité** avec les travailleurs algériens et nous exigeons :

- **le retrait du contingent** et de toutes les troupes d'Afrique du Nord.
- Nous ne voulons pas une nouvelle guerre d'indochine, nous ne voulons pas que nos frères sous l'uniforme soient transformés en "chasseurs de fellahs".
- **la levée de l'interdiction** du M.T.L.D. et de son journal **"L'Algérie libre"**.
- **la libération** de Messali Hadj et de tous les militants du M.T.L.D.

En avant contre le colonialisme avec l'Internationale Communiste Libertaire

LA REVOLUTION COMMUNISTE LIBERTAIRE

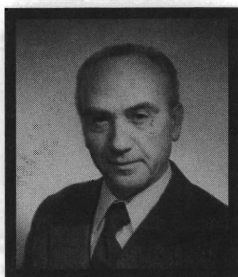
Chaque jeudi, le "Libertaire" se vend chez tous commerçants de journaux, kiosques, librairies, etc. Abonnements, les deux autres semaines, uniquement à l'Algérie. - Adresse à la S.E.L., 148, quai de Voltaire, Paris (10) -



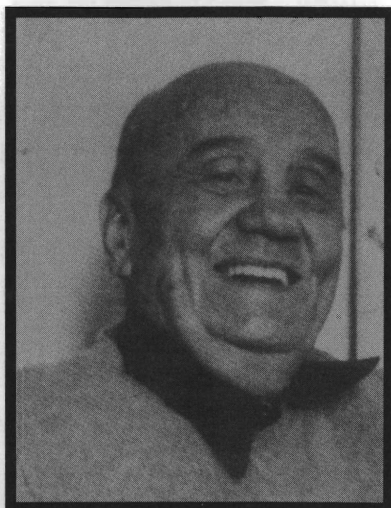
(left) Algerians celebrating the coming of independence in 1962.

(below) Important FLN leaders in Rabat, Morocco, 1962, honoring the late King Mohammed V. From left to right: Ben Youssef Ben Khedda, Ahmed Ben Bella, Mohamed Boudiaf, Belkacem Krim, Hocine Ait-Ahmed, Rabah Bitat, and Mohammed Saïd.





(above) George Fontenis, influential figure successively in the FA, FCL, UGAC, MCL, OCL (1), UTCL, and Alternative Libertaire.



(right) Daniel Guérin, influential writer of left socialist, Trotskyist and eventually anarchist persuasion. Leading anarchist writer on Algeria.



(above) GAAR group in about 1959–60, originators of the influential *Noir et Rouge* anarchist periodical. From left to right, standing: unknown, Paul Zorkine, unknown, Guy Bourgeois, Christian Lagant, Geo Satabin, Pierre Tallet. Kneeling on right: Jean-Max Claris. Two children of Todor Mitev. (Identities provided by Frank Mintz.)



(right) FA 1994 *Le Monde Libertaire* newspaper demanding a tyranny-free Algeria with neither Islamism, state terrorism nor capitalism.

ANV also displayed interest in *autogestion* as a revolutionary phenomenon potentially completely consistent with principles of anarchism and non-violence. Thus, in 1970, André Bernard put forth a proposed ANV study agenda for examining especially the historical experiences of *autogestion* in Russia, Spain, Yugoslavia, India, and Algeria. Concerning the latter, Bernard admitted that while that country's experience was close by and recent, it was constantly "changing, imprecise, and often distorted." Interestingly and apparently not mentioned in other anarchist accounts of Algerian *autogestion*, he also suggested examining potential roots of that movement in traditional communitarian practices in Kabylia and in awareness, during the revolution, of the ongoing Yugoslavian experience.²⁰⁰

PART IV

**The Chadli, Boudiaf, and Zeroual Regimes
(1979–1999): Berber and Urban Revolts,
Liberalization and Military/Islamist
Civil War**

Algerian Background: Grassroots Insurgents, Political Reform, and the “Black Decade” of Violence

WHILE THE DEATH OF BOUMÉDIENNE IN LATE 1978 SYMBOLIZED the passing of a relatively stable leadership presence in the sixteen years since independence, objectively the living situation for most Algerians continued its steady, intolerable decline. Economically, socially and politically, the great majority of the population had little influence and little hope for improvement from the new regime, now more explicitly than ever the product of balancing military and internal security clans. The government was now led by a long-time high-level officer, Colonel Chadli Benjedid,¹ named the new president after secret military elite negotiations.

Initially showing signs of economic liberalization to break from the state socialist model of Boumédiénne and finally liberating ex-president Ben Bella from house arrest, the Chadli regime faced its first major crisis with the “Berber Spring” of April 1980. Given the state’s continuous determination to control grassroots political expression since the early 60s, the bases for massive autonomous displays of independent thought and grievances were virtually now non-existent. One such base, however, was the deeply rooted Berber cultural identity concentrated especially in Kabylia and among Kabyle émigrés to urban centers, especially Algiers and abroad.

For long particularly aggrieved by the Boumédiénne regime’s imposition of an officially exclusive Arab national identity in history, culture, and language, Kabyles’ protest occupation of the university campus in Tizi-Ouzou, the regional capital, followed a government ban there of a conference on Berber language in mid-March 1980. Spontaneously, large demonstrations by students, workers, and the jobless, as well as attacks on police and symbols of the government, soon followed. A general strike in Kabylia began in mid-April. With strong anti-state content and without organized leadership, this sudden insurrection was a new political phenomenon.

Though severely repressed by the government, which blamed it on shadowy “neo-colonial” designs and a scarcity of basic consumer goods, the “Berber Spring” was an important statement not only for recognition of multi-dimensional Berber identity, but also symbolically for its unprecedented and generalizable mass demand to loosen the regime’s various

forms of control. Both the specific Berber issues and the larger demands for political liberalization would re-emerge in the coming years, especially with renewed development of the militant Berber Cultural Movement (MCB) in 1988 and with proliferation of numerous other political forces independent of the regime.

Quite differently, the most notable channel for anti-regime political discontent was gradually emerging in the only officially recognized independent realm of social association: the network of thousands of mosques countrywide. Within that network, radical political Islamist identities and organizations linked to the Middle Eastern Muslim Brotherhood were growing substantially and refusing, on principle, to subordinate themselves to the state. As with the growth and mass public expression of Berber identity, the emergence of radical Islamism was derived from both particular grievances (religious, in this case) and a successfully tapped, deeply felt, grassroots resentment of the authoritarian state regime more generally. Not only could the regime not afford, and never wished, to suppress Islamic identity, in fact it opportunistically emphasized it since the days of the revolution to help assure its own claim to legitimacy. But in doing so, it provided a potentially uncontrollable outlet for eventual volcanic energies to emerge from below, and threaten that legitimacy and the very stability of the regime itself.

Already, in 1981, a limited-scale underground radical Islamist guerrilla movement, the MIA (Islamic Movement of Algeria), had organized itself and for the next five years successfully defied police efforts to suppress it. A violent clash of Islamists with secular students at the Ben Aknoun student housing complex just outside of Algiers in 1982 and clashes with police at the massively attended Algiers (Kouba) funeral of major radical Islamist leader Sheik Abdelatif Soltani in 1984 were dramatic examples of this dynamic and growing independent political energy. A major trial of supposed MIA members in 1985 and appeasement of Islamist sentiment were alternative regime approaches to divert Islamist grievances away from the political arena while keeping in reserve its support against leftist forces opposed to Chadli's dismantling of Boumédiénne's state socialist infrastructure. Pursuing the strategy of appeasement, Chadli's regime authorized far more mosques and passed a new family code that further restricted women's rights. But such efforts backfired since they emboldened Islamists and strengthened their ideological and recruitment network with the import of thousands more *imams* from the Middle East, many of Salafist orientation, needed to lead the new mosques.

At the same time, the economic deterioration of Algeria accelerated with the continued corruption of the regime and the 1985 rapid drop of oil prices (petrochemicals being over 90 percent of Algerian exports), leaving inadequate state resources to provide needed jobs, housing, and health

services. Intense frustration with social conditions continued to feed the growth of mass political alienation more generally as well as specific Berber and Islamist anger and critiques of the regime. It also added more thousands to the steady emigration of Algerian workers and their families to France. Yet the Chadli regime turned its back on grassroots anger, responding only with admonitions for people to tighten their belts while adding more repression to the growing lethal mix.

As discontent grew, it began to be expressed in urban demonstrations and youth riots in the mid-'80s. Notable, for example, were the three days of violent clashes with police in the eastern city of Constantine in November 1986, which began with a demonstration of final-year high-schoolers who were suddenly faced with and panicked by a new government requirement for tests in political and Islamic education on top of other subjects. Soon after, various other elements, including university students, hospital workers, neighborhood residents, and the unemployed began demonstrating, and eventually faced violent police reactions. Crowds attacked especially the symbols of power, such as the FLN headquarters, a major bank, a department store, and the cars of judges. After a number of deaths and hundreds wounded and arrested, the government, with its controlled media, decided to blame the upheaval on a designated enemy of the regime—the leftist PAGES—arresting and imprisoning its militants, as well as on general troublemakers and “enemies of the revolution supported by the forces of colonialism and imperialism.” In the aftermath, many of the repressed youth of Constantine were thrown by default into the lap of radical political Islamism.²

The pattern illustrated in Constantine and elsewhere culminated in Algiers two years later, in October 1988 (“Black October”), with five days of massive street demonstrations and riots by youths, eventually strengthened by a large Islamist presence. Cries for an “Islamic republic” competed with radical secular political slogans. Because of a temporary conspicuous absence of police, some speculated afterward that Chadli may well have intentionally provoked greater rioting in order to justify a subsequent crack-down on those, within and outside the regime, who opposed his measures of economic liberalization. The clash brought an eventual declaration of a state of siege and severe repression, and resulted in thousands of arrests and possibly 300 deaths.

At this time, both Black October and eventual powerful demonstrations for Iraq during the first Gulf War (1990–91) made clear strong Islamist influence in the articulation of mass discontent. Twenty-five years earlier, Abdelatif Soltani (1904–1984), Abassi Madani (1931–) and Ahmed Sahnoun (ca 1907–2003) co-founded the *al-Qiyam* (“Values”) Islamist educational association in 1963–64, which was in turn banned by the regime for four years in 1970. The association and its leaders became increasingly strident as Boumédiénne’s regime turned more openly to the left in the late 1970s.

Soltani's funeral in April 1984 was another context for a mass Islamist demonstration and a message of competitive power to the regime. The passage of the restrictive Family Code two months later gave further momentum. By the late '80s, vice president of the eventual Islamist FIS party, Ali Belhadj (also Benhadj) (1956–) was a much more dynamic, fiery, and charismatic figure for young followers. He was an Arabic teacher, Algiers *imam*, and Islamist militant in the 1970s and was imprisoned between 1983 and 1987.

The October 1988 clashes also provoked significant secular public critiques of press censorship, torture, the single-party system, and the general policy failures of the government. Algerian youth, especially, developed a sense of both outrage at the repression and empowerment in making a major defiant public political statement of their own. Faced with an apparently grave challenge to its legitimacy and potential staying power, the regime eventually responded with major constitutional and political reforms, separating the FLN from the state, opening the door for independent mass organizations, and promising new elections for municipalities and a greater-empowered National Assembly.

This dramatic political liberalization resulted in the return of exiled political parties (the FFS of Aït-Ahmed and the MDA of Ben Bella),³ a new party, the RCD (Rally for Culture and Democracy), based on the Berber cultural movement and, importantly, the FIS (Islamic Salvation Front) to politically represent the rising tide of Islamism. Dozens of new smaller parties, independent women's organizations, a human rights league, and new newspapers and publishing houses contributed as well to develop a much freer climate of active and critical public political expression. At last, it seemed, the angry alienated voices from below could have a chance to be heard and to develop genuine bases of political power within the reformed system.

Political liberalization was accompanied as well by economic liberalization, including major efforts at privatizing significant portions of Algeria's state-run industry. But the rapid drop of world oil prices in 1991 led the government to give in to IMF demands for further privatization, a reduction of public jobs, more expensive public services, and devaluation of Algerian currency, all of which reduced consumer buying power and greatly intensified public protests against the regime, even provoking a two-day general strike by the tamed UGTA in early 1991.

With a specific banner of anti-socialism, anti-French influence (including French political models, ideologies, language, and culture), national unity, pan-Arab and pan-Islamic identity, and a return to basic Islamic moral values, the FIS succeeded in sweeping municipal election victories in June 1990. While recruiting a huge following in Algiers street demonstrations, the FFS chose to abstain (as did the MDA) from those elections, prioritizing the coming legislative contest instead. The only major rival, the now "independent" FLN cut loose from the regime, was hampered by

its still semi-establishment status and its association with all the past ills. As elsewhere in the Middle East, the first Gulf War in 1991 also intensified anti-West anger and increased calls for jihad against corrupt and westernized regimes in Muslim countries—a well-publicized successful example of which was the Afghani insurgency of a decade earlier.

A clash between an increasingly defiant FIS and the military regime over electoral methods to be used in the new legislative elections resulted in postponement of the polling for six months, the arrest of thousands of FIS activists and the two principal party leaders, Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj, and a new state of siege. Despite substantial abstention, the eventual first round of the election in December 1991 produced a large margin of victory for the Islamist FIS (though a much lower total vote than in June 1990), with the FFS and the FLN trailing far to the rear. While the FFS then sponsored a huge demonstration of several hundred thousand in Algiers against both police state and fundamentalist options, the army in turn pushed President Chadli aside and canceled January's second round of the election. Chadli, it seemed, had planned to co-govern with an FIS-dominated National Assembly and this was seen as too great a threat to the hidden control of government by the military/security clans. Indeed, some argue that the very approval of the initial election stage (and even the preceding "Black October" demonstrations) were intentional setups to provoke and legitimize an explicit military coup.

In any case, along with an official "state of emergency," a "State High Committee" was immediately established to replace the government. Long-exiled opposition leader, Mohamed Boudiaf, one of the historic leaders of the Algerian revolution, was recruited to head the new regime. With significant reformist ideas of his own, Boudiaf banned the FIS in March (following the arrests of thousands more FIS supporters earlier) but was himself assassinated in June. Whether by a radical Islamist among his own guards or, more likely, by a regime plot against his own zealous reform plans that threatened the interests of ruling elites, responsibility for the assassination remains still hidden. In the meantime, with the cancelation of elections that most likely would have brought the FIS to power, with the lengthy prison sentences for the two FIS leaders, and with the ban of the FIS itself and repression of FIS activists, a large-scale violent Islamist insurgency was launched in early 1992.

Urban and rural waves of attacks and assassinations spread throughout the country, especially strong at first in the general vicinity of Algiers, with hundreds of police, soldiers, and civilians murdered by the guerrilla forces. Through the end of 1994, apparently some 30,000 persons were killed in the escalating civil war, with intentional targets going beyond the army and police of the regime to "Westernized women" (those with Western dress, outside jobs, or even living alone) and urban "Westernized intellectuals"

(including journalists, professors, doctors, lawyers, and writers). This state of terror imposed by the FIS insurgency (specifically the AIS, its military wing) was matched in turn by massive repression targeted even beyond the Islamist movement and carried out by the “eradicator” regime, including widespread imprisonments, torture, and executions.

Some alleged that the new radical Islamist insurgent organization, the GIA (Armed Islamic Group) (1992), was largely infiltrated, if not directly established, by the Algerian security service in order to carry out its own attacks on secular enemies of the regime and also to discredit the overall reputation of the Islamist movement generally.⁴ Especially vicious in its targeting of urban professionals and artists as well as women, the GIA included many of the hard-core “Afghanis,” the well-experienced Algerians returned from jihad in Afghanistan and already infused with the radical Islamist political ideology of Osama bin Laden and others. Extension of Algerian violence across the Mediterranean in 1994, allegedly by the GIA, also helped to secure the French state’s support for the Algerian regime and dramatically fed an opportunistic rightist repressive turn in French politics as well.

The endless traumatic nightmare experienced by Algerians caught in the middle between the extreme violence of radical Islamist guerrillas and the police and army cannot be over-emphasized. Anonymous threats, kidnappings, rapes, and murders became commonplace and effectively terrorized the civilian population. Increasingly, with each adversary infiltrating and manipulating the other, it became difficult even to distinguish which party was responsible. Large numbers of those who could afford it and were able to obtain visas, especially professionals, fled to exile elsewhere.

Beyond the deadly confrontation of regime “eradicators” and radical Islamists, some others within the regime and in the political opposition, such as the FFS and MDA, favored restoring dialogue and the electoral process, assuming that the potential chance for Islamist victories thus would be diminished by the fear of violent theocracy or that the FIS itself could be induced instead into a responsible political stance, willing to respect a process of open political competition and regular change through elections. Others argued that the violent nature of radical political Islam, already manifested in some respects before the January 1992 election cancelation, demonstrated that movement’s totalitarian commitment to dominate Algerian society by whatever means.

Such a conclusion led to the call for “eradication” of the organized Islamist movement, even at the continued expense of government repression, and suspension of all meaningful civil liberties. Though the “eradicator” position was most popular within the military/security leadership, since it was their own power that was most threatened by both Islamist and secular sources, there were many civilians and influential foreign powers (including France) who also supported this hard-line position. In effect, they gave the

regime a free hand to fully eliminate the threat of Islamist terrorism, much as the post-9/11 Bush and Obama administrations in the United States would later do, in the first decade of the 21st century, to justify their foreign policy of aggressive imperialist intervention in the Middle East and Central Asia.

Throughout 1994, private and later public efforts toward dialogue between the FIS and the regime were encouraged by proponents in both camps, despite internal dissension in each, as exemplified in disputes between President Liamine Zeroual (Boudiaf's appointed successor) and "eradicator" General Mohammed Lamari. But only the FLN, FFS, MDA, PT, Ennadah, and the Human Rights League president Abdenour Ali Yahia were able, in their own set of talks, to come to an accord with exiled FIS leaders in the Rome Platform Pact of January 1995. This agreement deliberately blamed no one for the violent crisis. The FIS renounced the use of violence to gain power from a legitimate constitutional regime and terrorist violence against civilians and foreigners. The FIS also accepted political and religious pluralism and alteration of state power through elections. As well, the FFS gained recognition by all that the Berber language and identity were important parts of Algerian national identity and culture. By this agreement, the various parties jointly called for an end to emergency rule before elections could be held. Considering the level of violence and anger at the time, it was surprising that such an accord could be accomplished. Representing parties that had gained 82 percent of the votes in 1991, it was a direct challenge to the regime, which chose a route of its own.

The subsequent November election of General Zeroual as president, with at least 50 percent of eligible voters participating, suggested the willingness or hope among at least some civilians to settle differences through immediate voting. Nevertheless, the savage waves of kidnappings, rapes, tortures, executions, atrocities, and massacres continued between government forces and insurgent Islamists, augmented by government-sponsored local "patriot" militia armed to defend their own areas (and apparently also, in some cases, to settle long-standing local scores with unfavored individuals or nearby villages). A decade later, it was estimated by many that up to 200,000 had been killed in the conflict, "between 7,000 and 20,000 'disappeared,' dozens of thousands tortured, over 1.5 million persons displaced, over a half-million exiled, and hundreds of thousands left orphaned and handicapped."⁵

Following the decision of the FFS and FLN to participate in National Assembly elections in June 1997 and thus end the terms of the Rome oppositional agreement, the FIS agreed several months later to accept a cease-fire. Despite this significant weakening of the Islamist guerrilla struggle, the GIA continued its attacks and massacres (whether initiated on its own or, apparently most often, through hidden instigation by the government itself). After public criticism of his regime and division among the rival

military/security cliques, President Zeroual surprisingly called an early end to his presidential term in late 1998, and new elections were planned for early the next year—ultimately resulting in the ascension to power of Abdelaziz Bouteflika.

French Anarchism

Background: The Pluralistic Movement Sorts Out

THE FRENCH ANARCHIST MOVEMENT'S NUMEROUS SCHISMS AND generational conflicts of the late 1960s and 1970s period were largely left behind in the two final decades of the 20th century. The hopes for a purer anti-authoritarian political model through Third World revolution, the heady prospects for spontaneous revolution against all social authority in the height of the 1968 May Days, the subsequent hopes for a massive movement of genuine *autogestion*, and the search for decisive social rupture had all come and gone.

While modulating echoes of these themes lingered on, what remained more substantially, however, were a greater sense of clear differences between the several major tendencies of the movement (now organized in distinct separate groupings) a greater willingness to publicly self-criticize, and a spreading acceptance of the need to address all aspects of social hierarchy manifested in the various dimensions of daily life. As in the US, the retreat of many '60s activists in French culture and society away from explicit macro-level radical questioning and experimentation seemed a product of multiple factors: sheer burnout from prolonged intensity, an effort to stabilize personal lives because of children, and a sensed need for regular income, political disillusionment with Third World "revolutionary" regimes or worker militancy, or simply the slow pace of change itself. Such factors apparently influenced the more organized strands of the French anarchist movement as well. At the same time, however, numerous activists made conscious efforts to better digest and less frenetically analyze the cultural and political implications of consciousness-raising and social change strategies experienced and observed during the '60s and early '70s. This new period was marked especially by greater attention to racism and oppression of immigrants in France, women's and gay liberation, ecology, and occasional episodes of massive waves of strikes, as in 1986 and 1995.

The first two of these issues significantly related to the large Algerian immigrant community. Indeed, several anarchist organizations emerged during this period, which specifically focused on racist scapegoating of immigrants as well as on racism as a populist tool for the broader agenda of a rising movement on the extreme right. Meanwhile, for many French, the growing tide of Algerian radical Islamist violence seemed a credible threat to France as well, thus further catalyzing support for "law and order"

repression by the French state, supported by rightists and establishment leftists both.

After the disappointing contradictions of Algeria's immediate post-independence period and the subsequent authoritarian state rule of Bou-médienne, French anarchist perspectives on Algeria contained fewer hopes and thus less disillusionment. Nevertheless, it was still important to assess the meaning and significance of such phenomena as the Berber Spring, the massive anti-government demonstrations of 1988, the resulting two years of political liberalization, and, of course, the horrendous deadly conflict between insurgent radical Islamism and the repressive Algerian regime. In more general terms, French anarchists were thus called upon to analyze the significance of traditionalist struggles for cultural autonomy, the potentials of liberal democratic openings in authoritarian states, the significance of populist radical Islam, and the choice of engagement or distancing when confronted by rival alternative authoritarianisms—one populist and religious and the other state-based. As with issues raised in earlier periods, French anarchist responses to these generic issues continue to be potentially relevant throughout the international anarchist movement generally.

French Anarchist Positions

UTCL/Alternative Libertaire

UTCL EVENTUALLY ADMITTED THAT, IN THE EARLY YEARS, IT had evolved into a certain restricted “workerism.” However, it wished to clarify that “workers” included teachers, technicians, and employees, not just those of the traditional working class. Gradually, it had attracted militant workers involved in the organizing of several hundred strikes and important social movements. It circulated interior anarchist-oriented bulletins among postal, railway, and air workers, though it still lacked a presence among industrial and rural workers, those with insecure jobs, and the unemployed. UTCL believed that it did important work within trade unions, while always refusing integration within the system and always committed to grassroots democracy in these organizations. Through experience, “it had validated the principle of self-organization, with general assemblies at the base having permanent sovereignty.” Because of this orientation and respected activism, some UTCL militants actually had risen to leadership positions of certain union federations, even at the national level, especially within the CFDT—with its apparently strong *autogestion* orientation and pluralist commitment.

UTCL confirmed its commitment to the notion that trade unions, with significant influence of revolutionary militants, could be useful tools of class struggle, as demonstrated in the large strike wave of 1986 and UTCL’s particular role with striking teachers and railway workers. In this capacity, it refused roles either of “ultra-leftist”⁶ or administrative trade unionism. With the rise of autonomous new trade union federations in the ’80s with militant perspectives (SUD, etc.), UTCL became open to participating there as well.⁷

However, contrary to others’ assertions, UTCL claimed that it never saw non-syndicalist struggles as unimportant. Rather, it defined such efforts like women’s struggle as “fronts” of intervention that could occur anywhere, including in the workplace where members were most active. Meanwhile, the mid-’80s brought a new wave of young people into UTCL, accompanied by new perspectives and challenges to the priority efforts in trade unions.

Along with its other concerns, UTCL was committed to an anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist position. Vigorously supporting the Kanak people in

their struggle for independence in the French Pacific colony of New Caledonia,⁸ UTCL members found themselves inspired by the earlier FCL (and UTCL member Fontenis) in their previous support of the Algerian struggle. At the same time, UTCL's magazine, *Lutter*, began a series of articles concerning developments in Algeria itself.

An article in March 1985 summarized the earlier FCL efforts.⁹ The sequel in the next issue focused on what it called the "purist" "non-engagement" of the FA at the time, a refusal to analyze imperialism and equating the nationalism of the colonizers with that of those revolting against them. Indeed, it asserted, one FA writer (André Prudhommeaux) said that North African independence would be an obvious step backward in the realms of culture and morals, while another FA writer (C.A. Barbe) claimed that Algeria would have everything to lose if it seceded. FA leaders "could always find a bad reason to dodge [major revolutionary events] under the pretext that [such events] and those who brought them were not strictly anarchist."¹⁰

The concluding article summarized the Algerian national liberation struggle itself, while recommending Guérin's *Quand l'Algérie s'insurgeait* for a more detailed account. After describing the series of Messali's organizations from the ENA to the MTLD and the emergence of the FLN, the writer pointed out that the differences between the MNA and FLN were not over programs, but rather were sectarian. Many MNA militants rallied to the FLN at about the time of the 1956 Soummam Congress, but the program from that meeting avoided social revolutionary objectives in favor of an extreme nationalism. With both MNA and FLN units within the ALN, the FCL chose to critically support the latter and not choose sides. But just when the French movement of draftees and veterans was bringing about "a quasi-insurrectional atmosphere throughout the country," the FCL was forced underground by severe repression. Only later could a number of ex-FCL militants re-engage in significant support action through the left coalition group La Voie Communiste.

With the formation and outlawing of Boudiaf's PRS in Autumn 1962, La Voie Communiste, contacted by Boudiaf, began to question the revolutionary aspirations of the new regime. "It was thus that the critical support became more critical." The eight years of support was a difficult position, but the only one possible, "since abandoning all real combat for the sake of an artificial purism would be to abandon the revolutionary social struggle."¹¹

At the end of 1985, *Lutter* published two articles relating to then-current Algerian politics. Acknowledging that the death of Boumédiène was an important turning point in Algeria's political and economic realms, the first writer saw the new president, Chadli, as decisively opening Algeria to economic liberalism. Major obstacles to the development of private capitalism were dropping away with a series of government reforms aimed at revitalizing an economy blocked by bureaucratic inertia, exces-

sive centralism, the lack of accountability for major economic actors, and the corruption that prevailed under Boumédiénne. But this false alternative of private instead of state capitalism was no more capable of resolving the system's contradictions than the latter. The genuine alternative would be "a real *autogestion* where, in the framework of a collectivization of the means of production and services, it is the workers who would be fully responsible for economic choices."

Meanwhile, said the writer, the regime's promoted image of a liberal opening had its limits politically. While private interests could be freed to exploit others and make profits, freedom of political or philosophical expression was repressed. This was made clear with the recent formation and suppression of a League for the Defense of Human Rights in Algeria (LADDH), independent of the regime and FLN. For having defended freedom of opinion and expression, its militants were imprisoned.¹² Despite the diversity of perspectives of its members, they were united behind the League's strictly humanitarian goal of promoting free thought and expression. To allow the League to develop would eventually force the regime to permit those thoughts and structured demands that ultimately "would question the very foundations of Algeria's anti-democratic institutions based on the single party."¹³

Another article in the same issue called for international solidarity on behalf of jailed militants of the Algerian League. Since July 1985, all of the League's founding members were arrested. The strength of this repression, said the writer, demonstrated its potential danger for the regime. With Chadli's economic liberalization, a number of intellectuals, militants, and workers had some hope for a liberalization of individual freedoms as well. For placing their own wreath at the Algiers monument for the martyrs, separate from official ceremonies, members of the Sons of the Martyrs of the Revolution were also arrested. This wave of repression had mobilized protests by Algerian workers in France, with nearly 3,000 gathered for a protest meeting in Paris, followed by an illegal demonstration on November 1. In Algeria, the sweep of arrests was extended to include individuals such as the very popular Kabyle singer, Aït Menguellet,¹⁴ whose fraudulent trial resulted in a three-year sentence. Such actions have provoked turmoil in Kabylia these past few weeks, including demonstrations and lycée students' strikes, especially in Tizi-Ouzou. The French Socialist government in power should be strongly condemned for its positions in these matters. As with the Greenpeace affair (the fatal French sabotage of its ship, the *Rainbow Warrior*), the government has chosen, cynically and diplomatically, to keep its eyes closed in the face of human rights violations.¹⁵

UTCL predictions of ever greater demands in Algeria for political liberalization were borne out in the "Black October" events of 1988 and the public pressures that followed. A *Lutter* article in November 1988

described and analyzed these events. The October 1988 street insurgency, it said, had immediate roots in a series of anti-austerity industrial-sector strikes, supported by UGTA (with FLN leftists' encouragement) but severely repressed by the regime, followed by a strike of postal workers in Algiers. High school and university students then held street demonstrations and were joined by a mass of young people as well. With eventually 80 percent of urban Algeria affected by this revolt, the army declared a state of siege on October 6. In the streets of Algiers, "the butchery began" with machine guns fired at the crowds. The result was over 600 killed, a large number wounded, and several thousand arrested. The intensity of both the revolt and the repression was rooted in the whole evolution of Algeria since independence, including the creation of the state, its totalitarian drift with dependence on an army and political police (often trained in the Soviet Union), the crushing of leftist opposition, and the absence of any middle class beyond the bureaucracy of the regime.

As well, said the writer, the regime's austerity policy well-emulated the typical "therapy" imposed by the International Monetary Fund: reliance on the market, withdrawal of state subsidies for basic goods, the restructuring of industries, and the blocking of imports. But such measures, responding to the huge drop in oil and natural gas prices¹⁶ when these products brought 98 percent of Algerian export revenues and in the context of one of the world's highest birth rates, failed to improve the standard of living. The large price increases for fruits, vegetables, meat, and fish, along with the imposed barrier to higher wages and the regular scarcity of such basic needs as semolina are what readily brought huge participation to the streets of Algiers. And the symbols of the state and of luxury consumption for bureaucrats and businessmen were most targeted. Though political Islamists were not part of the original strikes, once students in Algiers began demonstrating, they quickly began to join in, especially after the Friday prayers, and sought to take charge on behalf of their own agenda. But the strike and street revolts responded to economic desperation and repression, so they were only partially successful.

Emergency courts were set up to try and convict those rounded up, with little opportunity for legal defense. Prison terms of four to eight years were most common. However, to appease the population, suddenly the previously scarce basic goods—lentils, semolina, butter, coffee, and sugar—became available and at subsidized prices.

But, said the UTCL writer, the repercussions of these riots would go beyond immediate repression and temporary economic appeasement. "They will have a heavy influence on the evolution of Algerian society." Already, certain political openings were beginning to appear. For example, the Comité Autonome (Autonomous Committee) student movement, independent of FLN control since the 1987 strike beginning the new school

year, now seems ready to assume a greater role. The same with UGTA that probably will be given somewhat more autonomy.

Meanwhile, in France, reported the writer, despite the massacres involved, both the state and a large part of the left refused to take positions, claiming Islamist responsibility for the October demonstrations and that they were thus, shockingly, not a matter of concern. While the French government has long avoided criticizing the Algerian regime, it didn't hesitate to ban the magazine of Ben Bella's MDA party at the Algerian government's request, thus helping to stifle Algerian opposition. For its part, the French Communist party advised that France should not interfere in Algerian politics, no doubt, thought the writer, because Chadli was important to them as an ally of Moscow. However, the Socialist party said the same. But in France at least some within the group *Coordination de Solidarité avec le Peuple Algérien*, including immigrant associations and the "left of the French left" (UTCL and others), are going ahead to mobilize support and demonstrations.¹⁷

Toward the late '80s, UTCL saw a need to revise its structure and orientation to better participate in the variety of fronts, to better accommodate its youth and more realistically to pursue the long-range goal of *autogestion*. Thus, it began to develop a strategy of counter-power, not only in the workplace, but also in communities and regions, and based on a synthesis, like that by Guérin,¹⁸ of the anarchist workers current, non-dogmatic Marxists, and proponents of *autogestion*. The programmatic bases of this synthesis would include "federalism, as the dialectic between autonomy and centralization; a revolutionary process of counter-power, as opposed to the myth of a single sweeping revolution; a dialectical and materialist method and concept of history; a refusal of electoral abstention as a principle while carrying out a critical and nuanced study of parliamentarianism and the state; and a plan for society taking account of several questions taboo among anarchists and the classic revolutionary left, such as the existence of law, justice, money, a market, and the recognition of specializations and their control." Organization is necessary, but as a collective tool, not as a clique of unassailable truths or an army of militants following a leader.

At the same time, UTCL increased its contacts with other anarchist groups to debate over differences and also to explore commonalities and, ultimately, potentials for organizational unity. In their eyes, the FA seemed too divided in organizational perspective, preventing its theoretical growth and democratic practice. While finding the FA now far more concerned with the importance of class struggle, "it was still the carrier of a quite confused and frozen, if not dogmatic and sectarian, 'anarchist doctrine.'" The UTCL found relations with OCL more complex. While the past OCL

was marked by an ultra-leftism, which helped cause the original split in 1976, as well as by its “autonomist” phase, more recently it seemed there was more in common between the two organizations, and the coolness had somewhat moderated. But differences persisted because of OCL’s continued faith in the potential of various minority social movements, such as alternative rock and squats, to create “ruptures” with existing society rather than developing mass movements for radical change.

After two years of debate and exchanges with other anarchist groups, including TAC and other smaller formations, UTCL opted, in June 1991, to dissolve in favor of a new Alternative Libertaire organization, thereby doubling its membership and gaining more overall attention and credibility.¹⁹ The new group, formed from UTCL and CJL (Collective of Young Anarchists) as well as non-affiliated anarchists, but not immediately including TAC, at the same time published a detailed “Manifesto for an Anarchist Alternative,” which has remained its basic text of guidelines, its “point of departure for theory and practice” to the present.²⁰

From the basic understanding of class struggle between those subjected to life conditions decided by others and those who dominate society through private or state capitalism,²¹ AL committed itself, as anarcho-syndicalists, first to proletarian struggles in the workplace and other aspects of daily life, and second, as anarcho-communists, to joining with other radical left organizations, anarchist or not, in broader social movements relating especially to the critical areas of women’s freedom, anti-productivist solutions to ecological disaster, and anti-imperialism. Success in each of these realms could be attained only by the fall of capitalism. Revolution is a long, permanently transformative process with a counter-power strategy in every arena developing anti-capitalist solutions based on federal and self-management principles and practice. Such a process can only be successfully encouraged and developed through the non-authoritarian assistance of militant organizers who themselves work together in self-managed and federal movements.

With an implicit reference to Algeria and elsewhere, the manifesto observed that “historical experience has demonstrated that independence struggles, always legitimate in their refusal of domination and thus always to be supported, have given birth to militarized bureaucratic regimes or become involved in various forms of neo-colonial relations.”

Of relevance as well for Algeria were several other issues. While AL was anti-statist, it would support struggles against dictatorships and those for expanding democratic freedoms in parliamentary systems since these demands are “basic challenges to the state apparatus and the social system it defends.” Similarly, reformist demands and cooperative or *autogestion* alternatives, while not in themselves revolutionary, would be supported to the extent that they can lead to massive mobilizations of the exploited and the development of revolutionary consciousness. Being much more

interested in constructive efforts, AL is not automatically in favor of violent solutions. But self-defense of oppressed people to preserve their gains is sometimes necessary against state terrorism and the violence of deposed ruling classes. However, violence should not be used by armed groups on their own and separated from the people. As well, the use of even justified violence can lead to excesses and the militarization of a movement, so vigilance is needed.

Finally, AL committed itself to fight against all forms of individual alienation. Here capitalism also has a role, even if it didn't generate them, since "it helps to solidify them by oppressing everyone's creative and vital abilities and by spreading hatred and divisions within the population." Because of its hierarchical nature, its interpretation of the world, and its dogmas and taboos, religion is one of the worst carriers of alienation. While AL respects freedom of religion, we oppose all its sponsored persecutions, "we refuse any overall influence of religions over society and we will subject them to radical critiques."

Though unspecified in the manifesto, Algeria's early years of *autogestion* experience are also implied in AL's counter-power strategy of social revolution. The latter "is prepared by a historical process in which the development of consciousness in individuals and social classes is the central element, a process based on concrete experimentation through class struggles, liberation struggles and self-organization," separate from the state. Indeed, this very conception of socialism is based on actual historical experiences of working peoples, as in the Paris Commune, Russia, the Ukraine, and Spain, "which spontaneously discovered and rediscovered the bases of a society alternative to capitalism." The limits and weaknesses of these experiences should be studied, but it is the anti-authoritarian stream of the workers' movement, inspired by workers' spontaneous socialism, to which AL is committed. Nevertheless, in the first phase of such attempts, a difficult contradiction is trying to construct direct democracy while elements of the old order are trying to survive and restore class divisions. Similarly, the model of and efforts by a vanguard party and socialism by the state are antithetical to spontaneous, self-managed socialism from below. And social democratic governments, content to try only reforms within the existing capitalist system, are equally repressive of both revolutionary workers' struggles and anti-colonial movements, the latter exemplified in the case of Algeria.

In its reports on Algerian politics and society in the 1990s, AL described deteriorating economic conditions, analyzed reasons for the rise of Islamist popularity, was scathing in its denunciation of Islamist violence and

treatment of women, was quite critical of the ability of the Algerian political class to address satisfactorily each of these issues, and strongly attacked the overall repressive nature of the regime.

In the early stages of the violent radical Islamist insurgency and following a daring March 1994 protest demonstration by women in the streets of Algiers, *Alternative Libertaire* (the organization's periodical) interviewed one of the organizers of the international solidarity network for Algerian women. "Malika" made clear that simply being a woman in Algeria had political stakes. This was obvious for a long time, especially since passage of the 1984 family code that established a regressive dependant legal status for females. This was not the case during the liberation war. At that time, women assisted the struggle. It's a constant battle, after schooling, to continue in outside work, instead of simply staying at home, being a mother. Furthermore, women are the primary political target. "With the veil, women are withdrawn from public view, withdrawn from society since they are seen as responsible for unemployment, for taking the place of men." In this context, beyond the sheer necessity to bring in an income, for women to continue working and going out is an act of resistance. "Especially to not give in to [Islamists'] blackmail, to not disguise oneself, to not hide one's body, to not become a shadow in the street."

But it is understandable, she said, why a great majority of women have accepted the veil from sheer fear of violent consequences. Islamists began their assassinations of women in 1989 when they burned a woman living with her son. Many women with jobs as secretaries, teachers, cleaning women, or hairdressers have been murdered. More recently even children have become their tools. At school, they are separated into different rows depending on whether their parents practice their daily prayers. With many teachers belonging to the FIS, they recruit students to become their assassins.

Even though the government itself has used violence for a long time and still now fails to protect us, the assassinations against women and others were started by Islamists. Malika said it makes her hair stand on end to hear some speaking of reconciliation. "That would be done on whose back and to erase what?... What can one reconcile about? Those who speak of reconciliation simply want a new share of power." Said Malika, "I would like to live in a pluralistic Algeria, where everyone can speak out, where you don't have to fear for your life because you think differently."²²

A year later, *Alternative Libertaire* published a much longer article analyzing and reflecting upon the growing barbarous civil war. Two accompanying cartoons directly conveyed AL's perspective on radical Islamists and their sense of reality. In the first, two bearded men strolled together, one

with a halo overhead. The other, quite disturbed, commented, “When I think that our mothers were women, I’m embarrassed.” In the second, a well-armed Islamist fighter confronts a simply dressed woman as he holds out two garbs. “Which will it be,” he shouts, “the veil or the shroud?” The Islamist quest for power, said the article, is based on an “Arab and Muslim” definition of Algerian society propagated during colonial days as well as by the FLN state regime since independence. The FLN regime passed the Family Code of 1984 that legalized an inferior status to women. At the same time, they also both have in common the lack of any alternative to the Algerian social crisis and Algeria’s role in the midst of international capitalism. As well, the radical Islamist FIS now imitates wartime FLN rhetoric against the new *pieds-noirs* dominating the country. For such reasons, some say, “the FLN is the father of the FIS.”

Profound changes came to Algeria in the first two decades of independence, said the writer. Illiteracy was reduced 50 percent, the industrial sector now employs more workers than the rural sector, and nearly two-thirds of the rural population lives from non-farming activities. While in the ’60s and ’70s, Algeria seemed to be fully developing and actively supporting Third World liberation movements; at the same time, total repression was used against any movement or individual who challenged the regime. The single party claimed to speak for the whole nation but denied pluralistic realities such as existence of the Berber population, a European-origin population, and a Jewish minority. From the first years of independence, a policy of Arabization (especially through educating in Arabic) gradually led to “the conquest of cultural hegemony by the Islamists.” Through having to import so many teachers from the Middle East, a majority of which were Islamist oppositionists, the state provided the means by which Islamist propaganda could spread.

With the collapse of petrochemical prices in the mid-’80s and Algeria’s dependence on imports for 80 percent of its basic foods, the writer observed, a huge trade deficit developed. Industrial projects were abandoned, much of the youth had no work and so could only go to the streets or the mosque. In a transitional society where 20 percent of the population was displaced by war, where rapid industrialization led to massive urbanization, and where the father could no longer provide adequate income for the family, “the father saw his status collapse and he tried to compensate through traditional values and authoritarianism.” Meanwhile, unemployment of the youth and a lack of sufficient housing meant that young people were deprived of emotional and sexual lives. All of this occurred at the same time that the minority linked to those in power enriched themselves. “This social question, therefore, is at the center of the Algerian crisis as well as the means by which the Islamist movement progressively gained its hegemony over Algerian society.”

“Muslim Brothers” in the poor urban neighborhoods, said the writer, provided a social network and mental distraction. While the regime obeyed

the demands of international capitalism, thus accentuating social disintegration, the Islamists redefined community around their set of religious values. Of course, this “community” by definition excluded atheists, the non-pious, Marxists, and foreigners. As the Islamists rhetorically attack the regime and the corrupt privileged, and armed Islamists attack policemen, in fact “the regime and the Islamists are not different in their social plans.” And on the international side, the United States, where religion is so important, supports the Islamists since the Islamists favor capitalism, and encourages Saudi Arabia, which keeps providing them financial assistance. Also, international capitalism, more generally, may be more comfortable with a tighter, more repressive regime.

In a brief period following October 1988, the writer described, demands for social justice, equal opportunity, and democracy were accompanied by greater freedom and diversity of newspapers and book publishing, and a proliferation of different associations, women’s movements, and political parties. But progressively the regime began its threats and repression against the press, even blaming journalists for being the instigators of social unrest. And the constricted press, in turn, began focusing exclusively on the battle between Islamist insurgents and the regime. Eventually, also, social demands took the backseat to demands for representative democracy as an alternative to Islamist rule, a greater concern for those who seem politically connected. In both cases, emphasized the writer, the underlying centrality of social distress and crisis is ignored.

At the same time, the article says the military-led regime is “engaged more than ever in economic liberalization conforming to the interests of international capitalism, while the pauperization of Algerian society continues.” In 1994, the “eradicator” government of secular modernist prime minister R  dha Malek²³ accepted IMF terms for restructuring Algeria’s foreign debt,²⁴ including a 40 percent devaluation of Algerian currency, reduction of the budgetary deficit (thus further undermining social welfare protections and food subsidies), restructuring of public banks and industry for privatization, and providing better terms for foreign investment.²⁵

In the midst of the intense civil war and twenty months after the election of incumbent General Liamine Zeroual²⁶ as president, *Alternative Lib  rtaire* published a new article analyzing the depressing political context at that time as the country approached new legislative elections. Though there was some hope that the late 1995 presidential election might bring improvement, it said, Algerians have been terribly disillusioned. The regime restored the authoritarianism and repression of before, engaged in large-scale electoral manipulation in the new constitutional referendum of 1996,²⁷ failed to stop the mind-blowing degradation of the economy and the increasing poverty of the great majority while huge fortunes were made through corruption, and failed to bring an end to the spectacularly cruel terrorism of the Islamists.

Multiple parties and independent candidate lists are competing, said the writer, but the Islamist FIS is dissolved and Ben Bella's MDA and Ettahadi (Challenge), the social democrat product of the old Communist party/PAGS, are boycotting the election for opposite reasons. While security was promised for all candidates, some have less to fear than others. Prime examples are the list for A'it Ahmed's FFS, which signed the Rome pact for rehabilitating the FIS, and the two Islamic parties, Ennahda²⁸ and MSP (Movement for A Peaceful Society, ex-Hamas).²⁹ Representing the regime is the RND party (Democratic National Rally), referred to sometimes as the FLN, Jr., which hopes to gather those who equally fear victories by the democratic parties or Islamists. This conservative RND constituency undoubtedly represents presently a substantial part of the grassroots population as well as the bulk of the petit- and middle bourgeoisie, largely "Arabized" since the 1970s regime of Boumédiène. "It fears both radical Islamism and those secular elements having assimilated Western values." Supported by these fears and by all those in the government and others with a stake in the present system, the RND is definitely the favorite to win. Meanwhile, the democratic parties will be lucky to gain even 15 percent of the vote, given the hostility they face from both the regime and Islamists and their own limited resources.

Said the article, the two authorized Islamist parties shed their so-called "moderate" skin quickly to show their objective alliance with the FIS. They strongly attacked democratic forces and women's movements as foreign elements and enemies of Islam and Algeria. "The speeches of the moderate Islamic parties thus join the discourse of the armed groups. By revealing their true nature, the legal Islamist parties hope to harvest the votes of FIS sympathizers." Even at the height of its power, however, the Islamist movement was supported by no more than a quarter of the voters. Nevertheless, they're adding FIS figures and conservatives close to the regime to bolster their chances.

The real purpose of the elections, the writer asserted, is probably to re-legitimize the old system of power without solving any of the serious problems of the society—the violence and terrorism, the disastrous economy and social conditions, and an alarming shortage of food supplies. With such contradictions, it seems impossible that the old practices can begin to address the separation of religion from politics, women's role in Algerian society, freedom of the press, and issues of Algerian identity.³⁰

In April 1998, the periodical published an appeal for a moratorium on French expulsions of immigrants back to Algeria. Actually, the problem was twofold, it said. In the midst of the assassinations of intellectuals and

massacres of villagers by both sides in Algeria, the French government has in fact, over ten years, cut back the number of visas for Algerians from 800,000 to 50,000 for 1997. Thus, those with democratic commitments, facing both government repression and Islamist violence, can no longer necessarily find refuge in France. Worse yet is the French government's increasing rate of immigrant Algerian expulsions, despite likely imprisonment on their return. Algerians are the most numerous group in the government's retention centers and the most likely to be expelled. Some, when placed on planes for Algeria, have preferred to struggle violently, hoping the pilot would refuse to take off, even though this means prison in France. But others, placed on boats, have little "choice." Three categories are most vulnerable: those who are already well-settled in France but who might not survive in unfamiliar contexts in Algeria, the young who fled the Algerian military draft, and transvestites and transsexuals facing great hostility in the homeland. Thus, a coordinated campaign has been launched to gain the moratorium.³¹

Anarcho-Syndicalists

ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM PRIORITIZED ANARCHIST ORGANIZING in trade unions since only the working class in a mass movement could bring social revolution. It had a long tradition as a major component of the French anarchist movement before World War II, especially during its peak of numbers and international influence between the 1890s and World War I with anarchist preponderance in the CGT (General Confederation of Labor).³² Following World War I (and the CGT's collaboration in the Union Sacrée war support), the CGT was taken over by the French Communist party in 1923 after initial hopes were dashed for anarchist predominance and postwar revolution. In 1926, anarcho-syndicalists formed a separate CGTSR (Social Revolutionary CGT), an organization lasting until the 1939 outbreak of World War II.³³

As early as March 1945, anarcho-syndicalists began publishing their own journals, coming together in April 1946 to form a new anarcho-syndicalist CNT (National Confederation of Labor) with several thousand members. However, this separate organization, though affiliated with the AIT (International Workingmen's Association), over the next several years, never gained significant numbers and remained only a very marginal element within the small overall anarchist movement until the 1980s. Nevertheless, a large number of those in the postwar FA also believed in the importance of trade union activity, but not, after 1948, to the extent of giving their sole effort to developing an independent anarcho-syndicalist organization. While stronger in certain sectors (teachers, railway workers, postal workers, proofreaders, and those in the building trades, for example), they chose to participate as very small minorities within the postwar CGT or two

other national central federations, Force Ouvrière (Workers' Strength) and the CFDT (French Democratic Confederation of Labor),³⁴ which emerged during the next two decades, or in FEN (National Federation of Teachers), an autonomous federation.

By the 1970s, the CNT apparently had no more than several dozen members. A second organization, the UAS (Anarchist-Syndicalist Union), with about 100–150 members mostly within the FA as well, focused on activity within FO, FEN, and CGT, and alliances therein with Trotskyist OCI militants, while accepting official leadership positions. A third group, AS (Syndicalist Alliance), formed in 1970, strongly opposed union bureaucracies and focused on grassroots militance within the CFDT, although it benefited apparently from the sympathies of some CFDT officials. But in addition to the problem of existing trade unions' reformism, it seemed that some AS members were much more concerned about the welfare of their particular unions or the overall central syndicate than they were with the development of anarcho-syndicalism (a critique of anarcho-syndicalism by other anarchists for decades). By the mid-'70s, the AS claimed some fifty groups and a 3,000 copy print-run of its publication. Beyond these three organizations were anarcho-syndicalist groups formed on the basis of their own trade union experience, such as the SAT (Self-Managed Workers' Union) organized among several dozen postal workers in Lyon in 1978.³⁵

From the mid-1980s on, especially with another large wave of strikes as well as disillusionment produced by the limits of the Mitterrand regime, more interest developed for anarcho-syndicalist ideas as well as for more autonomous unions, generally. Concerning the latter, the most important was the 1989 creation of a new federation, SUD (Democratic United Solidarity Union) from postal and health workers of the Paris region suspended by the CFDT. SUD was committed to revolutionary syndicalist operating principles, specifically federalist structure, *autogestion* internally, and complete independence from any political party. By the late 1990s, there were SUD federations in many sectors, especially among public workers, and they joined with other autonomous federations in 1998 to create USS (Union of Solidarity Trade Unions), another significant field of activity for French anarcho-syndicalists.³⁶

As part of this evolution from the 1980s, the CNT itself began to rebound. By 1993, it had an estimated several hundred members and in the next several years, especially because of CNT's important presence in the general strike wave of November–December 1995, gained many more members as well as new local branches throughout France. But in 1993, the organization split over the issue of participation or not in co-gestion elections.³⁷ The majority, thereafter referred to as CNT-Vignolles or simply CNT-F, approved participation. The one-third minority did not and, in retaining exclusive official recognition by the international federation in 1996, became

known as the CNT-AIT.³⁸ Each version of the CNT maintained a regular periodical with the traditional name, *Combat Syndicaliste*.³⁹ In Pucciarelli's mid-'90s survey of French anarchists, 11 percent of his respondents were involved in the two CNTs.⁴⁰

Though oriented primarily toward work within the larger central *syndicats*, or the several groups of anarcho-syndicalists or the CNT itself, from an internationalist and anti-repression perspective, anarcho-syndicalists have occasionally over the years taken public positions on Algeria or Algerians in France, on French policy toward Algeria, and on issues with indirect Algerian implications. Of the latter category, enthusiastic endorsement of *autogestion* of course was more a recommitment to long-standing ideological principles than to Algeria's particular experience. Opposition to persisting French colonial rule, as in New Caledonia and French Guyana, was also voiced in the 1990s by the CNT-F, and analyses of neo-colonialism and state capitalism in the new states of the Third World were presented by the AS publication, *Solidarité Ouvrière*, in the 1970s. In the early '60s, during the Algerian war, anarcho-syndicalists in France participated as well in large protest demonstrations.⁴¹



The CNT-AIT published two articles and a lengthy letter on Algeria at the end of the 1990s. The first, in the Summer 1998 issue of *Combat Syndicaliste*, discussed the relative strengths of popular support for the military regime and the radical Islamist insurgents. Based on rumor accounts to the writer from Algerian friends passing through France, the article focused on the Casbah section of Algiers, the traditional and most dense quarter of the city. In the legislative elections of December 1991, it said, a majority of Casbah voters supported the FIS. From 1994 on, the quarter was under intense police and military surveillance with close monitoring of the population and searches at the entries and exits. Nevertheless, armed Islamists maintained an active presence, carrying out assassinations of police, bombings of police stations, and other forms of sabotage against the regime. Contrary to usual media accounts, the population in the Casbah, as in other hot spots like Blida, Ben Talha, Shaoula, and Médéa, supported Islamist actions because they were decided jointly in grassroots meetings with the local population. Beginning in 1996, however, the army successfully rounded up much of the active Casbah insurgency through a perfected intense terror campaign against the population, forcing it through fear to change sides. But local residents also turned against the Islamists when, contrary to decisions of the general assemblies, they began assassinating civilians and merchants who refused to make payoffs. Imposing their own will over the values of the local population deprived

the armed Islamist movement, like the military regime, of active support. If an accurate account, said the writer, this contradicted common media suggestions of popular support for the religious component of the Islamists' anti-regime ideology.⁴²

A second article by the same author, apparently one year later after returning from a visit to Algiers and several southern towns, argued that the civil war itself provided the excuse for a massive pillage of the population by Islamists as well as the regime and its close supporters. The war was described as "state totalitarianism vs. religious totalitarianism" and "seven years of power struggles between clans," with official morgues estimating 200 people killed per day and some 500,000 deaths total.⁴³ It was unlikely to end before one side or the other had finished appropriating property for itself. Beyond the supposed ideological battle between Islamism and "democracy" was, in fact, "a cynical carving up of Algeria." A dynamic not covered by the media, was "the other face of this war, that of money, profit, exploitation, and pillage."

"Caliph" Boumédiène and his military regime, the writer said, could reign without political instability. Despite gross inequality, because of income from petrochemical exports, people didn't starve at least. The state subsidized prices for basic products, and schooling and medical services were free. But with the context of globalization and its demands on Algeria, the current regime welcomed the power struggle, since "nothing inhibits more than fear. 'Terror keeps people quiet,' many dictators will tell you." Because of the war, the IMF was able to quietly impose its restructuring of the Algerian economy with market liberalization, privatization, firing of workers, and a freer climate for foreign investment.

In the sites of petrochemical concessions to Americans, Italians, French, Canadians, and Germans, "there are no assassination attempts, no Islamist road barricades, no butchery, and no carnage." In these self-contained enclaves, Americans rely on their own security force and no Algerians can enter without proper credentials. With gold deposits discovered in the mid-Sahara, Algeria set up a mining concession with South Africans. Meanwhile, even more concessions are being explored by Americans, Canadians, and Australians, while multinationals such as Coca-Cola and Daewoo are now well implanted. At the same time, domestically, the military and others of the regime have monopolized control of all the large market sectors, such as housing, pharmaceuticals, coffee, sugar, and bananas.

Said the writer, thanks to the war and the IMF, inflation has risen to an impossible level for most people and it's still mounting. "Poverty has taken over everywhere, wiping out the middle class. There are the rich, the very rich, the average poor and those who are totally destitute. The gap between rich and poor has widened at a staggering pace." A monthly minimum wage is 5,000 Algerian dinars (about \$75 US, or about \$2.46

per day)⁴⁴ compared to 15,000 dinars (\$225 US) for someone in middle management. On the cost side, a baguette of bread is 9 dinars (13¢ US), a liter of milk is 22 dinars (33¢ US), a kilo of semolina grain is 40 dinars (60¢ US), dry vegetables are between 50 and 80 dinars (75¢ to \$1.20 US), a kilo of meat is 500 dinars (\$7.50 US), a chicken 150 dinars (\$2.25 US), and a simple drug prescription for flu is 1000 dinars (\$15 US), which social security compensates only 20–40 percent. Meanwhile, the state has increasingly removed itself from the public sectors of housing, health, jobs and education. A two-room apartment in a suburb of Algiers costs between 8,000–13,000 dinars (\$120–195 US) per month.

To get by, said the writer, the family network is essential. If no jobs are available, the young sell individual cigarettes or other blackmarket items, in the streets, along with old women and the very young selling bread, couscous and bits and pieces of other items. Begging has spread throughout all of Algiers in the past four years and there are more and more of the down and out, the mentally unstable, who yell out political speeches “that are not as incoherent as people might think.”

Things will only get worse. Those in power now have their eyes on privatizing and gaining control of land. Will it go to the peasants who were promised “land to those who work it” during the agrarian revolution? Or to those tribes of the pre-revolution days who held land as a community? Or to “the very wealthy connected to the regime (military and other mafias)?” What the press calls “the triangle of death” at present in the civil war is in fact the richest farmland in Algeria, the Mitidja plain near Algiers. “Is it a tactic of economic warfare to terrorize and massacre whole families in order to empty the land of its occupants and thus make it available to those who want to divide up the country for themselves?”

As a friend of the writer pointed out, the worst of all of this in Algeria is that the whole social tradition of solidarity, conviviality, warmth, and hospitality is being destroyed as people simply try to save themselves to get through the war. As Algerians thus become individualists, this is the final blow. “And individualism is one of the foundations of capitalism.”⁴⁵

Combat Syndicaliste published a letter in September 1999 from an Algerian militant of the autonomous university teachers union CNES (National Council of University Teachers). The writer reported that their struggle had gone on since 1991, primarily concerned with salary raises. When, in 1991, they held a peaceful demonstration in front of the government center, they were attacked violently by the police. As their economic situation deteriorated, they launched a three-month national strike in the middle of the university school year. Confronting intimidation, judicial proceedings,

salary blockages, and attempts to split the ranks, CNES decided to end the strike despite little gained.

The writer reported that in October 1998 a new national strike of about two-thirds of the 15,000 university teachers in the country began because of further worsened conditions. For three months, public media totally blacked out coverage of the strike despite numerous marches, demonstrations, and press releases about the issues. Though the majority of Algeria's 500,000 university students were thus deprived of courses, government authorities refused to acknowledge the strike except to block salaries. Though a new government cabinet opened the door to discussions, in the end the government refused any meaningful concession, apparently determined to block the success of any autonomous union outside of the regime-controlled UGTA. Teachers returned to work at the end of February.⁴⁶

Infos et Analyses Libertaires

BEGINNING IN 1981, SOUTHWESTERN GROUPS OF THE FÉDÉRATION Anarchiste began occasionally publishing a separate revue, *Infos et Analyses Libertaires*. During the next two decades, two articles concerned Algeria specifically. The first, in 1982, reviewed the post-independence retrospectives in special Algeria issues of French magazines, *Autrement* and *Temps Modernes*.

Ten years later, the same anarchist publication ran an extensive thirty-year retrospective article on Algeria by a writer from the FA "Groupe Albert Camus" of Toulouse. After a summary overview of the evolution of the Algerian nationalist movement through 1962, the author briefly described the establishment of the one-party state under Ben Bella and the opposition to it by Mohamed Boudiaf, Hocine Aït-Ahmed, and still-exiled Messali Hadj. All contestation ended, however, with the June 19, 1965 coup by Boumédiène. "The military installed themselves definitively in power, a totalitarian regime was established, and the state, army, and police organized society. The military security force tracked down opponents in Algeria and abroad and assassinated them: Mohammed Khider in 1967, Krim Belkacem in 1970, and Ali Mécili in 1987."⁴⁷

Following the economic shock of independence and the flight of *pieds-noirs*, said the writer, the tentative spontaneous *autogestion* efforts in the countryside and industrial sector "were rapidly taken back and muzzled by the regime. While the state ratified the *fait accompli*, it proclaimed decrees that established a framework and supervising agencies, thus quickly leading it down the path of a state-interventionist economy." The present crisis of the Algerian economy has several causes. It lacks enough technicians (more difficult to train than bureaucrats) and has a rigid and underused industrial structure. At the same time, it is far too dependent on petrochemical exports whose price on the international market cannot be controlled, as shown in

the price collapse of 1986. Algeria's annual debt service amounts to about 70 percent of its export income and it still must import huge amounts of its food supply. The GNP has fallen, the standard of living fell 8 percent in 1990, and inflation was 43 percent the following year. With a doubled population over the past two decades, there are 1.2 million unemployed, out of an active work force of about 6 million.

It is farcical, he said, for Algeria to proclaim itself a socialist country when, in 1984, the regime adopted a family code that places women's rights within a strict set of Muslim rules. These include the right for men of polygamy and unilateral divorce, discrimination in inheritance, the right of male supervision of women and the outlawing of marriage between Muslims and non-Muslims. Responding to Algerian women's egalitarian demands, leftist FLN coordinator chief Mohamed Salah Yahiaoui⁴⁸ simply dismissed them as "the sort of preoccupations found in the capitalist world, in reality derived from bourgeois attitudes lacking any social dimension and based on egoism and individualism." The claim to be a socialist country on the path of democratization is also farcical when the regime treats its youth in the same way Israel treats the Palestinians of the Intifada. The reality is a regime that confiscated the gains of independence and power for the benefit of the army and the state techno-bureaucrats who are solely concerned with maintaining their privileges, alongside a supposed all-powerful party that actually is reduced to a subtle game of competing tendencies.

He agreed that the bloody upheaval of October 1988 marked a setback for the regime.⁴⁹ The latter's nationalist and populist discourse had gradually replaced that of a worker-oriented Marxist language, but the same upheaval discredited this as well, thus leaving the door open to the religious populism of the mosques. Now, finally, the army has rid itself of Chadli, the last heir of the old guard FLN. It is now the army that sees itself as the direct guardian of order and political legitimacy. After the Islamist FIS political victory over the FLN in 1990's municipal elections throughout Algeria, the recently-appointed Minister of Defense Khaled Nezzar⁵⁰ clearly declared the military's intention to intervene, if necessary, "to re-establish order and unity and the restraint of force by law." But its peculiar respect for the law was well demonstrated in the forced removal of Chadli, the dissolution of the national assembly, and the creation of an unconstitutional State High Committee.

Ben Bella called for an Islamic socialism even from the time of independence, he said. He accepted the principle of Islam as the state religion and required religious teaching in the public schools. Boumédiène adopted the post-coup strategy of counter-balancing Marxist influence with Arabic and Muslim conservatism, thus gaining the support of *ulemas* wanting to spread their influence into "the realms of education and culture and anything concerning the family and supervision of morals." Responding to the "irreligious" takeover of land by Boumédiène's agrarian reform, victims

of these measures financed more mosques, and Islamist groups declared Islam as the only path to Algerian salvation. But the revolutionary creation of an Islamic republic in Iran in 1979 gave decisive encouragement and momentum to Islamists in Algeria.

He stated that battles between leftist and Islamist students and subsequent repression brought Islamists together behind the leadership of sheikhs Abdelatif Soltani and Ahmed Sahnoun, as well as Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj. The first armed Islamist organization was the MIA (Armed Islamic Movement), formed in 1981 by Mustapha Bouyali.⁵¹ It was suppressed and its chief killed in 1987, thereby providing an often-evoked martyr for the movement.

“It was the October 1988 insurrection that assured recognition of the Islamists as a political force. After this revolt of the young following twenty-five years living under military dictatorship, the desperate Chadli regime searched for representatives to negotiate with but found only Islamists who proclaimed themselves spokesmen for the insurgents”—specifically, Abassi Madani, Ali Belhadj, and Mahfoud Nahnah.⁵² Subsequently, taking advantage of the “democratic” opening by the regime, the militant League of the Da’wa was formed to bring about an Islamic order conforming to the Koran and the Sunna.⁵³ After some internal disagreements, Madani and Belhadj decided to create a mass radical Islamist political organization, the FIS. Importantly, the first large demonstration by the FIS occurred in December 1989 in response to secular and feminist demonstrations against Islamic violence. At this time, the FIS asserted its overall Islamist program and its specific vision about the place of women within it.

Said the writer, “the whole ideology of the FIS rests on simple or even simplistic ideas: Algerian society today is polluted because of its estrangement from the precepts of Islam. The solution is found in the dream of a return to the pure and holy origins, to a rebirth of the Muslim world by a return to the faith and strict obedience to religious rules.” The FIS concept of Islam is that of a total guide and explanation of all aspects of life, “in other words, a totalitarian concept.” In the longer range, it hopes for restoration of the Caliphate after ridding Algeria and the whole world’s Muslim community of the foreign concept of democracy. “It dreams of a world where the non-Muslim submits to the Muslim or is fought against. The individual freedom it seeks is that of submitting oneself to and obeying the Koran, the Sunna, and the Shari’a.” Everyone’s salvation depends on submission to God’s will and Islam incorporates all of God’s messages, to be changed by no one. “As the party of God, [the FIS] is by nature totalitarian.” Since the Algerian revolution was essentially Islamist, it said, but betrayed by political leaders after independence, the FIS is the rightful and sole heir of the revolution. Those who fight the FIS are fighting Islam and Islam is the lifeblood of Algerian society.

The basic question usually posed, he said, is whether the dangers of having the FIS come to power were greater than those of a new military coup. "Is it really a solution for maintaining the so-called democratic process in Algeria to cancel elections, dissolve the party that won, dissolve those municipal and departmental assemblies having properly elected FIS majorities, to arrest the leaders and cadres of that party,⁵⁴ to arrest hundreds of militants and place them in Saharan internment camps after confrontations that have left over a hundred dead over four months?" Surely the best way to gain mass confidence and support after their experience of unemployment and higher cost of living is not to condemn political opponents by military courts after depriving them of political rights, as the regime did with Mohammed Saïd, an FIS leader given a ten-year prison sentence. "Isn't this instead the surest way to throw the population into the arms of the bearded extremists?"

Boudiaf's assassination, he stated, was predictable in this climate of growing tensions and the spirit of martyrdom. His death and replacement by Ali Kaï⁵⁵ as president of the State High Committee "leaves the country in a state of crisis." Belaid Abdesslam,⁵⁶ the man Boumédiène chose to lead Algeria's rapid industrialization, is the new prime minister and has decided to impose on the country a "war economy" of further austerity and possible rationing in order to assure the payment of foreign debt.

To choose between the military coup d'état and the Islamist plague is not a true choice. After the collapse of the FLN's form of socialism, what path should be chosen? The Islamist path or the liberal capitalist path that leaves thousands of unemployed on the streets or rather a solution that appeals to the values of freedom, solidarity, and economic and political equality? May the Algerian people reject these religious or military authoritarianisms that only seek to enslave them. Perhaps, in their collective memory, they will remember the period after independence when attempts at direct management flourished and citizens themselves took their own interests in hand. It is at this price and only at this price that they will be able to attain the freedom to which they aspired in the struggle against French colonialism.⁵⁷

OCL

THE OCL'S JOURNAL, *Courant Alternatif*, PUBLISHED A DETAILED article on the November 1995 presidential election in Algeria and the violent political context in which the polling would occur. A brief introduction readily conveyed OCL's overall perspective: Algerians have "the choice between four candidates coming from different perspectives, but brought

together in the same masquerade by a same abuse of authority or collusion with the military-mafia regime which has ruled over Algeria since 1954.”

As an admirer of Khomeini, said the article, modernist Islamist and bureaucrat Nourredine Boukrouh calls for the privatization of the public sector and keeping the sexist family code, but opposes an Islamic state. In the legislative elections of December 1991, he gained less than 1 percent of the vote.⁵⁸ Mahfoud Nahnah is a moderate Islamist, jailed by Boumédiène during the 1970s. He believes that Algerian democracy allows free expression and that the justice system should be allowed to deal with political prisoners. Though his party received barely 2 percent of the vote in 1991, he publicly stated that he was now chosen to represent different social sectors as well as moderate Muslims. “But by whom was he chosen as candidate? By the regime, of course!”⁵⁹

A third candidate, it reported, is Dr. Saïd Sadi, a modernist republican and strong proponent of the Berber movement, now supported by Algerian Communists. He was imprisoned several times in the past, though since 1988 has been used by the regime. At the time of the October 1988 confrontations, he was called in by the secretary general of Chadli’s presidency, General Larbi Belkheir.⁶⁰ To divide and weaken Aït-Ahmed’s FFS, he was encouraged to form a new party, RCD (Rally for Democracy and Culture), a virtual clone of the FFS. But his party received less than 2 percent of the vote in 1991 and Sadi himself was even defeated in his own hometown, despite military assistance. By rejecting absolutely any negotiated solution to the present crisis, the RCD could open the path for radical Islamists to take power, the opposite of what Sadi stands for.⁶¹

Finally, next to the three others who together represented no more than 5 percent of the votes in 1991, is the incumbent general Liamine Zeroual. From the eastern part of Algeria, he symbolizes the two traits of those bloody leaders who have ruled Algeria since 1954; the product of a coup d’état and now uses de Gaulle’s 1958 tactic of legitimization by plebiscite.

The setting for this election is horrendous, said the writer, with 45,000 deaths caused by this war since January 1992, between completely barbaric and uncontrollable armed Islamist groups and the criminal and totalitarian Algerian army. For the occasion of the election, there are 300,000 men in the street armed by the state, between career or conscripted soldiers, police, militia, and members of the special intervention group (the Algerian GPU or Gestapo). “This means one man armed by the state for every 100 Algerians or 50 voters.” It is also a setting of pre-famine economic violence. Meanwhile, the radio and TV media “play their role as watchdogs for the regime, using the same types of propaganda as unfortunately used with success by Hitler and Stalin.” Even meetings for official candidates are sometimes banned. Public statements by the parties of the Rome pact, the FFS, FLN, and FIS, are all banned as well. PT (Workers Party)⁶² militants have

likewise been arrested and independent newspapers suspended. With these conditions, the appeal for boycotting the election could hardly be heard. "In this context," observed the writer, "the population is exhausted from all the violence. The need for peace and security has fallen into the trap set by Liamine Zeroual and, behind him, the army." And genuine potential competitors, like R dha Malek and Taleb Ibrahim, ⁶³ were pushed aside.

As for Algerians in France, stated the writer, they were motivated to vote in order to counter the media image of them as only terrorists. The images of huge crowds to vote at the consulates certainly caused a reaction in Algeria, but there is also a specific context that should be explained. In fact, the second Algerian war has been exported to France just as the first one was. In the latter case, the FLN eliminated its opposition in Algeria and France both. At present, in France, there's a wave of bombings ⁶⁴ and assassinations by radical Islamists. Chirac came to power in France and it seems that French policy toward Algeria has changed. Instead of imprisoning radical Islamists, France gives resident cards to their leaders, while also receiving Algerian Interior Minister Saadi and Algerian military chiefs. It sends ambassadors to Rabah K bir, ⁶⁵ the FIS representative in Germany, and signs agreements with the radical Islamist leader in Sudan in order to assure peace within France. This reminds us that the Algerian question is not only an issue for Algerians, but also for France, Britain, and the United States who support the Islamists of Saudi Arabia against Communism. And since Algeria has its supplies of natural gas and oil, business deals have gone well since 1992. France is one of the biggest supports of the regime with huge annual aid, training programs for Algerian police and military, and the sale of counter-guerrilla supplies.

According to the writer, another reason for the attacks in France is that Algerians here have become a stake in the campaign and the war, a zone of struggle and competing influence. The arranged meeting of Zeroual with Chirac must be analyzed as part of a large puzzle. ⁶⁶ Zeroual needed to show that he was recognized at the international level and Chirac needed to show action in stopping the attacks. But Chirac has responded with "Vigipirate," his national security alert system, ⁶⁷ and his 16,000 expulsions. His actions suggest that all North Africans are potential terrorists. A well-publicized target of the anti-terrorism campaign was Kelkal, a street kid tracked down by 700 paratroopers just like in the images of the Algerian war. Assassinated so he wouldn't talk, the kid's body was displayed for all the TV viewers, one more victim of French police (and now army) repression against North African youth. Lies have accompanied this whole affair and still continue. ⁶⁸

Meanwhile, the article reported, the media are filled with voices demanding even more repression. These include Jean Emile Vi , former officer during the Algerian war, who denounced the French haven for North

Africans, demanded emergency laws to restrict individual freedoms, the prevention of dual nationalities and creation of a specialized anti-terrorism force. Another such voice is Paul Lambert, distributor of an anti-immigrant brochure published by his “Renaissance 95” association. Likewise, Justice Minister Toubon proposed a law with further emergency measures such as forbidding, as “terrorism” in itself, assisting any foreigner into the country. The mixture of immigration and terrorism issues is meant thus to manipulate a confused public opinion to justify and support the types of raids used during the Vichy regime and the Algerian war.

“Thus, whether in Algeria or France, said the OCL writer, the Algerian people are further entrapped, forever victimized by the same violence. But it is true that this story began in 1830.”⁶⁹

In its October 1997 issue, *Courant Alternatif* published an article by Jean-Louis Hurst (1935–), a co-founder of Jeune Résistance during the Algerian war, concerning the role of the French Communist party during that period. Hurst was incensed that present-day Communists have encouraged others to believe that the party was militantly involved in opposing the war, that it helped stop trains and boats carrying soldiers to that conflict (they did this during the earlier Indochina war), or that the high point of Paris police violence was at the spring 1962 anti-OAS demonstration, led by the Communist party, rather than the October 17, 1961 FLN demonstration, which the Communists avoided. It is true that many spontaneously anti-colonial youth, when about to be drafted for military service in Algeria, chose to join the Communist party because of its antiwar past where Indochina was concerned, but, like many others, they soon discovered that they had been deceived.

Said Hurst, with a fellow party involved (and Ho Chi Minh had actually participated in the 1920 founding meeting of the French Communist party) and a colonial insurgency far from the shores of France, French Communists found it easy to take an oppositional stand. But an anti-colonial war across the Mediterranean from France, in a colonial context with one million Europeans, was a different story. In the meantime, it took twenty years for the French Communist party to pass on to *pied-noirs*, and then to Algerians themselves, control of the Algerian Communist party it had started in 1936. Even then, certain local sections of the latter, as in Bab-el-Oued and Sidi-bel-Abbès, issued racist statements and finished by siding with the OAS, while sections in the Aurès and the eastern suburb of Algiers rallied to the national liberation struggle in 1956.

Contrary to the apparent belief of many French Communists, he said, Messali Hadj and the PPA were not friends of Hitler, and the more

moderate elements of Algerian nationalism, such as Ferhat Abbas, were attracted to Roosevelt. But the definitive dénouement was the French massacre of 45,000 Algerians in early May 1945. The French Communist party interpreted the Algerian demonstrations as a sign of pro-Nazi sentiment, and Algeria was not deemed ready, in any case, for a revolution until it was achieved in France itself. For Algerian nationalists, in turn, it became impossible to trust the French Communist party. The Algerian Communist party, however, began to act autonomously with its three Algerian leaders, Sadek Hadgeres, Boualem Khalfa, and Bachir Hadj Ali.⁷⁰ Bombs were produced for its own use or for the FLN. In the Chelif Valley (to the west of Algiers), Algerian Communist party members attempted to set up a maquis of their own, intending to join up with the FLN's *wilaya* IV, but this was crushed by the *harki* Bachaga Boualem.⁷¹

The French Communist party, he asserted, didn't know what to make of the November 1954 insurrection. They still had suspicions of a Nazi residue and were also wary of the United States trying to encourage such rebellion as a way to expand its influence at the expense of France. Nevertheless, once army reservists were called up, people in the Young Communists organization began to develop support committees and encourage resistance. After the "peace coalition" of Socialists, Communists, and republican Radicals was elected in 1956, Prime Minister Guy Mollet reversed his position and asked for a massive infusion of French troops into Algeria. About a third of the Communist deputies wanted to oppose it, but they were called into line based on the need to maintain party unity and the overall governing alliance. Nevertheless, there were some three months of demonstrations—trains burned in Grenoble, concrete poured over railroad track switches in Valence, and a sit-in at the port of Marseille. But military orders prevailed, and there were second thoughts by resisters, in any case, when photos circulated in May showing the mutilated bodies of dead French soldiers ambushed in Algeria.

From that point on, there was a four-year "curtain of silence" about Algeria. "Only a few humanists dared to speak about torture and fascism." The Communist party refused to do more than appeal generally for peace in Algeria. But gradually, young intellectuals began an active resistance, as with the Jeanson network of *porteurs de valises* and Jeune Résistance, which became publicly known at the time of arrests in the spring of 1960. But the Communist party itself, aside from some particular individuals, refused to give any assistance to the FLN and expelled those who did as well as those who deserted the draft.

Like himself, Hurst said, many young Communists formed or joined the new Jeune Résistance movement, and a third of French students claimed to be part of it by the end of 1960. As well, Jeune Résistance also had the understood support of the Italian, Spanish, and Belgian Communist parties.

Meanwhile, wrote Hurst, the October 17, 1961 massacre of peaceful Algerian demonstrators in the streets of Paris caused little attention or protest. Finally, just one month before the cease-fire agreement of March 1962, the Communist party called for a demonstration against the OAS, which had recently exploded a bomb that wounded a young girl. The anti-riot police were there, and their aggressive actions led to nine martyrs at the Charonne metro station. Finally, the Communist party could say, “I was there.” As the Chinese Communists said in 1963, the French Communist party’s stance during the Algerian war was “a typical case of social chauvinism.”⁷²



The March 1998 issue of *Courant Alternatif* ran a five-page interview on the situation of Algerian youth in the midst of war and poverty with Hakim Addad, the secretary-general of an independent organization, RAJ (Youth-Action-Rally), founded in 1993. As of the previous November, RAJ had thousands of members and sympathizers throughout Algeria, where 75 percent of the population is under 35 years of age, where young people have an unemployment rate over 50 percent, and where 500,000 of youth are not in school each year. RAJ’s president, Dalila Taleb, was elected on the FFS line to the Algerian National Assembly in 1997. While the article essentially consisted of Addad’s statements, the factual material and perspectives offered—as well as the fact that the OCL decided to feature it—justifies inclusion here without pretending that it represents an anarchist orientation. In their view, RAJ “struggles at the grassroots level for peace and against all forms of exclusion within an Algeria that is in full civil war.”

RAJ’s members, said the article, include high school and university students, as well as young workers and unemployed. It seeks to eliminate the barriers dividing young people by religion, politics, ideology, or social class; to struggle against anti-youth bias by the regime, at the workplace, and in the schools; and to influence policy toward young people at every level. Algerian youth have been in great distress in their home country for a number of years. With little opportunity, many would like to emigrate rather than face possible violent deaths, but the number of visas is limited. In desperation and with hatred toward the regime, some have been lured by promises of rewards once the FIS comes to power or rewards in heaven. After the regime’s coup d’état of January 1992, many left the cities for the maquis, where they’ve been used by the radical Islamists of various kinds for their own purposes.

Other youth, the article reported, have tried to get by through the drug trade or small black-market vending of import items, thus enriching that mafia connected to the regime. Others have tried to keep the October 1988 dream alive by joining associations or political parties or creating their own

groups. There are now many social and cultural groups at local and national levels. Despite violence against them from various sources, or repression by the state toward those hostile to the regime, they continue to flourish and provide a democratic political culture of mutual aid and solidarity. All of this is aimed at the goal of a radical change of the system of political power in Algeria since 1962.

In the climate of violence, it said, it is difficult for RAJ to be too activist. Nevertheless, throughout the country, it has sponsored cultural events with young artists and musicians and debates on such issues as human rights, the role of women, free speech, education, unemployment, and drug addiction—occasions that are genuine schools of democracy. With its high school section, RAJ sponsored many local and national meetings on the rights and responsibilities of high school students and other issues for this age group, and submitted detailed policy proposals to the government. RAJ also circulated a petition with thousands of signatures demanding peace from the regime and opposition. This month and a half campaign culminated with a concert for over 10,000 persons in June 1995. Nevertheless, RAJ continues to be repressed, as with its effort to have a third festival in October 1995. Two years later, another RAJ effort to commemorate October 1988, this time with a sit-in before the National Assembly, was forbidden by the authorities. And the regime refuses to rent any meeting space to RAJ except in Algiers.

It takes time to influence young people's perspectives, said Addad, but RAJ attempts to offer opportunities for frank and open discussion whatever ideologies people may bring. It may be difficult for an Islamist, for example, to speak openly with a female or to discuss AIDS, but over time he may sometimes see the need to work together with people of different opinions. For the past two years, RAJ has held a "summer university" in September where a hundred youth from all over the country come to hear speakers discuss such issues as the national independence movement, the effect of globalization on Algeria, human rights, privatization, and youth movements in other countries. Audio and video tapes from these events are then sent all over Algeria for local meetings and debates. RAJ's campaigns concerning very taboo subjects in Algeria, such as AIDS and contraception, have been very promising. Such discussions commonly bring up issues of religion, as well, and RAJ has tried to educate people that secularism does not necessarily imply atheism. RAJ also tries to provide some general education opportunities for young people outside the school system, but it's impossible to compete resources-wise with the widespread and state-subsidized mosques that offer similar assistance (and often religious indoctrination as well).

None of the past regimes in Algeria, it was stated, have succeeded with their top-down socialist policies. Solutions are posed by the autonomous

trade unions, political parties, and social organizations, but the regime has everything in their hands. And repression affects also the autonomous and local unions that wish to organize demands and strikes. The strikes sometimes go on for months and tend to concern both wages (increases and simply being paid at all) and firings.

In the public sector, Addad said, workers attempt, when possible, focused strikes and sit-ins. In 1996, there were over 7,000 strikes. Workers' demands should be looked after by UGTA, but UGTA's leadership is more concerned with politics and playing the game of the regime's clans than in defending workers' interests. Over the years, UGTA has accepted the regime's policy of transferring enterprises from the public to the private sector. Nevertheless, at the UGTA base, workers are doing what they can at the local or enterprise level, but their movement has little chance of any gains while the war continues. The country has been under a state of emergency for the past five years, which has allowed the government to outlaw any protests, demonstrations, or meetings among workers and the general population. This is why the first priority today is to end the war and re-establish basic freedoms.

It is true, he said, that the regime fears a revival of the social forces behind the democratic movement. This is definitely why the regime has not done anything seriously to end the civil war. But the role of some of the French press needs to be questioned. At the time of massacres, the press from the whole world—especially from France—came to Algeria to find bloody images, but after the October 1997 regional and municipal election masquerade, there were three weeks of demonstrations in the streets and the press ignored it. Is it that the French media regard Algeria worthy of coverage only when Algerians cut each other's throats but not when people mobilize the population for democracy? The regime also tries to discredit the opposition with its public media monopoly. The Algerian opposition, what remains of civil society, and the population generally, showed their power during the three weeks of demonstrations. They united to demand a revision of the election results despite their basic divisions (including Islamists, eradicators, and reconciliators). For thousands of people to mobilize and march together in a dictatorship, even without gaining their immediate objective, is quite promising.

In the words of the very popular Rai singer, Cheb Hasni, assassinated in 1994, "there is still hope, it is never too late."⁷³ There is hope for a return to peace because of the efforts of national and international organizations and public opinion. It is also hopeful to see political parties and youth associations finally acting to raise the consciousness of the young about democratic ideas and tolerance of others who disagree. This is what RAJ is committed to. First peace, then democracy, then social justice, these are RAJ's goals and for which so many have died. The hope is to find a third

alternative to the plague and cholera, to encourage a passion for life, to be victorious. "This third alternative, that of truth, began with October 1988 and nothing and no one can stop it."⁷⁴

Seven months later, *Courant Alternatif* focused on the assassination of very popular Kabyle singer Matoub Lounès⁷⁵ to analyze further the continuing context of violence, as well as the Berber Culture Movement. Matoub was a longtime militant for the causes of secularism, Berber culture, and official recognition of the Berber language. He participated in the Berber Spring of 1980, was wounded by the police in the confrontations of October 1988, and was kidnapped and held for two weeks by the GIA in 1994. His assassination on June 25 occurred just a few days before the official date of total, forced Arabization.⁷⁶ "This crime sheds more light on the fate that the Islamo-Baathist regime reserves for those with democratic aspirations, especially concerning Berber demands." Within several hours of his murder being announced, Kabylia was again afire.

For several months, said the *Courant Alternatif* writer, Algeria has lost its status as number one news story in the French media. According to the commentators, peace, and tranquility are gradually taking over. In such messages, the same line is curiously presented across the board, and now once again concerning the death of Matoub Lounès. Concerning first Matoub's personality, he is presented as someone who loved to take risks and flirt with danger. RCD Deputy Noureddine Aït Hamouda, the "witness" most interviewed in the matter, confirmed those images. The fact that he was armed was referenced as if to prove that he looked everywhere for a fight, and thus died—supposedly as he wished—in action.

Concerning the crime itself: Apparently everyone in the media believes it was the GIA. Aït Hamouda is even cited as knowing this because he recognized the individuals involved, persons he sat near in school as kids. The assassination, he said, was set up by the trap of a false road barricade. Other supposed witnesses of the same political orientation claimed that he was followed by car from Tizi-Ouzou and then machine-gunned to death. A third account stated that he fell into a GIA ambush. "Democratic" politicians collaborating with the regime (the RCD) have never stopped blaming the radical Islamists and treating the other "democratic" camp (the FFS) as vultures. As if on command, the major media have claimed that Matoub was executed by the GIA, thus not by the regime.

It is certainly possible and even probable that GIA members actually pulled the trigger. "But it is well-known that the radical Islamists have been substantially beaten in the war for a number of months. The question is why does its defeat take so long or, more precisely, why does the regime

not want the war to end.” Scattered groups here and there could easily be overcome by the enormous strength of the regime. “However, one should know that the GIA has been strongly infiltrated by the Algerian military security force. The regime, or at least some parts of it, are able to manipulate these armed groups as they wish and they do so. This is proven by the fact that the GIA bomb expert, Kamel TNT, was in the military security force and under special mission orders.” This strategy of terror by the regime is used to silence those with social demands during this period when the social support system is dismantling, as pushed by the IMF.

Shocked and angry demonstrators, he said, soon gathered in Tizi-Ouzou and immediately accused the regime with slogans of “assassin regime, assassin Zeroual.” The Minister of Health, who came to the bedside of Matoub’s wounded wife, was himself almost lynched. Despite all the repressive measures taken, including the use of helicopters, anti-riot trucks, and shooting with live bullets, the streets of Kabyle towns were filled with youth confronting the military. “The choice of vandalized buildings was eloquent: courts of law, town halls, banks, and regional government offices,” but three young demonstrators have died to date. At Bougie in Petite Kabylia, thousands of people gathered at the appeal of the MCB and a student collective. Various speakers for the first time publicly suggested the idea of Kabyle autonomy. The MCB spoke of the looming implementation of the Arabization policy, an intentional provocation by the regime, and warned that the regime would be responsible for any consequences of this assassination.

“For the first time, the regime seems directly implicated in the assassination of a public figure, in this case the standard bearer of Berber demands.” For several weeks, rumors of assassinations of intellectuals again were circulating, a new step in the civil war.⁷⁷

This summer article was followed several months later by a further detailed analysis of the question of Algerian cultural identity and the politics of Arabization. This important ingredient of the present multi-dimensional Algerian crisis, said the writer, actually has deep and ancient roots. Though Berber demands have been massive and forceful for the past two decades, Arabization has evolved from the stage of hegemony to the current stage (since the July 5, 1998 law) of exclusive monopoly.

The article went on to describe the colonial context by the 1920s as having apparently locked up a French model of culture, education, and state. The political system before French colonization was a loose control by Ottoman Turks, designed to pillage the countryside with heavy taxes and without schools for those outside the elite class. Unfortunately, said the writer, Messali’s 1926 ENA program emphasized restoration of the Arabic language and Islam to their proper roles, as well as national independence, but without the same priority emphasis on freedom from economic

imperialism. In any case, it was a deceptive model since classical Arabic had never been used in Algeria by the vast majority. As for Islam, it was viewed primarily in defensive terms, a matter of uniting Algerians together against the French and their religion.

At the same time, however timidly, said the writer, a Berber cultural awakening was also taking place, especially among Kabyle researchers and teachers. By far, the best known was Saïd Boulifa⁷⁸ with his work on the Berber language, but others were producing language studies, poetry, and sociological works as well. Nevertheless, it was difficult to compete with the Arabic language, given the few resources and means of communication available. Realistically, the early political battles about identity between Arab/Muslim and Berber/materialist were often battles between political leaders. The best examples were the struggles between Messali and his Kabyle lieutenant Amar Imache,⁷⁹ for the former and latter identities respectively. The same conflict between young radical Kabyle militants and Messali was at stake during the Berberist crisis of 1949. "The problem was resolved through the physical liquidation of Berber militants."

This problem was linked, he said, with the emergence of pan-Arabism in the Middle East. The pan-Arab proponents in Algeria were the *ulema*—well read but isolated from scientific and philosophical developments elsewhere in the world, just like today's Taliban movement in Afghanistan. Their best-known leader was Ben Badis, a man who had never dared to offend the colonial regime and who subsequently became a hero of official Algerian history. The Association of Ulema wanted the teaching of classical Arabic in Algeria. They were reform-minded, not striving for independence. Ben Badis was allowed to open several Arabic *madrasas* in Constantine since they were not at all subversive of the colonial order. After independence, the influence of such schools became enormous. Though for many centuries Algeria was under Muslim (and thus Arab) domination, and later under the Turks, there was nothing from those models that the nationalist movement or present regimes have chosen to imitate. As well, the modest *ulema* influence tended to be confined to eastern Algeria. Thus, in the writer's view, somewhat more vigorous political effort by Berberist materialists could have definitely changed the nature of present day Algeria.

After independence, said the writer, those, such as the *ulema*, who wanted Arabization, were surrounded by a massive French-speaking context. The *ulema* were joined by new cadres from Koranic schools and *madrasas* and by intellectuals from Arab universities, often with religious or literary education. They had great contempt for the "primitive" colloquial Arabic dialect spoken by the vast majority since it was "polluted" with Latin-based words. The francophones at the head of state, after struggling for national independence, could not help but feel guilty. While Arab

identity was a basis of their own legitimacy, they didn't use the language. Thus began the trend toward Arabization, beginning with Ben Bella giving his first speeches in classical Arabic, though drafted originally in French.

Algerian governments for the next two decades had a mixed composition, he said, but the key ministerial posts went to the francophones and the lesser ministries (as with education, religion, and veterans affairs) to Arabic speakers. After that time, the latter group prevailed more generally, but in the meantime, the education sector had been left to those oriented toward Arabization, "the most backward elements of the country," a critical strategic mistake by the francophiles. As a result, the teaching of Algerian history has neglected a huge fundamental part of the past, beginning only with the supposed liberating arrival of the Arabs. These developments explain the roots of the present irrationality.

"Algerian Arabic, like Creole, is an original mixture of Arabic, Turkish, Berber, French, Spanish, and Italian. This language (along with Berber) is the authentic language of Algerians." If it had been given the educational attention it deserved, it would today be a very useful tool for communication. Despite huge sums allocated for promoting classical Arabic, contrary to real education, those in the Algiers working-class districts of Bab-el-Oued and Belcourt cannot always understand the language spoken in television news. In the end, if the Baathists have brought Arabization to the heart of the regime, they've lost the battle at the grassroots. Algerian Arabic, Berber (essentially the Kabyle version), and French are used in philosophical or technical discussions—never classical Arabic.⁸⁰

Leaving the arabophones to pursue their own ideas, he said, was not possible for Berbers, especially Kabyles. In actuality, they are the victims of Arabization since their language is used only marginally in official media. And the situation gets worse each year. Meanwhile, the regime's arrogant speeches about everything non-Arab only provokes Kabyles to become more radical. "From 1962 to 1980, the official line was even that the Berber language was created by the French! In this circumstance, one can only view the regime as a type of fascism."

Until 1968, he reported, Arabic was only taught as a second language. But Arabization was extending its roots, since the first to be taught were those in the earliest grades of school. In 1968, Boumédiène imposed Arabization on public officials, requiring them to learn enough classical Arabic within three years to carry out their official duties in that language. To assist with this effort, Syrians and Egyptians were brought in, but their language skills were limited and their teaching abilities non-existent, and in fact they mainly spread their Islamist ideology since most were members of the Muslim Brotherhood. Realistically, "they represented a cultural and linguistic neo-colonialism." The Baathists had taken control of the education and public administration sectors without challenge.

While Baathists present Arabization as a struggle of Arabic language versus French, he stated, the issue is actually used demagogically to attack France and those in Algeria who use French. Such people are denounced as *hizb frança*, those of the party of France. But this battle conceals another against those who wish to use their maternal language, especially Berber. How ironic it is that this policy of a single linguistically unified country imitates the French *Jacobin* centralist model. But at least in France, said the writer, the French language has a local base within the country, though alongside others such as Breton and Occiton that should not be dominated. But in the Algerian case, classical Arabic is an import without a native base, a graft that continues to be rejected.

Algerian intellectuals, he claimed, especially journalists under orders, have supported this policy that ultimately will counter their own interest when they fail to convert, but they secretly hope the policy will be reversed on its own. The worst opportunists, in this regard, are the pseudo-vanguardists who today complain of Islamist attacks against them while for so long they played games of hide-and-go-seek with these enemies within the regime. "Even today, few intellectuals take responsibility for themselves on this issue. The Kateb Yacines are a rare race in Algeria."⁸¹

As for the opposition parties, he said, "they were worse than pathetic." The PRS of Boudiaf in the '70s was much influenced by Maoism. In 1980, the PRS dissolved after Boudiaf sent a note of support to the regime during the Berber crisis. The PRS totally supported Arabization, but just wanted it introduced in a complementary way with socialist ideals. The FFS was originally totally silent on the issue. The party itself disappeared into exile after Aït-Ahmed's escape from prison in 1966. It strangely was not reactivated until three months after Boumédiène's death. Since then, however, the party has taken courageous positions on the linguistic issue. PAGS has advocated a progressive Arabization, but this position is typical of this party that is generally one war behind. It also has the nerve to call itself one of the first defenders of the Berber language. Like opportunists generally, without political courage, this Stalinist party adopts its positions according to the advantage of the moment. The only organization to struggle directly against Arabization was the Berber Academy, but it had only limited means and suffered repression as well. Its director, Mohand Arab Bessaoud,⁸² and others sent publications to Algeria from European exile and were the only ones, whatever their ideological excesses, to denounce Boumédiène's Arabization program.

When the high schools began quickly developing Arabization, he reported, many students rejected that "sentence" and were expelled. Then it was the universities' turn, and Philosophy and Sociology, areas to support ideology, were the first to be totally taught in Arabic. As teachers had to adapt, frequently the substantive quality was lowered. Scientific subjects

remained as French-language areas. When the first Arabic-taught graduates entered the job market at the end of the '70s, jobs couldn't be found, so those promoting Arabic demanded that such be created for their particular qualifications. To push these demands, they organized several weeks of demonstrations in 1979, with the quiet support of some in the regime, despite a ban on such gatherings and the threat of five-year prison terms. Of course, such bans were enforced selectively, as shown during the Berber Spring that followed the victory of the Arabizers.

The regime then realized, stated the writer, that such people were unqualified for professional positions; even after university studies, graduates could still not speak classical Arabic well, let alone use it in daily life. They then instituted a pedagogical reform of basic learning skills, such as used for adults learning a foreign language. But such an approach only increased the level of ignorance Algeria has today. The destructiveness of this approach was enormous and criminal. Suddenly, young schoolchildren were brought to a condition of structural near-illiteracy, and Algeria will pay dearly for generations for this policy still in place today.

The only group in Algeria resisting this Arabization policy, he said, is the people of Kabylia, and their resistance is massive and non-violent. The demonstrations of the Berber Spring were unprecedented in the period since independence. But the defiant street demonstrations of the young were met by repression. Afterward, the regime decided to open a dialogue on national cultural policy with meetings and debates in Algiers and Kabylia. Though the process showed huge support for officializing the Berber language, in the end the regime adopted a "cultural charter" more oppressive than ever. Claiming that the charter incorporated the ideas of the dialogue, the regime shut the door on any further discussion, a height of provocation.

A new wave of resistance, he described, thus sprung up (in 1981), first in Bgayet (Bougie), the principal city of Petite Kabylia, and later in the Soummam Valley to the west. Though the media failed to report much about this, due to the region's relative isolation, in fact this movement became just as powerful as the Berber Spring a year earlier. But again the regime ignored demands and blamed demonstrations on secret agents trying to divide the nation. Its only concessions came after the MCB organized a giant demonstration of 500,000 people in front of the National Assembly. These minor concessions—the creation of two Berber departments in two universities and three minutes of news commentary in Berber on television—were designed simply to appease the movement in the short-run while neutralizing Berber resistance over time. A subsequent year-long boycott of schools in Kabylia organized by the MCB gained the concession of a High Berber Commission,⁸³ but the regime refused official recognition of the language in the constitution, education, law courts, and public offices. Now, after

Matoub's recent assassination, the regime is viewed with more contempt than ever. Arabization has followed its logical path since the 1930s.

What then has been gained, he asked, by all the letters, delegations, debates, street demonstrations, and recent revolts, aside from a couple of small, shadowy institutes that will disappear with the slightest serious challenge?

The fundamental dynamic of the different protest struggles has always been the naïve hope that Algerian authorities could be convinced to take charge of the teaching of the Berber language (Tamazight). In what country, in democratic times, could a year-long boycott of schools not produce results? This stubborn refusal to admit *genuinely* the Berber reality is due neither to matters of chance (such as the need to prioritize the anti-Islamist struggle, since Islamists are already in power as shown in school curricula and TV content) nor by the desire to avoid offending whatever faction at the top of the state. This refusal is a visceral rejection.

It is impossible to negotiate with the different teams that have come to power since they are all committed to annihilate the Berber fact. "Thus, Berbers should consider the regime a mortal enemy." Since last July, except for the best cadres of Algeria, total Arabization is no longer an abstract concept but an actual reality.

The two Berber parties, the RCD and FFS, he said, have failed to make any headway in this matter, much to the chagrin of those who had hopes in them. In fact, they themselves have been domesticated, now having their deputies speak in only classical Arabic in the National Assembly, even though they're capable of only an approximate Algerian Arabic dialect. The new law thus applies to them directly. Today, therefore, is a critical moment for the Berber language that finds itself in shrinking space geographically. The language has no support like the former Academy and is thus falling apart. The sometimes utopian hope to assure the life of this language is now fifty years old.

The time for demands to the regime, he asserted, should be recognized as over. The only way to save the language is by direct action of Kabylia itself, separate from the regime. Of course, the latter will try to overturn any such efforts, even by shaking the whole region with violence, so Kabyles should re-enforce their abilities in pacifist resistance. Meanwhile, other regions of Algeria (Berber or otherwise) ought to begin detaching themselves from the power of the central regime. At present, the writer says in an accurate forecast of coming events, only Kabylia is likely to take this course, without which it risks losing its own unique culture.⁸⁴

The same issue of *Courant Alternatif* also ran two short articles by other organizations, “CIMADE” and the trade union “SUD-Rail,” concerning the vulnerable status of Algerians in France and those who wish to emigrate. CIMADE, the Committee against French Expulsions of Immigrants, again reminded readers of the reality of the Algerian civil war: an estimated 70,000 deaths in six years. France, like most European countries, has shown a mounting indifference to the ever-greater plight of Algerians. From 800,000 visas granted by France in 1989, the total by 1996 was only 40,000. Despite the promises of the left in power for a liberalization of visa policy, nothing has changed. Likewise, only 9 percent of Algerian requests for asylum were granted, compared to 17 percent for other nationalities. Expulsions have also increased, now at a rate of thirty per week. Algerians are the largest group in the retention centers (over 2,100 in 1997), which are like modern concentration camps. At present, there’s a new wave of suicide and self-mutilation attempts as a final effort to avoid expulsion. Many organizations have joined together in the campaign for the right of asylum and an end to the return of refugees and those who already served jail time in France.⁸⁵

Informations et Réflexions Libertaires/La Gryffe

THE SOUTHEASTERN FRENCH CITY OF LYON HAS HAD A LIVELY anarchist community for many decades. Largely independent of the national anarchist federations, Lyon anarchists of several orientations established a succession of anarchist collectivities from the early ’70s and, from 1984 on, a local federation of different groups and individuals with a variety of interrelated activities. These included an anarchist magazine, *Informations et Réflexions Libertaires: Journal d’Expressions Libertaires* (IRL), from 1975 to 1991 (with Paris anarchists as well) and an anarchist publishing group, Atelier de Création Libertaire (1979 to the present). Other anarchist groups belonging to the local *Coordination Libertaire* by the mid-’80s included one for anarchist women, another for anarcho-syndicalists, a third for high-school anarchists, and a neighborhood collective. Some local anarchists were also involved at that time in squats, an anti-militarism collective, the local anarcho-punk “Haine Brigade,” and an anarchist bookstore, La Gryffe (1978 to the present). Rooted in a rich tradition of different Lyon-area anarchist experiences (including the Lyon Commune of 1870–71, in which Bakunin was a leader), the anarchist milieu was re-enforced by events of May 1968 and afterward.

A new generation of militants emerged “from the fringes of the May movement, becoming anarchists after confronting Marxism and its organizations, and thus very distrustful of purely ideological groups. They were permanently convinced of the possibilities for mass direct action and the practical reality of anarchist ideas of self-organization and anarchist

spontaneity. At the same time, they strongly rejected identifying anarchism with structures that aimed primarily to perpetuate anarchist memories." As anarchist theoretician Daniel Colson recalled from that period in Lyon, "For me, [my awareness of the renewal of anarchism] came the day that I realized that everything we were experiencing so strongly during this period was linked with anarchism. I remember very well the moment when I understood that I believed in anarchist ideas and the anarchist vision."⁸⁶

It soon became clear to sufficient numbers of local anarchists that some form of coordination of activities could help strengthen actions and community, while rejecting the notion of an avant-garde center. The diverse backgrounds, orientations, and practices of local militants assured that no specific perspective or group would dominate. Diversity and autonomy were viewed as strengths. While there was no single ideological line, there was local unity as anarchists.⁸⁷ In 1985, Mimmo Pucciarelli and other Lyon anarchists estimated the presence of about sixty-seven active anarchist militants in that city (thirty-eight males and twenty-nine females). Forty were between twenty and thirty years old and seventeen between thirty-one and forty years of age.⁸⁸ In 1997, several thousand participated in a Lyon protest demonstration against an arson attack, presumably by the far right, on the local FA bookstore, *La Plume Noire*.⁸⁹



In 1984–85, *IRL* published four successive issues concerning anarchism and the Third World.⁹⁰ While Algeria was referred to in various articles, such references were brief. More important for this present book's purpose were the overall themes that set forth generic positions on a variety of issues relevant to Algeria and other countries of the Third World.

Writer "Grand-Père Max" suggested three distinct historical periods of anarchist theory and practice toward national liberation struggles. Citing Bakunin's and Kropotkin's support of non-authoritarian revolutionary national liberation movements and the specific example of Bulgarian anarchists' involvement in Macedonia, his best illustration of a combined anarchist and nationalist revolutionary movement was the Makhnovistas in the Ukraine. A second phase of anarchist orientation on national liberation, he said, was more a matter of different priorities than a denial of the worth of that cause. In the metropole countries of Europe, the larger anarchist concern was anti-militarism and conscientious objection, rather than the treatment of those colonized people targeted. To illustrate the point, the author cited several occasions in Spanish anarchist history, including the crucial period of the Spanish Civil War, when suggestions to liberate Spanish Morocco from colonial status were basically ignored. He speculated that perhaps, deep down, French, Spanish, and other European

workers unconsciously identified with the contagious imperial project, as Kropotkin had thought possible.

The third period of anarchist orientation, said the writer, was more contemporary and best illustrated by the fact that the majority of the French anarchist movement was “neutral or indifferent toward the Algerian revolution.” French anarchist André Prudhommeaux’s 1947 statement that anarchism had no interest in nationalist causes typified this perspective, but seemed to ignore the earlier positions of Bakunin and Kropotkin. However, some anarchist movements in Latin America in the 1950s and 1960s directly supported local anti-imperialist struggles in their nominally independent countries. As well, some indigenous movements in that region opposed imperialisms of either the US or the Soviet Union and thus were “a step toward anarchist ideas.”⁹¹

Several members of the Paris *IRL* group collaborated on another article exploring attitudes of anarchists in the West toward Third World national independence struggles. “Abdel” argued that “ethnocentrism consists of imposing on those who live under foreign domination the same agenda of struggle as those who, even involuntarily, profit by their domination...” Genuine anarchist revolution is pluralistic and should support the national identity restoration dimension of liberation even though other revolutionary tasks, such as direct democracy, *autogestion*, and federalism cannot be ignored and will be opposed by those who wish to use the nationalist masses for their own ambitions.

“Luc,” however, pointed out that national liberation struggles must always lead to state creation, whether originally the first goal or not, simply because of the realities of dominant international economic and political orders. Even attempts of a spontaneous anarchist-type dynamic to develop an international multi-ethnic federalism, as with the Pan-African movement, are doomed to failure because of neo-colonialist manipulations from abroad. Finally, in the same article, “Vanina” began by citing various reasons why, along with the apparent absence of self-declared “anarchists” in the Third World, Western anarchists seem to so little appreciate the nature of that area’s social conflicts. The lack of information, the inability of Western frameworks to incorporate very different life patterns elsewhere, preoccupation with their own daily activities as a priority over concern with faraway struggles, and the exclusivist dimension of national identity concerns all contribute to this distancing. The fact that national liberation movements all seem destined to end up with a state and tend to involve broad fronts of class collaboration adds to Western anarchists’ lack of interest, unwillingness to support movements leading to the opposite of anarchist goals, and, thus, their equal dismissal of colonizers and colonized.

However, said Vanina, such attitudes are a trap. By leaving the field of support open for Marxists to exploit (with their already discredited

models), anarchists imply to those of the Third World that their theories and models apply only to the developed West. By objectively staying neutral between the two protagonists in refusing any aid for the exploited side, anarchists assist the staying power of colonialism and challenge their own credibility for the sake of abstract purity. A constructive anarchist position, she said, would recognize that a nationalist movement includes diverse components. Not the least of these is the desire to preserve the community language and culture. Anarchists should be sensitive to such aspirations, given their traditional appreciation of the richness of diversity and the principle of federalism. Additionally, certain manifestations at the grassroots deserve anarchist support, such as when Algerian peasants developed the *autogestion* sector—a project close to anarchism—contrary to the program of the FLN.⁹²

An article in the next issue continued the themes introduced by Grand-Père Max concerning the relationship of anarchists to the Third World. While anarchists have had significant movements in Third World countries such as Mexico, Columbia, Brazil, and Argentina, the colonies or zones of influence of four major industrialized countries—Britain, France, Spain, and Italy—which had strong anarchist movements saw very little anarchist presence except among European settlers. Nevertheless, it said, four types of actions by anarchists of the industrialized world could assist Third World populations: attacking capitalist systems at home, precise measures like refusing to make armaments or demanding that multinationals provide equal working conditions abroad to those in the home country, volunteering to participate in specific struggles abroad, and providing some direct aid in supplies.

The remainder of the article contained observations by participants in a Paris meeting on this same overall theme. Marxist-Leninists seem to have an ideological monopoly among Third World students. Virtually the only effort with anarchist-type themes was the situationist pamphlet on the Algerian revolution published in French and Arabic.⁹³ As well, some effort was made for solidarity with immigrants. “In actuality, anarchists live in luxury and rely on political clichés. We must try to open up the movement to deal constructively with the Third World.” If anarchists focus only on broad political issues, they pass by a number of specific problems at hand, such as the situation of immigrants with work, lodging, and official papers.

Said the discussants, the point is both to expand the anarchist movement and to assist the Third World. In fact, “the only way the Third World can escape the situation of under-development is through anarchist alternatives.” But basic questions were posed as to what French anarchists could do in practical terms. What countries should be given most attention? Should anarchists wait until a revolution is underway, since this would be the only broad possibility for change, or should they, in the meantime,

help keep people from starving even without the potentials for change? Assisting those of the Third World who are close, those in France as immigrants, seems far more realistic. Even if only reformist in nature, how would such assistance differ from Malatesta's encouragement of reformist gains through syndicalism to improve workers' conditions?⁹⁴

A February 1983 discussion on Radio-Libertaire focused on the situation of immigrants in France and the best ways to move toward justice and equality in their status. "Abdel" and "Habib," representing *IRL* in Paris, stated views in response to the program moderator, "Gérard." Concerning the last round of municipal elections, Habib stated that all of the competing parties supported an anti-immigrant program. As an anarchist, he is, in any case, not interested in acquiring the right to vote.

But Abdel stressed that the key issue was treatment as equals and having the same opportunity as others to exercise civil rights. He agreed that politicians tend to be sell-outs, but in a non-revolutionary context where xenophobia reigns, "struggles at the legal level are not necessarily of no interest." Habib and Abdel agreed that one needs to have the right to vote in order to be able to refuse it. In any case, it is for immigrants themselves, individually or collectively, to decide what they want. Said Abdel, "In the present situation, to refuse voting rights for immigrants—even if this doesn't amount to much—is to marginalize them that much more and to reinforce their status as spectators concerning the policy choices that affect them."

Habib reviewed briefly certain other dimensions. Since the 1960s, immigrants have organized against the anti-immigrant policies of various governments. In 1975, the interior minister proposed that 1.5 million people leave France within five years. During that same period, some 800,000 immigrant workers were laid off. Sixty percent of fired autoworkers were immigrants and 80 percent of those were in construction trades. At the same time, French employers like to hire illegal immigrants because they're forced to accept lower wages and no social benefits, the employer doesn't have to pay more taxes, and illegal workers are very reluctant to struggle against work conditions. "Illegals" were a force of about 800,000 in 1975.

Concerning the position of trade unions, Habib regarded pro-immigrant statements as more an attempt at political recuperation, an effort to gain more members. Force Ouvrière,⁹⁵ he said, is actually anti-immigrant. Abdel, in turn, was more critical of trade unions for their insensitivity to cultural differences among immigrants. At the same time, he said, this is true of many political parties and even revolutionary organizations. "In the anarchist movement itself, acceptance of the other as being different, not

only as an anarchist, but as an anarchist belonging to another culture (Arab, Berber, or African, etc.), is not always evident.... Certain official positions of organizations with which I have many affinities, like the Fédération Anarchiste, show a blockage on certain subjects. For example, concerning nationalism, they view it only as establishing a state."

Thus during the Algerian war, he said, aside from *Noir et Rouge* and certain others, the anarchist movement failed to take courageous positions on colonialism and the liberation struggle. Realistically, the non-state federalist model of anarchism has not posed itself in the minds of large numbers. Colonialism has oppressed people and the latter wish their liberation. To be obsessed with the fact that nationalism ends with constructing a state, "in practical terms puts one objectively in the camp of the colonizer. Anarchists who didn't support the Algerian movement for national liberation have basically supported the French colonizer." Abdel's current position on Palestine, for example, is to support its liberation and also oppose construction of a state to defend its cause. "There is a nationalism of dominated people to which one should give critical support."

Added Habib, it would be desirable to abolish frontiers and the state both. It would be good "to be able to go where one wants and choose the community where one wants to live." It is important for people to see him not as an immigrant but as a human being deserving freedom. "For these goals to be more than a dream or idealism requires many steps and separate struggles."⁹⁶



Another article from the special *IRL* supplement addressed the issue of the relevance of anarchism itself for the Third World. Unfortunately, said the writer, the most common and abhorrent argument against it stems from the dogmatic historical materialist notion that a society needs first to develop its productive forces through capitalist accumulation. And along with this, quite typically, comes the demand for state or party dictatorship. Such a notion is all the more dangerous now with the plans of imperialists to develop favorable capitalist contexts in Third World countries.

A different argument, more voluntarist in nature, attributes the weak presence of anarchist movements in the Third World to "the absence of vast propaganda of anarchist theories." This model looks at the spread of an anarchist movement in the United States, for example, as the result of anarchist theory brought by immigrants from Italy and Spain. But this seems closer, the writer stated, to a Marxist-Leninist concept of the need for a vanguard than the anarchist notion of revolution. Partisans of this perspective "think they can find a place in a 'Committee of National Safety' or a ministerial post (as in Spain from 1936 to 1939) to better serve the people!"

Better than simply counting the number of anarchist individuals and groups in a country, one should “abandon the cartesian spirit and become deeply interested in the daily reality and new forms that grassroots struggle can show, including specifically anarchist-type movements.”

As anarchists, he said, we have the advantage of not being focused on taking power. We can “better understand the oppressions, revolts, and goals of struggle against all forms of domination. For we have neither a pre-established scheme about the march of history nor a readymade program, nor desires to run a society. We are an integral part of the society and our program of struggle is only an anti-authoritarian critique, using direct action and the socio-economic relations that surround us.” This approach “puts us alongside thousands of oppressed and exploited who have no foundation in anarchist ideology, but who are capable of revolting against exploitation and colonialist, imperialist, capitalist, statist, and other forms of domination.”

One cannot, as an anarchist, defend any kind of capitalist exploitation or “reduce a struggle for national liberation to political commands, demonstrations, or guerrilla operations. We can only express ourselves through grassroots struggles, to deeply challenge the structures of that form of domination, if we wish to avoid acting like some sort of ‘anarchist vanguard left.’” A national liberation movement that fails “to be based at the grassroots and fails to develop new structures of social change will be recuperated and immediately infiltrated in the race for power of ‘leaders,’ political parties, or states (supposedly nationalist, independent, democratic, revolutionary, or socialist, etc.).”

The Iranian example here is useful, he asserted. The people’s revolt against the Shah’s absolutist state and foreign domination created a context for many different struggles: “regional autonomy and occupations of land, housing, palaces, factories, ministries, radio-TV stations, embassies, police stations, and military barracks.” There was no avant-garde party with a program for such actions. They simply verify that the broad struggle for national liberation was deeply rooted in social struggles at the base. Thus, a vast anti-authoritarian movement used spontaneous means of direct action, self-organization, and mutual aid in the various social contexts—country-side, offices, neighborhoods, etc.—to bring down the oppressive regime. It was only because this movement didn’t have time to deepen and develop more coordination that the movement of the mullahs, based in the mosques, was able to take over.⁹⁷



The last article cited here from the *IRL* supplement was a prescient forerunner of anarchist positions several years later concerning national liberation in New Caledonia—that is, the importance of anarchist-type native

cultures and movements of resistance and self-organization that are not rooted in or infused with Western-defined notions or models of anarchist ideology. The article suggests that starting from this perspective provides as well a critique of the Western-based social theory of anarchism. In a deeper sense, it is a first written manifestation of so-called “primitivist anarchism” in the French movement.

Specifically, said the article, anarchism, like other 19th-century social ideologies, is pregnant with social Darwinism, with a religious belief that economic development is the road to human liberation but that “development feeds power” and this, then, establishes a fundamental contradiction in traditional anarchism. Development in itself has no necessary egalitarian implication. It manifests itself through existing social structures. As promoted by the capitalist world, development only reinforces the social exploitation. “Thus, it is not surprising that native communities react against that which destroys their social structure.”

“The demand for indianity is an important event since what we thought was done with now reappears while the future shrinks away. The meaning given to history finds itself confronted by this reality.” The “theological” social ideologies of the 19th century, including anarchism, posed themselves as paths to human liberation. But in fact “they were merely an ultimate disguise of the West, of sovereign civilization.”

Anarchists may find interest in indianity, said the writers, but see it as some “external reality. Good sentiments and exoticism prevent this reality from troubling theoretical certitudes” and lead anarchists to simply add new amendments to the basic ideology. Kropotkin’s economic ideas could apply to capitalism and socialism as well as anarchism. Bookchin portrayed domination as the product of scarcity, thus implying the impossibility of a liberatory society that has not gone beyond that state. “Thus, we are basically adversarial toward any sort of indianity.... With a little humility on our part, native peoples can teach us.”

Four centuries of their resistance to oppression has been based on cultural positions and these are rooted in community. Meanwhile our own system of domination continues to create new needs and customs and will continue to do so to the point when humans become robots.

To remember and retrieve the sense of living directly and honestly is something radically different from revolution. “These several millennia of oppression would be only an aborted branch of human history. The demand for indianity is an important fact even if its notions have not yet found their expression.”⁹⁸

Two years later, *IRL* ran an article complementing the piece on “indianity” and similarly calling for the decolonization of anarchist thought. While anarchist theory claims to be universalist, the fact that the majority of anarchist thinkers are from the West or adopt its mode of thinking seems

to contradict its aspiration to reflect and theorize for those of black, yellow, or dark skins. While the development of the anarchist movement came about during the historical context of emerging capitalism, “it is no less true that anarchist movements and ideas—in the sense of anti-totalitarian, anti-state, and anti-religious actions and thinking existed in diverse forms in pre-capitalist societies.”

“Anarchists are not excluded from those of judeo-christian civilization and its opponents who have occasionally referred to people of other cultures and histories as barbarians, savages, and primitives.” Tied in with the evolutionary notion of material and productive accumulation is the implicit idea of the superiority of Western civilization. From this comes value judgments of other societies impossible to detach from Western categories, “our mental schemes produced from our first socialization.”

Kropotkin, for example, who was aware of the ethnocentrism of Rousseau and Hobbes, in his *Ethics* refers to “customs of the most primitive savages,” “the savages of Patagonia,” and the Bouriates people of Siberia as being “at a higher degree of evolution” than various tribes observed by other explorers.

“For some time, with the breakthrough of modern ethnology and anthropology on the one hand and the decline of modernist ideology on the other, interest is coming to focus on countries previously described as ‘primitive’—sometimes with sincere interest in establishing a genuine internationalism, other times from hypocrisy or expiation, but often with tourist behavior, not seeing things from within, but through the stereotypes and images gained from his camera or the media.”

What these societies show to the outsider is a famished Third World, “a submissive and alienated world.” However, in these societies there are also radical revolts against arbitrary state behavior and religious ideology. The fact that such anti-authoritarianism doesn’t make a mark on world anarchist thought doesn’t justify anarchist ideology being dominated by Western values. “Anarchist theory should be a meeting place of every counter-culture on earth,” not the “privilege of one civilization.” This poses a challenge in the language used, daily behavior (“indifference or unconditional respect of the other”), and norms and values.

At the same time, Third World intellectuals should bring to light “the radical, anti-authoritarian memory of their peoples” in describing arbitrary and oppressive conditions they’ve lived under, as well as ways in which they’ve resisted. Only after such accounts are gathered can a genuine anarchist theory be created. Regular intercultural communication on the basis of full equality, one with the other, despite differences, can create “the society of tomorrow.”

There is a difference, said the writer, between internationalism and the intercultural perspective. The latter implies more complexity in class

struggle. Between French and Algerian workers in France having the same job at Citroën, essential differences exist in family, neighborhood, and factory relations. "In other words, what defines an individual in society is not above all his economic status, but his cultural situation, including his legal status (nationality, civil code, etc.), his behavior derived from his socialization, and the effect of the cultural values from his original society." Being the foreigner always poses the choice between assimilation or rejection of the new culture in which one is now immersed. This is the same choice posed to the native person in the colonial context.

The dominant culture, claimed the writer, attempts to deny the value of one's past culture. Failing in this strategy leads to the most flagrant form of racism. Often, the second generation of immigrant families, as the Polish and Italians in France in the late 20th century, seek to renew their ethnic and cultural roots. This dynamic is an important but not sufficient part of the intercultural project. The latter is not a mere co-existence of separate cultures in the same land, as a kind of mosaic; rather, through dialogue and confrontation, it is an effort to evolve a new cultural mixture derived from the best values of each.

This is not the same as the common attempt to "folklore" other cultures, the better to kill them off and provide distraction for the oppressed. "African and Indian dance, North African couscous and Asian rice are no more than a spicy dish, not spaces of intercultural expression and creativity, compared to immigrants' actual lived inequalities in the workplace, housing realm, and lack of access to political life."⁹⁹

In the same issue there were two articles conveying this same appreciation for an intercultural anarchist perspective in its proclamation of solidarity with the Kanak people struggling for their own national liberation in the French overseas territory of New Caledonia. While not "mystifying" Kanak "stateless society" because of, among other things, unequal gender relations, the first article pointed out that those named as Kanak chiefs are actually without special power and merely symbolize community cohesion. Communitarian relations of exchange, work, production, and distribution assure respect for capabilities and needs of all individuals. "This society has persisted for 4,000 years without a state or classes, without prisons or exile. Every aspect of its organization is based on dialogue leading to consensus, and this is reflected in the forms and content of the independence struggle."

Though sharing usual anarchist distrust of national liberation fronts, said the writers, the FLNKS (Socialist Kanak National Liberation Front) is based on the traditions and customs of Kanak society. The election boycotts organized before last November reflected the will of the base, as shown in the 80 percent abstention rate. As well, the last congress of the FLNKS decided to give all power to committees of the base to avoid any bureaucratization of the movement or any attempt by one part to dominate others.

Forced by French colonizers to live in tribal reserves, the writers said, very few Kanak have experienced wage labor. Because of this and the absence of a Kanak bourgeoisie, the FLNKS has no “productionist” orientation. They wish to have a future economy based on their traditions of decentralism, egalitarianism, and self-organization. While formal statehood will be needed in order to be recognized internationally, the future Kanaky political system will aim to unite workers of all communities in the colony in an anti-capitalist and multicultural coalition.

The independence movement, they said, has called for the use of civil disobedience through tax resistance and refusal to participate in the capitalist economic sector. It has launched its own autonomous school system and grassroots cooperatives. Without declaring a detailed program for the future, it relies on the principles of direct democracy, *autogestion* of collective lands through cooperatives, and a division of wealth according to needs.¹⁰⁰

The second article also acknowledged the legitimate anarchist distrust of national liberation movements, based on the experience of Algeria, Vietnam, and elsewhere, where anti-colonial struggles led to oppressive Marxist-Leninist, nationalist, or totalitarian regimes. Nevertheless, in principle, it said, anarchists must participate in such struggles. And this must be done in concrete terms—not just verbal—if anarchists are to have any chance of influencing the nature and outcome of that effort.

