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Popularizing historical taboos, transmitting postmemory: the French-Algerian War in the bande dessinée

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POPULARIZING HISTORICAL TABOOS, TRANSMITTING POSTMEMORY: THE FRENCH-ALGERIAN WAR IN THE BANDE DESSINÉE

by

Jennifer Therese Howell

An Abstract

Of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Doctor of
Philosophy degree in French and Francophone World Studies
in the Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

July 2010

Thesis Supervisor: Associate Professor Anny Dominique Curtius

ABSTRACT

In addition to proposing a survey and subsequent analysis of the French-Algerian War in French-language comics, also known as bandes dessinées, published in Algeria, France, and Belgium since the 1960s, my dissertation investigates the ways in which this medium re-appropriates textual and iconographic source materials. I argue that the integration or citation of various sources by artists functions to confer a measure of historical accuracy on their representation of history, to constitute a collective memory as well as personal postmemories of the war, and to re-contextualize problematic images so that they and the hegemonic discourses they reinforce may be deconstructed. Moreover, the bande dessinée mimics secondary schoolbook representations of the war in both Algeria and France in its recycling of problematic images such as Orientalist painting, colonial postcards, and iconic images of war. The recycling of textbook images has the double advantage of ensuring reader familiarity with these images and of inviting critical interpretations of them. By exploring how the bande dessinée reuses colonial images as well as critical histories in predominantly anti-colonialist narratives, I seek to explain how this popular medium uniquely problematizes questions of history, memory, and postcolonial identity related to French Algeria and its decolonization. It is my contention that, because historical bandes dessinées frequently include or reference authentic textual and iconographic source material documenting the repercussions of the French-Algerian war on various communities, they represent a valuable resource to middle and high school teachers looking to enrich the state-mandated history curriculum. By using the bande dessinée in this capacity, educators exploit this medium as both a historical document (whose objective is to transmit knowledge of the past) and a document of history (which allows scholars to retrace the evolution of public opinion).

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Graduate College
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Iowa City, Iowa

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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PH.D. THESIS

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This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis of

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has been approved by the Examining Committee
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ABSTRACT

In addition to proposing a survey and subsequent analysis of the French-Algerian War in French-language comics, also known as bandes dessinées, published in Algeria, France, and Belgium since the 1960s, my dissertation investigates the ways in which this medium re-appropriates textual and iconographic source materials. I argue that the integration or citation of various sources by artists functions to confer a measure of historical accuracy on their representation of history, to constitute a collective memory as well as personal postmemories of the war, and to re-contextualize problematic images so that they and the hegemonic discourses they reinforce may be deconstructed. Moreover, the bande dessinée mimics secondary schoolbook representations of the war in both Algeria and France in its recycling of problematic images such as Orientalist painting, colonial postcards, and iconic images of war. The recycling of textbook images has the double advantage of ensuring reader familiarity with these images and of inviting critical interpretations of them. By exploring how the bande dessinée reuses colonial images as well as critical histories in predominantly anti-colonialist narratives, I seek to explain how this popular medium uniquely problematizes questions of history, memory, and postcolonial identity related to French Algeria and its decolonization. It is my contention that, because historical bandes dessinées frequently include or reference authentic textual and iconographic source material documenting the repercussions of the French-Algerian war on various communities, they represent a valuable resource to middle and high school teachers looking to enrich the state-mandated history curriculum. By using the bande dessinée in this capacity, educators exploit this medium as both a historical document (whose objective is to transmit knowledge of the past) and a document of history (which allows scholars to retrace the evolution of public opinion).

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INTRODUCTION

On November 1, 1954, France's last war of decolonization erupted in Algeria, resulting in the death of at least 18,000 French soldiers and 350,000 Algerian civilians and nationalists.[1] Unlike any other war in French and Algerian history, the French-Algerian War (1954-62) remains pivotal in determining twentieth and twenty-first-century immigration and naturalization policies, national identity, and current Franco-Algerian relations. Indeed the legacy of colonial contact continues to affect both nations. What distinguishes the French-Algerian War in French and Algerian national history? Because France's Ministry of the Interior governed French Algeria, the region's administrative departments constituted an integral part of the French republic. Algerian independence therefore erased holistic conceptions of the French nation-state. In addition, the war would lead to the dissolution of France's Fourth Republic and, more importantly, of its colonial empire. In Algeria, the war has taken on mythic proportions, marking the beginning of the Algerian republic and contemporary Algerian history. How one participated (or failed to participate) in the struggle for independence still determines the respectability of Algerian leaders and Algeria's social order (McDougall 2006, 59).