What is notably different about the FLNKS movement, it said, is its opposition to a “productionist” or “primitive accumulation” development strategy so typical elsewhere with newly independent regimes. Anarchists can also base their support for FLNKS on its own anti-racism, on anti-militarism (against French repression), on nuclear opposition (an independent Kanaky would threaten continued French nuclear testing), on opposition to the far right (which seeks, as in Algeria, to mobilize settler and French populations), and the commitment to civil disobedience and a decentralized economy.¹⁰¹



Four years later, following the October 1988 uprisings, *IRL* published an article specifically focusing on Algeria. Frustrated and enraged youth made their anger known in “the bloodiest riots in the history of independent Algeria.” To those who criticized them for vandalism, they retorted that the only vandalism or barbarism was committed by those who fired on and massacred the crowd of young people. The first response of the Chadli government was “to baptize in blood by assassinating some 500 demonstrators. The torture of those arrested only confirmed the totalitarian nature of a regime that tries to legitimate itself as ‘socialist’ and heir to the national liberation struggle.”

Following these events, said the writer, the regime is trying to restore its purity by a *perestroika* policy of releasing some from prison, firing FLN boss Chérif Messaâdia¹⁰² and military security chief Lakhal Ayat, and submitting to a popular vote. The November referendum on new reforms was a hoax. Of course, reporting an approval rate of 92.27 percent instead of 99.99 percent, according to *Le Monde* and others, was a clear sign of “democratization.” The supposed constitutional change, in the context of single-party and military rule, only re-arranged power to benefit reformers who wanted more privatization and “democracy” instead of the orthodoxy of Boumédiénne.

But people who believed real change would come from the FLN congress or the referendum or new prime minister Kasdi Merbah,¹⁰³ the writer stated, will be deceived. The latter, after all, was the chief of the military secret service under Boumédiénne. As such, he designed the 1965 military coup against Ben Bella and the murder of two independent Algerian militants, Mohammed Khider and Belkacem Krim. The only definite post-riot legal changes were the establishment of a Constitutional Council and a required accounting of wealth before and after service for government officials. While the new government needs approval by the National Assembly, the latter is composed entirely of FLN deputies (the FLN being “a front of military both in uniform and civilian dress”). Meanwhile, at the last FLN congress, Chadli and Merbah both “openly denounced the illusions of multi-partyism.” The new political formations will be clearly statist themselves.

Paradoxically, in the past, “the embryo of an *autogestion* socialism was initiated by farm workers, not by nationalist militants.” Paradoxically, at present, the forces responding to youth rioters are political parties and professional or humanitarian organizations. For example, responding to the total control of media by the state, seventy journalists signed a petition that called for reform by establishing editorial committees in each newspaper and two commissions to defend independent journalism. 500 journalists also expressed the significance of independent information for the Algerian League of Human Rights (LADDH).

The least reformist demands, he said, were made by the ex-Communist PAGS, which called for abstention in the referendum and application of a socialist program. “Like all Communist party opportunists, PAGS just agreed to support the program of Kasdi Merbah in the hope of being included among those parties to be tolerated by the FLN.” Meanwhile, one student group, Etudiants Déchainés (Enraged Students), denounced the referendum fraud and media propaganda, and a second student solidarity committee gave massive support to the abolition of torture and prosecution of torturers, as well as a general amnesty and democratic freedoms. Radical Islamists also tried to recuperate the protests and, under the leadership of Cheikh El Hadj, gained a lot of support as well.

At the least, these developments have helped to revive Algerian civil society much weakened by colonial and FLN regimes. “They will also disperse our final illusions about state capitalism, desecrate Algerian nationalism, and probably lead to a new interpretation, less religious, of social reality.”

He stated that the Algerian story of a confiscated revolution is like that of the Russian revolution hijacked by the Bolsheviks. As Daniel Guérin pointed out, the national unity needed to eject French colonialism also provided a longer-range opportunity for Algeria’s bourgeois and petit-bourgeois interests to construct a new class domination to replace the old, while in the short-run using the poor to throw out the French. The “NEP” of Chadli promises more in the economic realm than politically and socially, no doubt facilitating greater accumulation of private wealth, while throwing a few crumbs simultaneously to the people in the style of Boumédiène. “The main task is still to be accomplished—to challenge the FLN monopoly and to send the army to the dustbin of pre-history.”¹⁰⁴

In 1995, Lyon’s anarchist library La Gryffe repeated the earlier appeal by an article in *IRL* for an intercultural non-Western-centric anarchism, but this time in response to the new large-scale “anti-terrorist” repression wave launched in France because of the alleged spread of Algerian radical political Islam across the Mediterranean. In an atmosphere comparable to that in the United States after 9/11, the government and media suggested imminent danger from Islamic terrorism in France and pushed forward the easy scapegoating equation of Arab = Islam = terrorism.

A sensationalist part of this propaganda scare campaign were the televised images of the execution of Khaled Kelkal on September 30, and anarchists should denounce the campaign, said the appeal. “At the same time, if young Arabs find militant Islamism to express their rebellion, anarchists can find nothing positive in that movement.” Many of those who are exploited, dominated, and oppressed choose a suicidal path of xenophobia or racism, while others “turn toward religion, which gives body to their desperation.”

But this whole situation raises “the larger problem concerning the anarchist movement itself.” The issues are twofold: First, the anarchist movement, having emerged in a specific historical context and influenced by Judeo-Christian culture, only rarely and sporadically had a presence in Muslim countries—usually because of a colonial situation. “Although the anti-colonial struggles and long traditions of rebellion fed into potentially revolutionary conflicts in these countries, anarchist ideas never developed a lasting influence.” Second, in France itself, though anarchists take part in anti-racism struggles, especially in Lyon, “there are never lasting relations between anarchism and individuals from a Muslim cultural background or

even any non-Western culture. Despite some friendly and affective individual relations, Arabs are very rarely in actions or demonstrations organized by anarchists."

Is anarchism doomed, asked the appeal, to be nothing more than a lower-class white movement? Despite all of its distancing from its Western cultural background, with its atheism, anti-racism, anti-colonialism, and unique concepts of freedom, is it inevitably bound to that heritage? "What is the nature of universalism in anarchist thought? How can the anarchist movement leave behind the Western cultural world that gave it birth, that shaped its modes of expression and its ideological landmarks? How can it become the movement common to numerous cultures that crushes the globalization of lifestyles developed by capitalism? What can we do? We must discuss and reflect together."¹⁰⁵

L'Oiseau-tempête

ANOTHER SAMPLE OF FRENCH ANARCHIST THOUGHT ON ALGERIA during this period comes from a journal of more lyrical, poetic politics. *L'Oiseau-tempête* [*The Stormy Petrel*] began in 1987 "intending to go beyond statements of position and factual accounts.... It fights against the pain of the world by carving up our certainties.... It seeks not to prove but to teach how to feel" and thus go beyond our usual fixed ways of perceiving and judging.¹⁰⁶ In its fourth issue, in the winter of 1998, the revue thus attempted a different form of "analysis" of Algeria's plight.

The writer observed that Algeria still suffers from immeasurable traumas absorbed during the colonial period and the liberation war. Yet as the present media coverage on Algeria demonstrates, it seems that perhaps the purging of a guilty French memory is at play. The sole attention to that society over the past few years has been the more recent Algerian war, while "deliberately ignoring the refusal of the people to support either camp, [and] denying social resistance to the plans of a bourgeoisie more insolent and demanding today to have a fight with those in misery." The media's approach seems to suggest that violence is in Algerians' genes. "One builds walls, when one can, to keep out accusing history."

In Algeria, said the writer, language is still a gaping wound. "Is there any greater violence than depriving a people of words?" Colonial rule deliberately uprooted Arabic from the people, destroying the *zaouias*, the schools of Koranic learning and centers for community life. In their place, the schools of the French republican tradition in Algeria were open to only 1 percent of the native population through the 1930s. After the Second World War, the French offered more schools instead of the independence it promised when dependent on Algerians during the war. Miserable social conditions, however, required putting children to work instead of sending them

to school. Thus, only 20 percent of a largely peasant population received French schooling, subjecting themselves in the process to book stereotypes of French life unrelated to their own miserable conditions: “Papa smoking his pipe near the fireplace, mama knitting, and the sister playing with a doll.” “This is where the schizophrenia began. The language of the privileged was French, that of the persecuted scholars was a mythical Arabic, while the spoken languages, popular Arabic and Berber, were in their eyes only a shapeless mumbo-jumbo, one a dialect, the other a sub-language.”

And, while enchanting words, such as “I love you,” exist in written and spoken Arabic, the phrase “cannot and is not used.” Instead, one must allude metaphorically to many other images, as of birds and animals “to represent the love that devours you or the loved one whose absence rips your guts.” But as with exuberant Andalusian poetry or “the joyous and mischievous explosion of Rai music,” the forbidden or the imposed silence can be evaded. Rai speaks out through rhythmic sensuality and singing forbidden words.

Can one measure the shock produced by Chaba Zahouania proclaiming, “Find me in the shack over there and make love to me”?¹⁰⁷ In this society of the unstated, the euphemism, the lightning could not have been brighter. So, one comes on in Rai, or Egyptian, the borrowed theatrical language, or in French. Distance is thus maintained, one doesn’t completely undress, the game can end as a joke in case it fails. But after all, isn’t the existence of love what is essential, the sign that hope can never be assassinated?¹⁰⁸

Fédération Anarchiste

THE FIRST PRINTED REACTION OF THE FÉDÉRATION ANARCHISTE TO Boumédiène’s death and the new regime came in a January 1979 article by Maurice Joyeux. In the latter’s view, Boumédiène’s regime was the final stage in demystifying the Algerian “revolution.” While rooted in the period after World War I, the revolutionary movement was “structured by Trotskyist Messali Hadj¹⁰⁹ and finally brought to its death by the romantic, Ben Bella, a mere flash in the pan.” It has now buried Boumédiène, “a person who played only a secondary role in the country’s liberation and was nothing more than a tyrant symbolizing the unspeakable mélange of Islam, technocracy, the sword, and arbitrary rule that kept Algeria in a poverty close to misery ever since decolonization.” Boumédiène was literally kept on life-support until the Algerian bureaucracy could decide how to go forward without him.

From 1954 to 1964, the Algerian revolution, he said, was a beautiful myth attracting French students and all kinds of socialists alike who were

unable to affect events in their own country. Instead, they transferred "their hopes for social transformation to a political apparatus, the FLN, to historical figures supposedly able to establish socialism in a country freed from colonialism and thus to catalyze transformation in the metropole." This reflected "the eternal illusion of those who believe that leaders make history, though they only respond to classes who pull the strings." Instead, the directing class of the revolution, trained in French universities and inspired by the Soviet model, was readying itself for a fierce struggle for power and confiscation of the revolution, "establishing its hegemony over Algeria in the name of nationalism." It encountered only weak grassroots opposition since the people were "numbed by Islam and dazzled by the living conditions of workers in industrialized countries, especially in France," which they assumed could be attained in Algeria through nationalism.

We anarchists observed closely the evolution of the Algerian movement from the time Messali's ENA emerged from the shadows of the syndicalist *Révolution Proletarienne* group to Messali's quasi-Trotskyist orientation and to his postwar reversion to an Islamic-based nationalism. Having come to know Messali well when both were in Santé prison in Paris in 1939, said Joyeux, he saw clearly the transition "from revolutionary to a prophet inspired by Allah!" Despite his important past contributions to the movement, his preference for words over action left him rejected by impatient nationalists and miserably repudiated by his people.

While young people's struggle against the war and colonialism were admirable, he said, the mixture of decolonization, nationalism, and socialism "created confusion from which no person, government, party, or trade union was exempt and which actually reached the anarchist movement and *Fédération Anarchiste* themselves." This was augmented by the Marxism that invaded the universities, contaminated the worker movements of the extreme left and tried to move the *Fédération* itself to back a national-communism orientation. Nevertheless, all our predictions at that time concerning the FLN plans for a single-party state and controlled trade union, for a leadership class to dominate the country to facilitate exploitation by the Algeria's bourgeoisie, have come true. "The little Marxists who introduced themselves into our milieu have disappeared into hiding while we can read what we wrote at that time without being embarrassed."

Boumédiène left the country in miserable conditions of poverty, he asserted, despite the riches from oil revenues. While over a million Algerians have had to emigrate to find work and a large number have been forced into bare subsistence, it is scandalous that the "preaching politicians and middle-class officials live at a European standard of living." Bribery and corrupt schemes are the rule. Meanwhile, to calm the multitudes of poor, the regime speaks of "socialism." "There's not a speck of socialism in this Algeria dominated by a state bourgeoisie, army and police. This

whole happy crowd is gathered in a party whose sole purpose is to justify the people's exploitation." Distribution of land in the agrarian reform was a scandal and the "cooperatives" created have no resemblance to workers' self-management.

The failure of colonialism and the Algerian modern state bureaucracy, he said, suggests the difficulty of industrializing in under-developed countries and the amount of sacrifice bearable "by a people still in their infancy, in the sense that they have still not escaped the religion-induced moronic state responsible for their intellectual castration. It is not by chance that in Turkey, Iran, and Lebanon, just as in Algeria, those in misery turn toward heaven, search for their gods, and break the means for their own emancipation. Everywhere, too rapid a process of economic development leaves people unable to determine new ways of behaving." Joyeux speculated that perhaps "a socialism of decent poverty for everyone would be better understood for these people of Islam than the sudden appearance of the most insulting riches in the midst of poverty, symbols of provocation and despair."

According to Joyeux, the future for Algerians looks bleak. Those politicians of Boumédiène's regime, as well as those in exile, have nothing to offer, "some being domesticated and others terrorized. They are all threadbare and of no use except to their loyal ranks." Returning again to his anti-religious agenda, Joyeux proclaimed, "The sickness of Algeria is the sickness of all Islam, the religious pox that poisons the whole body and that is still stirred up by socialist politicians prostituting themselves before this large sick body in hopes of gaining a few crumbs of inheritance. Unfortunately, Allah is great and people are idiots! That doesn't leave much chance for anarchism to settle into Muslim countries. But one never knows! Inexhaustible anarchy has a chance everywhere!"¹¹⁰

Joyeux turned this discussion into less scathingly patronizing and more general terms the following week by clarifying that, contrary to Marx, socialism does not require rapid industrialization. "Socialization poses the problem of how work is organized and economic distribution." Only when these problems are properly addressed, not in some supposed transition period between capitalism and socialism, can the question of production volume be decided. Socialism, in other words, is possible at any level of production. One of the worst legacies of Marxism is the notion that socialism is only achievable through extensive industrialization, which is only possible through great sacrifices by the population in deferred consumption even of basic needs. Meanwhile, a private or state bourgeoisie directing the process typically enriches itself while rationalizing the ever-prolonged poverty of the masses. The latter resist this forced-march strategy, as shown by the Russian peasantry in the 1920s with significant political consequences.

Thus, as in Algeria, Turkey, Iran, and the Middle East generally, state "socialist" or capitalist industrialization attempts are ultimately

unsuccessful. "Wars of independence were not simply wars for nationhood, they were also wars to preserve traditions, customs, and ways of life.... And it is this confusion between 'production quantity' and its organization that produces the misunderstanding leading to Islamic populations opposing industrialization and socialism." Industrialization should proceed only at the pace people choose, the pace they feel comfortable with, understanding intellectually the behavioral changes that must come with it.

"From Algeria to Iran was an attempt at sufficiently rapid development to achieve the point at which, according to Marx, socialism would be possible. Instead, it should have been a created socialism that permitted development at a pace consistent with natural evolution, industrialization conforming to the wishes of the population." In this second alternative, industrial production doesn't reflect false needs artificially manufactured by advertising, but simply "the need to create objects imposed by the slow maturing of society." This is the lesson taught by the failures of industrialization in the Islamic countries.¹¹¹

With the new regime's release of Ben Bella to house arrest after fourteen years of captivity following the 1965 coup, Joyeux used the occasion to review the actual nature and purpose of the Algerian revolution, as well as the differences between the *Fédération Anarchiste* and other leftists at that time. Said Joyeux, while those "socialists of every sort" who present themselves to us as guarantors of Algerian "socialism" and "self-management" are excited about his liberation, it is important to remember that such regime enemies might easily have used the same approach to their captors if events had favored them instead. In any case, beyond the welcome release of this individual, "it is the fate of a whole people that deserves our attention."

From the beginning, said Joyeux, the *Fédération* denounced the war, opposed the use of French troops, called for French abandonment of Algeria, and warned Algerians that genuine management of the economy by workers would be achievable only by rejecting the capitalist system, "its agent the State and its guarantor, religion." But at this stage, during the war, people came into our milieu with a particular Marxist view of nationalism, insisting that nationalism and capitalism were necessary preparatory development stages that would lead to socialism. These people have gotten older now, but some still pretend from the outside to give us such lessons. We should remember how important it was to resist such pressures. "Confusing action with revolutionary struggle," young people made Castro, Tito, Ben Bella, and certain others their heroes, and, "from Strasbourg to Nanterre, tried to impose on us an activism having nothing to do with anarchist socialism."¹¹²

We refused to compromise with this confused leftism that identified with legendary heroes abroad, capable of miracles, compared to "the 'poor clods' in this country who, with their pathetic journals, their tiny meetings,

their cheap tracts, pretended to be their equals. For these youths, revolutionary purity and effectiveness were far from the daily tasks demanded by revolution. Over there, with distance surrounded by well-marketed poetry, were produced popular folkloric images made for the taste of the day in imaginary cartoons, and going so far as volunteering for ‘revolutionary harvests’ of sugar cane.” This mindset is still around and soon Ayatollah Khomeini himself may enter “the anthology of imbeciles.” After all, even during the recent Lebanese civil war, “some leftists insisted that we side with the billionaire claiming to be of the left, opposed to the billionaire claiming to be of the right.”

“The Algerian war, which produced hundreds of thousands of dead, was a war for nothing, a war that allowed a caste of natives to replace a colonial caste in exploiting the population.” For their own internal reasons, socialist and communist parties appeared to believe in *autogestion* socialism, but the reactionary regime of Algeria, with its mask of “socialism,” failed to advance one bit toward the economic liberation of Algerians. The fact that Ben Bella is freed leaves a bitter taste since the Algerian people are still in chains.

The real issue, he said, is the need for clear and rigorous theoretical understanding, not at the level of “insipid and idle chatter” in the hubbub of meetings where no serious decisions are reached. “We must say to Algerians, however unpopular our views may be, that the transformation of their country will not come from the liberation of Ben Bella or from any other well-known politician, but from a struggle without mercy against nationalism, Islam, and Marxism-Leninism,” let alone liberal capitalism. “Endless discussions will solve none of the region’s essential problems, and *autogestion*, a carrot passed under one’s nose for the past twenty years, requires a rational organization of work including the banishment of statist centralism, authority, and for which economic equality would be the cement.” We must tell them the same message we gave two decades ago—that “political liberation” is only a scam, only changing masters. “We must tell them that anarchist socialism is the only socialism that opens the prisons where the privileged classes have held the exploited classes.”¹¹³

Two successive articles in the spring of 1980 focused on the cultural and political upheaval in Kabylia that remained “the principal obstacle to establishment of the dominating centralist State.” Said the first writer, when police prevented Kabyle writer Mouloud Mammeri, a professor and leader of the Kabyle Cultural Movement, from speaking in Tizi-Ouzou (the capital of Kabylia) on Kabyle poetry, a largely spontaneous protest erupted, which violently attacked any symbols of Arabization.¹¹⁴ The second article

went on to discuss the movement's largely spontaneous dynamics and the government's accusations about "anarchist" agitators.¹¹⁵

Le Monde Libertaire continuously covered the situation of immigrant workers, including the plight of the *sans-papiers*, throughout these two decades. A sampling of such articles indicates the FA concern. The cover page of an issue in November 1981, for example, focuses on the *sans papiers* workers' struggle for dignity. Comparing the commonly easier transition of political refugees than that of worker immigrants, the cover article stated that while the former group eagerly find relief and welcome among a sympathetic political community, the latter face misery and often contempt. "He is 'tolerated' when industry needs him but rejected when social difficulties come up. He is promised the most disgusting jobs, those that the native population refuses because of the low wages and poor status of the profession. His goal is not to adapt himself, but to gain a little money allowing him to settle in reasonably well upon return to his country." Desire to return home as soon as possible forces him to live in a ghetto in France, thus further worsening his image among the native population.¹¹⁶

A follow-up article in the same issue focused specifically on the struggle of undocumented workers who numbered, it estimated, about 300,000–400,000 persons, and lived especially in the Paris region. The situation of clandestine immigrant workers was worse than those with papers, beginning with the virtual "slave traffic" that brought them to France, sometimes at the risk of their lives. "They find themselves totally at the mercy of underground employers, slave-drivers who lodge them in illegal, horrible, and pricey housing, and even the least of police surveillance." Like beasts, they are "forced to accept the worst work conditions and lowest wages without being able to defend themselves." And, despite reformist election promises, Socialists now in power turn the other way, eager to please businesses that rely on such labor.¹¹⁷

In April 1983, the journal responded to a wave of riots and demonstrations, sensationalized by the press, by the younger generation of immigrant families throughout France caused by "their more than justified discontent." The media seem to blame delinquency and "today's youth," said the writers, rather than the recent zealous and quite personal attempts by police "to regulate the 'immigrant question.'" After citing numerous incidents of arbitrary police violence toward youth around the country, the article pointed out how politicians easily sought in public statements to take advantage of paranoid voters subjected to constant anti-immigrant propaganda. "None of these blabbermouths have ever set foot, it's true, in these ghettos that flourish around the large cities." The revolts are hardly surprising given the conditions they have to live in.

While temporarily suppressed by the police, “this violence expresses deep rebellion by this second generation of immigrant families and their determination to make statements that they have never been allowed to make.” At present, they’re involved in various actions such as anti-racism demonstrations and coordination of efforts among the various working-class suburbs. Organizing free “Rock Against the Police” concerts is one attempt to provide space for young people to get together and exchange ideas. “Anarchists have already chosen their camp—that of those who wrote on the walls of their housing complex, ‘We are all prey for the cops, but not for long!’”¹¹⁸

The first electoral victory of the far right National Front in the northern town of Dreux¹¹⁹ was cause for a reflective article, several months later, on the growing wave of open racism in France. While working-class voters provided this local victory, it said, manifestations of explicit racism and racist crimes appeared throughout the country. The linkage of “immigration,” “insecurity,” and “unemployment” was common propaganda. In the Spring municipal election campaigns, even the left was often guilty of silence about the problems of immigration. Some left candidates even added support for the repression of foreign workers.

With the economic problems of 1973–1974 came a definite change in the face of threatening unemployment. Arabs were especially targeted since their home countries had raised oil prices, thus causing the economic slowdown, while at the same time Arab workers seemingly took French jobs. From that point on, observed the writer, discourse about foreign workers changed. The Chirac government cut off immigration and tried to send foreigners back home. But the immigrant community had, by then, become an integrated structural part of the economy, especially in the realms of construction, public works, health, and auto production. Furthermore, two-thirds had already lived over thirteen years in France, many with their families now planning long-range settlement. But because French society refused to acknowledge this reality, immigrants remained quite socially vulnerable, marginalized by their home countries as well. Youth of the second generation, in turn, were caught between two cultures and sought their own identity in the midst of degrading urban conditions—an explosive situation.

Despite its campaign promises, said the writer, the Mitterand government is no better than its predecessors. The disastrous economic conditions have now starkly revealed the latent racism of the French. Cultural differences are not tolerated. Even if these are abandoned, for some, skin color itself suggests inferiority and unacceptability. As well, historical reasons such as the Algerian war may add to the tension. Ten years of mounting unemployment and rising cost of living have made for a dangerous situation. “It is urgent for all anarchists and all anti-racists to analyze well the situation and to defuse the risks of an unstoppable deterioration with

coherent propositions! To recognize the right to cultural identity, to favor the intermixing of groups, to promote and cultivate differences, to fight for equality of social and political rights."¹²⁰

In 1982, Jean-Marc Raynaud proceeded with a detailed assessment of Algeria's evolution since independence. Overall, he said, the two decades of Algerian socialism have been negative. Though Algeria is not at the edge of a cliff and the state has some important accomplishments to its credit, as in education and health, with Algerians' initial enthusiasm and with immense oil and gas revenues much more should have been done. In education, for example, quality is inferior with fifty students in a classroom and half days of schooling because not enough teachers and schools are available. Numerous hospitals and clinics exist, but these are insufficient in number and quality. Public housing has expanded, but families must still wait several years to get one room for five or six people. People don't starve since the price of basic items like oil, bread, and sugar has a low ceiling, but other items are expensive and hard to get.

Why, he asked, is migration from the country to cities so huge and unemployment so large, and why do Algerians hate their ruling class that provokes them with its riches and arrogance? The rural exodus and importation of food items, despite enough land to feed the country, emphatically demonstrate the overall mess. Industrialization policy is a patent failure as well. The emphasis on heavy industry and the frenzied pace to achieve it were completely unrealistic given the inadequate and incompetent bureaucracy, the plundering in and non-profitability of this sector. The resulting huge and expensive factories produce very little, at high prices and questionable in quality. And this sector was prioritized at the expense of the artisan sector and light development.

Importantly, Raynaud also pointed out the increasing audience for a militant political Islam that finds ever greater attraction among those disenchanted with the system. However, he said, it would be too simplistic to state a present generalized disaster for socialist Algeria and a future catastrophe. Even in their poverty, Algerians maintain a certain dignity absent in the poisonous misery of Moroccans. And the cancerous state is still far from taking over every aspect of Algerian life, though moving in that direction.

Algerian socialism is presently at a crossroads, he said. To proceed in the same direction as the last two decades, with ever more state control and oppression of minorities, will surely lead to totalitarianism. "But to leave that path instead for the direction of anarchist socialism, *autogestion*, and federalism is not possible without posing the need for a radical break from the existing system and its logic."¹²¹



At the same time, the journal recommended additional readings to supplement their own assessment: *Les mémoires de Messali Hadj* (with a preface by Ben Bella) was an edited account by the “father” of Algerian nationalism, a story “intentionally hidden by the military-bureaucratic caste in power” since 1962. A second work was Mohammed Harbi’s *Le FLN: mirage et réalité*, a thorough autopsy of the FLN, and a third was a special issue of the French revue, *Autrement*, a clearly nuanced appraisal.¹²²



The anarchist journal itself had provided a glimpse of the realities of daily life in Algeria in an article several weeks earlier. Almost all Algerians would tell you, it said, that daily existence there is not easy. In the countryside, one can starve on one’s little piece of land. There are almost no diversions in consumer goods or urban pleasures of life and, meanwhile, one must deal with the bothersome police and local officials who are even worse than in colonial times. People are thus tempted to migrate to the cities, but neither is life there easy. Algiers, for example, is full of the starving and unemployed. One can spend whole days searching for a job. “And lodging is a circus. One waits years for lodging,” only to gain the right to seven or eight to a room. Shortages are also the rule: TV sets, washing machines, and cars, just like for food itself. As well, hospitals and schools just get by, but poorly. So life generally is not happy.

On the other hand, it said, it’s different if you know the right person, if you have connections. The dream, the obsession, is to be a government official with a telephone, an office, little to do, but services one can convert to cash. Like in the remarkable film, *Omar Gatlatto*,¹²³ about a young Algerian’s daily life. Quite different from the usual films at the movie houses, shabby or full of propaganda—just like the newspapers.

Right after independence, it wasn’t so bad. People had hopes. There was *autogestion*. “And then the vultures arrived, the always more numerous officials and bureaucrats, ready to supervise, regulate and line their own pockets. Look at these bastards, the villas and cars. How shameful they are! But, one day, all this will change with the revolution!”¹²⁴

Two years later, the devastating impact of population growth was a new Algerian topic of substantive concern. With a two-decade doubling of Algeria’s population to 21 million in 1984, said the writer, it is expected to reach 34.5 million in 2000,¹²⁵ thereby exposing all the more the grave weaknesses of the economic, social, and political systems. Specific acutely negative repercussions are quite apparent in the realms of food supply, lodging, schools, and employment. With self-serving bureaucratic and

private bourgeois classes unwilling to adequately address this issue, the situation continues to deteriorate. A failed economic model and party elitism mean that the people themselves must find their own solution and rid themselves of those who claim to lead them.¹²⁶

Two significant book reviews also appeared in the periodical in this period. The first appraised the autobiographical account of Hocine Aït-Ahmed for the years 1942–1952.¹²⁷ The author is one of only three surviving historic chiefs of the FLN and obviously has a lot to tell us, said the reviewer. Beyond his excellent discussion about the dynamics and contradictions of Messali's movement, he offers readers a poignant glimpse of the daily realities of a revolutionary movement through "an extraordinary tableau of his life, that of his compatriots and that of his country." The book "is of major importance at the human, historical, and political levels."¹²⁸

The second highly recommended book was Mohammed Harbi's detailed and forthright account of the background to the outbreak of revolution in 1954.¹²⁹ Until this book, the writer said, readers had access to only snippets of the real history involved, since the ruling regime after 1962 zealously imposed its own self-serving and mystifying account. By creating its own nationalist myth, it neglected the history of the nationalist movement before 1954 and the political pluralism involved. It also overemphasized the role of the peasantry to the neglect of the urban classes. The Algerian regime, like all totalitarian rulers, fully committed itself to controlling the past and thereby the future for its own benefit.

Thus, the new book by Harbi is of great importance by revealing to those revolted by the present regime, especially Algerians, the reality of an alternative past and thus an understanding of the present. "This book, in effect—and this is rare—is exemplary in its form and content both." Harbi explains the roots of 1954 and the significance of Messali's movement in overcoming reformism and thus developing the momentum for radical forces to push for independence. In fact, he says, it was the decision of the dominant group within the FLN to opt for a coalition with Islamists and the reformists of UDMA and the MTLD rather than an alliance with radical Messalism, thereby preventing a deeper revolution.

Said the reviewer, Harbi provides a true history of the FLN, explaining its origins, how today's bureaucracy was created, why the regime allows only its own version of the revolution, and how the logic of one-party rule led to the exercise of power by the army. In its form as well, Harbi's book is logically arranged and clearly presented. "This is truly a book to read. It is one of the best existing approaches to the Algerian revolution, or rather to the sad reality of the Algerian pseudo-revolution.

It is thus a tool of the first order for those who wish one day to make a revolution in Algeria.”¹³⁰

Another journalistic scoop by the French newspaper, *Libération*, occasioned new observations by *Le Monde Libertaire* on the Algerian war and the complicity of all French political parties in its pursuit. It was revealed that rising right-wing political figure Jean-Marie Le Pen,¹³¹ as a French paratrooper lieutenant (and a previously elected Poujadist deputy to the National Assembly), from September 1956 to March 1957 had engaged in torture in the course of interrogating Algerian nationalists. The *Libération* article included detailed accounts by his victims.

While *Le Monde Libertaire* delighted in this exposure and speculated on its negative impact on the future of the entire right in French politics, it also editorialized on how the Le Pen scandal’s re-focus on the Algerian war served to embarrass the whole political class altogether. It is the subject of the war that all parties would like to bury deep in the dustbin of history. “Administration of electrical shocks, waterboarding, killing prisoners allegedly trying to escape, bloody reprisals now sully the clothes of respectability laboriously assembled by the leader of the National Front.” But the question must be asked, On whose orders were the torturers acting?

The answer is, “from the Socialists, directly responsible for a colonial war lasting six years, to the ex-partisans of French Algeria; from the Stalinists, voting full powers to the French army to crush the Algerian rebellion, to the former assassins of the OAS, rehabilitated by François Mitterand; no one has clean hands! Implicitly, all of them agreed with General Bigeard¹³² when he estimated that ‘one shouldn’t stir up the shit.’” This issue is all the more untimely for the present Socialist government as French colonialism is now confronted by the Kanak people fighting for independence and experiencing military repression in return.¹³³

The overall rightward turn in Algerian state policy under Chadli was discussed in successive spring 1985 articles by “Jean-Claude” of the FA’s Kropotkin group. Though with independence, the FLN took power to lead Algeria toward “socialism,” by now “the road seems twisting and very long.” With Chadli’s succession to power after Boumédiène in 1979, Algeria took a strong turn to the right. His selection as secretary-general at the extraordinary party congress in January 1979, influenced significantly by the army, opened the way for three political orientations subsequently confirmed: reconnecting with the private bourgeoisie, restructuring and

reviving the FLN while opening it to new social elements favoring the rightist orientation, and a purging of regime opponents from economic and political life while taking the offensive against workers.

From the beginning of 1980, the writer observed, the regime launched an effort to import more food, consumer items, and spare parts in order to diminish popular discontent with the shortages of daily existence. The previous regime had emphasized investments for developing heavy industry and sacrificed a generation, as Boumédiène himself said, in order to do so. To better balance the economy and lessen the pace of indebtedness involved, the new government decided to postpone or cancel some of the largest industrial projects and shift toward more investments in agriculture, housing, water power, job training, and other aspects of the social and economic infrastructure.

At the same time, he said, the FLN mounted a campaign to cleanse Algeria of "social plagues and parasitism" through police actions against delinquents, vagabonds, speculators, and smugglers and peddlers of every sort. The previous decade had produced all kinds of wheeler-dealers in the state enterprises and administration as well as in the private sector. New investigations and arrests, however, were aimed at the most vulnerable social elements despite some prosecutions and jailings of bureaucrats and military personnel for negligence and diversion of funds. Meanwhile, Chadli reserved the right arbitrarily to speed up or slow down prosecutions as he chose, with regime opponents the first victims of these purges.

"The nomination of Chadli marks a radical turn to the right. The populism of Boumédiène is shattered. A clean-up within the ruling circles has occurred with its parade of arrests and disappearances." While Boumédiène would constantly refer demagogically to "the working class" and "socialism," Chadli has abandoned such pretensions. He is committed to increase productivity at any price, especially through further exploitation of workers through cuts in their wages and benefits, firings, speedups, systematic repression of labor struggles, and glorification of these policies in the regime's media. Thus, to deal with repercussions of the international economic crisis, "the Algerian government has chosen the most reactionary path."

These policies are assisted by the regime's "militarization of workers through the mass organizations." Thus, UGTA is now used to directly implement the new line by identifying over-zealous trade unionists and controlling workers sufficiently to smother any labor struggle. These measures complement the simultaneous efforts to reduce food and consumer good shortages and to increase housing supply, to engage in "unpitying repression by the military security force of any opposition, thereby preventing any structured contestation from developing, and to isolate all opponents and struggles."

While the 1979 party congress used the slogan “For A Better Life,” he said, the 5th FLN congress in December 1983 thus proclaimed “Work and Austerity” as the overall guidelines. Increased productivity is meant to help the national economy, not benefit the masses, and production units must exert the necessary discipline to achieve this goal. This fits as well with increased political integration of the private bourgeoisie in the party and the increased role of the private sector, as with light industry and distribution networks, in the overall economy. Overall national productivity, it was decided, will be facilitated by breaking the state industrial sector into smaller units with financial and labor policy autonomy, giving priority to small and medium-size enterprises, halting rural migration in part by planting units in the interior, restructuring the large farms, and gradually reducing imports of food.

Internationally, he stated, Algeria will try to diversify exports and, contrary to Boumédiène’s policy, develop new alliances with pro-Western countries such as Senegal. The regime has bought arms from France and the US, increased ties with France and accords with French foreign policy, and distanced itself from the Soviet Union. It is now also a voice of moderation in both OPEC and the Arab League.¹³⁴

In his sequel article, Jean-Claude further elaborated on the repressive nature of the political regime as clarified by examining certain articles of the constitution and penal code. Thus, free speech and free association cannot be invoked to “undermine the socialist revolution” (Art. 55). Free movement of persons applies only within the country, not to travel abroad (Art. 37). Forfeiture of rights and basic freedoms will apply to anyone who uses them “to threaten the constitution, essential interests of the national collectivity, the unity of the people, internal and external security of the State and the socialist Revolution” (Art. 73). Anyone who tries to lead or maintain a labor strike for higher wages or to prevent anyone’s right to work is subject to fines and/or imprisonment (Art. 171 of the penal code).

“Like all totalitarian States, the repressive apparatus is very advanced and operates at all levels: economic (wage exploitation), political (single party system, political police), and ideological (State propaganda through its press, radio, and television). All political, trade-union, and cultural freedoms, even at the most basic level, are banned.” The media specifically easily attacks and falsifies information about even the slightest sign of challenge. Whatever rare critiques appear in the press follow a standard formula of describing the problem, reminding readers of socialist principles, verifying that leaders are attentive to the issue, and calling for militants and those responsible to avoid such problems in the future. The sometimes obscure or confused nature of the discussion demands an informed reader to really understand the issue at hand, whether a university conflict, a strike, or a

dismissed official. Meanwhile, foreign newspapers are banned when they discuss issues too delicate for the regime.

Social and economic conditions, he stated, continue to be in crisis. Some consumer items disappear for weeks at a time. Underemployment typifies the agricultural sector and the economy suffers from inadequate job training. Progress in health facilities tends especially to benefit the privileged ranks and workers in state enterprises. By 1981–82, fully half of the teachers in Algerian schools are foreigners.

“Nobody still believes in Algerian socialism. All hope for a different path disappeared years ago. Boumédiénne’s populist attempts to camouflage the class reality of the state have faded away under Chadli.”¹³⁵

A new Algerian human rights campaign in 1985 was the occasion for another critique of the regime’s authoritarian practice as well as a description of the new LADDH. Since early July, said the writer, thirteen of the fourteen original founders of the League have been arrested and imprisoned, including Berber singer Ferhat Mehenni.¹³⁶ “Every individual who loves freedom should demand the liberation of these human rights militants who are trying to open a breach in FLN totalitarianism.”¹³⁷



Meanwhile, said a new article, in France an “SOS-Racisme” organization attempted to place the recognition of immigrant issues within a much broader anti-racist movement. But, while mobilizing youth, its overall goals were rather vague, with no direct action against the National Front or challenge to the anti-immigrant policy of the government. However, it succeeded in holding various concerts, the most important, in Paris, drawing 300,000 in June 1985.¹³⁸ But now, the writer stated, separate anti-racist and immigrant groups have to decide whether or not to join in this larger, less focused movement or risk marginalization in public opinion. Autonomous movements are needed to avoid being controlled by any party or church.¹³⁹

With the new hard-right Chirac government now installed, said a writer three months later, politics have moved from the Socialist demagoguery of “Immigrant Is Beautiful” to an open season on immigrants. The new government contemplates various measures, including administrative refusals of entry to the country, without reason; case-by-case decisions on French citizenship for children born in France or with one French parent; more restricted access to resident cards; and easier policies for expulsion without judicial review. In fact, said a leading human rights spokesperson cited, certain policies from the Vichy regime seem to be appearing now as models for the present. The election result also seems to have encouraged a sense of revenge among police and the courts. As well, those on the extreme right, feeling betrayed by the National Front and already by the new

government, has used its plastic-bomb terrorism against immigrant communities in Marseille, Toulon, Nice, and Montbéliard.

Said the writer, “SOS-Racisme” has spoken out strongly against the government proposals, has 380 local committees, newspapers, and a radio program, and has become essentially a lobbying group. This approach is essentially like a poker game with the periodic need to mobilize huge gatherings to show its credibility. To this end, the organization definitely knows how to assemble huge numbers for its good concerts. As well, its rhetoric is carefully moderated and humanistic in nature. But, over the long run, this is not sufficient since it doesn’t challenge racist practices of the state, such as police and judicial practice and the notions of “citizenship.”¹⁴⁰

Late in the same year, the journal reported on new upheavals in eastern Algeria and their significance. “Although radical political Islam has poured into the Arab world, finding fertile terrain in the misery of the masses, the events of early November in eastern Algeria showed that Islam and the State still have challengers,” despite the regime’s attempt to describe the events in Constantine and Sétif as mere “episodes of vandalism.” But in fact it was a “radical challenge to the development mode based on the triad of oil, State and Islam,” a challenge to the shift toward capitalism and thaw in relations with the West that will not solve the basic problem.¹⁴¹

One week later, the same writer published a detailed critique of Algeria’s development model and concluded by stating that it was beyond speculation that Algeria’s development strategy has now exhausted itself. Justifiably, it is now important to encourage “a development model independent of the fluctuations of the world capitalist market, thus self-centered; with *autogestion* for units of adequate size; and decentralization with a balance geographically and among various sectors.” Despite regular proclamations by the regime since independence, Algeria is far from using its potential. It is no more a model to emulate than South Korea. “An anarchist approach to growth remains to be invented in practice.”¹⁴²

An article by “Brahim,” following up on the earlier article about the Constantine riots, expanded and deepened the analysis. Like their brothers in 1985 in Algiers, Ghardaïa and Tizi-Ouzou, he said, high schoolers, university students, and non-student youth in Constantine “confronted the forces of order for better living conditions. Algeria is in the streets and the challenge is not instigated by any political organization.” While it was Algiers students who first protested against the introduction of political and Islamic education into the *bac* curriculum, the news traveled fast and the youth of Constantine responded in spectacular fashion.

"Unemployment, shortages and the housing crisis are becoming more and more severe. Algerians don't see the end of the tunnel and youth have the unpleasant impression of falling into a bottomless pit." Some students quit their studies, knowing that employment will be even scarcer in the future. More rarely, some try to pursue bureaucratic or business careers. One would be quite lucky to be able to drive a Renault R25 (costing 300,000 French francs), to live in a nice villa (1 million French francs), or live in a three-room apartment (400,000 French francs), but the average wage in Algeria is 30,000 French francs per year.¹⁴³ "In Algeria, inequality is becoming more striking, especially as it affects young people." For them, finding a job is increasingly difficult, which forces them to accept whatever comes along, with no chance for advancement without connections. Many are forced unfortunately to leave the country to work, living in miserable conditions far from home. Because of crowded housing conditions, most often marriage implies promiscuity and family conflicts, and, in any case, it often costs too much.

"Rebellion is thus latent and diffused. If *rai* music is so popular, it's because it speaks of daily life and the street, of everything forbidden, of sexuality, of the fantasies that fill the imagination of the young. In Constantine, they fought the cops, pillaged the stores, stole foreign currency (the symbol of escape), and celebrated. In the course of a day, streets changed their face and became welcoming, a space of freedom." In Sétif, student protest was all the more embarrassing for the government since Chadli's brother was the head official of the *département* and a lot of money had been spent to make it a showcase of eastern Algeria. "But here, as in Constantine, all the renovations failed to hide the cracks." And rather than addressing inequality, the regime chose to expand it legally by opting for privatization and the new work code, which restricts workers even further.

Said the writer, the government is well informed of popular discontent through its honest grassroots militants in the party, trade unions, and other mass organizations. The problem for the regime is not a lack of information but how to keep power by giving favors and covering up all the mistakes of their subordinates. The long-time base of regime legitimacy has disappeared. The war caused the death of 1.5 million Algerians, and the FLN always used this fact to assert its claim to power. But by now, nearly 60 percent of the population never experienced these horrors. People no longer respond ideologically to the FLN's self-image as leader of the glorious Algerian struggle. They compare Chadli unfavorably with the mysterious and charismatic image of Boumédiène. "The State is in crisis and knows it."

Because of these blockages, he said, there is little hope for any opening in the direction of an anarchist society. Very rarely can one find people willing to discuss social revolution, except among convinced Marxists. Algeria has opened the door to liberal economics and foreign capitalists. "The

State will guarantee good social order.” Meanwhile “the petit-bourgeoisie is encouraged to invest and enrich itself on the backs of others.” At the same time, radical political Islam is on the rise. Algeria constructs more mosques than anyplace else in the world, thanks to the gifts of believers. The Muslim Brothers are well entrenched, are often seen in the streets, and, by 1985, have even begun guerrilla operations.¹⁴⁴ Thus, “everything is in place to perpetuate exploitation.”

The State continues to refuse any internal opposition. Openly violent repression is just part of the story. Those who challenge the regime may find neither jobs, lodging, nor passports. Despite this daily level of violence, some persons resist. “They are rare, live in hiding (silence or the club), and among them are some anarchists. Some prefer a ‘gilded’ exile. What else can be done?”¹⁴⁵

The journal’s first reaction to the October 1988 major Algiers street demonstrations was a front-cover full-page cartoon showing Chilean general Pinochet aiming a tank at fleeing protestors, with a heading, “In Santiago as in Algiers... Dictatorships.” Inside, an editorial began with the image of starving demonstrators outside the Tuileries 200 years earlier, seeking bread from a corrupt Convention, though fully knowing that “the Republic was no more than a whore who would sell herself to the highest bidder.”

Similarly, said the writer, hundreds of thousands of young people in the streets of an Algeria “martyrized, traumatized, and without freedom” also cried out for bread. There they are, desperately crying out their revolt “against the neo-colonial military regime that has halted this country for twenty-six years.” After all, they have little to hope for and little they can legally demand. A stagnant economy, huge population growth, and unbearable dark political and religious forces “have plunged this unhappy country into a material and moral distress, a scale of disaster that few French persons can suspect.”

“Our Algerian friends on both sides of the Mediterranean, are exploited, alienated, deported, censured, enchained, and always condemned to silence.” Meanwhile, the Socialist party speechmakers in France who proclaim liberty, equality, and fraternity should retract their verbiage, given the oppressive conditions the French state imposes on Algerians in this country. Can Mitterand’s supposed “pigs-in-a-pen relationship with comrade dictator Chadli” justify forcing the 800,000 Algerian workers in France to be silent? Respect Algerians and all immigrants.

“Algerian children are in insurrection. Depoliticized, cynical, exasperated, they are finally taking the image of [Camus’s] *The Rebel*: dignified, free, magnificent! They’ve broken with fatalism, they’ve taken their destiny in their own hands! The children of Algeria have given us a beautiful lesson. Like them, let us take up the great words of freedom; like them, let us show that the terms of freedom and justice are synonymous; like them,

let us share with others the love of freedom and extend our hand to the Algerian comrades.”

Having rid the country of French colonialism, Algerians now confront the single-party dictatorship. Intelligent people should stand up, heartened by their example. As old individualist anarchists used to say, referring to Sisyphus, “They’ve begun now to sidestep the rock and, if forced by necessity, they will break it!”¹⁴⁶

A more detailed discussion of the context and nature of the “fiery and bloody” rebellion appeared in the next issue. The first conditions to comprehend, it said, are the scarcity of basic necessities—such as semolina grain, sugar, coffee, tea, rice—and the thriving black market for consumer goods (from American cigarettes to refrigerators) and drugs. Unemployment continues to go up (18 percent officially, but no doubt higher in reality) and wages are fixed by the government in negotiation with UGTA, the only recognized trade union, and they have not risen since 1985. Preceding the revolts of past weeks were various strike attempts and, for the first time since independence, the call for a general strike. The rebellions thus occurred in “a deteriorating social climate.”

But beyond these general conditions of lower living standards, the youth of Algeria (over 50 percent of the population) had striking grievances of their own. “They were the spearhead of a movement embracing the whole country.” In 1980, 1986, and 1987, protest riots had occurred in Algiers, Constantine, Sétif, Tizi-Ouzou, and elsewhere. They live in crowded housing far from city centers, with little space for games or leisure activity and generally in far worse condition than the worst of housing complexes in France.

Young people have no future. A very large majority emerges from schooling with no diploma and no training. Even those with *bac* or university degrees have trouble finding a job. Poor housing availability also makes it difficult to migrate elsewhere in the country for potential employment. A minority decides that the society leaves them only one choice—emigration abroad.

The government’s first response, observed the writer, was to use machine guns. While the government established new private markets, the ones best able to take advantage of the opportunity were those with investment money already. At the same time, while the new rich and the bureaucrats at the center of client networks were the main consumers of newly available material goods, the money spent was thus not money invested for overall economic growth. Proliferation of consumer goods, cars, houses, and apartments for the corrupt and well-off was that much more provocation for young people to rebel and for workers to strike.

The economic crisis of Algeria is too deep to be changed by merely replacing one government or even one political system with another. “The rebellion of young Algerians poses again the relation between rebellion

and revolution. What has happened will be analyzed later. It is clear that today's central question is the form of our support for victims of the repression. But what remains on the agenda in France and Algeria both is the development of our ideas and practices to genuinely provoke change."¹⁴⁷



In November 1989, *Le Monde Libertaire* ran several articles concerning the issue of Muslim schoolgirls' dress in France. This became an issue among anarchists and among French society generally after three female students were expelled from a high school in Creil (a town north of Paris) the month before for wearing headscarves, since this was viewed as a form of religious expression in traditionally secular public schools. This and other issues related to practices of Muslims in France, especially concerning women, became heavily debated areas in the columns of *Le Monde Libertaire* and in other anarchist journals, all the way to the present. French anarchists are clearly divided and articles *on both sides* appeared in this and many subsequent issues. Select examples of these different perspectives are offered immediately below and later in this same section of the book.¹⁴⁸

Two issues earlier, an *Le Monde Libertaire* editorial stated that to simply ban was not a solution. In the meantime, said the latest editorial, the minister of education had tried to please everyone by affirming the principle of secular public schools while allowing headscarves in the name of tolerance and integration. As well, important voices on the right had surprisingly come out as strong defenders of secularism, despite their traditional praise of catholic private schooling. And who among them would treat all religious symbols the same way? Additionally, "should anarchists join with those who appealed to the State to exclude children from school?" At the same time, "should anarchists give in to what must be called growing radical Islamism?"

On the other side of the debate, said the editors, behind the veil, so to speak, was a strange mix of the new left, "SOS-Racisme," and religious figures of all denominations who bowed down to a religious custom in the name of tolerance. Even radical Islamists suddenly posed themselves as defenders of that principle. "The stone-throwers at adulterous women get away with parables of women's freedom. One could only dream!"

"We dismiss back-to-back the certainties of the new apostles of secularism and the opportunistic and specious complaisance of the partisans of 'let them veil' at school." Beyond the issue of the three schoolgirls, we agree with the advice from a group of Iranian women (whose article also appears in this issue¹⁴⁹) to give no ground to growing radical Islamism and to struggle through dialogue and persuasion, "but also, we add, through anti-religious propaganda in tune with our era. No God, no veil! Let us dismantle the authoritarian and patriarchal structure that gave birth to them."

The anti-religious struggle, relatively neglected more recently, must again be taken up in this era of collapsed ideologies. "To fight the religious fundamentalism alternative everywhere in the world, beginning in France, we must take a firm stand. In this case, a coherent position demands that we treat all religions the same way." No religious symbols should be permitted in public schools. "But are we really sure that this response gets to the depth of the question?"¹⁵⁰

To further explore the issue, in a note introducing a follow-up discussion from three writers, the editors stated that there was no fixed anarchist position and that the journal intended only to present several well-reasoned perspectives.

The first article, by Marc Prévötel, not only backed the school expulsion but went further to denounce the manipulation of the young students by radical Islamists. Denying the easy assumption that the whole issue was a racist illusion, he claimed that through laziness, laxity, or error, one could fall into a trap for idiots. Behind these nice little girls is a whole army of manipulators "ready to launch an offensive." First, the imams, then the rabbis, then the pastors and bishops, all with "the practically admitted intent to rush through the opening: the whole vile brothel of religions that wants to expand everywhere. These nice manipulated immigrant children are unconsciously playing the game for the mafia of clerical pimps. If we let them do it, we'll be the next victims of these thugs' rackets."

"It is never easy to struggle for freedom. Because we have scruples, we refuse to attack the manipulated front-line enemies, preferring to go after their leaders instead. But to do this, we sometimes have to push away those in front and we would be wrong to worry about them and their defenders, even if we are ready to indulge them when they change camps at the right moment." Said the writer, this journal is sometimes quite critical of public schools. Though we know their limits, we're not the ones who've chosen this context. Rather, it's those "indignant fathers and abusive brothers who wish to impose their pretended 'religious propriety' on some adolescents."

Nearly three weeks passed, he said, before writers in the major press media began examining the essential issue. Until then, they easily gave in to compromising the laic principle by accepting the "culture clash" reasoning. Meanwhile, the journals of "pious reformers" spoke of the need for a more open secular policy, thereby whetting the appetites of "leaders of the clerical bands, [Paris archbishop] Lustiger, the grand rabbi, and the rector of the great mosque of Paris, and assembling them to scramble for the spoils."

Many of us who still have not overcome the legacy of our Judeo-Christian "culture," he stated, continue to assault us with its garbage and we still have much struggle ahead against its machoism. Nevertheless, we've accomplished a lot by now, however imperfect, in the realm of women's rights. But this is now threatened "by the Islamist clerical shit, supported

also by Christian and Judaic shifts who hope to use it to revive their health.” It is this effort to continue humiliating women that we refuse to accept. We refuse to accept the use of the young as hostages, “in order to re-introduce practices from the Middle Ages.”

Liberal Muslims we admire and others who have freed themselves sufficiently from religion to live their own lives have urged us not to leave them alone in this battle against “barbarian radical Islamists.” Some Muslim school parents have also courageously demanded that the *hidjeb* not be allowed in classrooms. We should be at their side. Our own freedom as well as theirs is at stake. One can imagine the reaction if one of our teacher comrades went to class with a button expressing his much better opinion that all priests, pastors, rabbis, and imams be hung from the lampposts.

“Just because the society we live in still harbors barbarian traditions is no reason to expand their use. In our struggle against barbarism, we shouldn’t care where they come from, to privilege some over others.... We place all barbarisms in the same bag—Islamists along with all the other clerics, and their cousins, the followers of Le Pen, as well as the bastards who bulldozed the mosques, because we don’t challenge religious freedom as long as it doesn’t leave the private domain.” Nevertheless, given this position, “we should never forget that all religions are the excrement of intelligence. They will not impose their laws on us, nor their male chauvinist trash. The Islamist assassins do not impress us.”¹⁵¹

A contrary position was presented by Arnaud Muysen: Anarchists have always stood for freedom of thought and the need for dialogue. “This is the very foundation of our politics. And thus, the ‘headscarf’ question should not even be posed.” It is not for us “to denounce children who wear a cross, the star of David, a hammer and sickle, or a circled ‘A,’ or who cover their hair or let long hair hang down.” While some teachers oppose headscarves on safety grounds, fearing that if they are too long they might get caught in machines, the solution here, as with those with long hair a few years ago, is to demand that they wear a hat when so exposed.

“Tolerating that a person wears a distinct religious symbol is not to give one’s support to that religion. It is to let individuals dialogue less passionately, thus with more reason. Let secular schools take responsibility for teaching human rights. If dialogue is not made impossible by arbitrary bans, veils will surely be lifted. And I’m not talking only about fabrics.”¹⁵²

The last entry in this dialogue was a reprinted letter from “a teacher comrade” to the principal of the school in Creil. She supported the principal on grounds not only of the law but also because of the negative directions France is taking in response to its growing multicultural composition. Just as she would not admit a student to her classroom who wore a provocative racist symbol or message or one who wore a cross so large that no one could avoid seeing it, likewise she would not allow a female student more

or less veiled. These are statements meant to have an effect and possibly to influence. They have no place in a secular classroom where indoctrination is forbidden. "In our society, immigrants who wish to have rights must also assume responsibilities: the issue has already come up concerning military service for those who claim French citizenship."

It is too bad, she said, that after you met and worked out a compromise with the parents involved, Islamic organizations chose to intervene and to demand that you completely retreat from your position. Such a position by those who are truly radical Islamists rarely reflects the actual free and conscious views of the easily manipulated schoolgirls themselves. Unfortunately, these events are like the horrible and scandalous recent attempts at censure in which Christians condemned a Scorsese film (*The Last Temptation of Christ*) and attacked a movie house or when Islamists threatened to kill the author of *The Satanic Verses*.

She also wrote as a woman very concerned about how the values of equality and tolerance, which should be taught in schools, are threatened by a certain interpretation of the Koran where leaving one's hair uncovered implies showing one's body to the view of males. Such a position threatens the principle of mixed classes and thus an atmosphere of relative tolerance of different customs, respectful of everyone's freedom. This is something France has made good progress with over the past twenty years and should rightfully be proud of.

"To separate the theme of the veil from its symbolism is specious or irresponsible. What is at stake here is the whole issue of our freedoms and equality of men and women in our republican society."¹⁵³

The growing attention of *Le Monde Libertaire* in the 1980s to the dangerous rise of radical political Islam became concretely focused on Algeria in 1990 in response to Islamists' victory at local political levels in the first multi-party elections permitted since independence. Islamists of the FIS obtained 55 percent support of those voting; the FLN only 35 percent. Meanwhile, 40 percent of eligible voters abstained. "We could be happy, but the economic and social situation gives us nothing to smile about." Algeria is on the verge of catastrophe with its huge unemployment, overall misery, and flagrant corruption. The October 1988 upheaval made that quite clear. Everyone depends on the thriving black market to get by.

"Every injustice by the State that we denounce in *Le Monde Libertaire* is played out as caricatures in political skullduggery in Algeria. Our anti-authoritarian ideals are confirmed by the State corruption, self-reproduction of the regime, and the FLN, whatever 'legitimacy' it had originally. While the army now poses itself as the ultimate recourse for 'democracy in the

face of the Islamist menace,' it shows well at what point a society based on exploitation leads to an impasse." After twenty-five years of unshared power, it now must give way to another force "even more intransigent." The victory of the Islamists demonstrates the total failure of the regime.

"Those freedoms so tiny at present are now more threatened. Algerian women know it since they already are oppressed by a society that makes them sub-citizens. This radical Islamist victory is worrisome. Having known how to respond, in its own way, to the needs of the population—in organizing, for example, distribution of food goods to the most needy—the FIS gained a whole electorate. Lacking any radical and anti-authoritarian alternative, Algeria risks a long-range descent into a Khomeini-type religious state." Hopefully this will not happen.¹⁵⁴

However, the downward spiral was well underway when the journal addressed Algeria's situation a year later. "Algeria has again experienced some bleak events: the state of siege declared for four months makes obvious the difficulties challenging the FLN as it tries to remove the country from stagnation and limit the political advance of the FIS. Sad alternatives for the people who keep score between the plague and cholera."

Islamists estimate that the (June 5, 1991) Algiers clash with the police left a dozen dead and nearly forty wounded. According to the bearded ones, the demonstration was supposed to bring the fall of President Chadli, however, the FLN, unwilling to see that outcome, declared a state of siege for four months, with soldiers replacing police in the streets. This came after an FIS-declared general strike of several days, which apparently flopped in terms of overall popular support. This was too much for the FIS and followed various setbacks since the party's victory in the municipal elections. "Praying to the Divine and managing a town are two different things, as Islamists learned at their own expense." Supporting Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War was also a setback financially, since Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, which amply fund radical Islam everywhere, welcomed US intervention against the Iraqi regime.

"Seeing their influence diminish, the Algerian Islamists decided to go for broke by apparently opting for force and violence. Vicious, but not stupid, since it accomplished its goals by provoking the FLN." The election date (for the National Assembly) was pushed back, which helped the increasingly less-popular FIS. By provoking repression, it also gained its first martyrs and its calls now for vengeance give new leverage for mobilization. Though weakened, the FIS still draws significant support from the young and disinherited—also, paradoxically, from some women who seem "to confuse militantism with masochism."

Explanations have been offered for FIS success. Some suggest that many Algerians see it as the only hope for some kind of democracy. But this doesn't make sense since once the FIS gains power they will "install

an Islamic dictatorship. They don't hide this goal." The Koran supercedes the Declaration of Human Rights. In fact, the FIS derives its passionate following for the same reason as the National Front in France—people's misery. "Blessed with enormous financial resources, the FIS takes on humanistic airs. It has understood that to be popular and to get its message across, it needs to be fully attuned to the preoccupations of the population. It has moved into the social terrain, abandoned by the FLN and all other democratic forces of whatever flavor."

For example, when the major earthquake hit the El Asnam region a few years ago, the first assistance to victims came from the Islamists. By the time the FLN's ambulances arrived, they were hardly needed. Likewise, when a student from a poor family lacks resources to pursue his studies, Islamists make it possible. It is such actions that make recruitment easier. In the face of such gifts, a worker is unlikely to be concerned about the threat of Islamic dictatorship.

Latest reports indicate that the government and the FIS have agreed to legislative elections occurring at the end of the year. Given what's happened, "Algerians now risk falling under either military dictatorship or an Islamist republic. Much to choose between the plague and cholera. Unless, between now and then, voices emerge crying for 'No God, no master!' One can always dream, right?"¹⁵⁵



While deeply apprehensive about Algeria's future, the *Fédération Anarchiste's* journal took a retrospective view of the Algerian war, three decades after its final year, by publishing in October 1991 an interview with Jean-Louis Hurst ("Maurienne"), author of a newly republished, mainly autobiographical, work describing his 1960 experience as a French military officer deserter who chose active engagement in support of the FLN.¹⁵⁶

Both political and psychological factors, he said, motivated him to desert the draft. He discovered that everyone who took that action had a relative who participated in the French Resistance. The fact that the latter was so small in number helps to explain why so few came to oppose the Algerian war. Additionally, anti-Arab racism played a big role in inhibiting opposition, so "only those who had a personal or emotional relationship with the Arab world were led to take that step." His own background, in this regard, was significant since his family fled to Algeria when the Nazis came. He then witnessed, at age ten, Algerian soldiers departing in trucks to help liberate France. He thus understood later that there was a debt to be paid.

Before independence, he said, we knew only those Algerians who were like us. They wanted to pursue their studies and to explore beyond the

confines of their traditional society. Among those leftist Algerian workers we knew, who associated with French organizations, we gained the illusion that Algerians were quite close to our perspectives.

“In 1962–63, we discovered that 4/5 of these people lived on a different planet. They had closed in among themselves, with their traditions and conformity, in order to confront the invader. At that point, we discovered a different Algeria. For those who stayed [in Algeria], we were able to discover that they were a fabulous people, even if they didn’t have the same cheeky humor or irony as our pals of Barbès [a North African neighborhood in Paris].”

We need to understand why the French have repressed so much from their consciousness. In 1789, France “opened the path for the whole world, deeply affecting all revolutionaries. Yet France also held onto its colonial empire the longest. And now it’s fallen into the flirtation with Le Pen. It is the best and the worst.” My book expresses this duality. There is no other country with that level of contradiction. In their wartime newspaper, *El Moudjahid*, the Algerian revolutionaries referred to the best of French ideals and the Resistance.¹⁵⁷



With a report by Heidi Seray, its Swiss correspondent “who knows Algeria especially well,” the journal resumed its attentive focus on Algeria’s intense political struggle after the first round of legislative elections in late December 1991. Self-proclaimed experts on Algeria, she said, were sharply divided on the likely outcome of the coming second round. Some predicted an FIS victory, resulting in political confusion and chaos. Others thought the FIS was in decline because of its responsibility for the June clashes and its mismanagement at the municipal level.

The first round, however, implied a very likely decisive FIS victory at the end of the electoral process. The FIS gained 188 National Assembly seats, the FFS 25, and the FLN 16. At this point, she observed, some now predict a post-election “breaking wave of Algerian refugees hunted by misery and bloody Islamists.” Others suggest that since Algeria (as opposed to Iran) is a population of Sunni Muslims, a part of Mediterranean culture, and, despite all, close to the liberal West, it is absurd to think that Algeria could take the same route as the Iranian regime.

Until the FIS succeeded in mobilizing people’s misery into a weapon against the hated regime, seen also as “atheistic and foreign,” she noted, those of privilege genuinely believed that everyone was well fed and well lodged, and that all had jobs who wanted them. Only those close to the regime knew that food imports were costing Algeria a dangerous amount, with its foreign debt apparently near \$26 billion.

But the gap in values, she reported, was equally significant. For average Algerians, the thirty years of pseudo-Marxist lies by the FLN, the plea for parliamentary democracy by some forty little competing parties, and the strong commitment of the FFS for women's freedom all seemed like "foreign concepts." This made the task of the FIS quite easy by promising improvement of life conditions and a return to traditional values. This was exactly what the vast majority of Algerians wanted, as shown in the tidal wave of support they received in the June 1960 municipal elections and the first round just completed.

Without a doubt, she predicted, the FIS will gain an absolute majority of the 216-seat Assembly at the January 16 second round. This will be the outcome even if, miraculously, the FFS and FLN succeed in mobilizing at least some of the 5 million who abstained, as well as a majority of those who voted for the smaller parties. The only real question is whether the FLN regime will voluntarily cede power or whether it will use some subterfuge to annul the election. The army as well will be challenged to accept releasing the charismatic FIS leaders, Abbasi Madani and Ali Belhadj, imprisoned since the June clashes and accused of plotting against the State. Already, on December 29, the national police announced the death of three people after an FIS attack several days earlier. Could this announcement foretell the regime's solution—canceling the election because of a plot?

The regime faces a real dilemma. If it accepts the democratic outcome, "it will be accused of leading the country to the edge of failure after thirty years of disastrous management and of delivering it, without reacting, to a shadowy regime; or, if it blocks the FIS from its victory, very grave troubles are likely and it will be a long time before any new attempts at democratic overture are attempted."¹⁵⁸

The next week's issue had a front-page article about the military coup. "Four years after demonstrations in Algeria's streets marked the beginning of the end of thirty years of the FLN regime, the army, the eternal guarantor of the safety of the State, fired Chadli, thus depriving him of the delights of cohabitation with the bearded ones." Though the street was able in 1988 to push the regime toward certain political concessions, the economic situation never changed. "A democracy can only be put into place to serve the economic interests of those already in power. There's no interest in changing the constitution to democratize institutions if the only outcome is to pass them into the hands of groups, even of the masses, whose intentions and interests are opposite from those of the bourgeoisie. Anarchists have paid the price in such events."

In the present context, though one cannot feel sorry for the inability of the FIS to immediately take power, the situation is nonetheless "worrisome for those who don't view democracy and capitalism as the sole miracle remedy able to provide grateful people with peace, health, prosperity, and

freedom to choose.” The FIS certainly doesn’t dream of “peace, love, freedom, and flowers.” Their only way to give people “amusement” is to offer them the chance to structure their days with obligatory prayers. It is always easier to give people false assurances through religion than to ask them to shed blood and tears for the benefit of anonymous and foreign entities like GATT and the IMF.

Traditionally, if people vote the wrong way, regimes have to bring them under control or shoot them down. “To choose between the coup d’état and an elected ultra-authoritarian despotism is not a choice (and no one so chose). The plague or cholera, or why not both, suggests only one way out: strong medicine.” One such remedy is “a social and anarchist revolution, the refusal of all authoritarianisms—by the military, religions, bosses, clans, families, sexism, and all forms of exclusion. While easy for us to say it, what it implies is that to achieve it in Algeria means that anarchists must establish or revive social movements in Europe, North America, and Japan in order to block their regimes’ cultural and economic imperialism. “Such is the new hand of the new world order and we must take account of it, roll up our sleeves, and get to work.”¹⁵⁹

The next issue included a detailed interview with prolific historian Benjamin Stora to discuss his latest work on Algeria, *La Gangrène et l’oubli*, concerning memory of the Algerian war.¹⁶⁰ Said Stora, “Vichy and the Algerian war remain the two black holes of French internal history. In both cases, the State placed itself outside of the law, violated it, and flagrantly abused the notion of a State submissive to law. The State’s reasoning was the same in both cases. Thus, these two periods are analogous.” Though the State doesn’t prevent memory, he said, it has the means to obscure it by hiding secrets.¹⁶¹

With the military coup outcome of the legislative elections, *Le Monde Libertaire* found it timely to discuss the difference between anarchist and democracy models. In the present Algerian context, it said, the radical Islamists were ready to use their popular democratic mandate to establish an authoritarian regime. Meanwhile, the military uses its authoritarian power to supposedly guarantee democracy. Elsewhere in the world, democrats seem relieved to see the voting suspended while, in France, Le Pen’s National Front “is indignant at the military coup d’état.”

From this strange set of circumstances, several observations must be made. First, as the election of Hitler demonstrated, elections can bring

undemocratic forces to power. Only “idealists or idiots” still believe that voters will always choose only genuinely democratic parties. Secondly, “democracy is a potentially freedom-destroying system, thus dangerous,” since “fanaticized masses” can end up having a majority and dominating the polls. In school we were taught that democracy was the perfect system, or at least “the beacon for the impoverished,” and it was “the greatest political taboo” to think otherwise. The confusion comes from the common mixing of the words “democracy” and “freedom.”

“Anarchists are not and never have been democrats or parliamentarians. They are libertarians and federalists. As libertarians, they oppose any coercion of individuals or groups, unless it’s within the framework of freely and mutually agreed contracts. As federalists, they’ve understood that the idea of an absolute good which a government would seek to attain is a dangerous utopia. Everyone should seek their own notion of happiness and try to attain it, which means trials and errors, successes and organization.”

But such organization must be freely arranged, egalitarian and federalist, potentially grouping neighborhoods, producers, and consumers who “could unite effectiveness and freedom. It would not be a perfect society but rather, on healthy foundations, a society always improvable, discussible, possible, and anarchist.”¹⁶²



The next journal article refocused directly on the Algerian context. Throughout France, it said, people are denouncing the anti-democratic cancelation of elections in Algeria. Of course, the loudest cries come from the extreme right since it can well anticipate being able to exploit the fact of an FIS in Algeria to sow panic among many in France and therefore a future turn to the right for security. Of course, they also fear the possibility that they themselves might someday be outlawed as anti-constitutional. But they needn’t worry since it benefits the Socialists to maintain a split among rightists. Over the past seventy years, history has continued to offer the sole choice between bourgeois parliamentary democracy and dictatorship, whether of the left or right.

Nevertheless, it would be ridiculous to applaud the military coup since freedom never emerges from guns. “If the Algerian generals rid the country of the Islamist plague, as we might expect or even hope, they will regard themselves as mandated with an almost divine mission and will be tempted not only to retain power, but also to liquidate all vague attempts at freedom.” Our philosophical position cannot favor either side of the Algerian conflict since neither would offer freedom, and the people “will always be duped and cheated! If, in an absolute sense, our position makes good sense, to express it in this terse a manner is unsatisfactory. In the first place, if a

choice has to be made, it will be at another level, with the army and radical Islamists on one side and freedom on the other.”¹⁶³

The journal resumed its more detailed Algeria coverage with another article by Swiss correspondent Heidi Seray in mid-March. By the end of February, she said, according to the military, about sixty deaths, over 400 wounded, and some 4,000 arrests had been registered, and six detention camps opened in the south since the cancelation of the second round of elections. The army had so far chosen to avoid directly confronting the FIS while instead arresting its leaders and denying its capability for armed action. Next, it declared a complete ban of the FIS, thus “opening the door widely to every violation of human rights. And all this under the benevolent eye of the near-totality of ‘democrats’ within and outside of the country.”

Five men now comprise the new State High Committee, she reported, a new ruling circle to which the military owes obedience. The presence of four of them is not surprising: the minister of defense, Khaled Nezzar; the secretary-general of the war veterans association, Ali Kafi; the rector of the Great Mosque of Paris, Tadjini Haddam; and the minister of human rights, Ali Haroun.¹⁶⁴ What was unexpected was the inclusion of Mohamed Boudiaf, last of the historic leaders to return to Algeria. After early opposing the Ben Bella regime, leading the opposition PRS, and going into exile in 1964, Boudiaf now returns nearly thirty years later as the party he adamantly detested has finally been defeated. Is this a case of personal vengeance? Or does he “honestly believe himself to be the man of the hour capable of reviving the forces of the country indispensable for its social and economic recovery, while avoiding the pitfalls of both a Chilean-type dictatorship and collapsing into the abyss of the forces of deliberate deceit?” Answering her own question, Seray stated that nothing said so far by Boudiaf, the new strongman of Algeria, suggests new approaches to deal with its immense problems.¹⁶⁵



Quite surprisingly, especially given the dramatic and bloody conflict in Algeria over the months to come, the journal’s next articles on the country appeared only in late 1993, over a year and a half later. A December issue finally provided an update on the situation in Algeria. Said the article, the FIS has an easy time asserting the illegitimacy of the present regime while the latter’s dissolution of the FIS in April 1992 “only justified the recourse to violence of the FIS and GIA.” But the terrorist strategy of the FIS, with hundreds of assassinations and widespread sabotage, has been met in kind by the regime’s commando terrorism, “with over 1,000 ‘liquidations’ of FIS militants, deportations of thousands to camps in the Sahara, systematic torture, tight police surveillance, 350 death sentences and already 26

executions." In turn, groups close to the FIS have also targeted foreigners for assassination and warned them all to leave Algeria.

It is not clear, said the writer, what will replace the state of emergency when the statute runs out at the end of the year. Would the military wish to directly wield power when it already does so in actuality? Clearly, the people at large are not deemed mature enough to revive elections, so some form of semi-dictatorship seems likely. After all, they reason that 27 million Algerians need to be controlled, three-fourths of them under the age of 30 and "wanting to live, whatever the cost."

Are especially younger Algerians willing to put up with such a regime, given the already intolerable economic situation? Already, several strikes have broken out in the petrochemical sector, but military repression is severe and a generalized movement of revolt is hard to imagine. "For the moment, the population hopelessly keeps score and observes the struggle for power as something foreign to itself."¹⁶⁶

Another article one month later commented first on the treatment of Algeria by French media. The writer stated that news from Algeria only made headlines when another intellectual, militant trade unionist or ordinary person was murdered by radical Islamists. "Fatalism seems inscribed in bloody letters in most press commentaries. This brings us back to that primary and caricatured image of a people who have always been portrayed to us as ignorant and unable to think in modern terms. It is this devaluing and criminal representation that has fed racism and justified French colonization and exploitation."

Thus, he said, each new description of violence in Algeria is shrugged off as what one might expect from Arabs and what they deserve for wanting independence instead of the better life they had under the French. In the voyeurism of the French media, there's a sort of celebration and insidious revenge at work while conveniently forgetting that the French state and its colonial legacy have much responsibility for the present economic misery and political impasse. The Socialist party now seeks a monument to honor the 32,000 French who died during the Algerian war, but has no shame at the million Algerian deaths, a whole generation lost, in the same conflict, and the heavy weight this caused in reviving the economy after independence.

There is also the question of the real objectives of the French state and capitalist bosses for Algeria. He asked, do they really want that country to emerge from social misery? Do they prefer that Algerians be subject to military rule justified by radical Islamist violence? Without proof, it is still typical of capitalists to seek advantages where internal social strife exists. The FIS has of course gained much strength from the economic and political failures of the regime, but its ability to launch large-scale operations, such as the network of health services, Koranic schools, and cheap eateries, owes as well to financial support from Saudi Arabia and Iran. The

same financial backers now subsidize the armed groups and network, but why? And could this be done without involving the American and French governments in some way?¹⁶⁷

The fullest analysis and indictment of Algeria's bloody impasse to date, as well as hope for a liberatory third force from the grassroots, was presented in a detailed article by Georges Rivière in June 1994. Beginning with a short 1958 quote from *Noir et Rouge* proclaiming the need to morally support the Algerian people "purely and simply fighting for their lives," the writer portrayed the population generally as falling hostage to a deadly battle between two Islamist contenders—the FLN and the FIS—for government power and social control. "Everyone who thinks, creates, speaks critically, or lives an independent lifestyle gets shot or strangled like rabbits."

Citing Algerian poet Tahar Djaout's admonition, he repeated that both speaking out and remaining silent results in death, so one should speak out. This advice has become symbolic of the current situation. It was proclaimed on the banners of those who marched in the Algiers demonstration of March 22. And the admonition proved more than symbolic, because Tahar Djaout indeed spoke out and was assassinated.¹⁶⁸

The situation gets worse all the time. "Intellectuals," who symbolize an evil world, are a chief target: "writers, artists (Tahar Djaoui, Abdelkader Alloula),¹⁶⁹ teachers (Ahmed Asselah),¹⁷⁰ researchers, doctors, journalists, politicians." Women as well are executed: anonymous women, along with divorced mothers living with their children alone, women street vendors, and female high school teachers. Islamists place the status of women as a central preoccupation, in real and symbolic terms both, in assessing the quality of society. There is a choice between women "as mothers, as always unsettling bodies either holy or impure and women as individuals, freely engaging as they wish, in control of their own creativity." Between these two orientations, "the hold of males, priests, warriors, families, tribes, and uncontrollable birthrates—that is, of the law—is not the same."

Algeria's infamous "family code," he pointed out, was introduced by the FLN, not the FIS. Such regressive provisions as outlawing a woman from traveling abroad without her husband are the reasons why women were so predominant in the present struggles and why the demonstration of March 22 was so large. Thus, "the FLN-FIS conflict is not at all an opposition between progressivism and secularism on one side and theocratic and dark forces on the other, but rather two camps feeding off each other, confronting and engaging in secret conspiracies to conquer and/or to keep power. Sometimes, these two camps are one camp only."

In fact, the FLN opened doors for them, he said, as shown in the fact that FIS leader Abassi Madani was originally in the FLN and that Islam is proclaimed constitutionally as the state religion. "In this completely corrupt and infiltrated system, for one faction in power, an Islamist victory is

seen as the only way to keep power.” Under Chadli, the Islamists gained significant ground within the FLN regime itself. Minister Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi placed Islamists in important positions while the Minister of Education, against advice from the national science council, introduced the policy of Arabized education in the schools and appointed fundamentalist Islamists as principals of the high schools.¹⁷¹ Islamists appeared on state-controlled television and the reactionary family code became law. “The FLN/Islamist overlapping is so great that it would be impossible to toss out one without the other.”

The article then proceeded with substantial quoted passages from Tahar Djaout, published in his journal, *Ruptures*, in 1993. Illustrating close links between the two camps, Djaout also complained that Boumédiénne’s widow successfully sought a national ban of Rachid Boudjedra’s pamphlet *FIS de la Haine* (*The FIS of Hatred*), while the returned prime minister Belaid Abdesslem confined his notion of pluralism to solely the spectrum from socialist-tending to extreme-right versions of Arabo-Islamism.¹⁷² Meanwhile, he said, the highest level of the regime chose to receive, as a representative of Algerian women, a person who awhile ago espoused fundamentalist slogans and was expelled from a women’s demonstration. As Djaout predicted, progressive voices such as his own would be first targets for murder.

With fundamentalist Islamists’ intent to impose *sharia* on the whole society, they move from mere religious beliefs to totalitarian political dogma. Such intent is not a matter for debate, it must be fought. One needs “to call a cat a cat and radical Islamism a form of fascism.” Islamism is different from Islam. “One can think whatever one wants about monotheism, religions, and mystics generally. Theology and faith are outside the realm of the rational. But once fundamentalisms, whether Christian, Jewish, or Muslim, seek to regulate the realm of the profane, they are subject to the terms of that world.” And fundamentalist Islamism thus deserves the description as “fascist” since its intent is to substitute a totalitarian system for the republican state. But this conflict is not exclusively Algerian; it concerns both sides of the Mediterranean. “Islamists find fertile ground here in France in the exclusions, distrust and precarious existence experienced by North African communities.”

Despite this context of terror and despair in Algeria, “where all hope for the future seems destroyed,” thousands of people marched in the streets of Algiers against the FLN and FIS and for control “of their own thoughts, behavior, culture and economy.” Despite the atomization and divisions of the secular parties, “this massive and determined mobilization shows the power of a grassroots movement, the capacity of people’s networks and associations at the base—at the front of which are women—to rise up and declare: neither the sword nor the theocrats.”

Anarchists must feel intense fraternal sentiments for these men and women fighting “the three-headed hydra of theocracy, the financial-military-political Mafia and state centralism.” We need to act in solidarity with support networks and make known the freedom-seeking efforts in Algeria—thus contradicting the common image of “fanatical Arabs.” We must help raise funds, seek out shelter for individuals and families, and demand official recognition for political refugees fleeing Islamist threats and violence. We must deepen our critique of the present state of North-South relations with all the challenge to capitalism that this implies.

“Who better can be found to provide fruitful support to the new movement for Algerian liberation than those who, while supporting the anti-colonialist struggle, knew at the time to critique the modalities and limits of the ‘national liberation?’” Anarchists are the ones who opposed Communists and their leftist clones in denouncing the reality of communist models from Moscow to Algiers. Anarchists are the ones who exposed the capitalist reality of every form of managed development, through their radical analyses of power, and who thus sought new forms of production, decision making, and collaboration.

In effect, he said, Algerians now have just opened a debate on the nature and forms of modernity. It is easy to sense what its outer manifestations would be: “freedom of thought, speech, the written word, behavior; freedom to disagree; freedom to sing and play one’s music; freedom to speak one’s language; and the opportunity for decent housing and productive employment.” But there are big differences between creation of a ground-upward form of social organization based on grassroots associations and incorporating critiques of Western “modernity,” on the one hand, and alternative models of liberal capitalism, neo-colonialism, Saudi Arabian Wahabism, or those discussed among the “democratic camp” of Algerians, on the other.

Many of those who Islamists and Arab nationalists call “atheist,” “assimilationists,” “Communists,” and “the party of France” are not a bit tempted by the European model of “democracy,” having experienced and suffered from its reality. And many may perceive the call for Algerian democracy by some European politicians as essentially an appeal to open Algerian markets to further domination. Some anti-Islamists may confusingly see the State as the needed efficient provider of public services, as in the realms of health, housing, and education, but women’s associations in fact are doing without it. In various contexts, they are reintroducing the gender mixing in schools and discarding the *hidjab*. In the Aurès region, Berbers have organized committees to defend their language and culture against the hostile efforts of state centralism.

If Islamism is finally defeated, he said, there will be many of these issues, orientations, and demands to take into account in forming a new republican regime. We cannot pretend that there’s a genuine anarchist

movement in Algeria. "Nevertheless, support for Algerian resistance is once again a priority. A clear and critical anarchist position should not prevent us, as too often is the case, from participating in fields of struggle outside of Europe. Credibility is always the result of engagement, of being close to those who struggle, and never from an aloof 'prophetic' stance, however wisely based."¹⁷³

After several years, *Le Monde Libertaire* re-opened debate on the issue of Muslim girls wearing headscarves in French public schools. In summer 1994, said the writer, the state apparently began a much-expanded campaign against immigrants. During August, French Interior Minister Pasqua spoke of the terrorist danger when justifying police questioning of tens of thousands of persons apparently of darker skin "and thus evidently potential Islamists." The following month, Education Minister Bayrou¹⁷⁴ banned schoolchildren from wearing any conspicuous religious symbol in public schools. Hoping to gain support from secular leaders for his policy, he was rewarded with full endorsements by the various teachers unions.

However, said the writer, Bayrou admitted that his policy was aimed solely at the Muslim headscarf. This is no innocent operation since "an entire community is thus stigmatized, designated as hostile. Already, the term 'Muslim,' unless preceded by 'moderate,' tends to imply fundamentalist Islamist and thus terrorist. The repercussions of this campaign can only favor the development of racism." Perhaps most disconcerting is the apparent consensus from far right to far left behind this discriminatory policy.

Obviously, Islamic fundamentalism "is a danger that should be denounced and fought against. It is not through its archaic formulas and "installation of a theocratic dictatorship" that "misery, exploitation and oppression can be eliminated." But using the French state in this struggle is not appropriate. The state has its own agenda, based on domestic politics, and in any case had no trouble negotiating with an Islamist fundamentalist regime in Sudan to gain custody of Carlos.¹⁷⁵ "To ban forcefully the wearing of headscarves does not fight Islamism, but rather reinforces it in developing a stronger religious/political identity in a community already experiencing racism every day."

Like all religions, he said, "Islam helps to pass on a traditionalist ideology that, in turn, legitimizes exploitation and oppression, especially of women. But if chased off from public schooling, these girls (like those of Creil in 1989) will end up in Koranic schools, thereby suffering more harshly the cultural imprisonment and family yoke." It is a trap to argue, from a defense of secularism, that schools must remain neutral territory. Schools can't and shouldn't avoid the conflicts of the wider society.

“We should defend total independence from all clergies as well as non-discrimination on religious, cultural, and political grounds. But we must also defend everyone’s right of expression.” Proselytizing is banned from schools because the state wants to socialize children to be disciplined, good citizens and accepting of prevailing social values. “Muslim students should have the same right to display and express their opinions as anarchist students. We should not be afraid of debating ideas.”¹⁷⁶

The same writer was joined by another in amplifying these arguments a month later. The fact that an estimated fewer than 200 schoolgirls wearing headscarves are at issue, they said, well demonstrates that the whole issue, well orchestrated for political benefit in the press, is meant by rightist politicians to solidify support for their racist anti-immigrant campaign. Using the power of the state, they have now expanded the use of racial profiling in security checks and heightened surveillance of “at-risk” populations, all as part of a supposed “antiterrorist” and “anti-Muslim fundamentalist” struggle. In this context, the government’s directive to public schools helps electoral chances through fear propaganda and develops unity for this policy across the whole political spectrum.

It is important, they asserted, to respond to those who have no affinity for the political right but who justify the banning of headscarves. However sometimes confused, their arguments essentially come down to defending the ban as a tool against women’s oppression, as another means to battle fundamentalist Islam, and as an essential way to help preserve the good tradition of secular public schools.

The feminist argument that the headscarf is a symbol of female oppression, they granted, is the trickiest one to deal with. It is clear that stigmatization of headscarves can cause the stigmatization of real students among their peers. It is also true that female students wearing headscarves nowadays frequently wish proudly to do so and are not at all ashamed. And the fate of excluded schoolgirls, because of this ban, can be to force them into distance-learning arrangements, depriving them of integration-promoting activities at school such as physical education, music, and biology, and also subjecting them to more intense family oppression than before.

In fact, they pointed out, respective religious fundamentalisms are not treated equally. Though illegal, chaplains still have access to public schools, and the state prioritizes public financing of Catholic private schools where students are involved daily in religious practices such as studying their catechism.

If one really wants to liberate women in our society, they suggested, why not ban religious headscarves more generally, including those of bigoted grandmothers as they leave their churches? More seriously, people must avoid “the illusion that the state is capable of fighting any form of oppression. With regard to women, just as with immigrants, government

policy only reinforces discrimination by attacks against abortion rights, by putting into place a maternal wage encouraging female dependence on their families and by supporting the official Catholic religion, which provides an ideological foundation for discriminations reproducing themselves at the heart of society.”¹⁷⁷

The continuation of this article a week later took up the argument that banning headscarves was essential for the struggle against Islamic fundamentalism. To begin, they argued, the state’s hypocrisy here is quite clear. Its verbal pronouncements fail to keep it from fruitful trade relations with fundamentalist Saudi Arabia or negotiating with the fundamentalist Sudan regime to gain custody of Carlos. “The French state doesn’t defend ‘democracy’ against ‘barbarism,’ it seeks to defend the interest of itself and the wealthy.” Furthermore, repression against types of clothing only serves to hide and reinforce actual social beliefs—as proven when the Soviet closings of churches for decades failed to prevent great church attendance once they re-opened.

Islamic fundamentalism, they said, must be understood in its social complexity. Generally, religion tends to reinforce the existing social order by encouraging a fatalistic acceptance of divine will and a focus on spiritual rather than material concerns. At the same time, recourse to religion and a future paradise as consolation for social miseries implies the desire for a different life. Original Christianity thus had some subversive implications, as does liberation theology in Latin America. In the same way, radical Islamism is deeply reactionary in its objectives but can present itself “as radical or even revolutionary.”

The media, they argued, presents a simplistic and disdainful image of Algerians who supposedly were offered democracy and chose radical Islam instead. Such an abstract account fails to regard the social realities of the country. Radical Islam has benefitted from the FLN’s failed policies and dictatorship over the past three decades. The FLN wished to impose a foreign development model on Algeria, making a place for itself in the system of world capitalism. But misery and unemployment have caused Algerians’ disdain for so-called “modernization,” and secularism is associated with the FLN. Thus it is easy to justify, especially with young people, the FIS’s “anti-Westernist” and “anti-imperialist” stance, as well as the refuge it suggests with “its mythical past, presented as a return to the roots.”

Furthermore, they pointed out, the FIS is the only credible clear alternative to the FLN. As well, the FIS succeeded in developing important social support networks throughout the country. Given “the bankruptcy of Arab nationalism and the Soviet model, it is this militant and radical aspect of Islamism that makes it so attractive and in fact such a genuine danger.”

While the influence of fundamentalist Islam is rather negligible in France itself, they said, community identity among North African

immigrants has grown significantly. Responding to daily racism and the experience of rejection in an unfamiliar society, especially youth of the second generation look for elements of their roots to assert a positive self-image, even when their parents are not really practicing Muslims. Thus, in most cases, wearing the headscarf is more an assertion of identity (and a rejection of French values) rather than an explicit political statement of radical Islamism. Nevertheless, this very attraction to a more traditional cultural identity provides a fertile base for inroads by fundamentalism. "It is in this sense that the government campaign about headscarves is especially dangerous and insidious." It both encourages further racism in the society and, among North Africans, a closer association of Islam and their broader community identity.

From the above analysis, they warned, it follows that radical Islamism could potentially be a real danger in the future, a threat that justifies a present preemptive strategy. This demands strong opposition against all forms of racist campaigns, explicit or not, as well as going into the North African immigrant suburbs and helping to establish mutual aid and solidarity networks free from religious association. More generally, there is a need to develop concrete solidarity struggles with immigrants in France overall, in order to deter a reactive retreat into separate community identities and instead work together toward the larger transformation of French society.

The need to defend the principle of neutral secularism, they said, is a third major argument by those who support the headscarves ban. While the Third Republic's establishment of free, obligatory, and secular public education was undoubtedly a progressive accomplishment, it must be demystified by looking at its historical roots since it is so strongly defended in leftist ideology. It should be recognized that secularist Jules Ferry,¹⁷⁸ seen as the main figure responsible for such schooling, was also a strong nationalist proponent of French civilizing missions in the colonies and an active leader in suppressing the Paris Commune of 1871. His "republican school" was aimed at assisting French capitalism by both marginalizing competing local languages within France and developing a more efficient workforce. He also saw the public system as not only countering Catholic schools, with their conservative and monarchist orientation, but also as preventing the establishment of private schools for workers and peasants, which could teach socialism or communism of the sort manifested in the Commune. In the end, "the secular school only replaced the Church straightjacket with the republican straightjacket." Thus, it is only naïve to defend the secular system as neutral.

Despite claims about a republican meritocracy, they argued, numerous sociological studies have shown that the secular public schools only reinforce the class background advantages and disadvantages of the students' milieu of origin. Schools do not only provide knowledge. Schools are an institution

of socialization, like the army. "The object is to train disciplined citizens," accepting hierarchy and authority. But schools are not a realm of their own, "they are filled with all the social conflicts and cultural differences in the society." To speak of school neutrality is to legitimize their suppression in favor of the prescribed dominant values. But equality implies accepting differences and their expression. It is only this that will allow "development of critical autonomous individuals, masters of their own lives."

"To defend school secularism is to advocate for full independence of teaching from every clergy as well as non-discrimination by religion. Wearing a religious symbol is a private matter concerning the convictions of each student. Their institutional ban has nothing to do with laical principles."¹⁷⁹

A strong rebuttal to the two-part essay was then submitted by a Fédération Anarchiste group from Saint-Denis. They found it paradoxical that anarchists should be told to be defenders, in schools or elsewhere, of the right to wear any sort of religious symbol whatsoever. With this intellectual approach, we are asked to weigh equally "the freedom of several girls manipulated by their imbecilic parents and close-minded *imams* with the freedoms of our second-generation immigrant friends and their sisters of North Africa, Sudan, Pakistan, India, and black Africa, crushed by the weight of an inquisitorial religious morality. This attempt to balance the two is absolutely inadmissible for an anarchist mind concerned with justice."

It is clear, they said, that wearing the headscarf is a secondary issue. One shouldn't be taken in by all the media attention. We must address the overall philosophical problem. Confronting rising fundamentalisms and their new moral order, we should not concern ourselves with the strategic cries of their gurus for free expression. We know that such movements are not at all committed to that principle overall. "The question rather is to eradicate purely and simply this rising tide before it submerges us, like fascism did in Germany of the 1930s and most of Europe in 1940." This is the real issue.

Our role is "to fight against all religions, all totalitarianisms whether religious or political." Must we once again concern ourselves with the sex of angels when "in Iran freedom is scoffed at, when in Algeria men and women are assassinated every day and when Kabylia, no doubt tomorrow, will be subjected to fire and sword by the will of several senile *imams*, allies of international capitalism especially that of Saudi Arabia and America."

As anarchists, they claimed, we should all join with our North African friends as they march on December 3 against rising Islamist fundamentalism. We will bring to it our larger struggle to reject all religions and totalitarianisms—economic or moral—and the new world order.¹⁸⁰

Two more articles published two weeks later also were quite critical of the piece by Lyon anarchists Essertel and Thuinet. The first, by long-time Fédération Anarchiste veteran André Devriendt, congratulated the

organization for being able to carry out a strong debate on this and other difficult issues. But we should be wary, he said, about suggesting that one's anarchist adversaries in such a debate are violating anarchist principles and falling into the game of our enemies. It sometimes happens that temporarily we find ourselves in agreement on a matter with some we have otherwise struggled against. But this shouldn't prevent us from acting. It's basically the same situation as when people or groups we have fought for in the past now conduct themselves in a way we completely disapprove of. Our commitment should be to defend the oppressed, but we should be clear-thinking to better control our actions.

The headscarf affair in France, he said, is much less dramatic than the situation in Algeria and elsewhere since a woman can be assassinated there by radical Islamists for simply refusing to wear this sign of subjection. And some in our ranks now argue that schools are not really secular, that it is the state that is dictating expulsions, and that some girls actually wish to wear the scarves as a sign of positive cultural identity.

It is the fundamentalist Islamists, he claimed, who are happy now to use their young girls to provoke such trouble, including the intense debates and discord among laics and anti-racists, thereby showing young Muslims, already hostile for good reason to our capitalist state, their ability "to attack the great Satan, the rotten West." We should not mix issues and fall into traps. "The crimes of some do not erase the crimes of others."

"We should be intransigent and rise up against the wearing of headscarves at school." This will also legitimize our effort to rid classrooms of all religious symbols, including the crosses that still adorn some classroom walls. We must fight against all fundamentalisms aspiring to create intolerant theocratic states. "We should think especially about the struggle led by women in Algeria and elsewhere, at the peril of their own lives, against fundamentalists who regard them as inferior and impure beings. This fact alone should eliminate any hesitation."¹⁸¹

A second article in the same issue criticized those who wished to attack the secular school system. Said the writer, "Even if the education there doesn't fully satisfy an anarchist, it's either that or private schooling, which is primarily Catholic." However, it is true that the Bayrou policy is manifestly anti-immigrant and unjust and no doubt timed to help the election prospects of the right. And it is this injustice toward one particular religion that should be objected to. The ban on worn religious symbols in public schools should extend to those of all religions. Even SOS-Racisme has come out against the ban of headscarves.

The written position of the anarchists from Lyon would seem to encourage a society of separate communities based on religious differences, he said. But surely the examples of fanatical religious strife in places like Ireland, Lebanon, Yugoslavia, Southeast Asia, and Israel should discourage

creation of such a future for France. "Under the pretext of forbidding any bans, should one tolerate that which is intolerant? Should we also allow the wearing of swastikas? In states currently experiencing Islamist theocratic dictatorships, the intolerance is the same as under Catholic regimes at the time of the Inquisition."

Fundamentalist Islamism is currently growing and spreading and thus represents a genuine danger to freedom, he stated, much greater than current Catholicism, which is losing many of its adherents despite the Church's efforts to regain positions of influence even through political parties. "It is perplexing why some would have benevolent tolerance for wearing proselytizing symbols for a religion, especially knowing that the latter regards women as inferior and impure."¹⁸²

A final entry in this round of the headscarf debate was an article by an anarchist from Nîmes who took up some of the same points and perspective of the original Lyon contribution. Certain words, he said, become a trap in this discussion. Attaching, for example "Islamic" to headscarf makes one forget that essentially the scarf is no more than a banal piece of clothing tied beneath the chin. This is quite different from a veil or *hidjab*.

Furthermore, he pointed out, only a few dozen schoolgirls out of a million actually wear the headscarves at issue. It is mere fantasy or intentional lying to suggest that such schoolgirls are sent by the FIS on a mission to subvert schools of the republic. And such assertions, consciously or not, have certain racist connotations. It also seems true that some who present themselves as defenders of women have not inquired among those concerned.

Anarchists should struggle against exclusion, he said. They have always attacked institutions themselves, not those who are prisoners within them. To exclude those schoolgirls is to take action against those who perhaps had no choice or who were caught between pressures of school and family and understandably gave in to the latter. Forcing their retreat into education by correspondence courses or even religious schools, in fact, will isolate them that much more from pluralist exposure within and outside of the public school. There are numerous examples, by contrast, of girls who've abandoned the headscarf because of contact with others of their age.

He was flabbergasted that some felt that wearing religious symbols might lead to waves of religious conversions. "If all those were converted who one day crossed my path at high school when I wore a badge with a circled 'A', *Le Monde Libertaire* would have been a daily since long ago."

Public schools, he said, are subject to the state's definition of secularism and neutrality, which in actuality means that the right to expression is under intense surveillance: Any distribution of leaflets, posting of opinions, or holding of political meetings is strictly at the will of the administration. This definition of laicism tends toward uniformism and "the erasing of differences in thinking, expression, and class. In demanding

genuine secularism, which would prevent any religious or political interventions, anarchists should challenge the secular morality that the state has put in place, a morality that aims above all at establishing its authority.”

A different kind of school, he stated, should be easily imagined by anarchists: “anti-authoritarian, free from any religious, state, or moral supervision, and open to the larger society concerns, where students would have the right to choose the education that meets their sensibilities.”

The whole issue of headscarves is “an illusion established by the dominant system in order to find scapegoats, to demonize Islamists and to prepare the way for emergency measures (such as their roundups by police) or repression, the anonymous immigrant becoming, little by little in public opinion, the Muslim ready to kill for his faith. Doesn’t this remind you of something?”¹⁸³

Two articles in December 1994 engaged the journal in its first discussion of possible secret manipulation of the October 1988 and Islamist insurgencies to the Algerian government’s own potential political advantage. The first account underlined the argument that the present civil war was in fact simply the latest phase of a forty-year permanent civil war in Algeria since the time of the anti-colonial war against the French. The latter conflict included direct violence by FLN forces against those of Messali’s MNA, as well as pro-French Muslims. Despite constant attempts to pretend FLN unity, even during that war there were constant struggles for power, including assassination of rivals such as Abane Ramdane. According to Daniel Guérin, said the writer, one of the FLN historic chiefs, Mustapha Ben Boulaid, was not killed in action by the French as the official version stated, but probably by elements of the FLN itself.¹⁸⁴ The French made good use of these internal struggles during the war, as written about by Yves Courrière, Ferhat Abbas, and others.¹⁸⁵

After the war, he said, the exterior ALN, under Boumédiène, forcefully imposed Ben Bella to power, and any potential rivals had to swear allegiance, go into exile, or face prison or death. Even in exile, rivals were pursued, as shown by the murders of Belkacem Krim in Germany and Mohammed Khider in Spain.¹⁸⁶ Others, during Boumédiène’s regime, also died under mysterious and suspicious circumstances, such as a high military officer who fell to his death from his helicopter, a minister of interior who died apparently accidentally after a bath, and, after the Zbiri-led coup attempt in 1967, a military chief’s suicide and another’s supposed mortal auto accident a month later. Under Chadli, a foreign affairs minister died from a second plane crash. And even the assassination of Boudiaf these days is more often blamed on the regime’s internal power struggles than on the radical Islamists.

The image of a unified Algerian regime is misleading, he observed, since it has consistently hidden internal rivalries while imposing itself by force of arms. In fact, "all of Algeria's institutions (press, single party, police, trade unions, mass organizations, and, of course, economic power) are controlled by it through loyal subordinates, relatives, allies, and friends." Chadli, for example, was always criticized for promoting his relatives to different important positions. Many examples of such alliances are found in Rouadja's book, *Grandeur et décadence de l'Etat algérien*.¹⁸⁷

"The October 1988 demonstrations have also been attributed to struggles for power within the regime. By pushing young people to rebel and then demanding that the military re-establish order, Chadli was able to gain among the leaders around him a façade of unity by implicating them in the brutal, bloody repression." With the January 1992 halt of elections and the ensuing civil war, victims have now come to include persons not at all close to the regime as before. Though most of the political Islamist leaders were dead or in prison or exile, the situation became even worse after the assassination of Boudiaf.

Thus, in Algeria, it is common for people to ask who the real authors of attacks and murders are. "The assassination of certain intellectuals, little known by the media, seems to please radical Islamists and the military both." Only after their assassinations do the media come to acknowledge who they are. The French media seem to have been familiar only with those favored by the Algerian regime. Thus, one of the greatest Algerian playwrights, Abdelkader Alloula, was spoken about only after his throat-cutting death in March 1994.¹⁸⁸

A second article in the same issue specifically addressed the nature and power of the Algerian military security force. Before 1988, the writer pointed out, few Algerians dared to speak publicly about this institution. It was referred to as "S.M." (military security), whatever its change of official label, but also colloquially as "Sport and Music." Since that date, people have learned that S.M. is not solely composed of military and police. (Though some would say that there's not really an army in Algeria, just armed wheeler-dealers with uniforms.) In fact, civilians, professors, and trade unionists have drawn from the S.M. budget. Rumors have circulated concerning some well-known writers and "intellectuals."

Many have become familiar with the S.M.'s infiltration techniques, paralyzing certain underground political parties and causing certain manipulations. Apparently, the S.M. was created in the Soviet Union. "Trainees there learned the art of 'harsh interrogations' (torture), mass manipulations, staged trials, and infiltration of opposition groups (the colonial army during the Algerian war was already a good school for all of these techniques)."

It is probable, he asserted, that the huge demonstrations in October 1988 were an example of mass manipulation, but one that backfired

instead. Everyone, including journalists for *Le Monde* and *Libération*, could see persons in civilian dress step out of vehicles, fire machine guns on the crowd, and then disappear. “Clearly, certain clans in the regime wished to inflame the situation. But however Machiavellian the military regime, things have evidently gotten out of hand since then, including manipulations of fundamentalist Islamist groups. People even joke that the strikes called by the Islamists went off so poorly that they were probably organized by professionals.”

As well, the regime resigned itself to allowing a free press, but it is useful to ask which journalists were allowed to create it. “Free” elections were held, but the regime never expected such a rout of the FLN. Thus, the elections were canceled, Islamist leaders and those elected were imprisoned, politicians who refused to toe the line of the military were forced back into exile, and “the country sinks ever further into a morass and violence.” And this context allows even greater manipulations since now every assassination of political figures or ordinary persons can be blamed on Islamists.

“This country, pillaged by corruption and where petroleum revenues have only enriched a military oligarchy founded on nepotism, is sinking into civil war. And those who can are going into exile. When there are no more hydrocarbons to export, will this country end up like Somalia or Eritrea?”¹⁸⁹



In the December 1994 issue was a transcript of the Fédération Anarchiste’s Radio Libertaire interview in October with “Baya,” a female militant in France’s solidarity networks for Algerian women. First addressing the issue of current assassinations, kidnappings, and rapes, Baya pointed out the lack of interest by French media in such acts of violence when they occurred against anonymous women instead of well-known figures. Such acts are even more numerous since the government began a dialogue with the FIS a month ago. She mentioned the examples of Salira—a young singer murdered because she was a singer—and a teacher beaten in front of her students because she refused to wear a veil.

The situation worsened, she said, after passage of the Family Code in 1984—the first assassinations of women occurring two years later. One of the first to be attacked was a single mother who lived with her children in Ouargla. Her house was burned down and her youngest child died. In Algeria, women had always been called upon for assistance in times of crisis, as during the Algerian war and resistance to invasions, but once the crisis was gone, women were relegated to their previous positions. Daily verbal and physical street harassment, simply for daring to be outside the home, never ended. And police simply stood by and watched it happen.

Those who presently assassinate in Algeria do so not for religious reasons, but political ones. They use religion as the most populist, demagogic appeal. Meanwhile, women and young people are the ones most excluded from the work world.

Concerning the headscarf issue in France, Baya said, it is difficult to take a position. It is clearly an effort by fundamentalist political groups to pressure the society, especially their own community. To let this pressure continue is to endanger schoolgirls generally, even those who don't identify with Islamist ideology. But excluding them from school would deprive them of the chance to escape their confinement. However, it is astonishing to see schoolgirls speaking out apparently to defend headscarves, but also, it seems, to assert their own right to be heard and develop their own cultural identity. Fundamentalists who are encouraging them to speak may find in the future that this independent assertiveness has backfired against them.

In Algeria, she stated, it is only a minority of urban women and female officials who have argued for the veil. In the rural areas, women are not veiled, but rather dressed appropriately for daily responsibilities such as working in the fields or gathering wood. But it is also contradictory to pressure city women to discard their traditional white veils in Algiers and Oran or black veils in the east in favor of the type of veil worn in Iran or Afghanistan. "In what way does this restore traditional identity?"

Baya herself is engaged in two networks. The first, the International Network of Solidarity with Algerian Women (RIFSA), groups together a variety of women involved or not in political movements. The second, Women and Development in Algeria (FEDA), works to assist women to become more autonomous financially and contribute to the overall economic development of the country.

"It is clearly impossible to resolve the problem of Algeria with a dialogue between the existing regime and fundamentalist Islamist movements, even those more moderate. Solidarity should be exercised by putting pressure on institutions. French citizens could help us by participating in whatever is attempted on the other side of the Mediterranean, but also right here, to help us remain here for awhile, to be away from the country where we are at permanent risk."¹⁹⁰

The lead article in the same issue also concentrated on Algeria, this time reviewing the rise of Islamism from colonial days forward, with special attention to the most recent decade. Though it is certainly obvious by now, said the writer, that the FIS and Islamists intend to line their path to power by the endless bodies of others, the FLN itself, its ideology, and its alliances share much responsibility for the FIS influence to date. In fact, the FLN

simply maintained the tradition going back to Abdelkader's independent post-1837 state based on Islam, led by religious notables and relying on the religious appeal for *jihad*. In 1845, areas previously pacified by the French again rose up in response to religious appeals. With the movement of *ulema* founded in 1931 by Ben Badis came a more modern appeal mixing nationalism, Islam, and Arabic language identity. This same ideological mélange was adopted by the FLN during the war and continued after independence.

The National Charter of 1976 stated that "the construction of socialism coincides with the spread of Islamic values." Even before that time, in 1966, the writer said, the FLN created a Higher Islamic Council, while two years later sponsoring seminars on Islamic thought. In 1976, Fridays, being holy days, were declared holidays from work: Gambling was banned and alcohol sales to Muslims were forbidden. The FLN brought the Family Code in 1984 along with the University of Islamic Sciences (Constantine), headed by Mohamed Ghazali, "an Egyptian ideologue of the Muslim Brotherhood. Thus, Islam is far from being a new phenomenon in Algeria and the FIS far from being its only expression."

Overwhelmed by the bloody clashes of October 1988, asserted the writer, President Chadli sought spokespeople he could use for dialogue and calming the population. For this objective, he chose the Islamists, but by no means did they represent the rioters. From this legitimization by the regime, Islamists proceeded to establish the League of the Call (*Rabitat Daw'a*), although up until then the only Islamic associations were those for charity and spreading the religious message.

The FIS was born in March 1989 at the Ben Badis mosque in Kouba (a suburb of Algiers). "Its first and most faithful partisans were recruited from the heart of the petit-bourgeoisie, frightened by the riots of October 1988, a frustrated new elite with diplomas in hand, but unable to find work since all jobs were given by priority to the FLN elite. Its first and most faithful partisans were also from the lumpenproletariat, inspired by the FIS to dream and to participate in the cleansing of the country and in the building of the Islamic republic." Like Islamists everywhere, the FIS had roots in the writings of Sayyid Qutb, ideologue of the Muslim Brotherhood; Mohamed ibn Abd-al-Wahhab, Saudi Arabian ideologue; Sayyid Abul-Ala Al-Mawdudi, from India/Pakistan; and Khomeini of Iran. In central committee competition between two factions of the FIS, in July 1991, an Algerianist wing won out over salafists and chose to orient the FIS coalition to participate in elections.

Later, in prison, said the writer, the five main leaders of the FIS addressed a letter to Algerian president Liamine Zeroual and leaders of five parties of the "national dialogue," claiming their readiness to find a radical, overall solution to Algeria's crisis, but only if released from prison and in association with the armed branch of the organization. After their release

in September 1994, it thus seems that the regime is ready to negotiate with the FIS for a sharing of power and is encouraged to do so by both France and the United States.

According to a Saudi press report, the writer said, an advisor to French Interior Minister Pasqua met in late October with the president and vice president of the FIS as well as militants of the armed wing, the AIS (ex-MIA). Meanwhile the United States' Clinton administration clearly signaled its desire to see the electoral process reactivated and claimed not to see any evidence that the FIS was involved in violent action. However, the AIS claimed responsibility for the destruction of schools and, to date, 538 have been burned. As well, there are 1,800 deaths officially acknowledged. "Once again, the capitalist international is unconcerned with the fate of the people so long as a stable regime (of whatever variety) is in place and trade commenced."

At the same time, there are numerous demonstrations, including some in the street, against fundamentalism. Workers and bourgeoisie are side by side, as in France, where the opposition to Le Penism motivates many to vote for the left, despite holding their noses in doing so. This is the same kind of alliance, transcending class, that unites worker and boss to favor respect for Tamazight, the Berber language. This desire for broad coalition was also expressed by the Algerian women's movement, the RAFD, which called recently for "a strong state."

"'Over there,' like here and elsewhere, the same bosses, the same leaders, the same struggle. What we need is a radical and global revolution!"¹⁹¹



At the end of the year, the journal shifted attention to Kabylia, specifically to discuss the notion, as suggested by Mohammed Saïl, that this region had an anarchist-like political tradition. The article was based on an interview with an official of the Berber Cultural Movement (MCB) and consisted largely of the latter's responses.

Kabylia presently experiences the same economic deterioration as the rest of Algeria, he said. Nevertheless, a sort of parallel economy of significant emigrant earnings assists this region as well. "There is also a long tradition of solidarity, which insists that those who work and have regular wages should assist those who don't. This practice of solidarity is a long-time characteristic of Kabylia, a practice bound up with the functioning and structure of Kabyle society." Thus, begging does not exist since everyone is taken in charge by the community. This is why poverty is felt less here than in the rest of Algeria.

Traditional Kabyle society was based on large extended families with all married children remaining under the same roof and with patriarchal author-

ity over all. Though this arrangement supports everyone at least minimally, he said, it is often quite authoritarian. But this system is beginning to break apart with nuclear family households and emigration from the countryside to the cities. "Among us, to leave for Algiers is to go into interior exile, which we translate, as a Kabyle expression, as 'going to Arabia.' Those who are exiled gradually, effectively, and insidiously lose their sense of solidarity. Thus, in the cities, there are apparently destitute Kabyle families."

"[Kabylia] essentially has an anarchist tradition if by this is meant the rejection of an authoritarian and all-controlling state." Kabyle society has always been organized by confederations and, within these, tribes organized into villages. The latter are run by a council of delegates, usually from various extended families. No decisions are made without complete unanimity. This way of functioning is very close to anarchism. But customs are changing and young people are critical of a system based only on males and elders.

Thus, a generational conflict is developing which, in some villages, results in dissolving the council or opening it up to younger villagers. "Each age group has its own prerogatives. Elders continue to concern themselves with traditional issues, like land division and inheritances; the young, being more active, take responsibility for problems of a different nature, such as the upkeep of roads and the upkeep of public water sources."

Much is written about Kabyle women, he said, with completely opposite interpretations. Some say that because she can go out alone and without a veil, she is a free woman compared to other parts of Algeria. Others claim that she is more oppressed than those where Islamic law concerning women is strongly enforced. It is true that Kabyle women can move about freely within their own village, but they cannot go outside the village without accompaniment. This means that she is still a prisoner, but within a larger prison, not just a cell. By Western standards, this means little.

Today, he claimed, things are beginning to change through access to education. Very few Kabyle families prevent their girls from attending school and university; this is, in fact, a matter of pride, though only several decades ago it was shameful to let her go on beyond age twelve. In the past, women were always oppressed by men, though the division of labor gave them relative freedom through domestic responsibilities and authority.

"If one defines 'laical' as meaning the separation of religious power from the political realm, then I would say that Berber society is essentially laical." Partly, this is because Islam is experienced in specific ways in different regions. Kabyles have mixed together the Muslim religion with their ancestral animistic beliefs. This allows for a certain laicism. And second, village councils can be composed of both those who practice the religion and those who don't. All are accepted in managing the village.

To discuss atheism in Algeria, he said, is unimaginable. Atheists exist throughout Algeria, but this is a personal matter. The word and concept is

too shocking to discuss publicly, in the same way that denying that Mohamed was a genuine prophet is taboo—all the more today when one would be marginalized at best but also risk real physical danger. “The very concept of atheism causes fear even though there are genuine practices of atheism.”¹⁹²

The next coverage of Algeria was a three-part article by Edi Nobras on how the revolution was confiscated. The first part was entirely devoted to a sketch of Algerian history from the 8th century Arab conquest until 1954.¹⁹³ The second part summarized major elements of the transition to independence and the contentious emergence of a new government in September 1962, then moved on to the subject of *autogestion*. “The rush onto the properties abandoned by the *pieds-noirs* and the spontaneous reclamation of the farmlands by the permanent agricultural workers gave a deep meaning to Algerian *autogestion* at its origin. They expressed a rejection of statism and gave to *autogestion* its anarchist and revolutionary character.” Unfortunately, “the March decrees ratified the existing state of things, serving nothing less than legalizing *autogestion*, putting it under state control, and thus emptying it of its real content.” Workers subsequently denounced the bureaucratic trends that naturally followed from the reinforcement of state authority.

At the same time, said the writer, UGTA was brought under government control and its previous leadership forced out. Meanwhile, Ben Bella began efforts toward more deeply implanting Islam in the society. “Fasting during Ramadan was officialized and made practically mandatory.” Algerian Communists came to form the left wing of Ben Bella’s regime, but the really well-organized forces by the time of the new September 1963 constitution were the army and the bureaucracy. Over the next two years, until Boumédiénne’s coup, the regime fell into decay.

However, while beginning to get things back in order, the June 1965 coup was less a turning point than a logical next step in the evolution since independence, asserted the writer. Nationalizations occurred in the mining and banking sectors and, in 1968, among almost all foreign-owned enterprises, thus consolidating the “socialist” sector of the state. From the initial steps of state control of *autogestion* evolved “logically and almost ‘necessarily’ the formation of a bureaucratic and authoritarian national socialism.” Overall, the anti-democratic steps of the Ben Bella regime from March 1963 only escalated under Boumédiénne.

Increasingly, argued the writer, the FLN officially took on a more explicit, controlling neo-Leninist role of guiding and coordinating all the dynamic forces of the country, and orienting and supervising all programs of administrative execution. At the same time, Arabization was viewed as

the necessary basis of Algerian cultural identity once it was re-formulated to meet the needs of the socialist revolution.

By the time of Boumédiénne's death in 1978, "the balance-sheet of the Algerian regime [was] clearly negative. Minorities, especially Kabyles, had gained no cultural or social concessions. Social conditions were constantly deteriorating. The promises and hopes held by the Algerian masses were very soon replaced by disillusionment. *Autogestion* was confiscated. The revolution was confiscated. Statism never stopped growing, creating a caste of leaders with exorbitant powers and scandalous privileges. The total absence of democratic debate, the sprawling bureaucracy, the militaristic socialism, and the total power of military security... represented the daily condition of a people infantilized by their own leaders." The Marxist model failed badly in Algeria as elsewhere throughout the world.

Under Chadli, while certain aspects of the socialist option were reversed, the failures of the previous regime only amplified in political, cultural, and economic realms. The Berber Spring of 1980 showed the limits of Chadli's permitted democratic expression. "The Western liberal model, adapted to the specific situation of the country—single-party, controlled trade union, ever-present military and police—re-enforced the tyrannical and authoritarian character of the Algerian regime. The financial deals and fortunes gained by certain leaders as well as the 1987 assassination of Ali Mecili, while he sought to create a unified opposition with a democratic program, perfectly demonstrate that the system is totally corrupt."¹⁹⁴

The third installment by the same writer pointed out that the frustration of young people with the deadend they experienced came to a head in the upheaval of October 1988. This social revolt took over Algeria's city streets from October 4 to 10 with ever growing force and with slogans directly challenging the oppression and corruption of the regime. The choice of buildings targeted by the demonstrators was symbolic of their overall social and political critique.

Several days into the protests, on the 7th, the fundamentalists made their first appearance in the streets of Belcourt, a neighborhood in eastern Algiers, with about 7,000 demonstrators led by their *imams*. At the same time, an internal split emerged between those who favored a legal approach and those choosing violence. Ali Belhadj canceled a demonstration on the 10th and called for calm, but some 20,000 Islamists gathered in central Algiers anyway and were fired upon by the military, killing 25–30. On the same day, Chadli declared that "the country will not be delivered to anarchy." But these were the first days since independence that the Algerian masses directly confronted the regime.

Said the writer, while the French political class welcomed the political realism of Boumédiénne's coup and Chadli's return to market truths, under the former there was no free speech and under the latter nothing to

eat. In this fertile ground, the fundamentalists began to co-opt mass discontent for their own agenda. Deprived of its 1992 victory, the FIS then used words that only inflamed the situation further. Every regime leader, from Ben Bella to Boumédiène, Chadli, and Boudiaf, was denounced for using Western models unfit for a Muslim nation. Thus, the path opened to the use of "terrorism as the means for expressing disagreements." The AIS and GIA now were committed to killing any apparent manifestation of Western behavior and thought, just as the earlier Algerian war of national liberation threw off French colonial rule.

Instead of saying that socialism is unfit for any Muslim or Arab culture, the writer asserted, it is more appropriate to say that authoritarian socialism is "unfit for any individuals or peoples motivated by a deep desire for justice and equality. Libertarian socialism, social anarchism, egalitarian with solidarity, fraternal and respectful of cultural differences, this socialism in which the first acts of the Algerian masses were immersed after independence, this current of thought can meet the expectations of individuals and peoples aspiring to free themselves from every yoke, including those of religion!"

In 1988, shortly before his death, said the writer, famous Algerian poet and novelist Kateb Yacine spoke out for the free expression, however difficult, of all mass associations, including trade unions, without party control. At the same time, the singer Mouloud stated that "young people are thirsty for democracy, for creativity—the true kind, not the kind proposed by bandits."¹⁹⁵ In the spirit of this advice, anarchist society is "not a western model but, more simply, a model of human society, without alienation or exploitation, applicable everywhere!"¹⁹⁶

Next in the journal was an interview with Hafsa Zinaï Koudil, an Algerian woman filmmaker. At present, she said, there are virtually no film or stage productions in Algeria since artists are being killed. Some movie houses survive by showing videos (and probably paying off the FIS), but it is almost impossible to pass on copies of films. Nevertheless, the censorship and strangling of the Algerian film sector began with the FLN. "The FIS is the child of the FLN." Algerian films should be circulated to demonstrate that filmmakers are not sinister agents of the regime. *Le démon au féminin* [*Woman as the Devil*] by Hafsa Zinaï Koudil, is an example of a new Algerian film that so far can find no distributor in France.

At a recent gathering, Koudil showed her only copy. The story is based on the genuine experience of an Algerian woman in a middle-class neighborhood who was nearly tortured to death by Islamists practicing an exorcism in 1990–91. Koudil made the film during a very violent period when attacks were just beginning. She was enthusiastically committed to telling

this story but almost neglectful of the dangers that she and her film team were exposed to. Nevertheless, she moved quickly since she was quite anxious to denounce the fundamentalists through this account.

For her, living in Algeria as recently as December 1994 was quite difficult. She survived, she said, by hugging the walls, sometimes disguising herself, changing her routes, and never staying in the same place more than one night. She “had to play hide-and-go-seek with death,” having received a letter from the MIA¹⁹⁷ threatening her with decapitation in the name of God. Soon after the demonstration of June 29, 1994,¹⁹⁸ men came in a car to kidnap her. At that point, she went into complete hiding, carrying her belongings in a tote bag. Nights were horrible because those were the hours when people were attacked. “The anxiety was impossible to describe. Every minute that went by until dawn, one expected to die.” To regain the calmness she needed to work on her next film, she had to go off to Tunisia. But she definitely plans to return.

The subject of her new film will be the practice of unwritten “temporary marriages.” These are arrangements forced on women to benefit any number of men as long as they wish. When they decide they’re done, they just throw out or even decapitate the woman. These are horrible situations in Algeria and she’s determined to denounce this barbarity by making it public through film.¹⁹⁹

Shortly after the above interview was an equally tragic and even more forceful account of radical Islamist violence an article by Algerian journalist Ouassila Sisaber describing in detail the experience of an eighteen-year-old girl, Ouarda, kidnapped, terrorized, and raped repeatedly over several months in captivity by fundamentalist militants in the countryside. According to the article, Ouarda was one of over 400 women and girl captives “sacrificed on the altar of ‘God.’”

The tragedies mount up continuously. “Kidnappings, rapes, tortures, assassinations, ‘disgraces,’ flights, exile, permanent fear of reprisals, nightmares, grief, tears, broken hopes and futures—this is a sample of what is promised to women and their families by the soldiers of the Islamic faith, less than five years before the 21st century.”²⁰⁰



French-Algerian relations were the journal’s next theme seven months later. Said the writer, Zeroual will remain one of the military dictatorship leaders after Algeria’s upcoming supposed “presidential election,” an exercise meant to give a veneer of international respectability to military rule. After the “election,” the Algerian regime will make up with the French in order to facilitate the needed financial aid to keep the regime in power. For Chirac, it’s important that the military regime remains in a state of

dependence in order to demonstrate continued French importance in influencing world affairs.

However, from the 5 billion French francs provided to Algeria in aid since 1994, Algerians at the grassroots level have seen no benefit. He said that a third of the money has subsidized the military and paramilitary operations in the dirty war, another third has gone toward Algerian international efforts, and the final third toward paying off interest for the debt of the Algerian state. Even though economic and social misery underlies the current explosive upheaval, no money is going toward serious investment to improve the situation.

The decision to suspend Algeria's debt, made before the first attack in Paris, only allows the military to stay in power that much longer—not to benefit ordinary Algerians. In another ten years, the loan will still have to be repaid and this will only aggravate the social crisis at that time. "Where is the future for Algerian children?"²⁰¹



A new Algerian film review again concerned the oppressive situation of women in that country. *La moitié du ciel d'Allah* (*Half of Allah's Heaven*), by filmmaker Djamila Sahraoui,²⁰² examines various dimensions of women's status and struggles during the four decades since independence. Every day, Islamists repudiate women and commit various forms of violence, including rapes and massacres. Says one of the women in the film, "Moderate Islamism doesn't exist. There's only Islamism." Nevertheless, Islamists are not the only ones responsible.

The 1984 Family Code insists that women must obey their husbands (Article 39), said the reviewer. Only men have the right of dissolving a marriage, and when this happens, the man keeps the living quarters and the wife and children can be thrown out on the street. This happens to many thousands of women. Being forced to wear the veil is not at all the only issue. The Family Code opened the way, hypocritically, for various forms of violence and humiliation. Women's bodies are legal loot contractually arranged by one father with another. As FIS leader Ali Belhadj stated, it is the obligation of women to reproduce more Muslims. Her refusal to do so would be to subvert God's order.

However, during the Algerian war, women were valued for their activism. "Once independence came, those who had risked their lives for a future of justice and equality had to submit themselves to the controls of the Family Code, to play their role of eternal minor, to abandon their hopes for egalitarian rights and their demand for respect." But women have rejected this status and this new film gives accounts of this courageous struggle in the revolution as well as in daily life now as workers, students, and militants.²⁰³



By mid-1996, while the killings continued in Algeria, the regime attempted to put on a new face. This process of “normalization” was the theme of the next article. “Everyone in Algeria knows very well, as recently admitted by the highest military authorities themselves, that the June 1988 [sic] demonstrations were not at all spontaneous. As at Timisoara in Romania [in December 1989], they were organized by military security to cause problems for certain clans in the regime as the FLN congress approached.”²⁰⁴ The result was a certain strengthening of the reformers’ position, including proposing a more liberal new constitution, following the path of reform already being pursued in Eastern Europe. In turn, the old guard, wishing to keep its privileged hold on Algeria’s oil export receipts, waited its turn while constantly criticizing the new policies.

Political liberalization, said the writer, included greater press freedom but only within limited bounds. Journalists who were already part of the state newspaper system were invited to establish private newspapers, but these could only be printed at state-run printing facilities and initial capital was provided by the government. Beyond these continuing obligations to the state, journalists in the state media had all been carefully vetted by military security before receiving their posts. They had all then learned through practice to engage in self-censoring and to use the tightly controlled language of the regime. All new newspapers were also obliged to have an officially accepted patron, typically a businessman or someone with military security background or connections. This merely reflected the fact, as well, that most of the highest promotions in the military over the past several years were for officers of the military security branch.

For those of the “industrial-political-military mafia,” as they call it in Algeria, fearing the potential loss of the billions that continually lined their pockets because of the particular state monopoly system called “Algerian socialism,” “Islamic fundamentalism [was] a providential ally. Already in 1988, some political figures began warning against the ‘Islamist spectre,’ which some of the owners of Algeria were beginning to brandish.” At the same time, asserted the writer, the radical Islamists themselves unsurprisingly committed serious political errors. They began making incendiary speeches, calling democracy a project of unbelievers. They threatened the press and kept increasing the demagoguery instead of presenting carefully considered economic and political programs. They were also, “as one might expect, largely infiltrated by military security.”

By now, “every serious observer thinks that the FIS strike of June 1991 was masterminded by those who make up ‘the financial-political-military mafia’ and who have important positions in the military. This manipulation of Islamists by the regime and its military security force was recognized by

the number two leader in the FIS, Ali Belhadj himself, who only learned of it too late and who is now converted to the virtues of democracy." It seems that the Algerian press no longer prints his texts.

Apparently, the FIS strike was aimed at stopping the legislative elections and imposing the discussed presidential contest instead. Reformist Chadli was the target. The Islamists and Ben-Bellists voluntarily or unknowingly went along with this effort to get rid of him. But it backfired for the Islamists since even their most "moderate" elements were arrested and made "martyrs" for the movement. Meanwhile the elections were postponed until December.

Then, stated the writer, the large proliferation of political parties and the willingness of the state press to print the various and strongest critiques seemed almost to parody democracy itself. The first round of the legislative elections gave a crushing majority to the FIS who rejected the regime, though they were given an advantage by the chosen method of voting and the way electoral districts were mapped out. Thus, some observers think that, despite the apprehensions of democratic forces at the time, the FIS was intentionally given these favorable circumstances while also allowing party spokesmen to speak out for imposing *sharia*. The result was the canceling of the second round, the dissolution of the National Assembly, and the resignation of Chadli. These military elements therefore achieved absolute power "through a government of clerks" and by pushing forward civilian Boudiaf who they brought back from Morocco. But once the latter began speaking of reforms and attacks on corruption, the mafia had him assassinated in front of an audience of 600, thus providing a clear warning to anyone who would challenge their power.

Terrorism took over in Algeria after the election cancelation despite "the massive arrest of Islamists and establishment of military security files or even direct executions without trial. It was too late for those who understood that they had played the role of 'useful idiots.' In these conditions, everyone thus wondered who really killed Tahar Djaout and many other personalities and for what gain?"

The military thus has complete power, argued the writer, including its own man as president. They can't go back to the single-party system in Algeria, so they've allowed several unthreatening political parties to be formed. Thus Algeria moves toward the Tunisian model with the military in control, support from France, and "a formal democracy based on a facade of multi-partyism."

Meanwhile, the part of the press that thought it was free is quickly brought to heel by strong unwritten instructions. "Those who are recalcitrant must confront bans, fines, trials, imprisonment, higher cost of paper, etc. If that's not sufficient, there is always 'terrorism.' Here, as well, Islamists can be given the blame. Today, the situation is thus almost entirely

normalized. After having proven that Algeria is not yet ready for democracy, the regime is preparing to elect a parliament after having modified the constitution to permit only those groups that will go along with it.”²⁰⁵

Several months later, the FA journal published information received from the Gay and Lesbian Center about the arrest of a gay twenty-three-year-old Algerian militant, Laïche Faysal. Said the article, the situation of gays in Algeria, especially in working-class neighborhoods, is especially precarious. On the one hand, they are prime targets for kidnapping and assassination by radical Islamists. Many have already lost their lives. On the other hand, Algerian government authorities also persecute the gay community since any homosexual conduct is officially against the law. According to Article 338 of the penal code, any person having or apparently having a homosexual “attitude” is subject to imprisonment for two months to two years. With this rationale, “the security forces practice the worst violence.”²⁰⁶

An article on the specific situation of Algerians in France was published three months later. Contrasting with foreigners of other nationalities, said the writer, Algerians with French spouses or children born in France are deprived arbitrarily of the right to resident permits. While the French-Algerian agreement of 1968 actually favored Algerians over other foreigners, this was amended in 1985 to make Algerians’ status relatively the same. However, a new amendment in April 1994 actually put Algerians in the worst position.

At that time, he said, Algerians were required to gain temporary visas for all who wanted to stay in France longer than three months. Given the arbitrary nature of such decisions and the lack of right to judicial intervention, this leaves families with one Algerian parent or spouse easily and absurdly divided by administrative fiat, in violation of the European convention on human rights. The inter-state agreement now also facilitates police cooperation between the two countries and the ability to forcefully expel Algerians already in France. Algerian consulates have become virtual branches of the French police with their arbitrary power to issue or not passports and to provide or not documentation to Algerians in France allowing them to stay with their spouses and children.

Algerians are already denied the right of refugee status because of a narrow French interpretation of the Geneva Convention. In the present context of dangerous conditions in Algeria, that interpretation and the 1994 amendment, the author said, these arrangements and practices “are criminal and contrary to international law.”²⁰⁷



In September 1997, the journal sought to provide a new detailed update of internal Algerian conditions. Rather than relying on media information, potentially “censored or manipulated,” the writer chose to carry out and transcribe an interview with an Algerian worker in France (“A.L.”), a long-time trade-union militant, an anti-capitalist and atheist unattached to any political group, but also not anarchist. A.L. was well informed on the basis of personal contacts in Algeria and his frequent return visits.

In 1986–87, A.L. speculated that it would be dangerous for the government to open dialogue with elements outside of the regime because so much frustration and anguish had accumulated that some sort of massive score settling was likely to occur. People had been “so bullied, denied, scorned, and crushed,” that there was tremendous hatred. At the same time, the population had been so much excluded from any kind of political activity that they could only act irrationally, with vengeance instead of collective action. This in fact is what has come about and it may take ten years or so to finish paying back the regime.

It is not the case, he said, that radical Islamists have Algerians’ support. Rather, they “understand” that the violence of the former responds to the regime’s massive repression against innocent family relations of militants. This reaction is all the stronger with the prevailing censorship of media and the lack of credible information. “During the past five years, some have gone off to the maquis because of their Islamist sympathy or repression personally experienced. Others have joined the police or army, often simply to gain a job. But the population has never tipped massively to one side or the other.”

Argued A.L., it is not appropriate to use the term “civil war” to describe what’s happening since this would imply the involvement of large parts of the population on each side. “This is not the case. What we see is a war between general staffs to try to gain control of the population.”

The label of “democrat” as used by some to identify their own position, he said, doesn’t make sense. What is “democratic” in the legitimization of “eradicator” torture and assassination? “To legitimize a military dictatorship against a different totalitarianism, religious in nature, cannot be a solution. What is essential is to gain laws against all exactions. If the regime tortures, why shouldn’t Islamists react in the same manner?” The regime uses whatever means it can, including torture, to preserve its power. “The State started this infernal spiral by launching massive arrests of Islamists, often mere sympathizers caught up by chance. Oppositional democrats are ‘democratic’ only in words, not in their actions. They’ve never opposed these practices.”

Since the regime itself has carried out massacres and assassinations for thirty years, said A.L., it would be simplistic to blame all such violence on

the Islamists even though the latter are responsible for much of it. Islamists are not reluctant to “punish” civilians with massacres. Nevertheless, even without definite proof, it seems very likely that certain attacks can be easily attributed to the regime. For example, many of the named victims of assassinations were long-standing militants of the FFS or far left and thus far from being their allies. Also, many of the random violent attacks in cafes or on demonstrators were in heavily Islamist neighborhoods. As well, the so-called “triangle of death,” location of the vast majority of press-reported massacres, is actually on a plain—not hospitable to guerrilla operations and where the army is especially well implanted.

The self-defense militia was created by the army, he said, to tip the population into its own camp by creating targets for the Islamists. This tactic seems to have worked in some of the recent massacres. This also gives the army more free hands to defend vital economic interests. The militia was an absolutely extra legal creation, without supervision. They depend for financing on the army and could be eliminated at any moment the army chose. Basically, they push Algeria back into tribal arrangements where each village or region is organized around the local tribal chief and surrounded by relatives. By reinforcing the logic of armed struggle instead of reasoned debate, militia units are a danger to Algerian society.

The regime’s release of FIS leader Abassi Madani, he said, is not a sign of wishing to end the war. Rather, with Madani’s apparent willingness now to renounce armed struggle, the regime hopes to isolate the more radical Islamist elements. At the same time, “the FIS hopes to regain the audience it lost,” something it could readily do and probably already is doing with new militants.

For those who speculate that the military might be willing to concede rapid Islamization of the society as long it can keep control of the state and its oil revenues, it should be remembered, he said, that Islamization was already promoted by the state, long before the FIS even existed. Islam was the state religion. Finally, the population revolted against the regime’s three decades of total control. But now the regime wants to re-establish its control by posing as the population’s “savior.” If some now wish to work with it, while allowing the military to maintain control, this is no problem. The regime had its own fundamentalist rules: single-party, a ban on political opposition, the state religion, and its own interpretation of *sharia*. Its imposition of the Family Code was in 1984, before the FIS creation. “Whenever it suited them, the military favored the rigorous Islamization of Algeria.”

Meanwhile, he pointed out, the horrors of the war against Islamists have limited opposition to ongoing economic privatization, as the IMF dictates, resulting in thousands of workers losing their jobs. The only sizeable trade union, UGTA, has been tied to the regime for thirty years. Officially, it was separated in 1989–90, but its cadres are still closely involved with

the regime. During the past five years, some spontaneous struggles have developed sporadically. Strikes have occurred among teachers and workers in the transport and health sectors, but these have not been coordinated.

The social question is the most important problem in Algeria. Here “there is total confusion. The regime manages and gathers the wealth. It has no programs or perspectives, concerned only with postponing debt payments. For their own part, the democratic movements fail to assert the social question. They’re content to make several abstract human rights demands. But it’s important to put a finish to economic exploitation and arbitrary rule. And the problem is the same with the Islamists.” During the 1990 local elections campaign, A.L. asked Madani how the FIS would confront the serious housing problem in the various locales they came to administer. His sole response, in Arabic, was “God alone knows.” All three political elements—the regime, the Islamists, and the democratic parties—relegated the social question to a secondary concern in their speeches.²⁰⁸

Several weeks later, the journal relied on another Algerian “insider” to provide analysis about the shadowy context of continuing violence. Using a pseudonym to protect against retaliatory assassination, a journalist for an important daily Algerian newspaper gave the clearest statement yet about the regime’s hidden role in manipulating Islamist terrorism for its own benefit. At the beginning of the conflict, he said, Algerian journalists assumed that the hideous assassinations against clearly innocent people were the work of radical Islamists. Voices from the grassroots insisted, nevertheless, that such actions were directed by military security. Journalists discounted such assertions since rumors were always popular and people always discounted official versions of such matters. But over time, he said, with ever more assassinations, even journalists began to doubt the official accounts and to accept the grassroots rumor that “the army had organized counter-maquis and set up the GIA, the objective being to discredit the Islamists.” By sending fax messages supposedly from the GIA and demanding the deaths of journalists, intellectuals, foreigners, and others, the government could claim that these were no more than “bloodthirsty fanatics and criminal extremists, rapists with no respect for religion or law. This propaganda was effective in France by appealing to the fantasy image of cutthroat Arabs.”

“The majority of journalists knew that the GIA was a product of the defense ministry’s military security force, but they couldn’t write it.”²⁰⁹ There are several major reasons, he explained, why journalists came to accept this grassroots rumor. First, GIA victims were always ordinary Algerians, including intellectuals who lived in the working-class neighborhoods. Also, some of the victims were practicing Muslims, such as sociologist M’Hamed Boukhobza²¹⁰ who attended prayers at his local mosque. At the same time, the GIA did not murder any important officials of the regime, though one

might assume that this was because the latter were closely monitored and guarded. But the GIA has shown its capability of carrying out spectacular attacks. And while Khaled Nezzar, the retired general who canceled the 1992 election, is in fact protected by three bodyguards, three other regime dignitaries—Belaid Abdessalam, Rédha Malek, and Mohamed Cherif Messaâdia—are protected only by family members and have never been attacked.

Second, the GIA has logistical and communications systems surprisingly very sophisticated in a country so much under the surveillance of the military. For example, the GIA seems to have a much easier time sending fax messages to London and Paris than banks in Algeria, which have frequent breakdowns of their systems. The fact that the GIA readily uses faxes, mobile phones, and other satellite communications strongly suggests that it is supported by the defense ministry. “Portable telephones are forbidden for ordinary citizens and for them to function requires links with the central post office of the locality. The administration reserves mobile telephones for use only by officials and well known individuals.”

A third reason, he said, for viewing the GIA as a government production is the fact that in its five years of existence, no GIA member to date has been arrested and tried in court. A week after each attack, the government announces that its perpetrators have died, thus the irrelevance of any judicial process. “Even more striking is the fact that, up to the present, no one has admitted membership in the GIA. Journalist colleagues remain convinced that [GIA] figures Djamel Zitouni²¹¹ and Antar Zouabri are imaginary and never existed. The authorities announced the death of Djamel Zitouni, supposedly executed by his own men, but nobody knows who he was, where he worked, where he lived or whether he had a family.” No such information was released at the time of his alleged death. The imposed censorship of the press promotes such obscurity and is used to make GIA existence seem more convincing.

Of course, he stated, the AIS, the military wing of the FIS, was also involved in killings of its own. However, the GIA succeeded in pushing the AIS out of the Algiers region and into both eastern and western Algeria where it concentrated on attacking military convoys, police stations, and other government buildings. Throughout Algeria, they caused such a threat that security forces would barricade themselves in for the night. While not defeated, the army apparently could do no more. Soldiers and their immediate families were personally threatened and many officers killed in battle. “To lighten the weight of the war on military personnel, arms were distributed to militia. But distributing weapons at the local level, in a country where Islamists are popular, means that some will end up in the hands of the AIS,” a fact proven in later attacks by the AIS. Because certain generals came to regret the creation of militia, the general staff decided to sign the cease-fire with the AIS.

What is the meaning, he asked, of the current massacres and beheadings of children? The several hundred well-trained and well-equipped GIA soldiers have been ordered by the military security force to carry forth its "dirty job." When it was announced that the regime was negotiating a cease-fire with the AIS, "the GIA felt sacrificed and rebelled against its general officer. To break that agreement, the GIA redoubled its violence, pushing villagers toward Algiers in order to provoke an insurrection against Islamists."

If it were not for the UN secretary-general's statements, and especially articles in the Paris daily papers, *Le Monde* and *Libération*, which publicized these crimes and the military's complaisance about them, he said, the mass massacres and beheadings of children would have gone on as before. Fearing international investigations, the military finally cracked down with tanks and helicopters and seriously weakened the GIA. As well, any Algerian who advocated international inquiry was threatened, through anonymous phone calls, with death. Nevertheless, "a majority in Algiers thinks that whatever the future of the country, an international investigation commission should come to Algiers to identify the criminals who beheaded dozens of children."²¹²

Fédération Anarchiste writer "Patrick," in the same issue, echoed in general terms the perspective of the Algerian journalist concerning the context and events in Algeria. "For the last two months, the Algerian people are experiencing a new escalation of terror. The multiplication of civilian massacres arouses horror and indignation, but also a sense of malaise. Such blind violence seems irrational."

The regime's official interpretation is that the massacres are a last gasp of the Islamists in the face of their defeat, unpitying and desperate vengeance against the population. But this explanation, he said, seems too simplistic for such a complex and obscure reality. Thus, for example, the worst violence of the last five years occurred in the Algiers-Médéa-Blida "triangle of death," a zone with especially large concentrations of security forces. At the end of August, the village of Raïs in this zone experienced a supposedly Islamist attack resulting in 200–300 civilian deaths. Despite the huge racket from AK-47s and cries of victims, the assailants took their time over a period of four hours. Though military barracks were only 500 meters away, the "security forces" never appeared and the attackers were able to eventually withdraw without challenge.

Media information, he pointed out, is too simplistic and formulaic. Tight censorship has been in place in Algeria since June 1994. Any news report concerning security issues has to be approved by a "communications unit" in the government center. The decree establishing this system "recommends" that the press only provide "sound and believable" information. Thus, journalists should "trivialize and minimize the impact of any terrorist action." At the same time, they should emphasize their "inhuman" nature

by underlining the practices of beheadings, attacks on ambulances, and the killing and wounding of children.

This perspective explains why the nebulous GIA has been pushed forward at the expense of the AIS over the past several years. “From the regime’s perspective, if the GIA didn’t exist, it would in some way have to be invented. In any case, some sectors of the GIA are definitely manipulated by the several security services. Despite the extreme opacity of the Algerian regime, it seems that different military clans are engaging themselves, with every means, in internal struggles with complex stakes.”²¹³

Moving again to a discussion of the situation of Algerian women, an early March 1998 article notes the ways in which women were openly challenging the regime to change its policies. One year earlier, fourteen women’s or feminist organizations launched a mass petition, hopefully for a million signatures, proposing to adopt and immediately apply twenty-two amendments to the 1984 Family Code to create gender equality. Most of the associations, said the writer, actually favored abolishing the Code altogether. Both men and women were encouraged to sign, in Algeria itself, as well as abroad. In response, the Algerian party Hamas announced plans to obtain signatures from three million men in favor of the Code.

In 1988, on the anniversary of the petition launch, women in Algeria will hold a street demonstration to protest their oppressed position and to report on the petition status to date. In actuality, she said, the tight security measures in Algeria have significantly hampered efforts to gain signatures, so women have concentrated on talking to those nearby. This educational work itself has been productive. Some women were not even aware of the Family Code implications. As well, some men signed their names in support of their daughters’ futures.²¹⁴

In September, *Le Monde Libertaire* reviewed a very different anarchist account, a lyrical autobiographical narrative by a Tuareg writer, *Le coude grincant de l’anarchie*. While the author, Hawad, was born into a nomad family north of Agadez in Niger, the Tuareg people are constantly on the move, circulating easily across borders in the southern Sahara and Sahel and traditionally with strong presence in Algeria. For this reason and because the book itself offered another example of traditional communitarian forms and perspectives at least somewhat overlapping with and thus potentially expanding the concepts of Western-centric anarchism, the review is included in the present book.

The book title itself, according to the reviewer, reverses a medieval Arab derogatory label for inhabitants of this area and refers instead to a positive refusal to submit to authority, a defiant and screeching challenge to the narrow and controlling bounds of Western thought and social forms. This Tuareg-based epic “mixes and reassembles words into a spiral where the rebellion of the poor and the desire to be, the freedom to speak and to accuse are omnipresent. Vigor and beauty, continuously inspired, sometimes breathless, secrets, thoughts swept away by a desire for space, rocky arabesques, waiting rests, tears: sarcastic humor, lampoonist, epic poetry resembling troubadours, poets and nomadic storytellers of the East, Hawad represents all of that and speaks a universal tongue, while at the same time deeply immersing in *tamajaght* (Tuareg) culture.”

Presently, the traditional Tuareg culture is disappearing, said the reviewer, with people cooped up in camps and forcefully made sedentary. They remain an exotic image for tourist flyers—forever men in blue on top of camels, but this reality is dying out. While the book insists on hearing the voices of other nomadic peoples as well as those colonized in their own countries, such as the Indians of Chiapas and the Kurds, it also speaks for the victims of capitalism in the West. “Its images convey the bitter and accusing rebellion of peoples condemned to conform, to disappear, given the aggressiveness of the genocidal power of the modern conquerors, the masters of the world.”

The Tuareg are “a people formerly free and without boundaries, connoisseurs of the stars and the desert, and who carried the wisdom of those who pass by and who own none of the land that supports their paths.” This is why the Tuareg and Hawad can make links with all the disinherited of the world. “[His is] a language that undulates and twirls in a flood of strange lucidities. The translation restores the spiraling rhythm engulfing the reader, caught up and harangued by the story only to fall down into brutally cruel reality with its frenzied procession.”²¹⁵



The meaning of the October 1998 government crackdown on Algerian newspapers was the focus of the next article. On October 18, it stated, four of the leading French-language private newspapers (*El Watan*, *Le Matin*, *La Tribune*, and *Liberté*) were unable to be printed at the usual state-run printing enterprise—supposedly for “non-payment of debts,” but actually for straightforward political reasons. Other journals voluntarily shut down at the same time in solidarity against this attack on press freedom.

However, “even in relative terms, there is no independent press in Algeria.”²¹⁶ As a group, newspapers restrict themselves either to simply reproducing official positions (such as *El Moudjahid* or *L’Authentique*) or

the positions of supposedly-democratic parties linked to the “eradicator” bloc (such as the RCD, *Liberté*, or the Communists of Ettahadi, *Le Matin*), fervent supporters of the repressive policies of the current regime.

Said the writer, the regime has used this form of radical censure in the past as well. The weekly, *La Nation*, in December 1986, was shut down in the same way for the supposed same reason. At that time, there was no solidarity, as now, with the suspended paper. In fact, more recently, *El Watan* even repeated the official rationale for the earlier shutdown. *La Nation* had expressed hostility toward the hard-line eradicator policy of the regime and support for the “Rome Platform” approach: a negotiated agreement between certain political parties (FLN, FFS, MDA, etc.) and FIS “moderates” to end the war and replace the military dictatorship with civilian rule.

Given the past docility of the press, he said, the current regime action needs explaining. In mid-October, after many months of virulent press coverage, two government ministers were forced to resign—Mohamed Adami, justice minister, and General Mohamed Betchine,²¹⁷ a strongman of the regime and top counselor to President Zeroual. The press campaign no doubt reflected competition between clans within the military leadership, far more based on financial interests (bribes and petroleum export revenues) than on ideological differences. “When *El Watan* and *Le Matin* violently attacked Betchine, they knew that they could count on high-level protection by influential generals wishing both to weaken Zeroual and to eliminate one of the declared candidates to his succession.”²¹⁸

The subsequent “disguised suspension of several newspapers resulted from a kind of truce concluded between the two clans in order to calm things down for their own self-preservation. The abundant unfolding scandals revealed by the press implicated a number of high officials. Betchine himself was accused of outrageous wheeling and dealing. Another part of the deal between clans was that Zeroual himself promised to not serve his whole term as president. Both clans are now, with difficulty, searching for an acceptable consensus candidate, preferably a civilian. The presidential election itself has been postponed to April 1999.”²¹⁹

A corollary sidebar article, apparently by the same writer, discussed the censorship issue in more detail and related it to the military’s campaign of violent repression. All information related to security issues, he said, is intentionally manipulated by the state. Thus, while it is common to hear that intellectuals, journalists, and women have been the major victims of the war, in fact, by June 1996, one Algerian observer estimated about 70,000 deaths, only 400 of which were women and 50 of which were journalists. “The regime uses the atrocious massacres to justify its continuing the policy of unlimited war and repression. Most of the victims are anonymous, faceless.”²²⁰

A final *Le Monde Libertaire* article in this time period commingled the Algerian national liberation war with the struggle against the National Front by discussing the new book, *Du rouge au noir: mémoire vive d'un porteur de valise*,²²¹ by Gérard Lorne, and the reaction against it by the right. As a young rebel in the 1950s, said the reviewer, Lorne was naturally attracted to the Communist party. Gradually disillusioned with its policy toward Algeria, he eventually was excommunicated by the party and began working underground for the FLN in France. Finally arrested, he was sentenced to a prison term of twenty years. On special leave to visit his ill son, he escaped to Morocco and helped develop technical training for the FLN. Gradually disillusioned with the likely political turn of an FLN regime upon independence, he moved on to other contexts in exile and eventually back to France where he affirmed his own anarchist identity.

"This book, it must be said, is a hymn to insurrection, to a refusal to accept the intolerable—every sort of colonialism, wars, military, bullies, capitalists, nationalists, exploiters, and oppressors." Obviously, then, the book is very upsetting to the racist xenophobes of the FN who wish "to fiercely defend the myth of 'French Algeria.'" According to the reviewer, threats of lynching and murder have circulated following the book's release. In the *Dépêche du Midi* of November 28, the Ariège branch of the National Society of Repatriates, "which relates to veterans as hard fascism does to soft fascism," called for everyone to prevent the traitorous author from appearing anywhere to promote his book.²²²



As for the Fédération Anarchiste itself, a survey of *Le Monde Libertaire* readers in the early '90s found 82 percent were male, 21 percent under age twenty-five, 26 percent between twenty-six and thirty-five, and 27 percent between thirty-six and forty-five. Only 7.5 percent were blue-collar workers, while 17 percent were students. For the mid-'90s French anarchist survey by Mimmo Pucciarelli, 17 percent of respondents belonged to the FA, significantly more than any other single organization. Pucciarelli also reported that, at that time, 8,000 copies were printed of each issue of *Le Monde Libertaire*.²²³ In proportion to the overall population, this would be equivalent to about 32,000 copies in the context of the United States.

SCALP/REFLEX/No Pasaran!

WITH THE RISE OF ANTI-IMMIGRANT SCAPEGOATING AMONG MANY in France, and opportunistic attempts by political parties, especially Le Pen's Front National, to exploit this politically, in the early 1980s various political groups emerged to challenge this growing wave. Organizing

and demonstrations by African immigrant organizations (especially of the younger second generation) as well as by SOS-Racisme were already mentioned above. In 1984, motivated by the need instead to offer a grass-roots alternative to the latter (committed to direct action and anarchist political critiques instead of humanist-oriented periodic demonstrations) the first local SCALP (Section Completely Against Le Pen) group was formed in Toulouse.

On June 6, Le Pen's stadium appearance was greeted by a violent clash of SCALP protestors armed with Molotov cocktails, with riot police guarding the stadium approach. The week before, his originally planned meeting place had been blown up with a bomb.²²⁴ This commitment to a direct and radical approach to blocking the extreme right and its virulent racism was soon emulated by local SCALP groups throughout France. Inspired by the "autonomist movement" of the 1970s and a growing anarcho-punk counterculture, SCALP groups were energized by younger anarchists and others alienated by political parties, voting, and the Marxist left, and ready to confront the deadly nature of the surrounding culture—including especially the mounting tide of racist nationalism and repression and the apparent passivity toward this threat by those unsympathetic to it. While other leftists and anti-racist groups denounced such actions as sectarian and likely to lead to greater polarization, through direct confrontations at FN and neo-Nazi rallies and demonstrations, SCALP militants and sympathizers were able to express, without mediation, their core political values and to see immediate results from their action.

In Paris, a group of similar roots, orientation, and commitment was born among anarchist high school and university students in June 1986: RÉFLEX (Study, Training and Coordination Network Against the Extreme Right and Xenophobia). Issuing a journal, *RÉFLEXes*, at least several times a year (originally 300 copies) provided linkage among local SCALP and similar groups throughout France who wished to learn of successes and obstacles in their recruitment and actions, without depending on outside media.²²⁵ The Paris RÉFLEX group has continued publishing to the present.

After an attempt at national coordination in the late '80s failed to coalesce, a new effort in 1992 brought the various local SCALP groups together in a new network called "No Pasaran" (presumably adopted from the famous "They Shall Not Pass" declaration in Madrid by Dolores Ibárruri Gómez, "La Pasionaria," against Franco's fascist forces besieging the city in 1936).

In the first issue of the *No Pasaran!* journal that same year was a statement of the group's roots and goals. Coming out of the radical anti-fascist movement and observing the continued growth of the far right and xenophobia, it said, its militants had expanded its concerns to include "any kind of domination: capitalism, racism, patriarchy, alienation, social apartheid,

repression, and so on.” While devising new alternatives and new practices accordingly, these must be considered as part of an overall revolutionary perspective. The network is different from political parties and typical left organizations as it is composed of various anarchist groups. It was also distinct from those who proposed a broad anti-fascist front of the left as well as those who sought to stop the Front National through electoral strategies favoring the Socialist party. As well, it was committed to working with similar groups that shared similar goals in other countries. The journal produced eighty-eight issues by 2001.

Given this book’s focus on Algeria specifically, no further accounts will follow in this section on the particular evolution of the REFLEX or No Pasaran groups. However, articles from one product of this overall network, in 1995, are offered below to provide a sample of its analysis and orientation.

In line with the commitment of REFLEX and No Pasaran to exchange information between groups of similar nature and concern, the REFLEX-SCALP group of Paris began, in November 1995, to circulate a new periodic publication, *Contre Infos* (*European Counter Network*), with detailed accounts of local actions, topical analyses, and information from groups in other countries. Topics included a broad range of social issues from radical student upheavals and movements on specific campuses to sexism, the situations of the unemployed and undocumented workers, police repression, and the Front National of Le Pen.

The fourth issue of *Contre Infos* is of special interest because it directly addressed how the French state used the threat of Algerian radical Islamist terrorism within France itself, after several sensational incidents in 1994–1995, to justify a vast extension of police infrastructure intended to expand social control more generally. The French government activated a so-called “Vigipirate” national security alert system plan (designed originally in 1978) and a variety of “anti-terrorist” measures, which moved France far in the direction espoused by Le Pen and other rightists all along. According to information from *Le Monde*, some 42,000 police and military were mobilized for this campaign.

A first article in this issue described the sense of being besieged by police and soldiers everywhere and how the new repressive policies were used quite beyond the supposed original target. “So, you take the metro. Cops everywhere. You take the train. Cops everywhere. You get around by car or moped. Again cops everywhere. You take to walking. Cops, cops, cops! With soldiers armed with machine-guns following on behind. That is what they call ‘vigipirate.’ You have been told on TV that it’s to stop terrorism, to reassure you.” In fact, rather than a genuine “terrorist” danger, the cops are there to control “as always, the young, the poor, those in [working-class and immigrant] suburbs, and anyone else who can’t afford the aspirins. But now with more arrogance, given their new orders from ‘on high.’ Are they

racists? Not at all, these are orders. And besides, everyone is scared when there are machine guns.”

Actually, since July these patrols have found no terrorists at all despite questioning several million individuals and stopping tens of thousands of cars. Though the government claims that these tight measures have resulted in expulsion of several hundred foreigners without adequate papers, these latter are subsistence level labor, not terrorists.

The real reason for “Vigipirate” becomes clear when you see how it’s used—against young tram line riders in Strasbourg, demonstrators in Tahiti, and “to stop people handing out leaflets.... Vigipirate aims to frighten people—you, me, everyone. It makes us look at each other, especially the other, like watch dogs. It serves permanent control. It is the corollary of video surveillance and Pasqua’s laws. It sows the seeds of temptation for a vicious ethnic purge. Let’s be serious! In the end, you are bored of this old world. Vigipirate, we’ve had enough of it!”²²⁶



A second article began by citing recent remarks by a French government minister comparing the rebellion of youth in the working-class suburbs as a new “Intifada.” No doubt “he dreams of placing a policeman behind each citizen of color.” It is clear that the new security measures have nothing to do with terrorism. If such issues develop, they are typically resolved through hidden negotiations between states and the other parties concerned. Instead, said the writer, these policies are meant to create a binding consensus of support for the state. “Even better, it becomes a factor in managing the economic crisis. For the French state, terrorism is something it can greatly profit from. If it didn’t exist, it would have to invent it. One needs no journalistic scoop or radical analysis to understand that capitalism is breaking down!”

The economic crisis is not a matter of speculation or a passing phenomenon. “It is the future.” In the wealthy countries, increasing poverty goes along with growing riches for the bourgeoisie and their lackeys. Meanwhile, “in the huge peripheries of the planet, social disaster, massacres, and war force millions of persons to seek survival through exile and emigration.” The huge indebtedness of states in capitalist countries has brought the invention of privatization and the dismantling of social supports to solve the issue, while military spending remains untouchable.

“Debris from the Berlin wall has served to build a ‘Fortress Europe’ against the new barbarians who, frustrated by the broken promise to let them enter the Disneyland of consumption, are now menacing everywhere.” At the same time, France now must face the unfinished consequences of its colonial past, as with the current crisis of Algeria. “The

collapse of Algerian state capitalism makes obvious the widespread impoverishment of the people and opens a period where the leading strata pillage the wealth of the country. In this violent process, the religious ideology of Islam joins together politically the currents of private capitalism against the former *nomenklatura* in transition."

After suffering through colonialism and the horrors of the Algerian war, said the writer, Algerian workers were "invited" to emigrate and participate in the rising French economy. But they are now victimized, discarded without jobs. Meanwhile, the newer generations no longer have the possibility to emigrate and have no jobs, and thus are doomed to idleness in their own country or in the housing projects of French capitalism. "From Algiers to Tourcoing, the widespread rebellion of the young is presented to us as the result of identifying with Islam. However, the system fears not the renewed religious racket, but rather the strength of the rebellion which Islam has come to co-opt."

Though middle-class liberal Algerians now speak of their "unconditional attachment to Western democratic values, for many years they supported the hidden and reactionary politics of the regime. Islam was considered a good religion so long as they could use it as a means to control the people. Many of those who asserted Algerian national pride and who used the war of national independence as their foundation for political gain now discover themselves as 'French in heart and spirit.'"

The usual insecurity of wage earners is now, stated the writer, made even greater by the economic crisis. The days are over when capitalism would celebrate the apparent social integration of the working class, as demonstrated by changed lifestyle and attitudes and when reformist organizations would thus thrive. Now "police surveillance and the neighborhood *intifadas* have replaced the sales of *Humanité Dimanche* [the Communist newspaper]. The actions of parties and trade unions have prepared the way for today's growing exclusion, irrationality, and fear. Delegation of responsibilities, the cult of patriotism and obedience to leaders have produced irresponsible beings and childish thinking." With these organizations no longer in the picture, "frustration, egoism, and individualism remain and these are the basic materials for authoritarian social mentalities, which demand order and security." The transition has been made between "Vote for the working class" to "Vote French," and this process is not over.

"It is in the framework of this rotting of the system that the new Algerian war is situated." Thus, the social struggle within France "can be easily suppressed by the race question, neutralized by the demands of defending the national interest. Suddenly, the impoverished working-class neighborhoods are made to look like war zones and their inhabitants treated like enemies." Without jobs and surrounded by forces of law and order, they increasingly find it hard to leave these zones of French apartheid and to

avoid becoming the “enemy” they are alleged to be. Their “otherness” is now defined not only in terms of religion, but also, from a nationalistic perspective, as anti-French.

“After so many years of reforms, of social progress, here we are at the gates of barbarism.” While it is easy to denounce the image of a “new man” promoted by decades of Communist totalitarianism, “it is more rare that one judges appropriately the true value of ‘democratic man,’ the mediocre product of two centuries of Enlightenment politics. The average citizen has given himself up to the state for security. He asks protection from the institution responsible for his insecurity. This is the logic of the democratic mind! This security, like every guarantee given by capitalism, is fictitious and formal.” In fact, the economic crisis only grows and the propaganda of national security accomplishes nothing for the misery that people experience. Furthermore, “the security of some is the insecurity of many others: all those who find themselves every day supervised, followed, repressed, the subject of police files and aggression by the legions of mercenaries.”

There is no longer anything to be reformed in a system whose only promise is to survive terror. To develop collective means of combating this system, we must “remain vigilant about ourselves and our own attitudes. We must not cede the essentials of our principles nor our steadfast opposition to the present world. We must—everywhere and at each opportunity—reaffirm our total disbelief in the system.” The so-called protection by the state guarantees our insecurity. We must also denounce the media for their essential role as “the watchdogs of the regime. We must denounce every attitude of exclusion, of informing and of distrust. We must constantly unveil the hidden intentions of the security psychosis and bring [understandings of] problems back to the field of social inequality.”²²⁷

Another article emphasized how the application of the “Vigipirate” policy only heightened already existing tensions in urban France. “Harassment, interrogations and identity checks are the daily experience of the young.” The escalation of direct repression has caused an escalation of despair. “The new dangerous class, the youth of the housing projects can only relieve its boredom and regain an apparent identity by attempting urban guerrilla warfare against every aspect of the police operation. By the path taken by Kelkal, a product of the same situation as their own, in declaring war on France, they found a concrete response to their hatred of the French state.”

Unemployed and without opportunity for social success and only spectators of “normal” consumption available to others, “certain youth have identified with the myth of the warrior defying the forces of order and thus become public enemy number one. In the schools of the ‘difficult’ zones, anti-French language develops on the basis of a terrorist fantasy. It is the generalization of ethnic language, the withdrawal to a supposed culture of reactionary and autarkic roots, that feeds radical Islamism.” It is the very

war launched by “Vigipirate” that is likely to encourage some urban youth in that direction. At the same time, radical Islamism provides the pretext for repressing the sub-proletariat of the urban suburbs.

The article concludes with detailed descriptions of violence and direct clashes between youth and the police in Strasbourg, Estampes, Corbeil-Essones, Val-d’Oise, Seine-Saint-Denis, Evry, Grigny, and Vigneux.²²⁸

A final article in the same issue of *Contre Infos* called for disobedience in this second Algerian war. Asserting that Algerians were caught between two bands of assassins, “a reactionary religious movement and a junta of corrupt military,” it also stated that the French state had chosen to side with the junta by providing economic and military assistance. “Whether the recent bomb attacks were the work of the Algerian military security force or an Islamist group,” they were moments of an undeclared war.

Every political party, said the writer, now endorses the terrorism of “Vigipirate,” hunting down “illegals” and rejecting those who wish political asylum. Meanwhile, the television media provide censorship, and the courts provide protection for the government. “Suspicious” persons of darker skin are delivered to the special anti-terrorist force of the national police, and subsidized anti-racists call for collaborating with the new repression. In these conditions, “France deserves no more support than the Algeria of Zeroual and the GIA. Between the cops who persecute French housing project youth and the ninjas who assassinate in the Algerian counterparts, there is only a difference of degree in the level of terror.” We refuse to choose between them. “Confronting this second Algerian war occurring within France, there is only one solution—disobedience.”

This means, first of all—the writer emphasized—the need to speak out, meet, and organize. We must counteract the submissive and informant behavior they wish us to accept. We will not go along with “the frisking, the arbitrary ethnic profiling, and the surveillance of all by each one.” We need to build ties with everyone who resists the militarization of daily life, such as those high-school youth in the working-class suburbs who rebel against police controls. We should demonstrate our solidarity with Algerians “who face a double terror, by trying, for example, to make possible their ability to remain in France and to assure their free circulation between the two countries.” Finally, we should use every opportunity to oppose both the dark forces of Islamism and French government support for the Algerian junta—“especially in its worst forms, such as the shipment of weapons.”²²⁹

PART V

The Bouteflika Regime (1999–Present): Horizontalist Resistance and Authoritarian Rule

Algerian Background: Kabyle Insurgency, Assemblies Movement, and the “Democratic” Facade

CONTINUED OPPOSITION TO THE POLITICS OF PRESIDENT ZEROUAL by the “eradicator” clan of the military, led by generals Nezzar, Smâïn Lamari, Mohammed Lamari, and “Tewfik” Médiène,¹ apparently led the president to resign his post a few months before the next planned election. While Zeroual had achieved a truce with the FIS and withdrawal of their armed forces from action, the more radical GIA was still very much present (though apparently not independent from hidden manipulating “guides” within the military itself).

At this point, military leaders sought a preferably civilian replacement. Two potential names most frequently appeared—Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi and Abdelaziz Bouteflika—and both had earlier failed in seeking to inherit Boumédiène’s mantle after his death in 1979. Ibrahimi had served for many years as a close cabinet minister and advisor for Boumédiène and was a strong proponent of greater emphasis on Arabo-Islamic policies. Bouteflika, an officer under Boumédiène during the war, had long experience representing Algeria at the UN and as foreign minister. In the context of both continuing economic liberalization and the Algerian regime’s quest to gain greater acceptance internationally after the horrendous violence of the 1990s, Bouteflika soon emerged as the more logical candidate of the regime.

At the same time, domestic legitimacy and a degree of international acceptance required some facade of restoring “democratic” forms. For this reason, most of the military leaders openly refused to endorse Bouteflika and also opened competition to candidates from several other parties, including a more credible opponent, Hocine Aït-Ahmed, longtime leader of the FFS and one of the final survivors of the “historic chiefs” of the revolution. In the end, however, all six opponents of Bouteflika withdrew from the race at the last minute because of clear regime manipulation of results in early voting among military personnel. For both internal and international audiences, therefore, the new president’s rule was badly tainted from the beginning.

Added to this major problem, because the regime had not allowed Ibrahimi’s new Islamic party, the Wafd, to compete, the willingness of the regime to seriously seek re-integration of FIS (and potentially GIA) elements

into civilian society was legitimately questioned. Apparently, this then led some in the GIA to back off from approaching the regime for a truce and led many Algerians and foreigners to doubt the government's ability to end the conflict. In the next several months of 1999, backed by military chiefs behind the scenes, however, Bouteflika produced a "Civil Concord" policy, approved by referendum in September and giving a legal framework to the earlier armistice. The accord allowed for honorable re-integration of those FIS guerrillas who had laid down their arms and were not guilty of murders or sex crimes. Several thousand FIS/AIS insurgents thus returned to their homes.

However, any claim of the president or his backers that they were "restoring democracy" was contradicted by the manipulation of his election, the continued muzzling of the press, tight control of UGTA, and the continued official "state of emergency" that allowed government prohibition of demonstrations or other political activity it regarded as potentially threatening the regime's stability. Whichever political parties and private newspapers gained legal permission were, behind the scenes, also tied to one group or another in the top military circles. Critiques of the regime were carefully modulated, though the boundary between acceptability and illegality was constantly shifting and ambiguous.

Meanwhile, those Islamist individuals or parties who accepted posts within Bouteflika's government lost credibility as legitimate voices of the civilian Islamist opposition. As well, the only political institutions with potential independent voices and power, the National Assembly and the judiciary, were fully controlled by pre-election vetting, constitutional barriers, and the acknowledged sheer power of the military behind the scenes.

A major new challenge to the regime came in 2001 with what became known as the "Black Spring." This was a direct rebellious confrontation between angry, protesting youth of Kabylia and Algeria's *gendarmérie*, the national police. The intense level of violence, with over a hundred young people killed and thousands wounded, resulted from the government's policy to shoot down demonstrators, reminiscent of Algiers street scenes in October 1988. The clash began with the *gendarme* arrest and murder of a high-school student in April. Within days, enraged protestors appeared throughout Kabylia, attacking *gendarmes* as well as a variety of buildings that symbolized years of political oppression, social neglect, and misery.

Eventually, a new local political force emerged in Kabylia in the form of a coordinated network of traditionalist-type local village and communal assemblies—the *aarch* movement, as it was soon called. Though not part of the formal post-independence government structures at that level, local assemblies had centuries-deep roots in the mountainous communities of rural Kabylia, more autonomous by nature and fiercely suspicious of outside authorities than rural communities in the plains.² In its original

“horizontalist” structure and process and in its rejection of the national regime, despite important contradictions, this new movement had strong affinities with an anarchist model of social organization.

The *aarch* network persisted as the dominant political force in Kabylia for several years,³ holding a claim to legitimacy separate from the more modernist (and discredited) political parties of the region, the FFS and the RCD. Both traditionalists and the modernists were able to mobilize hundreds of thousands in rival demonstrations against the regime in efforts to gain government concessions. Ultimately, the *aarch* movement lost momentum and support because of its inability to take positive action and its growing compromise of its basic anti-hierarchical and anti-negotiation principles. It also suffered from its failure to successfully spread its model of resistance and counter-power to other parts of Algeria. This decline of the *aarch* movement,⁴ the relative isolation of Kabylia, and the continued intransigence of the regime on Berber cultural issues, in turn, contributed to a growing movement among some for more formal regional autonomy, a tendency led by a new regional organization, the MAK (Movement for the Autonomy of Kabylia).

Berber cultural issues were long standing. The demand for recognition of Berber identity and the Berber language as legitimate and important elements of Algerian nationhood was articulated even in the late 1940s within the nationalist MTLN, and led to a reactive purge of many Kabyle militants from the party. But Kabyles consistently contributed essential numbers and strength to the wartime struggle against the French. After the war, in 1963–64, the FFS guerrilla resistance against the Ben Bella regime, Kabyle demonstrators against his successor Boumédiène, attempts at revitalization of the language and literature, the Berber Spring of 1980, and the creation of the Berber Cultural Movement all manifested strong pride in and defense of the cultural heritage and political resistance to both centralist authoritarianism and exclusivist assertions that Algerians were Arabs alone. Nevertheless, Kabyles consistently asserted in words and deeds that they were as much Algerian as others and that only a minority supported the movement for political autonomy.

Apparently, attempting to find greater political autonomy for himself from those with power behind the scenes, Bouteflika sought to play off military clans against each other—acknowledging their longevity but trying to gain relative advantages for himself as well. In 2000, the “eradicator” clan obtained its greatest leverage by forcing the retirement of Zeroual’s top allies in the military.

Nevertheless, military leaders were deeply embarrassed by revelations at a Paris libel trial in 2002, instigated by General Nezzar’s attacks on a recent book by ex-lieutenant Habib Souaïdia.⁵ The latter had participated in various Algerian army operations in the first several years of the Islamist

insurgency and had witnessed or was later informed about military manipulations of GIA violence as well as massacres committed by the military on its own. Nezzar's position was challenged by defense witness historian Mohammed Harbi, among others. As well, there were credible revelations at the trial about the huge sums of money accumulated in various European banks by Algeria's top military leaders over the years. While several of Souaïdia's detailed accounts were not well corroborated, his overall message seemed reasonably credible and the Paris jury found that no libel had occurred.⁶ Meanwhile, as the decade proceeded, despite continued clan competition, it seemed that Bouteflika gained the allegiance of growing numbers of the top military leadership.

Already in the 1990s, especially after the 1993 bombing of the New York World Trade Center, the US government intensified its scrutiny of Algerian politics and radical Islam in that country. While critical of Algeria's election cancelation and overall human rights record, and despite violent repression and torture in the ongoing internal war, US officials gradually came to more openly support the military rulers for the greater stability and intelligence they apparently provided, thus assuring US oil and natural gas supplies in the process. Small-scale joint military operations began in the late '90s and Algeria became "America's most important strategic partner in North Africa after Egypt and its long-standing ally Morocco."⁷

The regime gained immense new international leverage because of Al-Qaida's 9/11 attack in the United States. Suddenly, the policies of the "eradicator" military from the 1990s on gained great credibility and support in Western capitals. In 2003, US President Bush declared Algeria's regime to be "the most democratic in the Arab world."⁸ While Washington had moved into Algeria as a major investor, trade partner, and natural gas consumer several decades before, it now promoted and developed a major military relationship as well. Algeria's military regime became a new "ally" and teacher in the Bush regime's "war on terror,"⁹ and the US supplied arms to Algeria and carried out joint operations in the Sahara to prevent the spread there as well of radical Islamist influence.

In April 2009, US Ambassador Pearce informed Washington of the regime's major fraud in the re-election of Bouteflika and the fact that it sat on a social "volcano" of disillusioned youth while consistently denying opportunity for citizen participation.¹⁰ A few months later, in November 2009, Bouteflika assured US Africa Commander William Ward and the US ambassador that their bilateral relations were excellent and that he was proud that Algeria was America's largest Middle East trading partner after Saudi Arabia, and the largest in Africa. He also stressed Algeria's desire to maintain a solid military partnership.¹¹ By 2011, Algeria was a leading US source of crude oil and natural gas imports and the US was Algeria's largest export market. With the rising tide of protests and demonstrations in Algeria in

early 2011, US President Obama urged the regime to avoid violent repression and then praised Bouteflika for his supposed openness to reforms.

By the early part of the decade, most of what was left of the GIA metamorphized into a similarly oriented GSPC (Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat) based partly in the eastern mountain regions and with an offshoot presence in the southern Sahara as well. With Osama bin Laden's prestige in the radical Islamist community, the GSPC in turn transformed itself in 2006 into a supposedly local branch of his network, "Al-Qaida in the Islamist Maghreb" (AQMI). Glorifying militant jihad, recruiting volunteers for the "Al-Qaida" movement in Iraq after the 2003 invasion by the United States, and carrying out kidnappings and assaults on foreign workers and Algerian security forces were its major activities.

The fall 2008 spectacular suicide bombings in Algiers against the UN office and a major government building were among the organization's most visible and publicized actions. At the same time, speculation continued throughout the decade that at least some of the GSPC/AQMI leadership and militants were controlled by the military security force, as in the '90s, enabling that part of the regime to turn on and off the terrorist threat to send warnings to power rivals, including Bouteflika, as well as to those in the larger population who complained against the continuing "state of emergency" dictatorial policies.¹²

This possible collaboration between certain military leaders and remaining terrorists in effect mirrored what seemed a *de facto* collaboration between the two murderous forces of the 1990s—radical Islamists and the military—in devising a "reconciliation" policy that made neither side accountable to anyone. As part of his quest for political leadership legitimacy before a second presidential election in 2004, Bouteflika elaborated a new national reconciliation law that went considerably beyond the Civil Concord of 1999.

To the tired and peace-hungry Algerian public, he asserted that the only way to continue the de-escalation of militant violence was to offer complete amnesty to guerrilla militants who turned in their arms (and were supposedly not guilty of rape and murder), as well as to all members of the military for any actions carried out in the previous murderous decade. Far from the "truth and reconciliation" approach after years of bitter combat in countries like South Africa, the Algerian law explicitly prohibited ordinary citizens from publicly criticizing the actions of either side.

"No accountability" was the rule, and families of the "disappeared" or murdered, and victims of violence and torture themselves were left with no recourse. No questions could be asked and no one could be brought to justice. The hands of the military and radical Islamists were both so soaked in blood, it was implied, that only more chaos and horrendous bloodshed would spread throughout the country if the history books of that decade

were really opened. In truth, of course, the military leadership from that period was perfectly aware that their last vestige of legitimacy would disappear if they were made truly accountable.

While the major hike in oil prices in the early part of the decade allowed Algeria's foreign debt to be paid off, as well as the potential for major new social investments, all measures of grassroots economic and social misery remained as bad as before. Government corruption remained as deep and widespread as ever, if not worse, thus draining away significant monies for potential public benefit and accentuating class divisions. A trial of the "Khalifa financial and business empire" in 2007 was the most spectacular public revelation of massive government corruption. Increasingly, well-publicized scandals involved Bouteflika's closest political entourage, and such revelations enabled the military security clan (headed by Tewfik Médiène) control over Bouteflika's attempts to gain more political autonomy.

Beyond the important Kabyle insurrection, grassroots resistance to the continuing political and economic dictatorship under Bouteflika and the military expressed itself in various dimensions. First was the traditional alternative of emigration. Though France, which remained the first choice of Algerians, maintained tight immigration laws, increasing numbers of young people attempted a dangerous, surreptitious Mediterranean crossing by small boat or raft. Beyond the relatively small numbers of those *barragas* who reached Europe, much larger numbers were arrested before debarkation or drowned at sea. In any case, conditions for Algerian immigrants in France remained as desperate as before and resulted in sometimes violent urban demonstrations or revolts in Paris and elsewhere, especially by the younger generation of Algerians (and that of other African immigrants). These continued throughout the decade, most spectacularly in the fall of 2005.

A second potential alternative was through the electoral process for both the president and the National Assembly. However, with the relative de-escalation of radical Islamist and military violence, Bouteflika's popularity increased somewhat by the time of the second presidential election in 2004, and he easily defeated the competition. Though the constitution barred a third term, the regime simply arranged an accommodating amendment and Bouteflika was again re-elected in 2009, though with little serious opportunity for a major credible opposition candidate to emerge. Meanwhile, the National Assembly continued its role as primarily a symbolic institution, with little power and with control in the hands of parties in the government coalition (FLN, MSP, and RND). The dead end of this alternative was recognized at the grassroots by widespread electoral abstention, easily identified despite continued rigging of electoral results for both presidential and legislative elections.

Thirdly, the appearance, rise, and militant activity of autonomous trade unions, especially in the public sectors of health workers and teachers,

became a significant form of publicized defiance and a threat to regime legitimacy. Despite stubborn government reluctance to negotiate—let alone concede—any substantial benefits in wages or work conditions, the presence alone of this dynamic worker opposition to government policies provided an important model for potentially greater organized militant grassroots activity even within UGTA and in other social realms. The presence of a still active and critical League of Human Rights, the continuance of vocal and sometimes confrontational militance among Kabyle activists and the young, and the persistent strong effort of autonomous women's organizations remained important other fields of political opposition.

A fourth realm of resistance was the continuing stream of mainly spontaneous violent street battles by those aggrieved at the local level—especially youth—over a variety of issues. These provided opportunity for release of generalized rage against the overall oppression and disinterest of the regime. While for the most part not coordinated, the typically rapid escalation of these demonstrations, from protests to setting up barricades, burning vehicles, and attacking local government buildings signified a seething and potentially explosive social force clearly alienated from and defiantly opposed to existing conditions.

In this context, even the mass urban street demonstrations against the Israeli attack on Gaza (and Egyptian complicity) in January 2009 and, a few months later, the spontaneous euphoric reaction to the Algerian national soccer team's World Cup-qualifying victory indicated a tremendous reservoir of welled-up popular energy that could potentially be directed against the regime if the opportunity presented itself.¹³

In short, Algeria's political context remained superficially more quiescent, by comparison with the 1990s, but also potentially quite volatile against a strongly disliked and distant regime. Indeed, throughout 2010 and early 2011, new waves of grassroots riots and demonstrations throughout the country emboldened the organized Algerian political opposition (political parties, the human rights league, autonomous trade unions, women's organizations, and other groups) to challenge the regime's tight hold on the country. Algerians were all the more emboldened by dramatic forced regime changes in Tunisia and Egypt and by subsequent grassroots challenges to rulers throughout the entire Arab world. However, while Bouteflika made symbolic concessions (the state of emergency was dropped, but equally stifling laws remained in place) and promised other eventual reforms, as of mid-2011 the heavy weight of police repression prevented massive street protests such as those that occurred virtually everywhere else at this time in the region.

As well, despite mounting demands for regime change by the opposition and almost daily demonstrations by various constituencies (including autonomous trade unions, university students, and organizations of the unemployed), many Algerians are no doubt hesitant to re-open the political

liberalization dynamics of the early '90s, which led to the traumatic decade of massive violence. This factor alone goes a long way toward explaining the less spectacular developments in Algeria compared to others in North Africa and the Middle East in 2011. Continuing occasional Islamist guerilla attacks (orchestrated by the regime or not) help, understandably, to maintain that fear. Additionally, the continuing reality of a huge repressive military/police complex, the ongoing submissive role of the large UGTA trade union, and the divisive Kabyle autonomy movement are all major obstacles to large-scale political transformation. In the meantime, with over \$150 billion at hand in foreign currency reserves, the regime is also quite capable, if it chooses, of satisfying the material demands of large numbers. It is still to be seen whether and when significant change will occur, and in what form, meaningful to grassroots Algerians.

In turn, by late 2011, neighboring Tunisia and Egypt, the avant-garde of Arab Spring political liberalization, experience some of the same political tensions and dynamics that Algerians lived through in 1989–1991, but hopefully will at least avoid the horrendous military versus Islamist civil war that followed as an outcome in Algeria.

French Anarchism Background: Distinct Voices and Identities

THE FRENCH ANARCHIST MOVEMENT DURING THIS PERIOD continued to demonstrate both centrifugal and federative contrasting tendencies as it has throughout its history. On the one hand, the larger anarcho-communist organizations—Fédération Anarchiste, Alternative Libertaire, and Organisation Communiste Libertaire—continued their relatively substantial presence, activism, and publishing as before, though the FA lost its southwestern French groups to a new federation, the CGA (Coordination des Groupes Anarchistes), in 2002. In some of the demonstrations and meetings during this decade, all three organizations willingly cooperated with each other, despite remaining differences between them. This anti-sectarian tendency probably owed much to the groundswell of interest in anarchism during this period (not only in France) and its proven relevance as both an oppositional force and positive model more generally.

Meanwhile, the still vital anarcho-syndicalist competitors, the CNT-AIT and the CNT-F, continued their more specialized working-class activism and organizing. No Pasaran also maintained its own anarchist anti-fascist network throughout France along with a new group, OLS (Offensive Libertaire et Sociale), which split off in 2003.

Beyond these groups were major new efforts of anarchist publishing in print and online. Substantial anarchist essay revues included *Réfractions* and *À Contretemps*, while *Divergences* and *Mondialisme.org* included significant amounts of anarchist content. At the same time, the Fédération Anarchiste; Alternative Libertaire; Editions Acratie; and the Lyon publishing collective, Atelier de Création Libertaire, produced many interesting monographs and anthologies about anarchist history and the current movement. Additional, smaller online periodicals in this decade, like the continuing *L'Oiseau-tempête*, included *À Corps Perdu*, *L'En-dehors*, *Cette Semaine*, *Non Fides*, *Anar Sonore*, *La Question Sociale*, *Le Jura Libertaire*, *Deuxième Sous-sol*, and *Le Tigre*.

Meanwhile, anarchists in France, as elsewhere, were exposed to a developing theoretical exploration of “post-anarchist” or “post-modernist” anarchism, as exemplified in writings of Daniel Colson.

The published words of the above groups, journals, and other works are discussed below to the extent, as in the earlier parts of this book, that they explicitly addressed Algeria and Algerians or offered perspectives that well relate, at least implicitly, to the Algerian context.

In 1999, Lyon anarchist Mimmo Pucciarelli wrote an extensive essay for *Alternative Libertaire* (Belgium) in which he reported on updated findings from a survey of French anarchists he carried out in 1995 and 1996.¹⁴ Based on 140 returns, he confirmed the trends already developed in the 1960s and strengthened in the 1970s, '80s and '90s for the transformation of what traditionally had been a largely working-class and artisan movement into one with a substantial middle class. Only 8 percent of Pucciarelli's respondents were blue-collar workers, compared to 26 percent students, 7 percent not working or unemployed, and the rest in various other social or professional categories. As he stated, it was thus important to emphasize that current French anarchists "do not at all represent, in their very large majority, the least socially, politically, and economically favored social strata," despite the fact that the latter are the ones who most directly experience "the injustice and social contradictions of our rich countries."

In other dimensions, he pointed out, fewer than 20 percent of the respondents were female despite the movement's ideological commitment to equality between the sexes. As well, 20–29 year olds comprised a majority, though respondents included some from all major age groups. As to the overall number of French anarchists, Pucciarelli stated that undoubtedly "there are tens of thousands of persons who share our ideas *without moving on to action*." However, based largely on those who marched in the anarchist sections of various big demonstrations in major towns and cities in the late '90s, he estimated a number of 5,000–10,000. Smaller yet was the number of militants belonging to specific anarchist organizations (not including the two anarcho-syndicalist CNTs)—somewhat less than a thousand—by early 1999. Beyond this last number were many small anarchist groups not federated in the larger organizations, as well as a large number (almost half of those surveyed) who regarded themselves as anarchists without belonging to any group, though Pucciarelli did not interpret this category as largely individualist anarchists. Another measure is the number of copies of anarchist newspapers printed, and this amounts to many thousands altogether.

Though survey responses were far from monolithic, he said, a majority indicated that the key event in anarchist history was the Spanish anarchist revolution in 1936—including the huge number of collectivizations as well as the strength of the anarchist movement itself. Other key events, each mentioned by at least 10 percent of respondents, included the Paris Commune, the Makhnovista movement in the Ukraine, and May 1968 in France. The role of anarchist culture was viewed by those surveyed as quite important in exposing people to anarchism and bringing them into the movement, as well as for maintaining a meaningful sense of involvement. This dimension includes anarchist journals, books, tracts, web sites, public forums, and radio, as well as various genres of alternative music.

Concerning the issue of violence, Pucciarelli perceived that it still fascinates anarchists. But that being said, “*the violent anarchist* remains primarily a myth that many writers, researchers, and journalists take up recurrently. It is evident, and for a long time, that violent actions are very few and especially insignificant compared to the daily efforts of several dozens, if not hundreds, of anarchists who, in their *utopian workshops*, write, read, produce books, and brochures and put much effort into finding ways to distribute this abundant production.” Of course, many in the movement are committed to non-violent principles as well. On this subject, he thus concludes that “today’s anarchists are agents of social transformation rather than revolutionaries with submachine guns and raised fists.”

Thus, in the view of Pucciarelli and others he cited, anarchy is possible here and now. It is not the privileged realm of any organization, but rather in daily energetic and creative activity, in openness to new ideas and dreams of fuller lives. There are still many people “who display in their daily lives that sensibility and that hope, if not the will, to transform social bonds by anti-authoritarian and anti-hierarchical approaches and practices, demonstrating the vitality of that [anarchist] culture.” As in the past, today’s anarchists “know how to create free spaces, a culture that is not only a representation, an idealization of reality and rebellion, but also...an *incorporation of practices*.”

In a brief article in autumn 2001, Pucciarelli clarified his profile of the French anarchist movement in certain respects. He distinguished between four types or realms of anarchists: social anarchists, daily anarchists, cultural anarchists, and diffuse anarchists. The first are those in organizations, and the second are those linked to specific activist groups dealing—in the short or long term—with specific aspects of daily life, such as squats, feminism, alternative music, fanzines, health issues, and so on.

These first two types, he said, are often based on affinity groups of between three and twenty members, with decisions made by close to unanimity or consensus and with everyone’s participation. The first type, social anarchism, is more explicitly politically oriented and emphasizes propaganda and anarchist politicization of a wide range of issues. The second group, daily anarchists, focus on the here and now of the quality of life within the specific group and how it takes action. It is not interested in occupying political space as such or in presenting itself as an “official” anarchist representative. The third realm, cultural anarchism, he argued, consists of all the cultural activities discussed in his earlier essay. The final anarchist type concerns those who are basically anti-authoritarian in their “thoughts toward established regimes and authorities and their frustration regularly expressed around us in our workplaces, at school, in bistros, etc.” Obviously, there can be much overlap between these categories.

As for movement size, stated Pucciarelli, those in French anarchist organizations now number about 1,000—or 2,000 if one includes the two CNTs. Several more thousands are part of his identified second realm of anarchists.¹⁵

Anarchist writer Ronald Creagh also emphasized the late '90s disparity between a “resurgence of anarchist spirit” and the reality of “weak organizations, sometimes consisting of several dyed-in-the-wool groups around a nucleus of organizers.” The present anarchist movement, he said, should thus be viewed not only in terms of the “official” anarchist organizations and their fringe of “sympathizers,” but also as a large underground, “sometimes more authentically anarchist” than traditional anarchists, with militants as active and defending the same values sometimes within other movements and in daily life. In Creagh’s view, it is now essential that an “egalitarian dialogue” occur between “traditional” anarchist groups and this new important and dynamic wave of “independent” anarchists.¹⁶

Finally, while post-anarchist Daniel Colson was quite critical of hierarchical and bureaucratic behavior in French anarchist movement organizations and their alleged fixation on 19th-century domineering notions of social revolution,¹⁷ it was not surprising in return to see organizational anarchists dismissing post-anarchist anarchism as too individualistic and lifestyle oriented, too ready to abandon rationalism, and too fatalistic and thus non-activist about the possibilities for overall social change against the state and capitalism.¹⁸

At the same time, in fact, it was clear (as discussed in previous sections herein) that some anarchist organizations, from the late '60s on, had already committed themselves to applying anarchist principles to their own internal structures and processes, and increasingly to abandon the notions of inevitable revolution and “revolution” itself except in terms of a permanent series of transformations. Meanwhile, some anarchist writers also rejected the polarized overdrawn stereotypes of “modernist,” “classic” anarchists and “post-modernist,” “post-anarchist” anarchists in this debate and pointed out more overlap between these supposed binaries than is usually acknowledged.¹⁹

French Anarchist Positions

Alternative Libertaire

THE FIRST *Alternative Libertaire* COMMENTARY ON THE BOUTEFLIKA era came several months after his uncontested 1999 election and the subsequent national referendum on his “Civil Concord” law. In effect, the writer stated, this was a choice between justice and peace. And this raises the question of at what price “national reconciliation” is achieved. The initiative, approved by the legislature in July, gained massive approval in a referendum, despite the neutral stance of many parties.

The price of acceptance, he pointed out, is that all legal recourse is abandoned against armed Islamists not guilty of collective murders, rapes, or attacks in public places, while those who committed bloody crimes and who surrender after enactment of the law will have their sentences reduced or canceled with probation. Bouteflika also promised to consider liberating the two FIS leaders, Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj. Thus, the regime has moved from an “eradication” policy to achieving a peaceful resolution to the civil war through a political formula. In effect, said the writer, this was the same approach defended by certain Algerian political parties during the (Rome) meeting of January 1995 that was clearly condemned at the time by the Zeroual government.²⁰

The present formula arranged by Bouteflika, however, is not completely supported by numerous regime opponents, including civil society organizations, who view it as quite faulty and an opportunistic political move to offset the questionable legitimacy of his election. Also, the writer stated, the wording of the referendum itself was loose enough to imply that if one disapproved, it would be voting against peace. Before the vote, there were some surprising alliances. The secular RCD party, for example, agreed with MSP, the moderate Islamic party, in approving it. But most of the “reconciliation” parties, including the FFS, preached abstention. Nevertheless, said the writer, (though one can question official figures) supposedly 85 percent of eligible voters took part in the referendum, and 98.6 percent of these voted “Yes.”

It is understandable, he said, that certain associations were reticent to give support to Bouteflika’s particular formula—the parents of the victims of armed groups, wives of assassinated intellectuals, or families of the disappeared. Though some 100,000 died and about 4,000 disappeared during the seven years of civil war, it is hard for some to justify a reconciliation process that minimizes any legal accountability for those responsible—Islamists and the state both. “It is not so much a question of identifying guilty persons as recognizing that it was a political clash between two systems and how this is registered in the collective memory. The army, especially, is getting off easy.”

Though the military/political oligarchy has ceded to Bouteflika only a certain margin of independent decision making, the writer asserted, he is trying to use it to best advantage. At this point, Bouteflika's major problem is the population's expectations of economic relief and democratization. His first step was to publicly denounce the pervasive political and economic corruption in Algeria, specifically even declaring that the Algerian economy "has become the monopoly of ten or fifteen persons." But given the mafia-like dominance of the top-level military leaders in the economy, one can certainly wonder if any genuine reform efforts will be made. Nevertheless, twenty-two prefects were dismissed at the end of August because of their various acts of embezzlement.

However, the economic and social situation for ordinary Algerians, which greatly affected by the larger structural adjustment and the wheeling and dealing of the ruling class, continues to deteriorate. "Unemployment, slums, and epidemics are increasing while young people raised during the civil war demand jobs and housing, or dream of money and 'business.' Hopes for a lasting peace also depend on improving living conditions and the social climate. It's also important to remember that killings, attributed generally to the GIA, still go on, and violence still affects the life of the country."

In this context of working out peace, Bouteflika seeks, "for better or worse," to restore economic and diplomatic relations in North Africa (especially with Morocco) and beyond. "Domestic reforms and restoration of Algeria's image abroad: after the Civil Concord, the work is far from over."²¹

In the same issue, the above writer interviewed an exiled Algerian activist who militated for democracy and Algerian women's rights. The activist rejected the term "civil war" to describe what's happened in Algeria, since in reality it was a war against civilians. The great majority of Algerians were caught between the two forces. They were unarmed and committed no violence. In fact, the first massacre was in October 1988 with the harsh repression of student demonstrations. From their helicopters, the military even fired on people in the streets.

On the issue of pardons, she said, Algerian society is divided. During the referendum campaign, television coverage was entirely one-sided and no debate occurred. It is clear that families of those who disappeared after military arrests and the families of terrorist victims find it very hard to absolve those responsible. But it is also important to preserve an honest social memory. This is the purpose of the CNOT (National Committee against Forgetting and Treason), which brings together a number of associations. Based on the accounts of various Algerians, one can also be reasonably skeptical about the official figures on the number voting and the results of the referendum.

While the overall atmosphere has become less tense, she reported, everything remains to be done. Most Algerians still live in degraded conditions because of corruption, the violent conflict, and IMF-imposed

structural adjustments. Facing unemployment, the lack of enough housing to live separately, and the degradation of public education, young people are left with little sense of integration into “normal” social life. It will also be difficult to achieve changes in the status of women. Algerian feminists are especially anxious to repeal the Family Code that gives all rights to men at the expense of women. “Finally, whatever Bouteflika claims, political power remains under control of the military, and the transition to a democratic regime remains quite theoretical.”²²

A few months later, to gain better understanding of the evolving Algerian context, *Alternative Libertaire* interviewed Mohammed Harbi who it described as “a professor, former director of the FLN (until 1965), and animator of its *autogestion* current.” Harbi stated that the “Civil Concord” had broken down despite Bouteflika’s intentions. The first reason is that “one can’t construct reconciliation on impunity, be it of the state or the Islamist armed groups.” A second reason for its failure is that the regime failed to include political parties, associations, and other groups in its achievement. “An authoritarian solution from on high can only have limited results and there have been some. However, the problem remains and risks getting worse if one isn’t careful.”

As to the privatization trend, Harbi declared that political obstacles still remain. Bouteflika recently asserted that only enterprises were negotiable, not land. But, as in Russia, “it is not enough that the law separates the economy from the administration, the administration must accept the autonomy of the economy.” As well, except for Sonatrach, the state petrochemical company, almost all of the units that could be transferred to the private sector are presently bankrupt.

Furthermore, he said, according to a Union Bank director, privatization alone is not sufficient to arouse the interest of financial investors. What they want is also the elimination of bureaucratic constraints and access to the banking system. They want speculative, not productive investments. While there is interest in Sonatrach, there is strong resistance to foreign investment in that company within the regime.

“The Algerian left formerly dominated by statist is now in full disarray. Part of it has converted to neo-liberalism. Another part defends the public sector and democratic freedoms and opposes Bouteflika. Among the latter group are Trotskyists and repented Stalinists among others. So far, there has not been adequate critical revision by statist socialists and debate on self-management prospects. But it should be noted that the weight of the left is very reduced.”

There is no chance, he said, for major economic change without rebalancing the various economic sectors and redirecting investments accordingly. While living off its petroleum resources, Algeria “neglects agriculture, industry, and construction. It fails to protect its natural and

human resources. Daily problems exist with regards to water, jobs, health, and education." The working class is being torn apart by police violence, as at El Hadjar where workers demanded assurance that their wages would be paid. This has to stop. "The condition for change is political. The democratic process is paralyzed and only clearer consciousness about the stakes at play and the forces needed to deal with them will get it moving."²³

By summer 2001, *Alternative Libertaire* addressed the insurrection in Kabylia with a June 16 interview with Harbi. According to him, there were two important dynamics at play: the first, from the grassroots in Kabylia, concerned economic, social, and cultural issues. The second, at the top level of the regime, saw military opponents of Bouteflika trying to force him from power while Bouteflika's clan sought to frame the revolt as an ethnic issue, to thus forestall its spread to other areas of Algeria.

Actually, he said, the political vision of the insurrection was not clear, with many potential directions. As a populist movement, it expressed various social demands, but since their satisfaction was not forthcoming, there developed more of a political emphasis, but excluding political parties. The regime, in turn, will try to break up the movement, segment by segment. "It is important to see that there are no forces with democratic programs aside from the political parties."

Those who revolted the most, he said, are those youth most marginalized and separated from the war generation and from that of 1980 and 1988. Though students are also marginalized, with poor job prospects, they participated in demonstrations but not in pillage. "Their opposition is more related to political parties or the associations of civil society." Overall, women have been only a small minority of participants; while in the FFS demonstration there were many women, the assemblies movement has a different logic. Thus, women in the latter have remained separate, with their own demonstrations.

"The principal problem of Algerian political life" is the Islamist factor. They have a heavier potential impact on Algerian politics than the present agitation in Kabylia. Just because they're presently not as much in the forefront doesn't mean that they're defeated. They've maintained a guerrilla presence and, in the case of free elections, would show surprisingly strong support.

Though organizations of the far left try to intervene in Algerian politics, said Harbi, their impact is very limited aside from occasional public statements in the press. And there is no group today "openly and publicly posing the question of a socialist alternative."²⁴

Given the lukewarm attitude of Harbi here toward the Kabyle insurrection, the enthusiastic perspective in an article in the next issue was quite

striking. “The quasi-insurrectional movement in Kabylia includes elements that deserve our deep support. It’s not only solidarity on our part: we identify with its process, its mode of struggle, and its modernity in reinventing democracy.” It belongs to the tradition of direct democracy and autonomous self-management, “presently rediscovered under the name ‘citizens movement’ or ‘participatory democracy.’”

The article provided a detailed outline of the movement’s explicit commitment to anti-authoritarian and anti-bureaucratic orientation, structure, and process, as defined in decisions of July 12–13 (discussed extensively in further articles below). An article annex discussed the chosen means of struggle: nationwide non-violent grassroots pressure through marches, sit-ins, conferences, and so on; pressure through media publicity; legal efforts; and political influence through NGOs, immigrant communities abroad, and national and international opinion.

By its determined explicit political position, said the writers, the Kabyle movement has, in effect, responded to those Europeans who currently search for a way to renew democracy by responding to the issues of delegated power, voting, politics separated from policy, and citizen control. The fact that these perspectives emerged from traditional structures doesn’t at all detract from their most modern application. Even the feminization of this movement in certain towns—even marginally—was unimaginable some time ago.²⁵



Three years later, *Alternative Libertaire* discussed the issue of Le Pen’s surprising and disturbing second-place finish in the first round of French presidential elections in April 2002. While the mainstream press sought to explain it as the far right’s ability to produce a backlash working-class protest vote based on the politics of nationalism and fear, the article disputed this interpretation. The approximate 30 percent vote he received among the unemployed, for example, is the same percentage he received in France overall. What was significant was the high degree of abstention and non-registration. Thus, less than 15 percent of the eligible-to-vote unemployed actually voted for Le Pen.

Examining the evidence properly shows that “if workers and the unemployed actually voted no more for the Front Nationale than other social classes, the truth of this vote must be found not in social insecurity. And the answer is quickly discovered: it is very much racism, especially anti-semitism, anti-black racism, and—even more—anti-North African racism that, in France, is one of the most commonly shared traits—for historical reasons that it is time to examine.” (Interior Minister) Sarkozy’s proposed (immigration) law is based on this racism, though he uses euphemisms like “a feeling of insecurity” to disguise it.²⁶

Two months later, as another article described, the French government quickly adopted a restriction on foreign refugees' right to asylum. As one more barrier to immigration in Europe generally, it permits the government to establish a list of "safe" countries (like Algeria, Turkey, or Morocco?) from which no refugees will be accepted. Sarkozy's proposed law with more restrictions on immigrants will now be presented as well, and with apparently no resistance planned by Socialists in the national assembly. Said the writer, no doubt he will use the same "populist" appeals to "security" to justify the proposed restriction on family members joining those already in France, the elimination of the ten-year-resident card, and a supposed encouragement of assimilation policies while segregating foreigners in their own neighborhoods.

He pointed out that many groups, organizations, and trade unions have now joined in solidarity with undocumented workers (*les sans-papiers*) to protest this law. As well, by now, some 150 organizations and several thousand individuals have signed a public appeal for disobedience, claiming to have already assisted foreigners lacking proper documentation. This is especially important at this moment when some militants in this solidarity movement are being prosecuted and threatened with imprisonment for up to ten years.

Solidarity with immigrants and refugees is now more than ever important. "There can be no social advance without massive regularization and re-enforcement of the right of entry and residence, without concretely designing a way to open borders, with free circulation and settlement."²⁷

At the end of 2003, *Alternative Libertaire* writers commented on mid-November's Anarchist Social Forum in the Paris region as well as the mobilization against the G8 summit meeting in Evian in June. According to them, on these occasions, they were pleased to discover that though the several different French anarchist organizations "have different priorities and different sensibilities, they are not necessarily antagonistic. AL, FA, No Pasaran, OLS, CNT, OCL, CGA, we can build, little by little, confidence in each other and work on common projects, creating at the same time new conditions allowing for a healthy political debate between organizations."²⁸

An editorial one month later blasted the hypocrisy of French politicians, beginning with President Chirac, for wanting to pass a law against wearing religious symbols in public schools. Are they really motivated, as they claim, to be fighting against sexism and the oppression of young Muslim

girls? Though now posing as upholding the principles of secularism, these same people have always opposed consistent secularism, supporting as they do public funding of religious schools that continue to promote reactionary and irrational beliefs.

These politicians, stated the editors, have never spoken out against violence toward women at work or in the street, or against wearing the veil outside of school, or against forced marriages. “The state is just as adept in male chauvinism as private employers.” The gradual exclusion of women from advancing in the realms where they are the majority, as in finances and national education, demonstrates the lack of concern with gender equality.

The proposed law, said the editorial, has nothing to do with secularism. Rather, it’s a gimmick to play on the fears of those who are opposed to dialogue and getting along together. In fact, “it’s the negation of the secular principle that requires that schools be open to all children regardless of their origin, or religion if they have one.” To be laic, it is not enough to promote literacy and oppose religious dogma; it is also to oppose the barriers to equality and critical thinking still existing in the schools.

For anarchists, “education should lead to the flourishing of the individual, to his or her autonomy, to the development of a critical sense. To achieve these objectives, we must break with religions as much as capitalism. No law, no religion. No God, no master, more than ever.”²⁹

In late 2004, another editorial made a firm link between the long-developing racism and political culture of fear encouraged by the right in France and similar developments post-9/11 in the United States and elsewhere. “One can’t repeat it enough: September 11th constituted a true windfall for most political leaders on the planet. In effect, it allowed supposedly liberal democracies to accept without much opposition measures leading to major and lasting erosions of freedoms in the name of anti-terrorism.... Fear, under the guise of security, is the primary motivation of those who support Bush, and the priority item in the Republican program to gain a new mandate for the White House.”

Likewise, in the present context, it said, the French government has decided to introduce more laws for domestic security while also “stigmatizing certain parts of the population with the law concerning the veil and the ‘debate’ on European integration of Turkey.” Following the lead of the Front National in the ’80s and ’90s, now it’s the parties of the right, as well as some leaders of the Socialist party, who use the same methods to consolidate their power.³⁰

On the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of the Algerian national liberation revolution, the journal ran a detailed review of the present context of

Algerian politics. "Immersed for ten years in terror launched by religious fundamentalism (nearly 200,000 victims) attempting to install an Islamic autocracy, Algerians since April 2001 have begun an insurrection against the political regime, which was produced by the mock 'pluralist and democratic' elections of April 1999 that brought Bouteflika, the candidate of the army and the sole one still running, to the presidency of the republic." This regime, "composed of a coalition of clans of which the army is the vertebral column," renewed itself with a pretend plebiscite on April 8, 2004. It is committed above all to preserving its own privileges and "scarcely attempts to hide its mafia-like practices." It declares its allegiance to neo-liberal economics and to a "nationalist-Islamic ideology."

At the international level, said the article, it gives the state a democratic image and the economy an allure of modernization responsive to neo-liberal expectations. Thus it gains legitimacy and support from the West, especially the United States and France. The former wants to extend its control over North Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia so as to enhance its geo-strategic interests generally, but especially in the energy realm where Algerian oil is a major prize. France, in turn, wants to keep or regain its privileged relationship with Algeria, especially through military agreements.

Domestically, "through applying a subtle strategy of 'pacification,' the alliance around the president intends to take control of all of Algerian society, by every means, even at the risk of tarnishing its democratic image, which it cultivates for the gallery of its foreign clientele tempted by the petroleum reserves." A first step in this process is "above all to destroy the unprecedented grassroots citizen and social movement opposing it and to lock up the rare spaces of freedom and open expression, dearly paid for and with great difficulty by civil society since the national insurrection of 1988. This task is made easier by maintaining the state of emergency and its accompanying laws, while at the same time the alliance in power continues to maintain and skillfully make use of what it calls the 'residual' terrorism."

Whole sectors of Algerian society, said the writers, impoverished by the regime's anti-social policies and "still traumatized by the unmerciful war led by armed religious fundamentalism have rebelled against the freedom-killing regime of Bouteflika ever since his first election. Spontaneously grouped into autonomous committees, first in Kabylia, they made up what is called the *aarch* movement. From the ground up, horizontal structures formed in assemblies of neighborhoods, communes, and villages, and federated themselves at the level of *wilayas*, which in turn also coordinated together." The El Kseur platform set forth minimum demands, and all delegates from the assemblies had to swear to uphold them.

Within several months, the writers said, this opposition movement spread throughout Algeria—in the center at Algiers and Boumerdès, in the east at Khenchela and Bordj Bou Arréridj in the Aurès, in the south at

Ouargla and Djelfa, and in the west at Chlef and Aïn Defla. Certain sectors of workers were affected, especially in education and health services, and the movement “revitalized social protest, which until then had been suppressed out of concern for surviving the time of terror.” Over these past three years, a completely new network of organization has thus emerged and “experimented with a form of direct democracy.” This is the base from which thousands now express their refusal to bow before the authoritarianism, corruption, and social repression practiced by the mafia state. This is a state that denied “their cultural rights, their mother language, their dignity, and all justice.” Using passive resistance, civil disobedience, and insurrection, this movement seeks the recognition and re-conquest of the people’s social, economic, linguistic, and cultural rights.

But Bouteflika’s regime, they said, has sought to destroy this movement and prevent its spread through the use of ideological and repressive means, as with the police, the courts, the administration, and the media. Thus, grassroots demonstrations in Kabylia were savagely repressed with some 126 killed since 2001. Demonstrators and delegates were arrested and imprisoned in Kabylia, the Aurès, and in the south. As well, efforts have been made to create internal divisions, to use the popular upheaval for partisan gains, and to infiltrate the movement with police informers.

Just one month after his 2004 “election,” said the writers, Bouteflika began a crackdown on the press and other realms by reactivating repressive measures introduced to the penal code in 2001. During the spring and summer, the regime moved to a more intense level. Certain “key institutions that had not yet been brought under control (such as the army, judiciary, the FLN, administrators of public services, national enterprises, and economic chambers) were purged, discretely but surely, of their elements judged to be undesirable or unreliable, and replaced by those faithful of the clans linked to the regime.” At the same time, the government resumed its “national reconciliation” policy and alliance with the so-called moderate Islamism of the MSP.

Following these measures and the self-destruction of the large opposition parties, they said, the top priority was to eliminate the independent press and cut off all dissident voices. It was in this context that Mohamed Benchicou, editor of the newspaper *Le Matin* and author of a critical biography of Bouteflika,³¹ was given a two-year prison term for a fictitious illegality. As well, the newspaper property was seized and sold by the government, thus killing the journal. *Le Matin* had provided a rare voice for the citizens and social movements and had revealed the torture policy of the government (especially in Tkout), the corruption of Bouteflika’s close associates, and the determined prosecution of Ghouli Hafnaoui, a militant human rights journalist who was condemned to eight months imprisonment. “Benchicou was right when he told his judges, ‘This trial is not my

trial, but that of free speech!’ His prison term, and that of Ghoul Hafnaoui, and the planned death of *Le Matin* is a new (but not the last) blow against the militants of freedom in Algeria.”³² These two journalists this summer join approximately a hundred delegates from Kabylia, twenty-two from Batna, and nine from Ouargla among the current citizens movement in Algerian jails.³³

In the same issue of *Alternative Libertaire*, another article reviewed the background of French colonization and development of the Algerian nationalist movement preceding the armed launch of the independence struggle on November 1, 1954. In France, the FCL supported the insurrection from the beginning. Its newspaper, *Le Libertaire*, informed readers in every issue, and, because of its contact with the MLNA anarchists in Algeria, the FCL was among the very first to report on and denounce torture by the French.³⁴

One month later, the December 2004 issue reported on the recent seventh congress of *Alternative Libertaire*. In preparation for this gathering, the *Alternative Libertaire* journal had reported that the past two years had seen significant organizational growth, with new groups created or expanded throughout the country.³⁵ About eighty delegates attended the three-day congress. (According to Pucciarelli in 1999, the *Alternative Libertaire* journal printed a bit more than 1000 copies of each issue and had about 400 subscribers. The organization itself had about 130 members.³⁶ Seven to 9 years later, membership had increased to between 200 and 300, with a periodical print run up to 7,800, from 4,000 in 2002.³⁷)

Among major concerns of the congress, according to the report, were the regression and discouragement of French social movements over the past five years, especially since the defeat of the large strike wave of May–June 2003, the multiplication of ephemeral small collectives and networks, and the lack of a strong autonomous social movement platform. At the international level, the congress critiqued the “re-colonization” of the world by Western imperialisms but also spoke of the *altermondialiste* counter-movement and its successes of confrontation at Seattle in 1999, Prague in 2000, and Genoa in 2001. Again, it is weakened by the lack of a clear program of “an alternative world” and also by its very weak class dimension.

The congress also took note of hopefully better relations among French anarchist organizations. “The traditional ostracism between anarchist organizations has virtually evaporated in the space of several years.” Working on common projects, like the G8 opposition and the Anarchist Social

Forum, has established more mutual respect. “Structurally, what brings us closer is more important than what keeps us divided and, if our cultures and strategic priorities can be different, we have everything to gain by co-operating in a certain number of realms.” Representatives of the *Fédération Anarchiste* and the CGA attended the congress as observers and the OLS and anarchists from Lyon sent greetings.³⁸

An editorial in late 2005 called attention to the increasing nature of repressive control by the French government. Sarkozy’s proclamation that security takes precedence over freedom should be taken seriously as the actual practice of a state that increasingly takes on “the basics and forms of an authoritarian regime.” Using the excuse of an anti-terrorist struggle, “we are witnessing here as in the United States a veritable hold-up of freedoms. In effect, the minority that governs is moving to concentrate in its hands more and more power, increasingly uncontrollable and relying more and more on a police force acting like a mafia.”

All those who contest the dictatorship of capital with direct action are increasingly defined as domestic enemies. “With raids in Paris and the working-class suburbs, just as with the nearly-systematic intervention of police in strikes, the development of video-surveillance in the cities, repression and control are now moving to another level, a level of mass repression. In fact, the state of laws is confused more and more with the state of emergency. We are already quite close to the totalitarian universe described in Orwell’s *1984*.” And the silence of the main political parties and trade unions “gives the impression that they live on a different planet.”³⁹

One month later, in December 2005, the journal ran a lengthy article on the extensive riots in France largely by young people of immigrant descent, beginning with the accidental electrocution of two youths in the Parisian suburb of Clichy-sous-Bois. Having attempted to hide from police harassment, said the report, the youths who died symbolized in drastic form the typical persecution of immigrant youth in working-class ghettos. Their deaths set off insurgencies in the immediate suburb, but then spread throughout the Paris region and then throughout France in similar neighborhoods. “This spontaneous rage, this rebellion carried out by not only ‘youth’ but more generally those who live in these quarters of social banishment, is legitimate.”

As said many times, explained the article, the anti-social policies of the government over past decades have dramatic impacts on residents of these neighborhoods. Inadequate welfare subsidies only delay the inevitable explosion. Immigrant labor from areas of French African colonies in the 1960s became a great reservoir of docile, non-unionized, unskilled workers

for the French economy. The grandchildren of these immigrants are now all the more vulnerable since they are largely excluded from the labor market or have quite precarious short-range jobs. Forced to live away from middle-class city centers since they are generally distrusted, they are relegated to segregated enclaves where their misery can be hidden from others.

Said the writers, various laws passed since 2001 have significantly increased police and judicial repressive powers and potential illegalities. The grossest example of the latter is the new law against assembling in the halls of a building. As if this wasn't enough, "the martial language tainted with neo-colonialism used by politicians is totally irresponsible, but carefully chosen to cause a reaction among the directly targeted population, thus justifying a policy of absolute firmness. The neighborhoods are 'territories to re-conquer' and young people are 'scum' and, icing on the cake, all of this is the fault of 'polygamy.'"

In this context, the writers emphasized, the government has chosen to apply a state of emergency law first used in 1955 to control Algerians in France during the Algerian war and later, in 1985, to repress the Kanak people during their revolt in New Caledonia. The law now applies to everybody throughout France and can be used to censor the press, ban public meetings and demonstrations, and give unlimited power to the police.

These three weeks of rebellion are added to the situation of a growing social insecurity in France generally. Thus, they said, it is obviously important to move from burning cars to a joint political movement of confrontation. We are all in the same class of those who work and those who want jobs. We must mobilize to end the state of emergency and police violence. But instead of returning to the status quo, which is actually impossible given capitalism's authoritarian momentum, we must demand justice and social and economic equality through a redistribution of jobs and wealth. As sociologist Saïd Bouamama has said, instead of seeking internal explanations for the behaviors and violence of youth, we must examine the economic, social, and cultural foundations of this society and underline the need for its overall transformation.⁴⁰

Another article in the same issue called attention to the fact that the French right, as personified by Sarkozy, has now taken over the rhetoric of the far right of Le Pen. In effect, said the writers, Le Pen won the 2002 election despite Chirac's electoral victory. The colonial-type management of the working-class immigrant neighborhoods, the round-ups of the undocumented, the intensified expulsions, the use of the state of emergency regime, and the stigmatization of immigrant families show the overall repressive and racist orientation of the state.

With the recent urban riots, they said, Sarkozy refers to rebellious youth as "scum" who need to be "cleansed" from the neighborhoods. And he prides himself on being the first to declare that integration into French

society is dead. The Socialist left is also to blame with its support of institutionalized racism in its emphasis on a domestic security state, beginning in 1997. The use of a state of emergency law created during the Algerian war says a lot symbolically. On top of these words and measures, the government passed a law last February that demanded that French school curricula now must recognize “the positive role of the French [colonial] presence overseas, especially in North Africa.”⁴¹

The January 2006 issue of *Alternative Libertaire* examined the reactionary offensive in France concerning the colonial past. The year 2005, it said, saw the February law praising the virtues of colonization, the highly publicized commemorative monuments for the OAS and the assassins of the Algerian war, and the re-introduction of the state of emergency law initially applied from 1955 to 1962. “Behind the pseudo wish to speak about the entire colonial past, the true motivation for a part of the right is to rehabilitate a fully approved colonization.” Instead of recalling the domination and pillage of colonized peoples, these rightists wish to impress their own interpretation on a population suffering from historical amnesia.

This amnesia is not at all innocent, said the article, when one looks at the contradiction between the motivations and realities of colonialism and the supposed republican ideals. “Liberty for whites, equality for *colons*, and fraternity for bosses.” While the official ideology provided leverage for national liberation of colonized peoples, the takeover of independent states by new bourgeois elites linked to the old colonizers has produced politics opposed to the interests of the populations concerned. “It is good to remember that in the case of the French colonial system, domination was based on a ‘civilizing’ justification, which in reality was merely a racist placebo stamped on an effort at economic exploitation, the subjugation of peoples based on a permanent state of emergency law.”⁴²

In March, an article announced that the government decided to eliminate from the February 2005 law the brief passage from Article 4 calling on schools to teach about the positive role of the French colonial presence. At the same time, also in an effort to reverse its reactionary image, the government announced a plan to commemorate in May the abolition of slavery. As a result, part of the opposition retreated and the demonstration planned for late February was called off.

For this deceitful media game, the article said, we should thank the Socialists. They claimed a victory, but in fact part of the retained law will now award state compensation to former members of the OAS among others.⁴³

In October 2009, *Alternative Libertaire* ran a short critical book review of a work on “the Islamic impasse,” published by the Fédération Anarchiste’s Éditions Libertaires. While acknowledging the worth of the publisher’s usual offerings, the review stated that this time they knew that it might be a hard sell since they sent a special appeal to anarchist bookstores for support. When most, including *Alternative Libertaire*, refused to carry it, the publisher sent a circular letter bitterly accusing them of being under Marxist influence. But in fact, this is a confusing book and prefaced by a “Gaullist of the left,” Michel Onfray.⁴⁴

Of course, *Alternative Libertaire* “has no problem in criticizing religious alienation.” But it is not productive to attack just one religion, Islam, and to fail to account for class relations. The book is “idealist and Islamophobic, suffering from three problems.” It uses an erudite lyrical form of essay instead of what it calls heavy analysis and hides behind the social-Sarkozyite Fadela Amara. The book’s vision relies on “conceptual abstractions to the detriment of a materialist analysis.” And it makes sacred the West and modernity, as in its preference for leaders like the authoritarian Mustapha Kemal.

The problem is more Islamism than Islam, thus political, not cultural. “*Alternative Libertaire* defends a rational and scientific approach as opposed to the irrationality of existing systems of domination, but one can’t keep individuals from forming groups on the basis of religion as long as they do so without coercion. But the author, like De Villiers,⁴⁵ equates Islam, Islamism, and terrorism.”

Instead of this celebration of a fantasized West, said the review, more serious studies are those by Georges Corm, François Burgat, and Olivier Roy. “No doubt it is because of this fantasized and a-historical vision that the author has opportunely forgotten to mention the defects—genocides, imperialist wars, and capitalist destruction of societies and the planet. These are the quite genuine demonstrations of ‘Western modernity.’”⁴⁶

With the growing grassroots riots and demonstrations against the Algerian government at all levels in early 2011, two articles analyzed the nature of the upheaval and its possibilities of greater impact. The first writer, in a February article, reminded readers that Algeria had already experienced a cycle of repressed popular revolts. “Between a rigid regime and a dispersed opposition, calls for enlarging the mobilization have failed to politically transform the legitimacy of the revolt into social rupture.” Already in 2010, he said, Algeria had experienced thousands of riots. But the week of January 5–9, 2011 was especially bloody. The official government explanation was a hike in the prices of basic foodstuffs, such as olive oil and sugar. “The unofficial reason was frustration with Bouteflika’s authoritarian regime,

which henceforth sought appeasement by announcing its efforts to adjust consumer prices.” The promise to eliminate taxes on such goods is actually an effort to evade accountability for “endemic unemployment, the scarcity of lodgings, government favoritism, and lack of freedom [which have] worn down Algerian society for decades. To speak of sugar riots, as the regime does, is to depoliticize a grassroots revolt incarnated in the most marginalized of Algerian youth in the large cities and in Kabylia, going beyond the usual divisions of identity.”

In fact, he said, the greed of transnational capitalism and the Algerian state have provoked a kind of insurrectionary atmosphere reminiscent of October 1988. “Algiers hasn’t seen a situation as tense since the general strike order called by the FIS in June 1991.” While some opposition parties have denounced the repression and called for reforms, such as ending the state of emergency, there are few to back strong actions.

He pointed out that a protest march by university students in Bejaïa, Kabylia, in mid-January went rather well, but despite poor job prospects, usually Algerian students don’t get into confrontations. “One must point out that Algerian universities are controlled by student associations close to the regime.” Also, in contrast with Tunisia, the army is bound tightly with Algerian rulers.⁴⁷

The second article, one month later, sought to explain why the mounting wave of confrontations had not produced the same downfall of the regime as in neighboring Tunisia. Though economic and social conditions are quite similar at the grassroots level, in fact, said the writer, Algeria is quite rich because of its revenues from natural gas and oil. No longer in debt internationally, the country actually has \$150 billion in reserves. “But this wealth is not redistributed, instead it’s diverted to the benefit of different clans in the regime, as well as toward investment in huge projects. But the generalized corruption and incapacity of a highly centralized administration—a Soviet and French legacy—greatly inflates project costs and leaves them inoperative.” Furthermore, subcontracting to foreign firms reduces job and economic benefits for Algerians. As well, the separate black market economy (about one third of the total) also debilitates economic growth.

The regime knows how to use social divisions to its advantage, said the writer, as with the minimum wage and the salaries for public officials, which fluctuate by the cycles of riots and strikes. “Daily life is unbearable—water and electricity cutoffs, almost no road repairs. In frustration, the population seeks to join the patronage system that exists everywhere, but this just reinforces the country’s tensions. A mosaic of peoples, revengeful Salafists, a hard-line military, confiscated wealth—there are so many explanations for why the same clique has remained in power for fifty years.”

He pointed out that nearly every Algerian family has lost a son or brother at the hands of the army or Islamists in the civil war of a decade ago.

While most of the Arab population is grateful to Bouteflika for bringing peace, there is “deep resentment against the Salafists and ambiguous feelings toward the regime.”

He claimed that, though January’s riots were described as “spontaneous and popular,” in fact “some of the most violent rioters were manipulated by the mafia clans [of the regime] or the local military.” The National Coordination for Change and Democracy (CNCD) was organized right after the riots by the human rights league (LADDH), the RCD party, autonomous trade unions, student collectives, and the organization of families of those who “disappeared.” They asked for democratic changes, including lifting the state of emergency and removing the hated prime minister, but did not demand the fall of Bouteflika. The working class is not preoccupied with the Islamist question, believing that religion is a private matter and rejecting political Islamism. As well, the Islamists have not showed up in numbers at demonstrations and have not dared to pose their usual slogans. Also, some military figures of the Algerian Movement of Free Officers (MAOL) have condemned the repression and demanded an end to the regime.

The planned Algiers protest march of February 12, he reported, was prevented by the police. Many who wanted to be part of it were blocked from entering the city. “Repression was especially ferocious toward women and the Association for the Disappeared was targeted. About twenty pro-Bouteflika persons tried numerous provocations, threatening several times to cause a generalized free-for-all. But the police didn’t budge.”

Though Algerians, he observed, would like to depose the present authoritarian and corrupt regime, those who keep the country’s wealth for themselves, working peoples are divided among themselves, socially, ethically, and politically. “The government knows how to play these cards of divisions to perfection and how to buy social peace. And if that doesn’t work, it will repress through violence or terror. Let us support their demands for basic freedoms, for the lifting of the state of emergency, for social justice, and for redistribution of the wealth.”⁴⁸

OCL

THE OCL WAS CONSISTENTLY THE THIRD LARGEST FRENCH (non-syndicalist) anarchist organization during the first decade of the 21st century. It was also more decentralized than the *Fédération Anarchiste* and *Alternative Libertaire*. According to one of its well-known militants, it rejects both the synthesis and platformist models, finding itself somewhat in between “a specific political organization and the dilution of its members in movements. This back-and-forth between two positions might seem contradictory and is often seen as a weakness of the OCL, but it is also its originality, if not its strength: a capacity of analysis and intervention in

movements and a relative homogeneity of its membership on content (compared at least to other anarchist organizations).⁴⁹ (As of 1999, according to Pucciarelli, OCL's journal, *Courant Alternatif*, published 2,400 copies of each issue and had about 400 subscribers.⁵⁰)

In October 2001, in a special issue of its journal, OCL responded to the appeal (led by anarchists of the Fédération Anarchiste and signed by over 400 by September) to have a joint meeting of French anarchists to begin exploring potentials for greater unity,⁵¹ as they'd gained a greater role and more attention in France but were persistently weak in influence because of organizational divisions. It sought not to abandon existing groups but to transcend them in some sort of broader alliance. Because OCL's several responses to this appeal identified what it saw as fundamental differences and commonalities and addressed the issue of its own organizational identity and form, it is useful to include excerpts here to better clarify the distinct nature of the OCL.

The longest response was by "Jeff" of Paris who had recently left the OCL but whose perspective and critique seemed to well synthesize the various articles of this issue. He began by criticizing a number of propositions in the appeal, such as an alleged greater extent of overall anarchist presence and influence or a supposed agreement on fundamentals among anarchists. He also critiqued the notion of a common meaningful strategy to replace the former romantic hope for a great revolution or even the possibility of common analyses of particular issues, such as the war in Kosovo and national liberation struggles. In fact, he said, there still remain important differences of orientation, priorities, practices, and concepts of intervention that continue to prevent effective common action on a number of contemporary issues.

He did concede that usually French anarchists decide to join one particular organization instead of another primarily because of its geographical presence or because of personal friendships. He also acknowledged that sometimes a sense of organizational competition prevents common actions.

He then examined the possibilities for greater unity. He found it encouraging that so many had signed the appeal, including members of different groups as well as unaffiliated individuals. And he welcomed the potential for sane public debate within the movement on political differences without deteriorating into name-calling and negativism. Instead of the old dichotomy of synthesis (federalist but without effective action) and platformism (more focused efficiency but also more disciplinary), the movement should seek an approach that uses its pluralist diversity for greater overall coherence and strength. This would acknowledge not only the diversity of anarchist formations, but also the multiplicity of identities in individuals and in the social movement more generally. Practical thematic research and related strategic elaboration, pursued jointly, would have the advantage of developing trust and solidarity, as well as richer content. However, even the

authors of the appeal recognized that this process of moving toward more unity would demand at least several years.

Actually, he said, on various occasions in the past few years, the OCL sought to develop common anarchist propaganda and actions, separate from the far left. But this was generally rejected by other organizations. It is essential that any joint political strategy be outside of, and hopefully opposed to, any form of statist politics, established institutions, reformism, or reliance on the media, clearly directed toward rebellion, social subversion, and transformative social revolution. Important questions to clarify would include overall perspectives as well as views on specific contexts concerning anti-fascism, national liberation struggles, “concrete utopias” (alternatives like squats, free schools, and trade unions), as well as issues of anarchist organization and behavior.

“Between the total splintering of the anarchist movement that we currently witness and the naïve hope for a large inclusive house for everyone, there is room to attempt something that places the anarchist project back into its global dimension, its plurality of expression and its necessary coherence. Without illusion or excessive doubt, I think this attempt is worth the effort.”⁵²

Another article in the same issue specifically responded to a pamphlet of January 2001 (“Unité pour un mouvement libertaire,” by Jean-Marc Raynaud) that preceded the published appeal that gained hundreds of signatures. Because the pamphlet set forth a sense of the potentials and objectives of this effort, the writer concentrated on a critique of this text in particular.

Said the writer, the pamphlet asserted that the divisions among anarchists are actually fictitious, that this can be jointly recognized through mutual discussion and analysis, that the unified and updated social anarchism of the 21st century would abandon the notion of transformative social revolution in favor of immersion in concrete social movements—that anarchist unity would then allow unity with other anti-authoritarians who share similar perspectives and that this is the only way the anarchist movement can have a significant impact on current efforts at social change.

Basically, “this text is an appeal for the unity of non-revolutionary anarchists to achieve an alliance with non-revolutionary non-anarchists in order to bring about the anarchist project.” The text calls for an anarchist plan for a future society free from oppression, but to encourage an advance plan is to endorse the idea of an avant-garde, “a privileged elite that makes plans,” instead of leaving that to the people who will be called upon to construct the new society. It seeks a unity through anarchists at the base of organizations rather than of the organizations themselves, because there is too much self-protected egoistic baggage with the latter. It rejects not only the OCL and CNT as political organizations, but also the anarcho-syndicalist and anarchist-communist orientations themselves.

This caricatured vision of anarchists “is a vision that originated in bourgeois culture and that portrays anarchists as blood-thirsty persons who want to burn everything up and destroy everything. This image, even if it exists and sometimes is used in anarchist propaganda, absolutely does not represent today’s anarchist; it is an image from a century ago.”

As well, he said, the text suggests that effective influence of the anarchist movement will depend on its numbers. But this “is to measure this movement according to the model of bourgeois political organization: political parties and trade unions that derive their truth (their legitimacy) from their size. This is the system of representativity. Anarchism can and does function by a different mode that should be questioned.” But the anarchist ideal comes from our practice today, not from some future vision. This is why anarchists support *sans-papiers* and other non-anarchists who are exploited. And this is why “the effectiveness of the anarchist movement cannot be reduced to the visibility or number of its members, but rather to the influence of anarchist ideas on anarchists themselves and in society generally, by individual and collective actions that cannot be labeled as anarchist or non-anarchist.”

Overall, “this text shows the deficiency of anarchist thought, the lack of analytical tools. Even if the author has no lack of good sentiment, good will, and good intentions, the result can only be the product of the tools employed: an outdated idealism...an abandonment, a retreat...a realignment of anarchist discourse, a bridge to reformist currents and a desire to collaborate with and integrate into an increasingly marginal realm.”⁵³

The next piece in this special issue was a synthesis of the ongoing OCL discussion of the appeal, as of May 2001. Despite the fact that most attempts at unity in the revolutionary movement, it said, end up causing more divisions than before, OCL welcomes the opportunity to engage in deeper reflection and debate among anarchists.

It is important for healthy growth and progress to test individual and group ideas and analyses with others who differ, rather than to recite one’s own perspective among those who already agree and thus develop sectarianism and sclerosis of the movement in non-revolutionary times.

OCL believes that to use the term “anarchist movement” is not correct since there are too many differences in political positions, goals, and actions to constitute a movement. Additionally, even the term “anarchist” is now too ambiguous and never defined in the appeal. “The label of ‘anarchist’ changes according to whether the historical moment is a period of intensive struggles or social regression. One could thus move from an enlarging of revolutionary anarchism to include anti-authoritarian components in the realm of social change, from the development of class struggle to a collection of people defending a sort of cultural identity, or a lifestyle, articulated around a concept of freedom quite vague and often synonymous with liberal.”

There is also, said the article, an important distinction between those who are engaged politically and those who are simply “anarchists at heart.” Additionally, while the old formulation of three anarchist branches—individualist, anarchist-communist, and anarcho-syndicalist—is now outdated, a more fundamental distinction is between those who aspire to a sort of cultural free space and those who are committed to a radical, not “realist,” transformation of society through class struggle and revolution.

The first group, it explained, a sort of bohemian or liberal anarchism, emanates from certain sectors of the bourgeoisie and wishes to emulate the lifestyle of the '70s—with free relationships, organic food, green tourism, alternative health care, and the like. If capitalism “with a human face” is able to allow this free space, it is enough, since capitalism itself seems inevitable. Daily life becomes integrated into the capitalist order and one is thus easily led to support NATO’s “defense of Western democracy,” republican values of laicism and good citizenship, and ultimately a pretend-radical reformism at the sides of social democrats.

Incorporating lifestyle anarchists or “anarchists at heart” into a large organization, it said, would lead only to “practical inertia and theoretical paralysis.” Likewise, to supposedly bring anarchism up to date through new participatory schemes and reforms acceptable to capitalist society is an unviable dead end.

Attempts have been made in recent years, it said, toward some forms of anarchist unity on specific issues and in specific locales. OCL will continue to make these attempts. Examples of some temporary success were for the Kanak national independence struggle in the '80s (CLA, Anarchist Anti-Imperialist Coordination) and anti-G7 action in 1996, but these did not last. OCL has sought similar coordinated actions, as with last year’s world women’s march, but this failed. There are many examples in which various anarchist groups have each participated in the same social struggles, as concerning the *sans-papiers* or against nuclear plants, without having any degree of unity.

The reason for this, it explained, is that there are genuine political differences that have implications in the realms of struggle. In effect, some give priority to working with or within institutional structures, while others, including OCL members, wish to develop autonomous structures of rupture vis-à-vis capital and the state. These real differences show up not only in times of social struggle but also in daily life. Thus, some accept becoming trade union officials and therefore a role in existing social regulation. Others refuse this delegation of power and the *co-gestion* and bureaucratization involved. The same sort of division is seen concerning elections where some rationalize their participation as some form of direct citizen control of capitalism.

While we continue to see possibilities of circumstantial and short-term alliances, depending on the context, “we are quite critical of every

organizational form that seeks to reduce debates in constant search of minimal consensus. For unanimity makes us scared, and we prefer having several organizations instead of one.”⁵⁴

This same theme of OCL wishing to avoid having a single anarchist organization that attempts to include all anarchists or to impose its political line on everyone else was repeated in another article discussing in detail the synthesis versus platformist historical evolution and debate. According to the writer, each of these elitist orientations, both emerging in periods of defeat or retreat, seeks to dominate the movement either through the claim to a more pure form of anarchist morality or through a self-proclaimed role as revolutionary avant-garde. Since the end of the '70s, he said, the OCL has defined itself as only one of several places within the movement: “It restores the role of a revolutionary organization to agitating, proposing, and initiating, but neither as guide nor avant-garde.”⁵⁵

The OCL analyses set forth in the above special issue were tested in practice at the time of the 2002 French presidential election when, according to the OCL, “the near totality of anarchist organizations were caught up in inter-class anti-fascism by appealing for people to vote for Chirac against Le Pen. Thus, anarchists and leftists allowed the bourgeoisie to strengthen its domination and to re-start its class offensive by promoting democratic and civic illusions of ‘capitalism with a human face’ and by leaving even more in disarray a social movement already in need of repair.”

At the same time, OCL was still open to close collaboration with other anarchists of similar orientation, as, in 2003, with a new group, Offensive Libertaire and Sociale (OLS, Anarchist and Social Offensive), which emerged from radical anti-fascism and with similar analyses and strategies to OCL's. Joint publications and meetings allowed for mutual discussions, joint intervention in struggles “according to a same concern with political autonomy and social liberation, and to move toward development of a tested theory and anarchist communist and revolutionary practice forever reinvented.”⁵⁶

A 2007 statement by OCL clearly outlined its own self-definition, its structure, and its ongoing operation. “The OCL is not a party, in that we do not consider ourselves a vanguard that should lead struggles.” Because we believe that “the means determine the ends,” OCL experiments with new forms of individual and group relations according to radical and anarchist principles: “direct democracy (the rejection of delegating power), general assemblies and collectivism, self-management and decentralization. Everything is done on a militant, voluntary basis, with no permanent or salaried workers of any sort.” Because each local OCL group is autonomous, each can determine on its own who can be a member.

Local groups, it said, can produce their own newspapers and publicity and define their own positions, but the latter rarely conflict within the national organization because of the continuing opportunities for mutual

discussion, mainly though direct verbal exchanges, and the lack of any central organizational structure to take over. This process “also avoids the power of professional writers and motion-makers” and is made possible partly because the OCL is so small—sixty some militants and twenty towns.⁵⁷ OCL tries to participate in all of the significant social movements in contemporary France (economic, anti-patriarchy, immigration issues, anti-nuclear, etc.) with the aim of reinforcing the autonomy of each movement. It also rejects any alliance with the “left of the left.”⁵⁸



Courant Alternatif began its Algerian coverage of the Bouteflika years with an article shortly after his “election” as president in April 1999. For several months, it said, the regime was in a situation of crisis. The generals had allocated the most lucrative sectors of the economy for their own profit, but this, in turn, created increasing competition within the ruling circles, as shown in the constant shifting of official posts and the use of different parts of the press to undermine rivals. But a “theatrical coup” occurred the previous October when, without warning, the existing president, General Zeroual, announced his retirement on television. Zeroual himself had been elected several years earlier through massive fraud.

To attempt to preserve its legitimacy, said the writer Gérard Lamari, the ruling circles “pulled out of their hat” a so-called “man of consensus,” Abdelaziz Bouteflika, who had been foreign affairs minister throughout the Boumédiène years but lost out in his bid to succeed him in 1979. During his time at that high post under Boumédiène, Bouteflika was able to amass an immense personal fortune through corrupt dealings. Before being charged for corruption by an Algerian audit court⁵⁹ (after Chadli took power) and denounced by the regime’s *El Moudjahid* newspaper, he exiled himself to the Gulf countries and remained there for several years. Only in office as president since the spring, he invited the king of Saudi Arabia to be his first official guest.

“The political pendulum of the Algerian ruling circles can move from one extreme to another.” This is easily illustrated by comparing two quotations from Bouteflika himself. In 1976, when the proposed national charter was under discussion, he said, “The deeply socialist choice of Algeria is an irreversible option.” But recently, he claimed that economic liberalism itself is “irreversible.” Even Thatcher would not have gone so far. But this new political line was a hallmark of his presidential campaign, promising a restructuring of foreign debt and the privatization of failing national enterprises.

In Kabylia, said the writer, he showed unbelievable arrogance toward Berber culture, telling people that they needed to Arabize, and he became enraged and personally threatening—like a psychopath—when MCB

(Berber Cultural Movement) militants displayed a reference to the earlier court charges against him.

All six candidates opposing Bouteflika in the presidential election withdrew, he said, because of what they saw as massive fraud, contesting not only the legitimacy of the election but also Bouteflika's mandate itself. Though of very different and opposing ideologies, they came together to issue a manifesto against "the totalitarian order." However, they said nothing about the deep issues for women, freedom of religion, problems in education, or Berber culture. What they asked for is thus even below the minimum of what might normally be expected for a democratic system. Meanwhile, rumors circulate that the RCD, a party mainly of Kabyles that entered no candidate, will be invited to participate in the new government.

Thus, he stated, two camps are facing off: a weakened military regime attempting to prolong its rule with patchwork and "an influential and very assertive opposition but with a limited agenda, as demonstrated by the manifesto." However, a "very rich but shattered" movement of other independent groupings offers a third alternative, like the MCB or far left. This includes autonomous unions like SATEF (for primary and secondary teachers) and CNES (for higher education teachers) and the women's movement (like TNT [The Call of the Woman]), which has a great mobilizing potential.

Unfortunately, he pointed out, the local and foreign media have not covered such groups, even when they organized a full-year boycott of school [in Kabylia], a gathering of 300,000 before the National Assembly, and blocked roads in demonstrations in different cities, including Algiers.

For the moment, he said, such groups seem unable to link up together and form a stronger third force, given the safety issues for militants. Adding to this difficulty is the continuing presence of the GIA that is thus "an objective ally of the regime." In any case, "life will be revived in Algeria only with a grouping around this democratic pole."⁶⁰

The same writer, nine months later, published an article on Bouteflika's Civil Concord law. Last July, said the article, the proposed law was published in the government's official journal. After his fraudulent election, Bouteflika chose through this first action to give legitimacy to his regime through fulfilling the great majority's desire for peace. Though details of the law were not necessarily understood, people were asked to approve it by referendum in September. Even before the appearance of the proposed law, Bouteflika apparently released between 5,000 and 12,000 Islamists from custody.

The law sought to eliminate arrests for any Islamists not guilty of deadly crimes, massacres, or bomb attacks and to provide amnesty for those in prison. So as not to offend civilian victims, he said, the law allowed them to bring civil action against any Islamist released before the end of his sentence. The first objective is to normalize the situation of AIS

[the FIS armed wing] members, even allowing elements to be integrated into the state military force. "The AIS had announced its surrender as of September 1997."

But, he noted, the effects of the law (only slightly more than 1,000 have personally surrendered) and the break-up of the AIS have not significantly affected the other armed Islamic groups. The GIA of Antar Zitouni and the GSPC (Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat) of Hassan Hattab continue their bloody attacks against civilians and the military alike.⁶¹ AIS forces have not carried out any attacks for over two years and began to leave their maquis bases this past January. In exchange for turning in their arms, they've been given a document officially exonerating them from any prosecution for crimes committed from the 1993 foundation of the AIS to the date of the truce, in 1997.

The writer explained that each ex-AIS militant receives a bonus of 10,000 dinars and a monthly allowance of 3,000 dinars⁶² and is encouraged to take up his old employment. As well, apparently the families of ex-AIS terrorists are provided with new housing, which was meant for the homeless. At the same time, villages that were deserted earlier at the time of highest violence and taken over by the AIS have now in turn been occupied by Algerian military units. "The AIS was implanted in eastern Algeria and 'cohabited' the western suburbs of Algiers with the GIA. Since the defection of the AIS brothers-enemies, massacres of the population in that region have multiplied. The GIA is thus taking revenge against those who gave logistical support to their former allies."

But AIS rehabilitation is going even further, he said. Authorities are being asked to consider "integrating Islamic combatants into the local militia controlled by the army, maintaining AIS groups in certain zones where the GIA is active, liberating FIS prisoners, giving amnesty to militants in foreign exile, and protecting Islamist leaders pardoned by the president." Such actions go quite beyond the terms of the Civil Concord. Many of those civilians who fought terrorism through local "patriot" self-defense militia units are quite frustrated since they were the prime targets of terrorism and now the militarily defeated fundamentalist Islamists will end up better off than they are.

More frustrating yet, he said, is that the RCD political party that they most supported and that contributed many members to the local militia has now joined the government, which includes Islamists. Yet the principal trait of the party was to oppose the FIS and Islamists more generally. The several associations of victims of terrorism have also cried out against the amnesty. In many villages, people are now confronted by the same pardoned or repentant persons who victimized and terrorized them a few years earlier. Meanwhile, to avoid reprisals, the army disarmed the local militia and increased their own presence.

Now the GSPC is also considering following the path of the AIS. Apparently, the writer said, last February 11, the GSPC *emirs* of the center, south, and east of Algeria came together for a “congress” to discuss their organizational position. This meeting could not have occurred without the cooperation of the Algerian army. The government also gave extra time for the GSPC to decide. Though some GSPC fighters have deserted their maquis, other important elements have strongly opposed surrender. This is the context in which the army decided to launch its “Sword of the Visitors to Mecca” operation following the ultimatum date, January 13, in the Civil Concord. Of course, even the title of the military operation is Islamist in nature.

“The true victims of this situation are the unarmed civilians who are far from being involved or informed of any arrangement being hatched. Once they had cast their vote for the law, this was no longer their business. Quite obviously, transparency is far from a reality in Algeria. As for the peace so much awaited, this also is not forthcoming, although the frequency of assassinations has been reduced.”

Meanwhile, he asserted, those in the regime have preserved their interests despite the many difficulties throughout the crisis. They are now ready to strengthen their position through co-opting their Islamist opposition. While taking in the former armed Islamists, the ideology of the regime is very accommodating since it has already accepted Islamist propositions in education, culture, and information in the past.

The realm of democratic freedoms was severely restrained during the years of terrorism. “After the probable rallying (or disappearance) of all the Islamist groups,” the democratic opposition must expect the government to tighten conditions even further. Already, he said, the government is apparently considering a constitutional revision that would strengthen the role of the president and diminish that of the national assembly. Even at present, however, Bouteflika shows little interest in having his government submit its program to the assembly (though the latter is elected by universal direct suffrage) since he himself is also selected by the voters who thus endorse his political program.

But except for the FFS of Aït-Ahmed, with twenty deputies, and the Trotskyist PT, with four, the parliamentary opposition is accommodating. Nevertheless, undoubtedly “future pills to swallow will be especially bitter.”⁶³

Two months later, the same writer examined the current state of social movements in Algeria. As he pointed out, most media attention has focused on the struggle between the military and radical Islamists over the past decade, including assassinations and large massacres. At the same time, because of this context, social movements have experienced much difficulty.

The best known of these abroad, he said, is the Berber Cultural Movement (MCB). Since 1980 it has mobilized large-scale public demands throughout Kabylia for democratic freedoms and, especially, for official

state recognition of Berber identity and state support for developing the Tamazight language. The apogee of this movement was the year-long school boycott through 1994–95. But this same campaign revealed a split between two competing tendencies. As well, the following year, nearly 20,000 students were excluded from the school system because of prolonged absence.

Explained the writer, the split became evident when, in April 1995, the conciliatory wing of the MCB (the national coordination body) declared an end to the boycott following talks with the government that were aimed at stabilizing the situation in Kabylia and allowing the RCD to participate in the November 1995 presidential elections. But the commissions of the MCB opposed ending the school boycott, thus helping to enable, as advocated by the FFS, a boycott of the same electoral event. The result was that Saïd Sadi (of the RCD) was a candidate and Aït-Ahmed was not.