Patricia Lorcin posits that the vertical sociopolitical violence of the colonial period (e.g. conflicts between colonizer and colonized) became bi-vectorial during the war. In addition to the original binary opposition, internal or what Lorcin terms "horizontal" struggles divided both camps (2006, xxiii). The French separated into two groups: those in favor of an independent Algeria and those in favor of French Algeria. Algerian nationalists were split between two dominant factions: Messalists and the *Front de libération nationale* (FLN). The French-Algerian War was simultaneously a French

[1] Figures vary substantially according to their source: the FLN at the end of the war, the Algerian government some years later, successive French governments, etc.

civil war, an Algerian civil war, and a Franco-Algerian war. Lorcin contends that the "quadrangular situation created a multilayered palimpsest of narratives on both sides, made up of mythologies, memories, and internalizations, some of which are only now beginning to surface" (2006, xxiii). In effect, France has long refused to recognize the war, favoring the euphemism "peacekeeping operations" over "war" and continues to struggle with the army's use of torture and other questionable war tactics. The Algerian government, on the other hand, still discriminates against the *harki* community (native Algerian soldiers enlisted in the French army and their families) even though president Bouteflika granted a general amnesty in 2005 to Islamic terrorists for crimes committed during the civil war (1991-2002). While the war is taught in French and Algerian secondary schools, their presentation is cursory at best, passing quickly over the war's causes and the ambiguous status of its actors. Certain memory communities such as the *harki* and *pieds noirs* (Algerians of European descent) remain marginalized groups in both societies. Rarely do their memories coincide with French and Algerian collective memory and national history.

History, Memory, Postmemory

Pierre Nora differentiates between history and memory as follows: "[l]a mémoire est un phénomène toujours actuel, un lien vécu au présent éternel; l'histoire, une représentation du passé" (1984, xix). Nora understands history as universal and memory as collective and individual. One could argue, however, that collective memory in its denial of marginalized, individual memories, lends itself to the writing of history. Stated differently, the collective memory of the dominant group is often recorded as history. One prominent example is the FLN's version of the Algerian revolution which was taught in Algerian secondary schools until the early 1990s. Moreover, Nora posits that "[d]ès qu'il y a trace, distance, médiation, on n'est plus dans la mémoire vraie, mais dans l'histoire" (1984, xix). But what happens when a traumatic event is not yet part of a

nation's distant past? The French-Algerian War remains a historical taboo in France and Algeria due to the fact that many eyewitnesses, participants, and victims have survived and are active in contemporary politics. Consequently, marginalized memory communities aggressively resist attempts to solidify an "official" version of the war in both countries. Yet if some have spoken openly about their war experiences, most have chosen silence for fear of retaliation, expulsion, and death. The result is a perceived absence of war narratives in France and the omnipresence of FLN-scripted narratives in Algeria until the 1980s when the next generation of French and Algerian citizens came of age and began contributing to the cultural production of their respective countries.

While new generations of citizens allow for the revitalization of French and Algerian collective memory (e.g. by speaking for their silenced parents, by unearthing the repressed memories of those who came before), they lack direct memories of the war. Most writers and artists working on the French-Algerian War today were either too young to remember it or were born after 1962. They must therefore create what Marianne Hirsch calls a "postmemory," defined here as an indirect, personal memory of the war generated from material traces of the past. Based on second-generation Holocaust literature, Hirsch's notion of postmemory can be distinguished from memory by time and from history by personal connection (1997, 22). Hirsch associates memory with first-generation survivors and postmemory with subsequent generations (descendants of survivors) whose childhoods were shaped by first-generation narratives and their accompanying photographic images. Although image and text both constitute vehicles for transmitting memory, photographs are particularly significant in that they separate postmemory from memory and memory from forgetting (Hirsch 1997, 22). If new generations are creating and transmitting postmemories of the French-Algerian War, readers must not forget that these postmemories are irrevocably linked to the personal memories of survivors, French and Algerian collective memory, and French and Algerian national history. It follows that postmemories are limited by the same silences and

omissions which have rendered the tasks of remembering, historicizing, and teaching the war problematic.