A significant impact of this division, he said, was the loss of support generally for the MCB. Young people experienced the greatest loss and bitterly withdrew from the struggle. Attempts to revive the movement consistently failed over the next five years. The only meager gains it can show at present are the creation of a powerless Amazighite High Council and a three-minute daily TV news program in the Berber language.

Beyond this struggle, he stated, the general worldwide wave of privatizations and attacks on social support policies has affected Algeria as well. Under the guidance of the IMF, the regime has zealously pursued layoffs in the public sector. At this point, social benefit allocations must be provided by employers instead of the state. The immediate effects of this policy are the priority firing of wage earners with families, which will lead to more job candidates declaring themselves unmarried.

The incredible loss of wage-earner buying power, he said, has no longer brought reactions, except by the two teacher unions—SATEF (for primary and secondary level) and CNES (for higher education). These two autonomous unions were formed, with much hope, in 1990 and stand apart from the official UGTA unions of the political class.

Both teacher unions are led by militant veterans of past mass struggles, and both are also affected, he explained, by the overall political context of Algeria. Essentially, SATEF is based in Kabylia and the Algiers region. It was badly affected, like the MCB, by the outcome of the school boycott of the mid-'90s that it supported and helped organize. But several jolts in the past year have helped to revive it. In contrast, the CNES is based more nationwide, though may be less influential in eastern Algeria. Several strikes, some quite long, have concerned school curricula, pay raises, and prioritizing housing for teachers instead of for the political/financial mafia. At the same time, some internal disputes over the role of fundamentalist Islamists have weakened the CNES.

Meanwhile, he said, the families of the “disappeared” from the decade of military/Islamist clashes have been quite upset over the Civil Concord’s preferential treatment for “repented” terrorists. Not only are the latter granted amnesty, they also receive priority job and housing opportunities, sometimes with the specific creation of jobs for them alone. As well, they seek permanent veteran pensions and, incredibly, seem likely to win out on this issue in the near future.

At the same time, he said, “the associations of the ‘disappeared’ are organizing all over to locate the bodies of the victims and to denounce regime complicity with the ex-terrorists. Associations like ‘Somoud’⁶⁴ have shown the locations of mass graves. Its president, on a hunger strike, was caught by the security services who ‘suggested to him to no longer use the term ‘mass grave.’” These associations are intimidated and threatened by the regime that wants to erase all traces of a recent past.”⁶⁵

Again the same author, a year later, wrote a detailed account on that spring’s widespread social rebellion in Kabylia and the violent government repression that followed. For three weeks, beginning in mid-April, the region was under military siege. The confrontation began with the arrest of high-school student Massinissa Guermah by the police in the community of Beni-Douala, the home base of popular singer Matoub Lounès who was assassinated near there three years earlier. “The *gendarmes*, no doubt finding him atypical compared to the regime’s Arab-Islamic model, could not resist the desire to fire a kalashnikov at him even within the police station. From that moment on, the villages of that region, with around 5 million inhabitants, erupted into violence. The riots led to the deaths of nearly one hundred of the local population.”

Many times during the confrontation, young rioters shouted “We’re already dead, you can’t kill us,” into the faces of the troops. This by itself, he said, illustrates the level of distress among the youth. For the twenty to thirty-five age group, unemployment is at 50 percent. Several productive units have simply shut down. Others have released two-thirds of their workers in an effort to restructure. At the same time, the huge petroleum revenues are entirely used to enrich the military *nomenclature*, the real power since 1962.

Worse yet, he declared, despite the over twenty-year demand by Kabyles that their identity and culture be officially recognized, the regime has consistently acted otherwise. The radio and TV media, for example, are more Arabicized than ever, though the Arabic being used is that from Saudi Arabia, which no one in Algeria understands—including academics. The school curricula increasingly give attention to Islam. Meanwhile

Kabyle youth are at the opposite end of the spectrum, deeply secular or even atheistic.

Thus, he said, there are more bars in the Kabyle town of Azazga (20,000 population) than in the Arabic-speaking city of Constantine (800,000 population). Despite the virtual absence of the French language in the primary and secondary schools, Kabyle young people, by their adolescent years, have mastered that language even though they can't express themselves in Arabic. Since their only prospect is to flee abroad, the French embassy receives over 2,000 visa requests per day, but these are "systematically rejected." Even "the Eldorado of Canada that already received a good part of the Kabyle elite is now closed off." The numbers of cadres, artists, and intellectuals going into exile from this region over the past decade is unprecedented. People's lives are so bad that suicide is increasingly the way out (over 3,000 each year). In relation to France, the same rate of suicide would amount to 14,000 people dead per year!

Around April 20 each year, he said, the MCB organizes various cultural activities by which to remember the Berber Spring events of 1980. In this region, that date is "a day of struggle for recognition of the Berber language." In the first few years, these were large and enthusiastic celebrations, but with the divisions between FFS and RCD, these events have become competitions to show the largest contingent. Without any sign that the cultural demands will be met and with the lack of future prospects, Kabyles became demobilized.

But suddenly and quite unexpectedly, the youth of this region rose up to set the record straight. "Spontaneous and uncontrolled, the movement of young rioters caught fire in every Kabyle village. Independent of any partisan structure, it developed its own watchwords. The rioters denounce the *hogra* (arrogance and contempt) of the regime that they also labeled as 'assassins.' They demand recognition of their Berber identity. They take a step never before taken in Algeria in demanding the departure of police brigades, considered as forces of occupation."

In various ways, he said, they remind one of the Palestinian *intifada*, armed only with stones and Molotov cocktails against well-armed security forces. "Their desperation is so great that they recognize no structure whether directly from the regime or from the official opposition. Thus, one notices that in every community, every public building is sacked (courts, state gas stations, FLN offices, tax offices, etc.), but also the headquarters of the parties like the RCD and even the FFS!"

But the police violence, he said, using weapons of war, far exceeded the hooliganism of the young. Several examples demonstrate this fact. In most locales, the police stationed themselves as snipers on the roofs of their buildings and carefully assassinated innocent passersby after the riots by shooting precisely at their heads and chests. They also shot in the back those who

attempted to flee the police repression. Using exploding bullets, they shredded the brains, stomachs, and limbs of demonstrators. They murdered with a shot or bootkicks to the head those who lay wounded on the sidewalks. People were arbitrarily arrested and beaten, sodomized, and tortured at the police stations. Some were stripped naked before release. In some cases, even the wives and children of some police participated in beating those arrested. Police also raided and pillaged homes and shops. Such actions were not sporadic or limited to a few. They went on for three weeks throughout the whole region, obviously with the full approval of state officials.

Responding to these events, said the writer, each village chose a committee, and over 200 of these came together in the symbolic location of Beni-Douala. The sense from this meeting was that Kabylia had to determine its own fate instead of seeking solutions within the national framework. Immediate objectives were to remove the *gendarmes*, to bring the assassins to justice, to postpone important school exams, and to develop a solidarity fund for victims. The first direct action of this coordination body (the *aarchs*) was to organize a march to honor the victims of the repression.

Thus, last May, he described, some 500,000 people proceeded through the streets of Tizi-Ouzou. With only 200,000 residents in that city, this was clearly its largest demonstration ever. Slogans from the crowd denounced the regime as assassins, demanded arrests of the criminals, and re-asserted that the Berber language will live on forever and that they are not Arabs. Quite remarkably, this huge demonstration included young people, students, the elderly, and also many women—with a substantial number of the latter for the first time helping to keep order. Four days later was a march of 10,000–15,000 women, and future marches were planned for Algiers.

“The least one can say is that Kabylia is evolving in a direction and manner different from other Algerian regions. In effect, there is no more commonality between the most important aspirations of this region and those in the rest of the country. Neither motions of support, nor strikes, nor any hint of a supportive march. In this desert of silence,” only a few intellectuals from the western city of Oran dared to offer even a timid request for some restraint on the repressive forces.

The rupture of Kabylia with the regime is now complete, he emphasized. Despite the insurrectional context, the regime could easily have granted a few symbolic appeasing concessions—such as delaying the school exams—but they refused everything and expressed no regret. “To the contrary, agents provocateurs in the pay of the military are still agitating here and there.” Cops drive around harassing and intimidating people and taking some off to the police stations. This situation is far from the time when eradicators and reconciliators confronted each other on the appropriate strategy: whether to ally with the regime against the Islamists or with the latter against the regime. “This debate is ultra dépassé today in Kabylia.”

The current question, he declared, is how Kabyles can best take charge of their own region, including in the important realms of cultural identity and education. This implies a new program that goes beyond the national parties. "What young Kabyles propose through their struggles—the need for the occupation forces to depart and the use of their village coordination structure—is completely new. To clarify, Kabyles no longer give recognition to this jumble called Algeria. Thus, voices are growing louder for autonomist positions for this region."⁶⁶

The next issue brought an article comparing the "two Algerian wars," by Gérard Lorne, a Frenchman who gave wartime logistical aid to the FLN; co-founded a journal at that time, *La Voix Communiste*; and was imprisoned by France for his actions. His personal memoir as a *porteur de valises* was published in 1998.⁶⁷

Lorne first addressed the issue of the French public's consciousness about the Algerian war of the 1950s and early '60s. Though for decades most of the French public did not want to know details about that war and was discouraged from learning them, there now is a huge proliferation of available books. Suddenly, there is great public attention, as the media focuses especially on the subject of torture. People now act indignant as they are "hypnotized and dazzled by the assassin generals, like cowboys on TV." They now discover "basic truths that their little brains had never registered with the simple equation: military + wars/virtuous politicians = torture."

It is remarkable, Lorne said, that present day "virtuous citizens," especially those who were alive during that war, claim never to have known of the practice of torture. Books by Maurice Audin, Henri Alleg, Mandouze, Vidal-Naquet, and many others, as well as the Declaration of the 121, addressed and endlessly denounced this phenomenon. With so many French soldiers in Algeria and all their families, that's a lot of people. "And you didn't learn that people tortured in your name? *You didn't want to know*. That is the simple truth." Not too long before and under different skies, others behaved in the same way, despite the streams of military trucks and trains bringing thousands to a camp near their village of Auschwitz.

He pointed out that, of course, Hitler didn't give those villagers the chance to choose their butchers and thus they shared no moral responsibility for what happened in the camp. "But in fact, is it you, by chance, who voted for the war criminals by the names of de Gaulle, Mollet, Mitterand, Lacoste, Papon, Bourguès-Maunoury who all under different titles came into the mazes of the regime from 1954 to 1962? Perhaps you've noticed, with

hindsight, that these illustrious civilian representatives of the people always covered for their military accomplices,” like assassins Massu and Bigeard. Said Lorne, I could perhaps believe in your good faith, but to really forgive you, you need to have watched the TV appearance of the sinister (torture supervisor) Aussaresses⁶⁸ in June.

You should also know, he said, that a tiny minority of young Frenchmen revolted against the military during that war for reasons of conscience. With your applause, they paid a high price for their actions and were never invited to appear on that same channel. Some refused to follow the orders of the torturer officers, some resisted the draft with Jeune Résistance, and some acted in isolation, like Benoist Rey (who published an account of the various atrocities he witnessed as a French soldier).⁶⁹

Surprisingly, he stated, the children of that amnesia generation are genuinely anxious to learn. They are quite aware of the failure of their curricula, their teachers, and the ministry of education to speak the truth about the war. Teachers excuse themselves from answering good questions. Some apparently fear that their promotion is at risk since their superior might be a war veteran. Others state that not enough time has gone by to fairly assess the war or that they don’t want to revive old passions or that they want to respect laicism. Apparently what they mean by the latter is “to respect the nation’s army and the assassins who kill in the name of a religion. Obviously, the disgust inspired by historical truth could lead quickly to rebellion or at least anti-militarist or anti-religious feelings.”

Though there is a huge documentation effort by now about the Algerian war, he said, there are those who don’t want to know, as well as organized attempts by the ministry of education to hide this knowledge. At the same time, absurdly, there are former torturer officers making no secret of their actions during the war.

On the other hand, he pointed out, the torturing generals of Algeria and Bouteflika wish a total blackout about the Algerian army’s behavior in the 1990s. However, glancing back to September 22, 1997 at Bentalah, there was a massacre of over 400 people, which was blamed on Islamists. Witnesses who escaped have continued to ask why the army unit near the village failed to respond, despite a helicopter that surveyed the scene from above and the fact that the massacre went on all night.⁷⁰

It seems that frequently the Algerian military disguises itself like Islamists and sets up roadblocks. But why? “To alert public opinion so that it would condemn actions that the Islamists would carry out and vice versa?” It also happens that local so-called defense groups are armed by the military to avenge their losses but are then assassinated. It doesn’t matter who did it. Often these local groups choose to help the Islamist maquis by providing them weapons that they bought from certain officers. “In other words, who does one believe and how does one prove information to be true?”

It is clear, he stated, that foreign journalists are not allowed to visit such places. When Algerian journalists uncover proof for what actually happened, they are assassinated or disappeared. (They should be honored for their determination, especially women reporters.) The small amount of information about such incidents comes from families of the disappeared, witnesses who escaped the massacres, and those who fled into exile. Local Algerian associations give them refuge and arrange to get them out of the country with the few foreign humanitarian associations still present. Meanwhile, foreign governments closely control what their embassies' press officers are allowed to say.

Though Bouffeflika may be near the end of his reign, even civilian rule is unlikely to bring fundamental change "as long as the Muslim religion remains so deeply anchored in the laws and population and as long as the basic conflict between Arabs and Berbers continues to be the fundamental problem of this nation. Religion-fed patriarchal civilization is not ready to be eliminated. Islam remains a powerful ideological instrument, much in the same way that other principal religions, Judaism and Christianity, provide important support for capitalism. Everyone knows this."

Though Algeria could become a liberal democracy and take off economically if the military gangrene was removed, he said, is this actually desirable? From a strictly human concern, it is important "that the atrocities stop, that this second war come to an end." This is hardly an original conclusion, but can one really conclude that "the people will come out victorious"? The truth is that I don't see any exit from this mess and all my certainties as an anarchist don't amount to much and have little weight. There are only pious and soothing wishes."⁷¹

A new article in February 2002 discussed the continuing confrontations in Kabylia and the increasing support of Europe for the Algerian regime. Said the writer, since the 9/11 attacks a few months ago, the media appear to have forgotten the murderous situation in Algeria in favor of "the poor Americans." After the April uprising in Kabylia a year ago and the fierce repression by the regime, the people of that region are once again in the streets. In the events of last spring, autonomous village committees were formed throughout all of Kabylia and a central coordinating meeting issued a guiding platform.

This El-Kseur program, he stated, contained fifteen essential points to normalize the present situation. These include the departure of the national police, official recognition of the Berber language (Tamazight), and various social demands. Members of the police brigades act like an occupation force with daily mafia-type dealings and embezzlement. The situation is so bad

that youths as well as the older population have made and stored Molotov cocktails in their own homes. In some locales, the municipality sounds the sirens when the police come into the streets with their armored cars, thereby warning residents to retreat behind closed doors.

“Because of its military and fascist nature, the regime cannot give in to the demands of its citizens. Requests for democracy were first met by incredible violence. Since then, the regime has systematically blocked the planned routes for large peaceful demonstrations scheduled by the *aarchs* (July 5th, August 20th, and October 5th). Thirdly, while it finally condescended to negotiate since last December, it did so with false [Kabyle] delegates.” At the grassroots, people have no more illusions. Demonstrations have re-emerged. Recently, with increased repression have come new riots. At the same time, some *Aarch* members have been arrested.

Thus, he said, the movement has responded with a new round of huge demonstrations, as before, in a succession of Kabyle cities. The first one, in January 2002, at Vgayet (ex-Bougie), for example, brought out half a million people! The activist momentum of earlier has thus returned, as well as greater repression. But the media of France and Europe seem disinterested.⁷²

A year later, in the February 2003 issue of *Courant Alternatif*, anarchist Georges Rivière published an article updating the situation in Kabylia as well as his own earlier article for a different anarchist revue, *Réfractions* (it appears in the section for that revue below).⁷³ In his view, “the pre-insurrectional and revolutionary movement, which has prevailed in Kabylia for almost two years now has not weakened.” Nothing has changed since the Black Spring insurrection (April 2001) that saw the deaths of some 117 people and the emergence of “an extraordinarily original and very popular ‘movement of assemblies.’” The regime acts like nothing has been seen or heard and simply lets the situation get worse with the social structure crumbling, and even holds elections without voters. Its parliament is filled with puppets, even when some are Lambertists (Trotskyists)!⁷⁴

It is wrong, he said, to accept a simplistic notion of the Algerian regime as a fascist-tending military dictatorship. “It is more intelligent than that and endowed with a cynicism and unfailing Machiavellianism. Thus, it is able, when facing an important election, to create enough fake opposition parties that one doesn’t know which ones are real! It is a snake with several heads and a puzzle of clans that complement each other but where no one prevails.” Of course, everyone in the regime detests the social movement “because it is intransigent and very clear,” but some military leaders, especially of the francophone side, like to use it to their own strategic advantage, “as a bomb thrown under the legs of Bouteflika.”

The regime, he said, has relied on wearing down and disenchanting people already generally suffering from poverty. It has somewhat succeeded in isolating the social movement and labeling the Kabyle resistance

specifically as separatism. It has also used certain parties like the FFS and the PT "to destabilize the movement from within." A January 2003 document from the Inter-Communal Coordination (of the *aarch* movement) reviewed the various elements of repression and marginalization used by the regime and specifically denounced the use of political parties in local elections of October 2002 to break the consensus and sabotage the rebellion. It also recognized the absence of international support since states follow their own interests.

Said Rivière, the regime's repression after the initial killings included arresting Coordination delegates before the elections of March 2002. Nevertheless, this had no success in diminishing support for a voter boycott. From the beginning of December to mid-January, imprisoned delegates pursued a hunger strike. They were also subject to beatings, and the best known among them, (Belaïd) Abrika,⁷⁵ presently remains in a coma.

It is remarkable, he noted, that the movement has persisted for so long in the midst of continued repression, great poverty, and complete isolation. Never has independent Algeria seen a revolutionary movement of such strength. "It is a movement of cultural, social, and political opposition, carried primarily by abandoned and marginalized youth." Its strength comes especially from the nature of its structure: "horizontal, autonomous, and anti-authoritarian. This allows it to be the expression, the least separate possible of the social movement, to be an identifiable executive power and with an explicit and limited mandate, to have a multiple presidency, elected, revolving, and revocable, extending its network throughout the insurgent territory, with officials controlled and prevented from any bureaucratic drift."

The communal coordination, he underlined, is composed of delegates elected from the grassroots, at general assemblies of villages or neighborhoods. Its meeting decisions are made by consensus or, at the least, by three-fourths majority after debate. This organization is not at all a political ladder for the sons of local notables. The organizational code of honor specifies that movement delegates will engage in no actions aimed at developing ties with the regime nor pursue any electoral, partisan, or power-seeking activity. Any delegate choosing to the contrary must resign from the movement.⁷⁶

The repression accomplished nothing, he said, except the deaths and the terrible legacy of the wounded, including paraplegic teenagers surviving on beds without mattresses. The Algerian state conceives of politics only in terms of authoritarian centralism. It thinks that if it arrests a general, it has decapitated an army. In fact, it arrests only a spokesperson and thus helps to mobilize citizens even more. It is unable to bribe the movement. While the movement suffers, it is not exhausted. "It deepens its reflections, strengthens its organization, and reaffirms its legitimacy."

A few days ago in Algiers, he pointed out, several women's associations met to show their support. The autonomous democratic women's

movement and the joint committee of Algiers citizens' committees called for demonstrations in front of the ministry of justice to demand the immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners from the citizen's movement and the fulfillment of all demands of the El Kseur platform. The women's movement, composed of six feminist associations, specifically denounced the repression in Kabylia and its implications for Algeria generally.

"At the moment of Porto Allegre [the World Social Forum] and the anti-globalization movement, at the moment when the 'Arab world' is in the spotlight, for few good and many bad reasons, for insurgent Algeria—the bearer of a libertarian political experiment, of the people, egalitarian, durable and incontestably universal—to be neglected again is unacceptable."⁷⁷

March 2003 saw another special issue of *Courant Alternatif*—this one devoted to the "citizen hoax," citizen movements, civil society, and republican liberal democracy. The editorial set out the overall position. "These days one is given a whole variety of meanings of good citizenry, from recycling one's garbage to scooping dog shit, and on to all the norms of good individual behavior. In well-defined frameworks, one should participate in society as it is in order to keep it from drifting off too much! No more notions of Revolution or communist society. Instead, we have participation in management, integration/assimilation, and control of excesses...of all forms of domination!"

Though the right to vote in France has expanded over time (to all adults except resident immigrants now), said the editorial, since it is based on the total delegation of power, this is "the history of a demobilizing 'victory' for non-propertied males and then for females. It remains the instrument of economic and social domination of a small minority over the great majority." People can elect whomever they want, but this will change nothing since all they can do is "manage the existing forms of domination (economic, patriarchal, cultural, etc.)." If they try to divert from this role, all democratic constitutions contain the possibility of calling in the military as a last resort. "One can always dream of a participatory democracy in the framework of a town or neighborhood and even preach 'libertarian municipalism.'"⁷⁸ Given the few functions allowed government at that level, such an orientation definitely has its limits, since in France the state controls—through prefects' ability to intervene⁷⁹—all local decisions.

Recently, it said, there's been a renewed interest in and emphasis on citizenship, coinciding with the coming of the left to power and the rise of specific interest protest groups (immigration, women, regionalism, homosexual issues, etc.) between 1975 and 1995. At the same time, the regime has learned how to integrate such groups into the political system. "This

renewal is also linked to the abandonment of the idea of revolution in the far left and among certain anarchists."⁸⁰

An article by Jean-Paul Duteuil in the same issue addressed the acceptance of a republican civil society orientation among some anarchists, the notion of necessary defense of a "lesser evil" state, and the fundamental flaws of human rights activism. The argument helps to clarify OCL's perspective generally and has obvious, though unstated, potential implications concerning Algeria.

Duteuil identified three causes for some revolutionary anarchists to slide into a reformist citizen's movement stance. First is the fear of being marginalized, of losing contact with people and movements and appearing patronizing. It is uncomfortable to criticize that which seems to be agreed upon in society, especially among those one is close to otherwise. "The temptation is strong to assume a low profile, to pussyfoot around words by giving them a slightly different, but imaginary, meaning."

Second, he said, is a desire for some sort of social and institutional recognition, somewhat like current attempts "to make anarchism an honorable, if not honored, current of thought." Having fought battles for years in the margins of society, one wishes to be acknowledged beyond the usual realm. Being seen as "serious and responsible," abandoning "sterile critiques, ideological purism and a radicalism without chance of fulfillment" are common clichés adopted to justify, through a sort of schizophrenia, a more conformist social democrat or anti-intellectual populism.

However, he argued, these explanations in themselves are not sufficient. In fact, a deeper cause is "anchored in the history of the revolutionary movement generally and in anarchism in particular: the persistence within it of a certain republicanism." This belief in equal rights of all citizens is an idealistic legacy of the French revolution, fictional in its complete separation from the reality of capitalist society. Importantly, while revolutionary anarchism eventually came to rejecting all forms of hierarchical political power, it still retained, more or less explicitly, a reference to at least a Republican ideal.

It is true, he said, that most people would prefer "to live in a regime of soft shit than in a regime of hard shit," but the problem is that the reason usually given are that the former is less dictatorial than the latter. As Bakunin believed, the French revolution was unfortunately channeled into a mainly political change instead of a social and economic transformation. "Property, the root of inequality, was not challenged. And it is there that was born the great split between liberals and communists."

To defend and appeal to human rights becomes a matter of recourse to the state rather than insurrection against the state. "Human rights have become the vision of those who renounce emancipation and liberation." The program then becomes one of choosing the lesser evil instead of the best. "One of the functions of the human rights movement is to hide the

successive historical setbacks of reformism (of which it is a part) and to only select from History that which is convenient and finally conforms to the official version of things (evolutionism).” Any regression is seen as only temporary in the grand scheme.

“The ideology of the human rights and citizen movements is inseparable from that ‘progressive’ conception that suggests that the sense of history though good and bad is to move from the simple to the complex, from bad to good. A vision that everything we see invalidates!” They thus join those “who support development (durable or not), a certain scientism (even critical), and a confidence in ‘human nature’ whatever that is, etc. In brief, he summarized, these are reactionary idealists in the sense that they defend quite archaic conceptions and modes of interpreting the world, without surprise or risk, well-entrenched in the established order and in conformism of thought agreed to by all regimes.”⁸¹

An editorial in the December 2005 issue gave the first OCL response to the riots the previous month in the working-class immigrant suburbs. “In France, two youths are dead and a third gravely wounded by an electric transformer when they tried to escape police forces (one of them had no documentation). This new police exaction, added to an already long list, led—in the Paris suburbs first, then throughout France—to three weeks of riots in the working-class neighborhoods. The young rebelled against a world that excluded them.” Cars, schools, and police stations were burned, and some threw stones at buses and the police. While often denounced or not understood, the riots still gained the sympathy of some.

It’s essential and urgent, the editorial asserted, that we mobilize against the brutal repression that they experience, and demand that judicial proceedings be abandoned with a general amnesty. Arrests are quite arbitrary and judicial punishments especially harsh. Making a fire in a garbage can, for example, led to a six-month jail sentence. “Taking advantage of this rebellion, aborted for lack of a real grassroots movement, the police state is re-enforcing itself: anti-riot law, state of emergency, a strong return of double jeopardy, etc.”

“There seems to be general apathy toward the repression now going on, but if we don’t want to spend the next several years bringing oranges to the prisoners, it is about time to destroy the prisons, and the world that goes with them.”⁸²

Returning to the subject of the October riots and state repression there was a detailed article in the January 2006 issue. The two writers also placed the events and response in a much larger context. In effect, the riots provided the regime with a welcome excuse to tighten its authoritarian control, thus to better manage the lengthy economic crisis. While hiding the real

reasons behind the rebellion, the regime has used the “clash of civilizations” imagery to further marginalize those not considered to be natives of the French republic.

With the use of “state of emergency” legislation last employed during the Algerian war, said the writers, the enemy is “clearly designated in the eyes of the ‘French’: the young proletarian North African.” This is one more layer—added to all the manipulations concerning the headscarf issue, growing anti-semitism in the suburbs, fundamentalist Islamists, gang rapes, sexism, and the dismantling of supposed terrorist networks—that is meant to contribute to the “racialization” of social conflicts, thus the better to divide and rule.

Ultimately, it said, beyond all the simplistic, demagogic, and provocative labels aimed at their designated target, the objective of the regime is to intensify the distrust and fear of “the foreigner.” “It is not by chance that the fantasy of a youth-foreigner-Muslim-delinquent is exacerbated by the political class—and even the whole political class, since the left is not strongly opposed—to scare the population and distract it from its preoccupations.” In this context, the government can then “quietly deregulate work conditions, dismantle public services, sell profitable national enterprises to its pals, and lower taxes on the rich.”⁸³

In November 2008, *Courant Alternatif* had a lengthy 20th anniversary article on the important October 1988 insurgency in Algeria. Said the author, the recent revival of (radical Islamist terrorist) attacks in Algeria and the effort of Bouteflika to alter the constitution to allow himself a third term of office suggests a dark future for the Algerian people—caught between continual terrorism and a dictatorship determined to stay in power. To understand this context, it is useful to go back twenty years where a number of current themes have their roots in what some call the second Algerian war.

Even before the grassroots explosion of October 1988, he said, there were several other angry movements (as in Tazmait, Mostaganem, Béjaïa, Sétif and elsewhere) as well as strikes at several enterprises. This momentum of grassroots rebellion was followed by a late September appeal by UGTA for a general strike on October 5. The overall social situation was disastrous. The repercussions of the oil crisis of 1986 were a collapse of oil and gas export prices for Algeria. At the same time, inflation shot upward and basic products became scarce. President Chadli’s term was coming to an end with elections scheduled for November.

The evening before the scheduled demonstration, he pointed out, there were serious confrontations with the police in Bab-el-Oued, with barricades and arrests. Similar violent marches began in various Algiers

neighborhoods the next day, proceeding along the route to devastate various symbols of the regime (FLN and government ministry buildings, police stations, etc.) and pillage numerous stores. Some ministers barely escaped lynchings. Most of the time, the police restrained from intervening, but when they did, they were brutal and the first deaths resulted.

On October 6, he said, huge crowds assembled in the center of town and violent confrontations occurred, including police and sniper fire on the rioters. According to advance plans, a state of siege was declared and the police cut off working-class neighborhoods from more affluent sections of Algiers and the outskirts. Now the army used machine guns against the crowds and casualties mounted. While the curfew was generally respected that night, the next day—Friday—two huge marches emerged from mosques after the prayers, but *imams* quickly dispersed them. However, at this stage, the rebellion spread to other Algerian cities, including Oran, Mostaganem, Guelma, and others. Though there was no state of emergency declared for those locales, the army nevertheless intervened.

On October 8, he described, demonstrators again gathered in large numbers in Algiers with more violent confrontations and renewed use of army snipers. Large numbers of arrests continued the next day and Chadli announced in the media his intent to address the nation on Monday. On that next day, Islamist leader Ali Belhadj led thousands of demonstrators from Belcourt to Bab el-Oued. At the headquarters of the national police, shots rang out and the army began firing directly at those in the march. At least forty people were killed. In the evening, Chadli's appeal for calm and the intense level of repression began to lower the tension. In the meantime, hundreds had been killed, thousands arrested, and torture systematically used.

Unfortunately, he said, the uprising could find no other forms than demonstrations and confrontations in the street. Its origins were several. One was the extreme contrast between the indecent comfort, luxuries, and privileges of the dominant class associated with the regime and the degradation of subsistence conditions for the Algerian majority. Inflation mounted while wages stayed the same and basic necessities were harder to find. At the same time, the schools released thousands of youths into the streets where there was nothing to do but linger against the walls (the *hittistes*).

To comprehend what followed, he explained, one should understand the nature of the Algerian regime. Among each of its three poles—the army, the secret services, and the party—were several competing groups. Each of them vied with the others to control a particular part of Algerian society that could provide them further wealth. Imports, such as cars and medical supplies, are controlled entirely by the state, just like the mafia.

The origin of this system, he stated, was in the structures that led the anti-colonial struggle against the French. The FLN was by no means a united front, representing as it did various orientations from those who

wanted a socialist revolution all the way to those who wanted total Arabization. But the main opposition was between the army of the exterior, exiled in Tunisia and Morocco, and guerrilla forces within.

As well, he said, separate clans of officers existed on the basis of personal loyalty or geographical origin. The group around Houari Boumédiène became known as the “Oudja clan” from the name of the interior zone he had originally commanded. Abdelaziz Bouteflika was a pillar of this group. Other clans emerged from the MALG, the secret security services of the FLN, and differentiated on the basis of the separate training programs they experienced with the Soviet KGB during the 1970s.

The October operation on the part of elements of the regime, he argued, consisted of creating such horror that the system in power since 1962 could not survive; sabotaging the planned November election and imposing Chadli as the only figure who could assure the promised transition to “democracy”; shocking people back into accepting the masters of Algeria; destroying the chances of those who hoped to lead Algeria in alternative directions; and channeling and extinguishing the rebellion by setting up a sham “democracy” with a transition to municipal and legislative elections. But the level of violent repression caused a shock abroad, as well as domestically.

For those who think these interpretations and suspicions are too paranoid, he suggested, they need only examine the past history of the regime where those perceived as leading opponents and potential threats—like Belkacem Krim in 1966 and Ali Mecili in 1986—were simply assassinated. The attitude and behavior of the army in the October events further makes the case. The way in which the military was deployed, the planned level of repression and torture and the neutralization of Kabylia by bringing Saïd Sadi⁸⁴ and three of his companions before Chadli are further proofs.

The next stage of the plan, he explained, could then be put into place. In its first phase, the repressive regime pretended to show an indulgent face. On October 31st, Chadli ordered the provisional release of all those arrested during the riots. In April 1989 and July 1990, amnesty laws were passed for “all those responsible for crimes and misdemeanors committed at the time of violent demonstrations” between April 1980 and October 1988. To assure that no one would oppose the laws, they were cynically designed to benefit both those innocent and those guilty, including already condemned Islamists, those in exile, and the victims of October repression as well as the torturers. Some of the released Islamists then served as informers for the SM, military security.

The next phase, he stated, was to re-organize the SM itself to assure that the planned reforms could be contained. The real power behind the throne, Larbi Belkheir (chief of the presidential cabinet), put two of his loyalists in charge—Mohamed Médiène (known as Tewfik)⁸⁵ and General Mohamed Betchine. While acting as zealous servants, they also provided a screen for

Belkheir. To give a “democratic veneer” to the reforms, a referendum was held on November 3, 1988 that provided 92 percent approval by the voters. The sixth congress of the FLN took place several weeks later. Chadli was then re-elected as the only candidate at the end of December, with 81 percent of the votes. Also named as prime minister on November 5 was Kasdi Merbah, a strong man but without real power—thus one who could be ejected when needed without difficulty. With this continuity of the regime through pseudo-change, the October plan was completed.

While the crimes of October were met by French officials “with deafening silence,” Mitterand was anxious to expand trade relations with Algeria after Chadli’s election, he explained. Thus, in January 1989, France granted Algeria a credit of 7 billion francs and Gaz de France agreed to pay higher prices for Algerian natural gas. At the same time, Accor made a deal to build twenty new hotels in the country and Total gained petroleum exploration rights and potential exploitation of a huge natural gas field at Hamra. All of these agreements were confirmed by a pompous state visit of Mitterand to Algeria in March. “The financial floodgates were then opened.”

It was then time, he said, to calm the democratic effervescence spreading in Algeria since the announcement of reforms. In early 1989, a new constitution ended the system of a one-party socialist state and authorized the formation of political parties. But two weeks earlier, the Kabyle leader Saïd Sadi beat everyone by announcing his organization of a new party, the RCD, a formalization of what had already existed secretly for a year but had been ignored by grassroots militants. Despite continued denials, Sadi and the RCD clearly wished to gain the advantage over other opposition leaders like Hocine Aït-Ahmed, whose return from exile would undermine Sadi’s claim to alone represent the opposition. A week later, Ali Belhadj and Abassi Madani announced plans to form a new party, the FIS, which was not made official until mid-March and not approved by the regime until August.

Then, he pointed out, came a whole stream of parties, including the Movement of Algerian Ecologists and the Socialist Organization of Workers (later, the Workers Party, PT), the Trotskyist party of Louisa Hanoune. This abundance of organizations “began the waltz of acronyms and labels, a disorganized selection that failed to hide the fact that several were the direct initiatives of the SM.”

Supposedly the army retired from the political realm, he said, completely discredited by its violent repressive role in October 1988. However, this was only a tactical retreat meant to further the superficial image of a democratic turn, while helping to hide the reality that the Belkheir clan genuinely controlled the heart of the regime, the SM, and the military general staff.

With the forceful October coup thereby providing a facelift for the regime, he stated, the annoying presence of Kasdi Merbah was no longer needed. He was dropped just three days after giving regime approval to the

new FIS. It had been his job to block any significant initiatives from Algerian society, but this final action was the heaviest. It was the final phase of the Algerian mafia's plan to find a scapegoat that could ultimately provide the justification for its maintenance of power. "But that's another story."

"The political freedom hoped for by the Algerian people thus had only a short life. The end result was a deep disgust toward and greater distrust of politics and of those who preach the institutional path for transforming Algerian society. However, the forms taken by the October rebellion, the grassroots demonstrations and riots as the concretization of discontent have been renewed in the different social movements of the past several years (as in the Kabyle rebellions)." Hopefully, the commemoration of the October massacres will help toward that trend.⁸⁶

Almost a year later, OCL posted a brief essay on national liberation struggles as part of its web site's introduction to the organization and what it stands for. This was done to clarify what some had seen as a contradiction between revolution and nationalism.

There are two principal strategies, it said, that we should bring to any national liberation struggle, beyond the essential goal of ending foreign domination. The first concerns the social dimension, the class struggle. We should "defend the idea that liberation does not come about by installing a national bourgeoisie, but by the reorganization of social life and of production, oriented toward satisfying the needs expressed by the oppressed classes and not by criteria of market 'imperatives' or profit. Tactics of institutional integration should be opposed and we should preserve the autonomy of counter-power structures that come into place." The forms of demands and struggle that tend to give more weight now or later to the bourgeoisie should also be opposed.

To encourage an anarchist type of liberation, we should "favor giving more weight to grassroots structures at the base rather than to parties; maintaining the armed struggle, if it exists, for a role in the longer-range social, cultural, and political struggles, while not allowing it to take over leadership; and encouraging voluntary participation in the struggle rather than on the basis of blood ties, which cross class lines by nature." Bonds of solidarity should come from acquired traits, like language and mutual struggle, rather than from givens like race and family relations.⁸⁷

The OCL posted on the same web site on November 9, 2009, as a communiqué, the whole *Alternative Libertaire* article, published one month

earlier, about the book on the Islamic impasse written by Hamid Zanaz and with an introduction by Michel Onfray.⁸⁸ Earlier in 2009, *Courant Alternatif* featured an article by Jean-Pierre Duteuil critiquing the anarchism of both Onfray and Camus.

“The anarchist movement has always had an essentially cultural current, which, in its historical evolution, went from a priority of anti-Marxism on one side to a crazed individualism, from a cult of myself to a visceral distrust of the great social movements we hold in such esteem! Actually, this [individualist] current takes many, often contradictory, forms but what they all have in common is rejection of the idea of social revolution.” This is the context for appreciating the rise and brutal fall of Onfray in anarchist thought.

During the Algerian war, asserted Duteuil, Camus (like some other anarchists at the time and some now with the issue of Palestine) took the political position of a liberal *pied noir* who saw the colonizer and the colonized in the same light. Thus, you could guess what his position would be today with the issue of the Gaza invasion. Camus refused to sign a 1958 petition against the seizure of Alleg’s book on French torture. In 1960, he also refused to sign the Manifesto of the 121.

There’s a parallel to make between the positions of Camus and Onfray. “Both built their reputations as anarchists because of their anointment by a part of the anarchist movement. Onfray had written in *Le Monde Libertaire* and this served him as a passport of competence.”

In fact, he said, Onfray demonstrated his overall political orientation in a 2007 issue of *Le Nouvel Observateur*. There he called himself anti-freemarket but a defender of capitalism, a Gaullist defender of the 1958 constitution, and a supporter of universal suffrage for electing the president. He viewed Mitterand as having unified the left.... Onfray is libertarian in the same way as Camus—in the liberal and humanist sense of the term, but not revolutionary. It is not for us to say who is and who isn’t an anarchist, but there are currents of “anarchism” that we have little in common with.

The “cultural” current of the anarchist movement, he stated, has been around for a very long time and in recent years has been reborn in different forms and often after cross-Atlantic influence: “individualism, anti-speciesism, and primitivism among the worst, civil society activism or municipalism among those more socially-oriented, but always cultural and very often academic.” Involved here is priority for individual fulfillment, “at the expense of the social and collective,” with intellectual roots “in Nietzsche, the individualists, and the American post-anarchists Zerzan and Hakim Bey.” The notion of changing life here and now has been recuperated and reduced to “knowing how to be anarchist in our niches,” with much moralism and “political correctness” and a total neglect of analyzing “class, society, and capitalism.”⁸⁹

In January 2011, OCL posted on its web site several communiqués from Algerian organizations about the mounting anti-government protests at that time. One was a joint statement from autonomous trade unions and the human rights league explaining the many justified reasons behind the rebellion of Algerian youth and calling for a peaceful national debate, instead of violent repression, in order to bring about a radical change of regime. Others were declarations by the *aarch* movement also demanding radical change, and the RAJ (which, while seeking political freedoms, distanced itself from the pillaging actions of some youth) urged peaceful forms of expression, and also denounced the regime's violent response.⁹⁰

Fédération Anarchiste

ENTERING THIS NEW DECADE, THE FÉDÉRATION ANARCHISTE was still definitely the largest of the national French anarchist (non-syndicalist) membership organizations, with about 600 members and some sixty groups. As of 1999, it published about 8,000 copies of each issue of *Le Monde Libertaire* and had about 1,100 subscribers. It also was responsible for Radio Libertaire since 1981, with several thousand listeners daily.⁹¹

A detailed article in February 1999 reviewed the precarious situation of Algerian society at that time. The civil war since 1992, its killings and insecurity, has caused thousands of families to flee to the cities. The state does little to assist these growing numbers and tends to show itself only when its security forces respond to explosive rebellion and when promises are made but rarely kept. "If the refugees suffer the most, all social gains are regressing under the joint impact of the war and the political-financial mafia that threatens the Algerian economy and affects the great mass of the population."

Public education, one of the most important social realms, it stated, has suffered the loss of some 400,000 pupils yearly altogether. Becoming an exclusionary institution, it has now become all the worse with last July's policy of mandatory total Arabization. A large number of students don't adjust well to this requirement and find themselves quickly expelled. "This makes worse an already catastrophic situation. Only 9 percent of elementary students move on to obtain baccalaureate degrees and only 5 percent a university diploma, but without any prospect of a job." Illiteracy affects over 7 million Algerians, a truly dramatic proportion. And with living conditions deteriorating, fewer families are able to have their kids, especially girls, in school.

Since 1996, said the writer, falling oil prices and the liberalization of foreign trade have led to a scarcity of basic food necessities, thus increasing the frustration of most Algerians. In 1987, the IMF and World Bank came to impose a strict economic “therapy” of privatization, and have limited budgets since 1995. “It’s no accident that the crisis began one year later.”

In 1998, he said, about 10 percent of all 29 million Algerians were unemployed, about 30 percent of the active population, with women especially affected. As the misery increases, begging has appeared everywhere—in cities and villages both, something not seen for the last three decades. The homeless, sometimes including whole families, live entirely on the sidewalks, day and night. Most of the 200,000 construction workers have been laid off without wages for months. For those who still get wages, spending power is no greater than in 1990, given the devaluation of Algerian currency, strong inflation, and the scarcity of basic items. The result is a much-reduced standard of living for the majority, including people in the middle class.

Health conditions have also deteriorated, the writer pointed out. The number of those obtaining vaccinations has gone down and child mortality rates are growing. Without vaccinations, deaths from measles and diphtheria have risen. Diarrhea and serious respiratory ailments are the leading causes of death, with tuberculosis on the return. Public hospitals have fewer resources and cannot meet growing demand, due to tighter budgets and overall corruption. At the same time, university hospitals have imported expensive scanning equipment.

Most people have given up on obtaining health care, he said, and thus the health of those with chronic ailments has deteriorated. Emergency room care is the most used since it’s cheaper. Though fewer can afford to buy medicine, a mafia sector has developed to market such goods since the end of the state monopoly of imports. With all of these problems, life expectancy has deteriorated to sixty-seven years, not taking into account the ongoing death toll from the civil war. In sharp contrast is the growing private market for luxury goods, accessible only to a minority of the very rich.

With the worsening health sector and the decrease in social benefits due to job layoffs, said the writer, social security is drastically affected. In 1986, the World Bank suggested lowering state social security benefits and retired jobholders were their first victims. In July 1998, three-quarters of those retired did not receive the pensions they were due. The precariousness of living conditions has worsened, as shown in the increase of needs for food assistance during the month of Ramadan. A million unemployed workers, 80 percent with families to support, receive state social assistance benefits of 1,000 dinars (100 francs)⁹² per month, too low an amount to meet bare subsistence. As well, in 1998, 40 percent of the population lived below the poverty line.

He described the housing crisis as equally catastrophic. To meet basic

needs, some 300,000 lodging units need to be built each year, but currently only about 80,000 are constructed. At the same time, the average number of occupants per unit was 7.4, one of the highest rates in the world. The overall urban environment is also affected, with water rationed to one out of three days at best. The worst off in the population obviously suffer from this the most, with diminished cleanliness causing the spread of typhoid and other epidemics, and increasing the threat of cholera.

The job layoffs, both in private and public enterprises, he said, have led to the collapse of trade unionism. This is all the more true with the main trade union, UGTA, given how its leadership is controlled by the regime. "Trade unions are confronted with the loss of membership renewals, repression, and subordination, and the pluralism promised by the new constitution is only embryonic."

Newspapers and media, he stated, are controlled by the state. The main national newspapers, like *El Watan*, *La Tribune*, and *Le Soir d'Algérie*, operate out of the Maison de la Presse in Algiers and are supervised by the SM, military security forces. The latter identifies those journalists showing sympathy for the legal opposition. But in any case, self-censorship is the norm, especially concerning security issues. However, this was not always so easy since the regime sometimes changes its line depending on shifting political circumstances. The result is a very restricted journalism that fails to reflect the pluralism of the society. Radio and national television are the same. To hide the real situation of the country, including the security setbacks, the government has subjugated journalists through a combination of "assassinations, kidnappings, systematic censorship, police surveillance, and economic pressures."

The official complete Arabization of the country, he verified, is no longer a matter of opinion since last July, despite the fact that it reaches only part of the population. Nevertheless, resistance to this policy is growing in Kabylia. After a year of school boycott organized in that region by the Berber Cultural Movement (MCB), the regime conceded establishing a High Commission for Berber identity (*Amazaghite*), but the essential objectives of teaching the Berber language, its constitutional recognition and its use in the government administration were refused.

"Since Matoub was assassinated, distrust of the government is more obvious still. Kabylia's detachment after that event has moved it even further away. Concerning the Berber language, the question now is to exist or not to exist." Its geographical spread is diminishing, with perhaps only another fifty years of life. The state insists that the time for demands is over and that it will do anything to prevent autonomy. Though non-violent opposition has been the practice to date in Kabylia, he presciently stated, a violent explosion is possible.

"The vestiges of a bureaucratic regime and the emergence of a politico-financial mafia are responsible for a bazaar economy where the debt money

liberated by the IMF has allowed for the circuit of corruption to be fed again, as well as the setting adrift of a society in risk of implosion. What can Algeria expect from a regime whose first concern is to enrich itself at the expense of the lives of the population?"⁹³

An equally detailed article followed, seven months later, concerning the continuing state of war in Algeria. The civil war since the cancelation of elections after the FIS's initial overwhelming victory, it stated, is far from finished. The September referendum on the "National Concord" was only a regime smokescreen designed to impress public opinion in the West with a supposed victory over Islamism and an ongoing democratic process. The West was petrified by Islam and thus gave major support to the Algerian regime since 1994. Beyond revenues from the massive purchases of Algerian petrochemicals, the regime gained about 40 billion francs⁹⁴ in aid from the IMF, the World Bank, the G7, and the EU. Fearing the worst, the West is quite ready to accept the fable created by the regime "and to close its eyes to the still-continuing daily violence, simply background noise beneath the capitalist melody."

Though military rule was threatened in 1992, said the writer, the regime has managed to turn the situation back to its favor. It still lacks the means, however, and probably even the desire, to win completely and establish a democratic peace, though bourgeois and capitalist. But actually, it doesn't matter. Oil and gas continue to flow across the Mediterranean and the media will come to forget Algeria, as they did earlier with Iraq and Afghanistan. Meanwhile, specialists in these matters will describe the war in Algeria as a "low-intensity conflict," despite its daily violence with repercussions throughout the society.

The competing clans within the military "are, above all, interest groups. The conflicts, which are often managed through civilian intermediaries, are struggles for influence linked to the division of the financial influx. There is only one limit, an absolute red line that none can cross over: conditions for the survival of the regime must never be threatened. The result is a rare long-range efficiency." Rarely in a world of so much corruption can one find "a country where the wealth is so systematically pillaged."

Beyond the hydrocarbon revenues, he said, generals control investments in all other strategic sectors as well as different large-scale commercial operations. "The law of silence reigns." Lower-level officers also participate, but to a lesser extent. "The Algerian army is thus a mafia in the first sense of the term, counting 140 generals (compared to about 20 a decade ago), unaccountable to the law, moving around only in armored limousines and living in separate residences. This parallel world has only one policy: to endure, no matter the price."

Thus, he explained, it is not desirable for the regime to completely defeat the armed Islamists. Instead, the military wishes to establish a level of

violence that still justifies their power and thus the continued flow of material wealth. The military effort and deployment during this war illustrates this logic. Only 120,000 soldiers are mobilized out of a population of 30 million Algerians. Likewise, though rich in available resources, the army has not significantly invested in the types of arms and equipment most suited for civil war. The same logic is shown by the areas given greatest protection—the most useful sectors for the regime. These are the capital—Algiers—which has suffered little except for spectacular assassinations, other large cities, and the zone of petrochemical production. The latter area has been protected so well that natural gas production has doubled. Meanwhile, massacres have occurred in the rural areas.

But the military is also obsessed, he said, with cultivating a proper international image. It does everything to improve appearances, such as showing the government to be very legalist with periodic elections (“though totally fixed”) and the present famous referendum on national reconciliation. “The West demands no more than these fakeries to permit large and small business to prosper in the shadow of the regime’s pretend struggle against the dark Islamist forces.” The Algerian government has for quite awhile provided diplomatic intervention between terrorism and kidnapped Westerners. It now plays the role of “rampart against radical Islam.”

In the short term, he predicted, neither form of Islamism—the bourgeois and “moderate” FIS and AIS or the radical GIA—has any chance of replacing the regime. Those who suggest that the military is responsible for all the killings and see the GIA as simply a group manipulated by the military security forces are not without reason. “The GIA’s birth on the ruins of the dissolved FIS in 1991 stems from two logical sources. First is the already-existing example of a radical Islamist sensibility that takes form independently and pushes to the greatest degree the dissensions existing in the world Islamist movement since the 1980s.” The second source is the social split of the coalition that temporarily came together in the FIS—“the pious bourgeoisie, the Islamist intelligentsia, and abandoned young people.”

While the FIS sought to bring people together around the idea of a state based on *sharia*, he said, the GIA tried instead to exacerbate the social contradictions. Thus, toward 1995, the GIA’s exclusivist doctrine and social base led logically to focus its action against its FIS rivals. In this period, under the emirate leaderships of Djamel Zitouni and Antar Zouabri, the GIA seems to have been infiltrated by the military security forces. In fact, this only accentuated a process already underway and that further distanced Islamists from power. In contrast with the competition between military clans within the regime, the Islamist competitors could not prevent their dispute from ending in fratricide.

The civil war has reached such a level of horror and complexity, he said, that it is unlikely to be ended soon, despite the weariness and opposition

of most Algerians. In fact, there are various reasons to suppose that it may keep going for a long time. For some, it continues to be a source of wealth and prestige despite the human cost, thus explaining why a settlement might be avoided. Among the adversaries, only the AIS admits its defeat and thus there is no will to suffer the consequences of failure. But especially, as the talented Luis Martinez explains it,⁹⁵ war becomes increasingly a lifestyle that only magnifies the supreme status of warriors.

This is shown, for example, even in the outward appearances demonstrated on each side. The GIA militants adopted the full beard and Afghan outerwear, while those of the AIS chose the Cuban guerrilla style with faded uniforms, cap, and beard. Among the security forces, beyond the options of usual police and soldier uniforms, are the choices of *ninjas* in black clothes and hoods or police with dark glasses, jeans, and sneakers. Such descriptions show the extent to which a common warrior imagination has spread among Algerians and made violence a source of social mobility for the young.

The ongoing political rearrangements and the referendum, he said, supposedly aimed at bringing an end to the war actually seem more like measures to strengthen the regime rather than to encourage national reconciliation. At this point, the spread of the warrior trade on both sides has moved Algeria into a logic already typical in southern Africa: “that of the privatization of violence.”⁹⁶



In May 2001, under front-page headlines, the journal published its first report on the large-scale insurgency in Kabylia. “Following the April 18th assassination of a high school student in the Beni Douala police station, near Tizi-Ouzou, and brutal interrogations on the 22nd at Béjaïa, a strong wave of rebellion against the Algerian state has taken over in Kabylia.” With declaration of a “state of emergency,” security forces have engaged in horrible repression, especially bloody on May 28. The police fired exploding bullets into the streets, made arbitrary arrests, and undoubtedly practiced torture—given the common practice in Algerian prisons. By the beginning of May, it was clear that at least eighty persons were murdered and hundreds more wounded.

In Algiers, it said, university students have organized a strike and demonstrations in support of the rebels. To contain the wave of insurgency, security forces have increased their numbers in the capital. Meanwhile, the RCD was constantly under fire and forced to quit the “national unity” government. The party itself is a mix of former FLN bosses and Islamists to whom it gives democratic cover.

As for whatever power Bouteflika still retains, he’s following a policy of “fierce liberalization” of all non-strategic sectors, thus add-

ing more to misery at the grassroots. Other sectors, like petroleum and telecommunications, remain in the hands of the military.⁹⁷

Just weeks after 9/11, an article on the nature of terrorism also made specific accusations about CIA support of Algerian radical Islamists. According to the writer, past CIA financing, arming, and training of violent radical Islamist groups suggest that, despite their momentary dispute, the two sides share much in common. Remember that the US did much the same in using the old spies and scientists of the Third Reich in facing off against the Soviet Union. "It is thus difficult in this context to judge solely radical Islamism as diabolical without denouncing just as vehemently the political, police, and military fundamentalism that governs our Western democracies and that distorts more every day the meaning of the word 'democracy.'" "The thousands of Manhattan victims astonishingly suppress the fact that the CIA financed GIA groups, which the French far right supported publicly without negative repercussions to its presidential candidates."⁹⁸

In April 2002, a detailed article traced developments in Kabylia from the "Black Spring" of the previous year. The initial explosive period, it said, saw daily clashes between demonstrators and police throughout the region, as well as public buildings, police stations, and political party offices in flames. While Bouteflika tried to calm the situation by launching an inquiry into the events, the report two months later emphasized the excess use of firearms. In the meantime, the resistance movement kept growing. Marches brought 50,000–100,000 persons into the streets, and there was a series of local general strikes in the Béjaïa area. Young people continued to challenge the repressive forces in dozens of towns and villages throughout the region.

On May 21, said the writer, half a million demonstrators marched in the streets of Tizi-Ouzou. Three days later, tens of thousands of women went into the streets to denounce the security forces and seek their punishment. Anti-riot police intensified their attacks on demonstrators, and four more youths were killed in two days. "It was truly a revolt against the military regime, but also against Kabyle politicians considered 'traitors and sellouts.' Kabylia was henceforth forbidden territory for the regime."

Movements of solidarity elsewhere were also important, he said, as those organized by Kabyle students at universities in Algiers, Oran, and Sétif. University students at Tébessa went on strike and blocked a major nearby highway. As well, a new round of demonstrations by high school

students began after the minister of education announced no postponement of the *baccalaureat* exams as demanded by students, parents, and teachers.

Another important dimension, he emphasized, was the organization of over 200 village committees throughout Kabylia. Delegates were also elected from each village to participate in an inter-*wilaya* coordination council, the CADC. The latter, meeting in El-Kseur, created a platform of non-negotiable demands including the removal of all *gendarmes* from the region. As explained in October, it was agreed that the new movement would remain independent and autonomous from all political parties, state institutions, and the regime and any allegiance to them. It would not transform itself into a political party and would remain a grassroots citizens' movement of regional democratization of political life. Surprising to many was the initial absence of a demand for constitutional recognition of the Berber language, Tamazight. But this demand appeared later on.

In mid-June 2001, he said, there was a huge demonstration and march in Algiers to present the El-Kseur platform to the president. But marchers were greeted by the violent response of anti-riot police instead. Eventually, Bouteflika announced his willingness to negotiate with elements of the *aarch* (assembly) movement open to negotiation with the regime about the contents of the platform, thus hoping to divide Kabyles and weaken the movement. But this move simply inflamed Kabyle sentiment further and caused new eruptions to occur in December.

In March 2002, said the writer, Bouteflika announced the conclusion of dialogue and the following decisions: Tamazight would be recognized as a national language, police guilty of homicide would be punished, and compensation would be granted to victims of police violence and their families. However, he totally refused the demand for removal of *gendarmes* from the region. His mixed response was criticized and seen as a maneuver to affect the coming May legislative elections. New rioting now erupted in Tizi-Ouzou, Akbou, Azazga, El Kseur, Seddouk, Oued-Ghir, Sidi-Aïch, and elsewhere. With the revived insurgency came more repression, including more deaths from police bullets, thus returning the region to nearly the same confrontational situation as the previous April.

At the same time, the writer reported, the CADC called for a boycott of the legislative elections both regionally and nationally. In Tizi-Ouzou and many other locales, ballot boxes and voting lists were removed and burned in public. School kids left their schools to join older youths in protests. A highway east of Bouira was blocked with burning tires. At Tazmalt, the tax collector's office was burned. Further intensification of local marches and strikes was planned to precede the scheduled elections.

However, "far from showing solidarity, the political parties fell behind Bouteflika who declared that 'it was inconceivable that legislative elections

could be postponed or canceled because one *wilaya* or region called for their boycott.” While the PT, FLN, and PRA withdrew their applications for posing candidates, the MSP and RND announced that they would participate.

It is certainly positive, the writer said in summary, that the movement has declared its autonomy from political parties and so on. Despite being a grassroots effort, however, the limits of that kind of approach are its bourgeois nature—there are no social demands, there is nothing to inscribe it within the framework of class struggle. The local strikes principally involved teachers, students, and hospital workers. The “proletariat” was only marginally involved. Despite strikes in the rest of Algeria, the CADC never successfully linked its nationalist struggle with that of the labor movement. It is important to know who the delegates are (women are excluded). “Wouldn’t it be notables who use the youth as ‘cannon fodder?’ As well, it is important to note that the majority of army officers and judicial officials are Kabyle!” Thus, it is a real stretch to speak of social revolution before large changes.⁹⁹

A sequel article on the same subject followed the successful election boycott. The report began with a description of various tactics used to assure this outcome. A general strike went along with three days of riots in Tizi-Ouzou. Militants blocked polling places, town halls were occupied, highway barriers prevented the usual busloads of fake voters from Algiers, military convoys were ambushed, and a truck carrying ballot boxes to villages was burned. “Given what happened with these May 30th elections, one could say that in many ways Kabyles could give lessons to that French electorate which, having allowed Le Pen to make it to the second round [of the 2002 presidential election], was tempted to make amends by voting for Chirac.”

While French people gently marched along, he argued, “Kabylia worked to make the voting a failure since it viewed it as simply one more provocation.” Official results showed a mere 2.62 percent participation in Béjaïa *wilaya* and only 1.84 percent in that of Tizi-Ouzou. “For a year, the region has lived in a state of permanent insurrection! Towns and villages organized themselves and attempts were made to put direct democracy into place, despite many roadblocks from the regime and opposition parties. The young regularly confront the anti-riot forces they call ‘robo-cops,’ the population supports them and repression hits back hard.”

Just before the election, he said, repression increased, as the state tried to decapitate the “spontaneous, radical, and organized” movement with a wave of arrests of delegates from the village committees. Over 300 of them were arbitrarily detained. Some were rapidly judged and condemned for “obstruction of the voting process” or “insults to officials.” These delegates merely “synthesized the expectations, desires, and frustrations of the population.” Their efforts to organize non-violent challenges to the state “could not be tolerated by the generals and their allies—the so-called ‘moderate’ Islamists. But their arrests provoked a new round of intensified insurgency,

before and after the election.” Many were wounded and one died from rifle fire, the 116th death since March 2001. Meanwhile, the regime pretends that violence in Algeria is the prerogative of the GIA.

Because the police and army deserted much of Kabylia in the civil war of the '90s, he pointed out, local villagers had to form self-defense groups to oppose “the crazies of Allah.” While no doubt the military regime would not have complained if the radical Islamists had “cleaned up” the whole region, in fact Kabylia was relatively spared. At the same time, traditional local village committees were established but with a new mission, and the regime interpreted this as the beginning of a separatist movement. Afterward came the provocations, the first deaths, the insurrection, and the march on Algiers. This ancient people thus join Tibetans, Kurds, Palestinians, and others “who refuse to blend into a national entity founded partly on the basis of wanting this people to disappear.”

In the last several years, he said, Kabyles have seen the FLN get close with the so-called “moderate” Islamists, while the opposition parties have accommodated themselves to the new context. Having no more confidence in these parties they once trusted, they now have “spectacularly turned their backs on the electoral process.” Though this strategy has not yet proven to be completely effective, it was the only one possible against the military/mafia Algerian regime and has caused great shocks to the FFS and RCD, unable to recuperate the movement to their own advantage.

He suggested that the choices are few for those who reject the Islamists, the mafia, and the sellouts. Despite voters being intentionally reminded by the regime of the violence and massacres of the '90s (estimates of 150,000–300,000 dead), they did not fall in line and actually were quite interested in the idea of boycott and proud abstentionism. Thus, for the legislative election on May 30, less than half of those registered actually voted. In turn, the minister of interior celebrated the turnout, demonstrating the regime's attitude toward the electorate. At the same time, the puppet FLN candidates—elected by 1 percent of registered voters in Kabylia—were promptly evacuated from the region to reside full time in Algiers, with no need to return to the area they supposedly represented. Of course, rioters also let them know what sort of greeting they'd get if they ever came back.

Overall, he concluded, these phony elections provided a great victory for the FLN and a further weakening of the opposition. Bouteflika must now decide whether to organize a new government entirely from the FLN or whether to include a few Islamists as well. While he tries to prolong the fable of a democratic Algeria, in Tizi-Ouzou discussion goes on and people are organizing the next barricades.¹⁰⁰

Almost one year later, a journal article focused further on Kabylia. Said the writer, though the FFS and RCD have each tried to take over the movement in Kabylia to their own advantage, it has remained autonomous.

Decisions are made at the base by consensus or three-quarter majorities. Those elected can have their mandates revoked. Committees of towns and villages of the seven *départements* are then coordinated by an overall committee of delegates from below. "Far from confining itself to traditionalist identity demands, and still less yet separatist as one reads too often, Kabyles struggle against generalized misery and the 'mafia of the generals' and attempt to go beyond simply Kabylia with their demands to extend them to the whole country as in 1980, or the Spring of 2001 when the large cities were put under a state of siege to protect them from 'contagion.'"

Separatist demands derive, he said, from only the largely unrepresentative group (MAK) of Berber singer Ferhat Mehenni. Nevertheless, the *aarch* movement can still be justifiably criticized, as with the absence of female participation—a problem raised by the inter-*wilaya* coordination body itself in August 2001. But this problem extends throughout all of Algeria and has roots in patriarchal customs in Kabylia. Hopefully, the huge women's movement will correct the situation.

Overall, he thought, the movement has gained strength in much of the country. The non-negotiable El-Kseur Platform of June 11, 2001 serves as a sort of minimum set of demands. Recently, the coordination body of the *aarchs* gained support from the MFDA (Autonomous Democratic Women's Movement) and the coordinating body for the citizens' committees of Algiers. "Taking account of the evermore determined youth rebellion, the circle is closing and all of Algeria could eventually finish by overthrowing the corrupt regime, even if none of these movements declare themselves revolutionary."¹⁰¹

An April article on French president Chirac's policy against the war in Iraq provided several reasons for his stand. Among these was the strong competition in Africa with the United States, felt by the French state and French businesses. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US seeks to expand its presence further, including at the expense of former colonial powers like France. "From Algeria, with an Islamism supported by the American CIA, to the present day Ivory Coast, tensions contribute to this competition." And Chirac did not hesitate to send troops into the latter country, using justifications similar to those that Bush used for invading Iraq. Chirac's position also helped preserve some degree of support from the younger Arab immigrant population in France who voted and demonstrated for him last year in the presidential campaign against Le Pen.¹⁰²

Another article on the situation in Kabylia appeared in April 2004 on the occasion of a new Algerian presidential election. Said the writer, Kabyle's beautiful seashore beaches are usually quite popular, but at present they are empty and shops are closed. "Everyone wants to obey the general strike directives proclaimed by the citizens' movement. The boycotts are massive, such as the one against payment of electrical bills to the Sonelgaz utility." For the legislative elections of 2002, a similar boycott, rioting, and forced closing of voting offices led to a maximum of 2–3 percent voter participation.

The regime has responded, he said, with the arrests of hundreds. Nevertheless, the constant popular pressure has forced the release of many, including some delegates. At the same time, people successfully revealed attempts by the regime to manipulate certain delegates (so-called "delegates from Taiwan") to its own advantage. Since 2001, the citizens movement has not only counteracted the regime, it has also forced some concessions.

In January 2004, he reported, negotiations with [Prime] Minister Ahmed Ouyahia¹⁰³ led to the regime's acceptance of most of the points in the El-Kseur platform. Their implementation is still in course, though the process is stalled over organization of a referendum on Berber identity. The *aarch* movement insists that it's impossible to have a referendum on matters of identity.

"It is thus possible that the campaign to boycott the presidential vote on April 8th will be strongly followed in Kabylia. And it is probable that it will also have its effects on the rest of Algeria."¹⁰⁴

The result of that election was analyzed in a broader context three weeks later in a new article. Official results, said the writer, were "extraordinary." Supposedly, 84.99% of those who voted (58.07% of registered voters) selected Bouteflika for a second term. "Thus, he who is considered in his own country as the Pokémon of the generals (and the IMF), and also nicknamed... 'Boutesrika' (thief) has just gained a stupefying result."

Some commentators beforehand, said the writer, thought this would be the first Algerian election without a predictable outcome—basically a contest between Bouteflika and Ali Benflis.¹⁰⁵ But the latter was the ex-prime minister of the former and Bouteflika is married to Benflis's sister. "Vive pluralism." As well, various leading Algerian political figures, like Aït-Ahmed, had predicted publicly that the outcome would be fixed.

With modern technology, he said, ballot-box stuffing is no longer needed for manipulating the results. Perhaps this is why the 200 foreign observers found nothing irregular. While 192 appeals were filed concerning electoral fraud, within four days the Constitutional Council rejected them all—hardly suggesting a thorough review of their merits, especially given the bureaucratic paralysis Algeria is known for. Nevertheless, the international press, Chirac, Bush, Blair, and various international organizations sent their congratulations, celebrating the supposed return of democracy to Algeria.

In Kabylia, he reported, official results proclaimed that 15.71 percent of eligible voters cast ballots in Béjaïa and 17.8 percent in Tizi-Ouzou, but none of my Kabyle friends believe this. They all reported that ballot boxes had been burned in their villages and that the highest possible rate would have been 2–3 percent. “Must one disbelieve the TV and official figures? Or are all of my friends imbeciles?” In any case, 17 percent of registered voters is still a very small minority, especially if one counts all adults who are not registered for one or another reason. Given that *gendarmes*, the bourgeoisie, and politicians would be likely to vote, despite the proclaimed boycott, that would imply very few voters outside of those categories.

Anyway, as anarchists, he said, we understand that the way democracy is practiced is a “mystification. No need to falsify the results, it always comes out the same. Whoever wins, it is the interests of the ruling classes that will be prioritized, to the detriment of the working classes. The only democracy worthy of interest is direct democracy. And it is in Algeria, in the *wilayas* (*départements*) of Béjaïa, Bouira, and Tizi-Ouzou that one can see the best contemporary prospects. The struggle of the Kabyle citizens’ movement is a movement to study and follow, not only for all of Algeria, but also for the rest of the planet.”¹⁰⁶

A June article declared that even as Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia repeated his official appeals to the citizen movement to renew dialogue, a new round of tragedy has developed. This time, in the Aurès, it said, the Chaouis launched a new grassroots uprising that was heavily repressed. On May 13, at T’kout in the *wilaya* of Batna, local defense groups founded by the regime “to combat terrorism” assassinated a well-known local youth, Chaib Argabi, for no reason at a checkpoint. His friend, in turn, was kidnapped and locked up. Non-violent demonstrations the next day showed solidarity and anger. These were repressed with great brutality by the police and army. For many hours, demonstrators were chased down—even in their homes—and arrested, and many fled to the forests or nearby towns. Many of the arrested were delegates in the citizens’ movement.

“The CMA (World Amazigh Congress)¹⁰⁷ denounced the hundreds of beatings, the dozens of arrests, as well as the strong possibility of prisoners being tortured. This is actually what happened, and one youth testified about it” in an article in *Le Matin* on May 26. At the same time, the village was cordoned off to prevent a Kabyle *aarchs* solidarity delegation from making contact with the local population.

But T’Kout is not alone, said the writer. Other towns have also risen up recently, including Djelfa, Sidi Rached, and Bordj Bou Arréridj. Of course, the general population is left uninformed of such events since these could be dangerously influential. “Let us join our voices to those of Algerians. Let us denounce Bouteflika’s repression! And let us denounce his accomplices in the Chirac regime and elsewhere, always seeking more

riches. Solidarity with the Algerian population and with all the oppressed of the Earth!”¹⁰⁸

In late June, the journal posted an article announcing a benefit concert for the “20 ans barakat” (“Twenty Years Enough”) Algerian collective seeking to overturn the 1984 Family Code. As it states, “this text, based on the Sharia, institutionalizes the inferiority of half of society.” Though Article 29 of the Algerian constitution recognized gender equality, the Family Code clearly states the sub-citizen status of females.

The latter, it said, stipulates that wives must obey their husbands as family heads (Article 39), polygamy is recognized (Article 8), a divorce of parents automatically leaves the lodging in the hands of the father, parental authorizations must come from fathers instead of mothers (Article 87), a Muslim woman cannot marry a non-Muslim (Article 31), and inheritances are divided unequally (Articles 126, 183). An additional Algerian law states that Algerian nationality can only be passed on to children by the father—not the mother.

This range of legislation “is the driving force for a genuine social regression. It has permitted and encouraged the fragmentation and breakup of the society. The massacres of populations, the kidnappings and sexual enslavement of thousands of females over the past dozen years, collective rapes—as at Hassi-Messaoud in July 2001—carried out by citizens ‘above suspicion,’ and every daily extortion against Algerian women are nourished by this legal statute that officially places women in the hands of men.” These unjust laws must be repealed and replaced by laws founded on gender equality. This would begin a solution to the Algerian drama.¹⁰⁹

In the fall of 2004, two writers described Bouteflika’s “pacification” strategy and summarized the nature and determination of the grassroots Algerian opposition. “Subjected to ten years of terror, launched by religious fundamentalism (nearly 200,000 deaths) in order to install an Islamic autocracy, since April 2001 the Algerian population began an insurrection against the political regime produced by the fraudulent ‘pluralist and democratic’ elections that carried army candidate Bouteflika, the sole candidate still running, into the presidency of the republic.” The regime renewed its “plebiscite masquerade” last April. This political mafia system consists of a coalition of clans centered around the army, dedicated to preserving privileges with neo-liberal economic policy and a nationalist/Islamist ideology.

The anti-social policies of the regime, they wrote, have left Algeria’s population in poverty.¹¹⁰ The years of armed Islamist terrorism have traumatized

people at the grassroots. Nevertheless, whole sections of Algerian society have fought against Bouteflika's attacks on freedom since his first days as president. This was especially clear in Kabylia with the spontaneous movement of autonomous committees, the *aarch* movement, structured horizontally by federalist principles and guided by the El-Kseur platform.

Within several months, they said, this contestation of the regime spread to other parts of the country, including Algiers and Boumerdès in the center; the Aurès communities of Khenchela and Bordj bou Arréridj in the east; Ouargla and Djelfa in the south; and Chlef and Aïn Defla in the west. It involved several social sectors (especially teachers and health care workers) and helped to jump-start worker protest that until then had been inhibited by the need to survive terrorism. The past three years have thus seen the development of a network of new organizations "that experiment with a form of direct democracy."

This, they declared, is the foundation for what is called the citizens' movement, involving thousands of Algerians who refuse to accept the mafia regime's authoritarianism and oppression, repression, and corruption. "The whole program of this network of autonomous assemblies, broken free from official politicians, aims, through passive resistance, insurrection, and civil disobedience, at the recognition and (re)conquest of social, economic, linguistic, and cultural rights refused to the Algerian people."

To break the movement and prevent its expansion, stated the writers, repressive and ideological means have been mobilized—police, courts, administration, media, and so on. Brutal repression of grassroots demonstrations, killings, arrests, and imprisonment have all been employed. The regime has also tried to create internal divisions within organizations, co-opt them into political parties, and infiltrate them with police agents. Since his April "re-election," Bouteflika has intensified his efforts to suppress freedom.

"We note that in France, if the large media have spoken quite little of the repression against a free press, they've almost totally blacked out any coverage (except by *l'Humanité* and the anarchist press) on the citizens' movement insurrection. They've similarly neglected the possible uses (officially against the 'interior' enemy: only Islamist terrorism!) of the military and police resources going to the Algerian government by virtue of the Franco-Algerian agreements on national defense matters."¹¹

Revolts in French working-class urban immigrant neighborhoods in late 2005 motivated an analysis and self-reflection about the anarchist movement in early 2006. "The upheavals that shook the suburbs of the large urban centers in France are the expression of a spontaneous grassroots rebellion.... Injustice in equal opportunity for jobs, lodging, rights, etc. led those most destitute and vulnerable to express their anger and despair." It

is capitalism itself, said the writers, through its need to maintain a reservoir of the cheapest labor, that is responsible for keeping people in such a plight. While 60 percent of this population has jobs, the regime wishes to keep them as uninformed and de-politicized as possible, giving them attention only in the discriminatory form of regular police harassment and raids.

In such a context, they said, it is not surprising to see the growth of Muslim religious influence in these areas, though its impact on young people has its limits, as shown in the violence of their upheaval. No connection was made between the upheavals and the trade union movement, no calls for a general strike even though the government was shown to be uncertain in its reaction to this new type of revolt. While quite familiar with and able to manage typical demonstrations at Place de la Bastille, the regime was quite obviously less at ease in the beginning stages of the suburb insurgency. The opportunity existed for significant solidarity interventions by trade unions and revolutionary movements, but the leadership of all of these remained inert. This seems to underline the sociological reality of a significant gap between inhabitants of the suburbs and “the political militants of all types, including anarchists.”

“In effect, anarchists were equally at the sidelines of these revolts because the distance separating our lives and those of the youth of those neighborhoods is immense. Though anarchists never speak for others and don’t settle for compassion or pity, it is nevertheless true that we are not present in the large housing developments and that no dialogue occurs with the concerned population.” Beyond the great difficulty in dealing with daily racism, “it is much more delicate to bring reflection and to help individual and collective consciousness advance in the suburbs.” This is a challenge to our past strategies and demonstrates the need to find new ones.

Given the long-time explosive situation in the suburbs, they said, rebellions were predictable. Nevertheless, anarchists, like others, did nothing in preparation simply because they were totally absent from these settings. Trade unions tended to abandon social struggles in favor of political battles and elections. The victims of capitalism had nowhere to turn except rebellion, and this is an important lesson of last fall. That form of revolt, for which the regime was ill prepared, and the possibility of a very large general strike movement may be the best way to block the path of capitalism and state repression. We must link the situation of the suburbs with the ultra-liberal economic policy of the regime since they are both part of the same problem.

By reflection, dialogue, and common projects, they urged, we can combat old ideas and promote our own anti-capitalist values among the oppressed. “These values are called ‘*autogestion* and federalism’; they result from the disappearance of all political, economic, and religious powers in a society of freedom, responsibility, mutual aid, and equality, where everyone has a place regardless of their origin.”¹¹²



The next article, in April 2009, was the first in four and a half years to provide direct political description and analysis of current Algerian politics. The previous November, President Bouteflika succeeded in altering the constitution to remove the two-term limitation. "The chief having expressed his wish to lead Algeria until his death, the presidential election of April 9th was doomed to be a mere formality for the occupant of the El Mouradia Palace (the presidential residence). Of course, that's what it was."

"Though Bouteflika doesn't claim the country as his own property, like Robert Mugabe does in Zimbabwe, the score he prides himself with (90.24%) could almost make the southern African dictator turn pale with jealousy." The election itself was a gigantic fraud that failed to fool Algerians, thus explaining their large-scale boycott. "The extravagant figures announced by the regime resulted, no more and no less, from mammoth vote-rigging."

Beyond the farce of the election itself, said the writer, Bouteflika's strategy is to pose himself as the "father of the country." His overall political career was launched by Boumédiène in 1958 and he succeeded Zeroual as president in 1999. As the two main political forces in the country are the army and the Islamists, his basic tactic is to carefully handle the interests of these sworn enemies by posing himself as "the sole guarantor of the regained peace, following the bloody red decade of the 90s, which devastated the country."

In order to gain lasting support from the Islamists, the writer stated, the Sultan promised to not hold FIS militants accountable for their atrocities. At the same time, for the army's sake, the regime will not acknowledge that the Islamist electoral victory in 1991–92 was stolen from them by the military. Because Bouteflika granted perpetual immunity to the radical Islamist guerrillas by his legal Civil Concord and National Reconciliation, they could descend from the maquis and take up again their religious life. At the same time, he refuses to repeal the regressive 1984 Family Code, despite the long resistance of Algerian women.

"Known for skirt-chasing in his younger years, Bouteflika now exaggerates his show of devotion to Allah to the point where he plans to build at the bay of Algiers the world's largest mosque." As well, another of his gifts means that believers can now broadcast their sermons on the Holy Koran network, just as he also gave in to Berbers' long-standing demand for launching their first network in the Tamazight language. Bouteflika has also managed to sufficiently satisfy the army and its military security and intelligence branches to keep them in their barracks while also raking in their riches to appease their "furious appetite for everything that can make their bank accounts prosper."

But experience, emphasized the writer, is very different for most Algerians. The great majority are poor; the 60 percent of the population under

thirty years of age have a 70 percent unemployment rate, lodgings are scarce, and many youth join the ranks of the *harragas*—those who burn their papers and seek to flee the country. Buying power has gone down with the rapid inflation of costs for basic necessities. The minimum monthly wage is about 120 euros,¹¹³ while a kilo of potatoes has recently cost 1 euro.

The overall macro-economic figures for Algeria, said the writer, are illusory. While Algerians have billions of dollars in Western banks that could easily cover three years worth of imports, the ratio of export revenues to import costs has fallen two years in a row. “To satisfy the lobby of importers closely connected with the completely corrupt highest levels of the regime and the military, the government has allowed imports to increase—200% in six years.” This policy permits an outlet for Algerians’ great frustration, but also accounts for mounting household indebtedness. At the same time, the manna of hydrocarbon revenues (98 percent of Algeria’s export revenues) will be severely decreasing due to the collapse of the market.

While the future of the country is bleak, the writer declared, the ability to express discontent is also controlled. Elections are a masquerade, the media is muzzled (200 journalists charged in the courts with libel in 2007), and the people have to put up with the regime’s *hogra* (the disdain of authorities to ordinary citizens). Is there potential for a grassroots revolt, as in Oran in 2008? The military would no doubt intervene with savage repression.¹¹⁴

A review of the well-publicized book *L’insurrection qui vient* (*The Coming Insurrection*), declared that it is “a clear and fast-moving text, written for reading with pleasure, to spread around despite its imperfections. Its rhetoric reveals a solid bourgeois culture but placed at the service of a project that is less so. It doesn’t matter who speaks if what is written is useful.”

Said the reviewer, the text contains an uncompromising fundamental critique of the alienating and dying civilization of work. It also describes the emptiness of the media and entertainment realms and the overall movement of the system toward a new capitalist totalitarianism, an austere eco-fascism, justified by ecological crisis. The book contains useful propositions as in advocating a decentralist system based on non-hierarchical communes.

Nevertheless, he said, the book fails to resolve, let alone sometimes even mention, some large problems. For example, it is not clear how large populations can be expected to survive in large urban concentrations or in ever more hostile climates. It also fails to explain how necessary agronomy and health research can be carried out or non-hierarchical social relations introduced and maintained without reliance on more institutionalized structures of research typically associated with domination. It doesn’t ad-

dress how people can be de-conditioned from their reliance on leaders or their addiction to passive consumerism.

Importantly, he added, it doesn't answer how to move from favoring violence to approaches based on collective non-violence. In fact, the book encourages the old forms of artisan violence (throwing pavement stones, Molotov cocktails, etc.) despite the likelihood of immediate repression and the further perpetuation of the overall spiral of violence. This issue is of the greatest urgency. We cannot wait until everyone is "completely anesthetized and terrorized."¹¹⁵

In January 2011, *Le Monde Libertaire* ran an article with special focus on Tunisia, but in fact found comparable conditions in Morocco and Algeria as well. Revolt in the streets, it said, characterizes Algeria as well as Tunisia. The self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi in Tunisia revealed the desperate situation of youth in both countries. "In Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia, young graduates find no employment and are thus condemned to odd jobs, to live between corruption and police violence. Young people, and, with them, the whole population thus came out in the streets to proclaim their discomfort, their suffering, and their rejection of corrupt politics." The violent repressive response of the government caused many deaths and wounded, but Western countries, including France, were indifferent. Yet they are the ones who support these autocratic regimes that proclaim themselves as the barriers to the "Islamist menace."

Young people throughout North Africa should construct their future in opposition to statist and religious power. "The Fédération Anarchiste fully supports the demonstrators and condemns with its greatest determination police violence, corruption and the murderous silence of the bourgeois 'democracies.' Everywhere in the world, young people have set out against poverty and restriction of freedom. Together, we will no longer have fear!"¹¹⁶

Coordination des Groupes Anarchistes (CGA)

IN JUNE 2002, THE SOUTHWESTERN FRENCH REGIONAL UNION of the FA (Toulouse, Montpellier, Perpignan, and other locales) broke off entirely, for organizational reasons, to become the CGA (Coordination des Groupes Anarchistes).¹¹⁷ The group continued to publish its four-page periodical, *Infos et Analyses Libertaires*, which was originally begun as an FA regional project in 1981.

According to CGA statutes adopted in 2002, while rebellions by individuals are important, they gain more clarity and effectiveness when joined together through political organization. At the same time, organizational

form prefigures “the type of society in which we wish to live in the future.” The CGA aims to participate in every relevant social struggle working toward the elimination of exploitation and alienation. While sometimes actively involved, side by side, with organizations that have a statist orientation, the CGA will never accept compromising its anti-statist principles.

“The CGA is not nihilistic, but revolutionary in the sense that each of its demands opens up systematically on another demand in the future, requiring us to go ever further down the path of our liberation. Each of the struggles we engage in to end exploitative and alienating society is for us a step encouraging greater consciousness of individuals and the masses in our ability to force systems to retreat, to defeat them and to manage society without intermediaries.”

The CGA is opposed, said the statement, to any participation in elections or governments at any level, from local municipalities to national and European entities. It is committed to avoiding any relations of domination within its own organization. In wishing to advance class struggle, the CGA favors those social confrontations, trade union battles, and grassroots citizen movements that organize themselves to force the retreat of exploitation and domination.¹¹⁸

A CGA observer’s presentation to the Fédération Anarchiste congress in Rennes in 2004 expressed satisfaction with the ability of various anarchist organizations to work together in mass actions at the G8 meeting at Annemasse in June 2003 and at the Anarchist Social Forum in Paris the following November. It was a positive development for the movement and helped to encourage many non-anarchists to become interested in anarchism. The observer also stressed the CGA’s care to maintain a workable federal organizational structure, including constant rotation of posts and ability to recall delegates, as well as its commitment to encouraging, as fully as possible, self-management practice by participants in any of the struggles in which it is engaged.¹¹⁹

Though *Infos et Analyses Libertaires* published articles directly concerning Algeria in 1982 and 1992, apparently nothing further of this sort appeared in the CGA journal to the present. However, groups in the CGA were involved in continuing critiques and demonstrations concerning the plight of the *sans-papiers* since 1998.¹²⁰

Responding to the fall 2005 insurgencies and repression in the immigrant working-class suburbs, the CGA stated that a regime providing only idleness and “stupid and humiliating police checks” cannot genuinely be astonished when the deaths of two youths became “the objective symbol of the contempt and aggression victimizing the young people of

the working-class neighborhoods, and that this event set off a cascade of nationwide violence.”

The CGA doesn’t preach violence for its own sake, declared the communiqué. Obviously, burning cars or public buildings are not solutions for the ills of the suburbs. But neither is resignation! “What do these youths want if not more justice? They simply want to be recognized and esteemed. When those who govern and those well-off refuse to treat them with the dignity and humanity they demand, they cannot be astonished, without being hypocritical fuck-ups, that they are now harvesting the hatred that they themselves planted.” Their concrete demands are quite legitimate: “stable jobs with decent wages and work conditions; proper housing; access to leisure activities, culture, and various social services; schooling that is genuinely egalitarian and liberating; and an end to incessant and counter-productive police surveillance.”

When Sarkozy defends police repression and uses war-like and racist language, it said, we cannot be surprised that youths in the neighborhoods respond with violence. “In the face of a lack of communication and the flaunted contempt of leaders, it seems to us difficult to consider this violence as anything but a legitimate rebellion, the consequence of the exclusion and social damages caused by this class society. A society that above all exerts itself to organize misery in an era of abundance.”¹²¹

In March 2011, a CGA writer summarized some of the main dynamics and outcomes of the Kabyle insurrection in 2001, relying on texts already provided in the anarchist press years earlier. Though concluding that little remains from that 2001 revolt, it nevertheless “should interest us as anarchists. It is an example and an attempt to practice a certain number of our principles. All the more significant since it was done without anarchist presence, thus proving once again that our aspirations come directly from the people and are part of their own logical goals. Let us hope that yesterday’s isolation of Algerian revolutionaries will tomorrow be swept away by the wind of a social and anarchist revolution.”¹²²

Anarcho-Syndicalists (CNT-AIT and CNT-F)

CNT-AIT

The 1993 split of the Confédération Nationale du Travail continued throughout the next decade, apparently sometimes marked by open competition and mutual accusations and sometimes with acceptance of differences, but also with occasionally expressed hope for eventual reunification.

The CNT-AIT remains a section of the anarcho-syndicalist International Workers' Association and has seven regional unions. Its present coordinating center is in Toulouse and apparently it has an overall membership base in the low hundreds at best.¹²³ Contrary to other trade unions, including its rival CNT-F, it remains committed to non-participation in *cogestion* functions in enterprises (elected personnel delegates and enterprise committees) and relies on direct action instead to achieve its goals. The CNT-AIT also maintains a strong internationalist orientation, demonstrating this concern in articles in its journals and web sites.



In December 2001, the web site for the Paris-Nord regional union posted a new article on the sufferings of Algerians caused by the domestic war of the 1990s. "The number of deaths indicated officially is 150,000, along with 20,000 disappearances. A macabre count for the year 2000 showed whose lives were lost in this terrible conflict: among the 9,006 counted victims for that year were 1,025 'terrorists,' 603 military personnel, and 117 members of self-defense groups. All the rest, that is over three-quarters, were civilians—especially villagers."

Said the writer, it is a ridiculous guerrilla war that is so cautious about attacking the ruling class but that kills so many civilians. In reality, it is a decade of war between rival clans for power, at the cost of 1,600 deaths per month! For a decade, neither the government nor the opposition—consisting of Islamists and "an emerging pseudo-progressive intellectual and/or regionalist new bourgeoisie—appear willing to stop before the taking of property, all property, by one or the other clique has occurred."

In fact, it was stated, it is wrong to speak of "opposition" since everyone fights for power, as "everyone dreams of being *khalifa* in place of the *khalifa*. They are all ready to sacrifice us, to drink our blood down to the last drop, if needed to succeed." This is why, even after ten years of war, the number of victims continues to increase. The deaths are in every region of Algeria. Some have died from bullets, some from bombs, and some from swords. There are others, in increasing numbers, who have died from starvation and total misery. "Their desperation and ruin of their living conditions has been so great this year that dozens of whole families have committed collective suicide (by turning on the gas in their own homes). But who hides behind these crimes?"

A good example of the cynical manipulations of the regime and Westerners behind the cover of war, said the writer, concerns the numerous massacres in the Mitidja plain—the so-called triangle of death. In the face of this vicious terror campaign, surviving local residents have abandoned their fields and villages. Thanks to this massive migration from this area, these

lands, which today are public property, will be privatized like elsewhere under directives from the IMF. "This state of totally ruined living conditions is fertile soil for the propagation of every form of nationalism (religious, linguistic/cultural, etc.), and in the end serves only to divide those in misery so as to better subjugate them."¹²⁴

The next item on Algeria published on the same CNT-AIT web site, in April 2003, was the lengthy 2001 text by post-situationist Jaime Semprun about the 2001 insurrection in Kabylia.¹²⁵ Because of its length and the fact that many details have already been provided in earlier articles, only select portions of this item are included below. As well, to not needlessly duplicate the accessible larger part of the first half of the text already translated (part I and some of part II), only the previously untranslated remainder now follows (the rest of part II and parts III and IV) below.

(The omitted text described underlying motivations for the insurrection based on the oppressive and unresponsive state, the demand for removal of *gendarmes*, the women's demonstration in Tizi-Ouzou, the rejection of political parties, the assemblies movement organization, and the huge, but state-repressed, march on Algiers on June 14.)

The regime's blow to the movement on June 14, said Semprun, established the limit of the uprising since that time. Two aborted Algiers marches in July and August showed that, at least for now, the time for such confrontations was over. "To maintain its chance of spreading throughout the rest of Algeria, the movement should especially resume the initiative in Kabylia by reinforcing its autonomy: after the first offensive momentum comes the time for internal development. After changing so much around it, the movement of assemblies could not avoid change for itself." Thus, in July and August, the assemblies met to consider their own organization, their means and ends.

The coordinating body for Tizi-Ouzou *wilaya*, he said, reaffirmed the basic democratic principles of the movement: free debates at the base; delegates elected in village and neighborhood assemblies; and a principle of "horizontalism," assuring strict control of delegates by the base. During this period of public debates, a split developed between those who wished to transform the coordinating bodies into structures of responsibility to engage in negotiations and those who defended horizontalism, the autonomy of assemblies, and the principle of no negotiations. At Béjaïa, the former group consisted of leftists and trade unionists. Their opponents called successfully for a general strike and a march at the end of July where the "traitors" were denounced. At the same time, the Tizi-Ouzou *wilaya* coordinating body adopted a code of honor by which delegates pledged not to

engage in any activity that aimed to establish direct or indirect links to the regime, to completely reject any electoral or political party activity, and to avoid giving the movement any regionalist dimension whatsoever.

Several delegates favorable to negotiations, reported Semprun, were approached by emissaries of the regime to see if a visit by Bouteflika might be possible, at which time he could be presented with the El-Kseur program. This maneuver was immediately denounced by a majority and reinforced their will to ban any official from entering the region. In fact, several days earlier, Interior Minister Zerhouni¹²⁶ was greeted with stones when he came to install a new official.

While the government temporarily continued to seek moderate elites who could represent the movement in negotiations and even described this *aarch* movement as positive for Algeria, he said, the inter-*wilaya* coordinating body continued to insist that the platform was non-negotiable and the government soon turned to a critical, disparaging discourse. (As with Kremlinologists, there now are various people who try to discover which clans in the regime and which factions within the movement might be open to negotiation. Such speculation has become “a professional specialization” among observers of Algeria who try to discern and interpret the various maneuvers and intrigues that divide the hidden forces controlling the regime. “But henceforth, these internal struggles are secondary since the principal power struggle, which determines all the rest, is that between the self-organized movement of the insurgency and all its enemies together.”)

Meanwhile, Semprun said, attempts to circumvent the movement persisted. At the end of August, a “community council” published a communiqué criticizing “the political amateurism of some and the bad politicking calculations of others, which continue loudly to interfere with public debate by preventing honest citizens, anxious about the future of their children, to make their voices heard.” Several days later, they made clear their orientation by criticizing the coordinating body for “the exclusion of all scientific and political personalities of the community who could bring sense and consistency to the movement.”

He pointed out that everywhere, to some extent, there appeared various new ad hoc “committees” and “coordinating bodies” attacking the radicals of the assembly movement and promoting, for example, the reduction of the spiral of violence in order to protect the youth. Such “parallel” committees, in turn, were denounced by the movement as efforts encouraged by the regime. At the same time, the FFS opportunistically sought to encourage a youth organization it was close to (the RAJ) to provide a national framework and cadres for the movement to increase its “efficiency.”

The FFS national secretary, in turn, publicly claimed, Semprun said, that the FFS was the first party to totally involve itself in the national citizens movement through its organization of two historic marches in May.

He also insisted that the FFS wished this non-violent movement for democratic change to develop properly by avoiding certain individuals or groups taking it over to impose their clannish goals. Specifically, he said, “FFS militants remain determined to act against all forms of drift that would lead the movement toward impasse and ghettoization for the purpose of imposing dangerous projects. In the end, such projects play the game of those regime clans opposed to every political and democratic solution to the crisis.”

In fact, “the most ‘dangerous’ project of the assemblies, which leads them to conceive of all others, is that of their own sovereignty. The will to closely control all delegation of power has already brought them far, but it can lead them still further: having re-established village assemblies for the sole purpose of uniting together against repression, the insurgents discover other purposes for which they can be the instrument. The great art of these returns to the past by revolutions when they revive ancient forms of community is *to rediscover more than what was lost*. The principal curse striking village-based democracy is clearly an isolation that prevents any historic initiative. And this is precisely what has disappeared in the midst of the general upheaval of Algerian society.”

In the next section of this text, Semprun studied in detail the fate of these traditional village institutions under French colonial rule. Even before the great insurrection of 1871, French troops were confronted with “the local strength and resources of Kabyle tribes,” which French colonial historian Ch.-A. Julien called “the little village-level democratic republics of Kabylia,” in reference to their refusal even to submit to the command of Abd el-Kader. Tocqueville, as well, referred to Kabyles as men “neither rich, poor, servants, nor masters, who chose their own chiefs and scarcely noticed that they had chiefs.” A vast 19th-century literature is devoted to portraying the extreme egalitarianism and insubordination of Kabyles, their absolute refusal to accept any abuse of authority by their local chiefs.

The French, in turn, he said, tried to co-opt Kabyle egalitarianism, industriousness, and little tendency toward religion against the alleged vices of Arabs (“servile, dishonest, lying, lazy, fanatical, etc.”). While some colonial officials came to genuinely admire the customs of the Berbers—“assuredly remarkable and worthy of respect”—those civilians and military who thought they could easily use the village assemblies as intermediaries for their authority were in fact the first victims of those traditional bodies. Even when official assemblies were established after the 1871 repression, communities were still secretly guided by the hidden genuine assemblies.

“Slanders against the presentday assemblies depend greatly on the fact that in Grande Kabylia (principally in the *wilaya* of Tizi-Ouzou) they designated their federation with the old name for the tribes (*aarch*) that in the past made up the vast political unity of Kabyles, separate from the circumstantial leagues formed against common threats.” For this reason,

journalists have played with the term as a kind of local folklore signifying a regressive turn to the past, thus helping progressives to rationalize their distrust of the movement. This is all the easier since the term “tribe,” in the rest of Algeria, really refers to no more than “a form of political clientelism and participation in the clan struggles within the bureaucracy.”

The fact that this village assembly tradition persisted, at least in memory, throughout the 20th century, said Semprun, is shown by the references regularly made to it in the evolution of the modern Algerian nationalist movement. In 1937, for example, Amar Imache, the secretary-general of the recently banned Etoile Nord-Africaine, wrote that the first republican and democratic government was in Kabylia, long before France and elsewhere had ever heard of those words. In 1949, Kabyles in the PPA who opposed Arabo-Islamic ideology criticized the internal functioning of the party, its encouragement of conformism, and the lack of democracy. The role of religion was also criticized since it discouraged the possibility of a genuine radical nationalism. In this so-called “Berberist crisis,” the critics were expelled on the same grounds of “Berber materialism” used later by the bureaucrats of the FLN against “whoever threatened the monolithism of the nationalist ideology.” Finally, at the founding of the FFS in 1963, the importance of the village assembly (*tajmat*) was recognized as a “democratic institution still enduring in our days and that is part of our most authentic and most glorious national heritage.”

“Obviously more important than these representations diversely marred by ideology, the persistence *in the behavior* of the anti-state tradition of village communities is itself well proven. This is especially the case for the concept of collective honor retained by these communities, according to which it was seriously undermining to make an appeal to any outside authority.” Thus, in 1948 a village assembly forbade any communication about community matters, including by the mayor, to any outside authority, even if it concerned tax revenues or an individual’s morality. Another example was the vigorous defense by a village assembly against a returned émigré who sought help from *gendarmes* in a dispute with that body.

During the recent formation of local assemblies, he said, one delegate referred as well to the past practice of resolving local conflicts by the *tajmat* without any recourse to the formal court—which would be considered shameful. “It is no doubt quite difficult for a citizen of our mass democracies, who is more inclined *to seek* intervention of the state in each detail of his life, to understand this type of civic involvement.” Even stranger for our passive democracy was the report of one village assembly that fined any individual, who could afford it, for not buying a gun.¹²⁷

In the final section of his essay, Semprun offers various critiques of the movement to date, while conceding that “even if it stops where it is, the Algerian insurrection already accomplished much. In very difficult

conditions, it achieved for freedom what the inhabitants of market democracy could never even *imagine*, although they are losing more and more of their illusions of security. Its limitations or its faults are not those stated by persons whose ideology (in general, tritely statist) prevents them from adopting the perspective of the insurgents themselves, thus making them incapable of imagining the circumstances in which the insurgents found themselves and the problems they confronted."

"On the other hand," he said, "for one who makes no pretense of judging this movement in the name of specific principles or interests separate from their own, but to defend it in the name of what it best accomplished and the direction in which its own principles led it, a certain number of inconsistencies, illusions, or naiveties cause some very real weaknesses. To raise them is only another way of rendering homage to the freedom of critique that from the beginning prevailed in the assemblies." As one journalist for an Algiers newspaper reported, at the witnessed meetings of the coordinating body, debate on a single point sometimes went on for hours, with heated opinions. Consensus was only gradually brought forth, often at the second or third meeting.

Semprun observed that since achieving consensus for every decision could end up paralyzing the coordinating bodies, they wisely decided that a three-fourths majority was adequate when unanimity was impossible. As well, in August, the inter-*wilaya* body decided that the absence of women was a weakness and thus encouraged their participation. "Let us observe on this issue that only a feminist obsessed with *parity* can believe that women played no role in village communities since they were not formally members of the assemblies, and not see how they in fact participated in the current movement without there being the need to set, in American style, a quota of delegates."

A more serious concern, said Semprun, is the timid approach of the movement concerning "Islamic" terrorism, knowing, of course, the heavy role of the army and military security forces "in its fabrication and perpetuation for ten years—at least in the form of the 'dirty war' led by the pretend eradicators. This strange restraint, on a subject quite decisive for a movement that declares its intent to take back Algerian history, was already an error when attacks picked up again (in Algiers for the first time in three years), truly encircling Kabylia from west to east, like a barrage of gunfire. Only one member of a grassroots committee, from Béjaïa, could be found who at least posed the question: 'Weren't the terrorists reactivated to kill the popular movement in Kabylia?'"

Actually, said Semprun, the restraint shown on this issue derives from a more central restraint in the basic strategy spontaneously adopted by the assemblies since last spring. "Having created in Kabylia a state of fact that resembles in many ways a classic situation of *dual power*, they avoid

everything that could compromise the fragile equilibrium thereby established. Their commitment, many times reiterated, to non-violent methods, understandable as it is after so many deaths for such a long time, will not however allow them to do enough to control practically the inevitable role of violence—even if only in the face of provocations—in a conflict that can only be forever more acute.”

Even their critique of politics, he said, “remains a sort of critique *by default*: autonomy is strongly defended against the parties, but the exercise of that autonomy is confined to ‘protest.’ Every ‘proposition’ is immediately rejected as political and associated with those ‘taking power’ alternatives that the code of honor adopted by the Tizi-Ouzou delegates rejected.” In June, for example, the Béjaïa meeting rejected a proposed platform because it specifically contained two demands—the repeal of the Family Code and an end to the state of emergency—interpreted as “partisan” since the RCD supported the first and the FFS, the second.

Such rejection, said Semprun, was not the product of an intentional strategy of “moderation” by an elite group on the path to seeking power, though such an eventual internal development of this sort within the movement is always possible. And the coordinating body for Tizi-Ouzou on August 24 unanimously rejected a suggestion to create two paid positions to compose a secretariat. “The limitation of the *explicit* program of the assemblies is less due to a conciliatory policy than to the rejection of all of the latest negotiation proposals, coming this time quite officially from Bouteflika, intending to show that the assemblies would not give way to a new show of force.”

The strategy of civil disobedience now envisaged by the assemblies, he stated, logically follows from the original spontaneous strategy of the coordinating bodies. The first such effort is the non-payment of electric bills, since they include a tax for the benefit of state television. “And one can imagine that in transforming itself into a positive plan of secession, the anti-statist assemblies movement will find before it all those tasks that fall to an insurrectional regime and that it has, to date, failed to assume, a bit like the Spanish anarchists in 1936. No part of the regime being clearly ready to take the risk of open repression, it seems in effect quite possible that a status of autonomy, like that in post-Franco Spain, could be given to Kabylia. There is scarcely any other resolution to the crisis and, aside from the fact that this would be the most acceptable abroad, it is likely to gain in Kabylia the support of all the political personnel who only wait for this occasion.”

While the FFS has tried to organize all the enemies of the assemblies in Kabylia, he said, the RCD, too discredited to do the same, works toward an autonomy agreement with the regime. “Those who are getting ready to lead an autonomous Kabylia, like the repugnant Ferhat Mehenni [president of the MAK] whose program consists of making this region ‘the California of

all Africa,' obviously have ambitions and goals radically opposed to the deep inclination of the coordination bodies. And if it is truly this scenario of a 'Kabyle policy' that prevails in Algiers (the regime thus reviving here also the methods of colonization), the assemblies could no longer retreat, unless they totally abdicate by accepting integration into a 'regionalized' state system, before the task of defending their own autonomy by extending it to everything it, to date, has put aside." This is especially important for them to clarify concerning the issue of Kabylia's wealth of natural resources, briefly mentioned in the El-Kseur program when it refused to accept further regional "pauperization," and a future approach to economic development. "Everything is still possible for the Kabyle assemblies, including such a position."

Unfortunately, "in France, the Algerian insurrection has been more ignored than misunderstood—and yet more than ignored, spontaneously mistaken, false consciousness seeing nothing there interesting, and occupied as it is in scrutinizing the 'social phenomena' brought to its attention. But for the moment, the insurgents of Algeria are alone, more alone than revolutionaries have ever been in the past."¹²⁸

On April 6, 2002, "Quelques amis français des aarchs" (at the same "Encyclopédie des Nuisances" location associated with Jaime Semprun) published a new discussion on the Kabyle revolt. It specifically attacked the complicity of all in France, including politicians and the media, who ignored or lied about the insurrection in Kabylia in the midst of heavy Algerian state repression.

"Since the time when Parisians, without flinching, let the police massacre Algerians in the streets, the shame of being French has never been stronger than today. We can wash away this shame only by denouncing and fighting with all our means every sort of complicity the enemies of the Kabyle insurgents' self-organization find here [in France]. These [Algerian] enemies, that everyone there knows, include the owners of the opposition, bureaucrats of totally discredited parties, who still hope through a crisis to be called to sit in a 'national union government.'"

The Algerian state, they said, has resumed its police methods in Kabylia after trying and failing with attempts to appease the movement and entice it to dialogue. But the displacement of several national police brigades and the supposed "recognition" of the Berber language didn't fool anyone. Thus, a Tizi-Ouzou rioter stated two weeks ago, "'For a year now, we've had lots of time to reflect: it's the regime that should leave, otherwise our problems will never be resolved.' This bureaucratic/military regime, throughout its mutations by cooptation and mafia-like purges, has successfully survived for forty years after first implanting itself by repressing attempts at *autogestion* in the first months of independence."

After systematic exploitation of the country, murderous chaos, and general pauperization, they said, the only real way to confront the problems

of Algeria is “self-organization at the base by direct participation in all community affairs.” The Kabyle *aarch* movement has set an example for the whole world: “freedom, but also firmness, dignity and courage based on the collective exercise of responsibility in the common struggle. This is something neither the repression, slanders nor the organized confusion by the media will succeed in making us forget.”¹²⁹

A more extensive discussion of the aftermath and implications of the Kabyle insurrection was presented by Robert Vasseur in the CNT-AIT’s *Combat Syndicaliste* issue of September–October 2002. He began by assessing the nature and significance of the El-Kseur Platform. There is no doubt, he says, that the latter is brief, “allusive and very general in some of its demands, while also insufficient if one regards it as a positive program for social transformation. It thus leaves itself quite open to critiques from the left, especially for not being exhaustive in its ‘socio-economic’ demands.”

Though such critiques are not always well intentioned, he said, they seem to show a failure to understand the inevitable course of such a process. The platform was adopted just a month and a half after the beginning of the rebellion and, unless there’s a ready-made “revolutionary” ideology already in place, it takes awhile for those involved in such an upheaval to begin to assess, focus on, and deepen their long-range goals. In any case, the El-Kseur Platform did not pretend to be a program for social transformation, but rather a prerequisite for such.

Nevertheless, said Vasseur, perhaps because of its brevity, the program went right to the basic point “by demanding that which the Algerian state could not agree to, as a whole, without disappearing. We know that power is in fact held by a tight circle of mafia-like generals and that it survives, from the summit to the base of the pyramid, only through terror and corruption: for it to fulfill the El-Kseur Platform would amount to committing suicide.” All of the protagonists understood well that demands such as withdrawing the *gendarme* brigades, placing all government administration (including the security corps) under the authority of elected bodies, and direct acquittal of all demonstrators would have that result.

Thus, he stated, while the state continues using its repressive force to wear down the rebellion, it also tries in every way to empty the platform of its subversive content—including by carrying out negotiations with false (so-called “Taiwanese”) delegates. However, the assemblies movement has quite stubbornly insisted that the platform is non-changeable and non-negotiable and has consistently resisted any dialogue and other attempts at manipulation.

“It is thus the fall of the regime that is the central stake of this conflict and critics should either admit this perspective or clearly declare that it is a foolish attack bound to fail. The insurrection has gone on for sixteen months in Kabylia while not ceding an inch of terrain to the state, and its

self-organization makes it hopeful of extending itself to other regions. Indeed, not a week goes by without riots bursting out in the four corners of the country, to the point where it often seems that Algeria is on the verge of a general uprising.”

It is thus not fantastic, he insisted, to believe that the regime could fall. Certain delegates state that they can wait it out for years until this occurs. In such a case, we’re talking about “an openly revolutionary situation. Algerians have scores to settle and certain of the tasks that await them are strikingly obvious: the destruction of military/bureaucratic power at every level, the dismantling of military security and the special armed units, hunting down all who were corrupt, etc.”

At this level of analysis, he argued, one can critique the ambiguity of the El-Kseur Platform and the self-chosen role of the *aarchs* to be no more than a counter-power. Thus, there’s an implicit potential risk for a “democratic transition” by political reformers to move in, keeping most of the state apparatus, negotiating the generals’ removal without punishment, and trying its best to limit any purge to a few scapegoats. While the *aarchs* have tried to assure their continued role, as in the Larbaâ Nath Iraten platform of October 31, 2001,¹³⁰ by requiring any solutions after fulfillment of the El-Kseur demands to be submitted for approval by the insurrection movement’s structures, it is inconceivable that any reconstructing state would tolerate any persistent coexistence with a self-organization of the masses. “There is no exception to that historical law.”

It is striking, he said, to see how the regime recently treated the Algiers region. Fearing that troubles elsewhere might spread to the capital area, they assaulted the June 14, 2001 march on Algiers and encouraged new guerrilla attacks from Autumn 2001 on, after three years of reprieve, and crushed subsequently even the slightest hint of rebellion. It isn’t possible to know if the new wave of guerrilla attacks was committed directly by the special forces or by manipulated groups. It could also be the result of simply removing barriers to their activity. The result, however, is the same.

While far from perfect, he said, the difficult context in which the insurrection emerged must be taken into account: a ferocious repression, infiltration attempts by military security, manipulations by the regime, and low blows by the political parties. “Besides, they themselves seem to have some consciousness of their limits and their difficulties, since the inter-*wilaya* meeting of June 27–30, 2002 compiled a list of dysfunctional practices, issued recommendations, and planned a special meeting on these questions.”

Because the so-called “independent” press in Algeria, he noted, has failed to seriously observe local coordinating bodies, let alone village or neighborhood committees, from the beginning, it’s focused on the gatherings at the *wilaya* and inter-*wilaya* levels. Thus, they’ve been in no position to investigate relations between young people who rioted and delegates, or

the truth or not of the accusation some have made that there is a new political elite being created. Conditions differ from one locale to another, so contradictory evidence can be gathered even from direct sources.

Crosschecking available data, said Vasseur, suggests that the average delegate age is probably under forty years, and the vast majority is far from being notables. The local committees choose their delegates on the basis of competence, and some committees have used their powers of recall or even systematic rotation of delegates. Young rioters attend the local assemblies and are involved in every chosen action. They thus believe that the movement belongs to them. If anyone tries to betray the movement, banishment forever would be the penalty. While an emerging bureaucracy is always a risk, it seems that young Kabyles here have a place to develop their consciousness and take a role as apprentices in the historical struggle.¹³¹

The issue of whether the movement form is archaic, he said, is more ambiguous. It's obvious that no one wants to return to a traditional society past, however, there's greater danger of seduction by Western material abundance and "the mirage of pseudo-democracy." Nevertheless, there definitely are certain archaic features in movement practice. Thus, for example, Kabyle custom applies a rigorous quarantine to anyone who seriously attacks collective honor. Not only did they apply this to the violent *gendarmes*, but also to those who pretend to be delegates and are ready to negotiate with the regime. But this seems like a quite wise and sane tradition.

Vasseur observed that the false consciousness in our own society, which prevents people from seeing alternatives, makes their use of terms like "archaic" or "attachment to the past" irrational and dogmatic and makes them incapable of critiquing the most modern forms of alienation. Many historical factors have combined to allow Kabyles to preserve, though less than one thinks, a number of the customs, institutions, and behaviors of their ancestors. But this is not at all a handicap. The survival of the *tajmat* is a good example since it provided an immediately accessible anti-hierarchical form of decision making. The same benefit is true from their traditional fierce antagonism to central power, which helps to expose the reality of the Algerian regime.

"More generally, attachment to their values—such as honor and individual responsibility as cardinal moral virtues, the durability of their bonds of mutual aid and solidarity, and their proverbial sense of hospitality—allow a point of comparison from which one can knowledgeably decide what to keep or change, without succumbing to automatic permanent innovation. As well, this indispensable point of comparison offers to us a measure of what we ourselves have lost here."

In France, he claimed, our blind march of progress has destroyed our small communities, suppressed our social relations, and eliminated all individual autonomy. Those who criticize "archaic" Kabyle customs from a

supposedly superior position worth emulating should realize that we have a great deal to re-learn from them, such as basic dignity. It is archaism that can shame modernism instead of the reverse.

The inter-*wilaya* coordinating body, he said, reported in August 2001 that one of the movement's strengths was "the rebirth of an ancestral organization to fight all injustice, and that itself applies to modern times." But among its weak points, it noted the absence of females in the organization. This was not an automatic decision, but rather the rebirth of an ancestral structure showing a bad side in not always representing the views of women. While, to their credit, the *aarchs* passed formal measures on this issue, it's not likely that that will suffice since it's more due to the rigidity and strictness in adhering to customs, including the isolation of women in their roles as mothers and homemakers (at least in the villages). A genuine effective participation of women would require a deep transformation of social relations.

But here again, he said, one cannot assume automatically that French life is an example to be followed instead of traditional Kabyle society, since many Kabyle women have a less miserable existence than many women employees in the West subject to limited wages, strangers to their children, and dying of boredom in the urban working-class suburbs. While not defending a return to the past, it is important to note that alienation takes many forms and neuroses or more severe emotional distress may be hidden under our own supposedly freer forms of behavior. One should inquire what the nature and quality of social opportunity for women actually is, while admitting that the *aarch* movement has some distance to go in this and other realms.

Said Vasseur, it was reported in Kabylia at the height of *gendarme* violence in May and June 2001 that mothers urged their sons to go into the streets since they would be shamed if their children did not take part in the struggle at that moment. Writers like Mouloud Mammeri and Mouloud Feraoun described honestly the nature of traditional Kabyle society. They refuted, as other studies have as well, that Kabyle women live reclusive lives, deprived of social bonds. It is much more complex.

It is wrong, he stated, to use the term "Berberist perspective" since this implies an ethnic-based position that is, in fact, asserted by only a tiny minority. Of course, Kabyles are Berbers and will remain so. This means that they have a language and living culture that they are determined to keep, as is their right. The question is how this might be best done in relation to broader universal values.

The present movement, he pointed out, owes a lot to the Berber Spring movement of twenty years ago and the Berber cultural activist decade that followed. But those struggles themselves involved more than simply an assertion of ethnic identity. They clearly were a part of a broader rejection of domination by the Algerian state, of the intentional falsification of

history and of the Arabo-Islamic ideology used to oppress Algerians since independence. They also were part of a broader struggle for free expression and democracy.

Repression of that movement, he said, was responsible, where this was possible, for motivating many young people to involve themselves directly in village affairs and thus in the revival of the *tajmat*. This helps to explain why this local structure and the horizontalist commitment appeared again so rapidly in the present conflict. That generation had already experienced the efforts to manipulate and recuperate, for the benefit of political parties, the cultural movement of that generation. Thus, in the present struggle, all the basics of the system were called into question and assertion of Berber identity was only one part of *aarch* demands. This fact clearly contradicts those over the years who asserted that only identity questions could persistently motivate Kabyles. As well, the present movement in Kabylia clearly struggles for all Algerians, as shown in all of its statements.

The material foundations for the traditional economy in Algeria, he observed, were completely undermined by colonialism and the economic policies of four decades of independence—the devastation of the agricultural sector, the frenzied industrialization, and the great emphasis on petrochemicals. The ruin of the economy is obvious and is repeatedly articulated by those who riot. A lack of jobs, potable water, and housing is why the town halls and public buildings were ransacked and burned.

As for how well traditional culture has survived, he said, it doesn't seem that the heavy infusion of modern technology has drastically penetrated and poisoned the consciousness and lifestyles of Algerians. "Traditional communitarian values remain very much alive, especially, for better or worse, in the persistence of very strong family ties. On the other hand, it is certain that all Algerians have in common an acute consciousness of the inhuman nature of their life conditions, a total absence of illusions on the fate reserved for them and the will for a radical rupture with the system. This is true especially with the rioting youth, who force admiration for their courage and generosity."

Contrary to popular belief, he noted, Kabyle immigrants are far from homogeneous. Unfortunately, many are not really concerned with what's happening in Kabylia since they've found or are trying to find their niche here in France. At the other extreme are those, of equal number, who are struggling with survival issues, without immigration papers or housing and over-exploited, sometimes by their own countrymen. "These obviously have the clearest perspective on French society and are often most virulent toward Berberism as an ideological mask for class relations between Kabyles. Still others, very informed about the history of their country and having kept solid ties with their villages, have immediately understood the importance and approved the emergence of the *aarchs*. Until now, they've

remained at a distance, by refusing to serve as rank and file for the maneuvers of leaders of immigrant organizations—they know the music.”

Immigrant associations, he claimed, haven’t done much to publicize and massively circulate the statements of the *aarch* movement or to describe and support the degree of subversion that has occurred. Probably not even 10 percent of Kabyle immigrants in the Paris area have read the honor code for the *aarch* delegates.

No doubt the political party and intellectual “elites” have their own reason not to publicize the movement’s activities, he said, but even the former have been forced to publicly declare their support. For militants at the base, it’s more a matter of not staying current with their information in good part because of their strong integration into French society. As with immigrants generally, this pressures them to assimilate and internalize the dominant values of the country receiving them, while at the same time creating a kind of mental self-defense through glorifying an a-historical and mythical community of origin in all its purity and not necessarily related to ongoing events. This explains as well why the MAK has an influence in France proportionally far beyond that in Kabylia. In turn, this contrasts with recent immigrants of the past year or those who visited Kabylia for an extended stay in order to directly participate in the movement. Most such people have advanced positions, very supportive of the movement, and the need to publicize it among non-Kabyle Algerian immigrants in France.

Vasseur emphasized that the work of the *aarchs* continues. They have much still to do. Over the long run, the fate of the movement will depend on its ability to adapt its positions and action to new contexts at each stage. During the last four months, for example, the imprisonment of or authorities’ search for delegates has forced coordinating bodies to meet under the protection of villagers organized into vigilance committees, with young people surrounding and guarding the meeting places. At the same time, the regime has continued its efforts to divide the movement, such as by pressuring prisoners to accept dialogue as the price of their freedom or by making payments to the families of those who died from the violence of the repression. But consulted delegates and the families were united in refusing to accept government payments since “the deaths were not for sale.”

Responses to new situations such as these, he said, must continue to be made. Though the civil disobedience of distancing themselves from the state has already cost the population dearly, the coordinating bodies have not yet taken the step of assuming responsibility for all of social life and don’t actually have the means to do so. In some locales, however, the *taj-mat* has assumed many of the responsibilities it had in the past. The regime is thus free to encourage chaos, especially in the urban areas, and ransacking of the environment, as with sand and forests, in order to accentuate a climate of insecurity.

Some observers, he stated, have suggested that discouragement and weariness are leading the movement toward an impasse. Meanwhile, the coordinating bodies recently decided on a total boycott of the local elections scheduled for October 10, a more important decision than the previous rejection of legislative voting, for it is understood that this will necessitate a deeper structuring and capability of the horizontalist movement. Nevertheless, it was hoped, this evidence of renewed dedication and sacrifice will help to influence international opinion as well.

Despite this defiant stance by the movement, he said, the FFS decided in early August to participate in local elections if certain conditions were met, including release of those imprisoned for their part in demonstrations. Conveniently, several days later, Bouteflika issued such an order. But this masquerade fooled no one. The movement coordinating body stated that it had nothing to do with any negotiations but that the prisoner release was due to grassroots pressures on the regime. Meanwhile the Béjaïa coordinating body stated that it would consider as treasonous any attempt to run candidates in the scheduled local elections.

While the RCD is too discredited to attempt defiance of the movement, said Vasseur, the FFS must still decide its course. Having held control of most of the municipal governments, the party has lost all of its local struggles against the movement since its beginnings. While it may be too far along in its negotiations with one or another clan in the regime, it is obvious that it is uncertain of its own power since it has stated the possibility that it might change its position at any moment.

However it evolves, he said, this episode bluntly demonstrated the limits of the *aarch* movement's resolve to stay aloof from party politics. There is a certain logic here, since the movement aimed merely to install a lawful democratic state, not to itself take over management of communal affairs. But it showed a profound distinction between political parties that want to take state power and a grassroots movement bringing together all the revolutionary concerns of the society. "If it wants effectively to reject all other forms of allegiance, preserve the autonomy of the coordinating bodies, and guarantee 'the primacy of delegates over partisan militants,' the assemblies will have to sooner or later demand that delegates who are party members either resign from their party or from their role as delegate."

For right now, he concluded, it seems likely that the potential for chaos and confrontation between Kabyles will change the direction of the movement. In the meantime, the regime no doubt will keep trying to divide it by encouraging those who wish to dialogue. It will also be instructive to see how the rest of the country responds to the rejection of local elections, given how so many Algerians are indifferent toward their deputies and hate their mayors and local elected officials who treat them so badly on a daily basis. A comparable election rejection in other Algerian regions is not

in itself an extension of the grassroots self-organization in Kabylia, “but it could be one more step toward a definitive divorce from the system.” For the moment, as Jaime Semprun stated in September 2001, Algerian insurgents are more alone than any revolutionaries of the past.¹³²

Posted on the same web site at the same time as Semprun’s article was a brief description of the April 2003 commemoration of the Berber Spring in Kabylia. “In Algeria, Kabylia is paralyzed by a general strike. Demonstrations are planned for the 23rd anniversary of the ‘Berber Spring’ in the three principal cities of the region: Tizi-Ouzou, Béjaïa, and Bouira.”

“The *aarchs*, the spearhead of the opposition in Kabylia, it said, called for a general strike and demonstrations in that region to commemorate the ‘Berber Spring’ and to demand the liberation of movement prisoners jailed for several months. The city of Tizi-Ouzou, capital of Grande Kabylia (110 km east of Algiers), is paralyzed by the strike. A march should begin there and end up near the city jail where, since October, have been held delegates of the movement among whom is its figurehead, Belaïd Abrika.”¹³³



In September 2003, the same web site posted the report of a recent trip to Algeria. Said the writer, arriving in Oran, friends took us to a nightclub where various groups offered their *rai* music. Having been so careful in the choice of my own clothes for the trip, “I never expected to see all the girls in short skirts (they arrived with long coats), boys flaunting their homosexuality, and the flow of alcohol! Revealing details of a completely schizophrenic and hypocritical society, where life is not the same for everyone and where people are not all radical Islamists or corrupt.”

The next afternoon, she said, we started off to visit the family of my friend and her birthplace, 400 km by highway, in the so-called triangle of death. There were many barricades by soldiers and national police along the way. Each one gave me the chills. “It could be a fake barricade, and even with genuine ones, we never knew what might happen, especially since we were two women fans of hip-hop! In each case, we had to turn off the music, put out the cigarettes, come to a stop, state our destination, avoid any movement, and make ourselves inconspicuous.” Night had fallen by the time we were thirty minutes away from our destination. As we approached and entered the town, my friend identified various places along the road where people had been massacred, including various members of her immediate and extended family.

Once at her sister-in-law’s house, she said, her uncle told me that here everyone went armed since it was dangerous and they were responsible for their own security. His large family lives 3 km from the town “in a permanent state of fear and anxiety.” He explained that they had received

anonymous phone calls announcing the deaths of each of them. The callers recited Koranic funeral verses, and told them to prepare their burial shrouds. They threatened to kidnap the children, returning only their heads. They then received menacing letters and the murders began.

Said the uncle, “We lived with the fear of death, with not arriving at our place of work or returning home, the fear of being kidnapped, tortured, and raped. At the house we organized as much as we could. We took turns watching at night for the terrorists and we walled up our windows. The children could no longer go to school or play outside. They were shut away in the house. Adults who had to go to work or had to go to the store for food and other needs changed their timing and routes every time to avoid being spotted. Those of us who had received threatening letters no longer even slept at the house and moved like nomads from one place to another. We asked ourselves what would be our future and we had no more tears to cry for our dead.”¹³⁴

A few months later, the same CNT-AIT web site published a set of three interviews with Algerians earlier appearing in *Macache*.¹³⁵ The first, with “Salem,” a university student in Béjaïa, in late December 2003, provided more details on the Kabyle insurgency and a different perspective on the assemblies movement. According to Salem, after the assassination by *gendarmes* of Massinissa Guermah and the kidnapping of students in Amizour in the presence of their teacher, the whole region exploded. “Young people were quite violent, barricades were set up, public buildings attacked, and the *gendarmes* began their killings.”

Thus, as university students, he said, “we had the responsibility to intervene. (We had planned to re-launch the social movement on May 19, but the insurrection beat us to it.) At our general assembly, we called for the structuring of this movement, the organization of youths’ violence, with the goal of a national grassroots movement. We called for creating neighborhood committees. We did not ask young people to return home, but to organize themselves: to give a political meaning to the violence of the young, which was legitimate, but if left unorganized would fall back to sporadic and circumstantial actions.” We also prepared a march, leaving from the university—the “first organized street combat.”

Though Kabylia was already bubbling over in anticipation of the April 20 commemoration of the Berber Spring and its related cultural content, he said, for the grassroots committee, “it was first of all social misery that was the motor force of this insurrection.” The slogans of youth at the barricades made clear that they felt they had nothing to lose. “The movement is fundamentally social (demands for work, housing) and for freedom. Slogans

called for an end to the existing regime. Also, there is the demand for recognition of the Amazigh [Berber] language.”

Said Salem, the political parties never left the scene. “The ordinary militant goes to the assemblies, though of course not in the name of the party, but of the village, the family, etc. For reasons of democracy, these militants have not been excluded from the movement. The *aarchs* burst forth, they are very plural. The totalitarian tendency was there from the beginning. While the grassroots committee of Béjaïa brought together women, workers, the unemployed, and intellectuals, the *aarchs* were based on belonging to the village. First, they excluded women, in the name of tradition, later, trade unionists (seeing them legitimately as a bureaucracy). One is confronted then with an assembly of notables. When FFS and RCD militants were elected in their village, they were able to reproduce political practice. Today, no one identifies themselves with the *aarchs*. [The latter] negotiate with the regime.”

“The movement endures,” he said, “because of the platform and the absence of the political class. In peoples’ consciousness, the movement has brought hope. There are no other alternatives. The crisis we live in today is political. Without a movement that expresses the interests of the oppressed, the unemployed, the working classes, there are no prospects. This movement shattered fear, the fear of the *gendarmes*, the fear of Islamists, the fear of the regime.”

A second interview, also at the end of December 2003, concerning a high-school teachers’ strike in Algeria, was with Redouane Osmane, a high-school French literature teacher in Bab el-Oued. According to the interviewee, the strike was motivated by a variety of accumulated grievances. Teachers had faced a dramatic loss of purchasing power over the past decade and an authoritarian administration. Even the increase in pay resulting from the strike fails to make up the difference. To cover expenses by the end of the month, teachers are forced to take extra little jobs. The strike movement began in the Algiers area, the result of about fifteen years of militant activity, then spread spontaneously around the country. Specifically, the demands set forth in September included pay increases, retirement after twenty-five years of work, and official recognition of the harshness of work conditions.

The desire to organize a high-school teachers union, said the activist, faced the opposition of the public authorities and the traditional trade unions. They tried to crush this new independent actor. The original battle was thus not over whether funds were available to meet teachers’ demands but rather how to “erase from Algerians’ imagination an independent and offensive movement as a symbol for the whole of society.”

The movement began, he explained, with an appeal among the most vulnerable high-school teachers, those in temporary positions who formed an opposition within UGTA. This association developed a founding text

that urged high-school teachers to emerge from their invisibility and take a role in society. This was quickly circulated and accepted. Assemblies of teachers were created among the high schools and a rotating leadership was elected for this new CLA (Council of the Lycées of Algiers). In other locales, they attempted to form a regular trade union.

The difference between CLA and CNAPEST (Autonomist National Council of High School and Technical School Teachers) is “a difference between the center and the periphery. As well, our movement’s democratic practices, such as the participation of women—very important in Algiers—is neither understood nor accepted by CNAPEST and outside of Algiers. CNAPEST functions in an authoritarian way, with five persons deciding for all the rest; a national council can decide for the whole base membership.”

“For example,” he said, “the agreement signed by CNAPEST with the ministry was first revealed to strikers on television. With the CLA, thus in Algiers, if we go to negotiate with the ministry, everything is discussed at the base general assembly and then brought back there again.” Though the CNAPEST exists in the rest of the country, there are many who share the CLA perspective, and the CLA is attempting to set up a national meeting to discuss and coordinate among those with a shared identity.

“In Algeria, it’s very important to defend freedom. Here there are extraordinary paradoxes. It’s an extremely policed society. When we refused to allow intelligence agents in our meetings, people thought we were crazy. With the terrorism, the police are everywhere and people have lost their instincts even for a private meeting. If the society had not regressed, we would have received large support. We must work to give society its voice, the same for our students. Our plan for the CLA is to organize the movement at the national level and to give it an identity that will allow it to move out from its corporatism, that is to make it be recognized as a social actor that will not be controlled.”

The third interview in this article was with several of the unemployed in the working-class neighborhoods of Béjaïa. To simplify the presentation, all of the remarks will be gathered together as if with one voice.

Though the initial murder of Guermah and the kidnapping of high-school students in Amizour seemed to be the cause of the Black Spring, it said that, “in reality, it was grassroots frustration, the social stagnation that caused these events. After 1990, economic restructuring demanded sacrifices. The State put these on the backs of the people and the people thought they had sacrificed too much. The state proved that it was deaf to the people’s demands. We therefore turned to other sorts of demands. To challenge an armored vehicle with a stone, for example. The riots took place essentially in Kabylia, but it’s a social crisis throughout Algeria. The death of Guermah and the kidnapping of the high school students

were the drop that caused the vase to overflow. The banners stated: 'To live standing up for one day, rather than 100 years on one's knees' and 'You can't kill us, we're already dead.' These words express a certain melancholy, a grief."

"The riots spread very quickly," it was said. "In two days all of Kabylia was involved. The State had no time to bring in reinforcements. People organized themselves to assure the safety of their own neighborhoods. Committees became responsible for representing the voice of each neighborhood in meetings taking place within the territory."

"The delegates of the committees," it stated, "were not those who took part in the revolt, they were not the rebels. Sometimes, they were even against the riots, they told you that you shouldn't destroy this or that. But young people who want to express their rebellion have no other way to be heard other than to go confront a policeman! The committees were formed in order to channel the uprising. In the neighborhood committees, there are three or four political orientations expressing themselves. The Kabyle people are very politicized. Even the way one eats bread has a political connotation."

As to the targets of the riots, "we sacked the symbols of the State, Sonelgas [the electric utility], post offices as well. We didn't touch schools, although I would have loved to do so since they gave us nothing. If I had need of papers, every time I went to the town hall, they made me wait—thus, I'm going to sack the town hall. For ten years, I pay water bills. But the water coming from my faucet two hours a day is not potable, thus I sack the water office, etc. Sacking the offices of political parties is a way of saying, 'We don't want partisan politicking in our movement.' The parties are totally discredited. They've brought us nothing. The movement says, 'I speak only in my own name and in my own way.'"

Concerning the boycott of elections, "Kabyles are a boycotting people from birth. Nothing is gained from voting. Elections never bring us anything. An elected person, once elected, turns his back to us. When people speak about the *aarchs*, I have the sense that they're telling me about something foreign. They're presented to us as our guardians. In the eyes of the State, they represent the people, but they represent nobody but themselves! The *aarchs* are caught between two poles, those who negotiate and those who don't. In truth, they're evenly split. These delegates have suppressed the movement. It does no good to stop when 123 young people have been murdered. What good is it to continue living when your brother is dead from the riots? We should live together or die together. We should live with dignity or die. Today, nothing has changed, the spark could flare up at any moment. We're sitting on a barrel of gunpowder!"¹³⁶

Following the October–November 2005 insurgency in the working-class immigrant suburbs of France, the CNT-AIT ran numerous articles in its journal, *Combat Syndicaliste* and in a special brochure, *Quelques réflexions sur la révolte des banlieues d'Automne 2005*,¹³⁷ to discuss and analyze the numerous issues involved. Beyond the general critiques of capitalism, racism, and the repressive policies and inflammatory rhetoric of Interior Minister Sarkozy (critiques in common with other anarchist organizations as presented in this collection earlier), several of the articles in the special brochure specifically targeted the compromised position of the French left, far left, other anarchists, and the CNT-AIT's rival, the CNT-Vignoles.

"The suburbs, where misery is concentrated, have been burning for a long time. What's happening today is not astonishing, only the contrary would be. From the right to the left, people pretend that it's the result of a failure of integration, of deficient education, of behavioral problems, of an identity communitarianism, of a reign of delinquents, of difficulties at work, etc. Explanations are mixed together and part of the population is stigmatized by the questionable behavior of some."¹³⁸ But this kind of theorizing lets those responsible off the hook. "The victim is transformed into the executioner, the oppressed into the oppressor."

"All the battles and demonstrations by working people and students of the housing projects are only the dawn of a popular resistance, the expression of social class contradictions." It is curious that some who speak in terms of class struggle, like Alain Krivine or Arlette Laguiller,¹³⁹ have expressed themselves concerning the present situation only in ambiguous and demagogic terms, without any revolutionary analysis. Is it possible that the sinful search for votes and electoral alliances were at stake?

"Certainly, those who rioted committed mistakes in their selection of targets when they destroyed property of their brothers in misery, but [political] silence and absence don't help to avoid errors. It is necessary to be present, among those who revolt in the housing estates, to give meaning, avoid wrongs, create links with other residents, work to develop mass support for the struggles, discuss and relate with the rest of the population, open debates, practice alliances and solidarity, and explain that Sarkozy threw oil on the fire in order to make people forget the deaths of two innocent persons."

We should remember that this left supported Chirac as a way to block Le Pen from power. How far are they willing to go with such an approach?¹⁴⁰

A second article in the CNT-AIT brochure was even more expansive in its critique. "The revolt that followed the death of two youths of Clichy was the right time to challenge all current politics. However, this wasn't the case—to the contrary. With the proclamation of the state of emergency, one more step was taken. The absence of solidarity on the part of political

movements that call themselves revolutionary or anarchist is partly responsible for this fatal result.”

Two justifications, it said, were offered by the “revolutionaries” for not supporting the insurgents of the suburbs: “the absence of political consciousness and the violence of the demonstrators.” Each of them in fact reinforces the position of the regime that they were simply the actions of delinquents instead of very real political reactions to the extreme violence committed against them by society. Those who were thus abandoned by the “conscious” and “responsible” militants are not likely to forget and, in the end, their isolation hurts all of us.

Thus, said the article, the comments of Trotskyist Lutte Ouvrière leader Arlette Laguiller dismiss “irresponsible” actions of the rioters as the result of poor consciousness and the actors as perhaps delinquents or drug dealers. Such comments suggest reliance more on reports from the media than perception of the real solidarity and social conscience of the rioters in resisting police repression.

In turn, it said, Alain Krivine, the historic leader of the Trotskyist Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, who lives in Saint-Denis, was most concerned during the riots about defending the safety of his own car and property and prided himself on developing “solidarity” with others in his neighborhood who were doing the same. As for the LCR, while its first communiqué on October 31 denounced the repressive measures of the regime, by November 3, the tone changed and the LCR aligned itself with the position of the Communist party, which called for a return to order and punishment of the rioters.

“Among those anarchists who preach the need for ‘media visibility,’ the reactions were even more delayed.” This suggested that the supposed strategy of “visibility” consisted in fact of simply signing the organizational name at the bottom of tracts put together by political parties, or participating in demonstrations organized by trade unions. “When the atmosphere becomes tinged with revolt, however, we no longer witness visibility, not even a humble discretion, but a clear and complete disappearance. The initial silence of ‘visible anarchists’ is all the more deafening since it is in Paris where the events began on October 27, 2005 and it is in that same city where the ‘leadership’ of these organizations is really found—even when the declared location is otherwise.”

Said the critique, it took over ten days for the first press releases to be written and even then it became clear that “the French anarchist movement had accepted the dominant discourse about violence.” The Fédération Anarchiste and Alternative Libertaire both regretted and criticized the haphazard destructiveness of the demonstrators. Without offering concrete alternatives, both organizations “seemed to discover that the expression of rebellion risks present interests in the hope of finding a better future. But

of course, rebellion, especially if it is contained and suppressed, effectively harms those who engage in it. This then is a risk that apparently the French ‘anarchists’ of the FA and AL are not ready to take.”

It took a long time as well, continued the article, to see what position would be taken by the CNT-Vignoles. In the end, there were contradictory statements released, ones that demonstrated the basic confusion within the organization. While some denounced “irresponsible behaviors,” others from the Paris regional union finally declared on November 11 the radical assertion that “we are all the scum” that the authorities despise. While a solidarity strike was called for two days later, by then the rebellion had ended.

Finally, said the article, to respond to the violence of the state, the CNT-Vignoles organized a “solidarity concert” on November 12, but this was held at their own headquarters in Paris, with proceeds going not to the “scum,” but rather to their own union. Even on November 16, a demonstration against the “state of emergency” law, called for by practically the entire left, all of the far left, and the “chronically visible” anarchists (represented by the Fédération Anarchiste and the CNT-Vignoles) gathered only 2,000 demonstrators, with very few from the suburbs.

“This farcical behavior by organizations claiming to belong to the anarchist movement or ‘revolutionary syndicalism’ naturally discredits the ideas that they pretend to represent in the eyes of all rebels. Now for us, the development and concretization of anarchist ideas is something essential (which of course is why we feel obligated to comment on the attitudes of organizations who claim this identity).” One must ask what sort of credibility such organizations have that brought no critiques to the debate and, in fact, followed the lead of Sarkozy in taking up negatively the imagery of violence when the violence they had glorified in the past finally became partly reality.

“For us of the CNT-AIT, the only question to be asked is whether this rebellion was or was not legitimate. If yes, one must clearly accept its contradictions and have the political courage to eventually pay the consequences for it. This is what we have done because we are persuaded that the place of militant revolutionaries is with rebels when that rebellion is legitimate, and because it is only from that place that we can, with them, go beyond the inherent contradictions in every revolt and move from revolt to revolution.”¹⁴¹

CNT-F

Known to some as the CNT-Vignoles after the 1990s split with the CNT-AIT, this organization has an ambiguous overlapping identity of anarcho-syndicalism and non-anarchist revolutionary syndicalism, with

members and published articles, at various points, expressing one or the other or a dual affinity.¹⁴² While no claimed membership figure can be verified from outside an organization, it seems likely that the CNT-F may have at least around 1,500 dues-paying members—potentially at least roughly ten times the membership numbers for its CNT-AIT rival.¹⁴³ (As of 2003, it claimed 5,000 members.)¹⁴⁴ In both cases, there are undoubtedly many non-dues-paying sympathizers and readers of their respective publications. The CNT-F has its greatest strength among workers in the education, health/social work, and the PTT (postal, telegraph, and telephone) sectors, but also includes workers from a variety of other realms. As of 2005, the CNT-F included about 200 local unions in its confederal structure.¹⁴⁵

Like its rival, CNT-F publications and web sites demonstrate a solid continuing interest in and commitment to international solidarity.¹⁴⁶ As well, the CNT-F has expressed its desire for the present AIT to “open itself to world realities” by greatly expanding its membership to include revolutionary unions from every continent. If it fails to do, says the CNT-F, a new expansive AIT should be created.¹⁴⁷

In early 2001, the CNT-F's *Combat Syndicaliste* explored the implications of four recent books on Algerian civilian massacres in the 1990s. While the regime maintains its position that all of these killings were carried out by radical Islamists (unquestioned claims passed on through the “eradicator” *El Watan* and *Liberté* daily papers), said the writer, enough serious questions are raised by the authors (and other sources) to make credible the claim of Algerian military *de facto* collaboration and/or direct responsibility itself. Among other actions, apparently, disguised DRS special units have been brought in by helicopter to attack isolated villages suspected of giving aid to guerrillas, then immediately flown out with official blame given to Islamist terrorists. After examining evidence in some detail, the writer concludes that “it is striking, in any case, to note that people speak out today with grave accusations against the regime and the latter apparently doesn't know how to respond.”¹⁴⁸

In mid-summer 2001, a lengthy article appeared concerning the Kabyle insurrection. While presenting many of the same background facts and ongoing details as other articles already presented in this text, several unique points stood out. Referring to the original 1980 “Berber Spring,” for example, the writers began the piece by emphasizing the close collaboration

between repressive regime forces and Islamists. “The revolt was crushed in blood. The Muslim Brothers joined with the police and served as informers for the Algerian repressive system.” At that point, the Islamists were not a political threat for those in power.

In some of the local village assemblies, said the writers, the strong motivation of young people in the insurrection has led some, in their twenties, to become elected leaders. At the same time, the biggest failure is the absence of women in assembly meetings and decision-making. Nevertheless, young women now have a greater role, not only in women’s demonstrations, but also on campuses and in student assemblies.

Amid miserable social conditions throughout Algeria, they said, “a caste of the privileged lead a princely life.” At the heart of this Algerian bourgeoisie are “the businessmen in uniform who lead Algeria from the shadows. A group of a dozen generals (retired or in office) and their families manage Algerian interests by mixing them with their own. They are all-powerful and have divided up the country’s economy. Each has his sector and especially each his benefits. They use the State and successive governments as political screens. These are the real leaders of Algeria.”

During the war against the Islamists, they said, state repression actually caused a lot more deaths than the Islamic groups.

Faced with the serious threat posed by the upcoming mid-June march on Algiers, two days earlier authorities released 2,000 common criminals “in order to destabilize the march and stir up robberies and pillage.” This was on top of the usual practice of infiltrating the movement with military in civilian clothes to intensify the upheaval and thus justify greater repression.¹⁴⁹



As of 2000, the CNT-F International Secretariat listed nine African unions of special interest, three of these in Algeria—SATEF, CLA, and SNA-PAP.¹⁵⁰ In December 2003, a CNT-F teachers union writer published an article on Algerian autonomous teachers’ unions. “Imagine [the French education minister] announcing that the strike of high school and technical school teachers that was steadily pursued for eight weeks had gone on long enough; that ‘it is time to blow the whistle for the end of recess’ and that therefore every persistent striker will be let go from the public education system and immediately replaced by unemployed university graduates. This bad dream is becoming a nightmare for nearly 58,000 of our Algerian colleagues confronted by the deathly rigidity of Bouteflika’s regime.”

The strike, he said, began last April, was suppressed, then reborn again two months ago. The principal demands are a 100 percent wage increase (now at 100–120 euros per month)¹⁵¹ and genuine legal recognition. Since the beginning, strikers have been subject to daily repression. Gaining legal recognition

for one of the two autonomous unions leading the strike, CNAPSET (CLA is the other), would give them some protection against likely reprisals.

"In mid-November, after four weeks of conflict marked by intimidation, arrests, contempt, and the suspension of leaders, the regime conceded a bonus of 5,000 dinars (45 euros), while refusing a wage increase that would incite those in the other public sectors to come out on strike. The teachers firmly refused this. Since then, the government has played a game of relying on trade union rivalries (the FNTE, close to the regime, serving as disruptor), the weariness of the population, especially the young—caught between willing support of the teachers and their desire to resume studies, and direct harsh repression with the weapon of firings (in direct violation of labor law)."

Since the ultimatum end-of-November deadline defined by the authorities, said the writer, mass firings have multiplied (already above 1,000) and the first new teachers have been hired. Strikers are also in danger of legal prosecution for "impeding the constitutional right to education." The Algerian state has thus chosen a stubbornly brutal and inflexible response. And it does this on the eve of the presidential election.

But the intransigent Minister of Education Aboubakr Benbouzid,¹⁵² he said, was still unable to stop the strike. Brave strikers continue to demonstrate, to meet together in the schools, and to demand a different policy of education. In Tizi-Ouzou, students have rejected the imposed substitute teachers and have promised to chase them from the schools. At Tiaret, new university graduates of the education school have demanded that new posts be created for them rather than replacing striking teachers. Solidarity strikes were also planned for two days in early December by primary- and middle-school teachers and by private-school teachers on a local basis.

Entering the third month of conflict, said the writer, strikers demand that legal actions and firings be dropped that and a dialogue begin with the government. "In the face of the arbitrary action of the regime and the sacrifice of education in a country demographically young and where a large part of the population lives in poverty, our Algerian colleagues should not feel isolated internationally. We support them and encourage sovereign and inter-professional general assemblies to be held which can extend the struggle for a transformation of society and workers' conditions."¹⁵³

Two years later, the CNT-F announced a demonstration on November 1, 2005 in front of the consulate-general of Algeria in Paris to be followed by a meeting with visiting Algerian trade unionists. Stating that the social, economic, human, and political situation in Algeria has continued to deteriorate and that the regime depends entirely on the police and corrupt clienteles, they wish to support the just struggles of the Algerian people by demonstrating on the 51st anniversary of the outbreak of the Algerian national independence revolution.

“We will not let a tyrannical system that sells off the country’s economy reduce this symbolic date to bureaucratic celebrations. November 1st belongs to everyone who fights for a democratic Algeria, respectful of human and social rights, and against the autocrats who scoff at law and justice by maintaining a freedom-killing state of emergency, by suppressing pluralistic trade unionism and who, by favoring every archaic practice, imprison women in a disgraceful status. For the free exercise of trade union rights in Algeria. For removing the state of emergency and repealing the emergency laws. For equal rights between men and women. For freedom of expression, assembly, and demonstration.”¹⁵⁴

In May 2007, the CNT-F reported on an international conference of revolutionary trade unionists they organized in Paris from April 28 to May 1. The expressed goals were to start “to build links between different organizations and unite workers of different countries, to struggle and to take action through organizing international solidarity. The weekend included discussions and debates in syndicalist meetings (e.g., ‘Revolutionary syndicalism, anarcho-syndicalism and institutions,’ ‘Precarity at work’), branch meetings (building industry, education, etc.) and thematic discussions (e.g., ‘Struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism,’ ‘Migration’). The anarchist/anarcho-syndicalist/syndicalist bloc at the May 1st demonstration had over 4,000 participants from every corner of the planet.”

In addition to the IWW delegation from the US, thirty other foreign countries were represented (some with delegates from multiple organizations), including delegates from SNAPAP from Algeria.¹⁵⁵

At about the same time, the education federation of the CNT-F posted on its web site a joint declaration with SNAPAP, the Spanish CGT, and the Solidaires unions¹⁵⁶ of France concerning the precarious situation of autonomous unions in Algeria. Representatives of the four organizations met together on April 30 to adopt a common platform on this subject. They all pledged to participate in a solidarity demonstration in Algiers toward the end of November or early December. At the same time, demonstrations would be organized in front of Algerian consulates and embassies in Europe. They also supported establishment of a meeting center in Algiers for the autonomous trade unions and the Algerian human rights league.¹⁵⁷

In advance of February 12, 2008, several CNT-F web sites announced joint demonstrations with US Solidaires, the French League of Human Rights, and CEDETIM¹⁵⁸ to be held on that day in front of various Algerian consulates in France. These were coordinated with a gathering in Algiers that day of various autonomous unions, the culmination of three days of nationwide strikes.

The coordinating body for the Algerian public service autonomous trade unions¹⁵⁹ “denounces the degradation of living conditions for the Algerian population generally (paltry wages, constant price inflation for basic

products and housing) at the same time that the regime's treasuries have never been more full (Algeria no longer has foreign debt and has a reserve in foreign banks of \$180 billion). It demands: wages compatible with decent purchasing power, the opening of genuine negotiations in the public administration sector, decent retirement pensions, appointments to new jobs for those in contractual and temporary posts, and allowances for those unemployed seeking jobs."

Autonomous union militants are still subjected to every form of repression. At the same time, the regime tries to corrupt their members and to create "clone" unions "in order to discredit them in public opinion."

The demonstrations in France will show solidarity with their demands and opposition to their repression, and will denounce the silent complicity of French authorities and the media about this situation.¹⁶⁰

In February 2008, CNT-F created a new publication, *Afrique Sans Chaines*, announced as a bi-monthly bulletin for the CNT-Africa Group. In the second issue (May 2008) was a brief update on the Algerian autonomous public workers unions' continuing efforts, through another two-day strike in mid-April, to accomplish the goals announced in February.

In March 2008, a "fanzine" bulletin of a CNT-F local in the education sector provided a lengthy background article to explain the general context for the Algerian autonomous unions' struggles. After a very brief historical chronology of Algeria from 1794 to 1989, it then reviewed various stipulations of the International Labor Organization. It pointed out, however, that Algeria had never ratified the 1971 convention that assured protection for worker representatives in an enterprise. Nevertheless, after the social upheaval of 1988, the Algerian regime guaranteed, in the constitutions of 1989 and 1996, various freedoms of expression, association, and meetings, as well as the right to strike and form trade unions.

The article briefly summarized the emergence and official nature of UGTA designed to prevent strikes and conflicts with the regime. October 1988, however, opened the door for formation of the first autonomous unions. Nevertheless, while workers in the public services and private sector have the official right to form unions and to go on strike, the government has imposed three conditions: providing a declaration of formation to the concerned authority, obtaining a registration receipt, and publicly advertising the declaration in a daily journal of national circulation. In this context, the regime quite deliberately refuses to provide registration receipts for those unions it can't control. The CLA and CNAPEST were just the latest to experience this tactic.

The regime also tries to develop internal conflicts within the autonomous unions, said the article, and then uses such conflicts to justify the non-inclusion of autonomous unions in negotiations with the government, as well as to initiate formal judicial interventions. Employers actively harass

the unions, persecuting and sometimes firing their members. If strikes are launched, strikebreaking contractual workers are hired instead. Arbitrarily, union members on strike are also often arrested and imprisoned.

For example, it said, CLA members, who paralyzed Algiers area high schools for over three months, were prevented from meeting at their schools, threatened with firings, cut off from paychecks, sometimes prevented from returning, and sometimes prosecuted and jailed. The recently formed SNOMMAR (National Union of Merchant Marine Officers) was victimized by administrative sanctions, judicial intervention, and the hiring of strikebreakers, immediately following declaration of their strike. As well, numerous members of SNPSP have been persecuted. Doctors have received threatening phone calls and e-mails, been harassed by their administrators, and even been beaten at their workplaces. Meanwhile, the office for SATEF was burned and executive committee members threatened.

“Whether in Algeria or in the rest of the world—including France—workers’ organizations have always represented a danger for governments denying democracy and enriching themselves on the backs of workers. Trade union rights have always been gained through struggles, and it is in struggles that we should defend them for they are the sole ramparts against a system exploiting poorer and poorer workers.”¹⁶¹

In May of the same year, the CNT-F web site posted an announcement by Algerian autonomous unions that they had created a joint web site, called the “House of Algerian Unions,” in the current absence of a physical location for shared activity. Though initiated by SNAPAP, it will offer complete freedom to each union and the space for democratic debate of trade union and general political ideas.

“Our conviction is that we are many having the same aspirations—despite small disagreements—the same ambitions and the same animating ideas and political convictions. Our vision is neither angelic and innocent nor policing, but what we are sure of is that we should learn to be better acquainted with each other in order to advance together.” From our initial stage of forming trade union organizations, usually corporatist in nature, we must now move on to gain the strength needed to meet the challenges for what is at stake.¹⁶²

In the face of the regime’s continued refusal to meet the demands of contractual teachers organized in the CNEC, in July, the CNT-FTE reported that the former were launching an unlimited hunger strike as they’d exhausted all other methods available. The CNT-FTE pledged its full support for the strikers.¹⁶³

The April 2009 issue of *Afrique Sans Chaines* carried a brief report of a strike launched in the Algerian public health sector by the SNPSP autonomous union in the last week of February. After one week, the union leader stated that 80 percent of the personnel involved had followed the

call for a walkout. The principal demands concerned wages, the specific legal status of doctors, and benefits. Meanwhile, the government refuses to acknowledge the union and offers no proposals of its own.¹⁶⁴

In the same month, the CNT-F journal, *Combat Syndicaliste*, published an interview with Achour Idir, an official of the autonomous CLA union for high-school teachers in the Algiers area. He is thirty years old and “identifies with the red and black ideals of disobedience and resistance.” The CLA, begun in 2003, he said, represents over 15,000 teachers and has also given support to the struggles of other autonomous unions. It began with a three-month strike, which demanded a 100 percent pay raise, a specific legal status for teachers, and a decent pension after twenty-five years of service. From that strike, we did obtain a partial victory of a 5,000-dinar (about 50 euros) increase in wages.

In 2005, he described, the CLA participated in a joint strike with other combative autonomous unions in the education sector. The movement gathered strength during the next three years and, in 2008, included a joint struggle with those in the civil service, as in SNAPAP. In the same year, temporary teachers pursued a hunger strike for forty-five days, but this produced no gain. They may decide to renew this again during this year’s spring break.

The regime, he made clear, recognizes only UGTA. Thus, it refuses to negotiate with autonomous unions, declares their strikes illegal, and prevents us from finding physical premises. It also tries to confuse the situation by creating separate clones of our unions.¹⁶⁵ While there is no trade union openly calling itself anarcho-syndicalist, “there are many anarcho-syndicalist militants who are members of the various unions. We are not numerous but we exist nevertheless.”

The overall social situation, he said, is one of extreme poverty. Most families have incomes covering only 15–20 days of the month. They then have to scrape by for the other days. Many workers have serious debt. Unemployment affects about 17 percent of the workforce generally, but the young are without jobs at a higher rate. Many workers in the public sector (still dominant in “socialist” Algeria) are quite vulnerable, with only temporary jobs. “Corruption is legalized at all levels of the State.”

In the private sector, he stated, unions don’t exist. This is because most of such workers are on only limited, temporary contracts. Often they work illegally, without any contract, thus are in precarious situations. They fear that if they became involved in building a union, they’d lose their jobs.

“The CLA gives its solidarity to all union struggles on a national and international level. We support all those causes that aim to create greater social justice. We also deeply believe that only struggle pays. On with the class struggle!”¹⁶⁶

In March 2010, the CNT-F web site published an article by CISA (International Support Committee for Autonomous Algerian Trade Unionism,

composed of the Algerian autonomous unions, the CNT-F, the CGT-E, and Solidaires) announcing that CNAPEST had decided to suspend its strike in the face of escalated persecution and threats. The fifteen-day strike had been followed massively throughout the country. Strike demands focused on social benefits, the management of worker welfare benefits within the institutions, and various work conditions. CNAPEST strikers faced levies on their wages, threats of massive layoffs (though where would 50,000 teachers be found?), a court order dictating the strike illegal, and direct threats on union officials by the DRS security police.

“These pressures reveal once again, if there was even a need, the nature of the real power in Algeria—held by the chiefs of a political police that uses for its own advantage a government and judiciary on orders, and that doesn’t hesitate to make them flout the laws of a purely superficial ‘democracy.’”¹⁶⁷

An early-April 2010 article described a trip the previous month to Algeria by European supporters of Algerian autonomist trade unions in order to meet with militants and observe conditions firsthand. Representatives of the CGT-E, CNT-F, and Union Syndicale Solidaires additionally met militants of the human rights league; journalists of two independent newspapers, *El Watan* and *El Khabar*; and employees of multinationals in the southern part of the country who had been fired for trade union activities.

“The aim of this report is to portray as accurate an image as possible of the social situation in Algeria. Right away, our conclusions led us to note a clear degradation, linked to the growing pauperization of the population and the increased repression against mobilizations of the principal democratic forces, especially the autonomous trade unions in the education and health services sector.”

The average monthly wage in Algeria, they said, is about 120 euros,¹⁶⁸ while the cost of living is about the same as in Marseille. Basic food items are now becoming inaccessible, and finding affordable housing is very difficult. Teachers make an average monthly wage of 250–350 euros. Though one may questionably use the term, “the middle classes” have been hit quite hard by the drop in purchasing power due to “galloping inflation.” For those under age twenty-five, the unemployment rate is nearly 40 percent. Nevertheless, Algeria’s gross domestic product (GDP) is positive, its foreign debt is paid off, and the country has close to \$150 billion of reserves, mainly in foreign banks. The natural gas and oil reserves are still quite ample and account for 98 percent of export revenues.

According to our interviews with representatives of the Algerian League for the Defense of Human Rights (LADHD), Algerian civil society has been badly splintered. This is partly from historical conditions, but also due to the regime’s policy of restricting spaces for dialogue and demands among citizens. During the colonial period, Algerian society was basically composed of different minorities (ethnic, political, and religious). This same

state of division was reproduced after independence. Thus, according to an LADDH member, Algeria today is still a “society of minorities in a neo-colonialist regime.” A ruling elite, lavishly rewarded, has handed over the country to multinationals.

“The only places where speech and debate can be freely expressed, for example, are teachers’ rooms or hospital and high school employees’ lounges. There is still family solidarity, essential for survival for certain workers in this economic context, but no more civil solidarity. The great majority of associations are under control and serve simply as the social façade of the regime. As well, information is controlled and disinformation on command is the rule for many newspapers.” *El Watan* (in French) and *El Khabar* (in Arabic), they said, have their own publishing facilities and are the two main independent newspapers. They both regularly provide accounts of state repression against the autonomist unions, but it is difficult to gather objectively verifiable information. The country is full of rumors, false information that can turn public opinion in bad directions or blur embarrassing realities in the “spheres of power.” Circulating false information can then discredit the press.

Journalists also told us, they said, that after a long period of lethargy, grassroots demands are swelling up today. People are responding to the huge gap between the overall financial improvement of the country and the overall social misery. “Basic civil rights, like the right to housing, access to medical care, decent living standards, etc., are less guaranteed than ever, despite promises for change. Civil society no longer recognizes those who claim to represent it: political parties, the central historically-controlled UGTA trade union, fake autonomist trade unions that systematically try to fool the public by blurring the labels, associations that have sold out, etc.”

Where does all this lead? “The regime has created a void, the system has come to an impasse. In a country in complete social turmoil, the forces of democratic resistance strongly risk being the first to be subjected to more and more violent efforts to force conformity.”

The delegation was able to meet representatives of various autonomous unions for civil service workers: SNAPAP, CNES, SATEF, CLA, SPEPM, the Council of Temporary Teachers, the SNAPAP Women’s Committee, CNAPEST, SNPSP, and SNPSSP (the National Union of Specialist Practitioners in Public Health). In the sectors of health services and education, since 2009, they said, there have been several significant movements followed by the workers and subjected to various intimidation and repression attempts by the regime. There have also been strikes in other parts of the public sector—for example, teachers and workers in professional training, temporary teachers and local communal workers—also subjected to pressure and repression.

From 1962 to the 1990s, they reported, UGTA was the only trade union federation authorized by the regime and subject to its commands. “The brief

period of ‘democratic opening’ (from February 1989 to June 1991) allowed, thanks to law 90-02 concerning union pluralism, the birth of the first autonomous unions: SNAPAP and SATEF. These unions were originally viewed by the regime as a way to curb the development of trade unions by the Islamist FIS. But after the military coup d’état of January 1992 and during the terrible ‘years of terrorism’ that followed (and which brought some 200,000 deaths), and then especially after the September 2005 adoption of the ‘Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation,’ the autonomous unions have become the principal forces of democratic resistance in the country.”

Given their embarrassing and thus undesirable presence, said the writers, the autonomous unions have had to endure growing pressures and daily harassment. This is all the more possible since the regime maintained its state of emergency, which it adopted in February 1992, allowing it to ban public meetings, demonstrations, and other gatherings. The regime also tries to sabotage and destroy the unions by corrupting its members and creating and “negotiating” with “clone” imitations to promote confusion. Unfortunately, this strategy has been somewhat effective, as shown by the present relative weakening of some autonomous unions, as well as the last wave of strikes in the education sector.

The autonomous unions, they stated, are truly representative in the latter sector primarily because they are the only ones to really fight. Thus, their 2003–2004 strike was observed by 90 percent of the personnel in Algiers and certain other regions. This sector was forced to confront various reforms in the last several years, partly responding to World Trade Organization demands for restructuring and budget cuts in education and public health. While salaries of tenured teachers are inadequate, those for temporary teachers are even worse—if, in fact, they’re actually even paid. Some have had to wait months or even years to be compensated for their work. This is what led some of the “temporary teachers,” mainly women, to be on a hunger strike for forty days in 2008. They also demanded permanent positions, the opening of a competitive and transparent process for new jobs, and medical coverage.

In mid-November 2009, said the report, at the initiative of CNAPEST, the other education unions began a strike, which, for the most part, was observed at every level of schooling. After the ministry announced an agreement for supplementary bonuses, however, some unions went back to work while others refused until a contract was signed. Using this division to its advantage, the ministry then tried to turn public opinion against the strikers by publishing the supposed pay of the teachers. The maneuver succeeded in intensifying the divisions, and the last striking unions went back to work without achieving definite results. After further government maneuvers and repression, subsequent strikes by CNAPEST and UNPEF also failed. At present, therefore, the autonomous unions in the education sector remain divided.

Toward the end of November 2009, in the public health sector, they said, health professionals went out on strike, as called for by SNPSP and SNPSSP, but still provided minimum services on their own. A month later, the strike became unlimited. The demands concerned a reevaluation of wage scales, benefits, and housing. Currently, general practitioners get paid 300 euros per month and specialists 400 euros. The strikers also denounced a government reform that was seen as the beginning of the privatization of hospitals and the health system generally, as well as a system of access based on personal means.

As with strikes in the education sector, said the writers, this one was declared illegal by an Algiers court, and a campaign of defamation to discredit the unions was launched by the regime. Strikers were also threatened with withdrawal of pay and amenities, as well as direct firings. A February 10, 2010 protest/sit-in, that included women, in front of the presidential palace was also violently broken up by the police and the mobile guard. At the moment of this report, the strike goes on, the longest enduring such action in the history of Algerian social movements.

The principal struggles of the SNAPAP Women's Committee, they said, is against violence and harassment of women at the workplace. There is presently no law against this behavior! "Those who dare to file complaints are generally found guilty of defamation by the courts, sometimes imprisoned and fined, and lose their jobs, with little hope of finding another." The committee is currently preparing a questionnaire, for large-scale distribution, on workplace harassment, as part of a campaign to develop sensitivity on this issue. The situation is worse for female employees of multinationals, with more cases of administrative and sexual harassment. The recent hunger strike of Meryem Medhi, fired by British Gas, helped to publicize the nature of working conditions in these firms.

They reported that the committee also denounces as sex discrimination the legislation concerning maternity leaves for those in civil service. The law provides a short period of ninety-eight days of leave, which is especially difficult given the shortage of daycare throughout the country. During the leave, pay is suspended and is only restored upon return to work. But given that a container of milk costs €3, and up to €7 for special milk to help with sickness, this creates an unviable situation for working women (as well as those not in the workforce).

"Everything is done to dissuade women from working—thus to imprison them in their homes—as well as to persuade women who work not to have children. The committee also denounces the insecurity of women's jobs. Compared to men, they are more often subject to temporary contracts. They thus have no workplace or health insurance and no maternity leaves. If they are sick and don't come to work, they are not paid and risk losing their job."

The committee, they said, is also preparing a campaign to promote equal opportunity for women to advance professionally in their jobs. Although women have degrees more frequently than men, they rarely get management positions. Even if the law requires parity, it is not applied. For example, the Algerian senate has only four women senators, the parliament only 25 percent women, and local assemblies only 13 percent, even though women are 54 percent of the electorate.

While worker rights are scoffed at and autonomous unions repressed in the civil service sector, they reported, the situation is even more catastrophic for multinational company workers in southern Algeria amid the oil and natural gas fields. Basically, there are no worker rights in the latter and management does whatever it wants to. In practical terms, this means sometimes extended workdays (rarely compensated), disgraceful housing and sanitary conditions, differences in how Algerians are treated compared to foreigners (in relation to bonuses and lunch breaks), and the contemptuous and insulting treatment of workers.

Confronting this situation, in several enterprises, they noted, workers have tried to assert their rights. While the struggles of two of these (Meryem Mehdi and Yacine Zaïd) have been covered in the media, others have tried to create a local UGTA section since autonomous unions are not allowed in the private sector. However, everyone who has made such attempts is fired. Meryem Mehdi ended her hunger strike against British Gas two days before our arrival. For her, conflicts with management began in 2008 when she demanded promotions and pay raises as stipulated in her contract and company regulations. Between 2007 and 2009, she received only a 4,000 dinars increase,¹⁶⁹ which compared poorly with her colleagues. She was also not paid for extra work. In the face of her demands, she was fired in 2009.¹⁷⁰

Le Jura Libertaire

IN FRANCE TODAY, A LARGE AND INCREASING PROPORTION OF written anarchist information appears on the Internet. Beyond specific web sites for particular national and local anarchist groups, which often simply post the published journal of the same organization, *A-Info News* and the *Indymedia* network have served for years as online daily sources for anarchist news throughout the world. Since the spring of 2006, *Le Jura Libertaire*,¹⁷¹ based in Saint Claude, France, has also offered a daily non-sectarian source of international anarchist and anti-authoritarian information, including some mainstream accounts of interest, as well as longer, more theoretical pieces.

In its own words, “it is a blog reflecting real activities and concrete struggles by making known realities, activating solidarity and providing theoretical ammunition to those who fight, in the Jura region and elsewhere.”

Apparently, most of the posted items are taken from a wide variety of Internet sources, including some reports from direct e-mails. As it stated through an early 2009 interview, "It falls to revolutionaries to work...by all means, existing and to be invented. Action can be coordinated, or not: one can recognize oneself quite well in the gestures of comrades who are far away, without actually knowing them. And this multi-form subversion is, no doubt, more dangerous to all regimes than an unattainable unity of the 'anarchist movement.' In any case, the revolution will not wait. It will be necessary to be in the *melée*, that's all."¹⁷²

On January 7, 2008, *Le Jura Libertaire* posted five essays on the Kabyle insurrection. Three of these, Semprun's 2001 "Apologie pour l'insurrection algérienne; Le grand camouflage," by "Quelques amis français des aarchs" in 2002; and Vasseur's "Entretien sur la situation en Algérie," in the same year, appear in the preceding anarcho-syndicalism section of this book.

A year later, in 2003, the same *amis* wrote a longer account of the Kabyle situation in response to an assembly delegate interviewed in the Algerian press. By way of introduction, they clarified that they are not "experts" on Algerian questions but are very motivated to inform themselves as much as possible because of what the *aarch* movement has already accomplished. If an overall label must be used to describe their political orientation, "anarchist" is to them "the least wrong." Nevertheless, that is "very insufficient" and, besides, "how many of those who call themselves anarchists have shown the least interest in your uprising?" The biggest influence on their political orientation was the May 1968 revolt and especially its defeat, by "how quickly and completely general passivity was reconstituted in the face of the disastrous course followed by the world of business."

In offering critiques of the Kabyle movement, they said, they do not approach the subject coldly, from an abstract perspective of historical necessity, or without recognizing the ferocious and tragic repression daily experienced. They also respect the Kabyle claim that "those who were killed for freedom die a second time when they are forgotten." As well, they honor those Kabyles killed by the French army in the great insurrection of 1871, shortly after the French army also suppressed the Paris Commune. This evocation is not made by chance, since the present insurrection, with its commitment to the concept that "no movement can pretend to struggle for democracy without itself functioning genuinely democratically," is in the same line as Kronstadt and other such upheavals. But "few historical movements of this sort have so quickly formalized their anti-hierarchical position as the *aarch* movement did with its code of honor and published guiding principles and with their refusal to collaborate with the regime or state institutions."

Nevertheless, they said, certain positions are likely to weigh down the movement, especially the policy of neutrality toward political parties. It is understood why multi-partyism (achieved by the 1988 upheaval) is more attractive than a single-party system. But honest politicians simply don't exist, either in Algeria or France, and political parties themselves are designed to gain state power and to manipulate the consciousness and discourse of the public. By contrast, the popular assemblies truly express popular social desires, as long as in those bodies "all problems are freely discussed, disagreements articulated, and all of this sent back to each decision-making level."

However, they pointed out, as shown in the recent call by some for a national-level meeting of democratic forces (political parties, trade unions, citizen groups, and democratic personalities), some have a different notion of democracy than that of the *aarch* movement, which saw some of its coordination bodies again properly reject this proposal. If the local general assemblies elect delegates, they truly represent the population and no separate organizational intermediaries are needed. Furthermore, none of those organizations adopted the El-Kseur Platform themselves. In fact, they would try to reduce it to one among various sets of demands—including dialogue with the regime, a political change at the top, and autonomy for Kabylia and the *aarch* movement to simply one organization, among others.

The *aarch* coordinating body for the Béjaïa area (CICB), they reported, defended the conference proposal, stating that it would help the movement to show its ability to transcend a solely rejectionist perspective and take on a constructive role. Such a role is important, but it should be the *aarch* movement itself, not a conference, that develops the program of reconstruction democratically. Often those who most plead for unity at any price end up losing out to those who manipulate that desire and undermine it from within. It is the maneuvers of political cliques within the coordinating bodies that are now the danger. Once one sees the consequences, it will be too late to redress them. Despite the past experience of the Berber Cultural Movement and the awareness of the population about politicking, we disagree with those who think recuperation of the *aarch* movement is impossible.

The recent discussion in the movement about structure, they said, is disturbing to the extent that it doesn't give enough attention to how the need for full participation is assured. Yet the Iflissen inter-*wilaya* meeting of July 2002 noted evidence of "non-respect for guiding principles, the code of honor, and internal rules; non-renewal of mandates; non-respect for horizontalism; and non-respect for ratified decisions." The call for a special followup meeting to discuss these issues in depth never took place. There is also the danger that, "by inertia or weariness, the coordinating bodies might increasingly come to rely on certain most competent delegates, however sincere, instead of training the greatest number. Why isn't there established a system of delegate rotation?"

Apparently, they reported, the Algerian regime has consciously attempted to force a constant situation of crisis, thus forestalling the restructuring of the movement and Kabyle society. While the movement is aware of that strategy and insists on the need for restructuring, it contradictorily opposes both local elections and local assemblies that would take on responsibility for managing local affairs. It insists on merely *mitigating* the effects of the “deliberately created institutional void,” rather than taking in hand this responsibility. There is no historical example of workable coexistence between a state and a movement like the one existing now in Kabylia.

“Though it seems unrealistic at first, going beyond this impasse depends on extending the theater of operations,” as the movement itself called for, to other regions of Algeria. Though obviously the regime is hated everywhere, as shown by the continuous stream of local riots, said the writers, these are not followed with any sort of self-organization, as in Kabylia. Other regions don’t have the same deep traditions of local assemblies, and the regime itself is quick to suppress any revolt after the events of 2001. As a delegate from the Aurès recently stated, any effort to give support to the *aarch* movement or to similarly organize locally is “immediately killed in the egg.” Local mafia-type regimes are also linked to one or another clan of Algeria’s rulers and have their own interest in suppressing any such activity. Nevertheless, especially in the Algiers area, revolt is in the air and includes a refusal to go through any intermediary like the bureaucratic unions. High-school teachers there have organized their own autonomous union, and 8,000 autoworkers at Rouiba wanted to march on Algiers as part of their general strike last February.

To escape its isolation and the desire of autonomists and the regime to confine it to simply a “Berber problem,” they said, the Kabyle movement has not been as proactive as it could be to support local upheavals elsewhere and to carry out new exemplary actions as before, but “now completely abandoned,” against individuals seeking to take local natural resources for their own private gain or corrupt local officials.

For us, the most difficult to understand is the insistence of the *aarch* movement for “the establishment of a lawful state.” We live under such a state, but there is “nothing there that resembles democracy.” If France were really a democracy, it would support your own movement, not “the mafia generals,” and the media would not be silent about Kabyle events. “The modern state has never been anything more than an instrument of domination at the service of the ruling classes.”

Algerians, they urged, should look to their own history and their own problems, not to “the mirage of the West,” to discover on their own “the means to establish the way of life they wish to lead.” The idea of a confederation of *aarchs* for the whole of Algeria seems the only solution to this situation. This would mean a complete “dismantling of the state in favor

of the sovereignty of village and neighborhood assemblies, in which case at all levels would be found federated decision-making bodies, as well as the horizontalist principle guaranteed, by means of strict accountability of delegates, their required mandates and revocability, a revolving collegial presidency, formal votes at the base on all essential strategic options, etc.”

Fulfillment of the El-Kseur program would be only “the *minimum* prelude to all real change.” But if all Algerians join in the struggle, they will find organic ways to define all *the real needs* of the society and the appropriate means of organization to address them. “For there is no readymade recipe in these matters: each revolution, as capable as it is in drawing lessons from past revolutions, must understand in the course of struggle which new conditions it confronts.” It is certain, of course, that a federation of *aarchs*, once formed, would immediately face as “declared open enemies” all Algerians who supposedly support the movement only for personal gain, and “also the coalition forces of all states.”¹⁷³

The final document in this series was written in October 2007 by Robert Vasseur, the person interviewed at length about the Kabyle insurrection in 2002. In effect, this is a post-mortem of the movement, written as a postface for a new Spanish edition of Semprun’s essay and others by the “Amis.”

“Today there remains nothing of the coordinating bodies for the village and neighborhood assemblies formed in Spring 2001. Without having been explicitly dissolved, they slowly disengaged themselves under the effect of weariness and demoralization, victims of both their helplessness against the State and their own contradictions.” Only several ex-delegates are still active. While originally among the fierce opponents of dialogue, they now try artificially to keep alive the *aarch* organizational structure, although “they themselves no longer represent anyone and their activity consists of trying to hide their crushing defeat by their signing of the valueless ‘Protocol of Agreement’ with the government on January 15, 2005.” This protocol stated the government’s intention to implement the El-Kseur platform within the framework of the Algerian constitution and legal system.

After a defeat of this sort, it is important, he said, for those most loyal to the original principles of the movement to provide its true history, “without hiding its limits and errors, in order to keep the memory and to leave open the possibility of a sequel.” But those qualified to write such an account have so far unfortunately remained silent. Nevertheless, among those who wish to draw out lessons from the experience, many think that the first and worst error was the march on Algiers on June 14, 2001, and that subsequent weaknesses followed from the heavy weight of that disaster. Given the ability to apparently attract over a million participants and the fact that very violent riots were simultaneously occurring throughout various regions, on the surface the choice to hold that march doesn’t seem bad. As Semprun stated, if simply one more day of confrontation with a

wavering regime had occurred in Algiers, it would have been enough to bring the whole population into the battle.

"But the sequel proved that this initiative was, in the best of cases, premature. The platform had been adopted only three days previously, the rest of Algeria was unaware of its content and could not judge all of its implications." The most important task at that moment should have been to circulate and explain that text as widely as possible, to find solid allies, and to extend the horizontalist form of organization everywhere as the basis for a long-range struggle. While many saw these tasks as immediate priorities, others found different needs more pressing given what seemed like an imminent civil war, which Kabyles "did not want and could not lead by themselves."

As the assemblies movement developed at the end of April 2001, he said, it sought to avoid a bloodbath and turn the revolt in a positive direction. A gathering momentum and mass cohesion developed through continuous discussion, street confrontations, and the eventual El-Kseur program. But the basic question was where to direct the immense grassroots energy in a way that would not set off a spiral of deadly violence. The movement was too inexperienced "to know how to subordinate its tactical choices to its long-range goals; [thus,] it was finally by a mix of enthusiasm, a reckless headlong rush, and a paradoxical instinct of self-preservation that the Kabyle uprising was pushed to take the chance—with the one single blow of the march—of extending the conflict to the rest of Algeria." But this was done without anywhere near adequate preparation, and that greatly assisted the success of the regime's trap.

The movement never recovered, he stated, from two catastrophic results. First was the ensuing isolation of Kabylia, from repression and media complicity, preventing it from spreading the organizational form and program to other regions, thus making impossible a new general offensive. Second was the subsequent need to prioritize confrontation with the regime, but without adequate discussion of tactics. The resulting continuing crisis atmosphere, in turn, discouraged the development of positive constructive action in the region.

But, he declared, the movement still had great advantages after the June march. They had the upper hand in confrontations of force during the rest of the summer, and security forces could not regain control without a massacre. The movement had enough strength to carry out powerful civil disobedience. They also had sufficient organization and control throughout Kabylia to be able to carry out a constructive social program. The government saw that it could only bide its time and let conditions deteriorate, "while hoping that the movement would be finally undermined by its own contradictions and procrastinations."

Among the latter, he suggested, was the ever greater hiding of the true relations among Kabyles, those between the grassroots and local corrupt

officials, leaders, and mafias who had been targeted, along with the state, in the early days of the insurrection. Such actions, if conscientiously pursued, would have set a good example for other regions and actually begun to fulfill, at the base, certain aspects of the El-Kseur program. But gradually, the desire to preserve unity at any price became the priority, no doubt the result of efforts by those originally targeted themselves. Despite the growing radicalization of the context, where the regime sought to divide the movement, the coordinating bodies merely declared the platform non-negotiable and failed naively or irresponsibly to re-define the movement for a positive role in the restructure of Kabyle society.

This would have meant, he argued, substituting for state structures in every realm. “This undoubtedly posed immense problems, but a movement that managed, even on a portion of territory, to make the state *outside of the law* is in some way forced to explore positively all of its potentials, to prove in practice that it is *in every respect* better than what it struggles against. Without this, it is, little by little, driven to immobility and impotence.” There were various reasons why the movement was so timid in the realm of social reconstruction, focusing finally on the least innovative of the initial demands—establishment of a lawful Western-style state. (A truly revolutionary movement in France would have helped to clarify for the insurrectionists the futility and mirage of this objective.) Among the most important was the stubborn failure “to seek responses to problems posed by the long-range nature of the conflict,” though the expected emergence of such problems was a key part of the regime’s strategy against the movement.

After the successful election boycott of October 2002, he said, local elections were the last opportunity for the movement to evolve to a new level of substitution for the state. But the movement simply reaffirmed that action of the latter sort was impermissible. Only mitigation was allowed, not social restructuring. And this left the door open for the regime to proceed with a massive wave of arrests and for demoralization and weariness to set in. As the methods of “direct democracy” began to erode as well, the movement was weakened.

Few historical movements, he declared, were so quick to establish “formal rules to guarantee at the same time democratic and anti-hierarchical principles (which they called ‘horizontalism’) as well as independence and autonomy from the regime and state institutions.” These functioned well in the first few months, in the general atmosphere of movement enthusiasm. “But no text can by itself guarantee respect of the best principles.” Unfortunately, Kabyles did not know “how to redefine, at each step of the process, to what ends their mode of organization could serve.” As simply defensive in purpose, the coordinating bodies perhaps inevitably would have had to face “political manipulation, careerism, personal ambitions, the weight of personal hostilities, and even stupidity.”

He asserted that the structures gradually lost their substantive importance to the extent that they simply took the static posture of demanding solely the implementation of the El-Kseur program, instead of taking initiatives for direct experimentation at the local level. The requirement for initiative from below and accountability to that level as well lost its purpose and interest when the *transformations of social relations*, desired at the base, were not forthcoming. (Unfortunately, there is yet no serious study of relations between delegates and those who rioted.) Thus, not only political maneuvers by partisan *arrivistes* but also focus solely on the fall of the regime gradually shifted sovereignty from the local assemblies level to that of the *wilaya* and inter-*wilaya* coordinating bodies.

Violations of the original organizational principles, he said, were identified in the June 2002 inter-*wilaya* meeting at Iflissen. But these issues were never followed up. By January 2003, a meeting of the Tizi-Ouzou *wilaya* coordinating body (CADC) referred to them only briefly in a self-satisfied paragraph. At this point, it would have been best for one or more local coordinating bodies to break away, to denounce those supporting this recuperation process, to critique the disastrous effects of the small *aarch* minority relating to the press and demand a strict return to original principles, including final decision making at the base. The “transpartisan” openness, in the name of neutrality, to pressures from the various self-serving political cliques (parties and associations including autonomists like the MAK) within, led to the retirement of “the most sincere delegates.”

The danger of relations with the press, he suggested, was from uncontrolled and selective coverage that deformed the perception of the movement’s major concerns, the polemical statements of those interviewed replacing the open discussion of meetings, and the eventual sense at the base that they had been replaced by those supposedly speaking for them. In effect, the assemblies movement “has been confronted by *the most modern* alienation, and they didn’t know how to respond to it. By not taking any concrete measure to prevent *the image of their struggle* from substituting itself for the real struggle, they allowed it to be eventually hidden by arbitrary categories created by the media.” Though Kabyles justifiably criticized those delegates who accepted the status of media stars, what was worse was that “they didn’t seek out every possible means to express themselves autonomously, and thus let themselves be robbed of their own voice.”

It is uncertain, he said, whether Kabyles will be able to regain their own voice. “Only those right there can judge how much remains living in the collective memory and discern what paths can be chosen henceforth.” Though recognizing their clear defeat, a number of those who revolted consider what they did, justifiably, “with no regret and with pride.... Despite all its errors, some of them quite understandable for a movement having so little experience, no revolutionary attempt has gone as far, in Algeria, as

the one launched in April 2001.” Meanwhile, most of the most sincere and committed delegates have retreated to associations, just as happened after the Berber Spring.

It is possible, but doubtful, he concluded, that hostilities could resume again in the future. “For the moment, Kabyles are exhausted and resigned, impotent in the face of their decomposing society. As often happens, defeat even accelerated this decomposition and reinforced the worst tendencies, based on unchanged material misery and the proliferation of corruption by local mafias.”¹⁷⁴

In February 2011, the *Le Jura Libertaire* web site posted an article responding to the new wave of Algerian protests and demands for change, and analyzing the difficulties of successful insurrection. The writer first observed that many in the mainstream Algerian media had labeled the attempted RCD mass protest march in Algiers as a failure, or partial failure, because of the relatively small numbers (5,000–10,000) and their lack of combativeness, as well as the fact that the police restrained themselves from using the violent repressive methods seen in Egypt and Tunisia. What this reasoning ignores, said the writer, is “the real problem in Algerian revolutionary contestation: repression [in Algeria] is coldly calculated, conceived, and deployed as a form of ‘management,’ just as in Western countries. Repressive strategy is similar to that used at the anti-capitalist counter-summits, that is, prevention through preventive [advance] deployments” of many thousands of cops—including many without uniforms—helicopters, road blockades, security checkpoints, hundreds of arrests and advance beatings, and interrogations to intimidate organizers.

Thus, he said, in the absence of spectacular confrontations in Algiers, the mainstream media dismissed the day as basically uneventful and without exceptional violence—a phenomenon that “well exemplifies a whole other form of repressive and dreadful violence: the preventive and totalitarian management of contestation. For Algeria has a powerful regime, an army and police force over-equipped and over-trained, massive and powerful. And the more powerful a regime, the more it is permissive; just as in Western countries, Algeria is not responsible to street pressure, as in Egypt and Tunisia.” There is no need to use tear gas or massacres in frontal assaults even if warning shots are fired.

According to the writer, this doesn’t mean that “those who demonstrate are less determined or united, or that the police are less violent or more ‘professional,’ but that the regime is much more solid and totalitarian, and that preventive strategies are thus able to stop any announced and official gatherings. But to the contrary, the large mid-week riots and blockades

in the poor neighborhoods, spontaneous and self-organized, were much more worrisome to the Algerian regime.” How is it that just 200–300 jobless could cause more trouble for cops than thousands of those assembling for the Great March? In fact, the conditions for social war are more similar to those in France. “The poor neighborhoods become battlegrounds where the ‘demonstrators’ themselves choose the areas for confrontation, not seeking to march in urban centers totally blocked off and surrounded by 30,000 cops in order to provide a stronger showcase spectacle for the mainstream and international media. The poor fight within their own neighborhoods, not to parade, but to cutting off economic flows with blockades.”

Effective insurrection, he said, is more likely through the riots of the poor neighborhoods than through the vain attempts of a planned march to defy the huge repressive force of the regime. Nevertheless, however strong the social misery in Algeria, it is “much less generalized and much more gradual. There is a middle class torn between its obvious proletarianization and its thirst for a bourgeois existence. Just as in the West, a revolutionary process can only really unfold if working-class and social insurrections are coordinated.”

In the last several years, the experience in France, he said, has made this clear. “When these processes coordinate themselves, the regime gets scared. That is why, during the movement of last Autumn, Lyon was such a battleground: ‘youth from the poor working-class suburbs,’ ‘the scum,’ ‘delinquents,’ high-school and university students, anarchists, autonomists, and the marginally employed were together in the confrontations.” This amazing mixing of “pre-established labels and social identities” in a solid offensive struggle was produced, not by directives, but by actual practice—“confrontations, occupations, and blockades as well as strikes and non-violent trade union demonstrations.”

What could be interesting for Algeria, he speculated, is if the representative forces of confrontation would be willing to genuinely occupy the streets, every day. This would force the regime to change its face and become more forceful since they couldn’t use their anti-demonstration tactics of simply stopping rail and road traffic all the time because this would slow down the economy. And this change in tactics, in turn, would lead to devastating mass arrests.

“In any case, determination and solidarity with the struggling Arab peoples! Let the wind of freedom blow, let the tempest of insurrection burst forth!”¹⁷⁵

No Pasaran

AS A NETWORK BRINGING TOGETHER VARIOUS SCALP GROUPS IN France in the early ’90s, No Pasaran was already committed to an anti-fascist

as much as an anti-racist focus. Gradually, the network assumed critiques and activism concerning other major forms of social oppression as well. “Neither a party-type organization nor an inflexible structure, the No Pasaran network is composed of groups and collectives federated together throughout France and it operates in an anarchist manner. Participating in the international struggle against capitalism and every form of authority, it develops exchanges and actions with groups from many countries. It is part of a large movement of political, economic, social, and cultural liberation for which ‘To Resist is to Create!’”¹⁷⁶



Its relationship to the French anarchist movement more generally was explored in 2001 in a series of seven articles in its journal, *No Pasaran!*, responding to the “Appeal for an Anarchist Movement” discussed above (in the section on the OCL)¹⁷⁷ and published in the April 2001 issue along with about 165 signatures (including, surprisingly, that of Noam Chomsky).¹⁷⁸ As described earlier, the appeal sought ways for the anarchist movement to transcend its myths and organizational/ideological identities through intentional collaborative experience, especially first at local levels, to thus bring a more substantial anarchist presence and perspective to social change in France.

The present appeal, said the first writer, attempts to struggle against the tendency for separate anarchist cliques, each one putting up its own posters, holding its own forums, and having its own procession at demonstrations. It emphasizes the changed political context where globalization is increasingly challenged and where a more united anarchist effort could thus have more substantial weight. “It emphasizes our uncertainty on revolutionary means. A single great revolution? This becomes more and more mythical. From today forward, it is important, by our creations, actions, and situations, to put into place the seeds of an anarchist society with integrating and pluralist modes of operation.”

“The goal is not to recompose a radical movement into a single organization, but to create common places in which anti-capitalists and anti-authoritarians can give themselves the means to act on present reality.” These will be places for reflecting, for organizing concrete actions and to share our ideas and practices.

Anarchists, anti-capitalists, and anti-authoritarians have everything to gain by developing this vast movement together. “In effect, ‘we make the road by walking.’ Sign this appeal and get others to sign, and let us begin to build this movement to attempt to change history as we want to!”¹⁷⁹

In the next month’s issue, two contrasting reactions to the appeal were presented. Said the first writer, because the appeal was addressed to

individuals and not to organizations, it was meant to evade the traditional rivalries. "Between a CNT that thinks it has no need of anyone else and Alternative Libertaire, which, after having had its eye on the left of the left for fifteen years, tries to return now as if there was nothing in the anarchist movement, between a Fédération Anarchiste torn apart between its many components and the No Pasaran Network that redefines itself, unifying steps have little chance of leading to anything more than vague appeals without practical consequences." In any case, agreements between leaderships only produce more bureaucratic and ineffective schemes that contradict anarchist principles. Instead, the appeal is aimed toward those who, despite their specific affiliations, have a common belief that "dynamics are born out of the fusion between ideas and practices in tangible initiatives... at the individual and local levels."¹⁸⁰

The second writer in this issue was more skeptical and more burned-out, but also saw the effort as at least potentially contributing to better dialogue. Developing critiques, if not done in a malicious way, can be useful for the movement. "I understand well that we have particular qualities, but we are not spared from every fault. It's not as if our refusal to see them ourselves prevents our adversaries from seeing them."

When he saw the phrase "We make the road by walking," he wondered where all the walking we've done already has taken us and where we are going to go this time. "I'm a disillusioned veteran of the anarchist movement. If I encountered it through concrete struggles and solidarity, it's because of its philosophical/theoretical confusions that I became disgusted. I too often had the impression that we passed by the great problems of society in favor of internal wars and simplistic slogans." "I began militating and doing all the daily tasks to keep the movement alive since the late '80s, so I know what I'm talking about," he said.

As to the anarchist organization that claims the famous synthesis (presumably, the FA), "I would say that in practice it is a veritable platform upon which several eminent representatives can forever present the same speeches, ever further from social reality and the base (of which they never fail to cite the courage, especially when it's at the opposite pole from the speech), and this in the name of the sacred union of the movement. I'm not even talking about official speeches, but rather about those within the organization. There is a heavy atmosphere of contempt and censure that several individuals impose."

He said that the movement's weakness in competition with other movements is our inability to present a convincing model of direct democracy for all to be part of, whatever their differences as individuals. "I've always had the impression that, in order to be an anarchist, one inevitably had to match a certain image, to have a well determined way of thinking. And in practice, it is perfectly impossible, even by creating ghettos

by affinity—that would soon become apartheid regimes, and millions of people would live and think the same way.” This doesn’t mean giving up our notions of social and economic equality. For example, while the society should be secular, this doesn’t mean everyone has to be strongly atheist. We need to understand that individuals and their convictions are different from the social contract that links those individuals.

As to our relations with the State, he said, on the one hand, we blend in with the mold it imposes. On the other hand, we refuse to debate it because it’s our enemy. Another problem is that we propose reading anarchist classics while completely rejecting the rules of exegesis. It’s a waste of time if one doesn’t place the author’s propositions within the geographical, political, and historical context. The states confronted by Bakunin, Kropotkin, and Louise Michel were quite different from the states we confront today. The present working class has fewer weapons than before. “To be against the state is one thing, to take one’s desires as reality is another.”

We should also be aware of the danger of hypocrisy and simplistic demagoguery. “On the one hand, we benefit, like others, from social laws and democratic freedoms, and on the other hand, we act like these are of no interest to us. We can do this, but we can also forever continue to speak into the void.”

Speaking of laws, he said, it seems to me that sometimes we anarchists have collectively substituted arbitrary behavior for written laws. “I can tell you that I meet an unbelievable number of people, outside of militant milieus, who were familiar with the anarchist movement. Some don’t want to hear anything more about it, others turn toward Stalinism because in the end they think they’ve found more democracy there (!); many of them went through the anarchist experience as a traumatic one.... Globally, the anarchist movement draws its glory from the Spanish experience, but actual practice is something else, and many people save themselves by running away.”

Men, especially, don’t realize all the sacrifices one has to accept as a militant. Is that by chance? “Personally, I’ve been treated too much as a doormat by certain militants, without the least consideration, but when it’s time to put up posters, whatever job to do, there’s the nice guy.”¹⁸¹

Another perspective came from a writer in the June issue who stressed the usefulness of alternative orientations in the anarchist movement, the value of a loose federal structure as with the No Pasaran Network itself, and the potential for greater anarchist influence through unified efforts on specific issues. While some belittle the significance of an anarchist movement with too few people among too many groups, the writer said, it is important to remember that, historically as well, the anarchist movement was broken into various groups because their approaches to struggle and their means were different. Nevertheless, the common anti-authoritarian commitment at the base suggests that individuals from the CNT, OCL, FA,

AL, and the No Pasaran Network could come together for greater anarchist effectiveness in specific struggles.

“Contrary to the communists, anarchists don’t pretend to be the clear-minded avant-garde whose mission is to guide people too stupid to guide themselves.” Without a determinist view of history, we should be careful about allying ourselves with those who have one. Remember the betrayal of Makhno, the POUM,¹⁸² and others. At the same time, we should not be seduced by the participation partisans of the citizens’ movements, like ATTAC, whose program reinforces the role of the state and continues an inequitable economy. We should not serve as their springboard.

“Autonomous local groups federated by a charter and a network: this is the only viable way for anarchists to function over the long range. But especially we should not be professional militants. Keep for us the innocence of the future. Don’t separate theory from practice; that is, put more effort into community efforts than the muck of politics so distant from real life.”

Some seem to suggest, said the writer, that those of us in the No Pasaran Network are sinful for our lack of political training—“we are different from other organizations by not having an anarchist prayer book. Do we realize that this is not at all a handicap? To the contrary, it’s a strength, certainly a fragile strength, but is it wrong to have only theory from our actions? Life is an adventure that gets played out every day. The redefinition of terms is always and perpetually ongoing. Life is not a dogma. We get our political training in the field (as far as SKALP 86 [the writer’s local group] is concerned) and when we meet together to make our zine.”

Our anarchist unity should be organizations and individuals acting together, the writer said, separate from institutional contexts, “proposing and putting into place alternatives that are a rupture from capitalism. It is to have an influence on the political life of a neighborhood, a city, or a region through anarchist municipalism or the reappropriation of management power at the local level. Unity is at the local level (because life is local, not national or at the world level), the organization of gatherings between organizations and individuals of the same place in order to establish a true network of active resistance to capitalism.” While growing opposition to capitalism is already in the air, efforts toward unity can help us radicalize the struggles.¹⁸³

The next *No Pasaran!* article about the anarchist unity theme, in September, was a report by those who made the original appeal. The writers stated that of the over 400 persons who eventually signed on to the document, about half were unaffiliated, and the other half were members of various anarchist organizations—Fédération Anarchiste, Réseau No Pasaran, Alternative Libertaire, the CNT, and groups in Switzerland and Belgium. They also outlined an agenda for the October meeting in Niort and described it as potentially the first of a series of anarchist movement *états-généraux* over the next several years.¹⁸⁴

The November 2001 issue provided an overview survey of the 100 or so anarchist signatories of the appeal who attended the Niort meeting. In general, it reaffirmed that sectarianism had damaged the movement, that unity was not uniformity, and that it was time to act together while respecting pluralism. Of those surveyed, there was a large diversity in age and in length of time involved as an anarchist militant. About two-thirds were members of anarchist organizations (those mentioned above, as well as OCL and autonomous collectives). Only some 10 percent of attendees were female, a statement in itself.

People had usually signed the appeal on their own, said the survey, though sometimes collective decisions were made. They reported on many local unitary initiatives already, without significant problems. Many people spoke out against the partitioning and sectarianism of the movement, a cause for many having left it. This loss of anarchist militants after a number of years definitely hurt the movement's development. For some, "the crisis of the anarchist movement" implied the need for new steps. "The need to move beyond the myths (Spain 1936, the Paris Commune, etc.) was underlined. The division between the veterans and the young seemed to cause some difficulty. The young refuse to take on the old quarrels. The need for coordination in our movement was a nearly unanimous wish."

Many saw the diversity of the anarchist movement as quite important, said the report, "a treasure and not a handicap." At the same time, people underlined their rejection of some sort of ideological purity. This doesn't mean accepting anything, but rather realizing that attempts to impose "purism" are what reinforce divisions in the movement, thus weakening its overall impact. It was also stressed that anarchists need to be more than just negative. They need a positive social vision, as demonstrated in actions and collective projects, as an alternative to contemporary capitalism.

Some, said the writer, were also hopeful about more emphasis on the international dimension, as with the new network, Solidarité Internationale Libertaire. The biggest divisions concerned the need or not to recompose the anarchist movement or to develop common strategies. Future projects might include further thematic meetings and possibly a journal or annual anarchist yearbook.¹⁸⁵

A final commentary on the unity issue came in the form of an interview with a Nantes anarchist militant. He emphasized that it was important for the anarchist movement to engage in solid reflection on the very foundations of anarchist ideology, "to renew with the critical thinking of a Berneri in the 1930s and with that developed by *Noir et Rouge* in the 1960s." While we have a certain number of publications already doing this, like *Agone*, *Oiseau-tempête*, *Réfractions*, and *Temps Maudits*, we need to develop that critical thought at the level of every local collective. The only way we can present ourselves as a political current is when we can make our social and political

analysis of events seem “relevant and intelligible in the eyes of those we’re in close contact with. The cooptation of Chomsky’s geopolitical analyses by the ‘social left’ is a good example of what I’m trying to say.”¹⁸⁶

The first *No Pasaran!* article of the decade that was at least partially related to Algeria was another detailed review of the life and thought of the Tuareg writer Hawad.¹⁸⁷ “It is good, above all, to remember that Hawad is a spokesperson for a disappearing people and culture. Poet, fiction writer, author of plays and narratives...singing as the resistant and rebel, Hawad transmits to us a vision of the world peculiar to his own culture, and affirms Tuareg identity as well as the right to another way of living.”

Born in 1950 north of Agadez, Niger, said the writer, Hawad came from a nomadic community where learning was not only from desert life, migration, and the knowledge of plants and animals, but also from a culture passed on through long cycles of story. Hawad describes nomadic culture as the product of motion, of walking and singing. It is opposed to rigid thinking. The described object is continually viewed from multiple perspectives to the point when words and thoughts are exhausted and gained is a direct form of vision, in which true identity is revealed, unbound by cultural suppositions.

At the age of seventeen, after traveling in Algeria, Libya, and Tunisia and being exposed to Sufi’ism and other forms of mysticism, noted the review, Hawad traveled in caravans to Egypt and eventually Baghdad. After returning in 1969 and finding the Tuareg in miserable condition, dispossessed of their grazing lands and water, he went off to wander in Europe for two years, finding there, in the hippy movement, “certain affinities with his nomadic life,” but also a place “where humans lived at the service of machines.” Returning to his own people in the Aïr mountains of Niger, he further immersed himself in elements of the culture, including trance, cosmology, and writing.

“Even when living outside of Tuareg space, Hawad’s culture lives within him.” Nevertheless, he “recalls the individual dimension of every culture: ‘I can’t accept boundaries, barriers. Culture goes beyond the limits of the State.... It doesn’t belong to the State, it belongs to peoples and peoples have no limits.... It circulates, it changes itself. When a culture is confined within a boundary, it dies. Boundaries...are the work of someone who fears the outside, who closes oneself within.’”

Hawad’s enthusiasm for exploring other cultures in order to develop his own synthesis, said the writer, is one of the key themes of his work. He values that marginal nomadic space between cultures, a space beyond labels, since every specific culture restricts one freedom. Having encountered other nomads, such as gypsies, Navajos, Apaches, Arab Bedouins, and no-

mads of Afghanistan and central Asia, Hawad has learned that those who have lost their space for nomadism end up sacralizing their cultures so much that they get trapped within them.

“Far from being an ideal for anarchist thought, Tuareg society shares with it, however, some strong traits. It seems on analysis that what is merely the philosophical and political engagement of the author is definitely the result of ‘nomadic thought.’” Said the writer, several of his works, for example, include persons who reject the society of domination. In the Sahara, the latter means both the past colonial rulers and the new national States. But his rejection extends to all forms of institutional domination, including religion in the West, as well as the East. Having transposed the Tuareg method of visionary perception of reality through a sideways glance into the aesthetic realm, Hawad “radically demystifies the word, language, culture, or institutions by putting into the foreground their false and arbitrary nature.”

This way of perceiving from outside the limits of institutional symbols, said the writer, “corresponds in politics to anarchist analysis.... Anarchists are, in effect, the only ones to propose a concept of politics outside of institutional reference points, an external approach free from traditional governments. Thus, one discovers a powerful correlation between artistic and [anarchist] political concepts and it seems relevant to think that they both proceed from this original way of perceiving reality.”

Some, noted the writer, have criticized the nomadic thought of anarchist philosophy for its aversion to dogmatism. After all, there is no holy text. “Anti-authoritarian thought demands non-fixity and movement. This is precisely what characterizes it. [Such thought] as well creates itself in the fluidity of movement, in passage. It is necessarily ephemeral because it is in permanent construction. It is this that makes it close to nomadic thought: this non-rigidity, absence of frozen rules, respect in advance for actors to freely improvise, as one can see by the diversity of ideas and practices achieved throughout history.” The very practice of rotation of tasks, in anarcho-syndicalism, is a good example of the importance for all to participate so that power keeps moving.

“This is not to say that nomadic thought and anarchist thought are identical, but rather to compare these two conceptions, the one European and the other African, both derived from human thought in different times and places.” This nomadic way of thought, as among the Tuareg, is distinct from that produced by the settlement culture of pastoralism. It is important to protect it as a human heritage in the face of its threats from the outside. It resisted being lost amid the incursions of Islam and the colonial West. “But the mechanization of transportation has forced them to abandon their desert trails, one of the Tuareg major forms of subsistence.”

“This society, like those of other peoples that have social systems non-profitable for liberalism, is condemned to disappear. Hawad, like oth-

ers, is a resister to planetary socialization, his struggle is also our own. For this reason alone, he deserves at least our solidarity for, in the end, what he defends is the right to live differently."¹⁸⁸



Several months later, a writer described the attitude of Algerians toward the September 11 attacks and the US war in Afghanistan. In the face of both events and despite demonstrations in many other Arab and Muslim countries, a lukewarm ambiance prevails in Algeria. Clearly, the last decade of violence by Islamist terrorism has had a deep effect. "One must say that the Algerian Islamists who could have burst forth in a pro-Taliban or pro-bin Laden frenzy are today reduced to trying to patch things up. Their credibility having considerably been given a rough ride by the terrorist fanaticism of their most radical elements, demonstrations of this sort could doom them. This is so, even though for the past two years Bouteflika, increasingly tempted to establish a Sudanese-type Islamo-nationalist regime, has not stopped flirting with them in order to counteract the secular tendency of a part of the army, fiercely anti-Islamist."

One of the founders of the FIS, Abdallah Djaballah,¹⁸⁹ said the writer, presently heads a very small legal Islamist party. While refusing to condemn the attacks on the United States, "he dares not go so far as to support bin Laden. He contented himself several days ago with speaking of the war against Islam and alluding to the role of Israel in the attacks. In sum, a truly typical speech of Islamist rhetoric." As for Mahfoud Nahnah, president of the legal Islamist MSP, he refused to make direct comments, only offering the usual support for Palestinians.

At least part of the population, noted the writer, seems relieved that the West will finally take seriously the dangers of radical Islamism. Many privately ask why the United States, Britain, and Germany never required the dismantling of their networks in exile despite years of repeated demands by the Algerian regime. It was from those capitals that radical Islamist propaganda was prepared and from there that orders were given for most of the terrorist crimes in Algeria and elsewhere. People are especially bitter toward the US sheltering of Anouar Haddam, one of the GIA leaders who, in Washington, publicly welcomed the assassination of Algerian intellectuals and journalists and ordered the bus attack in Algiers that killed forty-six and wounded dozens more. Algerians also do not forgive the unconditional support the West as a whole provides to Israel, nor its silence concerning the decade of embargo imposed on the Iraqi people.

Meanwhile, in some of the working-class neighborhoods of the large cities, the writer stated, certain *imams* have called for support of bin Laden and the Taliban. At the same time, "a certain elite of the petit-bourgeoisie

of the large cities, without proclaiming it openly, state that they favor the American bombings in Afghanistan since any blow anywhere against terrorist networks is quite welcome.” The regime itself is caught between the two fires. While Bouteflika phoned his condolences to Bush and offered to join an international anti-terrorist coalition, after the Americans began attacking in Afghanistan, he backed off and asked for proof of bin Laden’s involvement. He also repeated his position that Algeria, more than any other country, had suffered the most from terrorism.¹⁹⁰

Apparently, after 2003, no further articles on Algeria appeared in *No Pasaran!* for the rest of the decade. The No Pasaran Network did continue its articles and local actions concerning *sans-papiers*, the various forms of the fascist movement, and the adoption by the French government and politicians of left and right of elements of Le Pen’s original racist, anti-immigrant, nationalist, and repressive agenda. In a Spring 2009 issue, *No Pasaran!* devoted its full sixteen pages to a detailed report on the radical anti-fascist resistance advocated and practiced by the network. In addition to general issue discussions, the journal included detailed reports from local SCALP and other network groups in Strasbourg, Nancy, Lille, Limoges, Bordeaux, Lyon, Grenoble, and Paris.

One common observation throughout was the diminishing concern in the French media, in French mainstream, left and far left politics, and in the public generally with continued dangers of fascism. In part, this was due to splits in the Front National and the substantial defeat of Le Pen in 2002, but, as several writers pointed out, it also owed much to the adoption of substantial parts of Le Pen’s agenda in the government and political campaigns themselves. First as Chirac’s Minister of Interior and then his successor as president, Sarkozy has personified the Front National’s successful political socialization of a wide spectrum of French politics and society. “Anti-fascism is no longer *à la mode*.”

Based on the variety of local group reports and some of the general discussions in this issue, the No Pasaran Network seems still to be attracting generally younger persons, a large number heavily involved in various forms of punk and post-punk counterculture and squatting, as well as high-school and university students, just as in the ’80s and ’90s. This seems also to explain more readiness for street confrontations and other forms of direct action and physical presence, despite increasing state repression, than in other French anarchist organizations. It is also consistent with the explicitly mentioned emphasis on theory arising from concrete action.

While gathering and analyzing information and distributing this to the public are essential, said one article, these are not a finality in themselves.

They must lead to defiant and steady (but far from mindless or suicidal) public confrontation as part of the larger project of revolutionary transformation. At the same time, several local groups reported that the combination of greater state repression and other forces in the wider culture have somewhat diminished recruitment. More attention to individual pursuits translates to fewer numbers.¹⁹¹

L'Oiseau-tempête

IN THE SUMMER OF 2002, THE ANARCHIST REVUE *L'Oiseau-tempête* published a long interview with a far-left observer, "Nadir," who offered descriptions and analysis of the 2001 rebellion in Kabylia and other parts of Algeria. The interview was conducted in September of that year and edited in early 2002. Before that text, the revue itself provided a few paragraphs of introduction.

While ex-Trotskyist Nadir saw the absence of a political program, even more than the lack of a guiding political organization for the movement, as its main weakness, "to the contrary, *L'Oiseau-tempête* considers its attempt at self-organization (especially through its coordinating network of villages) an indispensable precondition for developing a program that is able to go beyond the content of demands in the El-Kseur platform of June 11. Going on from there, we think that our interviewee underestimated what the movement accomplished and thought it reached its high point of its offensive with the march on Algiers on June 14."

However, partly due to these basic differences, said *L'Oiseau-tempête*, Nadir provides useful analysis and reflection, especially concerning the economic dimension of the context, the difficulties involved in implementing self-organization, the continued state of emergency, and the stances taken by Islamist groups. One important contradiction he underlines is the movement's radical base of jobless youth (70 percent of the population under thirty-five) that refuses to negotiate with the regime but that has also failed to define its own goals.

Said *L'Oiseau-tempête*, while Semprun intended primarily to praise the insurrection and gain greater publicity for it, several of his critiques deserve fuller elaboration, especially concerning the role of women and the failure of the coordinating bodies to take a strong stand on Islamist terrorism. While women have a minimal role in the assemblies, we should find out more about their role elsewhere in the overall movement. As well, while a return to public debate and street demonstrations is a real victory over the years of terrorism, there are different tendencies in the Islamist movement and it seems quite possible that more moderate populist elements have had some influence within the assemblies. The ability of the assemblies movement to split Islamist ranks may be an important key to its future.

For over a year, said the writer, it has been clear that the insurgency is not confined to Kabylia alone. All over Algeria, people confront the regime. “In this struggle, the Algerian insurgents—quite alone for the moment—must respond to all the questions by necessity confronting a movement whose objective cannot be confined to overthrowing the state, but rather the complete transformation of a society.”¹⁹²

Nadir, in turn, began his detailed interview by outlining the economic context of Algeria over the previous decade. The economic and social collapse goes on in the midst of the climate of terror created by Islamist guerrilla violence and the vicious military and police attacks, responsible themselves for thousands of disappearances.

Algeria has no independent trade unionism, he said, even at the level of shops within enterprises. UGTA is very much bound with the government and is far more important than the autonomous unions. Only “scabs” are allowed into the top UGTA positions where they can fully support the government and suppress any worker revolts. Thus, UGTA supported the military coup of January 1992. UGTA supposedly opposes the “wild” liberalization policy. And, in fact, UGTA officials, especially at the middle level, have much personally at stake, especially in collaboration with management, when public enterprises are dismantled. But UGTA accepts “good” liberalization, especially if there are continuing advantages. In the past several years, UGTA has allowed certain protest actions by workers but then halts them “at the right moment.” Its overall willingness to tolerate government policy is justified in the name of protecting the republic against the danger of radical Islamism. While the last decade has seen various angry worker demonstrations and even strikes, these were atomized phenomena without unified action. Nevertheless, in January 2001, there was important trade union defiance in the petrochemical sector.

It is important to “denounce the myth of a Kabyle revolt. What we experienced was a social rebellion that began in Kabylia and that, because of this, took on a very special dynamic. Nevertheless it extended to other regions of the country. In Kabylia, people came out into the streets, not to demand recognition of their language, even though they are concerned about this.” Their slogans showed an open critique of economic policy, though by contrast such demands have little resonance in the platforms.

This social revolt, he said, took on a label of Berber identity concerns because it emerged in this region where very strong solidarity exists, with deep and ancient historical and cultural roots. Kabylia regards itself as different from the rest of the country not only because of the language, but also because of its political life. In this region, the FIS never had a strong base. Kabylia was always well mobilized around issues of the Berber language and culture, even though this was more a concern of militants than at the grassroots.

Nevertheless, he stated, the revolt marks the end of a period of brutal economic and social policy. Right now, no young person who quits studies after secondary school can hope to find a job in this poor economy. This social dimension of the revolt hasn't been emphasized enough. Unemployment is a huge issue, and it's impossible to acknowledge it without critiquing the policy that caused it. However, many intellectuals, politicians, and people in the media, who now support the young insurgents, approved that policy earlier.

The very fact that the revolt spread throughout the country, said Nadir, shows that it was not primarily an issue of Berber identity. The fact that it didn't have the same intensity is more because Kabylia had a deeper tradition of political organization. People in other areas "occupied housing, blocked roads to demand now-rationed potable water, and came out of the slums to demand electricity." Throughout Algeria, "people acted by themselves and for themselves, autonomously and spontaneously. There were almost no identity demands. It was a deep social malaise that expressed itself in this way, the accumulation of several years of suppressed rebellion."

The idea of class struggle, he argued, was surely in the minds of youth and some from leftist parties who tried in some places to supervise the revolt. But it wasn't expressed this way and didn't show up in the platforms. The fact that empty houses were occupied and that corrupt notables were attacked in Kabylia and elsewhere doesn't mean that the overall movement favored expropriating the rich.

"Women were practically absent from this movement, virtually invisible. Certainly, they supported those who demonstrated, especially in providing them with water and with vinegar to use against tear gas. In demonstrations, they were always a minority and, even then, they were there as mothers, spouses, and sisters of the rebels, not really as individuals." They were neither in the organizations speaking for the movement nor in the village committees.

In this sense, he said, despite its mythical reputation as a region strongly defending freedom and democracy, Kabylia was no different from other places in its traditionalism. Though it had women's associations, especially in the cities, these were limited and isolated as elsewhere. While women participated in marches, they were not many and usually came after appeals from men. Algerian women have a strong sense of injustice but never express it that way. Women were present in the first clashes with *gendarmes*, but this went against traditional machismo. "A pal told me that one girl, representing an Algiers student committee, introduced herself to a coordinating body. They said to her something like: 'You're a woman, what are you doing here?'"

Several months of street clashes with the *gendarmes* in Kabylia, he stressed, definitely radicalized the movement whose greatest strength was

the youth. But the movement then organized a form of leadership, with some members of former political parties, village notables, and a much smaller number of young people. Coordination bodies for Kabylia were designated by villages and communes, not elected as such. While village committees were a very old tradition in the region, their coordination together was not. Along with committees in most villages, there are neighborhood committees in some urban areas. All these are coordinated by *wilaya* bodies. This was not spontaneous. But after the initial stage of confrontation with the *gendarmes*, in some areas the pre-existing structures began to be used, though not everywhere.

In some places, as in Béjaïa, said Nadir, trade unions initiated a sort of coordination that they developed between themselves, neighborhood committees, and cultural associations. In western Kabylia, some coordinating bodies of villages or communes actually used the anachronistic term “tribes.” Despite being a reality at the time of initial resistance to French colonization, the term *aarch* at present is used simply as a form of symbolic local resistance to central authorities.

Following independence, he said, the role of these village committees declined. At the same time, young people created a form of parallel structure, village committees to mediate between local authorities and community needs, as with schools, road conditions, and so on, just like urban neighborhood committees dealt with issues like water and sanitary conditions. “But all of these committees are far from being representative of the whole population, as the female population, for example. By definition, the neighborhood committee or village committee is an exclusively male organism. Delegates are co-opted into them, not elected.” As well, in Kabylia, the coordinating bodies are composed of older persons (most often former political party people) despite the fact that village committees are often composed of young people (a new condition that preceded the revolt).

In any case, he claimed, those who carried out the riots, the jobless twenty year olds, are never found in the committees at any level. There’s a division between the latter and the youth, although youth don’t reject the committees. They distrust them, but don’t see any alternatives. This division is seen, for example, in the course of demonstrations. At Béjaïa, trade unionists were in the minority in rejecting the absurd logic of the coordinating body that wanted nothing to do with “doing politics.” Thus, the coordinating body refused the trade unionists’ proposal to demand an end to the state of emergency and the repeal of the family code. This latter decision again proves “that the movement was totally masculine.”

So, the movement was very radical at its base, he said, but not in its leadership. When the coordinating body decided to hold a regional strike, it was imposed and accepted, not decided democratically, despite some opposition by local business people. “To continue with the logic of confrontation, it

would be important to state explicitly what had been achieved. To state, loudly and clearly, for example, that they had forced the government to allow unauthorized demonstrations. This was extraordinary in a country where, since 1992, in a context of civil war, all demonstrations had to be authorized." Other things that should have been underlined included, for example, being able to massively encircle the barracks of *gendarmes*, forcing them to remain inside.

For its part, he noted, the state was forced to take certain actions unthinkable several months earlier, like sending prefects out to talk with demonstrators or to restrain *gendarmes* from shooting them. Government ministers could not even visit the region without heavy police protection. While the movement debated the issue of whether or not to negotiate, the regime sought out people to negotiate with, beginning with "civil society" groups, like cultural or charitable associations, not associated with demonstrators.

The movement needed more explicit alternatives, he insisted, if it were to demand that the central authorities withdraw. As actually happened in certain areas, it could have been stated that municipal governments would no longer be recognized, with coordinating bodies assuming at least some of their functions. In other areas outside of Kabylia, such radical demands were not made, despite concrete attacks against authorities like corrupt officials.

Gendarmes are actually a national military corps, he pointed out. Contrary to the police, they come from other areas and are viewed as corrupt and brutal. Nevertheless, the demand for their withdrawal is problematic. If people are so radical that they really want the regime to leave the region, why is it only the *gendarmes* who are specifically targeted? Some have suggested that some local police could replace them, those that are known and supposedly not susceptible to corruption. In the end, local officials, as well as the regime's representatives, the *walis* (*wilaya* head administrators), were left alone.

"I think the movement has arrived at a moment where no political force can give it a sense of direction. It's a rebellion that fails to go beyond the consciously negative record of the last years, especially in the economic realm. This is not stated explicitly. That's why prefects feel able to go talk with the population, make promises and life goes on. Essentially, Algerian society rose up for months with a certain number of demands."

It is true, he said, that the state has been quite repressive, with kidnappings, tortures, and the shooting of demonstrators. But since 1997–98 it has been asked to tighten security in the wake of Islamist guerrilla actions. For many isolated hamlets, the state has been long absent. Villagers demand either military protection or the provision of arms for self-defense. One of the worst aspects of the barbarous Islamist violence is that it seems to justify the repressive state. Thus, the demand for *gendarmes* to withdraw

was articulated only in Kabylia, an area where the armed radical Islamist movement never massacred at the scale carried out elsewhere.

In Kabylia presently, he pointed out, a well-implemented armed Islamist group is the GSPC, a breakoff from the GIA. These *salafists* tend to attack military patrols and other security corps much more than civilians. This group issued a statement of support for the Kabyle uprising, emphasizing that the regime was their common enemy. On the other hand, certain FIS leaders denounced the rebels as well as the regime, which was willing to negotiate with the rebels but not with the FIS. As well, certain other FIS leaders gave discreet support to the movement but expressed concern that it might lead to further Westernization of Algerian culture given Kabylia's reputation (though overrated) for secularism. Meanwhile, those Islamist parties in the government denounced demonstrations as products of foreign manipulation. This was easy to argue when French media (still given much attention in Algeria) "presented the revolt as that of a democratic region by contrast with the rest of Algeria, which is seen as Islamist and conservative."

It is not necessarily true, he stated, that the general disillusionment with political parties extends to fundamentalist Islamism. While some FIS ranks joined armed groups, others were simply jailed, and the party is still illegal. Nevertheless, if a revolt of this size erupted in Algiers, with mass demonstrations and clashes with the forces of order, it seems likely that Islamists would assume leadership. There's nothing to suggest that that possibility has been completely eliminated. While discredited by the civilian massacres committed by its armed elements, Islamism still has its potential, especially since the regime is still so hated.

A fundamental weakness of the insurrectionist movement in Kabylia and elsewhere, he said, is that "if you don't have an alternative, you must negotiate." At a certain point, the government understood this. While the movement of revolt made its platform of demands, it refused to negotiate. The government thus looked better in declaring its willingness for dialogue, though not under the gun of street demonstrations, while, on the other side, certain well-respected local figures were denounced for agreeing to speak with the regime. But if you're genuinely presenting an alternative program, you don't create a program of demands. It's embarrassing that despite existing for a number of months, the movement failed to establish any markers for its progress. Between different political forces, there was too much competition to prove who was the most representative. This hurt the movement.

If there were local elections tomorrow, suggested Nadir, surely many of the coordination body members would be elected. They have shown combativeness and are spotless compared with prominent local members of the RCD and FFS. Reputations of the latter have been damaged by their administration of local governments as well as their party leaders' involvement in the "political game" at the national level. As well, a new generation

has emerged that fails to see anything of value in the two parties. Nevertheless, these parties are represented by some members in the coordination bodies and will no doubt try to recruit some from the new generation.

While the insurrection, he thought, may result in a pause in economic reforms and more space for basic freedoms, the movement has failed to clearly articulate that direction in a focused way. With the real depoliticization of Algerians during the decade of war and with the disillusionment in and weakened role of the opposition parties, a certain void was created. This helps to explain the rather apolitical expressions of rage and why the movement has failed to make headway. There's almost a kind of insurrectional logic for its own sake. Endless demonstrations, without organizing and direction, will solve nothing.

At the same time, he pointed out, while the coordinating bodies proclaim their commitment to non-violence, they have not refrained from menacing pressures on delegates who show interest in negotiations or those who criticize the supposed radical position against taking up "political issues." Meanwhile, for a number of months, the committees of villages and neighborhoods have been increasingly less consulted concerning important issues, like how to respond to the government's appeal for dialogue. "All this implies that the coordinating body of delegates in Kabylia is no longer a place of democratic debate that could allow the grassroots movement to advance. It has become, like other political contexts, a place where a new caste of notables is forged."¹⁹³

OLS

IN JUNE 2003, A SPLIT FROM THE NO PASARAN! NETWORK PRODUCED a new anarchist organization, Offensive Libertaire et Sociale (OLS). While both organizations claimed a close and necessary link between action and reflection, statements by the OLS, beginning in the first issue of *Offensive* in October that year, suggested a stronger, more purposeful commitment to wide-ranging analysis.

The opening editorial demonstrated this commitment in three ways. First, by publishing only quarterly instead of more often like some other anarchist periodicals, it hoped to have more time to develop deeper and more thoughtful approaches to a good variety of themes and to avoid having to comment on immediate events or developments. Second, by establishing a collaborative, collective approach to reflection, *Offensive* promised to enrich the perspectives of all concerned, as well as to provide meaningful support to radical struggle in a variety of social movements. And third, also importantly, OLS saw itself as avoiding the quasi-party or organizational behavior of other groups. It would reflect daily struggles of the movement without attempting to assert the usual rigid political line.¹⁹⁴

OLS members, said a 2007 article, were committed to giving most of their militant efforts to the variety of social movement groups they were involved in, then sharing together their experiences for mutual benefit. Through reflection and analysis, they would bring greater insight and energy back into the grassroots activist groups that they were part of, thus developing and enriching a radical political culture in the latter. In this sense, OLS members defined themselves as “movementists.” They said, “The primary role of the organization is to allow the building of bridges between our practices in the social movements and our political project of social transformation. While our political groups are the occasion to assess our interventions in diverse collectives, we refuse the separation between political group, which does analysis, and social movements, which have no other function than to engage in agitation.”

According to the same article, OLS sought to make the various social movements themselves capable of strategizing, thus separating themselves from “all the parties, organizations, and groups that claim to represent them.... We are thus very far from thinking that we are developing an organization that will lead us to Revolution (social and anarchist, obviously!). Genuine social change can only be brought about by overall large and deep social movements that can collectively monopolize political management of the society.” This refusal of an avant-garde organizational role includes refusing to add our name to every political tract or other occasion simply to show our presence.¹⁹⁵ This distinct perspective led a 2008 editorial to compare itself to *Noir et Rouge* of the 1960s as “a non-group group.”¹⁹⁶

Concern for OLS’s non-directive role in the overall movement was matched by concern with maintaining a rewarding, non-hierarchical space for militants within the anarchist organization itself, prefiguring its goals for society in general. In *Offensive*’s special 2007 issue on anarchist movement activism, produced in collaboration with OCL, one article specifically addressed the conditions needed to sustain energy and perspective over the long haul. Everyone knows excellent comrades who “‘turned out badly,’ between more or less rapid political deviation, retreat to a hypothetical ‘private sphere,’ but also ‘careers’ of mental troubles, alcoholism, or drug addiction, if not suicide.” Two keys to personal satisfactory longevity in the movement, said the writer, are finding good work situations and personal and social relationships. “The more these are congruent and compatible with social and political engagement, and the more they contribute to personal stability and fulfillment, the greater the chance that this engagement can survive in the long run, a guarantee of effective action.” From this perspective, it’s important to pay attention to our daily practice and to seek satisfactory collective contexts. Without illusions about a possible separation from society at the micro-level, such attempts as self-managed cooperatives, communes, collectives, and projects are potentially important.¹⁹⁷

Later, in the present book's Conclusion, I will discuss traditional dichotomies appearing in the overall French and international anarchist movements generically. Of relevance for that later discussion is the next OCL/OLS article by Jean-Pierre Duteuil, which spoke of the need for revolutionary militants to be "tightrope walkers," maintaining a balance between "the principles of pleasure and reality; between dreams and utopia, on one side, and fatalism and the ways things are on the other; the desire for freedom and de-alienation against the comfort of alienation and voluntary submission; ends versus means; risk versus comfortable slippers. In tension between two opposite poles, militantism is on a razor's edge and at any moment can topple over, progressively or brutally, on one side or the other."

However, said the writer, slipping toward the first pole, of dreams and utopia, is much less likely than in the opposite direction. It tends to happen rarely in the midst of oppressive society since one can't create islands of non-alienation in the midst of capitalism. However, one sees it at those exceptional historical moments of intense rupture or "at a more reduced level of individual and collective existence when, in the course of struggle, the way we live temporarily takes on the silhouette of a different future. Large or small, these are the moments of 'insurrection' confronting a world concerned only with reproducing itself."

Slipping toward the other side, he said, toward "submission, power and alienation, is a permanent danger because everything pushes us in that direction." Usually, this is a gradual process, sometimes imperceptible, but we should learn how to perceive it. Rupture versus recuperation is a long-range struggle.¹⁹⁸

The same process, he asserted, occurs with organizations that are created to give "a permanent and collective form to militant activity." Thus, the congruence between means and ends of organizations must be constantly watched in their evolutions of structure, decision-making processes, and relations with other organizations and the world generally. There are no magic formulas for preventing organizational slides toward the wrong pole. "Without constant vigilant critiques from the inside, hiding behind declarations of principle and formulas like *autogestion*, federalism, affinity, or autonomy will change nothing." Too often anarchists tend to sacrifice the actual practice to mere verbal commitments. Because of this razor's edge situation of organizations and individual militants, internal discussion and debate about these issues must be seen as healthy and necessary, and defensive postures avoided.¹⁹⁹

Relevant to this discussion, in this same issue and earlier, *Offensive* published articles that specifically addressed failures of anarchist organizations to seriously address and practice equality within. "Anarchist groups are not spared the forms of domination that they struggle against. Though they reflect our society, however, they are not as violent." As well, "there exists a

uniformity in the anarchist milieu, composed mainly of male, white, and hetero individuals, possibly excepting groups that specifically struggle against sexism, racism, or a particular problem concerning a discriminated group.”

There are different reasons for this situation, said the writer. Some might be historical, related to the original founders of a group. However, at a more immediate level, “women are less available for militant activities when they already carry out the majority of housekeeping tasks and the care of children and the elderly. And when the most oppressed people engage in struggles, it’s usually concerning issues immediately relevant for them (immigrant documentation, housing, etc.).” Sometimes, as well, from the outside, anarchists can often be seen as practicing an “identity” politics of their own, with “the right clothing” and the displayed virility at demonstrations, putting some people off.

Too often, she said, anarchists remain unconscious of their own sexist practice within mixed groups through, for example, male domination of verbal discussion compared with women’s shorter, more “technical,” and more pragmatic remarks. Women’s statements tend to be more interrupted and given less weight. The division of tasks is also revealing. Who takes notes and fixes the food? Women tend to give more attention to conviviality, while men “do politics.” It is also true that heterosexuality is assumed and a trans-lesbo-homo-bi-phobia is typical, no matter what lip service is given to the contrary.²⁰⁰

While we shouldn’t spend all of our time dealing with internal issues of this sort, to the neglect of politics on the outside, she suggested, they should still be addressed. One way of doing so is by setting up occasional or permanent parallel or separate groups that can motivate more analysis and solutions.²⁰¹

In September 2006, *Offensive* published its only article solely concerned with independent Algeria, in this case a unique discussion of the Algerian practice of “anti-psychiatry.” “Far from relying totally on medicalization, Algerian psychiatry leaves an important place for traditional medicines and forms of solidarity. It shows itself close to [approaches of] anti-psychiatry.” Institutionalization, said the writer, has only a relatively small role. With half the population of France, Algeria has only one-fifteenth the number of beds for psychiatric patients and one-seventeenth the number of psychiatrists.

“Algerian psychiatry is also much influenced by the figure of Frantz Fanon,” who established its theoretical and practical foundations. Fanon was the theorist of decolonization, the writer noted, and an important FLN militant until his death in 1961. He is today considered Algeria’s first psychiatrist, having begun his work there in 1952, at the hospital in Blida.

His particular training, perspective, and practice laid the base for the anti-psychiatry orientation in Algeria.

In post-World War II France, said the writer, the dis-alienation movement was one of the trends in anti-psychiatry. Centered on the Saint-Alban hospital in Lozère and the figure of François Tosquelles, this approach opposed the authoritarian and organicist tendency popular in the late-19 and first half of the 20th centuries, seeking instead to humanize hospitals, avoid asylums and mental illness becoming chronic, and re-integrate patients into social networks. Fanon was trained at this hospital and apparently accepted its orientation.

Another current of anti-psychiatry, said the article, was the movement around R.D. Laing and others in England who critiqued the medical model of madness. "In Algeria, medicine does not monopolize mental illness treatment, and traditional therapies are very much present. A third related current centered on Basaglia in Italy and the attempt to close psychiatric hospitals. In fact, Algerian psychiatry, with its low rate of institutionalization, is a dis-alienating (or, rather, non-alienating) practice."

In Algeria, the writer suggested, traditional medicine, with its *marabouts*, *taleb*s, and *chowwafates*, is given an equal role in treating mental illness, compared to psychiatry. Although the practices and performances of these different types of "medical" practice are far from identical, they have some common features. All of them view the treated individual as one not sick, but "possessed," the victim of sorcery, or "persecuted." The treatment is a form of "magic."

This approach, said the writer, has certain advantages over classical psychiatry. In this system, the cause of the problem is external to the individual: *aïn* (the power of an enemy or friend), *rbî*t (a spell making a person powerless), or *djinn* (an invisible spirit taking the form of a person or animal). "By not attaching a cause to the sick person or his or her family, but to something hidden, this causes less stigmatization for either, since it is not there that is the problem or resolution." Thus, for example, "a hysterical person is not confronted with an unconscious conflict of a sexual nature that she can't resolve, but is the victim of another woman's jealousy. The victim of sorcery becomes a sort of exceptional person.... The healer never addresses the sick person, but rather the hidden force. Sometimes, the person doesn't even need to be present at the time of consultations." As well, often other members are asked to be present, thus allowing the affected person to remain in a social network rather than being isolated.

The field of ethnopsychiatry, stated the writer, is one of the approaches critical of traditional psychiatry. It sees values in traditional healing practices that the dominant approach views as archaic, but that avoid stigmatization, individualization of the problem, and isolation of the sick person. And it shows that traditional therapies have potentials at the practical level.

Though only weakly institutionalized, the article argued, Algerian psychiatry, as founded by Fanon, is still very much present. From his first work in Blida, Fanon opposed the racist colonial psychiatry then in place. The psychiatric hospital in Blida was the first in Algeria, and Fanon took charge of the Algerian patients then regarded as incurable by comparison with the Europeans. He attempted to humanize the environment by opening the cell doors, organizing a Moorish café inside with patient paintings on the walls, bringing in traditional singers, opening the mosque, and establishing a soccer club with patients and staff alike. In his book *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon theorized about the link between mental alienation and colonial alienation, seeing the independence struggle as a prerequisite for any effort of de-alienation. Algerian psychiatry thus inherits from Frantz Fanon a dynamic concept of mental illness, with much focus on the social context in treatment and especially the social context of the hospital itself.

Though developing Algerian psychiatry was on the post-independence agenda, the article pointed out, after significant public health investments in the '70s (including free health care), this trend was reversed in the '80s with Chadli's economic liberalization. Psychiatry was thus present, but not significantly in the form of institutions. With a shortage of facilities, the duration of patient stays was much reduced (an average forty-nine days at the hospital in Chéraga). This short amount of hospitalization minimizes the chances for chronic illness to develop. But releases to family care are only possible where women are seldom employed or the family is large enough.

As well, said the writer, the low rate of institutionalization means that the negative effects of traditional psychiatric treatment (individualization and neglect of the social context) and recourse to that approach to deal with social deviance are reduced. Only heavy psychiatry is practiced at the hospitals. But this somewhat captivating vision doesn't take account of the fact that a large number of the current homeless (2,500 counted in Algiers) suffer from mental illness, and many families are unable to assist one of their afflicted members and cannot find help from doctors. In the end, it is the women who bear the difficult burden.

As the Algerian family structure changes, with its reduced size and emphasis on the nuclear family, the writer pointed out, it becomes more difficult for one with mental illness to find recourse outside a psychiatric institution. It is thus likely that these traditional psychiatric facilities will be encouraged to expand. At the same time, NGOs and Unicef have responded to the needs of victims of terrorism and natural disasters with traditional psychiatric approaches. Thus, many programs have developed with a focus on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a more recent analytical innovation in contemporary psychiatry. While important in responding to the real psychological suffering of so many victims, the emphasis on this approach raises questions since sometimes it is the only form of assistance offered.

For example, said the writer, many victims from the earthquake and floods in Bab el-Oued in 2001 were still without housing four years later. As for terrorist victims, such treatment hides the fact that there is still no political resolution. A media-proclaimed day concerning the theme of PTSD took place in the midst of Bouteflika's referendum campaign for the national reconciliation charter.

"Finally, at the present hour, an American-type psychiatric culture is spreading as well, one centered on behavioral therapies and treatment education, financed by drug companies, in a context of weak public investment."²⁰²

Réfractions

A VERY DIFFERENT ANARCHIST REVUE, BEGUN IN 1997, IS *Réfractions: Recherches et Expressions Anarchistes*, a usually semi-annual collection of scholarly articles focused on particular themes and written by mainly anarchist writers.²⁰³ In its issues to date, the only full article directly concerning Algeria was one in spring 2002 by Georges Rivière on the Kabyle insurrection.²⁰⁴ Rivière also had two other articles in this same period in the OCL journal, *Courant Alternatif*, provided above. Because of some overlap with previous texts, only the more unique passages appear below.

Said Rivière, there was and is in Algeria a daily form of resistance in tense attempts "to maintain the appearance of a normal existence, for daring to travel on certain roads, at certain hours, to go to school, to work, to a meeting or to a celebration." For women, extra precautions begin earlier, at home, with an effort to wear acceptable clothing for the outside world.

Almost weekly, he said, the cemetery became the place of encounter for an ever-smaller group of friends and "one's assumption of life became an unlikely gamble to enjoy again from day to day. One no longer asked why an assassination happened, but how, the art and mode of murder: a gun or a knife." People already knew who was responsible and who they sought to kill: women, hairdressers, moderate and tolerant *imams*, writers, journalists, trade unionists. In essence, they wanted to kill "an Algeria open to the world, to diversity, to universality."

Daring to live, he asserted, meant daring to go to a fish market in between two rounds of submachinegunfire that killed two traffic police, daring to allow one's children to go play a school handball match in another city despite the danger of being caught at a barricade by those who behead their victims along the way; or daring to allow one's daughter to attend school despite radical Islamists' vow to kill those who went to mixed schools. "What is obvious first is the solitude of choices, the individualization of behavior. It is also the striking silence of an international community largely compromised with either the Algerian regime or Islamism."

Four years ago, he said, during a visit to Tiaret, a city in western Algeria, I saw a good example—in all its fullness and horror—of the demented and sinister dynamic between the regime and Islamist guerrillas. The situation was catastrophic at the grassroots. People who worked in state enterprises had not been paid for six months. Over 30 percent of the workforce had no jobs. Despite 800 deaths in the *wilaya*, the Islamist maquis survived untouched in the mountain forests north of the city. When grassroots social challenges became too strong for the regime—as happened while I was there with a union revolt, factory occupations, and reemergence of youth and women’s associations—as if by chance, the guerrillas descended to the city, killed some people, and slit the throats of shepherds and their sheep. The resulting wave of fear sent workers home again, not wanting to risk their lives for a wage. And only then did the army intervene. The guerrillas then retreated until the next time they were needed.

Until the present, said Rivière, the disarmed and atomized resistance consisted only of those committed to the classical republican form of political representation. Though they dreamed of a secular and democratic Algeria with a strong state role, they were too weak to combat the regime.

However, the Kabyle insurrection of spring 2001, “and what remains still today despite repression, manipulation, the will to make the movement run out of steam and to regionalize the problem, has considerably raised the level [of resistance].” This movement was very popular and loyally followed at the grassroots and had significant inroads as well in other *wilayas*, such as Boumerdes and Bouira, and a bit fewer in Batna, Annaba, and El-Harrouch. Much to the regime’s displeasure, this suggested the emergence of a national movement ready to assure citizens of an active role in democratic public life, to bring state administration under democratic control. Importantly, in the socio-economic realm, it demands government benefits throughout all of Algeria for the unemployed.

“But the assemblies movement goes much further yet: amidst the crisis of political representation on both sides of the Mediterranean, it puts into practice a very demanding system of direct democracy, and the exemplary nature of its form of organization is comparable to the most innovative democratic forms of struggle that the European social movement had created during the 20th century.” The movement demands that the means of struggle should be consistent with its goals, that democratic practice should be an educational tool as each person becomes a permanent student of freedom as it invents itself.

A solidarity commission, he said, is the only permanent structure, but it has no independent political power. Its task is to keep track of the wounded, take charge of gaining national and international assistance in medical supplies, and refer very serious cases—those with bullet wounds, for example—to a separate commission of doctors.

A collective presidency, without decision-making power, said Rivière, assures continuity between any two large meetings. It is decentralized geographically and revolving, being composed of two members of the past collective, two of the present gathering, and two from the next location. This body sets up safeguards against any authoritarian or bureaucratic tendencies and assures communication of accomplishments between meetings.

"Direct democracy is the principal factor allowing the assemblies movement of Kabylia to resist all forceful blows and all schemes and to continue its massive mobilization. Everyone has a clear consciousness about it, despite the difficulties. The mechanism of consensus at the general assembly, through encouraging discussion, controversy, a deepening of concepts, and listening abilities, is very productive over time. It leads to deep and durable decisions, but is difficult to work out in emergencies." Even those elected delegates who were hostile to the movement used the process to prevent urgent decisions from being made.

The archaic element still persisting in the movement, he acknowledged, concerns the total lack of women, despite the fact that they are the majority in community associations, and all democratic political parties insist on equality of rights and repealing the Family Code. An inter-*wilaya* report in August 2001 specifically identified the absence of women as a movement weakness. Militants and delegates reject the notion that women have voluntarily excluded themselves. This movement, in fact, with its very rural roots and composition, draws its legitimacy from the elective assembly tradition and thus reflects Kabyle social arrangements. "No woman would present herself as an electoral candidate before local residents. If she wants to express herself, she will go elsewhere to demonstrate or militate, not at home before her father, brothers, and uncles." This issue of political volunteerism is another matter for direct democracy still to take on.

"Today, the future appears quite somber. Algeria has not risen up. The regime cedes nothing and has a tight hold on perpetuating its privileges. Islamism—armed or legal—endures, with an arrogance reinforced by the Civil Concord decreed by President Bouteflika. The army has reappeared in Kabylia to protect the *gendarmes* and to manage the exit from the barracks."

Gaining outside support for the movement is difficult, he said. Serious French reporting on Algeria, through *Le Monde* and *Libération*, is heavily pressured by the Algerian regime. As well, the French left "has a very bad conscience about Algeria and strongly blocks out its colonialist past." Finally, European and Eurocentric revolutionary movements have been historically absent in their long-range vision and engagement toward Algeria, specifically, and Africa, more generally.

"Despite everything, chances are that it is in this movement and from this movement that new political opportunities will be born in Algeria. This could take much or little time and will perhaps cost many lives. But as one

very level-headed individual stated at the height of the riots in Tizi-Ouzou, ‘We’ve gone too far and have had far too many deaths to retreat.’”²⁰⁵

A special May 2008 issue of the same anarchist revue featured several articles analyzing the meaning of both the May 1968 revolt and post-modernism, as they relate to anarchism. While not obviously relating to Algeria, the perspectives of post-modernist anarchism, as explained in the article by Daniel Colson, could be interpreted as encouraging the interest of French anarchists in “anarchic”-type, non-explicitly anarchist political developments in Algeria, such as described by Rivière in the article above. In a separate interview, Colson made clear that anarchist phenomena have appeared for thousands of years in every civilization—*without* the presence of an anarchist movement of the sort familiar to the West since the 19th century.²⁰⁶

Colson’s May 2008 article in *Réfractions* made clear that *actual* anti-authoritarian, horizontalist, directly democratic, and federalist behavior—that is, “a vibrant anarchism”—was his central concern, whether practiced by those with an organizational anarchist identity or those acting autonomously. In fact, based on his personal experience, he was generally quite critical of the present-day French-organized anarchist membership movement for its overall inability to meet these criteria.

While claiming to incarnate anarchism, he said, its various components tend toward mostly nostalgic, hypocritical, overly rationalist, and wooden rhetoric; bureaucratic practice; an outdated and defensively rigid reading of classical anarchist writers; and they “lacked any authentic emancipating inspiration.” “The libertarian renewal that occurred during last century’s end has enabled the crystalization—but also the sedimentation—of a noticeable number of activists who reclaim an anarchist identity. This often ageing category of anarchists has enlivened the traditional organizations (mainly through the CNT, Alternative Libertaire, Organisation Communiste Libertaire, the Fédération Anarchiste and its various dissidents), but not necessarily the libertarian logic and dynamic.” In Colson’s view, “established anarchism has abandoned the breath of emancipation that appeared in the singularity and originality of its birth for the protective and oppressive shade of the order that it pretended to abolish.”

Still strongly committed to anarchism, Colson believed that it must take advantage of new understandings about ubiquitous power relationships and dynamics, from the macro to the smallest micro-levels, as discussed by post-modernist thinkers such as Foucault, Deleuze, and Guattari. As they emphasize, he said, it is a modernist illusion that society is composed of “rational actors, originators and masters of their actions.” “Far too many anarchists...satisfy themselves by adopting the worldviews

they fight against, never wondering why they always end up by obtaining the opposite of what they intend,” as emphatically demonstrated by proponents of “platformist” anarchism. Colson admitted that one doesn’t have to read Foucault to be aware of power dynamics everywhere pervading even the smallest dimensions of life, including “permanent or long-lasting [anarchist] organizations.” Hypersensitivity to all authority relations has characterized the anarchist movement at its moments of greatest “effectiveness and consistency.”

Ultimately, Colson believed, anarchist theorists from the past still have a rich potential to contribute to the revitalization of anarchism and expansion of its implications. Far from abandoning writers such as Proudhon and Bakunin, Colson urged their re-reading, now more closely than ever, with the aid of post-modern theorists, to promote “a much broader way of thinking and acting,” thus contributing to the “uninterrupted sequence of emancipating events.” This, not in the modernist sense of the march of progress, but in confronting in each successive “here and now,” the understood obstacles to greater intensity and freedom.²⁰⁷

Insurrectionist Anarchists

ANOTHER COMPONENT WITHIN THE FRENCH ANARCHIST MOVEMENT consists of those who prioritize self-determined insurrectionary actions of individuals or affinity groups as the only meaningful and consistent form of revolutionary activity. Action developed by anarchist or other membership organizations that consider themselves “revolutionary” are by nature recuperated, they assert, for other non-revolutionary purposes—such as organizational prestige or charisma on the left, ambitions of hierarchical power, and ultimate strategies of compromise and potential alliance with non-revolutionary forces that sooner or later reproduce basically the same alienation of individuals from their potentials of creative self and group expression, their own flourishing as free beings. Individual and affinity group insurrection is presented as the only authentic, non-alienating expression of rage against and release from the multitude of strings that attach individuals to the powerful inhuman forces and institutions of modern life. There is no compromise in immediate defiance.

In some ways, it is less an intellectual calculation of appropriate strategy and more a fundamental emotional outcry of asserted self-freedom. An instantaneous shattering of authoritarian constraints and an intimate glimpse of the implications of a life without hierarchy are found in the moment of expression. When it is a social effort of defiant individuals acting simultaneously, insurrectionist revolt, it is argued, also provides, through intense shared exhilaration and solidarity, instant and extended ruptures of “normal” barriers of communication into mutual recognitions of trust and celebration.²⁰⁸

To the extent that insurrectionary anarchists foresee the nature of future society beyond such moments, it is through a multitude of such insurrections, locally, nationally, and throughout the world that revolution will occur as all the various forms of arbitrary institutional and cultural constraint are shattered. As this happens, humans will enter a new, genuinely human existence of self-directed autonomous individual and group freedom, constantly recreating its forms and manifestations to avoid any re-imposition of hierarchical control. Necessarily, the outlines of such a future are quite vague. Emphasized instead is encouraging immediate insurrectionary ruptures.

To provide such encouragement through discourse, as well as exemplary action, numerous writings over past decades offered all-encompassing critiques of present day total domination. In France, as elsewhere, the writings and actions of “Direct Action”-type groups, situationism, and post-situationism have significantly inspired the insurrectionist orientation. Also important is an overlapping tendency that some have labeled “post-anarchist” anarchism to the extent that the anarchist movement itself is seen as ultimately reformist, inhibiting the advocated total revolution. In the past decade, writings of the Tiquun group and *The Coming Insurrection* (supposedly authored by the same) have been especially influential.

While the French state’s persecution of the Tarmac group involved with Tiquun was apparently condemned by all in the French anarchist movement as an attack on free speech and a further extension of state surveillance and control of political life, the text of *The Coming Insurrection*, just as those earlier by situationists, received mixed anarchist reviews. Such writings, it is stated, provide insightful and valuable critiques of the infinite reach of domination in institutional and daily life, permeating deeply into individual consciousness itself. Anarchists share the assumption that a dramatically different social consciousness is possible, and probably most believe that such changes can occur quite rapidly if the right circumstances prevail.²⁰⁹

At the same time, the emphasis on emotionality and totalistic liberation is seen by anarchist critics of insurrectionism as an inevitable setup for new authoritarianisms, for purges of “deviationists,” and for breakdowns of larger-scale solidarity and egalitarian decision-making essential for fulfilling human lives when others in the society refuse to go along. Insurrection becomes a potential fetish of its own, a “spectacle” for egoistic leftist consumption. Thoughtful concrete planning for social change against powerful adversaries and for more fully imagined revolutionary societies is discarded along the way. It is illusory to assume that insurrectionists can free themselves overnight of “the state within,” the tendencies of us all toward hierarchical practice so internalized by the pervasiveness of hierarchy in existing society.²¹⁰

In essence, beyond the social justice inherent in defiant rebellion by the repressed and the significant numbers who may be involved, the insurrectionist position, it is said, is essentially a form of nihilistic individualist anarchism by its failure to realistically consider the broader social dimensions of both the revolutionary process and post-rupture society. It is no surprise, therefore, that the writings of Nietzsche and Max Stirner are so often cited in developing insurrectionist anarchist expositions. A last important critique rejects the broad characterization of all ongoing anarchist organizations as typically passive and hierarchical.

It should be remembered that debate over the very meaning and intent of "insurrection" has a long history in the anarchist movement, most lengthy and striking perhaps in the Italian movement of the late-19th century. Malatesta, for example, saw violent insurrection as an attempt to overthrow the existing political and economic order, the first step in deep social transformation, but he understood that to be successful insurrectionary action required that the masses become involved and committed to that goal. While an anarchist minority could and should encourage contexts in which insurrection was seen by the masses as possible and desirable, much attention was needed to develop those catalytic conditions and a national network or movement to assure its spread. In other words, he and others assumed, the masses *could* be mobilized and that significant advance organizing would contribute to insurrectionary success.

Strikingly different from that perspective is the priority given by current insurrectionists and the Italian anti-organizationalists of Malatesta's day to spontaneous and defiant exemplary direct actions ("propaganda by the deed") by individuals and small affinity groups. Believing that the masses are too anesthetized by the spectacular and totalistic nature of presentday capitalism, they reject large-scale organizing as impossible and, in any case, as only reproducing existing society's hierarchies and bureaucracy.²¹¹

Passages from two articles in the French anarchist journal, *Non Fides*, illustrate the response of current insurrectionary anarchists to the critiques of others (though editors of *Non Fides* refused to accept any labels for their own project).²¹² Concerning the Paris suburb riots of late 2005, a writer observed that while left critics of these at best conceded that they were "understandable," they considered them as a "bad" rebellion since they were not "politicized" and the wrong targets were chosen (schools, mediating associations, neighbors' cars, neighborhood businesses, etc.). "But is it really the choice of targets that bothered our narrow-minded, comfortable revolutionaries? We ask the question since we see the [positive] reactions of these same persons when the same type of events occur in Greece, but on that occasion when such actions are 'produced' by persons who add a circled 'A' and other signs of tribal recognition on the walls (in other words, 'by persons already politically conscious')."

A clear hierarchy is set forth by such leftists, said the writer, between explosions of rage in the suburbs and those more desirable in Greece or Oaxaca. "Certain populations [are given] the privilege of 'revolutionary subjects,' while others remain, in veiled terms, the modern avatars of the lumpenproletariat, incapable of going beyond rebellion. For rebellions, in their minds, are good only if they are the prelude to the Great Revolution..." This hierarchical favoritism of some revolts over others is not only a matter of supposed political consciousness; it reflects a class bias more directly. "It is much easier for an anarchist, a Trotskyist or whatever leftist to identify with a middle-class student, already active in social movements and specially decked out with the same folkloric symbols than with an individual who doesn't have the same 'political culture' and who, besides, has not necessarily waited to read the full works of Bakunin before burning up the world."

The point of the article, said the writer, is to criticize those who value some revolts over others. "The only thing that matters in a riot is the rage that guides it, and not the 'pre- or post-revolutionary capacities' of those who do it. But to take refuge in the exotic fantasy of an insurrection in Greece allows one to not get involved much here, and to restore one's image tarnished by inaction. For us, to condemn a [working-class] suburb riot—under one false pretext or another—is the same as condemning a wildcat strike, an attack on cops or burning down a retention center; it is to deny the rebellion animating the enraged by making them objects of sociological study, which, in order to do so, means necessarily to adopt an external and distant, if not condescending, perspective. Sitting there by the fireplace, the revolutionary has the full leisure to ponder imposing thoughts that will give one authority and will show the way to those who only need to follow."²¹³

A second article in the same journal articulated a sense of close identity with those who riot, the importance of individuals following their instinct to revolt, and why violence is a part of insurrection. "When we learn that cobblestones broke the windows of banks that collaborated in tracking down *sans-papiers*, or no matter what bank, we know that we have accomplices. When workers on strike, here and there, send their unions packing, we know that we have accomplices. When prison cells are reduced to ashes by the prisoners, as at Vincennes, Nantes, Mesnil-Amelot, and elsewhere, that reinforces rage and helps to spread it elsewhere." Sabotage and resistance should be spread out wherever possible for those who are receptive.

"Every day, we truly feel the urgency [of doing so] because a day without rebellion is a day where the spiral of despair grows larger, becomes more unrelenting. In this situation, we can't be patient. Revolution might permit one that 'luxury,' but anger and revolt cannot. Those who sincerely burn with desire to eliminate domination cannot permit themselves to sacrifice everything for THE revolution. Before speaking of 'decisive rupture'

and ‘Great Revolution,’ and other dreams waited for by the militant milieu, sparks must fly and multiply. And sometimes, even survival itself requires that one move to rebellion, if only to find and keep one’s strength.” Resistance should not be put off to tomorrow. “There is more to lose in apathy than in spontaneity.”

It is not really relevant to theorize about violence and insurrection, said the writer. It is obvious that the capitalist system and the state are violent. We feel it directly. “If one considers that we respond to this violence (because basically we prefer that the world live in peace), that we defend ourselves against their terrorist enterprise, it seems to us that rocks thrown at the cops and fires to burn down police stations take on the same significance as a tract calling for the abolition of exploitation of man by man. Insurrection is not really a doctrine. If there’s an insurrection, there are reasons for it. It’s because, beforehand, more and more persons, as anger spreads out, have internalized anti-authoritarian ideas and practices. That will be an expression, a consequence, but this takes nothing, I think, from the coherence and radical nature of these ideas and practices.”²¹⁴

Considering the Algerian context, while anarchist writings included in other sections of this book above praised the defiant insurrectionary challenges to the state by young Kabyle rioters, they also assessed the problems and adequacy or not of the longer-range grassroots insurrectionary movement. Such writings, just as those that praised and analyzed the defiant rioting by enraged youth in urban French working-class suburbs in late 2005, therefore, are not from an insurrectionary anarchist perspective. However, one pamphlet on Algeria that appeared in February 2009 seemed to exemplify that orientation.

Since the author of the “Bref aperçu sur de vives flames algériennes” is anonymous, it is impossible to confirm or not the underlying perspective or intent. The fact that it was reproduced in various non-insurrectionist anarchist publications²¹⁵ does not, I think, change the nature of its apparent message. At the same time, its very inclusion in those journals makes it appropriate to include in this collection.

Accompanied by photos of Algerian riots, the brochure began by citing the Algerian regime’s huge new investment, since the summer of 2008, in anti-riot personnel and equipment: 20,000 billy clubs, over 200 troop transport buses, several vehicles equipped to break barricades or shoot water at demonstrators, and 20,000 new police. Such investments were not made to bolster the regime’s efforts against terrorism, but rather to add strength to the national security force against rioters in the streets. Apparently to further protect itself against a general uprising, the regime also

invested several tens of billions of dinars yearly to subsidize the products of mass consumption, to thus counter the effects of inflation in daily life. These facts, plus the news that various Algerian and foreign businesses were preparing protective measures against street pillaging, were more important than the announcement of constitutional change that would allow Bouteflika a third term.

It seems, from the bits of information coming to France, that for over a year, said the writer, an average of two or three riots or other forms of grassroots angry defiance (especially road blockades) have occurred daily in Algeria. Only China at present has more. In 2008 and early 2009, many such occasions were too big (at least hundreds involved) or too long (at least two days) or too spectacular in their destruction for the media to ignore.

Among these, according to the writer, were Timimoun (southern Algeria) in February 2008; Ghardaïa in March; Chlef, Gdyl (near Oran), and Tiaret in April; Ksar El Boukhari (90 km south of Algiers); Berriane and Oran in May; Berriane again in July and the following January and February; Annaba and M'sila in August; several Tizi-Ouzou area villages and Tissemsilt in September; Annaba again in October; and Meftah in November. The "joys of revolt" were thus experienced in all parts of the country, from the largest cities to many small villages. Despite the fact that marches in Algiers have been banned since the huge march by the Kabyle assemblies movement in June 2001, a mammoth demonstration of up to one million persons came out in the streets on January 2009 in support of the people of Gaza and directly confronted the police on a large scale.

The causes for such upheavals are quite varied, argued the writer. Though often disregarded or seen with contempt, sports fans' hooliganism is an expression of class struggle. Riots in Oran emerged when that city's soccer team was relegated to the second division. Algerian authorities dread every weekend when soccer stadiums become potentially explosive hotboxes, especially when teams from the poorest neighborhoods, like El Harrach and Bab el-Oued, are playing. Villages erupted in Kabylia when managed fires destroyed entire fields of olive and fruit trees. Seven bodies of *harragas* recovered offshore at Tiaret, vengeance against a rich hotel owner and his security guards at M'sila, water cut off, or too high a hike in the price of potatoes—"it hardly matters what factors set them off as long as they all were pretext for a healthy competition in collective rage."

What was common to all of "these beautiful emotions," said the writer, speaks volumes: for each occasion, buildings of the local or national government were attacked, including court houses and national enterprises like post offices, banks, and petroleum offices. As well, private business offices were especially targeted and store windows broken with subsequent pillage. "And the quasi-systematic practice of roadblocks assures that the blockage of flows remains a certain method for interrupting the daily grind

of the society.” Police are often overwhelmed and large reinforcements are always needed to return to “normal” conditions. Algerian demonstrators are world champions at making good use of rocks. But the state prosecution is severe. For the last year, several hundreds of rioters have been jailed and often sentenced to five-year terms. But such repression only reinforces anger, and freeing the prisoners becomes the occasion for commendable solidarity by family members, neighbors, and friends in demonstrations, courtrooms, and public meetings.

“Journalists, sociologists, and other accomplices of the regime regularly speak about the causes of what they call a ‘culture of rioting,’ as if rioting wasn’t basically the enemy of culture. Among the reasons advanced by these supposed experts of our lives” were a massive urbanization of the population (30 percent in 1960, 80 percent now) following Boumédiène’s agrarian reform in the ’70s and the subsequent unemployment of young Algerians (a 60 percent rate among the 60 percent of the population under thirty).

However, though youth and “enthusiasm” are usually matched together, the writer asserted, these experts don’t account for the fact that the many flaming tire barricades set up at the slightest provocation are enthusiastically supported by the whole oppressed local population concerned. As well, a deep underlying motivation for these confrontations is vengeance against each instance of *hogra* by any level of power in Algeria. It is impossible to recuperate this hatred as was done in the consensus contexts of the national independence revolution and the war against radical Islamists.

Nevertheless, the writer pointed out, it would be wrong to think that the atmosphere is truly insurrectional on a daily basis, since suppressed rage or a quiet desperate weariness is the common emotion. In the heavily male space of cafés or in the street, the desire usually is to find some way to break out of this shitty country. This is only aggravated by the innumerable sandbag road barricades by cops and soldiers with machine guns every 200 meters in the city and every 2 km in the sticks. Even in Kabylia, where *gendarmes* were kicked out in 2001, they returned several years later to participate in campaigns to eradicate the last jihadist maquis still in the area. “It is also true that the increased number of always bloody attacks, attributed to the Islamist guerrillas, leaves a mark on the countryside and the general mood. The ‘dirty war’ obviously never stopped.”

Concerning other “social movements” in Algeria, said the writer, the current period sees much lively contestation. Among the largest recent mobilizations are those, since the spring of 2008, of the temporary teachers, regularly joined by the whole teaching staff and high-school students in alternating strikes, sit-ins, and demonstrations, all met by violent repression with beatings, arrests, stubborn refusals, and threats of school privatizations.

Beginning last November, described the writer, 50,000 students in Sétif have carried out an unlimited strike for resources, while civil servants

struck for three days across Algeria. Autonomous dockworker unions also stopped working for several days to protest the award of ports of Algiers and Djendjen to a Gulf state multinational. Throughout the year, workers in other realms—health services, veterinarians, petroleum workers, and construction workers (fighting Chinese bosses forcing them to compete against Chinese workers)—have also agitated about their work conditions, despite the traditionally tight control of the labor force by UGTA, the dominant official trade union. It is not yet a matter of participation in decision making, but rather “several breaches within which autonomous spaces are developed for struggle, often more offensive than defensive.”

When considering the revolt that shows itself throughout Algeria, the writer argued, the socio-economic context needs to be examined—not as necessarily determining, but not either as an incidental factor. “The rumbling of excited crowds tells us also of the rotten ways in which capital more or less manages its own reproduction, which are actively resisted.” While Algeria has been called a model of economic growth (5 percent annually since 2002), it is also in the presence of Sarkozy’s heavily pushed Mediterranean Union (despite the reluctance of Bouteflika and other Arab leaders to be part of any arrangement with Israel). However, that scheme is also in harsh competition with the US project of a large coordinated Middle East, not to mention the “historic” ties of Chinese-Algerian friendship. Trade with China was worth \$4 billion in 2007.

In Spain in the ’80s, said the writer, workers involved in industrial strikes in “restructuring” sectors used to complain that it wasn’t so much Spain joining the Common Market as Europe entering Spain. In the same way, surely government and business leaders are excited about the prospects for expanding their economic exploitation to new areas across the Mediterranean, especially in a country like Algeria with its rich oil and natural gas resources (fourth in world natural gas production, fourteenth in oil). Despite the freefall in oil prices in 2008, enormous reserves of cash seem still readily available.

Thus, in the years to come, the writer predicted, Algeria will see built a trans-North African TGV railroad system and an Algiers metro, by Alstom; the largest Mediterranean industrial port (20 km of docks); petrochemical or steel complexes with partners from Saudi Arabia, Japan, and Germany; one of the largest Samsung factories at Sétif; a Brazilian viaduct at Constantine; new structuring of port and railway infrastructures; new gas lines and electric plants; oil equipment facilities; the world’s largest desalination plant at Mostaganem; thirteen new dams; a million new housing units (primarily by Chinese companies); and a \$5 billion mixed-use urban park (the world’s largest) in Algiers, by a Gulf state company.

Such giant investments and projects, noted the writer, of course demand a favorable economic system and a large and apparently docile workforce. Nevertheless, investors are not encouraged by the social climate in Algeria,

even with police who are watchful, more amply equipping themselves and preparing themselves for future upheavals.

Meanwhile, over the past several years, the writer pointed out, Algeria has become a country of new immigrants. In fact, a sub-Saharan *sans-papier* is a cheaper worker than a young Algerian. In 2007, 12,000 illegal immigrants were arrested in Algeria, including about 7,000 from Mali and 3,000 from Nigeria. The following year saw about 5,000 expelled to the south. At the same time, last June, a law was passed to make conditions for *sans-papiers* much more difficult and more money was allocated to build new retention centers. While making Algeria more difficult for illegal immigrants, the regime also, under EU pressure, made Algerians' escape to the north more arduous as well. Those who desperately attempt the highly risky boat voyage across the Mediterranean to find jobs in the construction, agriculture, and restaurant sectors, which are very dependent on the cheaper *sans-papiers* work force, face several months of prison. However, despite the well-publicized repression of this sector, designed to keep the social peace needed for good functioning of the economy, it warms our hearts to see "the beautiful spread in Europe of mutinies and flaming destruction of retention camps."

In recent years, reminded the writer, Algeria has experienced a remarkable series of grassroots rebellions. These extend from "the Berber Spring of 1980 [and] the generalized quasi-insurrection of October 1988 (bloodily swept aside, with apparently over 500 deaths) [to] the Kabyle uprising of Spring 2001, let alone the intense peaks of that unending long revolt aroused in Oran in 1982, Annaba in 1983, Laghouat in 1983 and '85, the Algiers Casbah in 1985, Sétif and Constantine in 1986, Algiers and various cities in 1991, around thirty cities in 2004, etc."

Having provided numerous examples of grassroots and sometimes violent revolts—especially in Morocco and Tunisia, but as well in Egypt (including against Muslim Brotherhood factory bosses) and several West African countries—the author moved toward conclusion.

"In brief, south of the Mediterranean, even if the space-times of ruptures are especially disjointed, the working classes *de facto* make up a delightful international of dangerous classes, all the more since it seems especially tenacious and vigilant against assaults by police and judges. It is in these intense collective moments that workers (with or without jobs) remove themselves from especially apathetic daily lives, that beggars take back the time to live at top speed." To have chosen confrontation is in itself "a critique in action of the world that wants to regulate our entire lives—it is especially reinvigorating to see that the street can still be that lively political space, and not only a so policed thoroughfare where they want to confine us. May the flames of Algeria and other ill-famed working-class suburbs of the world heat up our long winters."²¹⁶

Responding to the dramatic early 2011 insurgent waves in Algeria and Tunisia, a similar anonymous tract appeared at the *Non Fides* web site (and several others) in mid-January. “Poverty has been growing in North Africa since the beginning of the year. The price of food staples is soaring, there is less and less work, further reducing the pitiful spectrum of everyone’s means of survival. They are bringing out the old trick of the ‘crisis,’ making us believe that misery and revolt are new phenomena produced by it, while they are as old as money and authority. It only took a few sparks in Tunisia to set fire to the powderkeg of an already explosive situation, right to Algeria.”

After describing the usual targets of insurgents—such as cops, banks and government buildings, the tract denies the simplistic government and media labeling of rioters as simply “youth,” “the jobless,” and “extremists.” A wide variety of Algerians participate and their choices of targets are not random. “Opposed to this, the state’s response is equally clear: in Tunisia, the cops respond to stones by sniper fire, leaving dozens dead. In Algeria too, thousands of arrests, torture, detentions, and killings, while the convictions have started and will continue. As always, as everywhere, the social war is raging, urging everyone to choose sides.”

The tract denounces those with religious or political objectives who now rush in “to recuperate these rebellions for political purposes—calling for reform or regime change—to divert this anger expressed against any form of regime or government. They are already preparing the sequel, wanting to replace the control by dictatorship by democratic control; in other words, convert power to make it acceptable.” Experienced with life in “democracy,” and knowing that daily life is “less harsh than under a dictatorship,” the authors however forcefully assert that “*democratic freedoms* have never made us free. The freedom that we desire—it is total and unconditional. Therefore this background of insurrectional atmosphere, such as in Greece since December 2008 or in France in November 2005, warms the heart. That’s why we want to blow on the embers, and spread this revolt here, everywhere, now, all the time. The revolution must come from the slums, because only bullets and blows come from above.”²¹⁷

CONCLUSION

Nearly six decades of French anarchist engagement with Algeria and Algerians are reviewed in this book, an account that offers an alternative history of contemporary Algeria, an introduction to the French anarchist movement since the 1950s, and a heavy plateful of major generic anarchist theoretical and strategic issues. In this concluding section, I summarize and underline critical aspects of each of these three dimensions.

Before this effort, however, I will discuss in more detail the issue raised in the introduction about the presence of anarchism in Algeria itself. I then proceed to examine what is peculiar to French anarchists' alternative history of Algeria—what makes these accounts different from mainstream narratives in intent and substance and, also, in confronting the direct domestic blowbacks from French involvement with Algeria. I move on from there to consider the nature and dynamics of the French anarchist movement itself in its organizational, strategic, tactical, and substantive dimensions. Finally, I'll offer some reflections on the anarchist movement, generally, based on the evidence in this book.

Anarchism in Algeria

I FOUND NO SPECIFIC EVIDENCE OF NON-EUROPEAN PARTICIPATION in anarchist membership groups (the MLNA or Spanish émigré organizations) in Algeria at the time of the outbreak of the national liberation revolution. As well, given the FLN's internal purges and hostility toward the rival MNA and Algerian Communists during the war, it is difficult to imagine any Algerian with proclaimed anarchist views surviving determined FLN hegemonic control. Survival would depend on suppressing one's political identity, as in the example of Frenchman Serge Michel, and demonstrating overall loyalty and dedication to the dictates of the national leadership—as well as avoiding the heavy hand of French repression. The only mention I've seen of a non-European Algerian anarchist militant in Algeria for this period is the vague reference by MLNA leader Léandre Valéro to comrade Derbal Salah of the Constantine area in Valéro's brief retrospective account about forty-five years later.¹

It is of course true that the FLN considered France itself to be the seventh *wilaya* battlefield of the war. It seems clear that at least several Algerian émigrés in France participated alongside FCL militants and in the Fédération Anarchiste during that period.² But here again, considering the intense battles between FLN and MNA forces within France, as well as the reality of French government repression, it would seem that open allegiance to anarchism would make one especially vulnerable. The example of young FLN student militant (and future historian) Mohammed Harbi in France exploring the works of Voline and other anarchist writers during this period³ must have been quite exceptional. Nevertheless, the absence of more published data about anarchist participants does not preclude their existence. Likewise, it's important to acknowledge that quasi-anarchist behavior and values no doubt flourished in many local Algerian wartime contexts.⁴

From 1962 to the present, to my knowledge, no Western-type organized anarchist group has existed, unless ephemerally, in Algeria. Nevertheless, other evidence can be found. In 1999, Algerian writer Djilali Bencheikh recalled his student days at the University of Algiers in the post-independence 1960s. He remembered defending his “anti-authoritarian convictions” in the official student organization UNEA and helping to organize numerous campus strikes “to defend freedom of expression and the inviolability of the university,” agitation that culminated in February 1968 when the FLN closed the campus for four weeks and arrested some 600 students. It seems, however, that Bencheikh gradually abandoned his militancy and, in the following year, pursued his studies in Paris.⁵

Within two months of the regime's suppression of the Berber Spring insurrection in 1980, "a group of Algerian autonomists" produced a short book, *L'Algérie brûle!* (*Algeria Burning!*), as "homage" to the insurgents of Tizi-Ouzou for "all of the radical anti-state actions that they so courageously took on." In describing the origin and evolution of events, they enthusiastically noted the absence of leaders, manipulation, and "bureaucratic contamination." Though local in scale, the revolt was "a radical protest against the *totality* of the world of market and spectacle alienation" and, in the course of its development, "discovered the forms of struggle that, oddly enough, recalled those of the Communards of 1871, the Spanish revolutionaries of 1936, or, closer to us, the wildcat strikes and occupations of May 1968."

They regarded the nature of these events as "the point of departure for the coming *generalized* insurrection." In this sort of context, the working class throughout Algeria should organize itself to throw off the state and manage a society without wages, private property, hierarchy, and exploitation, one self-managed through workers' councils and working toward eradication of the mental and behavioral roots of Islam and all religions.

At the same time, they were critical of all leftists, far leftists, and "certified anarchists" for their more limited aims, and included three substantial situationist quotations.⁶

Online Web research offered discoveries at the individual level that would never have surfaced for an outsider before this decade. Thus, among the endless articles that referred to the "anarchy" of traffic, housing, the economy, the government itself, and other realms in present-day Algeria, I discovered several blogs and letters to editors that appeared to be written by Algerian anarchists *in* Algeria.⁷

A certain Algerian, "tiplouf79," established a blog with his friends in 2007 that was dedicated to "the Kabyle martyr of 4/20/2001, and titled "Anarchists of Algeria." A full-page "presentation of the movement" offers an "internationalist anarcho-communist" denunciation of religion, capitalism, the state, nationalism, all-imposed morality, and every injustice. The land with all its riches will become collective property of the society and will be managed for the benefit of all. The future will be determined by "the spontaneous action of all free men whose task it will be to create it and give it form, while incessantly changing like all life phenomena."⁸ There appeared to be no Web responses to this proclamation.

A 2009 exchange on an "Anarchisme" Facebook discussion concerning "Algeria, the country of anarchy," included several participants. One, "Caffado," seems reasonably acquainted with at least the basics of anarchism and attempts to explain these to others. In the end, "Yacine" interestingly states that he's perhaps not yet anarchist, since, though he agrees with freedom and equality for all as well as abolishing the state, he finds it

impossible to eliminate God and the family. He adds that he's especially interested in the Temporary Autonomous Zone concept of Hakim Bey⁹ who assures that even "a good dinner is a T.A.Z."¹⁰

As for apparent anarchist letter-writers to newspapers, two examples appeared through Web research. "Baba," in April 2009, responded to a *Le Matin* article for democratic change by the national coordinator of the El Badil (MDA) party. Baba's comment was a detailed explanation of the nature, perspective, and program of the "Fédération Anarchiste."¹¹ Most likely, though not explicitly identified, this was a reference to the French anarchist organization, since no such group apparently exists in Algeria.

A second newspaper respondent, "A.M.E.," this time to *Le Soir d'Algérie* in January 2010, denied that Algerians "were violent by nature, as everyone says." It is simply, the writer states, the fact of social marginalization and the need to assure respect and to defend one's convictions that make violence inevitable. Searching one's whole life for "social order... should lead one to embrace anarchism." The latter is not "destruction and disorganization," as popular belief suggests, but, as Emma Goldman suggested, "a social order based on free association between individuals," including "the liberation of the human spirit from alienation, as well as liberation from domination and property."¹²

Among the most direct statements by an apparent Algerian anarchist are two 1997 and 2001 articles by Tarik Ben Hallâj.¹³ The first, a lengthy address to his Algerian sisters and brothers, and prefiguring in some respects the 2001 Kabyle insurrection, calls for hatred of "all the assassins of our country, all who cover for them, and further, if possible, all who command them. For it is our people, transformed into throat-slitted sheep for the celebration of Aïd el Kebir, and not the Islamists, that they want to 'eradicate,' deny, suppress, like those Bosnian women the criminal Serbs forced to have Serbian children so that they would carry and give birth to the negation of their own people..." With each death, the bureaucratic and military rulers destroy that much more of remaining Algerian identity. Not even bothering to lead us to concentration camps, "they kill us on the premises of our own homes, amidst our families, like one cuts down wheat under foot."

The assassins take no risks, he said, they show no courage in massacring defenseless elders, women, and children. This is not war, but carnage, "the highest stage of inequality." This is not civil war, but butchery. We need to transform this into "true civil war, that of the people versus the executioners." We should pardon none of them nor let any survive. "The extermination of such brutes and cowards should be total."

Such massacres are accompanied by lies, he asserted, but not simply those that declare that only the residues of terrorism are still at play. The deeper lie concerns the label of "terrorism" itself. The time will come when it will become clear that groups like the Red Brigade and Red Army

Fraction carried out their actions on behalf of hidden elite or regime forces just as the "Islamist assassins" now do in collaboration with the Algerian regime. "Always too late, in twenty years for example, it will be publicly acknowledged that the Algerian people were massacred by the unified club of its enemies and that, in effect, there were only enemies, false friends, on the political chessboard: the neo-FLN state and the Islamic counter-state at the two extremes." Despite their proclaimed hostility, they collaborate together to oppress the people.

"With the forces of order disguised as terrorists, and the terrorists as forces of order, confusion could not be greater, the dance of identities has no more limits.... The state maintains itself by having commandos, pretending to be Islamists, massacre the electoral base of the Islamists, while the extreme Islamists, tolerating the state's attribution to it of every massacre the state itself commits (as through phony communiqués signed by 'emirs' no longer alive), prevent any political alliance between moderate Islamists and all other political currents." The lie completely surfaces when terrorists present themselves to their victims as police "with ease, since often in fact they are really police disguised as terrorists, as at Haouch Raïs or Beni Messous."¹⁴

What is called Algerian disorder, he clarified, is actually the desired "order" of the regime and the Islamists. It has never been so absolute as it is when people are led to support their own deaths and the enrichment of those in power. We must "remain irreconcilable enemies of that 'order' and learn, even through grief, that there can be no democracy other than the taking of power by the armed people, on condition that it stays in their hands forever and is delegated to no one."

We must combat, he said, both the state and the Islamist counter-state with equal force, not fall into the trap of thinking we must support one against the other. We must oppose at the same time "the madmen of God ...the special units of military police," and all foreign powers. Our only resource is "to impose by ourselves, collectively, *our law*, with the strength of guns. *The population should now arm itself and engage in a generalized insurrection.* This process has already begun. Self-defense groups have formed since 1994." If the army gives us arms to fight the GIA, take them and fight both "forces of order." We need arms to accomplish what we thought we did in fighting the *colons*: independence. "We want no longer to be subject to colonization at the pleasure of the regime, the GIA, or by other vomiters of the prehistory of humanity: generals, mullahs, presidents, and swindlers of all kinds. No people can be free without ridding themselves of *their own tyrants*. No people can be free if half of its members, women, are subjected to an order that tries to render them dispirited, ugly and servile." A people only rise up when enough grievances have accumulated to force them to do so. We must be conscious that we are now at that point of rupture.

Public salvation committees should be formed everywhere, he argues, in each neighborhood and village and open to all except enemies of the Algerian people, "starting with terrorists of every kind and those who assist or approve of them." These committees should have no connection to political parties, the army, or the police. The self-defense groups should emanate from these popular assemblies. The committees themselves should federate for mutual coordination and aid. They should then "name delegates to come together at the national level progressively to take in hand every political aspect of the country." We should simply ignore our enemies, dealing with our own affairs, until forced to fight against them.

Said the writer, Algerian men will not gain dignity by veiling Algerian women. "Down with the infamous Family Code! No more veil, no more head scarf, no more patriarchy.... Equality of the sexes cannot be separated from political freedom." We should rid ourselves of that miserable hatred and fear of women that mutilates every Muslim country. "Let us leave our military prison cells and our spiritual shit, breathe the great outdoors, and be done with those who oppose us."¹⁵

The second text by this author addressed Islamic terrorism more generally after 9/11 and suggested twelve measures that, if adopted, could demonstrate on the part of Arab countries a genuine "anti-terrorist" commitment, a stance that also requires opposition to worldwide American domination. Without replicating his longer explanation of each measure, they consisted of an immediate increase of oil prices, the return of oil revenues for the benefit of the people, and an end to contact with the multinational oil companies; cancelation of the full debt of Arab countries and use of such monies for the use of the populations and under their control; replacement of existing Arab states by direct democracies; and unification of the Arab world at its base and abolition of its borders.

Additionally the author argues for, creation of secular societies and the return of Islam to the private realm; immediate and full application of UN resolutions concerning Israel; total emancipation of women and the abolition of all traits of patriarchal society; renewal and enlargement of the tradition of hospitality toward all; reconstruction of the Arab world's economy on a communitarian production basis and environmental preservation; replacement of the concept of material wealth with that of wealth in freedom; new forms of street spectacle to ridicule fundamentalist ascetics and extravagant royal displays in the palaces of Riyadh and elsewhere; and, to accomplish all of this, a vast revolutionary movement committed to abolishing the state.

Once such measures are adopted, he argues, the terrorism supported by material and moral misery will have disappeared and the Arab world will become the model for admiring Western peoples. "This is the true and great card that the *oumma* possesses and should be played: it should avoid all the

traps of contemporary Western mediocrity while not falling back into the misery of its own alienated past.”¹⁶

Another Algerian anarchist, Achour Idir, is publicly involved in ongoing organizing with the CLA autonomous high school teachers union. As mentioned above, when interviewed by a CNT-F journal in 2009, he was described as identifying with the red and black ideals of disobedience and resistance. He also stated that there were many Algerian anarcho-syndicalist militants involved in various unions.¹⁷ The course of his political work in the future can no doubt be followed since this union is at various times covered in the local Algerian press, as well as that of the two French CNTs.¹⁸ In addition, as mentioned above, delegates from the SNAPAP autonomous union participated in the early 2007 Paris international conference of revolutionary trade unionists, organized by the CNT-F.¹⁹

Anarchism is naturally attractive to many in the creative arts, though some are more explicit than others in their embrace of the political ideology dimension or a particular anarchist organization. A review of Algerian writers, musicians, painters, and other artists who demonstrate themes or practice in their creative work suggestive of anarchist tendencies is beyond the limited scope of this section, but there is no reason to think that such ideas do not have strong influence among Algerians as they do among others elsewhere.

In addition to singer Lounès Matoub mentioned earlier, four Algerians come to mind as ready examples. Both Mohamed Kacimi (El Hassani)²⁰ and Mezioud Ouldamer²¹ had writings appearing or discussed in the French anarchist periodical *Iztok* in the 1980s. The March 1986 issue ran a series of Kacimi’s cutting and ironic aphorisms on political and other subjects. Concerning “President,” for example, he stated, “It was a president who gathered all functions. Having achieved this, his death was thought to commit a genocide.” On “Suicide,” “Weary, he seriously considered suicide. On the fateful day, the socialist state saved his life. There was a shortage of bullets, ropes, water, barbiturates, and altitude.”²²

The September 1987 issue included a selection of several pages from his novel, *Le Mouchoir*. In these passages, the same sharp irony effectively undermines the pretentious and repressive behavior of state and party officials in an “Islamist-socialist” country, no doubt with Algeria as at least one of his targets. The final passage in this narrative of a party member/police intelligence functionary stated directly the nature of such a regime’s relations with its subjects. Concerning a chance encounter in the city with one of those “guilty” ones being monitored by his office, the narrator stated that he merely regards him transparently since he’s not an individual, but “a long chronological list of reprehensible acts.” He saw his own role as that of a doctor when he examines their records. “Leafing through his dossier, I am a surgeon who uses an infallible scalpel on the minds of men. Isn’t

the Party in fact the discreet stethoscope that breaks through the walls of underground activity and camouflage in order to seize the most imperceptible flutterings and heartbeats of the body it dominates? We don't prevent failures of the organism, that would be too simple, but those of thought." Our intelligence operation is a more effective therapy than psychoanalysis since "it reveals nothing to the individual himself, but to the institution more responsible than himself, the State!"²³

The introduction to the September 1985 *Iztok* article on Mezioud Ouldamer cited Article 144 of the Algerian penal code, which demands major punishments for essentially any supposed critique of public officials by words, gestures, and other means, including all private writings or drawings. Under this law, Ouldamer was given a two-year prison term for "thought crimes." Among other items found in his office and home, after he dared to support a workers' strike in the construction company he worked for, were a Spanish-language anarchist circular; notes, reflections, and citations demonstrating a "negative mind"; and a supposed phallic drawing of a mosque.

Ouldamer's subsequent prison experience and reflections on prison life, generally, were the subjects of his 1985 book, *Offense à président*. Beyond discussing prisoners of all kinds, Ouldamer focused on army deserters (many of whom lived abroad as émigré children but returned voluntarily to Algeria for military service) and those involved in economic crimes. The second group was very large, he said, and for the most part consisted of those at the lower and most vulnerable levels of typical corruption schemes, widespread throughout Algeria, scapegoats in what he described as an Algerian state essentially "a vast association of crooks. What it took mercantilism elsewhere twenty centuries to conquer, it has conquered in twenty years in Algeria: if you remove from your vocabulary the words 'bizness' and 'percentage,' we will have nothing more to say."

Said Ouldamer, when he assisted another prisoner (arrested for "bad management") in preparing a statement about his "good conduct," the latter stated that he had always "satisfied the environment" before sales to the public. By this, he explained, he meant that he had always taken care of "the police chiefs, officials, directors of the different agencies, the mayor, the Party chief, the UGTA chief..." According to the *Iztok* reviewer, Ouldamer's account makes clear that "Algeria is one immense prison."²⁴

A third example of an Algerian creative artist identified with anarchism is underground Kabyle musician, poet, and political commentator Lvachir Vouchlaghem. Politicized especially by the liberating Berber Spring events and the accompanying state repression, Lvachir described himself openly as an anarchist while explicitly denouncing capitalism, the state, the nationalist dimension of the Algerian revolution as a recuperation, Communism, religion, those (like the MAK) who advocate Kabyle autonomy, and conventional morality.

"Countries are fabrications by elites," he said. "I find life in Algeria more obscene than my texts. Algerians have witnessed terrifying massacres and they don't seem shocked about it." "I have the impression that people find in religion what I find in cannabis. That said, I think my choice is better." "[In Algeria,] people took up arms against the French colonizers, that is, against injustice. Today one says that they died for Algeria. That's a lie! They died while fighting against the injustice of the occupation, the nuance is large... . The sole worthy reason for taking up arms is freedom. That's all!" Lvachir referred to anonymous anarchists in Algeria in the 1980s, as well as the strong "anarchist zest" in the Berber cultural movement at that time. He insisted also that the esteemed Algerian writer Kateb Yacine, in reality, is well accepted as an anti-authoritarian communist and had great influence on others in that direction. In fact, he said, in Kabylia, "there's a very interesting tradition of struggle. Many people are bloody anarchists without knowing it. There is hope in that."²⁵

A fourth example was Algerian painter Abdelkader Guermaz (1919–1996), about whom *Le Monde Libertaire* ran a glowing review in 2003. Though he might have rejected the label, it said, Guermaz's life and work suggested "an anarchist attitude and stance rarely encountered. Leaving for Paris in 1961, he lived simply, having "nothing in common with a comfortable bourgeois and intellectual self, based on material goods and cultural clichés." Not belonging to any school or network, nor bowing to any authority, he exemplified "anarchist individualism, with its risks and perils..." Said the reviewer, compared to today's lifeless, aggressive, and disparaging conformisms that pose as "individualism," "the example of Guermaz, a passionate lover of the cultivation of oneself, comes just at the right moment to give the notion of individualism its correct, deep, and fierce dimension—anarchist in fact."²⁶

In a broader sense, beyond generalized political culture traditions of anti-statism and grassroots participation, especially in Kabylia, it can surely be understood that various of the emancipatory and/or insurrectional engagements of Algerians over the decades covered in this book had strong anarchist content even if those involved made no explicit claim to a Western-type anarchist identity. Beginning with aspects of the national liberation revolution itself, then moving especially through at least the earlier stages of *autogestion*, the Berber Spring, the urban upheavals of the 1980s, the Kabyle insurrection of 2001, the efforts of defiant women's organizations and autonomous trade unions, and the continuing local riots and confrontations with state authorities throughout the country, surely large numbers of Algerians have articulated and acted upon anarchist-type impulses, desires, and critiques. In turn, many no doubt have been moved further in an anarchist direction by the liberating experience of asserting freedom, as well as by the heavy reality of French and Algerian state repression.

As French anarchist Georges Rivière observed with admiration, “There are deep anti-authoritarian dynamics in this population in which anarchists are not involved. An unspoken sense of justice, equality, honor or dignity, and independence and a quick readiness to rebel.”²⁷ Interlocked with these traits also is the importance in Algerian culture of strong social solidarity rooted in pre-capitalist traditions, beginning with mutual aid and defense of one’s family and friends, and extending outward to larger and larger social networks in the face of threats to these from the outside.

I close this section with a most interesting recent editorial from one of the relatively more independent Algerian dailies, *El Watan*. The writer played with opposite connotations of anarchy in referring to Algeria’s long history and present-day condition of constant social convulsions. “Ungovernable land for centuries,” he said, Algeria tempts each invader to think that it will impose order through force, but in the end it is unable to do so because of popular resistance. “We should recognize Bouteflika for at least one thing. He has never pretended to govern this country.... In theorizing his model of anarchism as an intelligent system built against the State, Bakunin surely did not have Algeria in mind. Today, Algerians should think like Bakunin by inventing a system of *autogestion* without capital, a sphere without a center, turning only around itself. Let’s not be confused, anarchism is not chaos, it is a model that naturally resembles Algerians. As for chaos, that’s the situation in which we live.”²⁸

French Anarchists' "Alternative History" of Algeria

IT IS COMMONPLACE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT HISTORY IS WRITTEN differently from one vantage point to another. It affects what one looks for and sees and how one interprets what is seen. The writer's subsequent narrative is also a matter of choice, depending on a particular set of values, the intended likely audience, and the preferred effect on readers. All such factors, of course, substantially affected the nature of the accounts by French anarchists on Algeria in this book.

Of course, the final element in this process is the actual response of readers themselves, a dimension impossible for myself, a gatherer of these narratives, to measure. Even if personally immersed in the French anarchist milieu for decades, I would have great difficulty untangling and measuring the impact of these writings on Algeria from a myriad of other factors influencing readers' responses. What seem to have aroused greatest controversy *within the journal of a particular organization* were opposing positions concerning the Algerian national liberation revolution and those concerning the Muslim schoolgirl headscarf controversy in France. The pages of *Le Monde Libertaire* offered competing positions on both issues.

Beginning with the question of intent, the primary assumed audience of French anarchist writings was logically French anarchists and anti-authoritarians themselves. Secondary were those on the fringes who might be challenged but would also find some resonance in descriptions and analysis not entirely foreign to their own life experience. Circulation figures on anarchist periodicals from which most of this book's passages are taken are mentioned in different locations in this text. As well, the numbers of readers of Guérin's Algerian works, in particular, may have exceeded by far the normal readership of those sources.

With this intended audience in mind, French anarchist writing on Algeria seems, at one level, a combination of sharing new learnings and appreciation of perceived quasi-anarchist phenomena, while also re-enforcing critiques of hierarchical behavior already understood by most readers. This combination of enthusiastically exploring new liberatory social phenomena with a more didactic emphasis on the destructive results of hierarchy (using Algeria as a foil) runs throughout the texts in this book. Different balances between these emphases depend on specific writers, on the overall orientation of specific anarchist groups, and obviously on the particular Algerian issues discussed.

As well, the very absence or near-total neglect of specific phenomena by some anarchists, while the same are extolled by others, is a statement in itself. A leading example is the bare mention of Algerian workers' self-management in the early years of independence by *Le Monde Libertaire*. Finally, while not inciting direct involvement in postwar Algeria itself, many articles urged readers to *engage* themselves in various forms of action within France in collaboration with or support of Algerian (and other) immigrants. Other urged actions would directly confront the French government and rightists on a variety of issues affecting Algeria, as well as blowback aspects of French politics resulting from French policy with that country (such as revisionist history glorifying colonialism).

In their substantive observation and analysis of ongoing Algerian politics and society, French anarchists obviously had a different vantage point from those of mainstream writers and political groups, though occasionally overlapping with groups on the extreme left—Trotskyists, council communists, situationists, and various autonomous movements. The ongoing French anarchist narrative is situated *from below: how Algeria is experienced and perceived by people at the grassroots level*. This is the primary orientation, though Guérin's involvement with Algerian political elites on occasion diverted from that perspective. Sometimes such narratives are claimed by apparent Algerian or North African authors themselves within or associated with French anarchist groups, as with various articles in *Le Monde Libertaire*, *Courant Alternatif*, and *Informations et Réflexions Libertaires*.²⁹

As well, it is not only a grassroots perspective, but one that is *distinctly anti-hierarchical*—condemning statist, capitalist, religious, and any other sort of elitism and oppression while also *highlighting emancipatory autonomous initiatives from below*. Such phenomena are activities most French anarchists themselves would willingly participate in or at least partially promote if they were in France.

Compared to mainstream writers, the published product of this anti-hierarchical grassroots orientation is far less concerned with the detailed interplay of political elites and forces committed to hierarchical policies and institutions. All of the latter are sources of misery, oppression, and alienation and are easily comparable to similar forces quite familiar in France. The resulting narrative was thus sometimes sporadic, stilted, and much less detailed in its coverage of Algeria at that elite level commonly described and analyzed by journalists and social scientists. Themes were often consciously related also to the context of France—not for nationalist reasons, but simply because it was a focus more easily translatable to action and more familiar to a broader number of readers.

As well, many French anarchist narrators from the 1980s on felt compelled to provide brief, almost boilerplate, background summaries of economic, social, and political contexts along with whatever fresh content they

wished to present. This substantive repetition of background information in the many hundreds of translated articles was a major factor in my own choice of omissions or passages only briefly summarized. Nevertheless, with a text spanning nearly sixty years of Algerian history, I wished readers to gain a more coherent general sense of the flow of background contexts—as well as certain neglected but important anti-authoritarian details (especially on Algerian *autogestion*). Thus, in introductions to each of the six parts, I provided at least an overall outline of critical factors and dynamics in each chronological period. With the same motivation, I offered endnote details throughout.

While French anarchist writings on background contexts and elites thus seemed less exceptional, their focus on (and critiques of) the rupturing episodes of quasi-anarchist or partially anarchist phenomena was especially valuable and often unique. It was anarchist sensibilities and interpretations that gave exceptional positive political significance to radical social defiance and insurrection in the Algerian landscape. In effect, it seemed, exploration of these phenomena provided a sort of prefigurative exposure to hoped-for anarchist efforts and societies of the future. And often the best anarchist writings were those that conveyed the *intensity* of grassroots experience, sometimes through personal accounts, that motivated radical political action.

Concerning the national liberation revolution, some French anarchists, like Camus, Joyeux, Guérin, and those in *Noir et Rouge*, openly criticized actions and orientations of the FLN while also supporting the principle of ending colonial rule. Guérin, *Noir et Rouge*, and *Tribune Anarchiste Communiste* publicized, supported, and also offered detailed critiques of Algerian *autogestion* to an extent not easily found elsewhere at the time in the French left, let alone in the mainstream press. While the Berber Spring and urban upheavals of the 1980s received some coverage elsewhere, the particular anarchist emphasis on the anti-authoritarian content of these developments was rather unique.

It was especially the Kabyle insurrection of 2001 and after that received the most anarchist coverage and analysis (highlighting basic anarchist principles and practice) of any Algerian phenomena since the national liberation revolution. Here was a formidable, grassroots-based horizontalist structure and defiant armed practice that refused, for at least several years, compromises with both Algeria's ruling regime and ambitious political parties. At the same time, anarchist writers were willing to critique basic inconsistencies—as the lack of women in the various assemblies and the unwillingness of the *aarch* movement to actively create new approaches to Kabyle economics and society. As well, the activism of autonomous Algerian women's groups and especially trade unions was praised not only for their substantive concerns, but also for their anti-authoritarian and defiant positions and practice, generally. Finally, the quasi-anarchist nature of the non-stop series of local riots and confrontations throughout Algeria in the present decade

was recognized and praised by at least some anarchist writers, while neglected or treated as background noise or dysfunctional violence by others outside anarchist circles.

In their reactions to conditions, forces, and developments in France, closely entwined with ongoing evolution in Algeria, some French anarchist critiques and analyses overlapped with those of at least the far left generally, while others, as with the futility of elections or the need to abolish borders, did not. French anarchist oppositions to colonialism, militarism, capitalism, racism, fascism, immigrant worker exploitation, radical Islamism, and state “anti-terrorist” repression are shared orientations with many on the French left, though the depth of critique and emphasis on the interrelationship of all these factors is no doubt greater than others because of anarchism’s unique focus on the central role of the state and of hierarchical practice generally. Additionally, French anarchism’s consistent strong critique of statist communism, and the French Communist Party specifically, was a separate and important continuing dimension in its overall analysis of ongoing French politics from 1954 to the present.

Reflections on the French Anarchist Movement

IN MANY RESPECTS, IT IS SURELY TRUE THAT THE FRENCH ANARCHIST movement, in its organizational variety and strategic, tactical, and substantive orientations over the past sixty years is not greatly different from anarchist movements in other parts of the world. Because of its size, historical importance, and continuing immersion in the hothouse context of French intellectual debate, however, it probably has greater influence, along with anarchist movements in Italy and Spain, than any other in the world. At the same time, the greater mobility of ideas and personal connections, because of easier travel and rapid Web communication, has no doubt helped to level the field somewhat. Anarchist activity, research, and theorizing in the Ukraine, Palestine, Uruguay, or South Korea, for example, can now be easily communicated to receptive audiences anywhere in the world. Innovations anywhere can be shared quickly and modified, as appropriate, for different local conditions.

Internal definitions, organizational choices, and composition details about each of the several main elements of the organized French anarchist movement were shared in introductions to the five parts and in the sections specifically devoted to particular organizations. What began in the early 1950s as a relatively comprehensible split between the FCL and the new FA—with much smaller numbers of separate individualist anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists—in the '60s evolved through generational clashes, partial collapse of Communism, counter-cultural influence, changing class structures, the rise of the women's movement, and the influence of Third World revolutions, into a more widely variegated and greater middle-class assortment of self-identified anarchist individuals, factions, and separate groups, all experimenting with new forms and process as well as with new substantive issues.

The volcanic explosion of May–June 1968 both verified tensions and conflicts within the anarchist movement and the abandonment of old structural and ideological markers in the population more broadly, leading many to join with anarchist and anti-authoritarian currents. The fierce divisions of organization and self-definition in the '70s and '80s gradually led, in the '90s (in the context of post-Communist Europe) to significant consolidation into the several major organizational orientations today, as well as at least some sporadic coordination between them.

Over the past several decades, influences of situationism, lifestyle anarchism, feminism, autonomism, and post-modernism have all made their mark in the anarchist movement in France and elsewhere to greater

and lesser degrees. Probably the biggest organizational change is a much-heightened sensitivity to assuring non-hierarchical dynamics within anarchist groups themselves, though evidence cited above in various articles suggests that much effort must be continued in that direction. Weakness of this sort no doubt influences, as well, the reported smaller proportion of females and people of color in the movement.³⁰

Ongoing tactics—such as publishing, public meetings, demonstrations, strikes, various other forms of direct action, entering or forming issue-specific social movement groups, and even some level of underground activity (as with FCL during the Algerian war)—are consistent with French anarchists of the past. So also is the continuing debate about the degree of organizational structure and discipline—ranging from the neo-platformist orientation of the AL to the “non-group group” preference of the CGA, not to mention autonomous affinity groups for those with a more insurrectionist bent. No doubt these differences reflect as well different reactions to the notion of pervasive power relations throughout the society and heightened powers of state repression, both of which suggest to many, probably most, the need to abandon the old dream of a rapid and sweeping *Grand Soir* social revolution and to pursue a more modest and longer-range vision of social change.

Because of the movement’s particular motivation to engage itself in observation, analysis, and action concerning Algeria’s evolution over the past six decades, as well as with key French political factors affecting and resulting from that evolution, French anarchists have had to directly confront certain generic anarchist substantive issues more intensely than many anarchists elsewhere. Issues of revolution, violence, nationalism, workers’ self-management, collaboration with statist movements, and others have been pushed to the forefront because of immediate developments in Algeria and their roots or repercussions in France. As demonstrated in the texts above, strong debates, based on differing perceptions and analyses, have ensued.

The issue of “revolution” was posed immediately once the FLN chose to apply that term to its violent anti-colonial struggle. The image of revolution became all the stronger with FLN wartime references to future transformation of the countryside and overall economy, as eventually in the radical promises by FLN writers such as Fanon. French anarchists thus had to assess the *potentials* for drastic transformation at the same time as weighing the value of a new national regime. While unanimously opposing continuing French rule, anarchists were divided about the likelihood or not of promised social change. Intertwined with that issue was the contradiction of an internationalist movement supporting nationalism.

Further provoking dispute within the movement were the use of violence and the nature of the violence employed. As indicated in the text, such issues could not be avoided—French anarchists were on the line and,

inevitably, sharp divisions ensued, fueled as well, it seems, by significant generational differences of perception, activist inclination, and energy.

In simplified terms, I find it useful to consider divisions on most such basic issues to reflect a broader *optimist-skeptic* split, a definitional alternative I prefer over the *pragmatist/purist* version commonly applied or at least implied concerning anarchists generally.³¹ In my view, the first set of labels highlights the strong sensibility of some anarchists (*optimists*) to the potential for deeper social transformation in the near future and for a powerful and motivating desire for further transformation caused by the rupture experience itself. Freedom is intoxicating and helps to overcome lingering fears of authority, while also providing energy to sustain the rupture. Both factors contribute to deepening the process of overall social transformation. Though pragmatic efforts are needed to attain it, the experience of freedom provides a qualitative boost of commitment to *further* liberation.³² This, specifically, I think, is the unique element *optimists* hope to tap in their “less than pure” activism and discourse reaching out to larger social movement milieus.

In addition to being more open to at least temporary working coalitions with, and sometimes direct involvement in, mass social movements, *optimists* emphasize the need to leverage rare moments of rupture, this will and temporary victory of mass defiance and social transformation (as with Algeria’s national liberation), to encourage the potential for yet further longer-range and broader anti-authoritarian alternatives (deeper social transformation in both Algeria and France). The notion here is that people need at least occasional meaningful victories to maintain hope and desire for larger and more sustained upheavals. The *skeptics* wish to look before leaping, to avoid past mistakes and disillusionments with supposed “revolutionary” partners. They wish to assure (and doubt that this can be done) only minimal contradictions before endorsing “revolution,” let alone even temporary alliances with nationalists and statists, or even minimal use of violence. Of course, there are many gradations between these two positions and not a few French anarchists apparently found themselves attracted to both.

Concerning Algeria’s contradictory experiment with *autogestion*, some, like Guérin, urged French anarchists to ride the wave of grassroots worker spontaneity, apparent egalitarian workplace re-structuring, defiance of state authoritarianism, and the impulse it provided for further transformation of Algeria (as suggested by the most radical themes of the Algiers Charter). This was a rare opportunity to support and (for Algerians) to experience an apparently radical non-hierarchical working-class control over workplace conditions, and to spread consciousness for an even broader horizontalist organization of society more generally. If it were able to hold its own, thought Guérin, against threatening hostile forces in Algeria, it could eventually develop into a deep social revolution—with the potential

to encourage the same in France as well. The same hope for the spread of social revolution to France also helped to motivate those, as in the FCL, who supported the Algerian struggle for national independence. Others, of skeptical inclination, like Joyeux, barely gave *autogestion* the time of day, either ignoring it or belittling its potential amid the military-state regime and the post-independence opportunistic scramble for spoils by the new bureaucracy and national bourgeoisie.

The Berber rebellions of 1980 and especially 2001 received probably the second greatest attention from French anarchists (after the national liberation revolution itself). Once again, though the poles seemed somewhat closer, some emphasized the new defiance of the military regime, the social creativity and revolutionary élan and revival of an indigenous egalitarian and federalist political structure as important moments of rupture, while others emphasized contradictions of the traditionalist package (as exclusion of women from the assemblies) and the dangers of a nationalist/autonomist orientation creating a potential enclave of partial liberation but incapable of spreading substantially to other parts of the country.

Closer to home, for French anarchists, positions on issues of French militarism, racism, fascism, immigrant exploitation, and repression, all related to French involvement with Algeria, achieved much more unanimity within the anarchist movement. All, for example, opposed a continuation of colonialism, French war-making, and postwar oppression of *sans-papiers* (Algerian and otherwise).

Differences on substantive issues, to a considerable extent, were matched by differences on organization as well, with those of a more *optimist* orientation, such as FCL, AL, and CNT-F, willing to accept more potential contradictions (such as tighter internal discipline and structuring, and immersion in broad social movements with non-anarchists) than the *skeptics*, seemingly in order to more immediately and effectively create and sustain periods of social rupture once they arrived.

The more *skeptical*, in turn, wished instead to emphasize the quality of anti-authoritarian experience within anarchist organizations, both for its own sake and to avoid losing the very sense of anarchist ideals. Those who wished to preserve the overall traditional “synthesis” structure and process of the 1950s FA are a good example. The FA requirement for unanimous decisions at annual congresses and relative autonomy for local groups represented, frustratingly to some members, intentional disengagement from ongoing social transformational efforts, based on an assumption of their futility at that time. Some, as in the OLS and no doubt many others, tried for the best of both positions, by preserving their own anarchist groups with a strong emphasis on internal anarchist practice while also involving themselves as anarchist militants within larger social movements.

Reflections on the Anarchist Movement Generally

MUCH OF THE EVOLUTION AND MOST OF THE DISPUTES WITHIN THE French anarchist movement from 1954 to the present, as shown in positions on Algeria and otherwise, exemplify generic issues and disputes within the international anarchist movement generally. These tensions and competing pulls are deeply rooted in the nature of revolutionary politics overall, but acutely so for those of anarchist orientation. Ultimately, I think, they refer back to the sort of poles indicated in the previous section.

The question of prioritizing and preparing for potential massive sudden ruptures of the prevailing social system versus seeking relative liberation in immediate micro-scale daily experience is a fundamental example. In many ways, I think, the dichotomy here is comparable, in stark form, to that in radical black or women's liberation movements, between those of social transformational and those of separatist orientations. The issue is whether it is really possible to hope for broad and deep social change in society overall, at least in the present period, or whether deep meaningful change is possible only within the boundaries of one's own social enclave.

While proponents of the first position may still hope for a single or multiple *Grand Soirs*, and while they may or may not have hopes of being major catalysts for such events, they argue that to attain the broadest and most sustained ruptures, long-range organizing efforts are necessary, working within a variety of grassroots social movements (for workers, women, health activists, ecology activists, etc.) with a strong, easily-identified anarchist organizational presence able to act in deliberate coordinated fashion.

Only through such organization and considerable self-sacrifice will anarchism be capable of strongly encouraging and influencing future times of rupture. A contrary emphasis on pure consistency with anarchist principles organizationally or in personal lives, it is argued, is inevitably compromised by living within a society of multiple hierarchies, and fatally paralyzes effective organizational presence and action in the broader social context. Morally, it is seen as untenable in its focus on individual or small-group self-centered fulfillment.

Critics of the mass organizing position argue that any social transformational breakthrough encouraged or upheld by individuals and organizations—even of anarchist identity—who have deferred non-hierarchical anarchist practice in their own lives and groups will assure a faster failure of such ruptures and ultimately result in the discrediting the anarchist movement itself. Anarchists must learn to live as anarchists, they argue, to

experiment with and create, as consciously as possible, prefigurations of eventual anarchism on a larger scale. Not simply personal indulgence or escapist rationales for avoiding difficult organizing activity on a broader basis, such emphasis is essential, they say, especially in rapidly changing social and political conditions when it is important to not be glued to outdated models of social change. When social ruptures emerge, it is smaller-scale affinity groups deeply familiar with and committed to anarchist practice, and thus genuinely alternative models, rather than mass organizations tempered by past compromises, that will have the greatest liberatory impact. In the meantime, incremental alternative practice at the micro-level allows the most potential for such models to emerge.

Proponents of the first position argue that only by deep immersion in ongoing, preferably mass, social movements, not restricted to anarchists, can anarchist ideology and practice be effectively communicated and spread to ever-larger numbers. Sharing the same social struggles and speaking about issues in a language challenging but understandable for non-anarchists is essential. This position is thus more open as well to at least temporary organizational alliances with non-anarchist groups on specific issues, even though the latter do not share larger anti-statist and consistent anti-hierarchical views. It is through "critical support" in common struggles and effective translation of anarchist language that anarchists will be heard, more liberatory outcomes gained and anti-authoritarian activists more effectively attracted toward fuller anarchist positions.

Those of the second pole believe that while activism in non-anarchist social movements can be useful, it is dangerous to prioritize "effectiveness" in terms more closely aligned to goals clearly inconsistent with anarchism. Long struggles for wage gains within exploitative capitalism or for representation in factory social benefit decisions might obviously bring some immediate relief, but a pragmatic orientation will gradually compromise separate anarchist identity, ideals, and commitment to anarchist practice. Instead, direct communication of consistent anarchist ideals and critique of authoritarian practice, providing real models of anarchist practice, and encouraging more spontaneous and innovative liberatory expression among non-anarchists are the best ways to communicate with non-anarchists and to recruit people to that orientation.

A similar divide potentially affects the choice of which social and political issues and contexts to most directly address in anarchist activism and propaganda. Those of the more *optimist* inclination are more willing to seize the moment of apparent massive social rupture if it seems to contain significant liberatory content. The precipitous FCL rush to support Algerian revolutionaries is an excellent case in point. This seemed a rare opportunity for anarchist influence, through critical support of a massive social movement, in this case solidly committed at the least to ending colonial

rule in Algeria and apparently potentially to seeking wider social revolution. For more *skeptical* anarchists, it is important to hold back direct support until the nature of the movement is better clarified. The same division, based on conflicting assessments of revolutionary potential and the need to retain strong non-diluted anarchist identities, holds true in non-rupture periods as well.

This raises the issue of how liberatory potential is even assessed. The more massive the nature of an insurrectionary or revolutionary movement, the greater ultimate change and staying power it might be able to achieve. Whatever anarchist or quasi-anarchist phenomena are involved, even merely in terms of the psychology and act of revolt itself, their influence in both the short- and long-range have deep implications for the positive spread of anarchist consciousness and alternatives, whatever the outcome of the particular social rupture. They hopefully can clearly communicate, as shown with the long-range impact of the Spanish Revolution of the 1930s, that anarchism can be relevant to the lives and aspirations of very large numbers. On the other hand, the more massive the movement, the more unclear and unpredictable its orientation and its potential contradiction with anarchism may be. Too close an association with a movement clearly identifying with hierarchical goals and practice, even if capable of launching successful insurrection, only damages the credibility and potential survivability of the anarchist movement. The same alternative arguments apply to assessments in non-revolutionary contexts, though simply with a slower unfolding dynamic.

A similar tension applies as well to Western anarchists' assessment of anarchic, "horizontalist" liberatory phenomena outside of the West that are rooted in traditional political culture and occur without self-conscious identification with Western-type "anarchism." While a mutual enrichment between Western anarchists and non-Western anarchic practitioners ideally would be useful on both sides, there is also a danger of recuperation by Western anarchists seeking to fit non-Western phenomena into Western anarchist categories. There can be much lost in the translating, even with good intentions, and thus a distorted discursive appropriation of a different culture's values and practice.

With so much communication over the years between French and Algerian students and workers, this danger may be somewhat less now with Algerian issues than between French anarchists and—for example—Kanak of New Caledonia. Further communication and understanding between Western anarchists and non-Western anarchic practitioners would hopefully develop a much richer and broader notion of a non-Western-centric anarchism more generally—a process *Informations et Réflexions Libertaires* writers called the "decolonization of anarchism." In the meantime, *optimist* Western anarchists are likely to show greatest enthusiasm for non-Western anarchic phenomena, while *skeptics* will likely be more critical of their apparent inadequacies.

The limited size of contemporary anarchist movements throughout the world obviously greatly affects the calculations and positions taken on the above generic issues, though even in the case of the massive Spanish anarchist movement in the '30s, the same debates took place and still resonate among anarchist writers *about* that period. Clearly, the generational and class composition of a particular anarchist movement can have substantial, though not necessarily determining, influence on such decisions as well. Of course, each historical and social context also has its own unique features, and these inevitably affect the assessments and preferences of those in the respective anarchist movements. A certain position on these generic issues in one context may be demonstrably dysfunctional in another.

The open-endedness of these debates in the international movement and within each local movement is inevitable. By their nature, tendencies in one direction or another may both seem appropriate at any particular time and fair judgments may be possible about the correctness or not of decisions only after decades have passed, if even then. As many have pointed out, such as anarchist writer Daniel Colson most recently,³³ revolutionary "events" such as the French Revolution, the Spanish Revolution, and the Paris Commune have decades of advance preparation through millions of micro-decisions, successes and failures, and negative and positive learnings. Likewise, as well, there are decades and more of a subsequent multitude of post-"event" interpretations of what "really" happened, suggesting repercussions and appropriate lessons to be drawn. Anarchism, as a movement, is necessarily a continuing learning experience.

Several years ago, as cited earlier, French anarchist Jean-Pierre Duteuil suggested that individual anarchists were like tightrope walkers, continually having to prevent themselves from leaning too far toward either the side of idealistic dreams or the side of the "realistic" everyday world that most people seem to accept as a given. As he added, the same should be said about anarchist organizations.

I would go one level further and say that the identical principle applies more generally also to the anarchist movement as a whole. There are good reasons to lean one way or the other, toward an "optimist" or "skeptical" pole, at particular times and circumstances, and it must be admitted as well that the very intensity of suffering and rage, not just positive dreams and desires, may move anarchists and others into the realm of "idealistic rapture" (or revolution). But whichever pole is emphasized at a particular moment, the opposite pole needs to be recognized and leaned toward at times if the full potential of the anarchist movement will be reached over the longer range.

Notes

INTRODUCTION

Personal Background

- 1 Examples of such commentaries are: Jon Parkis and James Bowen, eds., *Twenty-first Century Anarchism* (London: Cassell, 1997); Alain Pessin, "Problématique de la culture libertaire" in Alain Pessin and Mimmo Pucciarelli, eds., *La culture libertaire* (Lyon: Atelier de Création Libertaire, 1997), 10–11; Ronald Creagh, "L'anarchisme en mutation," in Pessin and Pucciarelli, 25–39; Tomás Ibañez, "Points de vue sur l'anarchisme (et aperçus sur le néo-anarchisme et le post-anarchisme)," *Réfractations*, no. 20 (May 2008); and Hakim Bey, "Post-Anarchist Anarchy" (New York: March 1987) (available on-line at <www.theanarchistlibrary.org> [4/19/11]).
- 2 This is the approach and rationale I presented, as well, in compiling and introducing Emma Goldman's writings on Spain in my book, *Vision on Fire: Emma Goldman on the Spanish Revolution* (orig. ed., 1983; rev. ed., Oakland: AK Press, 2006).

Historical Background of Modern Algeria

- 3 It is estimated that close to one-third of the Algerian population died from French repression (including famine deaths in 1868 caused by forced capitalistic privatization of farmland) (Mohammed Harbi and Gilbert Meynier, "La dernière frappe de revisionnisme médiatique," *Confluences Méditerranée*, no. 48 (Winter 2003–2004).
- 4 Mohammed Harbi, "L'Algérie en perspectives," in Mohammed Harbi and Benjamin Stora, eds., *La guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Hachette Littératures, 2004), 50, 60. Extensive details on the colonial situation are provided further in the text.
- 5 Benjamin Stora, *Algeria, 1830–2000: A Short History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 66.
- 6 Mohammed Harbi, "The World at War: Massacre in Algeria," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, May 2005.
- 7 Raphaëlle Branche uses the figure of 1,000 militants (Branche, "La torture pendant la guerre d'Algérie," in Harbi and Stora, 550). Jean-Pierre Peyroulou says 1800 (Peyroulou, "Rétablir et maintenir l'ordre colonial: la police française et les Algériens en Algérie française de 1945 à 1962," in Harbi and Stora, 163).
- 8 Stora, *Algeria*, 36.

Anarchist Background

- 9 Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809–1865). His first book and one of his most famous was *What is Property?* (1840).
- 10 Mikhail Bakunin (1814–1876) was one of the most influential writers and activists in late-19th century European anarchism. He was the most important rival of Marx in the First International and his writings continued to have great influence in the worldwide anarchist movement to the present.
- 11 Peter Kropotkin (1842–1921) was a famous Russian activist and theoretician for the ten-

- dependency of anarchist communism. His most famous and influential works were *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (1914), *Fields, Factories and Workshops*, (1901) and *The Conquest of Bread* (1892).
- 12 The Anarchist Revolutionary Communist Federation (FCRA), created in 1913, had about 2500 members throughout France (according to French anarchist historian Jean Maitron, as cited by David Berry, *A History of the French Anarchist Movement, 1917 to 1945* [Oakland: AK Press, 2009], 28).
 - 13 Sébastien Faure (1858–1942) was an influential French anarchist for fifty years from the late 1880s on, especially prominent as a speaker, writer, exponent of anarchist pedagogy, and promoter of the “synthesis” approach to anarchist organization.
 - 14 Bolstered by the prestige and inspiration of the Spanish revolution at the time, the UA had a membership of some 2,500–3,000 and a newspaper print-run of at least 25,000, while the CGTSR simultaneously had about 6,000–7,000 members and a much higher journal readership (Berry, *A History*, 307–308, 310).
 - 15 David Berry discusses this central organizational proposal in the context of the debate in the interwar French movement and elsewhere (Berry, *A History*, 170–176).
 - 16 Sylvain Pattieu, *Les camarades des frères: trotskistes et libertaires dans la guerre d’Algérie* (Paris: Editions Syllepse, 2002), 41, 49, 65. Pattieu’s work is quite useful, though concentrates entirely on the period of the Algerian war alone. As well, it gives more attention to Trotskyists than anarchists, though the former apparently numbered at the time scarcely more than a hundred throughout France. Anarchist historian Roland Biard estimated about 130–160 FCL militants in 1953 (Roland Biard, *Histoire du mouvement anarchiste, 1945–1975* [Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1976], 117).
 - 17 Sylvain Boulouque, *Les anarchistes français face aux guerres coloniales (1945–1962)* (Lyon: Atelier de Création Libertaire, 2003), 111. Boulouque’s book is also an excellent source informing the present work, but covers a much more limited timeframe.
 - 18 Georges Fontenis, *L’autre communisme: histoire subversive du mouvement libertaire* (Mauléon: Editions Acratie, 1990), 218.
 - 19 Pattieu, *Les camarades*, 46. Jean Maitron, *Le mouvement anarchiste en France*, vol. II – De 1914 à nos jours (Paris: François Maspero, 1975), 132. According to Maurice Joyeux, the anarchist journal is the “support and backbone of our movement” and the journal subscription number is “the thermometer to read the temperature of the anarchist movement” (Joyeux, *La reconstruction difficile de la Fédération Anarchiste, 1954–1960* [Paris: Groupe Maurice-Joyeux, 2002], 10).
 - 20 Pattieu, citing Fontenis, describes the FA members at this time as mostly small business people and shopkeepers (*Les camarades*, 49) though Joyeux criticizes this characterization as inaccurate, at least if FA sympathizers are included (*La reconstruction*, 10). Boulouque estimates that the Fédération Anarchiste had several hundred members in the early 1950s (*Les anarchistes*, 14). He sees the post-split FA as an older generation which lived as adults between the two World Wars, thus highly sensitized to the directly experienced oppressive reality of nationalist warfare, and Nazi and Communist totalitarianism (111).
 - 21 “Le colonialisme et la liberté,” *Le Libertaire*, no. 6 (June 1945)
 - 22 *Assises du mouvement libertaire et congrès de la Fédération Anarchiste à Paris, 6–7 octobre et 2 décembre 1945* (Paris, 1945), 25, as quoted in Boulouque, *Les anarchistes*, 71.
 - 23 Boulouque, *Les anarchistes*, 33–41.
 - 24 Two excellent anarchist critiques of nationalism are Fredy Perlman, *The Continuing Appeal of Nationalism* (Detroit: Blank & Red, 1985) and Rudolf Rocker, *Nationalism and Culture* (New York, Covici-Friede, 1937). Both appear also on the following web site: <<http://flag.blackened.net/antinat/>> (7/4/09) (all web citations in this book will specify the date of retrieval), though the latter work is only partially reproduced.

- 25 Nestor Makhno (1889–1934) was the central figure in the Makhnovist anarchist-oriented mass revolutionary movement in the Ukraine, 1917–21, which expelled Austrian, Russian and German occupiers as part of a broad social revolution. See Lucien van der Walt and Michael Schmidt, *Black Flame: The Revolutionary Class Politics of Anarchism and Syndicalism, Counterpower*, Vol. I (Oakland: AK Press, 2009), 255, 316–317 and 284–286, 319–321 for short discussions of the Makhnovist and Korean anarchist movements respectively. See Pyotr Archinov, *History of the Makhnovist Movement, 1918–1921* (London: Freedom Press, 2002) and Voline, *The Unknown Revolution* (Montreal: Black Rose Press, 2009) for extensive descriptions of the Makhnovist movement and Benedict Anderson, *Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination* (London: Verso, 2005) for a detailed account of the mixture of national liberation and social revolutionary agendas among Filipino anarchists.
- 26 A discussion of the relationship of certain indigenous traditions to the Western anarchist model will follow later at several points in the text.
- 27 The on-line “Dictionnaire international des militants anarchistes” cites various anarchist organizations and militants in Algeria before World War II. For example, a certain “Bombic,” “a militant of the anarchist communist group of Algiers ... was imprisoned in 1887 for ‘distributing anarchist journals’” and A. Cazes, in the late 1920s, belonged to the Alliance des Fédéralistes Anarchistes group in the Belcourt quarter of Algiers (<<http://militants-anarchistes.info>> [6/18/2007]). Also, an important European of anarchist tendencies in Algeria was Victor Spielmann (1866–1938), a strongly anti-colonialist journalist who, in the 1920s, collaborated closely with Emir Khaled, a chief spokesman of the new post-World War I generation of Algerian nationalists, and grandson of 19th century resistance leader Abd el-Kader. (Gilbert Meynier, “Victor Spielmann [1866–1938], un Européen d’Algérie révolté contre l’injustice coloniale,” at the Etudes Coloniales web site [<http://etudescoloniales.canalblog.com/archives/2008/05/26/9129542.html>] (6/27/09); also published in *El Watan* [Algiers], 5/10/08.)
- 28 Additionally, Algerian Hadj Mohamed Dahou was closely associated with Guy Debord and others in the pre-Situationist Letterist International and formed in 1953, with Cheik Ben Dhine and Aït Diafer, an Algerian branch in Orléansville (presentday Chlef).
- 29 See Saïl’s *Appels aux travailleurs algériens*, a 35-page pamphlet (no. 43 in the “Volonté Anarchiste” series published by the Groupe Fresnes-Antony of the Fédération Anarchiste [January 1994], with an informative biographical sketch, “Saïl Mohamed ou la vie et la révolte d’un anarchiste algérien, by compiler Sylvain Boulouque). An English-language slightly condensed version of Boulouque’s sketch appears on-line at: <<http://libcom.org/history/mohamed-sail-1894-1953>> (6/27/09).
- 30 See Berry, *A History*, for a detailed account of the French anarchist movement during the three decades before 1945.
- 31 Saïl, “A l’opinion publique,” *La Voix Libertaire*, no. 55 (March 15, 1930) and “A bas le code de l’indigénat ! Egalité totale des droits !” *Le Libertaire*, no. 506 (July 24, 1936), both reprinted in *Appels*.
- 32 Saïl, “Aux travailleurs algériens,” *Le Libertaire*, no. 22 (March 25, 1946), reprinted in *Appels*.
- 33 Saïl, “La mentalité kabyle,” *Le Libertaire*, no. 257 (February 16, 1951) (a translation of this article appears in Robert Graham, ed., *A Documentary History of Libertarian Ideas. Vol. II – The Emergence of the New Anarchism (1939–1977)* [Montreal : Black Rose Books, 2009], 157–160); “Le calvaire des travailleurs nord-africains,” *Le Libertaire*, no. 273 (June 15, 1951); and “Le calvaire des travailleurs nord-africains,” *Le Libertaire*, no. 275 (June 29, 1951), all reprinted in *Appels*. The same traditional local political structures were similarly praised by French anarchist writers years later as well (see Part V below).

- 34 Saïl, "Aux travailleurs algériens," and "La mentalité kabyle." Islamic marabouts were influential local hermits or holy men (sometimes women), sometimes teachers or arbitrators, often treated cultlike as saints, and often appealing to traditional superstitions, sometimes based on pre-Islamic practice. Modernist Islamic reformers were disdainful of maraboutism as heretical, while political reformers and radicals saw marabouts in Algeria as manipulated instruments of French colonialism.
- 35 Saïl, "La mentalité kabyle."
- 36 Boulouque, *Les anarchistes*, 46.
- 37 <<http://militants-anarchistes.info>> (6/18/2007); Fontenis, *L'autre*, 144; and Pattieu, *Les camarades*, 64 (where he also states, apparently incorrectly, that the MLNA was formed in 1954).
- 38 Fontenis, *L'autre*, 144.
- 39 Ibid., 183.
- 40 Pattieu, *Les camarades*, 64. An MLNA declaration of support was printed in a government-seized issue of *Le Libertaire*, no. 404 (November 11, 1954), the weekly newspaper of the FCL (cited in Fontenis, *L'autre*, 189–90).
- 41 Léandre Valéro, "Le MLNA s'était mis à la disposition des organisations de résistance," interview in *1954–1962: l'insurrection algérienne et les communistes libertaires* (Paris : Éditions d'Alternative Libertaire, 2006), 10–11. According to Valéro, the MLNA dissolved under the repressive wave of death threats, actual assassinations and forced removal of members to concentration camps in southern Algeria.
- 42 Personal correspondence from Miguel Martinez, Elne, France, 9/24/07. Martinez arrived in Algeria in 1939 at age 7.
- 43 Overall, about 7,000 Spanish refugees, of the whole spectrum of anti-Franco political persuasions, landed in Algeria, mostly in Oran (Margot Peigné, "Les républicains espagnols exilés en Algérie, 1939–1962," [<<http://ipr.univ-paris1.fr/spip.php?article258>> (6/17/07)]; Peigné's essay is based on her *Mémoire de maîtrise*, University of Paris [Panthéon-Sorbonne], 2004).
- 44 Miguel Martinez, "L'exile des anarchistes espagnoles en Algerie," 10/26/2002 talk at the Centre Ascaso-Durruti in Montpellier, France (<<http://ascaso-durruti.chez-alice.fr/Pages/debanaralger.html>>[7/10/07]) and his book, *Casbah d'oubli: l'exile des réfugiés politiques espagnoles en Algérie (1939–1962)* (Paris: Éditions L'Hamarttan, 2004). Another excellent source on exiled Spanish anarchists in Algeria is José Muñoz Congost, *Por tierras de moros (el exilio español en el Magreb)* (Móstoles, Spain: Ediciones Madre Tierra, 1989).
- 45 Peigné estimates that about 2,000 Spanish exiles in Algeria, most of those still there at the time, left for France in 1962 (Peigné, "Les républicains").

Book Organization and Methodology

- 46 Daniel Guérin and Albert Camus are the only individuals with their own sections.
- 47 While a significant number of issues of this important publication are available at the Fédération Anarchiste web site, a very large number have not yet been entered at all or only very incompletely.
- 48 One exception might be the perspective of "anarcho-primitivism," though apparently anti-civilization anarchist writings are still relatively scarce in France and consist mainly of translations from non-French sources, such as John Zerzan (see, for example, <<http://endehors.net/texts/green-anarchy>>). Nevertheless, several articles included in this book express what might be described as a "primitivist" critique.

PART I

Algerian Background: Realities of the National Liberation Struggle

- 1 The CRUA was the Revolutionary Committee for Unity and Action.
- 2 The original nine “historic leaders” of the FLN were Mustapha Ben Boulaïd, Larbi Ben M’Hidi, Rabah Bitat, Mohamed Boudiaf, Belkacem Krim, and Didouche Mourad within Algeria and Hocine Aït-Ahmed, Ahmed Ben Bella and Mohammed Khider as the external delegation in Cairo.
- 3 Stora, *Algeria*, 29, 46, 48.
- 4 Ibid., 63.
- 5 Ibid., 110–111; Guy Pervillé, “La guerre d’Algérie: combien de morts?” in Harbi and Stora, 693–716; and Raphaëlle Branche, “La torture,” 549–579. Pervillé emphasizes the difficulty of assessing accurate figures, given the lack of verifiable data and the propagandistic role of such numbers by both sides. Stora states: “According to the most plausible estimates, the conflict produced nearly 500,000 dead (all categories combined, but particularly Algerians)” (Stora, *Algeria*, 111).
- 6 Stora, *Algeria*, 59.
- 7 The MALG; after independence, the SM and then the DRS.
- 8 These included four of the FLN historic leaders—Ben Bella, Aït-Ahmed, Khider and Boudiaf.

French Anarchism Background: Engagement, Polarization, and Splits

- 9 A biography of Serge Michel (Lucien Douchet) (1922–1997) by his daughter Marie-Joëlle Rupp is *Serge Michel: un libertaire dans la décolonisation* (Paris: Ibis Press, 2007). Michel’s fictional work, *Nour le voile: de la casbah au Congo, du Congo au désert: la révolution* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1982) very closely follows the trajectory of Michel’s actual political life and thus offers important details.

French Anarchist Positions

- 10 Pattieu, *Les camarades*, 64; Fontenis, *L’autre*, 189–191; Paul Philippe, “Un combat politique,” in Sidi Mohammed Barkat, ed., *Des français contre la terreur d’État (Algérie 1954–1962)* (Paris: Éditions Reflex, 2002), 93.
- 11 Maurice Fayolle, “De Tunis à Casablanca où mûrissent les fruits de la colère,” *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 3 (December 1954).
- 12 Fontenis, *L’autre*, 190.
- 13 Philippe, “Un combat,” 93.
- 14 Poster reprinted in *1954–1962: l’insurrection algérienne*, 24. At the time, 250 francs was equivalent to about \$0.71 US.
- 15 Philippe, “Un combat,” 93.
- 16 Pattieu, *Les camarades*, 48.
- 17 Georges Fontenis, “L’insurrection algérienne et les communistes libertaires,” in Barkat, *Des français*, 85. An almost identical essay appears as well in *1954–1962: l’insurrection algérienne*, 2–9.

- 18 Fontenis, *L'autre*, 190.
- 19 Ibid., 169.
- 20 Ibid., 205.
- 21 Ibid., 217.
- 22 Jacques Soustelle (1912–1990).
- 23 Paul Philippe article in *Le Libertaire*, no. 432 (May 26, 1955), as quoted in Philippe, “Un combat,” 94. Almost the entire population—642 men, women, and children—of the French village ●radour were massacred on June 10, 1944 by a German Waffen-SS company in retaliation for attacks and sabotage by forces of the local French Resistance. The accuracy of Philippe’s accusation here was borne out in much of Algeria in the months and years to come.
- 24 Fontenis, *L'autre*, 209.
- 25 By 1956, the FCL included some Algerian members of the FLN tendency (Ibid., p. 209). From November 1954 on, the FCL consciously sought to distribute its newspaper in Algerian worker neighborhoods of Paris, engaging in “critical support” discussions and benefiting from natural Algerian interest in the latest published news on events in Algeria (supplied by friends and relatives there of FCL members as well as by the closely-linked MLNA) (Ibid., 194; Philippe, “Un combat,” 93; and *Une résistance oubliée, 1954–1957: des libertaires dans la guerre d’Algérie* [film] [Paris, 2001, 35 mins.].
- 26 *Une résistance oubliée, 1954–1957* (both the film and the related book); Philippe, “Un combat,” 100; and Gilbert Esteve, Un entretien avec Georges Fontenis: il y a 50 ans, l’insurrection algérienne, *L’émancipation syndicale et pédagogique*, November 2004.
- 27 André Marty (1886–1956) was despised by many as “the butcher of Albacète” for his repressive role during the late 1930s civil war in Spain against other leftists, including anarchists, and on behalf of the Communist International.
- 28 Fontenis, *L'autre*, 202. A leading Italian anarchist, Saverio Merlino (1856–1930), following release from prison in 1896, advocated a tactical alliance with progressive parties and participation in parliamentary elections in order to unseat a reactionary and repressive regime.
- 29 Errico Malatesta’s classic running debate with Merlino on this issue was reprinted in Rome in 1976 but has yet to be translated from Italian. Even in the case of polarized Spain in 1936, Emma Goldman opposed anarchists’ decision to vote (*Vision on Fire*, 101–103, 252, 287). Goldman (1869–1940) was a famous and influential Russian-American anarchist, no doubt the most prominent in the 20th century United States.
- 30 The FCL group from Maçon, mentioned for its activism above, was one of two local groups that left the FCL because of this issue. For many, the inclusion of Marty on the FCL list was simply too much to stomach.
- 31 Fontenis, *L'autre*, 200–202, 204–205. Thirty-five years later, Fontenis himself described the electoral attempt as somewhat ridiculous (Ibid., 216).
- 32 Such measures were specifically ordered by Premier Pierre Mendès-France’s Socialist Minister of the Interior François Mitterand (1916–1996), a future president of France.
- 33 Ibid., 192. The meeting was to be presided over by Daniel Guérin who would also read a message for the occasion from Messali Hadj (see page 45 below).
- 34 Fontenis, “L’insurrection algérienne,” 83. (The fines amounted to about \$8,564 US.); Fontenis, *L'autre*, 189.
- 35 Ibid., 199–200.
- 36 Fontenis asserts that the group that included Pierre Morain was infiltrated and encouraged in this action by an agent provocateur (Ibid., 226–227).

- 37 Philippe, "Un combat," 98.
- 38 Fontenis, *L'autre*, 214–216, 218.
- 39 Ibid., 216.
- 40 Ibid., 219.
- 41 Ibid., 220–221. In this context, all three terms equate generally with the notion of revolutionary insurrection caused and led by a small resolute group of conspirators.
- 42 Ibid., 217.
- 43 Félix Guattari (1930–1992) was a militant and innovative psychotherapist, activist in anti-colonial and other campaigns and co-author with Gilles Deleuze of several books which emphasized the social implications of psychic repression and introduced the concepts of schizoanalysis, rhizomatic networks and nomadology later adopted in some forms of contemporary post-anarchism.
- 44 The Groupes Anarchistes d'Action Révolutionnaire (Revolutionary Action Anarchist Groups) later formed the group and periodical, *Noir et Rouge*, and was also the origin of some who formed the more directly active UGAC, the Union des Groupes Anarchistes-Communistes (Union of Anarchist-Communist Groups), which eventually published the *Tribune Anarchiste Communiste* periodical. These groups and journals are discussed in separate sections below.
- 45 Denis Berger, "La 'Voie Communiste' et la révolution algérienne," in Barkat, *Des français*, 101–109. An almost-identical essay appears as well in *1954–1962: l'insurrection algérienne*, 17–22.
- 46 See below (95) for more details on Michel Pablo and his branch of the Trotskyist Fourth International.
- 47 Fontenis, *L'autre*, 237.
- 48 Pattieu, *Les camarades*, 113.
- 49 Sylvain Boulouque, "Anticolonialisme et anarchisme chez Daniel Guérin," in "Dissidences," *Daniel Guérin: révolutionnaire en mouvement(s)* (Paris: Éditions L'Harmattan, 2007).
- 50 At the time, Guérin was accused wrongly of instigating a mutiny of native colonial soldiers in Hanoi (Daniel Guérin, *Autobiographie de jeunesse, d'une dissidence sexuelle au socialisme* [Paris: Belfond, 1972], 226).
- 51 Daniel Guérin, *Ci-gît le colonialisme* (Paris: Mouton, 1973) (henceforth referred in end-notes as CG), 10–12.
- 52 Boulouque, "Anticolonialisme," 155–158.
- 53 Here Guérin saw a direct parallel with the class-divided revolutionary democratic movement in France in the 1780s.
- 54 Guérin, "Les ennemis de nos ennemis sont nos amis," *La Vague*, December 12, 1936, and reproduced in CG, 215–217.
- 55 Guérin, "Procès verbale de la réunion d'information de la gauche révolutionnaire sur le problème colonial" (10/21/37) and reproduced in CG, 223–231. Guérin also wrote to the leadership of the Spanish anarcho-sindicalist CNT, encouraging them to support independence for the Spanish Moroccan colonies (Laurent Esquerre, "Daniel Guérin et l'Union des travailleurs communistes libertaires," in "Dissidences," *Daniel Guérin*, 114).
- 56 Daniel Guérin, "Pitié pour le Maghreb," *Les Temps Modernes*, January-February 1953, and reproduced in CG, 258–290.
- 57 Ibid., 275–276.
- 58 In 1937, Guérin had written of the popularity of fascism in North Africa and the desire to rise up against the Popular Front government in France ("Un coup de force: la dissolution de l'Etoile Nord-Africaine," *La Vague*, February 1, 1937, and reproduced in CG,

- 304–306). Marshal Pétain's subsequent Vichy French regime (1940–1944), after French defeat by Germany, had great local support among Europeans in the area.
- 59 François Mauriac (1885–1970) was a prolific Roman Catholic writer who won a Nobel prize in literature in 1952.
- 60 CG, 63–64. Given the suddenly heightened intensity of colonial contradictions, the France-Maghreb Committee lasted only a few more months. Subsequent details in this section on Guérin's activities during the war are based, unless otherwise indicated, on his own account in CG, 40–166.
- 61 “Ou va le Maghreb?” *The American Socialist*, 1955 (written December 18, 1954) and reproduced in CG, 293–294 in French.
- 62 “Un message de Messali Hadj” was subsequently published in *Le Libéraire*, December 23, 1954, and reproduced in CG, 321–323.
- 63 *Un homme, une cause: Pierre Morain, prisonnier d'état* (Paris, 1955) and reproduced in CG, 324. See page 40 above concerning the Pierre Morain case.
- 64 Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980); Aimé Césaire (1913–2008); Jean Amrouche (1906–1962); Alioune Diop (1910–1980).
- 65 Daniel Guérin, “L'Algérie n'a jamais été la France,” speech subsequently printed in *Le Libéraire*, February 14, 1956, and reproduced in CG, 325–328.
- 66 *France-Observateur*, January 28, 1956. The article content and the wider context of the dispute are discussed in CG, 80–81. French philosopher Francis Jeanson (1922–2009) was a close literary collaborator with Sartre and would later organize a famous support network for the FLN, including transporting crucial collected funds across borders by suitcases.
- 67 Guy Mollet (1905–1975).
- 68 Daniel Guérin, *Quand l'Algérie s'insurgeait, 1954–1962: un anticolonialiste témoigne* (Paris: La Pensée Sauvage, 1979), 97–98. Bakunin's original statement was in his 1870 pamphlet, “To the Officers of the Russian Army.” Guérin substituted “French” for “Russian,” “Algerian” for “Polish” and “imperialism” for “the czar.”
- 69 Daniel Guérin, “Les Européens d'Algérie: mythes et réalités,” *Nouvelle Gauche*, June 24, 1956. It was republished in revised form in 1959 in *L'Almanach* of the Union de la Gauche Socialiste and reproduced again in CG, 331–338.
- 70 His 1959 revision of this article acknowledges indeed that petit-bourgeois Europeans were an “easy prey for fascist agitators” in the *pièdes-noirs*/military Algiers revolt of May 1958.
- 71 A militant companion of Messali since the mid-1930s, Filali was the assistant secretary-general of the Messalist Algerian trade union in France, the USTA. André Breton (1896–1966); Edgar Morin (1921–); Clara Malraux (1897–1982); Maurice Nadeau (1911–); Benjamin Péret (1899–1959).
- 72 By late 1957, the FLN finally achieved predominance over the MNA in France. Guérin's disdain for this deadly rivalry between two militant organizations dedicated to the same goal also reflected his deep antipathy to arbitrary dogmatic sectarianism among militant left groups generally.
- 73 CG, 133. As French Prime Minister, Mollet, collaborating with Britain and Israel, launched an invasion of Egypt in late 1956 in response to the latter's nationalization of the Suez Canal and its support of the Algerian revolution. Virtually simultaneously, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev ordered the Soviet invasion of revolutionary Hungary.
- 74 Jacques Massu (1908–2002) was the French paratrooper general responsible for heavy military repression in Algiers in 1956–57, including widespread use of torture.
- 75 Guérin, “Colonisation, décolonisation, socialisme,” *Correspondence socialiste internationale*, March 1959, and reproduced in CG, 295–303.

- 76 Frantz Fanon, *L'An V de la révolution algérienne* (Paris: François Maspero, 1959).
- 77 Guérin, "L'An V de la révolution algérienne," *Correspondence socialiste internationale*, December 1958, and reproduced in CG, 330–331. Guérin's description of the hurried context for this review is in *Ibid.*, 136.
- 78 Guérin, *Quand l'Algérie*, 107.
- 79 The Manifesto text and the list of signatories appear on-line at <<http://www.marxists.org/history/france/algerian-war/1960/manifesto-121.htm>> (7/20/09). Anarchist poet and pacifist Jehan Mayoux (1904–1975) was also among those who signed.
- 80 The most famous signatory, Jean-Paul Sartre, was not prosecuted, allegedly because de Gaulle did not want to make a martyr of France's current "Voltaire." French politician Michel Debré (1912–1996) was a close associate and ally of de Gaulle from 1943 through his reign as the latter's first prime minister in the new Fifth Republic until 1962. He was an ardent defender of the "French Algeria" cause and actively collaborated with others for de Gaulle's return to power in 1958. To pursue these goals, he allegedly encouraged a January 1957 Algiers assassination attempt on the life of General Raoul Salan (1899–1984) who at the time seemed insufficiently committed to the colonial cause. By chance, the bazooka missile instead killed a nearby French officer. Salan later proceeded to lead the May 1958 military insurrection leading to de Gaulle's return to power and, in 1961, to lead the fascist OAS.
- 81 Further signatures were added to the Manifesto after its initial release.
- 82 Guérin belonged to a movement for several years that eventually evolved with others into a new PSU in early 1960. Apparently he did so, as when he joined the SFIO in the early 30s, to be less isolated and marginalized politically (Georges Fontenis, "Un long parcours vers le communisme libertaire," *Alternative Libertaire*, 1998 and Esquerre, "Daniel Guérin," 116). For three decades, the PSU occupied a place in the French political spectrum critical of the Communist party but left of the SFIO.
- 83 At the higher levels of the French government, the whole affair was viewed as a "political victory" for the FLN (Linda Amiri, "La répression policière en France vue par les archives," Harbi and Stora, 601). Detailed descriptions and analyses of this police massacre and its context are found in: Jim House and Neil MacMaster, *Paris 1961: Algerians, State Terror and Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). My personal introduction to Paris police violence in that period came when I was one person away from a smashing police *matraque* when participating in an anti-OAS and antiwar Paris demonstration opposite the city hall one month later. Of course, contrary to their behavior against Algerians, the police on this occasion did not shoot into the ranks of white French protestors.
- 84 In 1959, he gathered in one volume his various libertarian socialist writings begun in 1956 (*Jeunesse du socialisme libertaire* [Paris: Marcel Rivière & Cie., 1959]). In 1965, Guérin also published an introductory work on anarchism, *L'Anarchisme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1965) and edited *Ni Dieu, Ni Maître: anthologie de l'anarchisme* (Lausanne: La Cité-Lausanne, 1965).
- 85 According to FA leader Maurice Joyeux, the Kronstadt group was the only group (presumably in size and influence) comparable to his own Paris-based Louise Michel Group at the time (Joyeux, *Sous les plis du drapeau noir: souvenirs d'un anarchiste* [Paris: Éditions du Monde Libertaire, 1988], 143). Among its better-known members were Yugoslav Paul Zorkine (1921–1962) and Giliana Berneri (1919–1998) (daughter of well-known Italian anarchist Camillo Berneri who was assassinated by Communists in Spain in 1937).
- 86 The Memorandum was discussed in Fontenis' memoir, *L'Autre*.
- 87 Guy Bourgeois, "Aventures à la Willaya 3," in *1954–1962: l'insurrection algérienne*, 14–16. An on-line biographical sketch of Bourgeois (1926–2004) is at <<http://libcom>.

- org/history/bourgeois-guy-1926-2004> (10/26/2007).
- 88 "Pourquoi Noir et Rouge," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 1 (March 1956). Numbers 1–13 (1956–1959) have been posted on-line at: <<http://www.la-presse-anarchiste.net/spip.php?rubrique12>> (7/21/09).
- 89 "Noir et Rouge," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 2 (Summer 1956).
- 90 "Faire le point," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 3 (Autumn 1956).
- 91 Christian Lagant, "Les prolétaires n'ont pas de patrie," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 2 (Summer 1956).
- 92 "Note économique sur l'Algérie," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 2 (Summer 1956).
- 93 J. Presly, "Français d'Algérie = Israël," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 2 (Summer 1956).
- 94 Walter, "Comment on prépare la guerre," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 2 (Summer 1956). The large French Communist party, in the National Assembly, voted for "special powers" to intensify French repression and the war in Algeria in 1956 and never gave support, until the last stage of the war, to large antiwar demonstrations, let alone to the Manifesto of the 121. It also encouraged party members to serve in the military throughout the war. It is true, however, that a number of Communist militants at the base refused to support these positions.
- 95 Famous Spanish anarchist Buenaventura Durruti (1896–1936) led the best-known anarchist militia unit against Nationalist forces in the Fall of 1936. Durruti himself was killed while leading this unit in defending Madrid.
- 96 Paul Zorkine, "Réflexions sur la guerre de partisans comme type de lutte révolutionnaire," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 2 (Summer 1956).
- 97 "Déclaration de principes du G.A.A.R.," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 6 (March 1957).
- 98 "Existe-t-il un problème national?" *Noir et Rouge*, no. 7/8 (Summer/Autumn 1957).
- 99 Paul Rolland, "Psychose nationale," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 7/8 (Summer/Autumn 1957).
- 100 "Nationalisme ou anarchisme," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 7/8 (Summer/Autumn 1957). A full English-language translation of this article appears in Graham, *A Documentary History*, vol. II, 171–172.
- 101 "Question nationale," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 7/8 (Summer/Autumn 1957).
- 102 "Nationalisme ou anarchisme," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 7/8 (Summer/Autumn 1957).
- 103 "Trois années de guerre," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 7/8 (Summer/Autumn 1957). Such working-class pressure would also have to overcome the French Communist party's imperialism in Algeria ("Question nationale," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 7/8 [Summer/Autumn 1957]).
- 104 J. Presley, "Avenir des nations," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 7/8 (Summer/Autumn 1957).
- 105 No doubt meaning especially the FA.
- 106 "A propos de la révolution algérienne," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 10 (Spring 1958). This article also was republished in the later collection, *Noir et Rouge: Cahiers d'Etudes Anarchistes Révolutionnaires, Anthologie, 1956–1970* (Peyrehorade: Editions Acratie; Paris: Amis de Spartacus, 1982), 157–158.
- 107 Jean Marie Chester, "Refuser," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 17 (1961); also republished in the *Noir et Rouge* anthology, 169–177 and an almost complete version in English translation in Graham, *Anarchism: A Documentary History*, vol. II, 176–182.
- 108 Joyeux served a total of ten years in prison by 1945, for military insubordination as a soldier, for militant activism in the 1930s and for opposition to World War II. His several autobiographical works include *Sous les plis* and two fictional books based on personal militant experience, *Le consulat polonais* and *Mutinerie à Montluc*. Also, see the biography, *Maurice Joyeux*, by Roland Bosdeveix (Paris: Editions du Monde Libertaire, 2005).
- 109 *Socialisme ou Barbarie* (Socialism or Barbarism) was a small but influential group and journal (1949–1965) of the extreme Marxist left, originating as a split from the French

- Trotskyist PCI, and was mainly led by theorist Cornelius Castoriadis ("Paul Cardan") (1922–1997). Other well-known members included Claude Lefort (1924–), Guy Debord (1931–1994) and Jean-François Lyotard (1924–1998). The Situationist International (1957–1972) was a small international group of revolutionary Marxists with an anti-hierarchical political program close to anarchism, emphasizing workers' councils and fulfillment of basic desires, and an innovative social critique exposing and analyzing the false and alienating sense of everyday reality produced in modern mass capitalist society. Perhaps its most influential works were Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle* (1967); Raoul Vaneigem, *The Revolution of Everyday Life* (1967); and Mustapha Khayati, *On the Poverty of Student Life* (1966).
- 110 Joyeux, *Sous les plis*, 148–150, 154–159, 183–184.
- 111 Joyeux regarded *Le Monde Libertaire* as "the locomotive which drives the Federation" (Joyeux, *La reconstruction*, 10). For an anarchist journal in the late 50s, Joyeux thought it sold well (10,000 sold copies per issue, including 2000 subscriptions) (Joyeux, *Sous les plis*, 190).
- 112 While the views of Joyeux, Fayolle and Laisant toward Algeria were apparently held by a majority in the new FA, they were challenged by some anarchist-communists as too harsh toward Algerian nationalism, a position which Joyeux denounced as "national-anarchism," spread into the anarchist movement by sentimentalist, romantic and "brainless" students (André Devriendt, "Algérie, Indochine: les guerres coloniales et la Fédération Anarchiste entre 1945 et 1962," *Magazine Libertaire*, no. 4 (December 1984); Joyeux *Sous les plis*, 157, 232; and Joyeux, *La reconstruction*, 15).
- 113 Fayolle, "Le reveil du monde musulman: de Tunis à Casablanca où mûrissent les fruits de la colère."
- 114 Maurice Laisant, 1956 article quoted in Joyeux, *La reconstruction*, 14.
- 115 André Devriendt, "La guerre d'Algérie et les anarchistes," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1306 (February 5–12, 2003).
- 116 Joyeux, *Sous les plis*, 192.
- 117 Maurice Fayolle, "Face au coup de force militaro-fasciste : avant tout, refuser la servitude," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 39 (June 1958). Articles in this issue appear clearly to have been written before the capitulation of the Fourth Republic to the coup in May.
- 118 Maurice Laisant, "La République est menacée," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 39 (June 1958); Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte (Napoléon III) (1808–1873), nephew of Napoléon Bonaparte, was elected the first president of the Second French Republic in 1848. He abandoned the Republic and proclaimed himself Emperor of the Second Empire in 1852 after overwhelming referendum approval.
- 119 Michel Penthité, "Face au plébiscite de Gaulle, les travailleurs refuseront la dictature," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 43 (October 1958). The article clearly appeared before the September 28th referendum which approved the constitution with almost two-thirds of the votes cast in favor, while nearly a quarter did not vote.
- 120 *Bulletin intérieur de la Fédération Anarchiste*, no. 33 (July 1960), as quoted in Devriendt, "Algérie, Indochine."
- 121 Louis Chavance, "Les signatures et les manifestes," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 64 (November 1960).
- 122 Hem Dey (Marcel or Henri Dieu) (1902–1969) was a well-known ardent anarcho-pacifist from the late 1920s on.
- 123 André Devriendt, "A propos des 121," *Bulletin intérieur de la Fédération Anarchiste*, no. 37 (May 1, 1961), as quoted in Devriendt, "Algérie, Indochine."
- 124 Joyeux, "Pourquoi j'ai signé le manifesto des 121?" *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 64 (November 1960).

- 125 "Editorial: l'heure des reniements approche," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 65 (December 1960). The referendum in January 1961 produced in France a 75% "Yes" vote for the vague formula of "self-determination," with 29% abstentions despite the fact that no major party called for the FA's abstention alternative.
- 126 Joyeux, "L'Algérie à la croisée des chemins," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 66 (January 1, 1961), reproduced as a pamphlet of the same title (Paris: Groupe Maurice Joyeux, 2002).
- 127 Joyeux, *Sous les plis*, 191.
- 128 Déluret, "Fin de la 'chose' qui n'osait pas dire son nom," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 70 (May 1961).
- 129 "La rébellion de l'armée prend sa source dans la pourriture des cadres de l'État moderne," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 70 (May 1961).
- 130 Maurice Joyeux, "Et s'ils veulent, ces imbéciles, faire de nous des héros..." *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 71 (June 1961) and Maurice Laisant, "Réflexions sur le procès des généraux," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 72 (July-August 1961).
- 131 Talks between the French government and the FLN to end the war began in Melun, France, but failed, in June 1960. They resumed in Evian, France a year later, then were suspended until a new final round at Evian in March 1962. A peace accord and promise of independence was signed on March 18th and a ceasefire declared the following day.
- 132 Le Normand, "La nécessaire révolution," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 72 (July-August 1961).
- 133 Ahmed Abderamane, "La révolution continue," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 73 (November 1961). Ben Youssef Ben Khedda (1920–2003) was a leader of the "centralist" reformer faction of the MTLN before the war, later a leader of the executive committee of the National Council of the Algerian Revolution (CNRA) (created in 1956 as the FLN's supreme body). During the August 1961 Tripoli meeting of the CNRA, he was appointed to replace Abbas who had led the GPRA since its formation in September 1958. While the FLN by this time had seemed to promote potentially significant measures of "social revolution," such as the call for "agrarian reform," these were expressed in vague terms and represented a kind of populist ideological patchwork to appease all sides of the movement. But for the majority of FLN leaders, "revolution" meant only "national independence."
- 134 Walter, "OASS," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 75 (December 1961).
- 135 "'Le Monde Libertaire' saisi," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 76 (January 1962).
- 136 Walter, "Contre le fascisme. Front unique du prolétariat? Oui! Collaboration des classes? Non.," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 77 (February 1962).
- 137 Devriendt, "Deux guerres coloniales."
- 138 Joyeux, *Sous les plis*, 224–227.
- 139 French anarchists commonly use the term *libertaire* (libertarian) to signify "anarchist." However, it can also connote "anarchist-tending" or merely "anti-authoritarian" (Irène Pereira, "L'esprit de 68, quel héritage contestataire pour aujourd'hui?" *Réfractions*, no. 20 [May 2008], 6). Charles-Auguste Bontemps pointed out that sometimes the former term is preferred since it results in less marginalization or repression and disguises a more disciplined form of anarchism (Charles-Auguste Bontemps, *L'anarchisme et l'évolution* [Paris: Groupe Maurice-Joyeux, 2002], 22). It does not have the North American connotation of laissez-faire or minimal-state capitalism as intended by the U.S. Libertarian Party or others of that orientation. In most cases, I've therefore translated the term in this book as "anarchist." However, when the term seems to be used to signify "anti-authoritarian" more broadly, I've employed the latter translation.
- 140 André Prunier, "Discussion avec Albert Camus," *Le Libertaire*, no. 134 (June 18, 1948).
- 141 Albert Camus, *L'homme révolté* (Paris: Gallimard, 1951); the 1962 English-language

translation of *The Rebel* (London: Penguin Books) is the source of quotations from this book. The broad genealogy of ideas and practice in this work, distinguishing rebellion from totalistic revolution, includes strong denunciation, among other targets, of the hegemonic ambitions and behavior of Marxism, the Soviet Union and the international Communist movement.

- 142 Camus, *The Rebel*, 247.
- 143 Ibid., 247.
- 144 Ibid., 248.
- 145 Ibid., 249.
- 146 Ibid., 256.
- 147 Ibid., 258. Though an active militant as a journalist for the French Resistance movement's newspaper, *Combat*, Camus opposed executions of French collaborators after the war.
- 148 Ibid., 261–262. I have added the bracketed word “syndicalism” after “trade unionism” since this seems more consistent with the historical revolutionary syndicalist movement in France.
- 149 Ibid., 262. Camus no doubt refers here to the preeminence of the Communist movement internationally after the Russian revolution.
- 150 Ibid., 263. I have added the bracketed word “anarchist” here to clarify Camus's use of “libertarian.”
- 151 Albert Camus, “Révolte et romantisme,” *Le Libertaire*, no. 318 (June 5, 1952).
- 152 Camus's involvement with the anarchist movement is directly addressed in Lou Marin, ed., *Camus et les libertaires* (Marseille: Éditions Egrégories, 2008); *Albert Camus et les libertaires* (Antony: Groupe Fresnes-Antony de la Fédération Anarchiste, coll. “Volonté anarchiste,” no. 26, 1964); and Teodosio Vertone, *L'oeuvre et l'action d'Albert Camus dans le mouvement de la tradition libertaire* (1985). A short biography of André Prud'hommeaux (Prunier) (1902–1968) appears in the *Bulletin of the Kate Sharpley Library*, no. 6 (September 1996). Gaston Leval (Robert Pillar) (1895–1978) was an anarchist militant active in France, Argentina and Spain. After World War II, he produced a monthly revue, *Cahiers de l'Humanisme Libertaire*. The anarchist revue, *Témoins*, is discussed in the next section below. Lecoin's campaign is discussed in the section after that. Camus was not hesitant to criticize the anarchist movement itself if it contradicted his principles.
- 153 Lou Marin, “The Unknown Camus: Albert Camus and the Impact of His Contributions as a Journalist to the Pacifist, Anarchist and Syndicalist Press,” <http://www.dhf.uu.se/pdf/finder/cc3/cc3_art1.pdf> (7/27/09). For a brief period of membership in the French Communist party in the mid-30s, Camus was responsible for propaganda among Algerian Muslims (Jean-Jacques Gonzales, “Une utopie méditerranéenne: Albert Camus et l'Algérie en guerre,” in Harbi and Stora, 868).
- 154 A collection of Camus's writings on Algeria is *Chroniques algériennes (1939–1958)* (Paris: Gallimard, 2002). Ironically, when this collection was first published in 1958, in the midst of the Algerian war, apparently it received little attention from the press (Gonzales, “Une utopie,” 892). However, Camus was also criticized by Edward Said and Abdelkader Djemai, among others, for the Eurocentric absence of substantial Muslim characters, of native conditions and of Muslim perspectives on the colonial situation in his various fictional works set in Algeria. (See Said, *Culture and Imperialism* [New York, Vintage, 1994] and Djemai, *Camus à Oran: Récit* [Paris: Editions Michalon, 1995].)
- 155 On the surface, as in various wartime statements by FLN leaders and articles, European Algerians were welcomed to be part of the new Algeria
- 156 Letter to Charles Poncet, September 25, 1956, quoted in Gonzales, “Une utopie,” 882.
- 157 “Un appel d'Albert Camus,” *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 31 (December 1957), originally in *Révolution Proletarienne*, October 19, 1957.

- 158 See page 40 above.
- 159 "Albert Camus en Algérie: la trêve civile de janvier 1956," <http://www.ldh-toulon.net/spip.php?page=imprimer&id_article=2341> (11/6/2007); Benjamin Stora, "Il y a cinquante ans, le prix Nobel de littérature était attribué à Albert Camus," lecture in Stockholm, October 6, 2007, at <http://www.ldh-toulon.net/spip.php?page=imprimer&id_article=2308> (2/14/2011); Gonzales, "Une utopie," 884. Abane Ramdane (1920–1957) was the major FLN thinker and activist leader in Algiers at the time. He later prepared in Kabylia the 1956 Soummam gathering of FLN leaders to establish a collective political decision-making body and general program, including the primacy of political and internal vs. military and external leadership. He was assassinated in 1957 by decision of rivals in the FLN military/security leadership in Tunis.
- 160 Stora, "Il y a cinquante ans,"; Gonzales, "Une utopie," 890–891. By this time indeed, however, Camus despaired of the unstoppable logic of the war that would ultimately force him from the neutral sidelines to "return to his community" (Camus quoted by Jules Roy, *Camus* [Paris: Hachette, 1964], 204, and cited in Gonzales, "Une utopie," 889.) The last phrase of Camus's spontaneous Stockholm remarks was sensationalized as an easy sound-bite by the French media, thus contributing to a simplistic, mechanistic and politically opportunistic insertion of Camus into one side of the nationalist/left vs. *pieds-noirs*/right dichotomy. Camus biographer Ali Yédes says his statement simply reflects European Algerian culture, giving more weight "to the relational, the personal, the sensual, the emotional and the tribal over the rational and the universal" (*Camus l'Algérien* [Paris: Éditions L'Harmattan, 2003], 89).
- 161 A large number of Algerian immigrant workers in France in the mid-1950s were members of Messali's MNA. Camus regularly supported campaigns against French persecution of Messali.
- 162 Mouloud Feraoun, *Journal, 1955–1962: Reflections on the French-Algerian War* (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 2000; orig. Fr. ed., 1962), 184–185.
- 163 An overall account recalling Camus's collaboration with *Témoins* was written by the magazine's director, Robert Proix, in issue No. 32 (Spring 1963). The revue probably published no more than 1,000 copies per issue (Lou Marin, *Albert Camus*, 44).
- 164 Samson fled France in 1917 to avoid military conscription. Short sketches of Samson, his major collaborators and the magazine itself, appear at "'Témoins,' pour mémoire," *A Contretemps: Bulletin de critique bibliographique*, no. 20 (2006) at <<http://acontretemps.org/pip.php?article78>> (12/2/08) and Gilles Benoit and Nadine Rohrbasser, "Témoins: collaborateurs," an on-line article at: <<http://www.unifr.ch/grhic/revues/collaborateur.php?id=49>> (12/9/08). While the magazine was anarchist in orientation, Samson preferred to call it a place where readers could see "the thoughts of men who try to be free" rather than an explicit anarchist revue (introduction to "Libéraux et libertaires," *Témoins*, no. 1 [Spring 1953]). The full set of issues is available on-line at: <<http://www.la-presse-anarchiste.net/>>.
- 165 In various articles, Samson referred to France as "our country" and French people as "our people." See no. 27 for example. But he also viewed the fraternity of free spirits as the only country worth recognizing ("Témoins,' pour mémoire").
- 166 "Avertissement," *Témoins*, no. 1 (Spring 1953).
- 167 André Prunier (Prudhommeaux), "Libéraux et libertaires," *Témoins*, no. 1 (Spring 1953).
- 168 Leval, "Correspondances," *Témoins*, no. 7 (Autumn 1954).
- 169 *L'Express* was a slightly leftist French newsweekly established in 1953 and a significant influence on the gradual turning of French public opinion against the war.
- 170 Samson, "Périodiques," *Témoins*, no. 9 (Summer 1955).
- 171 Samson, "Lettre à M. J.-M. Domenach," *Témoins*, no. 9 (Summer 1955).

- 172 Camus, "Actuelles," *Témoins*, no. 17 (Summer 1957).
- 173 Samson, "Périodiques," *Témoins*, no. 17 (Summer 1957).
- 174 "Périodiques," *Témoins*, no. 20 (Spring 1958).
- 175 Samson, "Périodiques," *Témoins*, no. 9 (Summer 1955). Presumably, the *caid* he refers to is de Gaulle.
- 176 Samson, "Mesure pour démesure," *Témoins*, no. 30 (Summer 1962).
- 177 Samson, "Le démon de l'analogie," *Témoins*, no. 20, supplementary text (Summer 1958).
- 178 Samson, "La seule urgence," *Témoins*, no. 20 (Summer 1958). After World War II, Georges Bidault (1899–1983) was foreign affairs minister for much of the Fourth Republic. Closely identifying with the cause of "French Algeria," he supported de Gaulle's return to power in 1958, then turned against him as the latter's policy on Algeria began to change. He later supported the April 1961 "revolt of the generals" and the formation of the fascist OAS and was forced to flee France.
- 179 Samson, "Autocritique," *Témoins*, no. 27 (June 1961).
- 180 Samson, "Quelques documents (sur le racisme)," *Témoins*, no. 29 (March 1962). (See page 50 above.)
- 181 Samson, "Le temps de l'abjection," *Témoins*, no. 29 (March 1962).
- 182 See pages 49–50 above on the Manifesto.
- 183 Samson, "Lettre à Jean Bloch-Michel sur les 121, la guerre d'Algérie et l'insoumission," *Témoins*, no. 27 (June 1961).
- 184 Also known as "revolutionary defeatism," this notion advocated by Lenin and other left antiwar figures during World War I foresaw military defeat of one's own country as potentially benefiting workers by leading to (and perhaps being encouraged by) class-based domestic civil war and eventual international revolution.
- 185 "Quelques documents (sur le racisme): Frantz Fanon," *Témoins*, no. 29 (March 1962).
- 186 Samson, "Mesure pour démesure," *Témoins*, no. 30 (Summer 1962). In another article in the same issue, despite OAS atrocities, such as the assassination of Algerian Mouloud Feraoun, Samson endorsed the notion that all *pieds-noirs* must not be condemned en bloc simply because of their ethnicity ("L'autre drame et le meme").
- 187 "Thèse: les réfractaires à la guerre d'Algérie, *Quotidien d'Oran* (submitted by S. Raouf, October 27, 2007, at <<http://www.yakhou.com/nouvelles/histoire-et-perspectives/these-les-refractaires-a-la-guerre-dalg.html>> [11/17/07]). This brief article describes the doctoral thesis of Tramor Quemeneur, accepted by the University of Paris VIII in 2007. As a different writer points out, of course, "in our opinion, it is actually impossible to know in detail about all acts of insubordination by those on the ground who refused to obey certain orders, such as the execution of prisoners, the practice of torture, etc." (Erica Fraters, *Réfractaires à la guerre d'Algérie, 1959–1963* (Paris: Éditions Syllipse, 2006.)
- 188 Tramor Quemeneur, "Insoumissions, refus d'obéissance et désertions de soldats français pendant la guerre d'Algérie" (September 20, 2007), at <http://www.ldh-toulon.net/spip.php?page=imprimer&id_article=2265> (11/17/07).
- 189 In addition to the new exhaustive study by Quemeneur are individual accounts of anti-militarist insubordination and support networks in Fraters, *op.cit.*, and Hélène Bracco, *Pour avoir dit non: actes de refus dans la guerre d'Algérie, 1954–1962* (Paris: Paris-Méditerranée, 2003). The movement toward the legalization of C.O. status was reviewed in Edward A. Cain, "Conscientious Objection in France, Britain and the United States," *Comparative Politics*, vol. 2, no. 2 (January 1970), 275–307.
- 190 Lecoin, Martin, Laisant and Bernard are further discussed in this section.
- 191 Sylvain Garel, *Louis Lecoin: An Anarchist Life* (London: Kate Sharpley Library, 2000), 9.

- 192 Louis Lecoin, *Le cours d'une vie* (Paris : "Liberté", 1965), 152–153.
- 193 Ibid., 159.
- 194 Garel, *Louis Lecoin*, 12. Emma Goldman, among other anarchists, had also proclaimed in 1939 her refusal to support the war (*Vision on Fire*, 244–247).
- 195 Lecoin, *Le cours*, 204, 206.
- 196 Garel, *Louis Lecoin*, 12.
- 197 Ibid., 14. See page 67 above concerning the bombing.
- 198 Simultaneously, he founded the Solidarity Committee for Conscientious Objectors (CSOC). As late as the mid-1920s, Lecoin, like most anarchists, had opposed an official "C.O." status as being selfish, anti-revolutionary and dependent on legitimization by governmental authority.
- 199 The C.O. provision was revocable in time of war and a presidential decree stated that the law could not be publicized in France.
- 200 He insisted in 1964 that his name be withdrawn in favor of Martin Luther King.
- 201 Nicholas Faucier, *Dans la mêlée sociale: itinéraire d'un militant anarcho-syndicaliste* (Baye, Finistère: Éditions La Digitale, 1988), 212–213.
- 202 Lecoin's solidarity organizing, from campaigns for Sacco and Vanzetti and defense of Spain on forward, relied on wide and energetic coalition building. His "diplomacy" and success in such efforts even caused some mainstream politicians to urge that he abandon anarchism to join their parties (Lecoin, *Le cours*, 176).
- 203 Faucier, *Dans la mêlée*, 209; Lecoin, *Le cours*, 239; Fraters, *Réfractaires*, 78–79, 198 ; "Malick M'Baye: A Tribute to Pierre Martin" at CCIVS web site, <<http://www.unesco.org/ccivs/New-SiteCCSVI/CcivsOverview/FR-Documents/FR-Ccivs-origins-MBaye-Martin.htm>> (11/15/07). Martin authored two books: *Candide face au Moloch*, about his prison experience, and *In Kabylia: In the Trenches of Peace*.
- 204 Forces Libres de la Paix, "Paix immédiate," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 60 (May 1960); Laisant, "Le pacifiste," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 57 (February 1960); "Maurice Laisant" webpage, <http://archives.free.fr/pages/biographies/bio_MauriceLaisant.html> (11/27/07); Albert Louvrier, "Les anarchistes français face aux guerres coloniales," *Union Pacifiste*, March 2004; Maurice Joyeux, "Maurice Laisant condamné," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 5 (February 1955).
- 205 Bernard recalled that the Algerian conflict was not frequently discussed in the Bordeaux group and that, in any case, Algeria was considered—even by militants—as part of France. However, at a Young Anarchists camp-out in Provence in August 1956, composed mostly of individualist anarchists, an anarchist network was first organized to facilitate exile to Switzerland for those deserting the army or resisting the draft (Bernard, "Pas un homme pour la guerre!" *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1306 [February 6–12, 2003]).
- 206 CIRA was founded in Geneva in 1957 and later moved to Lausanne. It currently contains over 18,000 books and brochures and a vast collection of periodicals and other resources on the historical and current international anarchist movement.
- 207 Fraters, *Réfractaires*, 77–82, 175, 192; R.D., "Bernard, André et Anita (née Ljungquist)" at web site of *Dictionnaire international des militants anarchistes*: <<http://militants-anarchistes.info/spip.php?article321>> (11/07/07) ; Joachim, "André Bernard devant ses juges," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 71 (June 1961); Hemel, "Six André Bernards," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 70 (May 1961); André Bernard, "1954–1962."
- 208 "Présentation (?)," *Anarchisme et non-violence*, no. 1 (April 1965); "Quelques données fondamentales," *Anarchisme et non-violence*, no. 1 (April 1965).
- 209 *Anarchisme et non-violence*, no. 14 (July 1968).
- 210 Armand, "Quelques précisions nécessaires," *L'Unique*, no. 4 (October 1945).
- 211 Armand, "Le fil renoué," *L'Unique*, no. 1 (June 1945).

- 212 Armand, *Initiation à l'individualisme anarchiste* (1923) as reproduced on the "L'En Dehors" web site at <<http://anarchie.joueb.com/news/les-individualistes-et-la-revolutionnairisme-systématique>> (1/22/08).
- 213 Berthier's biographical sketch appears at the "RAForum" web site at <http://raforum.info/article.php3?id_article=1957> (1/22/08).
- 214 FLN leaders Ahmed Ben Bella, Mohamed Boudiaf, Mohammed Khider and Hocine Aït-Ahmed were kidnapped by last-minute substituted French pilots as they flew from Morocco to Tunisia to explore secret compromise peace feelers from Mollet's government. They spent the remainder of the war in French captivity.
- 215 Berthier, "Le crime, monopole d'État," *Défense de l'homme*, no. 97 (November 1956).
- 216 Pierre-Valentin Berthier, "Le drame algérien: pas d'incendiaire chez nous!" *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1285 (June 13–19, 2002); this article was an extract from Berthier's original article in *Défense de l'Homme* in March 1957.
- 217 Brief biographical sketches of Bontemps are at the "Ephéméride anarchiste" web site at <<http://ytak.club.tr/fevrier2.html#4>> (1/22/08) and that for "anarlivres" at <<http://anarlivres.free.fr/pages/biographies/bio-Bontemps.html>> (1/22/08).
- 218 Bontemps, *La démocrate devant l'autorité* (Paris: Groupe Maurice-Joyeux, 2002? [reprint of his 1949 brochure of the same title]).
- 219 Bontemps, *L'anarchisme et le réel: essai d'un rationalisme libertaire* (Paris : Groupe Maurice-Joyeux, 2002 [reprint of the same title published in 1963 by "Les Cahiers," Paris]), 15, 20, 23, 27–29.
- 220 Bontemps, *L'anarchisme et l'évolution*, 6, 14–15, 19, 21–23.

PART II

Algerian Background: Power Struggles and "Algerian Socialism"

- 1 Ahmed Ben Bella (1916–). From 1962 to 1965, charismatic Ben Bella led Algeria's government but was then overthrown, jailed and under house arrest until 1980. Upon release, he went into exile until 1990, founding in the meantime a new party, the MDA (Movement for Democracy in Algeria). In 2003, he was chosen as president of the International Campaign Against Aggression on Iraq, based in Cairo. For several decades, he has described himself as a moderate Islamist.
- 2 Hocine Aït-Ahmed (1926–) refused to join Ben Bella's post-independence FLN political bureau. In the Fall of 1963, he founded an oppositional party, the FFS (Front of Socialist Forces) and led a brief rebellion in Kabylia. He escaped from prison in 1966 and continued to lead his repressed party from exile, returning to Algeria for several years only in 1989. He has continued to lead the FFS to the present, primarily from abroad.
- 3 Mohamed Boudiaf (1919–1992) broke from Ben Bella in the Summer of 1962, founded a strongly critical opposition party, the PRS (Socialist Revolution Party), and went into exile the following year after plotting with others for a July 1963 insurrection and his temporary imprisonment after the plot was uncovered. He returned only in 1992 to serve as president of the State High Committee, the nominal top political leader, until his assassination a few months later.
- 4 Mohammed Khider (1912–1967). As postwar secretary-general of the FLN, he soon came to oppose Ben Bella, partly over the issue of a mass- versus avant-garde party, and went into exile in 1963, taking with him substantial FLN funds, supposedly to finance opposition to the regime. He was assassinated in Spain, presumably on orders from Boumédiène, in 1967.

- 5 Rabah Bitat (1925–2000) served as first vice-president of Algeria until 1964 when he resigned in opposition and went into exile. After Boumédiène's 1965 coup, he returned and joined the government cabinet until 1977, thereafter serving as president of the National Assembly until 1990 and very briefly, following Boumédiène's 1978 death, as Algerian president.
- 6 Mohammed Harbi, *Une vie debout: mémoires politiques, 1945–1962* (Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2001), 370.
- 7 A brief, though documented, discussion of Fanon's influence is presented in David C. Gordon, *The Passing of French Algeria* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), 127–132. See also Alice Cherki, *Frantz Fanon: A Portrait* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006; orig. Fr. edition, 2000), 151, 157–159, 168–169.
- 8 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1968; orig. Fr. edition, 1961), 191–195.
- 9 The Federation's program contained the same ideas and many of the same phrases as those presented by the nationalist UGTA trade union seven months earlier (*L'Ouvrier Algérien*, new series, no. 30 [December 1961] and *Le Monde Hebdomadaire*, August 9–15, 1962).
- 10 Front de Libération Nationale, *Projet de programme pour la réalisation de la révolution démocratique populaire* (Algiers: Imprimerie Spéciale d'Al Chaab, 1962). An English translation of the full document appears in Thomas L. Blair, "The Land To Those Who Work It": *Algeria's Experiment in Workers' Management* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1969), 212–249.
- 11 Houari Boumédiène (Mohamed Ben Brahim Boukharouba) (1932–1978).
- 12 There were apparently a small number of such social expropriations before the war's end (*El Djeich*, no. 7 [December 1963] and *Le Monde Hebdomadaire*, November 15–21, 1962). In addition to my own dissertation (David Porter, "The Role of Workers' Self-Management in Algerian Political Development," doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, 1968) which relied greatly on primary Algerian sources and interviews, a number of very informative works on Algerian workers' self-management have been published, but most are in French. In English are: Ian Clegg, *Workers' Self-Management in Algeria* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971) and Blair, "The Land."
- 13 Jacques Peyrega, "L'expérience algérienne d'autogestion vue à travers l'ouvrage de Serge Koulytchizky," *Autogestion et Socialisme*, nos. 30–31 (March–June 1975), 148–149.
- 14 *L'Ouvrier Algérien*, new series, nos. 5 (July 1959) and 11 (January 1960).
- 15 *L'Ouvrier Algérien*, new series, no. 30 (December 1961).
- 16 Report of Michel Raptis of September 6, 1962, quoted in Michel Raptis, "Le dossier de l'autogestion en Algérie," *Autogestion: Études, Débats, Documents*, no. 3 (September 1967), 17. According to Eqbal Ahmad, closely associated with Algerian militants at the time, even while still based in Tunis, UGTA leaders decided to send former agricultural organizers (from the French CGT trade union) into Algeria to assist workers to move forward with self-managed farms (personal interview, late 1968).
- 17 Personal interview with BNBV member, 12/28/65.
- 18 Mohammed Harbi (1933–). Helping to lead the opposition to the new Boumédiène regime in 1965, he was soon arrested and imprisoned for six years. He escaped from house arrest in 1973 and sought exile in France. There he became a professor of history at the University of Paris and launched groundbreaking critical studies of the nationalist movement, the revolution and Algerian society generally, while also unhesitatingly denouncing the authoritarian and repressive nature of the military regime. His writings were banned in Algeria for over two decades and individuals who were found with underground copies or duplicated pages were tortured and imprisoned.

- 19 Michel Raptis (1911–1996).
- 20 Full translated texts of the second and third decrees appear in Clegg, *Workers' Self-Management*, 201–209.
- 21 The figures for numbers of units and workers are based on subtotals available for each realm of *autogestion* activity. But precise censuses were never taken and, in any case, numbers fluctuated over time. I use a single figure to estimate the total of permanent and seasonal workers together in self-managed farms. While only the former were eligible to participate in the decision-making structures, many of the latter category eventually became permanent and in any case seasonal workers were immediately affected by the overall fate of the self-managed farms. The figure of 500,000–700,000 *autogestion* farmworkers is based on varying estimates by various sources, official and otherwise. Specific estimates of the number of permanent *autogestion* farmworkers ranged from 100,000 to 400,000. Monique Laks reported a range of *autogestion* industrial workers from 10,000 to 17,000 and the number of units from 385 to 550, depending on the source (Laks, *Autogestion ouvrière et pouvoir politique en Algérie [1962–1965]* [Paris: Études et Documentations Internationales, 1970], 29, 31). Almost half of these units were in the Algiers region. Construction/building materials and food processing units led the categories of production involved.
- 22 Algeria, Ministère de l'Orientation Nationale, Direction de la Documentation et des Publications, *Les discours du Président Ben Bella: année 1963–1^{er} trimestre 1964* (Annaba: Imprimerie Centrale Autogérée, 1964), 78–80.
- 23 Michel Raptis published the texts of 41 BNASS radio messages (a large portion of those broadcasted between May 9, 1963 and August 17, 1963) in Raptis, “Le dossier,” Annexe III.
- 24 Personal interview with former member of BNASS, December 28, 1965.
- 25 Raptis, “Le dossier,” 60.
- 26 Ibid., 133.
- 27 There are many references to these successes in Algerian publications, such as *Révolution et Travail*, *Alger Républicain* and *Révolution Africaine*, as well as in the personal accounts of foreign observers.
- 28 When I mentioned this proposal to a high-level Ministry of Industry official responsible for supervising *autogestion* enterprises, I was told that such an arrangement would be “anarchy.”
- 29 *Alger Républicain* was the popular daily newspaper permitted for the banned Algerian Communist party. Ben Bella's radical socialist advisor Mohammed Harbi was appointed editor of the weekly *Révolution Africaine* in June 1963. Given widespread illiteracy in Algeria at this time, the impact of such articles, especially on rural *autogestion* farmworkers was surely more important indirectly than directly. (Adult illiteracy was 85% at the end of the war [William B. Quandt, *Between Ballots and Bullets: Algeria's Transition from Authoritarianism* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1998), 24]. In the *autogestion* sector, one source estimated in 1971 that rural workers were less than 10% literate in Arabic and virtually 0% in French [Gérard Chaliand and Juliette Mincés, *L'Algérie indépendante: bilan d'une révolution nationale* (Paris: Maspero, 1972), 129].) Likewise, the near-daily broadcasts of BNASS were not heard by those without radios or too busy to listen. Laks also suggests that the passionate radicalism of *Révolution Africaine* was too intellectual, in any case, to directly support *autogestion* sector workers (Laks, *Autogestion*, 247).
- 30 Well illustrating the contradictions within the regime, a close associate of Ben Bella since their escape from Blida prison together in 1952, Ali Mahsas was the first head of the long-criticized ONRA since his appointment in April 1963. In September of that year,

he became Minister of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform and in April 1964 a member of the FLN Political Bureau.

- 31 From the partial transcript of the FNTT congress, reproduced in Raptis, "Le dossier," 152. "Ben Gana" was a family of Algerian notables in eastern Algeria and symbolized generically those native elite families empowered as well by the French colonial regime; the Borgeauds were one of the most powerful and rich French *colon* families over many decades in Algeria. They were the arch-symbol of *colon* exploitation and domination in the colonial period.
- 32 In actuality, the FLN during and after the war was more a symbol of mass nationalist insurgency than a clearly-structured organization with cadres and membership. In effect, the ALN was the institution of power and even this had significantly competing loyalties and goals internally and externally.
- 33 After imprisonment from 1955 to 1957, Hocine Zahouane (ca1935-) joined the maquis in Kabylia (*wilaya* III). After independence, he led the Algiers section of the FLN. Later, in 1964, he was in the FLN Political Bureau and chaired the FLN central committee's orientation commission. After the Boumédienne coup of June 1965, he joined Harbi in forming the opposition ORP. Arrested, tortured and imprisoned until 1967 and under house arrest until 1971, he left for French exile soon after. He then became an attorney, returning again to Algeria only around 1991. He helped organize and became a vice-president of the Algerian League of Human Rights in the early 90s. During the war, Abdelaziz Zerdani was the political commissar under Tahar Zbiri, commander of *wilaya* I (Aurès area), and remained Zbiri's close associate afterwards when Zbiri, an apparent supporter of *autogestion*, was appointed ANP chief of staff. He helped to co-write the Algiers Charter and, following the 1965 coup, joined the new government as Minister of Labor and Social Affairs. He resigned in late 1967 in protest against the regime's negative policy toward UGTA and *autogestion*, then went underground after Zbiri's failed coup against Boumédienne in December.
- 34 Report of FLN Secretary-General Ben Bella to the FLN Congress, April 1964 (published together with the Algiers Charter as indicated in the next footnote).
- 35 The full text of the April 1964 document was published as F.L.N. Commission Centrale d'Orientation, *La Charte d'Alger: ensemble des textes adoptés par le 1er congrès du parti du Front de Liberation Nationale* (Algiers: Imprimerie Nationale Algérienne, 1964). Significant parts of the translated text appear in Clegg, *Workers' Self-Management*.
- 36 Supposedly, the immediately precipitating motivation for the coup was Ben Bella's takeover of the Foreign Affairs Ministry from Abdelaziz Bouteflika, a close ally of the military, only the latest of his attempts to accumulate more powers for himself, his close associates or rivals of Boumédienne.

French Anarchism Background: Support, Younger Visions, and Faded Vitality

- 37 vander Walt and Schmidt, pp. 124–127.

French Anarchist Positions

- 38 Guérin, *Quand l'Algérie*, 181.
- 39 Ibid., 182.
- 40 CG, 168.
- 41 He also visited Algeria in March 1964 to observe the first congress of industrial self-

management workers.

42 Guérin, *L'Algérie qui se cherche*, 8–9.

43 Ibid., 25–27.

44 Ibid., 64.

45 Belkacem Krim (1922–1970) joined Messali's PPA following World War II, soon gaining important responsibilities there and in the underground OS. One of the founding FLN "historic chiefs," he was the first chief of *wilaya* III (Kabylia) and had great influence as well over adjoining *wilayas*. He later became a top-level decision-maker in the FLN CCE (Committee of Coordination and Execution), then prime negotiator with France at Evian. He sided with Ben Khedda and the GPRA against the Ben Bella/Boumédiénne coalition in Summer 1962. Krim quit the National Assembly for exile in early September 1963, stating that he refused to be "a toy or an accomplice of a fascist dictatorship" (Ottaway and Ottaway, 80). He formed an oppositional MDRA (Democratic Movement for Algerian Renewal) in Paris in October 1967. Three years later, he was found strangled in Frankfurt, presumably by military security agents on orders from the Boumédiénne regime.

46 Ibid., 69.

47 The UNFA (National Union of Algerian Women) was founded in 1962 to mobilize Algerian women behind the new post-independence regime.

48 Ibid., 77.

49 Ibid., 42.

50 Ibid., 84.

51 Ibid., 84–85.

52 See reference to this essay below on page 138.

53 Daniel Guérin, *L'Algérie caporalisée?* (Paris: C.E.P., 1965), 19–20. (These comments were not reproduced in his republication of most of this book's introductory essay in his 1973 work, CG.)

54 Ibid., 171.

55 See the descriptive endnote 109 for Part I above.

56 *Internationale Situationiste*, no. 10 (March 1967), 80.

57 CG, 173–174.

58 Abdelhafid Boussouf (1926–1982) was the commander of *wilaya* V in the Oran region of western Algeria after its original leader Larbi Ben M'Hidi. He later became the Minister of Arms and Liasons in the GPRA. He, Belkacem Krim and Lakhdar Ben Tobbal made up the Interministerial War Committee from January 1960 on, the most powerful leaders of the FLN's Algerian wartime government. Among the three, Boussouf was considered by many to be the preeminent power and was personally responsible for the 1959 assassination of the FLN's leading political strategist, Abane Ramdane. His wartime military intelligence network (MALG) was considered the predecessor of the post-independence secret police, the SM (later DRS). Boumédiénne's rapid rise to the post of ALN General Staff chief in 1960 was much due to being Boussouf's protégé from the time of Boumédiénne's first period in the maquis.

59 After joining the maquis of *wilaya* V, Abdelaziz Bouteflika (1937–) later became involved with the ALN General Staff in Tunisia and was a close collaborator of Boumédiénne. As part of the victorious coalition in Summer 1962, he was named to Ben Bella's first cabinet, then Minister of Foreign Affairs in September 1963. He remained in that position after the coup until Boumédiénne's death in 1978. He was a losing contender to assume power at that time, then spent six years in exile from 1981 to avoid later-dropped corruption charges. He became the *de facto* official candidate of the military for president in the 1999 election and was re-elected in 2004 and 2009.

- 60 Ahmed Kaïd (1921–1978) joined the FLN after the outbreak of war and eventually rose to the post of ALN assistant chief of staff under Boumédiène. He became Minister of Tourism in September 1963 and was elected to the FLN central committee the following April. He lost his post in a dispute with Ben Bella in December, but returned to power with the June 1965 coup as Minister of Finance. In December 1967 he was chosen by Boumédiène to re-organize and lead the FLN. Strongly anti-Communist, he repressed the leftist Algerian student organization and leftists of UGTA and publicly opposed Boumédiène's agrarian reform of the early 70s. Losing a power struggle with more leftist forces within the regime, Kaïd was replaced as FLN head in 1972 and died in exile.
- 61 "Un état dans l'état," *Combat*, January 25, 1964 and included in *L'Algérie caporalisée?*, 21–25.
- 62 "Alger: au Congrès de l'Autogestion Industrielle, les travailleurs ont parlé," *L'Action*, April 1964 and included in *L'Algérie caporalisée?*, 28–29.
- 63 This Algiers cooperative published the previously mentioned *Bulletin de l'Autogestion*.
- 64 "A l'écoute de l'Autogestion Industrielle," *La Révolution Prolétarienne*, May 1964, and included in *L'Algérie caporalisée?*, 28–29. Guérin published most of this same text earlier in the Algiers-based left weekly *Révolution Africaine* (April 4, 1964) but toned down several passages at the request of the editor for the domestic Algerian audience. Nevertheless, Minister of Economy Bachir Boumaza strongly complained to the weekly's director Mohammed Harbi about its content.
- 65 "Equivoque du Congrès du F.L.N.," *L'Action*, May 1964, and included in *L'Algérie caporalisée?*, 44–55.
- 66 Gérard Chaliand, *L'Algérie est-elle socialiste?* (Paris: Maspero, 1964). Chaliand himself was also a past *de facto* editor of the *Révolution Africaine* periodical.
- 67 Daniel Guérin, "L'Algérie est-elle socialiste?" *Le Monde Libertaire*, July 1964, and included in *L'Algérie caporalisée?*, 46–48.
- 68 "'Révolution Africaine' victoire de l'arabo-islamisme," *L'Action*, 10/64, and included in *L'Algérie caporalisée?*, 49–51.
- 69 "Le jeu de bascule continue," *L'Action*, November 1964, and included in *L'Algérie caporalisée?*, 52–53.
- 70 "L'Algérie a hue et dia," *L'Action*, January 1965, and included in *L'Algérie caporalisée?*, 54–56. Guérin later wrote a further brief article, with quotations, about the incident, "Un article antisocialiste," *La Révolution Prolétarienne*, February 1965 and included in *L'Algérie caporalisée?*, 57.
- 71 "Un congrès scandaleux," *La Révolution Prolétarienne*, January 1965, and included in *L'Algérie caporalisée?*, 58–60.
- 72 Detailed quotations of remarks by farm workers at the congress were presented by Guérin in a separate article, "Comment s'est déroulé le congrès des travailleurs de la terre?" *La Révolution Prolétarienne*, May 1965, and included in *L'Algérie caporalisée?*, 61–69. But this article was not included in Guérin's later anthology of anti-colonial writings, *CG*.
- 73 Zahouane's article in the Algiers daily *Le Peuple* (December 28, 1964) was included in the appendix of *L'Algérie caporalisée?*, 90–92. Safi Boudissa, in turn, praised the "democracy" shown at the FNTT congress and denounced the "reactionary" nature of Zahouane's criticisms of the same proceedings (*Révolution et Travail*, no. 70 [December 31, 1964]).
- 74 Nevertheless, members' clandestine activities related to the Algerian war and anti-Franco struggle caused the editorial team to remain closed. I.R. [Israël Renof, actually Frank Mintz], "Evolution externe et interne du groupe 'Noir et Rouge,'" *Noir et Rouge Anthologie*, prefaces.

- 75 J.P.D. [Jean-Pierre Duteuil], "Avant-Propos," in Ibid. The publication itself evolved from merely 50 copies for the first several issues to several hundred in the early 60s and 3,000 by 1970 (Yvo [Bulgarian Todor Mitev], "Noir et Rouge..." and Christian Lagant, "Sur le néo-anarchisme," *Noir et Rouge Anthologie*. [the latter article appeared originally in issue no. 46 (June 1970)]). Pierre Vidal [Jean-Pierre Poly] states that no doubt it was difficult to know how to respond to events in Hungary and Algeria, "but these popes [of the FA] didn't truly pose the question. Conformist and respectable, they assert, while even proclaiming themselves anarchist, [that] they'd exhausted their possibilities of revolt" ("L'histoire, c'est ce qui reste quand l'essentiel est oublié...", [1981] *Noir et Rouge Anthologie*).
- 76 Lagant, "Sur le néo-anarchisme" and Roland Biard, *Histoire*, 126–127. Vidal [Poly], who joined the *Noir et Rouge* group at about this time, said there were only about 4–5 people in the Paris section and perhaps about 20 altogether throughout France ("L'histoire, c'est ce qui reste.").
- 77 Israël Renoff [Frank Mintz], "Evolution externe."
- 78 Lagant, "Sur le néo-anarchisme." Lagant had years before been expelled from the FCL of Fontenis in one of its purges of internal critics (Vidal [Poly], "L'histoire, c'est ce qui reste").
- 79 "La difficulté d'être anarchiste," *Noir et Rouge*, no.'s 17 (1–2/61) and 18 (3–5/61). The second and longer installment appears in *Noir et Rouge Anthologie*. The entire article appears on the web at <http://www.fondation-besnard.org/article.php3?id_article=270> (7/12/10).
- 80 Letter from Frank Mintz, July 12, 2010. A biographical sketch of Mitev is on line at: <www.fondation-besnard.org/article.php3?id_article=248> (7/12/10).
- 81 See more on this anarchist split about Cuba in the section below concerning the FA.
- 82 Théo [Todor Mitev], "A propos des pays sous-développées," in *Noir et Rouge Anthologie*.
- 83 To this point, describing the early purpose of *Noir et Rouge*, Yvo [Todor Mitev] stated that "we didn't want our movement to resemble a pendulum needle that had to balance between two extremes—pseudo-revolutionary Leninism and the pseudo-philosophy of vague humanism. Anarchism needed to and could recover its own face simultaneously revolutionary and human" ("Noir et Rouge...").
- 84 Henry K., "La difficulté d'être anarchiste," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 72 (July–August 1961). It also appears in the *Le Monde Libertaire* anthology, *Et pourtant ils existent! 1954–2004: Le Monde Libertaire a 50 ans* (Paris: Le Cherche Midi, 2004).
- 85 Joyeux, *Sous les plis*, 227.
- 86 "Itinéraire autogestionnaire," *Tribune Anarchiste Communiste*, no. 29 (May 1980).
- 87 Biard, *Histoire*, 132, 140–141.
- 88 Ibid., 136–140. In the view of Joyeux, Guérin was another baneful Marxist influence on young anarchists. On the other hand, *Noir et Rouge* published a review of Guérin's *Jeunesse du socialisme libertaire* in 1959 (issue no. 13) which stated that Guérin was "one of the rare authors coming from a Marxist position who comes to conclusions quite close to us", though clearly identifying certain ways in which Guérin still remained excessively dependent on Marxist formulations.
- 89 Joyeux saw the Kronstadt group (Zorkine and others) as especially influenced by "Socialisme ou Barbarie" (Socialism or Barbarism), a group and publication attracted to a "council communist" position (Joyeux, *Sous les plis*, 229).
- 90 Biard, *Histoire*, 143.
- 91 Gaston Leval, "Réplique sur Cuba," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 71 (June 1961).
- 92 Joyeux, *Sous les plis*, 228.

- 93 "Résolution sur Cuba," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 114 (July–August 1965).
- 94 Maurice Joyeux, "Le Journal (1955–1962) de Mouloud Feraoun est surtout le cri d'un juste," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 86 (January 1963).
- 95 Sablier, "Les délices du pouvoir ou la contre-révolution algérienne," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 86 (January 1963).
- 96 René Fugler, "Histoire de la guerre d'Algérie," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 88 (March 1963).
- 97 Maurice Joyeux, "Le livre du mois," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 92 (July 1963).
- 98 No. 101 (May 1964).
- 99 No. 103 (July 1964).
- 100 Maurice Joyeux, "Le livre du mois," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 101 (May 1964).
- 101 Biard, *Histoire*, pp. 157–161.
- 102 See *Témoins*, no. 28.
- 103 "Quand la justice ne change pas de camp," *Témoins*, no. 31 (Winter 1962–63).
- 104 "Un manifeste," *Témoins*, no. 32 (Spring 1963).
- 105 "Sur l'Algérie," *Témoins*, no. 33 (Summer 1963).

PART III

Algerian Background: Balancing Left and Right in Consolidating the Regime

- 1 Part of this passivity apparently was due to the common assumption that the tanks then appearing in the streets were simply part of the filming background for the then-ongoing shooting of *The Battle of Algiers*.
- 2 Ben Bella was denounced generally for his "political narcissism" and "public relations socialism" while the Communist *Alger Républicain* daily newspaper was now banned.
- 3 Additionally, the ORP included a number of *pieds-rouges*, Europeans of the Trotskyist Fourth International and the French Communist party. (See Catherine Simon, *Algérie, les années pieds-rouges: des rêves de l'indépendance au désenchantement (1962–1969)* [Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2009] for detailed discussion of the *pieds-rouges* experience generally).
- 4 By one economist's account, the self-managed farm sector between 1966 and 1974 received only 38% of the investments it needed to simply maintain and replace the material means of production (Stora, *Algeria*, 157).
- 5 Ottaway and Ottaway, 266–267.
- 6 Chaliand and Minces, 124.
- 7 Claudine Chaulet, *La Mitidja autogérée*, a 1968–70 study (Algiers: S.N.E.D., 1971), as reported in Chaliand and Minces, 127–128.
- 8 Mansoor Moaddel, *Islamic Modernism, Nationalism, and Fundamentalism: Episode and Discourse* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 281.
- 9 Boumédiénne was even confident enough to welcome assistance from the illegal left opposition PAGS in formulating its particular socialist ideological message (Stora, *Algeria*, 146) and later allowed its activists to openly militate against capitalists and bureaucrats opposed to his state socialist vision (Martin Evans and John Phillips, *Algeria: Anger of the Dispossessed* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007], 91). In 1976, a nationally-discussed and referendum-approved National Charter set in motion the design of a new constitutional framework with strong presidential powers and FLN-

supervised elections, thus providing more apparent institutional stability for the regime. It also pledged civil liberties and equality for women.

- 10 This round of nationalizations followed earlier waves of nationalizations in mining, insurance, petroleum distribution, construction materials and metallurgy in the late 1960s.
- 11 Stora, *Algeria*, 153.
- 12 In 1967, the underground ORP and banned Algerian Communist party joined to become the PAGS, the Socialist Avant-Garde Party, while still remaining illegal (Ottaway and Ottaway, 195, 202, 255).
- 13 The number increased from 2,200 in 1966 to 5,829 in 1980 (Stora, *Algeria*, 171).
- 14 Despite Algeria's bitter anti-colonial struggle, among significant numbers, especially in the cities, French language was the more common initially spoken conversational mode and French-language newspapers the more commonly read (*Ibid.*, 170).
- 15 For example, gambling and the sale of alcohol to Muslims were declared illegal in 1967.
- 16 Grassroots receptivity to this movement, led at this time by exiled cleric Abdelatif Soltani, was encouraged by the lack of other participatory political outlets, the spread of mosques and the major influx of schoolteachers from the Middle East, many of whom were influenced by the ideas of the Muslim Brotherhood movement and its chief ideologist, Egyptian Sayyid Qutb. Nevertheless, according to Harbi, "The conservatism of the society is not a consequence of the rise of Islamism. It was favored by the policy of the partisans of authoritarian modernization who deliberately side-stepped the question of transforming mentalities, especially through women's emancipation and education" (Mohammed Harbi, "Sur la nature du pouvoir algérien et les élections présidentielles de ce jeudi" [interview], *Le Soir* [Brussels], 4/13/99).
- 17 During the last year of his life, apparently Boumédiène was shocked and deeply embarrassed at the anti-regime insults displayed by Kabyle fans at a nationally televised soccer match (Un groupe d'autonomes algériens, *L'Algérie brûle* [Paris: Editions Champ Libre, 1981], 14).

French Anarchism Background: New Reflections on Algerian *Autogestion* and the Peak and Aftermath of May-June 1968

- 18 Some 10 million (of an overall French population of 50 million) were estimated on strike at the high point of May 20, 1968 (Pierre Sommermeyer, "Sous les pavés, la grève," *Réfractaires*, no. 20 [May 2008], 28).

French Anarchist Positions

- 19 Guérin, *CG*, 354n.
- 20 Guérin, *L'Algérie caporalisée?*, 2
- 21 "L'Etat dans l'état" discussed above.
- 22 Guérin, *L'Algérie caporalisée?*, 2-3.
- 23 *Ibid.*, 5-6.
- 24 ALN tanks located at strategic points in Algiers on June 19 were assumed by many to be there for the ongoing filming at the time of "The Battle of Algiers." Larger demonstrations occurred in Annaba and Oran, with an estimated 10-50 deaths caused by the army (Stora, *Algeria*, 141; Ottaway and Ottaway, 189).

- 25 Guérin, *L'Algérie Caporalisée?*, 15. Several passages of this essay, including the final 4 ½ pages were not reproduced in CG.
- 26 Ibid., 16.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 Ibid., 17–18.
- 29 Guérin, CG, 176–179. This account is the source for Guérin's quotations and details in the next four paragraphs.
- 30 Testimony from these victims was published in a brochure, *Les torturés d'El Harrach* (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1966), with an introduction by Henri Alleg, author of *La Question*.
- 31 Henri Alleg (1921–) went to Algeria in 1939 and became heavily involved with the Algerian Communist party. He became editor-in-chief of the PCA newspaper, *Alger Républicain*, from 1950 to the time of its banning by the French in 1955. He went underground the following year and during the battle of Algiers in mid-1957 was arrested and tortured by the French military. His smuggled prison memoir of his ordeal was published in February 1958 (*La Question*, [Paris: Editions de Minuit; Eng. translation, New York: George Braziller, 1958]). The account of French torture in the book itself and the censorship around it had a major impact on the French left and public opinion more generally. Alleg later escaped from prison into exile after transfer to France, and returned after Algerian independence to re-launch *Alger Républicain*. He left Algeria at the time of Boumédiénne's 1965 coup.
- 32 Until this date, development rights to Algeria's oil reserves had been in the hands of French companies by virtue of the peace treaty ending the war.
- 33 Guérin, *L'anarchisme*. The English-language edition was published in 1970 (New York: Monthly Review Press).
- 34 Guérin, *Anarchism: From Theory to Practice*, 148.
- 35 Ibid., 146.
- 36 Ibid., 147.
- 37 Ibid., 149.
- 38 Ibid., 148–149.
- 39 Ibid., 150.
- 40 Ibid., 152–153.
- 41 See more on the MCL below.
- 42 Guérin, *Anarchism*, 156–157.
- 43 Ibid., 158.
- 44 Guérin, CG, 175.
- 45 “Les luttes de classes en Algérie,” *Internationale Situationiste*, no. 10 (March 1966), 12–21. Guérin discussed his 1973 perspective on this article in CG, 172.
- 46 Ibid., 394.
- 47 According to Georges Fontenis, Guérin maintained his belief in a genuine self-management experiment in Algeria into the 1970s (Fontenis, “Un long parcours vers le communisme libertaire,” *Alternative Libertaire* [1998]).
- 48 One could also reasonably argue that the internally-contradictory nature of the origin and purpose of the FLN itself in 1954 was well-rooted in the nature and evolution of decades of the growing Algerian nationalist movement since the 1920s—which is to say, ultimately, that the very contradictions within Algerian society under French colonial rule greatly influenced the limitations of the movement toward *autogestion* socialism in the post-independence period.
- 49 Accounts of most of these events are included above in Part I concerning Guérin's involvement during the Algerian revolution.

- 50 Guérin's text referred to this informant as "Reda Mehenaoui." However, a last-minute footnote, as the book went to press, identified this source (now in "new circumstances"—his release from prison) as Harbi with whom Guérin had quite extensive correspondence. The present large Guérin documentary archive at the Bibliothèque de Documentation Internationale Contemporaine (BDIC) at Nanterre, France lists 186 pieces of correspondence on Algeria in 1965 in its collection, including some with Harbi. It also possesses 45 letters and various texts in correspondence with Harbi between 1965 and 1972.
- 51 In 1979, Guérin compared the attitude of the November 1954 CRUA insurrectionists to that of the early 1970s Red Army Brigade in Italy and the Red Army Faction in Germany (*Quand l'Algérie*, 43).
- 52 CG, 166–167. Nevertheless, as demonstrated with Spain in the late 1930s, the *de facto* international alliance of state regimes, of whatever political stance, would do everything possible to prevent a genuinely anarchist polity from emerging.
- 53 Guérin even wrote in July 1961 to U.S. presidential advisor McGeorge Bundy, whom he knew at Harvard in 1948, in part to encourage Bundy to get President Kennedy to pressure France for Algerian independence (CG, 151).
- 54 Guérin's 1973 reference had described Boumédiène as "an ambitious and unscrupulous colonel" (167).
- 55 Esquerre, "Daniel Guérin," 116–117.
- 56 The UTCL in 1980 had only several dozen members and never more than 80 (Ibid. 113, 117–118). It merged with other anarchists and the Anarchist Youth Collective (CJL) (which Guérin and the UTCL had helped to form in 1986) to create the Alternative Libertaire (AL) which exists to the present and is discussed in Parts IV and V below.
- 57 See below.
- 58 Daniel Gordon, "Daniel Guérin et le mouvement des travailleurs immigrés en France après 1968," in "Dissidences," *Daniel Guérin*, 199.
- 59 CG, 187.
- 60 Gordon's account provides several specific examples.
- 61 Gordon, "Daniel Guérin," 216 and Esquerre, "Daniel Guérin," 120. Guérin also apparently supported centrist presidential candidate Alain Poher in 1969 against de Gaulle's candidate, Georges Pompidou (Fontenis, "Un long parcours").
- 62 Daniel Guérin, "Algérie: La honte du pardon aux généraux criminels," *Lutter*, no. 4 (January–February 1983).
- 63 Paul Zorkine, "Le mythe des conseils ouvriers chez Tito," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 14 (Winter 1959).
- 64 Lagant, "Sur le néo-anarchisme."
- 65 With the I.C.O. (Informations Correspondance Ouvrières), a French council communist collective from the late 50s to the 70s.
- 66 Groupe *Noir et Rouge*, *Autogestion, état et révolution* (Paris: Éditions de la Tête du Feuilles, 1972).
- 67 Ibid., 162.
- 68 Ibid., 164.
- 69 Ibid., 16.
- 70 The Dutch *Provos* were a popular grassroots counterculture and political activist movement in the mid-1960s, partly begun by anarchist activists and with explicit anarchist appeals.
- 71 "De l'attitude réligieuse," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 36 (December 1966), republished in *Noir et Rouge Anthologie*, 273–274.
- 72 *Autogestion, état et révolution*, chapter 6.

- 73 Ibid., 116.
- 74 Ibid., 114.
- 75 Ibid., 140.
- 76 Ibid., 124.
- 77 Ibid., 162–163.
- 78 While various negative dimensions of structure and practice within individual *autogestion* units were identified, *Noir et Rouge* appropriately emphasized the much greater responsibility of government and other anti-*autogestion* forces in suffocating that sector's potential success. Inevitably, in the face of such opposition and the overall evidence of individualistic opportunism by large numbers, *autogestion* workers' morale was weakened and some were tempted to act inconsistently with notions of solidarity and unit democracy. Enemies of *autogestion*, of course, thrived on publicized examples of anti-social behavior by individuals and decision-making bodies of this sector.
- 79 Ibid., 137–138.
- 80 Lakhdar Ben Tobbal (1923–2010), a veteran activist of the PPA and OS, was a planner of the FLN insurrection and a top-level FLN officer in *wilaya* II (North Constantinois). He attended the important interior Soummam congress of 1956. Along with Krim and Boussouf, he was one of the most powerful members of the GPRA as Minister of Interior and State.
- 81 Abdelkader Chanderli (1915–) was a chief FLN representative in New York during the war and became friendly and influential with then-Senator John F. Kennedy, encouraging him to give his 1957 speech in favor of Algerian independence. Chanderli was Algeria's first ambassador to the UN from 1962 to 1964.
- 82 Ibid., 142.
- 83 Ibid., 143.
- 84 Presumably Harbi, Zahouane and Zerdani among others. The *Noir et Rouge* analysis omits any mention of apparently pro-*autogestion* elements in UGTA or the BNASS cadres or even among some assigned technical advisors, though the study does refer to supportive critical perspectives articulated in the UGTA newspaper, *Révolution et Travail*, and the independent *Bulletin de l'Autogestion*).
- 85 Ibid., 144.
- 86 Ibid.
- 87 Ibid., 160, 168.
- 88 Ibid., 165. Wilhelm Reich (1897–1957) was a radical Austrian-American psychiatrist who combined Marxism and psychoanalysis to become a major and influential theorist for sexual revolution as a path to political revolution.
- 89 Lagant, "Sur le néo-anarchisme," 54.
- 90 This confrontation is discussed below on page 164.
- 91 Biard, *Histoire*, 145. Among these Nanterre student activists were anarchists, Trotskyists, Maoists, situationists and others. The best known anarchists among them were Jean-Pierre Duteuil (who originally had founded a Nanterre group affiliated with FA) and the one given most media attention, Daniel Cohn-Bendit. Duteuil (1944–) is mentioned further below in connection with *La Lanterne Noire* and the OCL. His most recent writing on the events of 1968 is *Mai 68, un mouvement politique* (Mauléon: Éditions Acratie, 2008). In 1980, he founded Éditions Acratie which has published to date over 50 books. After his forced return to Germany, Daniel Cohn-Bendit (1945–) eventually joined the German Green Party in 1984. He was elected as a Green to the European parliament in 1994, then, in 2002, became co-president of the European Green parliamentary group. See the book, "Mouvement du 22 mars," *Ce n'est qu'un début: continuons le combat* (Paris: Maspero, 1968) among a large number of useful initial works

- on the May 68 revolt. Among more recent good books on the same subject is Kristin Ross, *May '68 and Its Afterlives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).
- 92 *Noir et Rouge* sold over 3500 copies of its magazine by 1968 ("Texte no. 2," *Noir et Rouge* [1970], in *Noir et Rouge Anthologie*, 43+.
- 93 Ibid.
- 94 Lagant, "Sur le néo-anarchisme," 55–56; Israël Renof [Frank Mintz], "Préface," for *Noir et Rouge Anthologie*. Roland Biard estimated that *Noir et Rouge* and independent groups it collaborated with at this time numbered about 130 militants between Paris and Nanterre. (He estimated that FA at this time had 200–300 militants total throughout France, the majority of whom were hostile to the May Days or too old to participate.) Biard, *Histoire*, 177–178.
- 95 "Texte No. 2," 43.
- 96 "Cohn-Bendiste?," (no. 42–43, 1968), in *Noir et Rouge Anthologie*, 172–174.
- 97 Lagant, "Sur le néo-anarchisme," 57.
- 98 While inevitably the literature on the May Days in France focused on events in France itself, the rapid growth of a movement against the Vietnam War was an important catalyzing element in the eventual May explosion. Algeria was off the radar screen, though it is easily arguable that the prominent theme of *autogestion* at this time owed something to the Algerian experience in that realm. Indeed, in the "small postscript to read first" in the 1968 book Daniel Cohn-Bendit wrote with brother Gabriel, *Le gauchisme: remède à la maladie sénile du communisme* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1968; Eng. translation, *Obsolete Communism: The Left-Wing Alternative* [London: Penguin Books, 1968]), the Algerian experience was *explicitly acknowledged* as one of the several historical models which, rightly or wrongly, have been presented as potential models for socialist workers' self-management and which they had wished to have more time to discuss in the book (7, French edition; in the English edition, unfortunately, *autogestion* was translated as "workers' control").
- 99 Groupe *Noir et Rouge*, *Autogestion, état, révolution*, 148–153.
- 100 Israël Renof [Frank Mintz], "Préface"; Yvo [Todor Mitev], "Noir et rouge...", introductory 1981 essay in *Noir et Rouge Anthologie*.
- 101 "Texte No. 2"; Lagant, "Sur le néo-anarchisme"; Biard, *Histoire*, 206–208; "Qui sommes-nous ? Que voulons-nous faire ?" *La Lanterne Noire* (LN in further references below) (no. 1, July–August 1974).
- 102 Biard, *Histoire*, 208, 297.
- 103 One, no. 6–7, was a double issue. As of 1977, LN published 2000 copies.
- 104 "Nos points communs," LN (no. 1, July–August 1977). In a statement presaging post-modern anarchism, LN asserted, "In each of us, though by different processes, is capitalism, fascism, repression. To be revolutionary is to recognize this and fight against it; that is, capitalism will be able to secrete its elements of stabilization (all trade unions, all parties) only so long as we have them in our heads."
- 105 Such as gays and lesbians, prisoners, mentally disturbed, and those with disabilities.
- 106 Nicolas, "L'organisation anarchiste spécifique," LN (no. 6–7, November 1976); "LN," "Réponse I," LN (no. 8).
- 107 Claude Martin, "Lip revu et corrigé," LN, no. 2 (December 1974).
- 108 Chassignol, "La passivité des lecteurs," LN, no. 9 (December 1977).
- 109 Claude Martin, "Courrier," LN, no. 6/7 (November 1976).
- 110 "Nos points communs"; "La Lanterne Noire et le mouvement libertaire français," LN, no. 9 (December 1977). "Triumphalism" is the stance that victory of the cause is inevitable.
- 111 Martin, "Courrier," LN, no. 6/7 (November 1976).

- 112 Nicolas, "L'organisation"; "LN," "Réponse I"; "La Lanterne Noire et le mouvement." In effect, the rise of "autonomist groups" in France and elsewhere in the '70s was comparable to the Algiers Charter's call for the spread of self-management principles and structures throughout every realm of society—a refusal to rely on outside authorities to improve one's condition and indeed the need to critique and struggle against outside definitions, impositions and repression.
- 113 "Une nouvelle revue?", *LN*, no. 11 (July 1978).
- 114 "Fedayins, vous nous faites chier," *LN*, no. 1 (July–August 1974).
- 115 "Lire ou ne pas lire: les conseils ouvriers," *LN*, no. 2 (December 1974).
- 116 Martin, "Lip revue et corrigé."
- 117 Martin, "Courrier," *LN*, no. 6/7 (November 1976). This article pointed out that these criteria for genuine *autogestion* were also discussed before in *Noir et Rouge* articles on the experience of Algeria and elsewhere.
- 118 "Fedayins."
- 119 See details above and below on 123–124 and 176.
- 120 Biard, *Histoire*, 162.
- 121 Ibid., 167–170.
- 122 Ibid., 178, 183, 210.
- 123 No. 18–19 (January–April 1972), 71–79. The entire issue was devoted to the theme of anarchists and *autogestion*. The magazine's editorial board included, among others, Daniel Guérin and Michel Raptis (Pablo). While largely rooted in the Marxist tradition, the magazine favored, as did other groups at the time (such as the I.C.O., council communists, situationists, etc.) a program of creating an *autogestion* society through a self-managed revolution from the grassroots upwards instead of by a Leninist-type authoritarian vanguard (Yvon Bourdet, "Anarchistes et Marxistes," *Autogestion et Socialisme*, no. 18–19, 3–4).
- 124 TAC acknowledged that the Spanish FAI potentially played the role envisaged here, but stated that its political line was too confused and inconsistent. An earlier issue of *Autogestion*, no. 5–6 (March–June 1968) was mainly devoted to "autogestion in the May revolution."
- 125 TAC's position here about a clear distinction between the Ben Bella government and the state had the same problem as Guérin's similar formulation which he later self-criticized.
- 126 See pages 16–17 above.
- 127 TAC, "Les conditions d'une révolution autogestionnaire," *Autogestion et Socialisme*, no. 18–19 (January–April 1972).
- 128 As of 1970, TAC had about 20 militants and published about 500 copies of the magazine (Biard, *Histoire*, 215).
- 129 "Itinéraire autogestionnaire," *TAC*, no. 30 (May 1980).
- 130 Ibid. and "Comprendre la réalité sociale," "Rôle et avenir des revues libertaires," and "Pour une appréhension nouvelle" in the same issue.
- 131 See discussion of Alternative Libertaire below.
- 132 Biard, *Histoire*, 143–145. It was the "tutary" association legally owning the newspaper that purged the board. See more on this hierarchical power within the FA above at page 58. Joyeux defended this intervention as necessary to counter "provocation and sabotage" (Joyeux, *Sous les plis*, 247).
- 133 Most of the FA was opposed to it. The IAF originally included anarchist federations of France, Italy, Spain and exiled Bulgarians and still exists today. (See its web site at: <www.iaf-ifa.org>.)
- 134 Biard, *Histoire*, 202–203, 211, 215. Anarchist historian Biard was a member of ORA (Roland Biard obituary at <<http://flagblackened.net.af/org/issue50/obit.html>> [1/31/09]).

- 135 The low point in size for ORA was in 1971 when it had no more than a dozen local groups and some 60–70 members (Biard, *Histoire*, 234).
- 136 Ibid., 238–244, 301–305.
- 137 UTCL, “Les dix-sept années de l’Union des travailleurs communistes libertaires,” text adopted at the conclusion of the UTCL fifth and final congress, June 16, 1991 (text on-line at: <<http://raforum.info/spip.php?article3872&lang=fr>> [9/15/09]). Both Fontenis and Guérin had joined UTCL by 1980, the latter having joined ORA before the split (Fontenis, *L’autre*, 265, 268).
- 138 Ibid., 265–267. The OCL was in 1979 second only to the FA in membership among anarchist organizations (“*La lanterne noire* et le mouvement libertaire français,” *La Lanterne Noire*, no. 9 [December 1977])
- 139 Ibid.; “Crosnier, Alain, 1955–2005,” libcom.org web site (<<http://libcom.org/history/crosnier-alain-1955-2005>> [9/11/09]); Fontenis, *L’Autre*, 268–269; Biard, *Histoire*, 225–227.
- 140 In the 1970s decade, there were numerous attacks against Algerian immigrants and organizations, including bombings in Marseille (the Algerian consulate) in 1973, bombings in Paris, Lyon and Roubaix in July 1975 and at least 70 assassinations.
- 141 Quoted from Ania Francos and Jean-Pierre Sereni, *Un Algérien nommé Boumediene* (Paris: Stock, 1976), 140.
- 142 “Algérie: de l’autogestion à la gestion socialiste,” *Lutter*, no. 4 (December 1977–January 1978).
- 143 Up to about 1/6 of the present Algerian population is of Kabyle origin, while other smaller Berber-speaking ethnic groups live elsewhere in the country, especially in the south. The original population of North Africa was Berber, eventually to some extent “Arabized” by descendants of smaller waves of Arabs from the Middle East.
- 144 No evidence was offered about an already existing such movement.
- 145 “L’état fort contre la jeunesse, la femme, les kabyles,” *Lutter*, no. 4 (December 1977–January 1978).
- 146 “L’OCL, quarante ans d’anarchisme révolutionnaire” (May 4, 2008), on the OCL web site (<<http://ocl.libertaire.free.fr/spip.php?article4>> [1/21/2009]).
- 147 Jean-Pierre Duteuil, “L’organisation communiste libertaire,” *Réfractions: Recherche et Expressions Anarchistes*, no. 7 (September 2005), available on line at: <http://www.plusloin.org/refractions/refractions7/ocl_duteuil.htm> (1/29/2009).
- 148 Jean-Louis Gérard, “Algérie des colonels,” *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 114 (July–August 1965).
- 149 Montluc, “Trois aspects de l’activité syndicale,” *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 114 (July–August 1965).
- 150 Michel Raptis was no doubt the prime example in mind.
- 151 Pierrick, “Nouvelles algériennes,” *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 116 (November 1965).
- 152 Joyeux, “Les torturés.”
- 153 Maurice Joyeux, “Le livre du mois,” *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 122 (May 1966).
- 154 Approximately \$60 US.
- 155 Montserrat, “Retour d’Algérie,” *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 132 (May 1967).
- 156 Guy and Joseph Bernet-Rollande, “Sur les travailleurs immigrés,” *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 208 (January 1975). Presumably these figures do not include illegal undocumented workers (*les sans-papiers*).
- 157 “Les immigrés de 1945 à nos jours,” *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 291 (December 7, 1978).
- 158 Ulric Schulze, “L’émigré algérien à l’ordre du jour,” *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 194 (October 1973); Guy and Joseph Bernet-Rollande, “Les immigrés,” *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 210 (March 1975).
- 159 Ibid. Some Algerian emigrants joined the workforce in France as early as the late 19th century. The number reached 100,000 in 1924. Whole families began to emigrate by the

- early 1950s. By 1956, some 300,000 Algerians lived in France. At the end of the war in 1962, up to 100,000 Algerian *harkis* who had (sometimes under force) served the French in the Algerian war themselves migrated to the metropole. By 1965, the number of Algerians in France numbered over 500,000. (Jim House, "The Colonial and Post-Colonial Dimensions of Algerian Migration to France," article on the "History in Focus" web site at: <<http://www.history.ac.uk/ihr/Focus/Migration/articles/house.html>> [11/4/09].)
- 160 "Les immigrés de 1945 à nos jours."
- 161 Ibid.
- 162 Michel Cavallier, "Les travailleurs nord-africains en France," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 131 (April 1967).
- 163 "Les immigrés de 1945 à nos jours."
- 164 "Entretien avec les résidents de la Sonacotra: Chelles-Torcy-Noisiel" and "Ce qu'est la Sonacotra," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 291 (December 7, 1978).
- 165 Cavallier, "Les travailleurs."
- 166 Joyeux stated that during this period the FA was dedicated to "the maintenance of anarchist reflection...and today [1988], upon consideration, one sees easily that it was difficult to do better" (Joyeux, *Sous les plis*, 231).
- 167 Bernard Dréano, "Un Zépétiste en mai 1968," article posted on line at: <<http://zonedecologiepopulaire.org/spip.php?article57>> (7/16/10).
- 168 Apparently about a hundred FA members departed that year, not counting the emergence of the ORA tendency that remained in the FA (Biard, *Histoire*, 200).
- 169 *Le Monde*, September 3, 1968, as quoted in Biard, *Histoire*, 190.
- 170 Biard, *Histoire*, 191–192.
- 171 Maitron, *Le mouvement anarchiste*, vol. II, 103–104, 134.
- 172 "Dossier 68: Rolf Dupuy et Guy Malouvier," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 173 (May 2008). In this same article, Malouvier states that Paris ORA militants at the time considered, in case of a military coup d'état, going to the countryside in Limousin to set up a resistance maquis.
- 173 Joyeux, *Sous les plis*, 269; Maurice Joyeux and Richard Pérez, "A nos amis lecteurs," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 143 (July–August 1968).
- 174 "Sous les plis du drapeau noir," *Le Monde Libertaire*, special number (June 1968).
- 175 Maurice Joyeux, "C'est la lutte finale qui s'avance...", *Le Monde Libertaire*, special number (June 1968).
- 176 "Avec les anarchistes à Carrare capitale provisoire de la pensée libertaire," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 144 (September–October 1968).
- 177 Maurice Joyeux, "Le gauchisme de Cohn-Bendit," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 145 (November 1968).
- 178 Joyeux, *Sous les plis*, 248, 264–265.
- 179 Ibid., 267, 288.
- 180 Ibid., 278.
- 181 Ibid.
- 182 Ibid., 283.
- 183 Biard, *Histoire*, 217–222.
- 184 Maitron, *Le mouvement anarchiste*, vol. II, 131–132.
- 185 Maurice Joyeux, "Autogestion, Gestion directe, Gestion ouvrière," *Volonté Anarchiste*, no. 9 (Paris: Editions du Groupe Fresnes-Antony de la Fédération Anarchiste, 1979) (also on-line at: <<http://raforum.apinc.org/bibliolib/HTML/Joyeux-Autogestion.html>> [9/9/09]). The article was originally published in 1972 and also appeared in the *Autogestion* revue in January 1973.
- 186 In a 1976 article, Joyeux wrote that the FA was committed to the notion that the self-management insurrectional strike was the presentday preeminent strategy for revolution

- (Maurice Joyeux, "De la violence révolutionnaire: la Fédération Anarchiste et la transformation révolutionnaire," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 224 [July–August 1976]).
- 187 Though Joyeux admitted that even with a genuine *autogestion* society, production would only gradually move away from its current heavy consumerist emphasis, due to many years of advertisement conditioning.
- 188 "Anarchisme et non-violence," *ANV*, no. 24 (January–March 1971); André Bernard, "Anarchisme et non-violence, un groupe, une revue, 1964–1974," *Réfractions*, no. 5 (Spring 2000). This article also appears on the web site: <<http://anarchismenonviolence2.org>> (2/16/09). The web site for all of the 33 issues of *ANV* is: <<http://www.la-presse-anarchiste.net/spip.php?rubrique15>>. Bernard's earlier experience is discussed on pages 81–82 above.
- 189 "Anarchisme et non-violence" and "Propositions pour tenir compte des données critiques ci-dessus énumérées," *ANV*, no. 24 ; "Bulletin intérieur (fragments)," *ANV*, no. 33 (January–April 1974); Bernard, "Anarchisme et non-violence, 1964–1974."
- 190 See pages 81–82 above.
- 191 Christian Minot, "Remarques sur la violence," *ANV*, no. 1 (April 1965).
- 192 Lucien Grelaud, "Plaidoyer pour une nouvelle méthode," *ANV*, no. 2 (October 1965).
- 193 Michel David, "L'homme et la foule," *ANV*, no. 3 (January 1966).
- 194 Reclus stated as well that the cycle continues unendingly with evolution following revolution, etc., a position explored as well by Emma Goldman in the 1930s (as seen in *Vision on Fire*). Elisée Reclus (1830–1905) was a famous anarchist writer and geographer, forcibly exiled from France in 1872 after siding with Paris Communards.
- 195 Lucien Grelaud, "Evolution, révolution ou éducation," *ANV*, no. 4 (April 1966).
- 196 Marie Martin, "Frantz Fanon: la décolonisation dans la violence," *ANV*, no. 4 (April 1966).
- 197 The same phenomenon, of course, has also been demonstrated convincingly in "community disaster" aftermaths when previously fixed roles and behaviors are tossed aside to enable necessary collective solutions and healing.
- 198 This phenomenon of "revolutionary festival" has been discussed in many places, including my own article, "Revolutionary Realization: The Motivational Energy," in Howard Ehrlich, *et. al.*, eds., *Reinventing Anarchy: What Are Anarchists Thinking These Days?* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), many books on 1960s radical politics in many countries and, most recently, Barbara Ehrenreich, *Dancing in the Streets: A History of Collective Joy* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006).
- 199 René Furth, "Sur les postulats individualistes de l'anarchisme non-violent," *ANV*, no. 25 (April–May 1971). His lengthy essay, "La question anarchiste," published in *ANV*, no. 31 (October–December 1972), was a quite thoughtful analysis of contemporary "anarchist culture" and an appeal for its conscientious, more methodical reconstruction.
- 200 André Bernard, "Introduction à l'autogestion," *ANV*, no. 20/21 (January–April 1970). The issue of traditional communitarianism was discussed by Mohamed Sâil (see page 21 above) and will be further explored below, especially in Part V and the Conclusion.

PART IV

Algerian Background: Grassroots Insurgents, Political Reform, and the "Black Decade" of Violence

- 1 Chadli Benjedid (1929–), commonly referred to simply as Chadli, was a French army officer in Indochina, then joined the ALN soon after the Algerian war began. He became another protégé of Boumédiène, rose through the ranks after independence and became

minister of defense shortly before Boumédiène's death. As a compromise choice, he was Algerian president from February 1979 until removed from power by the military in January 1992.

- 2 N.N., "Il y a 20 ans, les émeutes de Constantine," *El Watan*, November 14, 2006.
- 3 The MDA was the Movement for Democracy in Algeria. Surprisingly, earlier in the decade, exiled Ben Bella stated that his earlier one-party statist regime was a mistake and that a decentralized polity of *autogestion*, local revolutionary committees and traditional village and neighborhood councils was preferable (Ahmed Ben Bella, "Enfin Ben Bella parle," *Jeune Afrique*, no. 1014 [June 11, 1980] and Ahmed Ben Bella, *Itinéraire* [Alternatives/El Badil, 1987], 197–203).
- 4 Mohammed Samraoui, a former high level official in the Algerian secret service, the DRS, provided detailed apparent evidence about the regime's manipulation of the GIA in his on-line article, "DRS, GIA and Impunity," at the "Algeria Watch" web site, July 2003 (5/5/10), and in his book, *Chroniques des années de sang* (Paris: Éditions Denoël, 2003) published several months later. The "Algeria Watch" web site also posted on-line the lengthy "Introduction" section of this book. Some have speculated as well that the US government, willing to play both sides of this conflict, with its eyes on Algeria's resources, at least indirectly encouraged and even helped subsidize the GIA, as it previously had done with bin Laden.
- 5 "Algérie: la machine de mort," report by Algeria-Watch and Salah-Eddine Sidhoum (October 2003), introduction. This is a very detailed account of the Algerian regime's institutions and practice of widespread torture since 1994. It appears at the Algeria-Watch web site.

French Anarchist Positions

- 6 Unrealistically assuming a revolution in the near future.
- 7 UTCL, "Les dix-sept années." The CFDT (French Democratic Confederation of Labor) was created in 1964. It was active in the 1968 upheaval and committed to *autogestion* principles (within the capitalist system) for much of the next decade. It was originally close to the PSU, then to the Socialist party from the mid-70s. In the 1990s it took a more independent stand. Autonomous trade union federations, such as the various SUDs, began to appear in the early 80s. See more details below.
- 8 Gained by the French as a possession in 1853, it soon became a penal colony where, among others, Louise Michel and other Paris Communards along with Algerian insurgents were sent in the 1870s. A modern movement for independence began in 1985. A 1998 accord promised a referendum on independence after 2014.
- 9 A. Coursan, "L'insurrection algérienne et les communistes libertaires, part one," *Lutter*, no. 10 (March 1985).
- 10 A. Coursan, "L'insurrection algérienne et les communistes libertaires, part two," *Lutter*, no. 11 (April 1985). FA member C.A. Barbe strongly opposed Fontenis and the FCL in the 1950s.
- 11 A. Coursan, "L'insurrection algérienne et les communistes libertaires, part three," *Lutter*, no. 13 (Summer 1985).
- 12 The League was created on June 30, 1985, affiliated with the International Human Rights Federation, and was headed by Abdenour Ali Yahia (1921–). His good relations with Abane Ramdane led to his role as one of the founders of UGTA in 1956. Arrested in January 1957, he was imprisoned for three years. In 1963, he joined for awhile the FFS anti-regime maquis in Kabylia, but then left and reconciled with Ben Bella. He later headed two different ministries after Boumédiène's coup. Aware beforehand of Tahar Zbiri's

attempted December 1967 coup against Boumédiène, Ali Yahia quit the government and sought refuge temporarily in Kabylia. He then decided to study law and entered the Algiers bar in 1972. He was one of a lawyers' collective in 1981 that defended student activists from the Berber Spring upheaval of the year before. He also defended members of the Communist PAGS. Ali Yahia and his fellow League founders, including Saïd Sadi (a leader of the Berber Spring), were tried and convicted in December 1985, after Ali Yahia's strong courtroom accusations against the regime. He was imprisoned until April 1987, during which time the regime put into place an alternate Human Rights League of its own under Miloud Brahimi. Recognized officially after the events of "Black October" 1988, Ali Yahia's League was active in trying to establish peaceful resolutions with the growing Islamist movement in the early 90s and he himself defended in court the top FIS leader, Abassi Madani, in 1992. He also represented the League at the Rome non-governmental negotiations and accord with the FIS in January 1995. He retired from the League presidency in September 2005, replaced by Hocine Zahouane. (Algeria Interface biography of Ali Yahia at: <http://web.archive.org/web/20050312142054/www.algeria-interface.com/new/article.php?article_id=410> [9/15/09] and Madjid Makedhi, "Hocine Zahouane succède à Ali Yahia Abdenour," *El Watan*, September 24, 2005). Even down to the present, Ali Yahia has maintained his strong oppositional voice against the regime, in the Spring of 2011 helping to organize and lead defiant illegal street demonstrations in Algiers.

- 13 P.V., "Chadli: l'ouverture?" *Lutter*, no. 14 (December 1985). This conclusion was quite prescient since the League's activities helped legitimate and keep alive, now with international attention, the public political critique of the regime articulated and amplified by the earlier Berber Spring. This momentum would be important for events of the late 80s.
- 14 Lounis Aït Menguellet (1950–) was accused of keeping illegal arms, but his arrest directly followed a new song dedicated to founders of the LADDDH.
- 15 "Les droits de l'homme sous les verrous," *Lutter*, no. 14 (December 1985).
- 16 A 2/3 drop of prices between 1982 and 1986 (Quandt, *Between Ballots and Bullets*, 38).
- 17 Jacques Dubart, "Algérie: les assassins sont au pouvoir," *Lutter*, no. 25 (November 1988).
- 18 In "Change the World Without Taking Power? The Libertarian Communist Tradition in France Today" (*Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, vol. 16, no. 1 [April 2008]), David Berry discusses in some detail the ideological evolution of UTCL and its successor, Alternative Libertaire. He states that Guérin helped write UTCL's 1986 "Libertarian Communist Project."
- 19 UTCL, "Les dix-sept années." By the mid-90s, Mimmo Pucciarelli's 1995 survey of French anarchists found that 3% of his respondents were involved in Alternative Libertaire (Mimmo Pucciarelli, "L'anarchisme, une denrée pour les classes cultivées ? Les libertaires aujourd'hui," in Pessin and Pucciarelli, 409).
- 20 The manifesto is available on-line at: <<http://www.alternativelibertaire.org/spip.php?article2393>> (9/16/09).
- 21 The manifesto's definition of social classes is more detailed and nuanced than space allows for here.
- 22 "Les femmes: enjeu politique de la crise algérienne," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 24 (May–June 1994).
- 23 Rédha Malek (1931–) was an editor of the FLN newspaper *El Moudjahid* from Tunis between 1957 and 1962 and a GPRA negotiator and spokesperson at Evian. He was Algeria's ambassador to several countries after 1963, including France, the USSR, Britain and the United States. He was one of five members of the State High Committee established after President Chadli's forced removal in January 1992 and headed by Mohamed Boudiaf until the latter's assassination in June. He then was Algeria's prime minister between August 1993 and April 1994 and strongly opposed reconciliation with radical Islamists.

- 24 Estimated at \$26 billion.
- 25 L. Séminole, "L'impasse algérienne," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 32 (March 1995).
- 26 Liamine Zeroual (1941–) joined the ALN in 1957 and after independence received further military training in Egypt, France and the USSR. He finally became head of land forces in 1989 but resigned soon after, following disputes with President Chadli. He returned in 1993 after Chadli's downfall to become Minister of Defense and, in January 1994, was named to succeed Ali Kafi as head of the State High Committee. He then was elected Algerian president in November 1995 with 61% of the vote. During his time in office, he favored some dialogue with the FIS and reconciliation with insurgent Islamists who disarmed. He stepped down in September 1998 and announced that a new election for his successor would shortly be held.
- 27 The new constitution again stressed the centrality of Islam, the Arabic language, and the glorious tradition of the national liberation revolution, but also added much more centralization of presidential powers. It also banned political parties from using Islam politically and proclaimed a full set of civil liberties for Algerian citizens. The government's claim that nearly 13 million votes were cast and 86% in favor was met with disbelief.
- 28 Also known as the Movement of the Islamic Renaissance (MNI or MN), it was legally authorized in 1990. While of similar perspective to the Muslim Brotherhood in the Middle East, it appeared to have no links with the latter. However, it distinguished itself from the FIS and Hamas in opposing further privatization of the public sector and other economic liberalization.
- 29 The MSP was founded in 1990 as Hamas, but had no organizational ties with the Palestinian group or the Muslim Brotherhood with which its overall orientation coincided.
- 30 "Algérie: avant les élections," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 54 (June 1997). Election results, as usual, were demonstrably rigged. While the regime claimed an abstention rate of only one-third, it was at least 50% in the Algiers region and Kabylia. Official results gave over 40% of the votes (and an absolute majority of seats) to the RND, 27% to the two Islamist parties, 17% to the FLN (no longer the official regime party), and 5% to the FFS. Huge public outrage at the fraudulent process resulted in the largest mass demonstrations since 1992. (Frédéric Volpi, *Islam and Democracy: The Failure of Dialogue in Algeria* [London: Pluto Press, 2003], 77 and 147; Evans and Phillips, 237).
- 31 H.B., "Appel pour un moratoire sur les expulsions en Algérie," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 63 (April 1998).
- 32 During the first decade of the 20th century a split developed within the CGT between those who continued to maintain the ideal of anarchy as the inspiration for revolution and those known as revolutionary syndicalists who believed in workers' struggles through the unions as creating in themselves a revolutionary dynamic for gaining an anti-authoritarian society—without explicit abstract anarchist ideological baggage.
- 33 See Berry, *A History and Maitron, Le mouvement anarchiste*, Vol. II for more detailed discussion of French anarcho-syndicalism during the 1920s and 30s. While in 1923, anarchists in the overall union movement seemed to have the support of some 120,000 syndicalists, the CGTSR had an estimated membership of no more than one-sixth and possibly only one-twentieth of that number (Berry, *A History*, 144, 151, 256).
- 34 Force Ouvrière emerged in 1948 in response to Communist domination of the CGT and the specific general strike of 1947. It had the backing of the Socialist party and the American CIA. In later years, it gained more independence from the Socialists. In FEN, anarcho-syndicalists played a significant role in the "École Émancipée" (Liberated School) tendency, one of three major forces within the federation.
- 35 "La Lanterne Noire et le mouvement libertaire français," *La Lanterne Noire*, no. 9 (December 1977); Fondation Pierre Besnard, "Petite histoire de la CNT-F," on-line

- at: <http://www.fondation-besnard.org/article.php3?id_article=201> (11/18/07); Jaky Toublet, "Retour sur les luttes syndicales des années 1970–1980," *Agonne*, no. 26–27; Ben, "Anarcho-syndicalisme et syndicalisme révolutionnaire à Lyon, 1971–1999," *La Gryffe*, no. 17 (early 2000); and Biard, *Histoire*, 255–268.
- 36 By 2009, only 8 percent of the French workforce belonged to unions (*Le Monde*, May 31–June 1, 2009).
- 37 These elections in each enterprise of a minimum size send worker delegates to an enterprise committee of information-gathering and consultation with management. Such committees can also organize social and cultural activities, including some decisions benefiting the health and welfare of enterprise workers.
- 38 Yves Peyraut, "La Confédération nationale du travail," *Réfractions*, no. 7; *Le Combat Syndicaliste*, "La CNT-AIT," *Réfractions*, no. 7. The sometimes use of "Vignolles" after "CNT" arose because the Paris office of the majority organization was located on the street of that name. The CNT-AIT minority argued that this mechanism of co-gestion was not a gain for workers, but rather a means to integrate them into the existing hierarchical, capitalist system and demobilize them. CNT-F's more detailed discussion of its exclusion by the AIT is CNT-F, "Historique de l'exclusion de la CNT-F de l'AIT, 1996–1997," on-line at: <http://www.fondation-besnard.org/article.php3?id_article=174> (11/18/07).
- 39 A further complication is that another *Combat Syndicaliste* was also published by the CNT-AIT branch in Toulouse. It changed its name to *Anarchosyndicalisme!* with the 101st issue in Summer 2007.
- 40 Pucciarelli, "L'anarchisme," 409.
- 41 French anarcho-syndicalist views on the war were expressed, for example, in *La Révolution Prolétarienne*.
- 42 Fadilla, "La rumeur de la Casbah," *Combat Syndicaliste* (CNT-AIT), Summer 1998. This and subsequent cited articles from this CNT-AIT periodical are available at the same web site (<<http://cnt-ait.info>>) unless otherwise indicated.
- 43 Most estimates of the death toll by now do not exceed 200,000.
- 44 In brackets are US\$ equivalents for 1999 as calculated with the exchange rate in that year of about \$.015 = 1 dinar.
- 45 Fadila, "L'autre face de la guerre: argent, profit, exploitation, pillage," apparently published in *Combat Syndicaliste* (CNT-AIT), June 1999.
- 46 Nidal, "L'autre Algérie: celle des luttes sociales," *Combat Syndicaliste* (CNT-AIT), September 1999.
- 47 Ali Mecili was exiled to France in 1965 and became a lawyer and human rights advocate very close to Ait-Ahmed, helping the latter to explore an alliance with Ben Bella in 1985.
- 48 Mohamed Salah Yahiaoui was a colonel with a "leftist" reputation in the Algerian military when Boumédiène selected him in 1977 to coordinate and rejuvenate the FLN. Yahiaoui attempted to do so in part by relying heavily on support and militants from the still-illegal leftist PAGS. After Boumédiène's death at the end of the next year, Yahiaoui and Foreign Minister Abdelaziz Bouteflika, the last of Boumédiène's wartime close military clique, were two leading replacement contenders. After the first FLN congress since 1964 and the decisive intervention of military leaders (especially Kasdi Merbah, SM security force chief from 1962 to 1979, who apparently threatened to reveal embarrassing information about rival candidates), Chadli was chosen as an alternative who would not restrict the military's power. Merbah, in turn, was assassinated in 1993 (Mohand Aziri, "Le colonel est mort, vive le colonel!" *El Watan*, December 27, 2008).
- 49 Two decades later, a retrospective OCL article on this event and its political context provided a much fuller narrative on the regime's manipulations at this time (see pages 369–373 below in Part V).

- 50 Khaled Nezzar (1937–) trained as an officer in the French army and, like a few others, only deserted to the side of national liberation late in the war. Boumédiène came to value such men over the guerrilla officers of the revolution and placed them in the army general staff. This group rose to a predominant position in the 1980s. During the October 1988 upheaval, Nezzar declared a state of siege. After appointment as Minister of Defense in 1990, he reorganized the SM into the DRS (Department of Intelligence and Security) and chose members of his own clique to head it. In 2002, already retired, he sued exiled former officer Habib Souaïdia for defamation after the latter accused him of being responsible for thousands of assassinations during the civil war and, with others, for starting the war and launching massacres attributed falsely to the Islamist GIA. Nezzar lost the case in a Paris court.
- 51 Mustapha Bouyali (1942–1987) fought in the war against the French and later joined the FFS maquis in Kabylia. After conversion to radical Islam in the late 1970s, he soon became a strident *imam* himself in Algiers, militantly purging his neighborhood of “anti-Muslim” behavior. When about to be arrested in 1981, he fled to mountainous terrain south of Algiers and there formed the first Islamist maquis. With 300 followers, he sought to overthrow the regime until his ambush and execution in 1987. Some veterans of his group later formed a new MIA guerrilla group in 1991.
- 52 Madani was generally considered to at least symbolize the more moderate wing of the later FIS. Sheikh Mahfoud Nahnah (1942–2003) taught Arabic after independence, was a member of the Muslim Brotherhood and was imprisoned for four years in 1976 for sabotage in opposition to Boumédiène’s new national charter. He was the founder of the Islamist political party, Hamas, in 1990 after being brushed aside by and objecting to the new more militant FIS. The party remained legal after the 1992 military coup and Nahnah received 25% of the vote when he ran for president in 1995.
- 53 This League helped to unite various grassroots charitable and religious associations in 1988, thus laying the groundwork for a powerful FIS.
- 54 FIS leaders Madani and Belhadj were among those arrested in July 1991 as part of a major crackdown on the FIS by the military after the perceived threat of a successful Islamist revolution. The repression and the elimination of top leadership then moved large numbers of the FIS into more dedicated militancy, including fleeing to the countryside to set up maquis. Madani, later willing to negotiate a settlement to the civil war, was released to house arrest in 1997.
- 55 Ali Kafi (1928–) commanded *wilaya* 2 (northeastern Algeria) for two years during the war and was a strong proponent of Arabization after independence. He briefly succeeded Boudiaf as head of state for a few months until the early 1994 appointment of Zeroual to that position.
- 56 Belaid Abdesslam (1928–) was a militant of the PPA and MTLD and founded UGEMA, the Algerian students organization in 1955. He established the state hydrocarbons company, SONATRACH, in 1963. As Minister of Industry and Energy under Boumédiène, he was identified as the state socialist architect of the rapid industrialization program in the 1970s with the use of huge petrochemical exports income. In office as prime minister under Chadli for only a year, he failed to improve the economy, the war greatly intensified and he was apparently forced to step down.
- 57 Jean-Pierre Gavroche, “Algérie: une société bloquée,” *Infos et Analyses Libertaires*, September 1992.
- 58 Boukrouh ran in 1995 with the PRA label (Party of Algerian Renewal). He received 3.8% of the official vote. Boukrouh was a strong admirer of Malek Bennabi (1905–1973), an Algerian modernist Islamist with extensive writings. In September 1994, Boukrouh had publicly opposed any negotiations between the regime and the FIS, talks that had begun in the previous month.

- 59 Nahnah had opposed the earlier Rome pact between several opposition parties and the FIS.
- 60 Larbi Belkheir (1938–2010), like Nezzar, was one of those officers who changed sides during the national liberation war. He remained a Nezzar hardliner in the 1980s and 90s and was regarded as one of the military-mafia “godfathers” of the regime. As Minister of Interior when Boudiaf was assassinated, he was suspected by some as responsible.
- 61 Saïd Sadi (1947–) was one of the leaders of the “Berber Spring” movement in 1980 and was jailed five times in that decade. He was a co-founder, in 1985, with Ali Yahia of the League for the Defense of Human Rights. The secular RCD was officially formed in 1989 with many activists from the Berber Spring and MCB (Berber Cultural Movement) in the leadership. It had a significant proportion of westernized middle class professionals, including many women activists. Not as critical of the regime as the FFS, it also called for restoration of French language in the schools and rejected the use of Arabic in its own internal meetings. Among some others, the RCD appealed to the regime to cancel the second round of legislative elections in January 1992 to prevent the FIS from coming to power. The party eventually became a part of President Bouteflika’s first government, only to withdraw at the time of a new Kabyle uprising in 2001.
- 62 The Trotskyist PT was also one of the signatories of the Rome pact of January 1995. The party was formed in 1990. Louisa Hanoune (1954–), a militant feminist leftist and one of its co-founders, has continuously served as its spokesperson to the present. She was imprisoned for six months in 1986 and ran for president in 2004 and 2009.
- 63 Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi (1932–) was the son of Sheikh Mohamed Bachir Ibrahimi, a prominent Muslim theologian who headed the Association of Algerian Ulema, founded by Ben Badis, from 1940 to 1951. He was jailed for nearly five years by the French for membership in the FLN and later for seven months by BenBella. He then served as Bou-médiénne’s Minister of Education from 1965 to 1970 and Minister of Information and Culture from 1970 to 1977. He was then Minister Counselor to the President from 1977 to 1982. Taleb Ibrahimi was widely seen as a potentially successful presidential candidate able to gain ex-FIS support in 1999 and 2004.
- 64 The most notable was a bomb in the Saint-Michel Paris metro station on July 25, 1995, which killed 10 and wounded 57, leaving many of the city’s population in panic. Two weeks before, Abdelbaki Sahraoui (1910–1995), one of the FIS co-founders and a Paris *imam* serving as an intermediary between the French government and political Islamists, had criticized GIA gangsterism and spoken against spreading violence to France. Sahraoui was assassinated outside his mosque.
- 65 As president of the FIS external committee, Rabah Kébir signed the Rome pact of January 1995. He returned from a fourteen-year exile in 2006 and spoke in conciliatory terms about Algeria’s regime.
- 66 The planned meeting, in fact, did not occur. Conservative Jacques Chirac (1932–) was a French prime minister from 1986 to 1988 and president from 1995 to 2007.
- 67 A multi-colored “terrorism” alert system like that adopted by the Bush administration after 9/11.
- 68 Khaled Kelkal, a twenty-four-year old French-educated Algerian raised in poverty in France supposedly left fingerprints on a bomb on the high-speed railway line near Lyon and had a backpack with the murder weapon used against Sahraoui. In an interview three years earlier, he spoke of the large obstacles of discrimination confronting young Arabs in French society. Apparently converted to Islamism while in jail, he returned to Algeria for GIA training, then came back to France to carry out attacks. But there were many contradictions in the official accounts and, two years later, a former Algerian DRS agent claimed that that agency itself had manipulated the GIA bombings in France in order to mobilize French public opinion against both the Rome pact and radical Islamists generally.

- 69 K. Thaguesht, "Les lassitudes du peuple algérien piégé!" *Courant Alternatif*, no. 54 (October-December 1995).
- 70 Sadek Hadgeres (1928–) became a PPA militant in 1944 but was purged during the PPA "Berber crisis" in 1949. He joined the Algerian Communist party in 1951 and its political bureau in 1955, soon becoming co-leader of its underground armed wing. He and Bachir Hadj Ali then negotiated the entry of PCA militants into the ALN and he remained within the ALN guerrilla forces until independence. He became the underground leader of the PCA after it was banned in November 1962 and was a founding member of PAGS, the replacement for the PCA in 1966. PAGS militants were allowed a certain discreet activist role later during the Boumédiénne regime, only to be forced further underground by the policies of Chadli, his successor. With the 1992 coup, Hadgeres refused to endorse the new regime, PAGS discontinued and Hadgeres left for France. Ettahadi/MDS (Social and Democratic Movement) and PADS (Algerian Party for Democracy and Socialism) succeeded PAGS, though Hadgeres has no official role. (*Le Soir d'Algérie*, 6/2/07.) Bachir Hadj Ali (1920–1991) joined the PCA after demobilization in 1945 and soon became one of its top leaders. He remained underground throughout the entire Algerian war. He co-founded the ORP with Harbi and Zahouane after Boumédiénne's coup, then was captured in September 1965 and tortured. His smuggled account of his experience was published the next year as *L'arbitraire* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1966). He was released from prison in 1968 and from house arrest in 1974.
- 71 Bachaga Boualem (1906–1982) was a traditionalist leader in rural northwestern Algeria who formed his own pro-French *harki* military force against the FLN and eventually sided as well with the OAS. Bitter at French neglect of *harkis* after the war, he eventually stated that he had made the wrong choice.
- 72 Jean-Louis Hurst ("Maurienne"), "Point de vue: le PCF dans la guerre d'Algérie," *Courant Alternatif*, no. 72 (October 1997).
- 73 From a working-class background, Cheb Hasni (1968–1994) became a popular Algerian Rai singer domestically and abroad, despite the disfavor of Islamists. His fame and especially sexual lyrics caused death threats from the latter and, finally, his assassination in his hometown of Oran.
- 74 "L'espoir et la pratique d'une jeunesse enragée," *Courant Alternatif*, no. 77 (March 1998). The RAJ is still active in Algeria in 2011.
- 75 The song lyrics of Matoub Lounès (1956–1998) were uniquely and courageously very direct and confrontational toward the Algerian regime and those who opposed secularism, democracy, human rights and Berber culture. He was a defiant anti-authoritarian and free spirit. Apparently, many were initiated into radical politics from his songs and poetry, a phenomenon similar to that in the US in the 1960s. Subsequent anniversaries of his murder have been the occasion of major demonstrations in Kabylia.
- 76 The measure, passed originally in 1991 as part of the Islamizing policies of the Chadli regime and suspended the next year after he was removed, would make Arabic the sole official language in all deliberations, reports and communications, thereby "restoring sovereignty" by eliminating the language of the colonizer but also excluding the Berber tongue. It would apply to the entire public administration, schools (including universities), hospitals and other parts of the state economic and social sectors, with heavy penalties for violations.
- 77 G.Y.L., "Algérie: un chanteur assassiné," *Courant Alternatif*, no. 81 (Summer 1998). This "G.Y.L." writer is the same "G. Lamari" who for several years wrote articles on Algeria for *Courant Alternatif* cited below and in Part V of this book and "Gérard Lamari" (1958–) of Toulouse who was part of the first class at the University of Tizi-Ouzou and one of the student leaders wresting control of the campus from national authorities in March 1980. The latter was thus one of the 24 subsequently imprisoned by the

government. He was also a co-founder of the "Spring 1981" group and thus again imprisoned. He later co-founded the Berber Cultural Movement (MCB) and taught math at the same university. He left for France in 1990. After the assassination of Matoub, government authorities destroyed crucial evidence, eliminated some involved in the shooting and failed to carry out a serious investigation, despite a publicly stated promise to do so by new president Bouteflika in September 1999.

- 78 Saïd Boulifa (ca1861–1931) was educated in the first French school in Kabylia in the 1870s, then went on ultimately to teach at the University of Algiers.
- 79 Amar Imache (1895–1960) was a militant ENA leader, imprisoned with Messali in the 1930s. He ultimately left the PPA for UDMA in 1947, in part over the growing identity dispute and the tendency for his wing to be more secularist and independence-minded than Messali's.
- 80 Ali Zamoum suggests that the regime was at least partially motivated to speak publicly in classical Arabic in order to *prevent* most Algerians from understanding its actions and falsely to suggest the cultural sophistication of its high officials (Zamoum, *Le pays des hommes libres: Tamurt imazighen: mémoires d'un combattant algérien, 1940–1962* [Grenoble: Éditions La Pensée Sauvage, 1998], 287–288).
- 81 Famous Kabyle writer Kateb Yacine (1929–1989) wrote novels, poetry and plays in French and the Algerian Arabic dialect, with some work translated to Kabyle Berber. As a student, he participated in the May 1945 demonstrations and was jailed for several months, the beginning of his engagement in the nationalist movement. He also was a journalist for *Alger Républicain* before and after the Algerian war. According to the writer, he was the only intellectual to engage himself alongside students during the Berber Spring confrontations in Tizi-Ouzou in 1980.
- 82 Mohand Arab Bessaoud (1924–2002) was a PPA militant, then an officer in the ALN during the war. He participated in the FFS maquis from 1963 to 1965. Supported by young Kabyle intellectuals and artists, the Academy existed as a cultural association from 1967 to the late 1970s and was the first organization to demand recognition of Berber (Tamazight) as an official national language. Beyond its opposition to Arabization and assertions of Berber (Amazigh) superiority, it worked on establishing a standard written Berber alphabet to help revive the traditional culture. Its publications were outlawed in Algeria.
- 83 The High Commission was supposedly created in 1995 to promote the Berber language. But the regime agreed to no specifics as to how this would be done and the 1996 constitutional revision renewed the exclusion of the Berber language.
- 84 G. Lamari, "Algérie: tous Arabes?" *Courant Alternatif*, no. 84 (December 1998).
- 85 CIMADE, "Campagne pour l'accueil et la protection des Algériens," *Courant Alternatif*, no. 84 (December 1998).
- 86 "Lecture philosophique de l'anarchisme : entretien avec Daniel Colson," *IRL*, no. 90 (Summer 2002). This specific issue of *IRL* was the first since 1991 and was not followed by others. Daniel Colson is the author of *Petit lexique philosophique de l'anarchisme: de Proudhon à Deleuze* (Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 2001), *Trois essais de philosophie anarchiste: Islam, Histoire et Monadologie* (Paris: Éditions Léo Scheer, 2004), and a historical work on the emerging anarchist workers' movement in Saint Etienne, France from 1865 to 1914. He was also a co-founder of *IRL*, originally *Informations Rassemblées à Lyon*.
- 87 "Les libertaires entre Saône et Rhône" and D.C., "Organisation libertaire à la lyonnaise," *IRL*, no. 61 (May–June 1985).
- 88 Pucciarelli, "L'anarchisme," 407–408.
- 89 The attack is described in *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1073 (February 27–March 4, 1997) and both the attack and demonstration are discussed in a Lyon anti-authoritarian web site, <rebellion.info>.

- 90 *IRL* nos. 51–54 (1984–1985) were assembled together as an overall forty-four-page brochure, a special supplement to no. 55, entitled *Tiers monde et anarchisme*. Subsequent endnotes from these issues will refer to specific articles in various of the four issues.
- 91 Grand-Père Max, “Anarchisme et tiers monde à travers l’histoire,” *IRL*, no. 51.
- 92 Abdel, Luc and Vanina, “Nationalisme du tiers monde et anarchisme,” *IRL*, no. 51.
- 93 Presumably, they referred here to the “Address to Revolutionaries of Algeria and of All Countries” distributed secretly in Algeria in July 1965, shortly after Boumédiène’s coup. The statement was reprinted in *Internationale Situationniste*, no. 10 (March 1966). An English translation is available on-line at: <<http://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/algeria.html>> (4/18/11).
- 94 “Débat sur le tiers monde,” *IRL*, no. 52.
- 95 The strongly anti-Communist union that broke off from the Communist-dominated CGT in 1947.
- 96 Radio-Libertaire, “Les immigrés et les élections,” *IRL*, no. 52.
- 97 Azad, “Quel anarchisme pour le tiers monde?” *IRL*, no. 53.
- 98 Groupe Benevento, Angers, “Arêtes,” *IRL*, no. 54.
- 99 Abdoul le bougnoule, “La place du projet interculturel dans la société future ou comment décoloniser la pensée libertaire,” *IRL*, no. 61 (May–June 1985).
- 100 Coordination libertaire contre les impérialismes, “Solidarité avec le peuple Kanak en lutte,” *IRL*, no. 61 (May–June 1985).
- 101 Coordination libertaire étudiante, “Kanaky: quelle solidarité?” *IRL*, no. 61 (May–June 1985).
- 102 Mohamed Chérif Messaâdia (1924–2002) was an important military leader in eastern Algeria (Wilaya I) and the southern Sahara during the war, then, during the Boumédiène regime, a high official of the FLN. After Chadli maneuvered Messaâdia into the FLN top leadership position in 1980, Messaâdia purged UGTA and the youth organization of their leftist activists and became the symbol of single-party orthodoxy. The FLN party boss was dismissed by Chadli as an expendable scapegoat immediately after the October 1988 riots.
- 103 Kasdi Merbah (1938–1993) headed the Algerian military security force in the 1970s and early 1980s. He provided a crucial power base for Chadli’s rise to the presidency after Boumédiène’s death. He served as prime minister for slightly less than a year in November 1988. He was assassinated by car ambush in August 1993, most likely by a secret military unit determined to maintain power for the “eradicator” faction of the military. Apparently, from his past position, Merbah had accumulated much detailed knowledge about corruption in high ranks of the military and had provided much of this to President Boudiaf before the latter was assassinated the year before, most probably because of his determined anti-corruption drive. At the time of his death, Merbah was the leader of a secret group of officers attempting to open dialogue with the FIS and other parties and to eliminate military corruption. Merbah’s group became the nucleus of the later MAOL (Algerian Movement of Free Officers) that emerged publicly in 1997 and since then has supplied major revelations about military corruption and manipulation and encouragement of violence in the 1990s to enhance the power and economic gain of certain officers. (The MAOL web site contains very detailed accounts, among various subjects, of military manipulation of the GIA).
- 104 Un Abdoul très Bougnoul, mais pas Moujahid pour un sou!, “L’Algérie ou la mort des nôtres,” *IRL*, no. 80 (January–February 1989).
- 105 “Le silence du mouvement libertaire face à l’islamisme militant,” reprinted in *Contre Infos* (Paris), no. 4 (December 24, 1995) (available on-line at: <<http://www.spunk.org/texts/pubs/ci-fr/sp001596.txt>> (1/13/2010).

- 106 Jean-Paul Gavard-Perret, "L'Oiseau-tempête: plaidoyer pour une vie fuyante," an on-line review at: <http://www.plumart.com/vf8105/html/body_3181_l_oiseau-tempete.html> (4/13/09).
- 107 Chaba Zahouania (Halima Mazzi) (1959–) began her career in Oran as a highly successful Rai singer in the 1980s. After the assassination of her friend and collaborator, Rai singer Cheb Hasni in 1994 only a few days after the kidnapping of Kabyle singer Matoub Lounès, she left for French exile. The assassins of Cheb Hasni, presumably Islamist or military, remain apparently unknown. With his explicitly sexual lyrics, charisma and prolific recordings, Cheb Hasni was and remains idolized by the younger generation which regards Rai as a music of resistance. The quoted lyrics here are from the still quite popular song, *El Baraka* ("The Shack"), which the two recorded in 1986, causing a huge scandal at the time.
- 108 Chafia, "Algérie . . . mots d'amour . . .," *L'Oiseau-tempête*, no. 4 (Winter 1998).
- 109 There is no literal basis for this label for Messali Hadj however much Joyeux may have seen his political perspectives and friendships with Trotskyists as demonstrating that orientation. In another article on July 12th (see below), Joyeux referred to Messali as "strongly influenced by Trotsky."
- 110 Maurice Joyeux, "Le conseil national de la révolution algérienne s'est enfin décidé à libérer Boumédienne," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 295 (January 4, 1979).
- 111 Maurice Joyeux, "L'Islam, l'industrialisation et le socialisme," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 296 (January 11, 1979). While a clearly stated outline of an anarchist alternative to socialist and capitalist models of economic development, Joyeux's presentation still demonstrates a strong industrialization bias quite disputed among many anarchists and others today.
- 112 Joyeux's particular references to Strasbourg and Nanterre no doubt implied specific critiques as well of situationists and the March 22nd Movement.
- 113 Maurice Joyeux, "Ben Bella est libéré mais le peuple algérien reste dans les fers!" *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 322 (July 12, 1979).
- 114 "Kabylie: attention, un État peut en cacher un autre!" *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 355 (April 23, 1980). Mammeri was to speak at the university on March 18, 1980 on the use of the Berber language. After military service in World War II, Mammeri (1917–1989) began teaching Berber at the University of Algiers in 1965. In 1982, he established a center for Amazigh (Berber) language studies in Paris that produced important research on language and literature. He died in a car accident in 1989.
- 115 Jacques Perdereau, "Violents mouvements sur la Kabylie," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 357 (May 8, 1980). These events of "the Berber Spring," as they became known thereafter, were the first large-scale defiant protests against the new Chadli regime. While still consolidating his power, Chadli initially made concessions, establishing a chair of Kabyle studies at Tizi-Ouzou and a chair of Berber studies at the Algiers campus, and also promising to review government cultural policies. But a new Cultural Charter in mid-year made no mention of the Berber dimension of Algerian identity and the two university programs were forced to teach only in Arabic.
- 116 "Travailleurs sans papiers: lutte pour la dignité!" *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 419 (November 19, 1981).
- 117 Phillipe (Groupe Kropotkine), "La lutte des travailleurs 'sans-papiers,'" *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 419 (November 19, 1981).
- 118 Groupe Libertad, "Stand the Ghetto!" *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 483 (April 14, 1983).
- 119 The "Front National" gained control of the municipal council and elected the deputy mayor.
- 120 Carolina, "Immigration: quelques points de repère," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 498 (September 29, 1983).

- 121 Jean-Marc Raynaud, "Bilan et perspectives," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 441 (April 22, 1982).
- 122 "Pour en savoir plus," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 441 (April 22, 1982). *Les mémoires de Messali Hadj* (Paris: Éditions J.-C. Lattès, 1982); Mohammed Harbi, *Le FLN: mirage et réalité* (Paris: Éditions Jeune Afrique, 1980); and *Autrement*, no. 38.
- 123 A 1977 influential first feature film by Algerian Merzak Allouache (1944–) that examines, with humor, the *machismo* poses and frustrations of young urban Algerian males.
- 124 Hervé-Claude Lapidaire, "La vie quotidienne en Algérie," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 442 (April 29, 1982).
- 125 It actually reached only slightly above 31 million by that year.
- 126 Jean-Claude (Groupe Kropotkine), "Algérie: une démographie galopante," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 551 (November 29, 1984).
- 127 Hocine Aït-Ahmed, *Mémoires d'un combattant: l'esprit d'indépendance, 1942–1952* (Paris: Éditions Sylvie Messinger, 1983).
- 128 M.C.L., "Note de lecture," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 519 (February 23, 1984).
- 129 Mohammed Harbi, *1954: la guerre commence en Algérie* (Brussels: Éditions Complexe, 1994).
- 130 Jean-Marc Raynaud, "'1954: La guerre commence en Algérie' de Mohamed Harbi," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 558 (January 17, 1985).
- 131 Far rightist Jean-Marie Le Pen (1928–) founded the National Front party in 1972 and ran for president five times. In 2002, he gained more votes than the Socialist candidate and lost the runoff to Chirac.
- 132 Marcel Bigeard (1916–2010) was a fast-rising counter-insurgency officer in the French army especially notorious for his command of paratroopers using extensive torture and assassination of prisoners during the battle of Algiers and elsewhere during the war.
- 133 "Les mains sales" and "Editorial," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 563 (February 21, 1985).
- 134 Jean-Claude (Groupe Kropotkine), "Algérie 1979 a droite toute!" *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 568 (March 28, 1985).
- 135 Jean-Claude (Groupe Kropotkine), "Algérie: l'heure du bilan," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 569 (April 4, 1985).
- 136 Ferhat Mehenni (1951–) has been a well-known Kabyle protest singer for decades and a leader in the movement for Berber cultural recognition and autonomy. Following the Berber "Black Spring" of 2001, Mehenni formed and led the MAK, the Movement for the Autonomy of Kabylia, and has suffered repression in retaliation for his political stances over the years. At the same time, he was apparently quite supportive of American policy in the Middle East after 9/11.
- 137 Denis (Groupe de Conflans), "Algérie: droits de l'homme derrière les barreaux," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 587 (October 3, 1985).
- 138 The use of rock concerts to create a context for strong anti-racist messages among youth had already developed in England with the critiques of "Rock Against Racism" in 1976. The practice spread to the United States as well within several years.
- 139 Jean-Pierre, Virginie and Daniel (Groupe de Rouen), "Abrégé de l'immigration depuis 1981," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 609 (March 6, 1986). See discussion of a distinct anarchist response (SCALP) to this need in the last section of Part IV below.
- 140 Pepe Carvalho, "Quoi de neuf dans l'antiracisme?," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 623 (June 12, 1986).
- 141 Willy Pelletier, "Algérie: contre l'Etat et l'islam," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 639 (November 27, 1986).
- 142 Willy Pelletier, "Algérie: l'essoufflement d'un développement," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 640 (December 4, 1986).

- 143 At this time, the exchange rate was about 6 French francs to 1 US dollar.
- 144 In April 1985, the regime placed 135 radical Islamists on trial, accusing them of belonging to an underground organization, the Armed Islamic Movement, led by Mustapha Bouyali.
- 145 Brahim (Iason Sarcelles), "A propos des émeutes de Constantine," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 652 (February 26, 1987).
- 146 "Editorial," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 621 (October 13, 1988).
- 147 Imbra, "Algérie: une révolte apparemment soudaine . . .," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 722 (October 22, 1988).
- 148 A 2006 issue of *Anarchist Studies* (vol. 14, no. 1) is another good English-language resource on this subject. In that issue, French anarchist Ronald Creagh was the only one to defend *Le Monde Libertaire* arguments in favor of a legal ban on headscarves in the schools (Creagh, "The Trial of *Le Monde Libertaire*," 62–76).
- 149 Mahnaz Matine, "Affaire du voile à l'école: le voile islamique, la loi coranique," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 767 (November 9, 1989). The article mentioned that when fighting against the Shah's regime, thousands of Iranian women had voluntarily taken up the veil "to symbolize the alliance of all anti-imperialist forces." But they did not foresee the consequences of thus encouraging radical Muslims who eventually imposed anti-women laws once in power.
- 150 "Editorial," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 767 (November 9, 1989). Adjacent to this editorial was an article attacking "the return of the clerics" more generally, as with the vicious condemnations of a recent book and movie as "blasphemous." It is important, said the article, for us to affirm the right to blasphemy as simply one dimension of free thought and expression. Freedom of religion is simply a sub-set of the latter and freedom of atheism and agnosticism and religious indifference must be equally protected. In any case, despite their demands for religious tolerance, the major religions in France also fight each other and those who position themselves as ardent defenders of secular schools are acting from racist, and specifically anti-Muslim, orientations.
- 151 Marc Prévôtel, "Les femmes musulmanes, otages des intégristes," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 767 (November 9, 1989).
- 152 Arnaud Muysen, "Voile sur la liberté," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 767 (November 9, 1989).
- 153 Marie-Claude Calmu, "Lettre du 23 octobre 1989," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 767 (November 9, 1989).
- 154 Alain Dervin, "Algérie: pouvoir en vue pour l'islam," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 790 (June 21–27, 1990).
- 155 Nordine, "Algérie: la peste ou le choléra," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 833 (June 20–26, 1991).
- 156 Maurienne, *Le déserteur* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1960; 2nd ed., Levallois-Perret: Many, 1991; 3rd ed., Paris: L'Échappée, 2005—an anarchist publisher). When first published, the book was immediately banned in France for encouraging military desertion but was influential in underground circulation nevertheless. Hurst was also interviewed in *Courant Alternatif* (see above, pages 222–224).
- 157 Interview by Sylvain Eischenfeld, "Regard sur un engagement pro-algérien: Maurienne, le déserteur du Djebel," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 842 (October 24–30, 1991).
- 158 Heidi Seray, "Élections algériennes: l'islam sort des urnes," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 853 (January 9–15, 1992).
- 159 Vincent, "Algérie: la peste et le choléra," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 854 (January 16–22, 1992).
- 160 (Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 1991).

- 161 Sylvain Eischenfeld, "Benjamin Stora se penche sur les années algériennes: 'La Gangrène et l'oubli,'" *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 855 (January 23–29, 1992).
- 162 Coq's, "Suivant l'exemple algérien: démocratie ou liberté?" *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 856 (January 30–February 5, 1992).
- 163 Roland Lane, "Point de salut pour la liberté entre le FIS et l'armée," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 859 (February 20–26, 1992).
- 164 During the Algerian war, Ali Haroun (1927–) was active in the FLN Fédération de France and was a member of the CNRA in 1960. After serving as a deputy in the National Assembly until 1964, he retired from public life. In addition to several of his own books, Haroun wrote the preface for the 1999 memoirs of Khaled Nezzar.
- 165 Heidi Seray, "Algérie: un pays dans la tourmente," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 862 (March 12–18, 1992).
- 166 Bernard (Groupe de Lyon), "De la lutte contre le FIS comme justification à l'exploitation," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 936 (December 9–15, 1993).
- 167 Bernard (Groupe Déjacque, Lyon), "Algérie: mêmes patrons, même combat," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 950 (March 24–30, 1994).
- 168 Tahar Djaout (1954–1993) was a prolific writer of essays, poems, and fiction, and a strong critic of the radical Islamist movement, before he was fatally attacked by GIA assassins in May 1993. His final novel (unpublished at the time of his death), *The Last Summer of Reason* (St. Paul: Ruminator Books, 2001; orig. Fr. Edition, 1999) prophetically, though in veiled terms, describes a likely totalitarian culmination of radical Islamist control in Algeria.
- 169 Abdelkader Alloula (1929–1994) was a well-known Algerian actor, director and playwright, in the popular Arabic dialect, for three decades before his assassination by splinter Islamists.
- 170 Ahmed Asselah, age fifty-four, was the director of the Algiers School of Fine Arts when he was assassinated, along with his son, by radical Islamists in March 1994.
- 171 As indicated earlier, the Arabization policy actually began under Boumédiène when Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi gained major power while heading successively the ministries of education and information and culture and becoming a close advisor of the president.
- 172 A veteran of the Algerian war, Rachid Boudjedra (1941–) is a prolific writer of essays, poetry, novels, plays and screenplays. After a Sorbonne degree, he left Algeria again after the 1965 coup. His 1969 novel, *La Répudiation* (Paris: Denoel), resulted in a *fatwa* calling for his death because of his critique of Muslim traditionalism. He eventually returned again to Algeria in the mid-70s where he eventually pursued his writing and teaching. His 1992 publication, *La FIS de la haine* (Paris: Denoel), was enlarged with a lengthy postface in 1994. Boudjedra's book strongly denounced political Islamism and its mounting influence through the political opportunism of each Algerian regime since independence.
- 173 Georges Rivière, "Algérie: intégristes: no pasaran!" *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 962 (June 16–22, 1994).
- 174 François Bayrou (1951–) was education minister in conservative governments from 1993 to 1997. As the head of the centrist UDF (Union pour Démocratie Française) party, he ran for French president in 2002 and 2007 and subsequently changed the party name to MoDem (Mouvement Démocratique).
- 175 Venezuelan Illich Ramírez Sanchez ("Carlos") (1949–) gained notoriety in the 1970s for a series of violent bombings and murders and his leadership in the hostage-taking of OPEC leaders in Vienna in 1975, all in the name of the PFLP (Party for the Liberation of Palestine). After expulsion from the latter, he formed his own organization and continued similar activities while moving periodically to various host countries. While in Sudan, in 1994, he was drugged and handed over to French agents and later convicted and imprisoned to the present.

- 176 Patrick Essertel, "Racisme et foulard islamique," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 970 (October 13–19, 1994).
- 177 Patrick Essertel and Jean-Pierre Thuinet, "Le foulard islamique" (pt. 1), *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 975 (November 17–23, 1994).
- 178 Jules Ferry (1832–1893), a leading moderate republican, was French minister of education, prime minister and minister of foreign affairs in the 1880s.
- 179 Patrick Essertel and Jean-Pierre Thuinet, "Le foulard islamique" (pt. 2), *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 976 (November 24–30, 1994).
- 180 Groupe Henry-Poulaille (Saint-Denis), "FIS de la haine," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 977 (December 1–7, 1994).
- 181 André Devriendt, "Le voile: oui, mais..." *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 979 (December 15–21, 1994).
- 182 Gilbert (Sucy-en-Brie), "Racisme et foulard islamique," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 979 (December 15–21, 1994).
- 183 Daniel (Nîmes), "La question du 'foulard islamique' ou comment le système dominant est en quête de boucs émissaires," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 980 (December 22, 1994–January 4, 1995).
- 184 Mustapha Ben Boulaïd (1917–1956) was an important militant of the postwar PPA-MTLD and OS and the initial military leader of the Aurès region (Wilaya I) before his arrest and death sentence in early 1955. He escaped prison in November 1955 and was killed in the field.
- 185 Journalist Yves Courrière (Gérard Bon) was a prolific French writer on the Algerian war with four books on the subject between 1968 and 1971. As mentioned above, his works were important sources for Guérin's CG account of the war in 1973. Ferhat Abbas, former president of the wartime GPRA (1958–1961) and of the National Assembly in independent Algeria (1962–1963), wrote several books after retirement, including *Autopsie d'une guerre*, *L'aurore* (Paris: Garnier, 1980) and *L'indépendance confisquée* (Paris: Flammarion, 1984).
- 186 See endnotes 4 and 45 for Part II above.
- 187 Ahmed Rouadjia, *Grandeur et décadence de l'Etat algérien* (Paris: Karthala, 1994).
- 188 Kader Oussel, "La guerre civile permanente en Algérie," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 977 (December 1–7, 1994).
- 189 K.O., "Algérie: la section 'Sport et Musique,'" *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 977 (December 1–7, 1994).
- 190 "Femmes Libres," "Les femmes dans la tourmente," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 978 (December 8–14, 1994).
- 191 Yann-Karim, "Pour une Algérie sans tyrans," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 978 (December 8–14, 1994).
- 192 Hugues Lenoir, "Kabylie libertaire: une société en mutation," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 980 (December 22, 1994–January 4, 1995).
- 193 Edi Nobras, "Algérie: l'histoire d'une révolution confisquée" (pt. I), *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 981 (January 5–11, 1995).
- 194 Edi Nobras, "Algérie: l'histoire d'une révolution confisquée" (pt. II), *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 982 (January 12–18, 1995).
- 195 Presumably, the singer quoted by the writer here is Zedek Mouloud (1960–), a popular Kabyle singer who made his first recording in 1983.
- 196 Edi Nobras, "Algérie: l'histoire d'une révolution confisquée" (pt. III), *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 983 (January 19–25, 1995).
- 197 The Mouvement Islamique Armé (MIA), founded in 1991 as the armed wing of the FIS, took the same name as the early 1980s guerrilla force led by Mustapha Bouyali discussed

- above. The name of this second MIA was changed to the Armée Islamique du Salut (AIS) in early 1994.
- 198 This was a march by the RCD (Rally for Culture and Democracy), the Berber party led by Saïd Sadi and the new MPR (Mouvement pour la République) to demand the genuine facts about President Boudiaf's assassination exactly two years earlier. Two bombs were set off along the parade route, causing two deaths and sixty-four wounded.
 - 199 Interview by Michele Rollin, "Le Démon au féminin, ou l'Algérie racontée par Hafsa Zinaï Koudil," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 987 (February 16–22, 1995).
 - 200 Ouassila Sisaber, "Ouarda, la sacrifiée," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 991 (March 16–22, 1995).
 - 201 Bernard (groupe Déjacque, Lyon), "Les militaires algériens demeurent les favoris de l'Elysée," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1014 (October 26–November 1, 1995).
 - 202 Algerian filmmaker Djamilia Sahraoui (1950–) for two decades from 1980 made a series of short films and documentaries, including the film reviewed here. Her first feature film, *Barakat! (Enough!)*, was produced in 2006.
 - 203 Christiane Passevant, "Ciné selection: 'La moitié du ciel d'Allah' ou la lutte des femmes en Algérie," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1037 (April 23–30, 1996).
 - 204 Presumably the writer refers to either October 1988 or June 1991. Though there is evidence of consequential government manipulation in both cases, the former, "Black October," is the likely intent here since a decisive FLN congress was scheduled for the Fall of 1988 where a political showdown was expected between Chadli and the "reformist" faction on the one hand and the more old guard anti-liberalization elements on the other.
 - 205 Yakourène, "La normalisation en Algérie," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1047 (June 13–19, 1996).
 - 206 Centre gai et lesbien, "Algérie: un militant homosexuel arrêté," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1051 (September 19–25, 1996).
 - 207 Claude, "Être Algérien en France," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1086 (May 29–June 4, 1997).
 - 208 Interview of "A.L." by Patrick, "Algérie: l'inférieure spirale de la terreur," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1091 (September 11–17, 1997).
 - 209 Journalist Sid Ahmed Semiane in 2005 said that in 1997 he witnessed some journalists referring to GIA communiqués in their articles even when they knew they were falsely prepared. Worse yet, certain journalists even helped to write these false GIA messages (Sid Ahmed Semiane, *Au refuge des balles perdues: chroniques des deux Algérie* [Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2005], p. 16).
 - 210 M'Hamed Boukhobza (1941–1993) participated in the struggle for independence and was captured and tortured before the end of the war. He became a well-respected Algerian pioneer in empirical and ethnographic sociological research and wrote three books, including *October 1988: évolution et rupture* (Algiers: Éditions Bouchène, 1991).
 - 211 Djamel Zitouni (1964–1996) was the alleged supreme emir of the GIA for the two years preceding his death. As such, he supposedly promoted a campaign against France as well, with a spectacular GIA plane hijacking, the assassination of a more moderate FIS leader in Paris, a fatal bombing of a Paris metro station and several other violent attacks culminating in the 1996 kidnapping and apparent murders of seven French Trappist monks in Tibhirine, Algeria. More recent information and analysis suggest that Zitouni was blackmailed and manipulated into becoming a GIA militant and eventual leader by the Algerian military security force, thereby conforming to this writer's general line of speculation. As well, there is some evidence to suggest that the Algerian military itself was directly responsible for the deaths of the seven monks. Antar Zouabri (1970–2002) was Zitouni's immediate successor as GIA leader until his violent death six years later. The same suspicions about military security force manipulation of the GIA apply to his leadership as well as that of his predecessor.

- 212 "Larbi Aït-Hanlouda," "L'opacité du drame algérien," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1098 (October 30–November 5, 1997).
- 213 Patrick (Groupe Durruti, Lyon), "Terreur et manipulation," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1098 (October 30–November 5, 1997).
- 214 Danielle (Groupe Kronstadt, Lyon), "Une lutte pour les droits des femmes en Algérie," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1113 (March 5–11, 1998).
- 215 Cxxxxx Lxxxxxxxxxx, "Lecture: 'Le coude grinçant de l'anarchie,' Hawad," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1132 (September 17–23, 1998).
- 216 "While some journalists have really suffered censorship, . . . a majority have contributed to fabricating lies [for many years] with zeal and self-sacrifice" (Semiane, *Au refuge*, 17).
- 217 Betchine was a retired patron of the military security force when appointed to his position by Zeroual.
- 218 Presumably, he implies here protection by the "eradicator" clan of the military headed by General Mohammed Lamari.
- 219 Patrick (Groupe Durruti, Lyon), "La lutte des clans," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1140 (November 12–18, 1998).
- 220 "P.," "Censure et raison d'État," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1140 (November 12–18, 1998).
- 221 (Paris: Les Editions du *Monde Libertaire*, 1998.)
- 222 Jean-Marc Raynaud, "Les fascistes veulent nous faire taire à propos de la guerre d'Algérie!" *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1144 (December 10–16, 1998). The same writer reviewed the book originally in issue no. 1134 (October 1–7, 1998).
- 223 Pucciarelli, "L'anarchisme," 405, 409.
- 224 This account of the original SCALP direct action differs from the account traditional to SCALP folklore but is vouched for by a CNT-AIT militant of Toulouse in "Contre le fascisme: quelle stratégie?" April 14, 2007 at the CNT-AIT web site: <http://cnt-ait.info/article.php3?id_article=1391> (2/2/2010).
- 225 A detailed discussion of the *RÉFLEXes* journal history, "Historique de la revue 1986–2002," is on-line at the journal web site (<<http://reflexes.samizdat.net/spip.php?article64>> [2/1/2010]). A detailed history of SCALP to 1992 is No Pasaran, *SCALP 1984–1992: comme un indien Métropolitain* (Paris: REFLEX, 2005).
- 226 Un réfractaire sans frontières parmi d'autres, "Vigipirate, Basta!" *Contre Infos*, no. 4 (December 24, 1995). This entire issue of *Contre Infos* is on line at: <<http://www.spunk.org/texts/pubs/ci-fr/sp001596.txt>> [1/13/2010].)
- 227 Un réfractaire sans frontières, "De 'Vigipirate' à 'Vigibanlieues,'" *Contre Infos*, no. 4 (December 24, 1995).
- 228 Un réfractaire sans frontières, "Météo des banlieus," *Contre Infos*, no. 4 (December 24, 1995).
- 229 Réfractaires sans frontières, "Insoumission à la deuxième guerre d'Algérie," *Contre Infos*, no. 4 (December 24, 1995). This article was also published in *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1017 (November 16–22, 1995).

PART V

Algerian Background: Kabyle Insurgency, Assemblies Movement, and the "Democratic" Facade

- 1 Military clan rivalries were based in part on the long-time hostility between those officers who had risen from Algerian maquis experience during the national liberation war (and gained military training in Egypt and other parts of the Arab world) and those who had

- trained and risen within the French military, only to desert to the Algerian side in the last stage of the war. The first group included Zeroual and the second, important leaders of the “eradicators.”
- 2 This traditional political culture seems well within the category that anthropologist James Scott recently labeled as *Zomia*-type societies: self-governing, state-evading and state-preventing peoples, typically residing in more inaccessible regions geographically. Indeed, he explicitly sees the situation of Berbers in Algeria and the Maghreb as apparently exemplifying this model (James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009], 3, 29–31, 123. Similarly, anthropologist Judith Scheele refers to historical observations of “anarchic” Kabyle political culture in past centuries which claimed that “there are neither chiefs, nor nations, nor governors. Everybody is master and free to his will” and “the driving force” of the Berber soul and philosophy “is the constant struggle to take off the straitjacket that any kind of power imposes on society.” It was reported as the place people flee toward to avoid the Algiers government or taxman (Judith Scheele, *Village Matters: Knowledge, Power and Community in Kabylia* [Woodbridge, Suffolk, England and Rochester, NY: James Currey and Boydell and Brewer, 2009], 10, 15).
 - 3 An excellent English-language pamphlet, including dramatic color photos, on the events and movement in Kabylia is *You Cannot Kill Us, We Are Already Dead: Algeria’s Ongoing Political Uprising* (Baltimore: Firestarter Press, 2004). It is available online at: <<http://zinelibrary.info/you-cannot-kill-us-we-are-already-dead>> (4/18/10).
 - 4 A rump *aarch* movement continues to hold meetings and issue statements to the present.
 - 5 Habib Souaïdia, *La sale guerre* (Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2001).
 - 6 Detailed trial statements were gathered in a sequel book, Habib Souaïdia, *Le procès de “La sale guerre”* (Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2002).
 - 7 Evans and Phillips, 254–255.
 - 8 Ibid., 288.
 - 9 Ironically, at the same time, the Pentagon encouraged staff to watch and discuss the *Battle of Algiers* film to learn how French paratroopers had defeated the FLN’s urban insurgency of the mid-1950s. From the evidence of American policy in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere in the years which followed, no doubt the Algerian military’s subsequent adoption of similar widespread torture and infiltration, like those practiced by the French, was also consumed with great interest. See my article, “The Pentagon’s Algeria” (2/22/06) at the ZNet web site.
 - 10 Cable from US embassy in Algiers, April 13, 2009 (released on Wikileaks web site, 1/22/11).
 - 11 Secret communiqué from US embassy in Algiers, December 6, 2009 (released on Wikileaks web site, 12/6/10).
 - 12 A n extensive 2007 article on the important “Algeria Watch” web site is definitive on this issue. (See François Gèze and Salima Mellah, “‘Al-Qaida au Maghreb’, ou la très étrange histoire du GSPC algérien,” September 22, 2007, at <http://www.algeria-watch.org/fr/aw/gspc_etrange_histoire.htm> [2/15/11].)
 - 13 See my web articles, “Algeria, Elections and Gaza” (January 19, 2009) and “Algeria: Soccer, Scandals and the President” (January 29, 2010) at the ZNet web site.

French Anarchism Background: Distinct Voices and Identities

- 14 Mimmo Pucciarelli, “Qui sont les anarchistes?” *Alternative Libertaire* (Belgium), no. 219 (Summer 1999). The original version of his report was presented at a 1996 colloquium on anarchist culture, the papers from which were published the following year in Pessin and Pucciarelli.

- 15 Mimmo Pucciarelli, "Comment s'organiser?" *Réfractations*, no. 7 (Autumn 2001).
- 16 Ronald Creagh, "L'anarchisme en mutation," 26, 29–30, 38.
- 17 See Colson's article below on pages 464–465.
- 18 As articulated, for example, in an article by the OCL's Jean-Pierre Duteuil further below.
- 19 Pereira, "L'esprit de 68" and Pierre Sommermeyer and André Bernard, "Désir de... révolution sociale," *Réfractations*, no. 20 (May 2008).

French Anarchist Positions

- 20 Actually, while the Zeroual government at the time was seeking its own reconciliation solution as opposed to the "eradicator" military faction, the real objection of the former was no doubt the fact that political parties separate from the regime had taken this initiative and thus represented a threat to the legitimacy of the military regime itself.
- 21 Gudule, "L'Algérie à l'heure de la réconciliation," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 80 (November 1999).
- 22 "Témoignage: 'la transition vers un régime démocratique reste bien théorique,'" *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 80 (November 1999).
- 23 "Interview de Mohammed Harbi: 'La concorde civile algérienne est en panne,'" *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 87 (June 2000).
- 24 "Quand les algérien(ne)s s'insurgent: contre la dictature," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 98 (July-August 2001).
- 25 Hassina Hamaili and Georges Rivière, "Solidarité totale avec la révolte de Kabylie: démocratie en Algérie," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 99 (September 2001).
- 26 Pierre Tévanian, "Idéologie: la 'France d'en-bas' n'est pas lepéniste...ni sarkozyste," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 117 (April 2003).
- 27 Jérôme (CAL Paris Est), "Immigration: pendant les grèves, les 'réformes' continuent," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 120 (July-August 2003).
- 28 Guillaume (AL Paris-Sud), Christine (AL 93), Charline (AL Paris-Est), "Forum social libertaire: une réussite qui fera date," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 125 (December 2003).
- 29 "Edito: contre la loi sur les signes religieux, je suis athée et je t'emmerde!" *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 125 (January 2004).
- 30 "Edito: culture de la peur," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 134 (November 2004).
- 31 Mohamed Benchicou, *Bouteflika: une imposture algérienne* (Algiers: Editions Le Matin, 2003).
- 32 Benchicou also published in 2007 a strong account of his experience with Algerian courts and prisons in *Les geôles d'Alger* (Paris: Riveneuve) and in 2009 a sequel on the same themes, *Journal d'un homme libre* (Paris: Riveneuve). *Le Matin* was founded in 1991 but is now limited to a web site alone.
- 33 Alain Mac Law, G.H. and A.A., "Algérie: un pays qui résiste," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 134 (November 2004).
- 34 René Jacques Defois, "Algérie, Toussaint 1954: Le déclenchement de l'insurrection," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 134 (November 2004).
- 35 Commission Congrès d'AL, "Préparation du 7e congrès de l'AL," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 131 (Summer 2004).
- 36 Mimmo Pucciarelli, "Qui sont les anarchistes?"
- 37 The lower membership figure is stated by Simon Luck in his 2008 doctoral dissertation, *Sociologie de l'engagement libertaire dans la France contemporaine: socialisations individuelles, expériences collectives, et cultures politiques alternatives* (Thèse pour le doctorat de science politique, Université Paris 1 - Panthéon-Sorbonne, 2008), 138. The

- higher number is from Irène Pereira in her 2009 doctoral dissertation, *Un nouvel esprit contestaire: la grammaire pragmatiste du syndicalisme d'action directe libertaire* (Thèse pour le doctorat de sociologie, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 2009), 22, 700. Both dissertations provide excellent and extensive sociological insight on the current French anarchist movement. Publication numbers are cited by Berry, "Change the World," 121.
- 38 "VIIe congrès d'Alternative Libertaire: lutter contre la dispersion," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 135 (December 2004).
 - 39 "Edito: l'ennemi intérieur," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 145 (November 2005).
 - 40 Antoine and Erci, "Violence sociale: qui sème la misère...." *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 146 (December 2005).
 - 41 Boxing Bertha and Flores, "Etude lexicale: quand Sarkozy parle Le Pen." *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 146 (December 2005).
 - 42 Pierre Laviec, "Offensive réactionnaire sur un passé colonial bien présent," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 147 (January 2006).
 - 43 Pierre Laviec, "Loi de février 2005: fausse victoire sur le front anticolonial," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 149 (March 2006).
 - 44 Michel Onfray (1959–) is a contemporary French philosopher who identifies himself as an individualist anarchist, a proponent of atheism, hedonism and post-anarchism. He advocates individual and small-group level micro-revolutions instead of large-scale social revolution.
 - 45 Phillipe de Villiers (1949–) is an ultra-nationalist French politician who ran for president in 2007 as the candidate of the MF (Movement for France) after an earlier attempt in 1995. He is a leading spokesman against the EU and what he calls the growing takeover of France by Islam.
 - 46 Les Éditions Alternative Libertaire, "Confus: Zanaz, 'L'impasse islamique,'" *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 188 (October 2009). The book reviewed is Hamid Zanaz, *L'impasse islamique* (Paris: Editions Libertaires, 2009). A short English-language critique of Islam by an ex-Muslim and published by anarchists is Al-Djouhall, *The Misery of Islam* (The Anarchist Library, 1989), posted on-line at: <libcom.org> (5/28/10).
 - 47 Franz B., "Peuple algérien, encore un effort...", *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 203 (February 2011).
 - 48 Mikael (AL Nantes), "Algérie: une révolution à construire," *Alternative Libertaire*, no. 204 (March 2011).
 - 49 Jean-Pierre Duteuil, "L'organisation communiste libertaire."
 - 50 Pucciarelli, "Qui sont les anarchistes?"
 - 51 The appeal for unity is available on line at: <http://oclibertaire.free.fr/ocl/debat_unite.html> (2/26/10).
 - 52 Jeff (Paris), "Mouvement libertaire et unité: la voie étroite d'une convergence nécessaire," *Courant Alternatif*, special issue no. 6 (3rd quarter 2001).
 - 53 Saoud (OCL-Toulouse), "Unité pour un mouvement libertaire: lecture critique," *Courant Alternatif*, special issue no. 6 (3rd quarter 2001).
 - 54 OCL, "Quelle unité des révolutionnaires?" *Courant Alternatif*, special issue no. 6 (3rd quarter 2001). This same article was also in issue no. 111 (Summer 2001).
 - 55 Denis, "Ni plateforme, ni synthèse," *Courant Alternatif*, special issue no. 6 (3rd quarter 2001).
 - 56 "L'OCL, quarante ans d'anarchisme révolutionnaire," *Courant Alternatif*, May 2008. One example of this collaboration was a jointly written issue of the OLS journal, *Offensive*, in 2007 devoted to describing and analyzing militant anarchist experience in France (no. 13 [2/1/2007]). (See above pages 456–458.)

- 57 "L'OCL, the way it works?" September 2007 (an on-line English-language translation of the original article in French on the OCL web site).
- 58 "Qui sommes-nous? L'OCL," *Offensive*, no. 13 (2/1/2007).
- 59 The Algerian court charged him with the disappearance of 60 million dinars while serving as foreign affairs minister between 1965 and 1978 (Benchicou, *Bouteflika*, 133, 150, 160–164).
- 60 G. Lamari, "Une élection plurielle avec un candidat unique," *Courant Alternatif*, no. 90 (June 1999).
- 61 The writer here mixed the names of GIA leaders Djamel Zitouni and Antar Zouabri. Hassan Hattab (1967–) was trained as a paratrooper in the Algerian military. After leaving the army in 1989, he joined the new GIA after the 1992 election cancelation, became the leader (*emir*) of the GIA Kabylia zone and formed the new GSPC in 1998—supposedly in rejecting GIA mass killings of civilians and reacting to suspected army infiltration and manipulation of the GIA. The GSPC, said the article, in 2001 controlled maquis in Kabylia and the east-central part of Algeria, while the GIA controlled the west. At some point later in the decade, Hattab either surrendered or was captured and allegedly appealed for the GSPC to give up its struggle. By 2010, he had never appeared in public or on trial and his fate is unclear despite several supposed press releases in his name. Since there seem significant grounds for assuming that the GSPC, like the GIA, had been infiltrated and manipulated by the DRS, the Algerian national security force, it could be highly embarrassing to put Hattab on trial (see "What Happened to Hassan Hattab and Amari Saïfi [alias Abderresak El Para]?" December 20, 2008, at the web site of Algeria Watch).
- 62 Said the writer, the Algerian monthly minimum income (SMIC) is about 4000 dinars. In 2001, the Algerian dinar was worth \$0.014 US.
- 63 G. Lamari, "Les résultats de la loi sur la 'concorde civile' tournent à la 'concorde militaire,'" *Courant Alternatif*, no. 97 March 2000).
- 64 An association of the families of victims kidnapped by the armed Islamist groups.
- 65 G. Lamari, "Où en est le mouvement social?" *Courant Alternatif*, no. 99 (May 2000).
- 66 Gérard Lamari, "Où va la Kabylie?" *Courant Alternatif*, no. 110 (June 2001).
- 67 Gérard Lorne, *Du rouge au noir* (Paris: Éditions du *Monde Libertaire*, 1998).
- 68 Paul Aussaresses (1918–) is a career French army intelligence officer best known for supervising the massive torture campaign, death squads and summary executions in the 1957 battle of Algiers. Appointed French military attaché in Washington in 1961, he instructed the American military on the torture and counter-insurgency methods used in Algeria, then did the same in the 1970s for the military regimes of Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina and Chile. At the turn of the century, in France, he caused a public scandal by openly defending and advocating for the use of torture in "emergency political situations" like the Algerian war, just as Vice President Dick Cheney would do for the American "war on terror."
- 69 Benoist Rey was a young draftee in a French army unit in Algeria in 1958. There he witnessed an unending series of murders, rapes, torture, and pillage by his fellow soldiers. Sickened by the experience, he published a book on what he had witnessed, *Les égorgeurs: la guerre d'Algérie, chronique d'un appelé, 1959–1960* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1961). The book was immediately seized and banned though was circulated underground.
- 70 Lorne here cited the influential book by Nesraulah Yous, *Qui a tué à Benthala?* (Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2000).
- 71 Gérard Lorne, "Les deux guerres d'Algérie," *Courant Alternatif*, no. 111 (Summer 2001).
- 72 G.Y.L., "Algérie: l'Europe au secours des généraux," *Courant Alternatif*, no. 116 (February 2002).

- 73 Rivière published an enthusiastic and detailed account in *Réfractions*, no. 8 (Spring 2002). To read his observations chronologically, therefore, that piece should be read first.
- 74 He refers here to the PT (Workers Party), led by Louisa Hanoune.
- 75 Belaid Abrika (1969–) is a university economics professor in Tizi-Ouzou and a delegate/spokesperson for the *aarch* movement. Earlier, he was an activist in the Berber Cultural Movement (MCB), autonomous student unions and other groups. Underground for much of 2002, he was then imprisoned for eight months. In 2004, he led a delegation of the assemblies movement in 2004 and 2005 to dialogue with the government, culminating in the latter's public acceptance of the 2001 El-Kseur program. However, by 2007 he estimated that only 20% of the demands had been met, notably *not* including recognition of Tamazight as an official language and *not* prosecuting those responsible for the massacres in the spring of 2001.
- 76 The movement's "code of honor" is posted on-line at the *mouvement des aarchs* web site: <<http://www.aarach.com>> (7/7/10).
- 77 Georges Rivière, "On n'en a pas fini avec la Kabylie," *Courant Alternatif*, no. 126 (February 2003).
- 78 A concept especially promoted by American anarchist Murray Bookchin.
- 79 Prefects are the central state's chief administrative representative in local *départements* or *regions*.
- 80 "Editorial," *Courant Alternatif*, special issue no. 9 (April 2003). To this point, the ability of the Algerian regime to use the proliferating, but controlled, "civil society" associational sector to replace the one-party system in maintaining Algerian state "legitimacy" domestically and abroad is the theme of Andrea Liverani, *Civil Society in Algeria: The Political Functions of Associational Life* (New York: Routledge, 2008).
- 81 Jean-Paul Duteuil, "Le citoyennisme comme rempart de l'ordre capitaliste," *Courant Alternatif*, special issue no. 9 (April 2003).
- 82 "Edito," *Courant Alternatif*, no. 154 (December 2005).
- 83 Sylvie, Tonio (Paris-Romainville), "Entendez-vous dans nos banlieues mugir ces féroces barbares!" *Courant Alternatif*, no. 155 (January 2006).
- 84 A leading MCB activist and founder, a short time later, of the new RCD party.
- 85 Mohamed Médiène ("Tewfik") (1939–) joined the ALN a few months before the end of the war, then received KGB training shortly afterwards. He was posted to the Oran region in military intelligence and there became closely associated with Chadli and Larbi Belkheir. As part of their clan, he rose to a top-level military intelligence role by 1986, then in 1990 was appointed to head the new military security force, the DRS. He was a leading "eradicator" in the 1990s struggle against the radical Islamist insurgency and was the figure ultimately responsible for DRS partial creation and manipulation of the deadly GIA. He has continued in his DRS role to the present and therefore is one of the several most powerful figures and, many think, the top boss, in the regime. He is strongly suspected of having organized the assassination of Boudiaf in 1992 and Kasdi Merbah one year later, as well as having personally profited from billions of dollars of misappropriated funds.
- 86 Jean Mouloud, "1988: la deuxième guerre d'Algérie," *Courant Alternatif*, no. 184 (November 2008).
- 87 OCL, "A propos des luttes de libération nationale," OCL web site (<<http://ocl.libertaire.free.fr/spip.php?article617>> [3/12/10]).
- 88 See page 345 above.
- 89 Jean-Paul Duteuil, "De Camus à Onfray, une permanence libérale en milieu libertaire," *Courant Alternatif*, no. 187 (February 2009).
- 90 "Algérie: sens et portée des émeutes..." OCL web site, posted January 11, 2011.

- 91 Pucciarelli, "Qui sont les anarchistes?" As of 2006, Ronald Creagh stated that the FA had about 200–300 activists and usually sells about 2500 copies of its weekly journal (including subscriptions) (Creagh, "The Trial of *Le Monde Libertaire*," 64, 74). For 2006–2007, Simon Luck estimates 250–300 members and about the same number of weekly journals sold (Luck, *Sociologie de l'engagement*, 138, 200).
- 92 \$17.22 US.
- 93 Michel Sahuc, "Algérie: une société en miettes," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1148 (February 21–28, 1999).
- 94 \$6.36 billion US.
- 95 Luis Martinez, *La guerre civile en Algérie* (Paris: Les Éditions Karthala, 1999). An English-language translation is *The Civil War in Algeria, 1992–1998* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2000).
- 96 Franck Gombaud, "Référendum sur la 'concorde nationale' le 16 septembre: l'impossible fin de guerre en Algérie," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1172 (September 16–22, 1999).
- 97 Romain (groupe Kronstadt [Lyon]), "En Algérie. l'état opprime et assassine," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1244 (May 10–16, 2001).
- 98 Joaquim Lopez, "Nature du terrorisme," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1254 (October 18–24, 2001).
- 99 Pascal (Groupe Louise-Michel), "Algérie, le printemps noir," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1275 (April 4–10, 2002).
- 100 Fred (Groupe Louise-Michel), "La Kabylie, l'autre pays du bonheur," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1285 (June 13–19, 2002).
- 101 Romain, "Réconciliation ou Françalgérie?" *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1310 (March 6–12, 2003).
- 102 Philippe Pelletier, "Les dessous du chiraco-pacifisme," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1314 (April 3–9, 2003). There is no question that the US offered some support to Algerian Islamists after the 1992 election cancelation, military coup and Islamist violent conflict with the regime. The issue is what kind, how much and when, if ever, it stopped. The US regime obviously has no inhibition about supporting radical Islamists when it perceives their utility in gaining US foreign policy objectives. Support for radical Sunni Islamists in Afghanistan, Iran and Lebanon is well documented and has continued, in some contexts, after 9/11.
- 103 Kabyle Ahmed Ouyahia (1952–) became Zeroual's prime minister after the latter's election in 1995, serving until 1998. At the same time, he co-founded the RND in 1997, a party designed to provide an alternative civilian party face for the regime to that of the old FLN. In Bouteflika's new government, he served as justice minister, 1999–2002. He was prime minister in 2003–2006 and again from 2008 to the present.
- 104 Errant solidaire, "Le printemps noir est aussi le temps des cerises," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1353 (April 1–7, 2004).
- 105 Ali Benflis (1944–), a former justice minister and close collaborator of Bouteflika, was named the latter's prime minister in August 2000. He was chosen as the revived FLN's general secretary in September 2001 and thus presided over its return as the majority National Assembly party in the May 2002 election. He was replaced as prime minister in May 2003 by Ahmed Ouyahia. With officially only 8% of the vote, Benflis publicly called the election a sham and left his FLN post.
- 106 Manuel Sanschaise, "Algérie: l'élection du président," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1356 (April 22–28, 2004).
- 107 The World Amazigh Congress was founded in 1995 to defend and promote internationally the rights and interests of Berbers throughout their various home countries in North and West Africa.

- 108 Manuel Sanschaise, "Insurrection à T'Kout contre le pouvoir algérien," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1362 (June 3–9, 2004).
- 109 "Abrogation du Code algérien de la famille!" *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1364 (June 17–23, 2004).
- 110 In 2005, Sid Ahmed Semiane stated that half of all Algerians lived off of less than \$1 US a day (Semiane, *Au refuge*, 79).
- 111 G.H. and A.A., "Une Algérie qui résiste...", *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1373 (October 28–November 3, 2004).
- 112 Groupe Gard-Vaucluse, "Banlieues: une révolte spontanée," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1421 (January 12–18, 2006).
- 113 Equivalent to \$158.40 US.
- 114 Soledad Rincón, "Bouteflika, FIS des islamistes et des généraux algériens," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1552 (April 16–22, 2009).
- 115 François Sébastianoff, "Pour qui vient l'insurrection," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1560 (June 11–17, 2009).
- 116 "Tunisie: la jeunesse se lève," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1619 (January 20–26, 2011).
- 117 "Ni Dieu, ni maître," a lengthy summary of organizational evolution of the French anarchist movement down to 2004, at: <http://fraternitelibertaire.free.fr/th_anarchisme.htm> (10/26/07).
- 118 CGA statutes (2002) posted on the CGA web site: <www.c-g-a.org> (4/1/09).
- 119 "Déclaration de la CGA au congrès de Rennes de la FA (mai 2004)," CGA communiqué of 10/6/2004, posted on CGA web site (4/9/10).
- 120 "Solidarité avec les sans-papiers en lutte," CGA communiqué of 6/7/2004, posted on CGA web site (4/9/10). As of four years later, an *Infos et Analyses Libertaires* article claimed that "the anarchists were probably the political force most invested in effective support for the *sans-papiers* (Anne and Stéphane [groupe de Montpellier], "Elargir les luttes pour la régularisation des sans-papiers," no. 72 [July 2008]).
- 121 "Quand 'ils' sèment la misère, 'ils' récoltent la colère," CGA communiqué of 11/10/2005, posted on CGA web site (1/29/08).
- 122 Alex (Montpellier), "2001, le printemps noir en Algérie," *Infos et Analyses Libertaires*, no. 86 (March 2011).
- 123 Pucciarelli, "Qui sont les anarchistes?"
- 124 Aicha, "Algérie, une population martyrisée: les dessous des cartes (Summer 2001)," posted at the CNT-AIT Paris-Nord Regional Union web site: <http://www.cnt-ait.info/article_print.php?id_article=207> (4/14/2010).
- 125 Jaime Semprun, *Apologie pour l'insurrection algérienne* (Paris: Éditions de l'Encyclopédie des Nuisances, 2001) (51 pp.). While Semprun's post-situationist politics and writings are far closer to insurrectionary anarchism than to anarcho-syndicalism, the fact that the text was re-published at the CNT-AIT web site makes it appropriate to include in the book and at this location. An English-language translation of most of the first half of the text was also included at the CNT-AIT web site and both versions were presented on the *A-Infos* web site on 11/11/2006.
- 126 Noureddine Yazid Zerhouni (1937–) was the *patron* of the SM secret police, 1979–81 and is one of Bouteflika's closest and most loyal associates. He served as his interior minister from December 1999 to May 2010, at which time he became vice-premier. It seems that this was a significant demotion since the responsibilities of this new position were not immediately defined. In any case, it was one more episode in the continuing battle of clans at the top.
- 127 Judith Scheele's recent anthropological study of a Kabyle village overlooking the Soummam Valley, Ighil Oumsed, describes the continued weekly meeting of the village

assembly into the 1970s dealing with land conflicts and transgressions of village customs through “asocial” behavior. Into the present decade, fines are still levied against those who fail to attend village funerals or contribute to communal labor projects (Scheele, *Village Matters*, 123).

- 128 Jaime Semprun, “Apologie pour l’insurrection algérienne” (2001), posted at the CNT-AIT Paris-Nord Region web site, 4/28/2001(4/18/10).
- 129 Quelques amis français des aarchs, “Le grand camouflage” (April 6, 2002), *Combat Syndicaliste* (CNT-AIT), no. 182 (Summer 2002), posted on-line at: <juralibertaire.over-blog.com/article-15111597.html> (6/12/10).
- 130 This platform of 10/31/01 was a further assemblies movement clarification of the original El-Kseur program.
- 131 In the village she studied, said Judith Scheele, “the delegates were exclusively young men.” They had attended high school, but never gained the *bac* degree. They got by with local odd jobs and most had been involved earlier with village activities. “Many came from families already known for political commitment in more established groups” (Scheele, *Village Matters*, 145).
- 132 “Dossier: l’Algérie libertaire, entretien sur la situation en Algérie,” *Combat Syndicaliste* (CNT-AIT), no. 183 (September-October 2002), as posted on line at the *Jura Libertaire* web site [5/12/10].
- 133 “Algérie: la Kabylie est paralysée par une grève generale,” posted at the CNT-AIT Paris-Nord Region web site, 4/28/2003 (4/14/10).
- 134 “Voyage en Algérie,” posted on the CNT-AIT Paris-Nord Region web site, 9/18/2003 (4/14/10).
- 135 *Macache* was a journal appearing on line at:<internetdown.org>.
- 136 “Algérie: carnet de route,” posted at the CNT-AIT Paris-Nord Region web site, July 4, 2004 (9/20/05). According to Scheele, by 2004 the local citizens’ committees “had lost most of their prestige and popular legitimacy, although virtually none of their demands had been heeded. They were frequently accused of having ‘sold out to,’ or even of having been initiated by, the government, or of quite simply wanting to cause trouble without any results” (Scheele, *Village Matters*, p. 47).
- 137 No. 39 (42 pp.) in the CNT-AIT Caen UL brochure series, *Les Cahiers de l’Anarcho-Syndicalisme* (C.A.S.); also available at the CNT-AIT Caen UL web site.
- 138 As a later article in the CNT-AIT’s journal pointed out, young whites as well as Arabs and blacks were involved in the insurgency. An official government intelligence report in November 2005 stated that the urban guerrilla attacks after the first deaths transformed themselves “into a grassroots revolt of the housing projects, without leaders or programs,” and in which the participants shared in common “a social condition of exclusion from French society.” (Syndicat intercorporatif de Châteauroux, “Il n’y a pas de fumée sans feu,” *Combat Syndicaliste*, no. 203 [March 2006].)
- 139 Alain Krivine (1941–) was a prominent figure in the 1968 May Days and is a longtime leader in the Trotskyist LCR (Revolutionary Communist League). From 1999 to 2004, he was a member of the European parliament. Arlette Laguiller (1940–) was actively involved in the formation of the Trotskyist LO (Workers Struggle) in 1968. She was selected to run as the LO candidate for French president in 1974 and in the five subsequent elections for that position through 2007 and has been the chief spokesperson for the party for decades.
- 140 Jean Picard, “Automne 2005,” in *Quelques réflexions*.
- 141 Des militants CNT-AIT, “Trop conscients pour se révolter,” in *Quelques réflexions*
- 142 The CNT-F theoretical journal, *Les Temps Maudits*, for example, described itself as of 2007 as an anarcho-syndicalist and revolutionary syndicalist revue.

- 143 These approximations are based on a back-and-forth argument on a Wikipedia discussion page between proponents of each French CNT. (<http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discussion:Conf%C3%A9d%C3%A9ration_nationale_du_travail_%28France%29> [4/18/10]). Pucciarelli estimated perhaps 3000 in 1999 with its *Combat Syndicaliste* journal printing about 2000 copies, and about 700 subscribers (Pucciarelli, “Qui sont les anarchistes?”).
- 144 “Petite histoire de la CNT-F,” on the web site of the Fondation Pierre Besnard. A 2005 article in a French political journal states the figure of “4000 militants” in the CNT-F (“Le reveil des chats noirs,” *Politis*, April 7, 2005, as translated and posted on his web site by Larry Gambone at: <http://porkupineblog.blogspot.com/2006_10_01_archive.html> [9/21/09]). Another 2002 published source, cited by Luck, estimated 3000–4000 members (*Sociologie de l'engagement*, 136).
- 145 “Petite histoire de la CNT-F.”
- 146 Though one militant of the CNT-F in Lyon was concerned, as of 2000, that his local was “essentially a union of white men, which doesn’t truly reflect the composition of our society” (Ben, “Anarcho-syndicalisme et syndicalisme révolutionnaire à Lyon, 1971–1999,” *La Gryffe*, no. 17 [January 2000], as reprinted on the Fondation Pierre Besnard web site, 3/1/2005).
- 147 “Editorial: l’internationalisme en pratique,” *Les Temps Maudits*, no. 25 (October 2006–April 2007).
- 148 Miguel Chueca, “Questions sur une sale guerre,” *Combat Syndicaliste*, March 2001.
- 149 Kahina Ait Tafoune and Jugurta Ait Amchiche, “Le second printemps berbère: nous casserons plutôt que de plier,” *Le Combat Syndicaliste International*, July–August 2001.
- 150 SATEF is the Autonomous Union of Education and Training Workers. Its current web site as of April 2010 is: <<http://satefdz.unblog.fr/>>. The CLA was already discussed above. SNAPAP is the Autonomous National Union of Public Administration Personnel.
- 151 100 euros = \$122 US at this date.
- 152 Aboubakr Benbouzid (1954–) was a university professor and administrator at Blida and since 1994 was a member of every Algerian government—thus, of the present Algerian ministers, the one with the longest reign.
- 153 Frédéric, CNT-Education 93, “Je radie, tu radies...ils radie,” *Combat Syndicale*, no. 274 (December 18, 2003).
- 154 “Le 1er novembre 2005, nous manifesterons pour les libertés publiques et syndicales en Algérie,” posted on the CNT-F web site, 10/13/05 (11/18/07).
- 155 “Brief Report on I07,” posted on Indymedia, 5/4/2007 and included in a larger article, “Conférences Internationales Syndicales – I07,” posted at the “anarkismo.net” web site at: <<http://www.anarkismo.net/article/5434>> (9/22/09).
- 156 The Union Syndicale de Solidaires includes all of the “SUD” unions (Solidaires Unitaires Démocratiques) and many other local or national work sector unions throughout France. It was founded in 1998 by numerous breakaway trade unionists from the major French federations, the CGT, CFDT and the CGT-FO. It generally subscribes to a more decentralized organizational model and more progressive social change positions, apparently with a membership approaching 100,000. However, according to a 2007 article in the anarchist OLS journal, *Offensive*, “it seems that the SUDs reproduce the same problems as institutional trade unionism: hierarchical structures, separation of politics from unionism, weak numbers, etc.” (Saba and the Ch’ti, “Syndicats ou groupes politiques?” *Offensive*, no. 13 [February 1, 2007]).
- 157 “Algérie: Déclaration commune CGTe, CNT, Syndicats autonomes algériens et Solidaires,” posted on the CNT-FTE web site at: <http://www.cnt-f.org/fte/article.php?id_article=1217> (11/18/2007).
- 158 CEDETIM is the Center for International Solidarity Studies and Initiatives. Based in

Paris, it was established in 1965 and is active in solidarity campaigns for various peoples throughout the world.

159 Among the organizations in this grouping were CLA, CNAPEST, SATEF, SNAPAP, SNTE, SNPEPM, CECA and the coordination body for CNES sections. SNTE is the National Union of Education Workers, SNPEPM is the National Union of Paramedical Education Teachers, CECA is the Coordination of Contractual Teachers of Algiers and CNES is the National Council of Higher Education Teachers.

160 Posted on several CNT-F web sites, including those for the FTE and the Union Locales for Lille and Marseille.

161 Historique du syndicalisme en Algérie,” originally published in *Miaouu* (a bulletin of CNT-FAU33), no. 4 (March 2008) and posted on the CNT-F FTE web site.

162 “Bienvenue dans le site de la maison des syndicats algériens,” posted at the CNT-F web site on 5/3/2008 (4/26/10).

163 Secrétariat International de la CNT-FTE, “Solidarité avec les enseignants contractuels algériens,” posted on the CNT-FTE web site, 6/18/2008.

164 “Algérie: grève dans la santé publique,” *Afrique Sans Chaines*, no. 5 (April 2009). Similar strike accounts were given for struggles in Chad, Senegal and Madagascar.

165 This same regime tactic was noted earlier concerning the LADDH human rights group and a proliferation of regime-supported political parties.

166 Jérémie Berthuin, interviewer, “Le syndicalisme autonome algérien,” *Combat Syndicaliste* (of the CNT-F), April 2009. This interview was also translated into English and posted at: <http://www.anarkismo.net/article/12438?print_page=true> (9/22/09).

167 Le Comité International de Soutien au Syndicalisme Autonome Algérien, “Algérie: comment la police politique a fait pression sur des syndicalistes pour arrêter la grève dans l’éducation,” posted on 3/14/2010 at the CNT-F web site (4/27/10). CISA also posted on its own web site a detailed article on the overall political context, as well as the development of Algerian autonomous unions and their repression (“Entre répression et manipulations: le courageux combat des syndicats autonomes algériens” [November 15, 2009] at: <<http://www.cisasolidaritesyndicalistes-algerie.org>> [5/1/10]).

168 At this date, this sum was equivalent to \$161 US.

169 About €40.

170 Stéphane (Solidaires) and Valérie (CNT-F), “Algérie: de la montée en puissance de la répression policière dans un pays en pleine crise sociale,” posted on the CNT-F web site, 4/8/2010 (4/22/10).

171 Located on line at juralibertaire.over-blog.com. There were originally six print issues of a small journal from the same group through February 2006, focusing on more local concerns.

172 Based mainly on the “The Good Fuckers at *Le Jura Libertaire*” translation of the original French-language interview by Not Bored! (10/11/09) and posted at: <notbored.org/le-jura-libertaire.html> (6/12/10).

173 Quelques amis français des aarchs, “Lettre à Mohand Chelli” (Paris, April 18, 2003), posted on 1/7/2008 at: <<http://juralibertaire.over-blog.com/article-15116648.html>> (6/10/10).

174 Robert Vasseur, “La Kabylie, six ans après” (Paris, October 22, 2007), posted on 1/7/2008 at: <<http://juralibertaire.over-blog.com/article-15108307.html>> (6/12/10).

175 Guitoto, “Algérie: répression à l’occidentale, de la problématique insurrectionnelle en Algérie et en France,” *Le Jura Libertaire* web site, February 12, 2011.

176 “Présentation du réseau No Pasaran,” posted on the *No Pasaran* web site <<http://nopasaran.samizdat.net>> (5/2/10).

177 See pages 348–352 above.

178 “Unité! – Appel pour un mouvement libertaire: le chemin se trace en marchant!” *No Pasaran!*, no. 86 (April 2001).

- 179 JC, "À la recherche d'un mouvement libertaire," *No Pasaran!* no. 86 (April 2001).
- 180 Laurent, "Ça bouge dans les chaumières," *No Pasaran!* no. 87 (May 2001).
- 181 Michel Akhno, "L'unité: oui, le dialogue, aussi!" *No Pasaran!* no. 87 (May 2001).
- 182 The independent Trotskyist Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista (Workers Party of Marxist Unification), formed in 1935, was persecuted by the Communists in Spain during the Spanish civil war of the late 1930s.
- 183 Tranx (SKALP 86), "L'anarchisme est mort, vive l'anarchie!" *No Pasaran!* no. 88 (June 2001).
- 184 Jean-Christophe Berier, Jean-Marc Raynaud, and Roger Noël/Babar, "Appel à l'unité du mouvement," *No Pasaran!* no. 1, new series (September 2001).
- 185 Babar, "L'unité des anarchistes en débats," *No Pasaran!* no. 3 (November 2001).
- 186 Interview by Laurent, "Les libertaires vont-ils décrocher la lune?" *No Pasaran!* no. 4 (December 2001).
- 187 See excerpts from the *Le Monde Libertaire* review on pages 308–309 above.
- 188 "Hawad, la pensée nomade," *No Pasaran!* no. 88 (June 2001).
- 189 Abdallah Djaballah (1956–) was trained as a lawyer. He founded the Movement of the Islamic Renaissance (MNI, al-Nahda or Ennahda), an organization legally approved in December 1990 though possibly existing underground since 1974. In June 1990, he urged people to vote for FIS candidates. The MNI was critical of the liberal economic policy of the regime, in contrast with the FIS. After the latter was banned in 1992, the MNI remained legal. He later founded the Movement for National Reform (MRN, El-Islah) after losing control of the MNI and was a presidential candidate in 1999 and 2004.
- 190 Lotfi, "Les Algériens face à la guerre en Afghanistan," *No Pasaran!* no. 3 (November 2001).
- 191 Pour une résistance antifasciste radicale: état des lieux du mouvement antifasciste radical contemporain," *No Pasaran!* no. 74 (May–June 2009).
- 192 "Soulèvements en Algérie: tout d'un coup, c'est devenu autre chose," *L'Oiseau-tempête*, no. 9 (Summer 2002).
- 193 "Entretien avec Nadir," *L'Oiseau-tempête*, no. 9 (Summer 2002).
- 194 "Edito," *Offensive*, no. 1 (October 11, 2003).
- 195 "Qui sommes-nous?" *Offensive*, no. 13 (February 1, 2007).
- 196 "Edito," *Offensive*, no. 20 (December 1, 2008). Specific OLS groups or contacts listed on the OLS web site were in Paris, Marseille, Toulouse, Tours and Grenoble.
- 197 Mark, "Militer, un sport d'endurance," *Offensive*, no. 13 (February 1, 2007).
- 198 Of course, in a revolutionary context, as in Spain in 1936–37, this conflict between rupture and recuperation by existing political institutions and behavior is that much more intense and direct. Emma Goldman's description of and conflicted experience with this tension is powerfully articulated in her writings in that period (see her *Vision on Fire*).
- 199 JPD (Jean-Pierre Duteuil), "Le militant funambule, la soutenable légèreté de l'être," *Offensive*, no. 13 (February 1, 2007).
- 200 A more elaborate description and analysis of the sexist and gender bias in anarchist groups is Collectif Klito, "Du sexisme en milieu militant," *Offensive*, no. 8 (December 1, 2005).
- 201 Anita, "Militant et dominant?" *Offensive*, no. 13 (February 1, 2007).
- 202 "Psychiatrie algérienne et antipsychiatrie," *Offensive*, no. 11 (September 1, 2006).
- 203 Most articles in past issues of *Réfractions* are available on line at the revue's web site: <<http://refractions.plusloin.org>>.
- 204 The same article, in English translation, appeared in *Anarchist Studies*, vol. 11, no. 2, 103–110.
- 205 Georges Rivière, "Algérie, l'insurrection libertaire du Mouvement des assemblées dit des Aârouchs," *Réfractions*, no. 8 (Spring 2002).
- 206 Razmig Keucheyan, "L'anarchisme aujourd'hui: entretien avec Daniel Colson," *SolidaritéS: Pour Une Alliance Socialiste* (Geneva), no. 102 (February 14, 2007) (this

article is available at the web site of the journal and various others).

- 207 Daniel Colson, "L'anarchisme, Foucault et les postmodernes: remarques sur le texte de Tomás Ibañez," *Réfractions*, no. 20 (May 2008) (an English translation of this article is on-line at: <<http://raforum.info/spip.php?article4919&lang=fr?>> [5/2/10] and several other web sites). Colson's plea for the infusion of new sources for understanding wider potentials of anarchism extends to writers and historical experiences quite separate from post-modern philosophers, as demonstrated in his *Petit lexique philosophique de l'anarchisme*, and *Trois essais de philosophie anarchiste*. In the latter, Colson explores anarchist implications not only of non-anarchist Western philosophers such as Spinoza and Leibniz, but also Moroccan historian Abdallah Laroui (1933–), mystical aspects of Shi'ism and the term of *dawla* in Arab-Muslim tradition.
- 208 Anarchists' attraction to this orientation of propaganda by deed in the late 1870s and 1880s and its transformation into more powerful direct confrontations through general strikes is well-discussed in Daniel Colson, "La science anarchiste," *Réfractions*, no. 1 (Winter 1997).
- 209 The final section of *The Coming Insurrection*, labeled "Insurrection," praises the 2001 Kabyle revolt, though sharply criticizes male domination of the assemblies.
- 210 From an "anti-hierarchical" perspective, Alain C. wrote a critical web essay about *The Coming Insurrection*, asserting that it seems "less a political project than an existential alternative" and a project of alternative radical "identity," with all the problems inherent in sacrificing one's own individuality to a group's definition of itself and those external to it ("*L'insurrection qui vient*, construction identitaire et alternative existentielle" [November 1, 2009], posted at several on-line sites, including: <tv.rebellyon.info/l-insurrection-qui-vient,6926.html> (5/15/10). See also the review by Chris Spannos, "The Coming Insurrection or the Arrival of Suicidal Nonsense?" (July 24, 2009) and responses at the ZNet web site.
- 211 Nunzio Pernicone's *Italian Anarchism, 1864–1892* (Oakland: AK Press, 2009) provides a good introduction to this decades-long debate in the Italian movement of the late 19th century as well as its connection to direct action anarchists, like Ravachol (1859–1892), in France.
- 212 "Adieu *Non Fides*" (November 28, 2009), posted at: the <non-fides.fr> web site (8/11/10).
- 213 "Deux poids, deux mesures: de l'onanisme en milieu militant" (12/29/2008), *Non Fides*, no. 3.
- 214 "Réponse à un lecteur: nous ne laisserons pas enterer l'humain" (4/5/2009), *Non Fides*, no. 3. See various writings by Wolfi Landstreicher on the web for extensive English-language statements of the insurrectionist anarchist perspective.
- 215 Without an extensive search of French anarchist publications, I found this same article re-published in *Le Jura Libertaire*, *Cette Semaine*, *Divergences*, and *Non Fides*.
- 216 Anonymous, *Bref aperçu sur des vives flames algériennes* (early 2009).
- 217 Posted on *Non Fides* web site, January 12, 2011. The posted English-language version is quoted here with several of my own slight alterations in translation from the French.

CONCLUSION

Anarchism in Algeria

- 1 Léandre Valéro, "Le MLNA."
- 2 1954–1962: *L'insurrection algérienne*; brief biography of Slimane Kiouane in the on-line *Dictionnaire international des militants anarchistes*. The *Noir et Rouge* group also was closely followed by two members of the FLN Fédération de France (Letter from Frank

- Mintz, July 12, 2010).
- 3 Mohammed Harbi, *Une vie debout*, 111. French historian Gilbert Meynier, a close collaborator with Harbi in recent years, referred to Harbi in that earlier context as “an unrepentant libertarian” (June 2006 review of Harbi’s autobiography at: <<http://colloque-algerie.ens-lsh.fr/article.php3?id-article-127>> [2/9/10]). More specifically, then as now, Harbi should be viewed as an anti-authoritarian Marxist.
 - 4 For example, Ali Zamoum recalled egalitarian practice among wartime Algerian prisoners who shared everything of their meager prison resources and mutually taught languages and other subjects to their peers (Zamoum, *Le pays des hommes libres*, 183, 191, 215–216, 270–271).
 - 5 Djilali Bencheikh, “Entretien: Djilali Bencheikh: comme Feraoun, écrire pour témoigner,” *L’actualité littéraire*, n.d. (available on-line at: <www.revues-plurielles.org/uploads/pdf/4_33_10.pdf> [6/10/10]). Djilali Bencheikh (1944–) was born in Algeria at the end of World War II. Since living in France, he has pursued journalistic and writing careers and is the author of four novels by 2010.
 - 6 “Un groupe d’autonomes algériens,” *L’Algérie brûle!* (Paris: Éditions Champ Libre, 1981), 7, 17–18, 21, 49, 51, 53, 58, 62–65.
 - 7 Given the nature of such sources, of course, it is impossible to verify with satisfaction the country location of the writer.
 - 8 This blog is located on-line at: <<http://anarcho-club.tchatcheblog.com>> (4/15/10).
 - 9 Hakim Bey, *T.A.Z., The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism* (Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 1991).
 - 10 This Facebook discussion is at: <<http://www.facebook.com/topic.php?uid=2464495189&topic=7697>> (6/6/10).
 - 11 The original article by Haider Bendrihem, “Opinion: le CRI de l’Algérie pour le changement,” was posted on the *Le Matin* web site on 2/20/2009; the comment by “Baha” was posted there on 4/13/2009.
 - 12 A.M.E., “De l’anarchisme...,” *Le Soir d’Algérie*, January 28, 2010.
 - 13 I am unaware of further identification of this writer. Again, authors of items posted only on the web are sometimes very difficult to trace. These two texts were posted originally on the web site of “Les Amis de Némésis” but this site no longer exists. They now can be seen at: <<http://bibliolibertaire.org>> (7/29/10).
 - 14 The sites of two large massacres in September 1997.
 - 15 Tarik Ben Hallâj, “Adresse à mes soeurs et frères algériens” (9/28/1997).
 - 16 Tarik Ben Hallâj, “Remèdes au terrorisme islamique: comment le combattre et l’éliminer efficacement et durablement, en douze points” (October 20, 2001).
 - 17 See page 425 above.
 - 18 In an April 2, 2011 article, for example, Achour Idir described the current quality of Algerian high school education, complained of new teachers having no advance pedagogical training and criticized the education ministry for planning curricular reforms without involving teachers (<<http://newspublish.algerieautrefois.com/02/04/2011/dans-une-conference-de-presse-idir-achour-porte-parole-du-cla-a-declare-hier-a-alger-que-les-resultats-des-lyceens-sont-catastrophiques-au-deuxieme-trimestre/>> [4/22/11]). He also spoke out the week before at a March 25, 2011 Algiers meeting demanding a change of Algeria’s political system, part of the larger wave of current meetings and demonstrations seeking major political transformation (Ghania Lassal, “Le changement viendra à travers un combat pacifique et patient,” *El Watan*, March 26, 2011).
 - 19 See p. 422 above.
 - 20 Mohamed Kacimi (1955–) is a quite prolific writer of poetry, plays, novels and essays. Since 1982, he has lived in Paris.

- 21 Mezioud Ouldamer (1951–) is an Algerian essayist, imprisoned in Algeria in 1980 for a year and later settling in France. Several of his books directly concern Algeria and the immigrant experience in France. He was apparently a co-author of the June 1980 manuscript for *L'Algérie brûle!*, and was close to situationist Guy Debord in the 1980s.
- 22 Mohamed Kacimi El Hassani, "Algérie: *Incidences* (extraits)," *Iztok*, no. 12 (March 1986).
- 23 Mohamed Kacimi El Hassani, "Une journée de la vie d'un militant sincère et intègre d'une république démocratique et populaire," *Iztok*, no. 14 (September 1987). *Le Mouchoir* was published in 1987 by Éditions L'Harmattan (Paris).
- 24 Nasdine Hobja, "À propos du livre *Offense à président* de Mezioud Ouldamer," *Iztok*, no. 11 (September 1985). The book was published by Éditions Gérard Lebovici – Champ Libre (Paris, 1985).
- 25 Lvachir's writing, as quoted here, appears on his myspace blog at: <<http://blogs.myspace.com/lvachir>> (6/10/10). Historian Mohammed Harbi also was quoted as saying that Kateb Yacine was an anti-authoritarian (N.B., "Kateb, 'un libertaire,'" *El Watan*, January 29, 2007).
- 26 Roger Dadoun, "Abdelkader Guermaz," *Le Monde Libertaire*, no. 1321 (May 22–28, 2003).
- 27 Letter from Georges Rivière, June 21, 2010.
- 28 Chawki Amari, "Cette terre ingouvernable," *El Watan*, March 29, 2010. For over 15 years, Amari has written editorial commentary, novels and non-fictional accounts on Algerian politics and society. In a 2007 interview, he said, "To directly respond to the phrases and methods of those who govern, to show the absurdity of a castrating system is for me something fundamental" (Yassin Temlali, "Rencontre avec Chawki Amari, écrivain et dessinateur," at the BabelMed web site [July 13, 2007]: <<http://www.babelmed.net/Pais/M%C3%A9diterran%C3%A9e/Litt%C3%A9rature/index.php?c=2490&m=319&k=4&1=fr>> [6/11/10]). Three other Algerian journalists of apparently similar inclination are Yassir Benmiloud, Sid Ahmed Semiane and Ali Dilem.

French Anarchists' "Alternative History" of Algeria

- 29 Of course, in most cases, outsiders cannot know if article writers use real or pen names.

Reflections on the French Anarchist Movement

- 30 Irène Pereira and Simon Luck provide good insight on women's experience in Luck and Pereira, "Les pratiques dans les organisations anarchistes," *Réfractations*, no. 24 (Spring 2010). Pereira's previously-cited 2009 dissertation also strongly emphasizes the importance of a pragmatic post-modern revolutionary orientation in the current French anarchist movement.
- 31 The "purist" label was applied explicitly to the FA of the 1950s by Fontenis (see page 37 above) and implicitly by *Noir et Rouge* (see page 54 above) as well as by Maurice Fayolle's 1960 internal critique of the same organization (Biard, *Histoire*, 133–137). See also Bou-louque, 92.
- 32 This insight was emphasized, for example, in René Furth's 1971 ANV article discussed in Part III.

Reflections on the Anarchist Movement Generally

- 33 Daniel Colson, *Trois essais de philosophie anarchiste*.

Selected Bibliography

Aggoun, Lounis and Rivoire, Jean-Baptiste. *Françalgérie, crimes et mensonges d'États: histoire secrète, de la guerre d'indépendance à la troisième guerre d'Algérie*. Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2004.

Barkat, Sidi Mohammed, ed. *Des Français contre la terreur d'Etat (Algérie 1954–1962)*. Paris: Editions Reflex, 2002.

Berry, David. *A History of the French Anarchist Movement: 1917 to 1945*. Oakland: AK Press, 2009.

Biard, Roland. *Histoire du mouvement anarchiste, 1945–1975*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1976.

Blair, Thomas E. “*The Land To Those Who Work It*”: *Algeria's Experiment in Workers' Management*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1969.

Boulouque, Sylvain. *Les anarchistes français face aux guerres coloniales (1945–1962)*. Lyon: Atelier de Création Libertaire, 2003.

Clegg, Ian. *Workers' Self-Management in Algeria*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971.

“Dissidences,” *Daniel Guérin: révolutionnaire en mouvement(s)*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2007.

1954–1962: l'insurrection algérienne et les communistes libertaires. Paris: Éditions Alternative Libertaire, 2006.

Duteuil, Jean-Pierre. *Mai 68, un mouvement politique*. Mauléon: Éditions Acratie, 2008.

Evans, Martin and Phillips, John. *Algeria: Anger of the Dispossessed*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.

Fontenis, Georges. *L'autre communisme: histoire subversive du mouvement libertaire*. Mauléon: Éditions Acratie, 1990.

Groupe Noir et Rouge. *Autogestion, état et révolution*. Paris: Éditions de la Tête du Feuilles, 1972.

Guérin, Cédric. *Pensée et action des anarchistes en France: 1950–1970*. Mémoire de maîtrise, Lille, 2000.

Guérin, Daniel. *L'Algérie qui se cherche*. Paris: Editions Présence Africaine, 1964.

———. *L'Algérie caporalisée?* Paris: C.E.P., 1965.

———. *L'Anarchisme*. Paris: Gallimard, 1965; Eng. edition: New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970.

———. *Ci-gît le colonialisme*. Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1973.

———. *Quand l'Algérie s'insurgeait, 1954–1962: un anticolonialiste témoin*. Paris: La pensée sauvage, 1979.

Harbi, Mohammed. *Aux origines du FLN: le populisme révolutionnaire en Algérie*. Paris: Christian Bourgois, 1975.

———. *Le FLN: mirage et réalité*. Paris: Éditions Jeune Afrique, 1980.

———. *1954: la guerre commence en Algérie*. Brussels: Éditions Complexe, 1984.

———. *L'Algérie et son destin: croyants ou citoyens*. Paris: Arcanère, 1992.

———. *Une vie debout: mémoires politiques, 1945–1962*. Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2001.

Harbi, Mohammed and Stora, Benjamin, eds. *La guerre d'Algérie*. Paris: Hachette, 2004.

Joyeux, Maurice. *Sous les plis du drapeau noir: souvenirs d'un anarchiste*. Paris: Éditions du Monde Libertaire, 1988.

Laks, Monique. *Autogestion ouvrière et pouvoir politique en Algérie (1962–1965)*. Paris: Etudes et Documentations Internationales, 1970.

Le Sueur, James D. *Algeria Since 1989: Between Terror and Democracy*. London and New York, Zed Books Ltd., 2010.

Luck, Simon. *Sociologie de l'engagement libertaire dans la France contemporaine: socialisations individuelles, expériences collectives, et cultures poli-*

tiques alternatives. Thèse pour le doctorat de science politique, Université Paris 1 - Panthéon-Sorbonnes, 2008.

Maitron, Jean. *Le mouvement anarchiste en France*, vol. II – *De 1914 à nos jours*. Paris: François Maspero, 1975.

Marin, Lou, ed., *Albert Camus et les libertaires (1949–1960)*. Marseille: Égrégories Editions, 2008.

Martinez, Luis. *The Civil War in Algeria, 1992–1998*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2000.

Martinez, Miguel. *Casbah d'oubli: l'exile des réfugiés politiques espagnols en Algérie (1939–1962)*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2004.

Meynier, Gilbert. *Histoire intérieure du FLN, 1954–1962*. Paris: Fayard, 2002.

Noir et Rouge: Anthologie, 1956–1970. Peyrehorade: Éditions Acratie; Paris: Amis de Spartacus, 1982.

Ottaway, David and Ottaway, Marina. *Algeria: The Politics of A Socialist Revolution*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970.

Pattieu, Sylvain. *Les camarades des frères: trotskistes et libertaires dans la guerre d'Algérie*. Paris: Éditions Syllepse, 2002.

Pereira, Irène. *Un nouvel esprit contestaire: la grammaire pragmatiste du syndicalisme d'action directe libertaire*. Thèse pour le doctorat de sociologie, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 2009.

Pessen, Alain and Pucciarelli, Mimmo, eds., *La culture libertaire*. Lyon: Atelier de Création Libertaire, 1997.

Porter, David. *The Role of Workers' Self-Management in Algerian Political Development*. Doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, New York, 1968.

Raptis, Michel. "Le dossier de l'autogestion en Algérie," *Autogestion: Etudes, Débats, Documents*, no. 3 (September 1967).

Roberts, Hugh. *The Battlefield Algeria, 1988–2002: Studies in A Broken Polity*. London: Verso, 2003.

Ross, Kristin. *May '68 and Its Afterlives*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.

Rupp, Marie-Joelle. *Serge Michel: un libertaire dans la décolonisation*. Paris: Ibis Press, 2007.

Saïl, Mohamed. *Appels aux travailleurs algériens*. No. 43 in the “Volonté Anarchiste” series. Groupe Fresnes-Antony of the Fédération Anarchiste, 1994.

Semiane, Sid Ahmed. *Au refuge des balles perdues: chroniques des deux Algéries*. Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2005.

Simon, Catherine. *Algérie, les années pieds-rouges: des rêves de l'indépendance au désenchantement (1962–1969)*. Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2009.

Souaïdia, Habib. *La sale guerre*. Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2001.

Stora, Benjamin. *Algeria, 1830–2000: A Short History*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001.

Une résistance oubliée, 1954–1957: des libertaires dans la guerre d'Algérie (film). Paris, 2001, 35 mins.

van der Walt, Lucien and Schmidt, Michael. *Black Flame: The Revolutionary Class Politics of Anarchism and Syndicalism*, vol. I. Oakland: AK Press, 2009.

Volpi, Frédéric. *Islam and Democracy: The Failure of Dialogue in Algeria*. London: Pluto Press, 2003.

Zamoum, Ali. *Le pays des hommes libres (Tamurt Imazighen): mémoires d'un combattant algérien (1940–1962)*. Grenoble: Éditions La Pensée Sauvage, 1998.

INDEX

- aarch* (assemblies) movement 321–322, 335–336, 339–340, 360–361, 363–365, 375, 382–389, 397–413, 415, 420, 431–438, 449–455, 461–463, 470, 487, 546 *nn.* 3, 4, 550 *m.* 75, 76, 553 *nn.* 131, 136
internal organizational issues 322, 335–336, 365, 384, 401–402, 406–407, 413, 420, 432, 434, 437, 452, 463, 487
recent years 322, 434, 453–455, 546 *n.* 4, 550 *n.* 75, 553 *n.* 136
See also El-Kseur Program
- Abbas, Ferhat 15, 35, 38, 46, 61, 65, 114, 125, 223, 288, 508 *n.* 133, 543 *n.* 185
- Abdelkader, Emir 292, 399, 499 *n.* 27
- Abdessalam, Belaïd 279, 306
- Abrika, Belaïd 365, 411
- abstentions, electoral, Algerian 532 *n.* 30
- ACNV (Action Civique Non Violente) 80–81
- Adami, Mohamed 310
- Addad, Hakim 224–227
- Afghanistan 194–195, 229, 291, 378, 380, 446–448
- agrarian reform, Algerian 91, 110, 118, 133–134, 139, 144, 153, 250, 471
- Ahmad, Egbal 514, *n.* 16
- AIS (Armée Islamique du Salut) 195, 293, 297, 306–307, 321, 355, 379–380, 391
- AIT (Association Internationale des Travailleurs) 211–213, 419
- Aït-Ahmed, Hocine
after June 1965 114, 193, 321, 257, 320, 356–357, 372, 386, 513 *n.* 2, 533 *n.* 47
before independence 90, 257, 501 *nn.* 2, 8, 513 *n.* 214
during Ben Bella regime 96, 111, 114, 216, 513 *n.* 2
- Aït Hamouda, Nouredine 227
- Aït-Menguellet, Lounis 531 *n.* 14
- Algeria, French colonial policy in 13–15, 21, 36–37, 44–45, 47, 52, 58, 62, 69, 145, 222, 228, 247–248, 344, 399, 408
- Algeria, pre-1954 resistance 13–15, 20–21, 43–44, 46, 399, 431, 530 *n.* 8
- Algerian emigrants to France
expulsions 210–211, 221, 234, 264, 302, 337
numbers 30, 148, 211, 234, 249, 264, 527 *n.* 159
political activity 30, 202, 221, 224, 325, 368–369, 408–409
reasons for emigration 175–176, 192, 195, 211, 263–265, 315, 325, 473
social and work conditions 148, 174–175, 243, 263, 315, 325, 408
See also French state “anti-terrorist” repression, racism in France, undocumented workers (*sans-papiers*)
- Algerians in French military 15, 131, 271
- Algerian war 28–32, 34–40, 42, 46–51, 53–57, 59–67, 70–77, 80–81, 84–86, 88, 90–91, 93–95, 108–109, 113, 125–126, 137–138, 144–147, 185–186, 201, 246, 251–252, 257–258, 271–272, 274, 277, 288, 322, 483, 490, 543 *n.* 185, 546 *n.* 9, 558 *n.* 4
casualties 29–30, 50, 70–71, 74–76, 90, 145, 252, 263, 277, 483
See also FLN before independence, terrorism, torture use by French
- Al-Ghazali, Mohammed 292
- Algiers, “Black October” riots and repression (1988) 192–194, 199, 202–204, 217–218, 220, 224, 227, 244, 264–266, 269, 273, 288–290, 292, 296, 321, 333, 339, 346, 369–373, 473, 483, 487, 531 *n.* 12, 534 *n.* 50, 544 *n.* 204
- Algiers Charter 95, 103–104, 115–118, 153, 159, 161, 491, 526 *n.* 112

- Ali Yahia, Abdenour 196, 530 *n.* 12, 535 *n.* 61
- Alleg, Henri 141, 171, 361, 374, 522 *n.* 31
- Alliance Syndicaliste 212–213
- Allouache, Merzak 540 *n.* 123
- Alloula, Abdelkader 278, 289, 542 *n.* 169
- Al-Qaida 323–324
- Alternative Libertaire, generally 328, 341, 442
- membership 163, 169, 205, 341, 523 *n.* 56, 531 *n.* 19
- negative critiques of 417–418, 441, 464
- on Algeria before independence 205, 208, 341
- on Algeria and French politics after independence 205–211, 332–347
- on anarchist movement generally 337, 341–342, 443
- on internal organizational issues 490
- program 205–206, 531 *nn.* 20, 21
- Amara, Fadela 345
- Amari, Chawki 559 *n.* 28
- Amrouche, Jean 46, 504 *n.* 64
- Anarchisme et Non-Violence 81–82, 181–187
- anarchist-communism, generally 16, 119–120, 349, 351
- anarchist, French, direct support for MNA or FLN 21–22, 35, 39, 42, 51, 55, 59, 88, 119, 490, 501 *n.* 9
- anarchist internal organizational behavior and issues 37, 40–42, 52, 119–124, 136, 154–158, 163–165, 182, 204, 329–331, 352–353, 394, 441–443, 455–458, 464–465, 489–490, 490, 492–494, 556 *n.* 200, 559 *n.* 30
- anarchist movement, French, generally, post-1945 33–35, 51–52, 105–106, 119–123, 135–136, 157, 183–185, 198–199, 204, 328–331, 347–352, 440–445, 464–465, 485–493, 495
- anarchist movement, French, generally, pre-1945 16–18, 499 *n.* 30
- anarchists in Algeria
- after independence 132, 168, 170, 237, 253, 264, 280–281, 425, 476–484, 527 *n.* 144
- before independence 20–22, 124, 499 *n.* 27
- anarchist unity proposal, France (2001) 348–352, 440–445
- anarcho-pacifism 76–82, 176, 181–187
- anarcho-syndicalism, French 16, 105–106, 211–216, 489, 532 *nn.* 33, 34, 533 *n.* 41
- anarcho-syndicalism, generally 16, 68, 105–106, 157, 211, 238, 349, 351, 422
- Anderson, Benedict 499 *n.* 25
- anti-racism efforts in France 148, 254–255, 261–262, 311–317, 390, 540 *n.* 138
- AQMI (Al-Qaida au Maghreb Islamique) 324
- Arabization, generally 14, 115, 190, 210, 217, 227, 231, 252, 320, 353, 370, 377, 536 *n.* 76, 542 *n.* 171
- in education 133–134, 172, 208, 229–232, 279, 359, 375, 537 *n.* 80, 542 *n.* 17
- as identity focus 170, 190, 229–231, 233, 279, 295–296, 358
- in media 230–231, 233, 358
- for public officials 230, 233, 536 *n.* 76, 537 *n.* 80
- Arab Spring (2011) 326–327, 346, 393, 438–439, 474
- Armand, Emile 83–84
- Arshinov, Peter 499 *n.* 25
- assassinations, in 1990s 194–195, 207, 210–211, 213, 226–228, 276–278, 285, 288–290, 297–308, 310, 356, 358, 362, 377, 461, 533 *n.* 48, 538 *n.* 103, 542 *nn.* 168, 169, 170, 544, *n.* 211
- named victims 194, 219, 221, 226–227, 278, 288–290, 301, 305–306, 533 *n.* 48, 538 *n.* 103, 542 *nn.* 168, 169, 170, 544, *n.* 211
- Asselah, Ahmed 278
- Association of Algerian Ulema 13–14, 38, 229, 292, 535 *n.* 63

- Audin, Maurice 361
- Aussaresses, Paul 362, 549 *n.* 68
- autogestion* (self-management),
generally 105–106, 135–136,
141–143, 148–151, 153–155,
158–167, 179–181, 185, 187. 198,
200, 204–206, 212–213, 236, 244,
352, 390, 394, 490, 525 *n.* 98, 529
n. 187
- autogestion*, in Algeria
1962–1965 92–104, 106–107,
109–119, 121, 123–128, 135–139,
141–144, 149–153, 158, 160–163,
166–167, 179–181, 187, 206, 216,
219, 237, 245, 251–252, 256, 334,
403, 483, 486–487, 491, 514 *n.*
12, 522 *nn.* 47, 48, 524 *n.* 78, 525
n. 98
congresses 101–102, 114–115,
118–119
extent 98, 132, 153, 515 *n.* 21
post-1965 coup 130–133, 135,
139, 142, 144, 152–153, 166–168,
170–171, 173, 202, 250, 255, 262,
295, 477, 484, 530 *n.* 3
general principle for other Algerian
sectors 103–194, 526 *n.* 112
- autogestion*, in Yugoslavia 93,
141–142, 149, 163, 180–181, 187
- autonomous trade unions 225–6,
325–326, 347, 354, 357, 375,
413–414, 420–430, 433, 450,
471–472, 481, 483, 487, 555 *nn.*
159, 167
- Ayat, Lakhal 245
- Bakunin, Michael 16, 21, 39, 42, 47,
141, 159, 177, 234–236, 367, 442,
465, 468, 484, 497 *n.* 10
- Bandung conference (1955) 29
- Barbe, C. A. 201
- Bayrou, François 281, 286, 542 *n.* 174
- Belhadj (also Benhadj), Ali 193–194,
218, 273, 296, 299, 301, 332, 370,
372, 534 *n.* 54
- Belkheir, Larbi 220, 371, 535 *n.* 60,
550 *n.* 85
- Ben Badis, Abdelhamid 14, 229, 292,
535 *n.* 63
- Ben Bella, Ahmed
before independence 31, 84, 90,
501 *nn.* 2, 8, 513 *nn.* 214, 1, 2, 3,
515 *n.* 30
in power (1962–65) 91, 93–96,
98, 101–104, 109, 111–114,
116–118, 124–127, 130–131,
138–139, 143–144, 147, 151–152,
161, 166, 170, 172, 216–217, 230,
245, 248, 251, 276, 288, 295, 297,
322, 513 *nn.* 214, 1, 516 *n.* 36,
517 *n.* 59, 518 *n.* 60, 526 *n.* 125,
530 *n.* 12, 535 *n.* 63
post-June 1965 coup 131, 137,
139, 170, 190, 193, 204, 251–252,
256, 301, 520 *n.* 2, 530 *n.* 3, 533
n. 47.
- Ben Boulaid, Mustapha 288, 543 *n.*
184
- Benbouzid, Aboubakr 421, 554 *n.*
152
- Bencheikh, Djilali 476, 558 *n.* 5
- Benchicou, Mohamed 340–341, 547
n. 32
- Ben Dhine, Cheik 499 *n.* 28
- Bendjedid, Chadli
See Chadli
- Benflis, Ali 386, 551 *n.* 105
- Ben Khedda, Ben Youssef 31, 65, 95,
114, 508 *n.* 133, 517 *n.* 45
- Ben M'Hidi, Larbi 501 *n.* 2, 517 *n.* 58
- Bennabi, Malek 534 *n.* 58
- Ben Tobbal, Lakhdar 153, 517 *n.* 58,
524 *n.* 80
- Berber activism (before 2001) 190,
199, 227–229, 232–233, 252–253,
280, 521 *n.* 17, 536 *n.* 75
See also Berber Cultural Move-
ment, Berber discontent, Berber
Spring
- Berber Cultural Movement (MCB)
191, 220, 227–228, 232, 252–253,
293, 322, 353–354, 356–357, 359,
377, 432, 483, 535 *n.* 61, 536 *n.*
77, 550 *n.* 75
- Berber discontent 154, 168, 190,
229–233, 280, 321–322, 335, 340,
365, 377, 384, 408, 412–415
See also El-Kseur platform,
Kabyle insurrection
- Berber language 134, 168, 190, 196,
227, 229–233, 248, 280, 322, 340,

- 353, 356–360, 377, 382, 391, 403, 407, 413, 450, 536 *n.* 76, 537 *nn.* 82, 83, 539 *n.* 114, 550 *n.* 75
- Berber Spring (1980) 190, 199, 227, 232, 252–253, 296, 322, 356, 359, 407, 411–412, 419, 438, 473, 477, 482–483, 487, 492, 531 *n.* 12, 535 *n.* 61, 539 *n.* 115
- Bernard, André 77, 81–82, 187
- Berneri, Camillo 66, 444, 505 *n.* 85
- Berneri, Giliana 505 *n.* 85
- Berry, David 498 *n.* 15, 499 *n.* 30, 531 *n.* 18
- Berthier, Pierre-Valentin 83–86, 513 *n.* 213
- Bessaoud, Mohand Arab 231, 537 *n.* 82
- Betchine, Mohamed 310, 371, 545 *n.* 217
- Bey, Hakim 374, 478, 497 *n.* 1
- Biard, Roland 124, 164, 177, 179, 498 *n.* 16, 525 *n.* 94, 526 *n.* 134
- Bidault, Georges 74, 511 *n.* 178
- biens vacants* 92–96, 138, 151, 162, 295
- Bigeard, Marcel 258, 361, 540 *n.* 132
- bin Laden, Osama 195, 324, 447–448
- Bitat, Rabah 31, 90, 501 *n.* 2, 514 *n.* 5
- “Black Decade,” internal war (1990s) 194–196, 206–210, 213–215, 219–221, 224–228, 233, 275–280, 288–291, 293, 298–301, 303–308, 310, 317, 320, 322–327, 332–333, 339, 347, 354–358, 533 *n.* 43, 534 *n.* 54, 538 *n.* 103, 550 *n.* 85, 551 *n.* 102
- major massacres 226, 303–304, 307–308, 310, 323, 333, 362–363, 419, 478–479, 534 *n.* 50
- military manipulation of Islamists 194–195, 228, 288–289, 300–301, 304–308, 320, 323–324, 379, 401, 405, 419, 478–479, 530 *n.* 4, 534 *n.* 50, 535 *n.* 68, 538 *n.* 103, 550 *n.* 85
- overall dynamics 194–196, 198
- repression of FIS 194, 219, 270, 276, 290, 301, 534 *n.* 54
- See also* AIS, assassinations, GIA, militias, MIA, Rome
- Platform Pact (1995), torture (Algerian use of)
- BNASS (Bureau National d’Animation du Secteur Socialiste) 95, 98–99, 515 *nn.* 23, 29, 524 *n.* 84
- BNBV (Bureau National à la Protection et à la Gestion des Biens Vacants) 94–95
- Bonaparte, Louis-Napoléon 60, 507 *n.* 118
- Bontemps, Charles-André 83, 86–88, 186, 508 *n.* 139, 513 *n.* 217
- Bookchin, Murray 241, 374, 550 *n.* 78
- Bösiger, André 81
- Boualem, Bachaga 223, 536 *n.* 71
- Boudiaf, Mohamed 1962–1991 56, 111, 126, 128, 201, 216, 231, 276, 513 *n.* 3
- as Algerian president 194, 276, 297, 301, 521 *n.* 3, 538 *n.* 103
- assassination 194, 219, 288, 301, 531 *n.* 23, 535 *n.* 60, 538 *n.* 103, 544 *n.* 198, 550 *n.* 85
- before independence 90, 501 *nn.* 2, 8, 513 *n.* 214
- Boudissa, Safi 118, 518 *n.* 73
- Boudjedra, Rachid 279, 542 *n.* 172
- Boujut, Michel 128
- Boukhobza, M’Hamed 305, 544 *n.* 210
- Boukrouh, Nourredine 220, 534 *n.* 58
- Boulifa, Saïd 229, 537 *n.* 78
- Boulouque, Sylvain 17, 33, 498 *nn.* 17, 20
- Boumaza, Bachir 518 *n.* 64
- Boumédienne, Houari 514 *n.* 11
- before independence 31, 91, 114, 130, 138, 248, 320, 371, 391, 518 *n.* 60, 529 *n.* 1, 533 *n.* 48
- in Ben Bella regime 91, 109, 112, 114, 130, 137–139, 141, 288, 516 *n.* 36, 517 *n.* 45
- June 1965 coup 104, 130–131, 137, 170, 216, 295–296, 516 *n.* 36
- post-1965 coup 130–134, 137–141, 147, 152, 166, 170–171, 190, 199, 201, 210, 214, 216–218, 220, 230, 245–246, 248–249, 259–261, 288, 295–297, 322, 353, 371, 517

- n. 45, 518 n. 60, 521 n. 17, 523 n. 54, 529 n. 1, 530 n. 12, 533 n. 48, 534 nn. 50, 52, 56, 535 n. 63, 536 n. 70, 538 n. 102, 542 n. 171
- Bourdet, Claude 40, 45–46, 128
- Bourgeois, Guy 120, 159, 505 n. 87
- Bourgès-Maunoury, Maurice 361
- Boussouf, Abdelhafid 114, 137, 517 n. 58, 524 n. 80
- Bouteflika, Abdelaziz
1962–1999 114, 139, 353, 371, 516 n. 36, 517 n. 59, 533 n. 48, 549 n. 59
as Algerian president (1999–present) 197, 320–326, 332–335, 339–340, 345, 347, 353–354, 362–364, 369, 380–382, 384, 386–389, 398, 402, 410, 420, 447–448, 461, 463, 472, 484, 517 n. 59, 535 n. 61, 551 nn. 103, 105, 552 n. 126
before independence 371, 517 n. 59
- Bouali, Mustapha 218, 534 n. 51, 541 n. 144
- Bowen, James 497 n. 1
- Brahimi, Miloud 531 n. 12
- Branche, Raphaëlle 497 n. 7
- Breton, André 48, 79, 504 n. 71
- Bulletin de l'Autogestion* 101, 117, 524 n. 84
- Burgat, François 345
- Bush, George 323, 338, 385–386, 448
- CA (Confrontation Anarchiste) 166
- Camus, Albert 32, 34, 40, 67–73, 75–76, 79–80, 159, 264, 374, 487, 510 n. 163
- “Carlos” (Illich Ramirez Sánchez) 281, 283, 542 n. 175
- Cassou, Jean 40
- Castoriadis, Cornelius 507 n. 109, 519 n. 89
- Césaire, Aimé 46, 504 n. 64
- CFDT (Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail) 200, 212, 530 n. 7, 554 n. 156
- CGA (Coordination des Groupes Anarchistes) 328, 342, 393–395, 490
- CGT (Confédération Générale du Travail) 60, 141, 145, 211–212, 532 nn. 32, 34, 554 n. 156
- CGTSR (Confédération Générale du Travail Syndicaliste Révolutionnaire) 16, 211, 498 n. 14, 532 n. 33
- Chadli 190–192, 194, 201–202, 204, 217–218, 220, 244–246, 258–259, 261, 263–264, 270, 273, 279, 288–289, 292, 295–297, 301, 353, 369–372, 529 n. 1, 531 n. 23, 532 n. 26, 533 n. 48, 534 n. 56, 536 nn. 70, 76, 538 nn. 102, 103, 539 n. 115
- Chaliand, Gérard 115, 518 n. 66
- Challe, Maurice 64
- Chanderli, Abdelkader 153, 524 n. 81
- Chavance, Louis 61
- Cheney, Dick 549 n. 68
- Chirac, Jacques 221, 254, 261, 298–299, 337, 343, 352, 383, 385–387, 416, 448, 535 n. 66, 540 n. 131
- Chomsky, Noam 440, 445
- CIRA (Centre International de Recherches sur l'Anarchisme) 81, 512 n. 206
- CISA (Comité International de Soutien au Syndicalisme Autonome Algérien) 425, 555 n. 167
- Civil Concord (1999) 321, 324, 332–334, 354–358, 378–380, 391, 463
- civil society
in Algeria 246, 339, 426–427, 453, 550 n. 80
anarchist views on 366–368, 374, 442
- CNCD (Coordination Nationale pour le Changement et la Démocratie) 347
- CNES (Conseil National des Enseignants du Supérieur) 215–216, 354, 357
- CNRA (Conseil National de la Révolution Algérienne) 30, 65, 91, 108, 508 n. 133, 542 n. 164
- CNT-AIT (Confédération Nationale du Travail - Association Internationale des Travailleurs) 211–216, 328, 395–419, 441, 481, 533 nn. 38, 39, 554 n. 143

- CNT-F ("Vignolles") (Confédération Nationale du Travail - France)
212–213, 328, 395–396, 416,
418–430, 441, 481, 492, 533 *n.* 38,
553 *n.* 142, 554 *nn.* 143, 144, 146
- Cohn-Bendit, Daniel 154, 160–161,
176–178, 524 *n.* 91, 525 *n.* 98
- Cold War, anarchist views on 52,
71–72, 78–79, 122
- Colson, Daniel 235, 328, 331, 464–
465, 496, 537 *n.* 86, 557 *n.* 207
- Communal Councils for the Anima-
tion of Self-Management 97,
99–100, 115–116, 141–142
- Communist Party, French
after Algerian independence 113,
120, 135, 141, 162–163, 204, 315,
488, 520 *n.* 3
before Algerian independence
14–15, 17–18, 32, 42, 44, 47, 53,
55, 59, 66, 74–75, 145–146, 211,
222–224, 258, 311, 488, 506 *nn.*
94, 103, 509 *n.* 153
- Communists, Algerian 125, 130, 170,
210, 220, 222–223, 295, 310, 334,
476, 515 *n.* 29, 521 *n.* 12, 522 *n.*
31
See also Ettahadi, PADS, PAGS
- Constantine riots (1986) 192,
262–263, 265, 473
- Corm, Georges 345
- corruption, material 115, 134, 191,
208, 213–215, 249–250, 256, 259,
265, 269, 289–290, 296, 310, 323,
325, 333, 340, 346, 353, 358, 363,
370, 377–378, 380, 391–393, 404,
420, 425, 433, 438, 482, 538 *n.*
103, 549 *n.* 59, 550 *n.* 85
- council communists 26, 113, 155,
169, 183, 507 *n.* 109, 519 *n.* 89
- Courrière, Yves 144, 288, 543 *n.* 185
- Creagh, Ronald 331, 497 *n.* 1, 541 *n.*
148, 551 *n.* 91
- CRUA (Comité Révolutionnaire
pour l'Unité et l'Action) 28, 38,
523 *n.* 51
- Cuba 121–127, 177, 251
- Dahou, Hadj Mohamed 499 *n.* 28
- Daniel, Jean 72, 126
- David, Michel 184–185
- Debord, Guy 499 *n.* 28, 507 *n.* 109,
559 *n.* 21
- Debré, Michel 50, 64, 505 *n.* 80
- Dechezelles, Yves 40
- de Gaulle, Charles 15, 32, 42, 48–50,
60–66, 73–74, 76, 79, 139, 145,
147, 220, 361
- Deleuze, Gilles 464, 503 *n.* 43
- Delisle, René 126
- del Vasta, Lanza 181
- demographics, Algerian 134,
167–168, 217, 224, 256, 263, 540
n. 125
- Devaldès, Manuel 83
- de Villiers, Philippe 345, 548 *n.* 45
- Devriendt, André 61, 284–285
- Dey, Hem (Marcel or Henri Dieu)
61, 507 *n.* 122
- Diafer, Aït 499 *n.* 28
- Dilem, Ali 559 *n.* 28
- Diop, Alioune 46, 504 *n.* 64
- Djaballah, Abdallah 447, 556 *n.* 189
- Djaout, Tahar 278–279, 301, 542 *n.*
168
- Djemai, Abdelkader 509 *n.* 154
- Doukhan, Fernand 21
- DRS (Département du Renseigne-
ment et de la Sécurité) 228, 245,
300–301, 305–307, 317, 320,
324–325, 371, 379–380, 391, 401,
404–405, 419, 426, 479, 501 *n.* 7,
517 *n.* 58, 530 *n.* 4, 534 *n.* 50, 535
n. 68, 549 *n.* 61, 550 *n.* 85
- Duchemin, J.-C. 144
- Durruti, Buenaventura 53, 506 *n.* 95
- Dutch Provos 151, 160, 523 *n.* 70
- Duteuil, Jean-Pierre 156, 160, 164,
169, 176, 347–348, 367–368, 374,
457, 496, 524 *n.* 91
- economic liberalization (privatization)
policy 191, 193, 201–202, 209,
214, 260, 263, 265, 304, 320, 334,
339, 353, 357, 380, 388, 450, 460
- education policy 133–134, 192,
214, 230–232, 255–256, 262,
279–280, 335, 358–359, 375,
381, 421, 558 *n.* 18
- Ehrenreich, Barbara 529 *n.* 198
- elections, Algerian
municipal 193–194, 217, 226,

- 269, 305, 410–411, 433, 436, 454
 legislative 194, 209–210, 219–220,
 226, 269–270, 301–302 325, 364,
 378, 382–384, 386, 415, 436
 presidential 209, 219–221, 310,
 320, 324–325, 339–340, 353–354,
 357, 369, 385–388, 421
 electoral (or voting) participation,
 anarchist views on 39–40, 60–61,
 72–73, 148, 204, 238, 274–275,
 351–352, 366, 374, 383, 394, 523
 n. 61
 El Hadj, Cheikh 245
 El-Kseur program 339, 363, 366, 382,
 385–386, 389, 398, 403–405, 413,
 432, 434–437, 449, 451, 454, 553
 n. 130
 Ennahda (MN or MNI, Mouvement
 de la Renaissance Islamique)
 196, 210, 532 *n. 28*, 556 *n. 189*
 “eradicators” 195–196, 209, 310, 320,
 322–324, 332, 360, 401, 419, 538
 n. 103, 545 *nn. 218, 1*, 550 *n. 85*
 Étoile Nord-Africaine 14–15, 20, 43,
 201, 228, 249, 400, 537 *n. 79*
 Ettahaddi 209, 310
 FAC (Fédération Anarchiste Com-
 muniste) 120
 Family Code (1984) 191, 193, 207,
 217, 220, 278–279, 292, 299, 304,
 308, 334, 388, 391, 402, 463, 480
 Fanon, Frantz 49, 75, 91, 94, 102,
 185–186, 458–460, 490, 514 *n. 7*
 Faucier, Nicholas 77–79, 81
 Faure, Sébastien 498 *n. 13*
 Favrelière, Noël 128
 Favrod, Charles-Henri 144
 Fayolle, Maurice 17, 57–58, 60,
 123–124, 163–164, 507 *n. 112*
 FCL (Fédération Communiste
 Libertaire) 17, 21, 34, 36–42, 45,
 51–52, 57, 69, 72, 76, 88, 147,
 160, 201, 341, 476, 519 *n. 78*
 FCRA (Fédération Communiste
 Révolutionnaire Anarchiste) 16
 Fédération Anarchiste (FA)
 before 1953 split 17–18, 20–21,
 32, 37, 41–42, 52, 80, 82–83, 211
 1954–62 17, 33–34, 36–37, 51–52,
 57–67, 80, 83–84, 88, 498 *n. 20*
 1962–79 80, 105, 119–127, 135,
 154, 159–160, 163–164, 166,
 169–181, 524 *n. 91*, 525 *n. 94*, 526
 nn. 132, 133, 528 *nn. 166, 168*
 1979–1999 204, 216–219,
 248–311, 537 *n. 128*
 1999–present 345, 348, 375–393,
 464
 membership 120, 123–134, 154,
 159, 164, 166, 176, 179, 212, 311,
 328, 375, 464, 498 *n. 20*, 525 *n.*
 94, 527 *n. 138*, 528 *n. 168*
 negative critiques of 34, 37,
 51–52, 119, 121, 123–124, 154,
 163–164, 166, 176–179, 204, 239,
 345, 417–418, 464, 519 *n. 75*, 559
 n. 1
 on Algeria, 1954–62 33–34, 36–
 37, 58–67, 80–81, 88, 124–126,
 201, 216, 248–249, 251–252,
 257–258, 271–272, 274, 288, 311,
 476, 485
 on Algeria, 1962–65 125–127,
 216–217, 248, 251–252, 272, 288,
 295, 486
 on Algeria, 1965–79 169–176,
 179–181, 216–219, 248–250, 261,
 288, 295–296
 on Algeria, 1979–99 216–219,
 249–253, 255–266, 269–281,
 283–286, 288–310, 375–376,
 378–380, 388, 485
 on Algeria, 1999–present
 375–389, 391–393
 on anarchist movement gener-
 ally 337, 342, 348, 440–443
 on internal organizational issues
 57–58, 80, 105, 124, 127, 159,
 164, 176, 179, 204, 347, 441, 489,
 492, 526 *n. 132*
 FEN (Fédération de l'Éducation Na-
 tionale) (France) 212, 532 *n. 34*
 Feraoun, Mouloud 71, 80, 125, 407,
 511 *n. 186*
 Ferry, Jules 284, 543 *n. 178*
 FFS (Front des Forces Socialistes)
 1963–1965 400, 513 *n. 2*, 530 *n.*
 12, 534 *n. 51*, 537 *n. 82*
 1965–present 193–196, 210, 220,
 224, 227, 231, 233, 272–273, 304,

- 310, 320, 322, 332, 356–357, 359,
364, 384, 398–399, 402, 410, 413,
454, 513 *n.* 2, 535 *n.* 61
- Filali, Abdallah 48, 504 *n.* 71
- FIS (Front Islamique du Salut)
after January 1992 194–196, 207,
210, 213, 219–221, 224, 275–279,
287, 297, 301, 304, 306, 320–321,
355, 378–379, 391, 450, 454, 531
n. 12, 532 *n.* 26, 535 *nn.* 61, 65,
538 *n.* 103
before January 1992 193–194,
213, 218, 224, 269–274, 277, 283,
299–301, 372, 428, 447, 534 *nn.*
52, 53, 54, 535 *n.* 64, 556 *n.* 189
roots 192–193, 218, 278,
304–305, 346, 372, 447, 534 *nn.*
52, 53, 535 *n.* 64
- FLN (Front de Libération Nationale)
1954–62 21–22, 28–35, 38–39, 42,
46, 48–49, 51, 54–56, 59, 61–63,
65, 70, 72–73, 75–76, 84–86, 90,
94–95, 102–103, 108, 114, 119,
125, 130, 137–138, 143–147, 159,
162, 201, 222–223, 271, 288, 292,
311, 361, 476, 490, 516 *n.* 32, 517
n. 45, 518 *n.* 60, 522 *n.* 48, 524
nn. 80, 81, 531 *n.* 23, 535 *n.* 63
1962–89 90–91, 93–94, 102–103,
108–111, 114–118, 127, 130, 132,
134, 137–138, 140, 153, 162, 175,
192–194, 196, 202–203, 208, 217,
220–221, 237, 245–246, 249,
258–261, 262, 269–273, 278–279,
283, 290–292, 295, 297, 310–311,
369–371, 400, 476, 479, 516 *nn.*
30, 32, 33, 518 *n.* 60, 521 *n.* 9,
533 *n.* 48, 538 *n.* 102, 544 *n.* 204
1989–present 325, 340, 359, 380,
382, 384
Federation of France 46, 48, 51,
91, 94, 126, 542 *n.* 164
- FNTT (Fédération Nationale des
Travailleurs de la Terre) 101–102,
104, 113, 118–119, 518 *n.* 73
- Fontenis, Georges 17, 21, 36, 39–42,
45, 57, 143, 147, 160, 164–165,
201, 498 *n.* 20, 502 *n.* 31, 527 *n.*
137, 559 *n.* 31
- Force Ouvrière 212, 238, 538 *n.* 95,
554 *n.* 156
- Foucault, Michel 464
- France, Islamist attacks in (1994) 195,
221, 246, 313, 535 *nn.* 64, 68, 544
n. 211
- French army, conscript resistance 31,
40–41, 49–50, 55–57, 59, 61, 69,
75–77, 128, 201, 222–223, 271,
362, 511 *n.* 187
- French Guyana 213
- French policy toward Algeria, post-
independence 145, 153, 195, 202,
221, 277, 293, 296, 298–299, 302,
317, 339, 372, 378, 385, 389, 393,
423, 433, 472
- French Resistance 37, 41, 59, 76,
271–272, 502 *n.* 23
- French revolution 139, 143, 169, 181,
264, 272, 367, 496
- French state “antiterrorist” repres-
sion 195, 198–189, 221–222,
246, 313–317, 337–338, 342–344,
368–369, 394–395, 416–418,
448–449, 488, 492
- Furth (Fugler), René 126, 186, 529 *n.*
199, 559 *n.* 32
- GAAR (Groupes Anarchistes
d’Action Révolutionnaire) 34,
42, 51–57, 59, 72, 76, 88, 105,
119–120, 123, 159, 503 *n.* 44
- Gandhi, Mohandas 181
- gay community, Algerian 302
- general strike 105, 135, 190, 212, 265,
270, 300–301, 346, 369, 383, 386,
390, 397, 411, 433, 521 *n.* 18, 528
n. 186, 532 *n.* 34, 557 *n.* 208
- Ghazali, Mohamed 292
- GIA (Groupe Islamique Armé)
195–196, 227–228, 276, 297,
305–308, 317, 320–321, 323, 333,
354–355, 362–363, 379–381, 383,
447, 454, 479, 530 *n.* 4, 534 *n.* 50,
535 *nn.* 64, 68, 538 *n.* 103, 544 *n.*
209, 549 *n.* 61, 550 *n.* 85
- Goldman, Emma 39, 69, 478, 497 *n.*
2, 502 *n.* 29, 512 *n.* 194, 529 *n.*
194, 556 *n.* 198
- GPRA (Gouvernement Provisoire
de la République Algérienne)
31, 63–65, 90–91, 93–95, 114,

- 125, 130, 138, 508 *n.* 133, 517
nn. 45, 58, 524 *n.* 80, 531 *n.* 23,
 543 *n.* 185
- Grelaud, Lucien 183–185
- GSPC (Groupe Salafiste pour la
 Prédication et le Combat) 324,
 327, 355–356, 454, 549 *n.* 61
- Guattari, Félix 42, 464, 503 *n.* 43
- Guérin, Daniel 43–51, 58, 67, 75, 124,
 137–148, 155, 164, 176, 180, 201,
 204, 485–487, 502 *n.* 33, 503 *nn.*
 50, 53, 55, 58, 510 *n.* 88, 522 *n.* 47,
 526 *nn.* 123, 125, 137, 531 *n.* 18
 on colonial Algeria 43–45, 503 *n.*
 58
 on Algerian war 34, 40, 42–43,
 45–51, 75, 108, 137–138, 140,
 143–147, 149, 201, 246, 288, 487,
 502 *n.* 33
 on Algeria, 1962–1965 105,
 108–119, 127, 137–144, 147, 491,
 522 *n.* 47, 525 *n.* 125, 543 *n.* 185
 on post-1965 coup Algeria
 137–141, 144, 147
- Guermah, Massinissa 358, 412, 414,
 477
- Guermaz, Abdelkader 483
- Gulf War, First 194, 270
- Haddam, Anouar 447
- Haddam, Tadjini 276
- Hadgeres, Sadek 223, 536 *n.* 70
- Hadj, Messali 14, 28, 30, 38–39, 43–46,
 48–49, 69–70, 113, 145, 201, 216,
 222, 228–229, 248–249, 256, 502
n. 33, 537 *n.* 79, 539 *n.* 109
- Hadj Ali, Bachir 223, 536 *n.* 70
- Hafnaoui, Ghoul 341
- Hamas 308, 534 *n.* 52
- Hanoune, Louisa 372, 535 *n.* 62, 550
n. 74
- Harbi, Mohammed 514 *n.* 18, 558 *n.* 3
 as historian 13, 15, 90, 144,
 256–258, 323, 334–336, 514 *n.*
 18, 521 *n.* 16, 523 *n.* 50
 before 1965 coup 94–95, 103,
 109, 113, 115–117, 119, 144, 476,
 515 *n.* 29, 518 *n.* 64, 524 *n.* 84,
 558 *n.* 3
 post-1965 coup 130, 140, 144,
 323, 514 *n.* 18, 516 *n.* 33, 523 *n.*
 50, 536 *n.* 70
- harkis* 29, 90
- Haroun, Ali 276, 542 *n.* 164
- harragas* 325, 392, 470
- Hasni, Cheb 226, 536 *n.* 73
- Hattab, Hassan 355, 549 *n.* 61
- Hawad 308–309, 445–447
- health services 191–2, 214–215,
 255–256, 261, 280, 335, 376–377,
 427–429, 458–461
- housing supply 134, 191, 215,
 255–256, 259, 263, 265, 280, 305,
 333–334, 346, 355, 358, 376, 392,
 408, 412, 426–427, 430, 472
- Hungarian revolution (1956) 47–48,
 73–74, 84–85, 87, 122, 151, 184
- Hurst, Jean-Louis (“Maurienne”)
 222–224, 271–272, 541 *n.* 156
- IAF (International of Anarchist Fed-
 erations) 164, 526 *n.* 133g
- Ibañez, Tomás 497 *n.* 1
- Ibárruri Gómez, Dolores (La Pasion-
 ara) 312
- Ibrahimi, Ahmed Taleb 221, 279, 320,
 535 *n.* 63
- Ibrahimi, Mohamed Bachir 535 *n.* 63
- ICO (Informations et Correspon-
 dances Ouvrières) 155–156, 523
n. 65, 526 *n.* 123
- Idir, Achour 425, 481, 558 *n.* 18
- illiteracy 91, 172, 208, 232, 375, 515
n. 29
- Imache, Amar 229, 400, 537 *n.* 79
- imams*, imported from Middle East
 191, 229
- IMF (International Monetary Fund)
 193, 203, 209, 214, 228, 274, 304,
 333–334, 357, 375–378, 386, 397
- immigrants (generally) in France
 148, 174–175, 198, 238–239, 243,
 253–255, 261–262, 269, 282–286,
 302, 311–317, 325, 336–337,
 342–343, 353, 368–369, 385,
 389–390, 394–395, 416–418, 458,
 468–469, 486, 488, 492, 553 *n.*
 138, 559 *n.* 21
 youth revolts 253–254, 314–317,
 325, 432–443, 368–369, 389–390,
 394–395, 416–418, 468–469, 553
n. 138

- See also French state repression, racism in France, undocumented workers
- indigenous non-Western anarchic traditions 187, 236–237, 240–244, 246–247, 293–295, 308–309, 321–322, 399–400, 406–408, 433, 445–447, 463, 483–484, 492, 495, 499 *n.* 26, 529 *n.* 200, 546 *n.* 2, 552 *n.* 127
- individualist anarchists 16, 37, 57, 77, 82–88, 178, 183, 186, 329, 331, 350–351, 374, 483, 489, 548 *n.* 44
- industrialization, Algerian 132–133, 167, 208, 219, 250–251, 255, 259, 535 *n.* 56
- Infos et Analyses Libertaires* 216–219, 394
- insurrectionist anarchism 465–474, 477–480, 487, 552 *n.* 125, 557 *n.* 208
- Iran 240, 250–251, 270, 272, 277, 285, 291–292, 541 *n.* 149, 551 *n.* 102
- IRL (Informations et Réflexions Libertaires) 234–246, 486, 495
- Islam, critiques of, generally 21–22, 59, 111, 173, 249–250, 252, 266–267, 279, 281, 345, 363, 477, 548 *n.* 46
- Islam, political use of by Algerian regime 103, 111, 115, 117, 131, 133–134, 171–173, 192–193, 217, 248–250, 257, 278–279, 290–292, 295, 297, 299–300, 304, 315, 321, 339–340, 356, 358, 363, 384, 388, 391, 407–408, 420, 447, 479–480, 521 *nn.* 15, 16, 536 *n.* 76, 542 *n.* 172
- Islamism, generally 267–269, 279–288
- Islamist movement in Algeria, generally
1962–2000 133, 159, 190–196, 202–203, 206–210, 212–213, 216–220, 223, 244–245, 254, 261, 265, 268–272, 275–292, 296–307, 309, 314–316, 320–323, 333, 339, 346–347, 355, 357, 370–372, 379–380, 388, 419–420, 479–480, 521 *n.* 16, 531 *n.* 12, 534 *n.* 52
2000–present 321–323, 332–334, 354–358, 369, 378, 384, 401, 405, 411–412, 447–449, 453–454, 461–462, 471, 480
pre-independence 13–14, 208, 292
See also “Black Decade,” military manipulation of Islamists
- Jeanson, Francis 46, 75, 504 *n.* 66
- Jeanson network 49, 51, 56, 61, 223, 504 *n.* 66
- Jeune Résistance 50, 56, 81, 119, 162–163, 222–223
- Jouhaud, Edmond 148
- Joxe, Louis 49
- Joyeux, Maurice 17, 57–58, 60–65, 123–127, 154, 164, 171, 176–181, 248–252, 487, 492, 498 *nn.* 19, 20, 505 *n.* 85, 506 *n.* 108, 507 *nn.* 111, 112, 526 *n.* 132, 539 *n.* 109
- Julien, Ch.-A. 399
- Jura Libertaire, Le* 328, 430–439, 555 *n.* 171
- Kabyle autonomy issue 228, 322, 361, 364, 384–385, 402–403, 433, 482, 540 *n.* 136
- Kabylia, anarchic traditions 21–22, 187, 293–294, 321–322, 399–400, 406–408, 433, 483, 499 *n.* 33, 529 *n.* 200, 552 *n.* 127
- Kabylia insurrection (2001+)
321–322, 325, 335–336, 339–341, 358–361, 363–366, 375, 380–386, 388–389, 395, 397–415, 419–420, 431–438, 449–455, 461–464, 469–471, 473, 478, 483, 487, 492
causes 321, 335, 340, 358–360, 363, 366, 380, 382–383, 385, 387, 397, 404, 412–415, 433, 451, 462
dynamics 321–322, 335–336, 339, 358–360, 363–366, 380–389, 395, 397–415, 419–420, 431–438, 449–455, 462–464, 470–471, 483, 487
government repression 321, 340–341, 358–360, 363–365, 380–383, 386–387, 389, 397, 401, 403–405, 415, 420, 433, 435, 450
negotiations 322, 386–387, 398, 403, 410, 432, 449, 453–454
physical targets of rebellion 321,

- 359, 381–383, 386–387, 415, 451
spread beyond Kabylia 322,
339–340, 360, 381, 385, 389, 397,
405, 433, 435, 480–481
See also aarch (assemblies)
movement
- Kacimi, Mohammed (El Hassani)
481–482, 558 *n.* 20
- Kafi, Ali 219, 276, 532 *n.* 26, 534 *n.* 55
- Kaid, Ahmed 114, 518 *n.* 60
- Kebir, Rabah 221, 535 *n.* 65
- Kelkal, Khaled 221, 246, 316, 535 *n.* 68
- Kemal, Mustapha 345
- Kennedy, John F. 523 *n.* 53, 524 *n.* 81
- Khaled, Emir 43, 499 *n.* 27
- Khalifa, Boualem 223
- Khalifa, Rafik 325
- Khayati, Mustapha 507 *n.* 109
- Khider, Mohammed 31, 90, 96, 125,
216, 245, 288, 501 *nn.* 2, 8, 513
nn. 214, 4
- Khomeini, Ayatollah 220, 252, 270,
292
- Khrushchev, Nikita 48, 504 *n.* 73
- Koudil, Hafsa Zinaï 297–298
- Krim, Belkacem 111, 114, 216, 245,
288, 371, 501 *n.* 2, 517 *nn.* 45, 58,
524 *n.* 80
- Krivine, Alain 416–417, 553 *n.* 139
- Kropotkin, Peter 16, 52, 58, 76, 141,
235–236, 241–242, 442, 497 *n.* 11
- Lacoste, Robert 361
- LADDH (Ligue Algérienne pour
la Défense des Droits de
l'Homme) 193, 196, 202, 245,
261, 326, 347, 426–427, 516 *n.*
33, 530 *n.* 12, 531 *n.* 14, 535 *n.*
61, 555 *n.* 165
- Lafort, Claude 507 *n.* 109
- Lagant, Christian 120–123, 519 *n.* 78
- Laguiller, Arlette 416–417, 553 *n.* 139
- Laisant, Maurice 17, 57–58, 60, 64, 77,
80–81, 154, 176, 179, 507 *n.* 112
- Laks, Monique 515 *n.* 29
- Lamari, Gérard 353–361, 536 *n.* 77
- Lamari, Mohammed 320, 545 *n.* 218
- Lamari, Smaïn 320
- Lambert, Paul 222
- Lambert, Pierre 45, 364
- Lanterne Noire*, *La* 156–159
- Larcher, Simone (Rachelle Willisek) 77
- Laroui, Abdallah 557 *n.* 207
- Lecoin, Louis 34, 69, 77–81, 83–84,
86, 512 *nn.* 198, 200, 202
- Le Pen, Jean-Marie 258, 268, 272,
293, 311–313, 336, 343, 352, 383,
385, 416, 448, 540 *n.* 131
- Leval, Gaston (Robert Pillar) 72, 121,
124, 509 *n.* 152
- liberal democracy, anarchists on 52,
72–73, 108, 204–205, 238, 280,
315–316, 338, 351, 363, 366–368,
387, 400, 432–433, 442, 474
- libertaire*, the term 374, 508 *n.* 139,
558 *n.* 3
- Libertarian Communist International
21
- Liverani, Andrea 550 *n.* 80
- L'Oiseau-temps* 247–248, 328, 444,
449–455
- Lorne, Gérard 311, 361–363
- Lounès, Matoub 227–228, 233f, 358,
377, 481, 536 *n.* 75
- Luck, Simon 547 *n.* 37, 551 *n.* 91, 559
n. 30
- Lyotard, Jean-François 507 *n.* 109
- Maachou, Abdelkader 94–95
- Madani, Abassi 192, 194, 218, 273,
278, 304–305, 332, 372, 531 *n.*
12, 534 *nn.* 52, 54
- Mahsas, Ali 118, 515 *n.* 30
- Maitron, Jean 177, 179, 498 *n.* 12
- MAK (Mouvement pour
l'Autonomie de la Kabylie) 322,
327, 385, 402–403, 409, 437, 482,
540 *n.* 136
- Makhno, Nestor 19, 443, 499 *n.* 25
- Makhnovist movement, Ukraine 17,
53, 76, 86, 162, 206, 235, 329, 499
n. 25
- Malatesta, Errico 39, 53, 59, 66, 141,
238, 467, 502 *n.* 29
- Malek, Rédha 209, 221, 306, 531 *n.* 23
- MALG (Ministère de l'Armement et
des Liaisons Générales) 371, 501
n. 7, 517 *n.* 58
- Malraux, Clara 48, 504 *n.* 71
- Mammeri, Mouloud 252, 407, 539
n. 114
- Mandouze, André 361

- Manifesto of the 121 (1960) 49–50,
 56, 61–62, 75, 77, 361, 374, 505
nn. 79, 80, 81, 506 *n.* 94
 MAOL (Mouvement Algérien des
 Officiers Libres) 347, 538 *n.* 103
marabouts 21, 459, 500 *n.* 34
 March Decrees (1963) 95–102, 110,
 112, 118, 131, 151, 216, 295
 March 22nd Movement (1968) 135,
 154–155, 176–179, 539 *n.* 112
 Marin, Lou 509 *n.* 152
 Martin, Marie 185–186
 Martin, Pierre 77, 79–81, 512 *n.* 203
 Martinez, Luis 380
 Martinez, Miguel 22
 Marty, André 39, 502 *n.* 27
 Maspero, François 128
 Massu, Jacques 29, 48, 361, 504 *n.* 74
 Matoub
 See Lounès, Matoub
 Mauriac, François 45, 504 *n.* 59
 Mawdudi, Sayyid Abul-Ala 292
 May–June 1968, in France 135, 141,
 143, 154–155, 158, 160–161, 163,
 165, 176–179, 186, 198, 234, 329,
 431, 464, 477, 489, 524 *n.* 91, 525
n. 98, 553 *n.* 139
 Mayoux, Jehan 505 *n.* 79
 MCL (Mouvement Communiste
 Libertaire) 50
 MDA (Mouvement pour la
 Démocratie en Algérie) 193, 195,
 204, 210, 301, 310, 478, 513 *n.* 1,
 530 *n.* 3
 MDRA (Mouvement Démocratique
 pour le Renouveau Algérien)
 517 *n.* 45
 MDS (Mouvement Démocratique et
 Sociale) 536 *n.* 70
 Mecili, Ali 216, 296, 371, 533 *n.* 47
 Medhi, Meryem 429–430
 Médiène, Mohamed (Tewfik) 320,
 325, 371, 550 *n.* 85
 Mehenni, Ferhat 261, 385, 402–403,
 540 *n.* 136
 Mendès-France, Pierre 66, 502 *n.* 32
 Merbah, Kasdi 245, 372–373, 533 *n.*
 48, 538 *n.* 103, 550 *n.* 85
 Merle, Robert 141
 Merlino, Francesco Saverio 39, 502
n. 28
 Messaâdia, Mohamed Chérif 245,
 306, 538 *n.* 102
 Meynier, Gilbert 558 *n.* 3
 MIA (Mouvement Islamique Armé)
 191, 218, 264, 298, 534 *n.* 51, 541
n. 144, 543 *n.* 197
 Michel, Louise 125, 442, 530 *n.* 8
 Michel, Serge 34–35, 476, 501 *n.* 9
 migration, internal (urbanization)
 134, 208, 254–256, 294, 375, 471
 military, Algerian (post-independence)
 internal clan competition 131,
 289–290, 308, 310, 320–322, 324,
 335, 353, 364, 370–372, 378–379,
 388, 398, 534 *n.* 50, 545 *n.* 1, 552
 n. 126
 military security/intelligence force
 (secret political police)
 See DRS, MALG, SM
 militia (1990s) 304, 306, 355, 362,
 384, 387, 396, 479
 Mitev, Todor (Yvo) 121–122, 519 *nn.*
 80, 83
 Mitterand, François 45–46, 148, 212,
 254, 258, 361, 372, 374, 502 *n.* 32
 MLNA (Mouvement Libertaire
 Nord-Africain) 20–22, 341, 476,
 500 *nn.* 37, 40, 41
 MNA (Mouvement National Al-
 gérien) 15, 21, 30, 38–39, 46, 48,
 55, 70–71, 145–147, 201, 288,
 476, 504 *n.* 72, 510 *n.* 161
 Mollet, Guy 31–32, 46–48, 59, 84–85,
 223, 361, 504 *n.* 67, 513 *n.* 214
 Morain, Pierre 40, 45–46, 70, 503 *n.* 36
 Morin, Edgar 48, 504 *n.* 71
 mosques, expanding number of 133,
 191, 264, 521 *nn.* 13, 16
 Mouloud, Zedek 297, 543 *n.* 195
 Mourad, Didouche 501 *n.* 2
 MPR (Mouvement pour la Répub-
 lique) 544 *n.* 198
 MRN (Mouvement pour la Réforme
 Nationale) 556 *n.* 189
 MSP (Mouvement de la Société pour
 la Paix) 210, 325, 332, 340, 382,
 447, 532 *n.* 29
 MTLN (Mouvement pour le Triom-
 phe des Libertés Démocratiques)

- 15, 28, 30, 38, 40, 44, 90, 201,
257, 322, 508 *n.* 133, 534 *n.* 56,
543 *n.* 184
- Muñoz Congost, José 500 *n.* 44
- Muslim Brotherhood 191, 230, 264,
292, 420, 473
- Muslim schoolgirl attire issue, in
France 266–269, 281–288, 291,
337–338, 485
- Nadeau, Maurice 48, 504 *n.* 71
- Nahnah, Mafoud 218, 220, 447, 534
n. 52, 535 *n.* 59
- National Charter (1976 constitution)
133, 168, 292, 353, 534 *n.* 52
- National Charter for Peace and Rec-
onciliation (2004) 324–325, 340,
391, 428, 461
- National Front (France) 254, 258,
261, 271, 274, 311–313, 336, 338,
448, 539 *n.* 119
- nationalism, anarchist views on
18–20, 34, 54, 56, 59, 62–63,
85–86, 146, 171, 236, 249, 252,
477, 490–491, 498 *n.* 24
- nationalizations 132–134, 141, 144,
295, 521 *n.* 10, 522 *n.* 32
- national liberation movements,
anarchist views on 18–20,
33–34, 38–39, 42–45, 47–48,
50–56, 62–63, 73, 79, 84–85, 88,
120–122, 146, 158–159, 200–201,
235–237, 239–241, 248–249,
251–252, 348–349, 373, 490–491,
507 *n.* 112
- New Caledonia 200–201, 213,
240–241, 243–244, 258, 343, 351,
495, 530 *n.* 8
- Nezzar, Khaled 217, 276, 306, 320,
322–323, 534 *n.* 50, 535 *n.* 60,
542 *n.* 164
- Nietzsche, Friedrich 374, 467
- Noir et Rouge*
1956–1962 34, 51–57, 119–120,
239, 519 *n.* 88, 557 *n.* 2
1962–1970 34, 105, 120, 149–159,
525 *nn.* 92, 94
on Algeria before independence
51–57, 119, 122, 159, 239, 278,
487
on Algeria after independence
121–122, 149–154, 487, 526 *n.* 117
on anarchist movement 34,
51–52, 56, 119–121, 149, 151,
154–155, 157, 182, 444, 519 *n.*
83, 559 *n.* 31
formation 34, 51, 119, 503 *n.* 44
organizational model 51, 149,
154–156, 456, 519 *n.* 76
- Non Fides* 328, 467–469, 474
- No Pasaran 311–317, 328, 337,
439–449, 455
- OAS (Organisation de l'Armée
Secrète) 22, 32, 42, 65–67, 71,
76, 90, 125, 128, 145, 148, 222,
224, 258, 344, 505 *n.* 80, 511 *nn.*
178, 186
- OCA (Organisation Combat Anar-
chiste) 165–168
- OCL (Organisation Communiste
Libertaire)
1970s–99 147, 158, 169, 204–205,
219–234, 527 *n.* 138
1999–present 328, 337, 347–375,
442–443, 457
on Algeria, before 1962 222–224,
228–230, 361–362, 369, 374
on Algeria, 1962–65 229–230
on Algeria, 1965–79 230–232,
353
on Algeria, 1979–99 219–222,
224–228, 230–233, 353, 355–357,
359, 362–363, 369–373, 533 *n.* 49
on Algeria, 1999–present
353–367, 375
on anarchist movement 165, 205,
337, 348–352, 367, 374, 442–443,
456–457
formation 165, 169
membership 165, 347–348, 527
n. 138
organizational model 169,
347–348, 352–353
program 165, 169, 204–205, 353,
373
- October 17, 1961 massacre, Paris 50,
222, 224, 505 *n.* 83
- OLS (Offensive Libertaire et Sociale)
328, 337, 342, 352, 455–461, 492,
554 *n.* 156, 556 *n.* 196
- Onfray, Michel 345, 373–374, 548

- n.* 44
- ONRA (Office National de la Ré-
forme Agraire) 97, 101, 113, 118,
127, 152, 515 *n.* 30
- ORA (Organisation Révolutionnaire
Anarchiste) 147, 163–165, 177,
527 *nn.* 135, 137, 528 *nn.* 168,
172
- ORP (Organisation de la Résistance
Populaire) 130, 137, 140,
151–152, 170–171, 516 *n.* 33, 520
n. 3, 521 *n.* 12, 536 *n.* 70
- OS (Organisation Spéciale) 15, 28,
90, 130, 517 *n.* 45, 524 *n.* 80, 543
n. 184
- Ouldamer, Mezioud 481–482, 558
n. 21
- Ouyahia, Ahmed 386–387, 551 *nn.*
103, 105
- Ouzegane, Amar 144
- PADS (Parti Algérien pour la
Démocratie et le Socialisme) 536
n. 70
- PAGS (Parti de l'Avant-Garde So-
cialiste) 133, 192, 210, 231, 245,
520 *n.* 9, 521 *n.* 12, 531 *n.* 12, 533
n. 48, 536 *n.* 70
- Papon, Maurice 361
- Paris Commune (1871) 161, 206, 284,
329 431, 444, 477, 496, 530 *n.* 8
- Parkis, Jon 497 *n.* 1
- Pasqua, Charles 281, 293
- Pattieu, Sylvain 17, 33, 498 *n.* 16, 20,
500 *n.* 37
- Peigné, Margot 500 *n.* 45
- Pereira, Irène 548 *n.* 37, 559 *n.* 30
- Péret, Benjamin 48, 504 *n.* 71
- Perlman, Fredy 498 *n.* 24
- Pernicone, Nunzio 557 *n.* 211
- Pervillé, Guy 501 *n.* 5
- Pessin, Alain 497 *n.* 1
- petrochemical sector 214, 221
 changes in world market prices
 132, 191, 193, 203, 208, 216–217,
 325, 369, 372, 375, 392, 472, 480,
 531 *n.* 16
 importance in economy 132,
 144, 191, 203, 208, 216, 249, 255,
 290, 323, 325, 334, 339, 346, 358,
 372, 375, 378–379, 392, 408, 426,
 472, 480, 534 *n.* 56
 work conditions 277, 429–430,
 472
 See also corruption, material
- Peyroulou, Jean-Pierre 497 *n.* 7
- Philippe, Paul 36–38
- Picquerey, May 77
- pieds-noirs*
 composition and economic
 status 13, 44, 47, 52, 70, 516 *n.* 31
 flight in 1962 90, 92, 106, 151,
 162, 216, 295
 political influence exiled in
 France 76, 277
 political views and actions 15,
 22, 28, 31–32, 42, 44–47, 49, 62,
 70, 76, 90, 92, 145, 173, 222, 503
 n. 58, 504 *n.* 70, 511 *n.* 186
 postwar potential integration
 62–63, 69–71, 75, 509 *n.* 155
 war casualties 22, 28–30, 32, 70,
 75, 277
- Pierre, Abbé 79
- Pivert, Marceau 44, 48
- platformism 16–17, 42, 78, 162,
 164–165, 169, 347–348, 352, 465,
 490, 498 *n.* 15
- Pohér, Alain 523 *n.* 61
- Polisario Front 166
- political liberalization (Algerian)
 from 1980s on
 pre-1988 202
 1989–91 193, 199, 201–203, 208,
 218, 245–246, 273–275, 290,
 300–301, 327, 371–373, 423, 428
 1992–present 226, 321, 323,
 326–327, 333–334, 339, 356, 363,
 377–378, 386, 423, 428, 550 *n.* 80
- Pompidou, Georges 523 *n.* 61
- Pontecorvo, Gillo 35
- postmodern anarchism 184, 328, 331,
 464–466, 489, 525 *n.* 104
- Poujade, Pierre 41
- poverty, in Algeria 52, 214–215,
 249–250, 255–256, 283, 293, 299,
 325, 339, 364–365, 370, 375–376,
 385, 388, 391–392, 396, 421,
 425–426, 474, 552 *n.* 110
- PPA (Parti du Peuple Algérien) 15,
 69, 90, 222, 400, 517 *n.* 45, 524

- n.* 80, 534 *n.* 56, 537 *nn.* 79, 82,
543 *n.* 184
- PRA (Parti du Renouveau Algérien)
382, 534 *n.* 58
- press, Algerian
Arabization of 230–231, 358
expansion of 193, 209, 300, 357
government pressures and cen-
sorship 193, 209–210, 220, 231,
233, 245, 260, 300, 303, 305–310,
321, 340–341, 377, 392, 419, 427
journalist activism 245, 309–310,
340–341, 362–363, 377, 426–427,
451
negative critiques of coverage
170, 209, 220, 233, 256, 260, 307,
354, 377, 389, 405–406, 419, 431,
435, 437–438, 451, 544 *n.* 209,
546 *n.* 216
positive comments on coverage
310, 340, 353, 427, 430, 451
- press, French
coverage on Algeria 58, 130, 138,
166, 221, 226, 245–246, 258, 277,
283, 289–290, 307, 354, 361–362,
363–364, 378, 386–387, 389, 400,
403–404, 423, 433, 454, 463, 470
coverage on France 246, 253,
258, 267, 282, 285, 316–317,
361–362, 418, 439, 448
negative critiques on 58, 166,
221, 226, 245–246, 253, 267, 277,
282–283, 285, 289–290, 316–317,
354, 361–364, 378, 386–387, 389,
400, 403–404, 417, 423, 433, 439,
448, 454, 463
positive comments on 258, 307,
361–362
- primitivist anarchism 241–243, 374,
500 *n.* 48
- protest riots and demonstrations,
2011 326–327, 345–347, 375,
438–439, 474
- Prudhommeaux (Prunier), André 20,
67, 69, 73, 201, 236, 509 *n.* 152
- Proudhon, Pierre-Joseph 16, 141,
143, 465, 497 *n.* 9
- PRS (Parti de la Révolution Socialiste)
125–126, 201, 231, 276, 513 *n.* 3
- PSOP (Parti Socialiste Ouvrier et
Paysan) 44
- PSU (Parti Socialiste Unifié) 50, 123,
160, 163, 505 *n.* 82, 530 *n.* 7
- psychiatry, Algerian 458–461
- PT (Parti des Travailleurs) 196,
220–221, 356, 364, 372, 382, 550
n. 74
- Pucciarelli, Mimmo 213, 235, 311,
329–331, 341, 348
- Qtub, Sayyid 291, 521 *n.* 16
- Quemeneur, Tramor 511 *n.* 187
- racism, in France 148, 174–175, 198,
221–222, 243, 246, 253–254,
261–262, 267–268, 275, 277,
281–284, 286–287, 311–317,
336–338, 342–344, 389–390, 395,
448, 492a
- raï music 226, 248, 263, 411, 536 *n.*
73, 539 *n.* 107
- RAJ (Rassemblement Actions Jeu-
nesse) 224–227, 375, 398, 536
n. 74
- Ramdane, Abane 30, 70, 288, 510 *n.*
159, 517 *n.* 58, 530 *n.* 12
- Raptis (Pablo), Michel 42, 94–95, 109,
131, 151, 160, 163, 503 *n.* 46, 515
n. 19, 526 *n.* 123, 527 *n.* 150
- Ravachol 557 *n.* 211
- Raynaud, Jean-Marc 255, 349
- RCD (Rassemblement pour la Cul-
ture et la Démocratie) 193, 219,
227, 233, 322, 332, 347, 354–355,
357, 359, 372, 380, 384, 402, 410,
413, 438, 454, 535 *n.* 61, 544
n. 198
- Reclus, Elisée 185, 529 *n.* 194
- Red Army Brigade 478–479, 523 *n.*
51
- Red Army Faction 478–479, 523 *n.*
51
- REFLEX 312–317, 545 *n.* 225
- Réfractions* 328, 444, 461–465
- Reich, Wilhelm 154, 524 *n.* 88
- religion, generally, role of 86, 110–
111, 186, 206, 267–268, 274, 279,
281–283, 285–288, 297, 338, 345,
363, 390, 477–478, 480, 482–483,
541 *n.* 150
- revolution, anarchists and 78, 83–84,
86–88, 105–106, 111, 157–158,

- 160–161, 164–165, 169, 176–177, 180, 183–186, 197–198, 203–206, 240, 330–331, 349, 351, 366, 393, 399, 418, 434, 440, 456, 465–469, 477, 490–496, 528 *n.* 186, 548 *n.* 44
- revolutionary defeatism 59, 75, 78, 511 *n.* 184
- Révolution Prolétarienne* 43, 113, 249, 533 *n.* 41
- Rey, Benoist 362, 549 *n.* 69
- Rivière, Georges 278–281, 364–366, 461–464, 484
- RND (Rassemblement National Démocratique) 209, 325, 382, 551 *n.* 103
- Robles, Emmanuel 71
- Rocker, Rudolf 498 *n.* 24
- Rome Platform Pact (1995) 196, 210, 220, 310, 332, 531 *n.* 12, 535 *nn.* 59, 62, 65, 68
- Roosevelt, Franklin D. 222
- Ross, Kristin 525 *n.* 91
- Rouadja, Ahmed 289
- Roy, Olivier 345
- rupture, social 169, 197, 204, 345, 351, 443, 457, 465–467, 473, 487, 491, 493–496, 556 *n.* 198
- Russian revolution 49, 53, 58, 76, 78, 110, 141, 161–162, 177, 187, 206, 246, 431
- Saadi, Salim 221
- Sadi, Saïd 220, 357, 371–372, 531 *n.* 12, 535 *n.* 61, 544 *n.* 198, 550 *n.* 84
- Sahnoun, Ahmed 192, 218
- Sahraoui, Abdelbaki 535 *nn.* 64, 68
- Sahraoui, Djamila 299, 544 *n.* 202
- Said, Edward 509 *n.* 154
- Saïd, Mohammed 219
- Saïl, Mohamed 20–22, 293, 499 *n.* 29, 529 *n.* 200
- Salah, Derbal 476
- Salan, Raoul 50, 76, 148, 505 *n.* 80
- Samson, Jean-Paul 71–76, 128, 510 *nn.* 164, 165, 511 *n.* 186
- Samraoui, Mohammed 530 *n.* 4
- Sarkozy, Nicholas 336, 342–343, 395, 416, 418, 448, 472
- Sartre, Jean-Paul 46, 58, 75, 128, 504 *nn.* 64, 66, 505 *n.* 80
- Saudi Arabia 209, 221, 277, 280, 283, 285, 323, 353, 358, 472, 480
- SCALP (La Section Carrément Anti Le Pen) 311–317, 439–449, 545 *nn.* 224, 225
- Scheele, Judith 546 *n.* 2, 552 *n.* 127, 553 *nn.* 131, 136
- Schmidt, Michael 105, 499 *n.* 25
- Scott, James 546 *n.* 2
- Self-Management
See autogestion
- Semiane, Sid Ahmed 544 *n.* 209, 559 *n.* 28
- Semprun, Jaime 397–403, 411, 431, 434, 449, 552 *n.* 125
- Sétif massacre (1945) 15, 69, 223
- Simon, Louis 77, 80
- Sisaber, Ouassila 298
- Situationist movement 58, 113, 144, 183, 237, 466, 477, 486, 489, 499 *n.* 28, 507 *n.* 109, 524 *n.* 91, 526 *n.* 123, 538 *n.* 93, 539 *n.* 112, 559 *n.* 21
on Algeria 113, 144, 237, 477, 486, 499 *n.* 28, 538 *n.* 93, 559 *n.* 21
post-situationism 392–393, 397, 466, 532 *n.* 125
- SM (Sécurité Militaire) 132, 134, 144, 203, 216, 245, 289, 296, 371–372, 377, 501 *n.* 7, 517 *n.* 58, 533 *n.* 48, 534 *n.* 50, 538 *n.* 103, 552 *n.* 126
- Socialisme ou Barbarie* 58, 506 *n.* 109, 519 *n.* 89
- Socialists, French
after Algerian independence 202, 204, 261, 275, 277, 313, 337–338, 344, 530 *n.* 7, 540 *n.* 131
before Algerian independence 17, 31–32, 59, 145, 222, 252–253, 257, 505 *n.* 82
- Solidarité Internationale Libertaire 444
- Soltani, Abdelatif 191–192, 218, 521 *n.* 16
- Sonatrach 334, 534 *n.* 56
- Sorel, Georges 186
- Souaïdia, Habib 322–323, 534 *n.* 50
- Soummam congress (1956) 30, 201,

- 510 *n.* 159, 524 *n.* 80
- Soustelle, Jacques 37, 74, 502 *n.* 22
- Spanish anarchists in Algeria 20, 22, 476, 500 *nn.* 43, 44, 45
- Spanish civil war and revolution 20, 22, 53–54, 65, 69, 72–73, 76, 78, 86, 141–142, 149, 151, 161–162, 187, 206, 235–236, 239, 329, 402, 442–443, 477, 495–496, 506 *n.* 95, 523 *n.* 52, 526 *n.* 124, 556 *nn.* 182, 198
- Spielmann, Victor 499 *n.* 27
- State High Committee 194, 217, 219, 276, 531 *n.* 23, 532 *n.* 26
- Stirner, Max 178, 467
- Stora, Benjamin 274, 501 *n.* 5
- SUD (Solidaire Unitaire Démocratique) (France), trade unions group 200, 212, 422, 530 *n.* 7, 554 *n.* 156
- synthesis anarchism 16–17, 57–58, 124, 347–348, 352, 441, 492
- TAC (*Tribune Anarchiste Communiste*) 160–164, 205, 487, 503 *n.* 44, 526 *nn.* 124, 125, 128
- Taleb, Dalila 224
- teachers, imported from Middle East 133, 208, 230, 261, 521 *n.* 16
- Témoins* 69, 71–76, 128
- terrorism
- Algerian state 195–196, 214–215, 301, 323–324, 378, 396, 401, 404, 478–480
 - anarchist 85
 - FLN 34, 55–56, 59, 70, 72, 85–86, 146, 159
 - French and OAS, in Algeria 34, 54, 70, 73, 76
 - French state “anti-terrorist” definition of 222, 246, 281, 369, 535 *n.* 67
 - Islamist 194–196, 210, 214–215, 246, 293, 301, 323–324, 339, 355–356, 388–389, 396, 401, 412, 449, 460–461, 478–480
 - other political groups 155, 393
 - state and capitalist, generally 206, 214, 469
- Tibhirine monks 544 *n.* 211
- Tiqun group 392–393, 466, 557 *nn.* 209, 210
- Tocqueville, Alexis 399
- torture, Algerian use of 132, 139–140, 143, 171, 193, 195, 244–245, 276, 289, 297–298, 302–303, 323, 340, 360, 362, 365, 370–371, 387, 412, 453, 474, 522 *n.* 30, 530 *n.* 5, 536 *n.* 70, 546 *n.* 9
- torture, French use of 29, 70, 72–73, 90, 140, 171, 181, 223, 258, 289, 341, 361–362, 374, 511 *n.* 187, 522 *n.* 31, 540 *n.* 132, 549 *n.* 68
- Trotskyism, French 486
- after Algerian independence 159–160, 163–164, 170, 212, 416–417, 449, 468, 520 *n.* 3, 524 *n.* 91, 553 *n.* 139
 - before Algerian independence 42, 45–46, 51, 60, 76, 498 *n.* 16, 506 *n.* 109, 539 *n.* 109
- Tripoli Program 65, 91, 102
- Tuareg society 308–309, 445–447
- UACR (Union Anarchiste Communiste Révolutionnaire) 16
- UAS (Union des Anarcho-Syndicalistes) 212
- UDMA (Union Démocratique du Manifeste Algérien) 15, 35, 257, 537 *n.* 79
- UGAC (Union des Groupes Anarchistes Communistes) 120, 123–125, 127–128, 154, 159–160, 163, 176, 503 *n.* 44
- UGEMA (Union Générale des Étudiants Musulmans Algériens) 125, 534 *n.* 56
- UGTA (Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens)
- 1965–present 130–132, 134, 139–140, 167, 171, 193, 203–204, 216, 226, 259, 265, 304–305, 321, 326–327, 357, 369, 377, 423, 425, 427, 430, 450, 472, 482, 516 *n.* 33, 518 *n.* 60, 538 *n.* 102
 - before Algerian independence 93, 514 *n.* 9, 530 *n.* 12
 - during Ben Bella regime 93–94, 96–99, 101, 111, 114–115, 117–118, 125–127, 130, 151, 170, 295, 423, 427, 524 *n.* 84

- undocumented workers (*sans-papiers*) 148, 238, 253, 317, 337, 350–351, 394, 408, 448, 473, 492, 527 *n.* 156
- UNEA (Union Nationale des Étudiants Algériens) 130, 140, 170–171, 476
- unemployment 134, 167, 172, 176, 191, 207, 217, 219, 224, 255–256, 261, 263–265, 269, 283, 292, 326, 333, 346, 358, 375–376, 391–393, 408, 412, 425–426, 449, 451–452, 462, 471, 474
- UNFA (Union Nationale des Femmes Algériennes) 111, 517 *n.* 47
- Union Anarchiste 16, 20, 498 *n.* 14
- United Nations 29, 133, 141, 307, 320, 480, 524 *n.* 81
- United States
 Algerian policy toward 152, 260, 285, 323, 531 *n.* 23, 540 *n.* 136
 economic interests in Algeria 323, 339
 foreign policy, generally 32, 196, 236, 447, 480, 549 *n.* 68
 foreign policy toward Algeria 64, 152, 209, 221, 223, 260, 278, 285, 293, 323–324, 339, 381, 385, 447, 524 *n.* 81, 530 *n.* 4, 546 *n.* 9, 551 *n.* 102
- urbanization
 See migration, internal
- UTCL (Union des Travailleurs Communistes Libertaires) 147–148, 165–166, 169, 200–205, 523 *n.* 56, 531 *n.* 18
- Valéro, Léandre 21, 476, 500 *n.* 41
- van der Walt, Lucien 105, 499 *n.* 25
- Vaneigem, Raoul 507 *n.* 109
- Vasseur, Robert 404–411, 431, 434–438
- Véran, Emile 77, 79–80
- Vichy regime 15, 22, 41, 60, 74, 222, 261, 274, 504 *n.* 58
- Vidal-Naquet, Pierre 361
- Vidal, Pierre (Jean-Pierre Poly) 121, 519 *nn.* 75, 76
- Vié, Jean Emile 221
- Vigipirate 221, 313–314, 316–317, 535 *n.* 67
- Vincey, Georges 83
- violence, anarchists on 53, 55–56, 68, 70, 73, 76–88, 105, 107, 145–146, 150 159, 181–186, 205, 208–209, 350, 373, 393, 395, 401–492, 416–418, 467–469, 478–479, 490
 false image of anarchists 76, 330, 350
 guerrilla warfare 53
 in revolution 53, 55–56, 68, 73, 76, 78–79, 83–88, 108, 145–146, 150–151, 184–186, 373, 393, 467–468, 474, 478–479
 necessary use of 76, 206, 402, 467–474, 478–479
 non-violence essence of anarchism 81–82, 181, 183
 of state and capitalism 183–184, 206, 210, 402, 416, 418, 469, 472–473, 478–479
 opposition to 68, 70–88, 105, 159, 181–186, 330, 393, 395, 417–418
 understandable use of 395, 416–418, 467–468, 471
 See also Algiers “Black October,” “Black Decade,” Kabyle
 insurrection, revolution, terrorism
- Voie Communiste, La* 42, 51, 201
- Voline 476, 499 *n.* 25
- Vouchlaghem, Lvachir 482–483, 559 *n.* 25
- Wafd party 320
- Wahhab, Mohammed ibn Abdul 292
- women, Algerian
 activism 111, 139, 167–168, 172, 193, 207, 209, 217–218, 278–280, 290–291, 293, 297–298, 308, 326, 333–336, 354, 360, 365–366, 381, 385, 397, 401, 413–414, 420, 428–430, 449, 451, 462–463, 483, 487
 government policy 112, 115, 133, 167–168, 172, 191, 207–208, 217, 278–279, 290–291, 332, 334, 354, 388, 391, 429, 521 *n.* 9
 Islamists and women 168, 194, 206–208, 217–218, 225, 270, 278,

- 286, 290, 297–298, 308, 310, 332, 388, 461
 social and economic status 111, 115, 168, 172–173, 207, 210, 215, 270, 290–291, 294, 335, 383, 388, 401, 407, 413–414, 420, 422, 429, 449, 451–452, 460–461, 463, 479–480, 487, 492, 521 *n.* 16, 557 *n.* 209
See also Family Code
 WTO (World Trade Organization) 428
 Yacine, Kateb 231, 297, 483, 537 *n.* 81
 Yahiaoui, Mohamed Salah 217, 533 *n.* 48
 Yédes, Ali 510 *n.* 160
 Yous, Nesroulah 549 *n.* 70
 youth, Algerian
 activism (secular) 111, 168, 193, 224–227, 264–265, 326, 335, 357, 359–360, 365, 375, 393, 405–406, 408, 413, 415, 452, 471
 alienation 111, 264–265, 296–297, 323, 326, 334, 358–359, 365, 408, 412, 415, 540 *n.* 123
 attraction to Islamism 192–193, 207, 224, 316, 379
 emigration desire 224, 263, 265, 325, 359
 government policy 115, 168
 other issues 111, 192, 224–225, 263, 333–334, 359, 412–413, 451, 471
 rebellion and riots 192, 218, 262–264, 289, 296, 323, 326, 335, 346, 358–359, 375, 393, 403, 408, 413, 415, 452, 471
 sector of population 111, 168, 224, 277, 471
 unemployment 224, 263, 291, 333–335, 412, 425–426, 449, 451, 471
 Zahouane, Hocine 103, 113, 118–119, 130, 140, 142, 516 *n.* 33, 518 *n.* 73, 524 *n.* 84, 531 *n.* 12, 536 *n.* 70
 Zahouania, Chaba (Halima Mazzi) 248, 539 *n.* 107
 Zaïd, Yacine 430
 Zamoum, Ali 537 *n.* 80, 558 *n.* 4
 Zanaz, Hamid 374
 Zbiri, Tahar 114, 288, 516 *n.* 33, 530 *n.* 12
 Zeller, André 64
 Zerdani, Abdelaziz 103, 119, 516 *n.* 33, 524 *n.* 84
 Zerhouni, Noureddine Yazid 398, 552 *n.* 126
 Zeroual, Liamine 196, 209, 220–221, 228, 292, 298, 301, 310, 317, 320, 322, 332, 353, 391, 532 *n.* 26, 547 *n.* 20, 551 *n.* 103
 Zerzan, John 374, 500 *n.* 48
 Zitouni, Djamel 306, 355, 379, 544 *n.* 211, 549 *n.* 61
 Zorkine, Paul 53, 120, 149, 505 *n.* 85, 519 *n.* 89
 Zouabri, Antar 306, 355, 379, 544 *n.* 211, 549 *n.* 61

"Porter's sensitive, learned, and accessible account is highly recommended for anyone wishing to acquire a deeper knowledge of the history of modern Algeria, as well as of the range of anarchist approaches, in both France and Algeria, to the pathways of Algerian politics before and since independence." —Mohammed Bamyeh, author of *Anarchy as Order: The History and Future of Civic Humanity*

"This alternate history of Algeria's struggle to eliminate French rule and transform itself from the inside makes it clear that the grassroots urge to mobilize for social justice in North Africa didn't begin and won't end with 2011's Arab Spring." —Maia Ramnath, author of *Decolonizing Anarchism*

"*Eyes to the South* makes a significant and valuable contribution to a small but growing literature analyzing the complex and problematic engagement of anarchists with decolonization in general, and Algeria in particular."

—David Berry, author of *A History of the French Anarchist Movement, 1917 to 1945*

Eyes to the South explores important issues from the last six tumultuous decades of Algerian history, including French colonial rule, nationalist revolution, experiments in workers' self-management, the rise of radical Islamist politics, an insurgent revival of traditional decentralist resistance and political structures, conflicts over cultural identity, women's emancipation, and major "blowback" on the ex-colonial power itself. David Porter's nuanced examination of these issues helps to clarify Algeria's current political, economic, and social conditions, and resonates with continuing conflicts and change in Africa and the Middle East more generally. At the same time, *Eyes to the South* describes and analyzes the observers themselves—the various components of the French anarchist movement—and helps to clarify and enrich the discussion of issues such as national liberation, violence, revolution, the role of religion, liberal democracy, worker self-management, and collaboration with statist in the broader anarchist and anti-authoritarian movements.

David Porter, a professor emeritus at SUNY/Empire State College, taught politics and history, including courses on modern Algeria. David is the editor of *Vision on Fire: Emma Goldman on the Spanish Revolution* and an analyst of the recent "leaderless revolutions" of the Middle East and North Africa.

Sylvain Boulouque is a historian and author of *Les anarchistes français face aux guerres coloniales (1945–1962)*.



www.akpress.org
www.akuk.com
printed in USA
cover design: Josh MacPhee/Justseeds.org

ISBN 978-184935076-1



9 781849 350761

5 2500>