Because history and memory are intimately related (despite Nora's theoretical paradigm), their relationship renders any attempt to differentiate between them difficult. Mireille Rosello posits that "[…] some narratives develop in a space that blurs the distinction between them [memory and history] or rather perform a type of cultural work that cannot be accommodated by an either-or logic" (2010, 17). I would argue that Hirsch's notion of postmemory provides a point of transition between history and memory (both collective and individual[2]). Postmemory allows an individual or a generation (in the case of collective postmemory) to constitute their own memory of an event not directly experienced or witnessed. While postmemory involves a great deal of imaginative creation, it is not synonymous with historical fiction. The writers and artists responsible for generating postmemory have established a deep personal connection to the event represented. With respect to the French-Algerian War, they are the children of soldiers, of mujahidin, of *pieds noirs*, of *harkis*. Because they have grandparents or parents who participated in or were deeply affected by the war, they grew up listening to eyewitness accounts and survivor testimonies as well as viewing family photographs and picture postcards. Later, these same writers and artists would hear different narratives generated by the State or respected historians. Unable to recreate their parents' memories

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[2] One could argue that it is impossible to differentiate between collective and individual processes of remembering. Maurice Halbwachs posits that "[…] nos souvenirs demeurent collectifs, et ils nous sont rappelés par les autres, alors même qu'il s'agit d'événements auxquels nous seul avons été mêlé, et d'objets que nous seul avons vus. C'est qu'en réalité nous ne sommes jamais seul" (1997, 52). I would argue, however, that despite the influence of a collective identity on a particular individual, he or she constitutes an individual or personal memory of people, places, objects, and events based on unique, personal experiences. Anne Sibran, for example, generates her memory of the French-Algerian War from specific childhood memories. She remembers bonding with her father over his stories about the war and French Algeria shared in their "fauteuil de velours rouge" (Sibran 2003, 3). While French collective memory certainly influences how she has interpreted her father's stories, her memory (and thus representation) of the war differs significantly from that of other bédéistes.

as their own and intrigued by discrepancies between family memories and national history, they create postmemories whose narrative gaps are filled by newspapers, critical histories, film, literature, archives, and photographs. The resulting narrative mosaic is composed of various elements taken from collective and personal memories as well as national history. They are narratives which bear the mark of the original (parental memories) while maintaining their unique subjectivity (parental memories studied through the prism of history, collective memory, and personal experience).

Postmemory (whether collective or individual) is not an entirely innocent process of remembering and historicizing trauma. Similar to memory and history, postmemory can be instrumentalized in order to serve a particular nation, group, or individual. Yet postmemory also has the power to generate reparative narratives in which individuals attempt to insert themselves and their families into national metanarratives. For Rosello, "[…] the reparative is an energy, a process, a specific set of narrative choices that propose to offer a conscious or unconscious strategy to a double process of recapturing and recovering" (2010, 22). Writers and artists recapture their parents' experiences so that they, their families, and the nation may recover from political trauma. The process of constituting postmemory nevertheless remains a personal journey, one which explores the antagonisms inherent in family relationships, one which endeavors to reconcile parent and child. As an intermediary or "liminal"[3] figure moving between history and memory

[3] In *The Location of Culture*, Homi K. Bhabha uses the notion of "liminality" or "in-betweeness" to explain how cultural identity is negotiated across differences of class, gender, and race: "[…] 'in-between' spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood—singular or communal—that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself" (1994, 2). Jean-Robert Henry proposes a similar term, "frontalier" in his article "Les 'Frontaliers' de l'espace franco-maghrébin" published in 1991. Henry defines "frontalier" as individuals or groups who inhabit the symbolic space separating two antagonistic societies (specifically France and Algeria) or, one could argue, two antagonistic sectors of the same society (e.g. the *pied noir* community in France) (1991, 301). When used in this dissertation, *frontalier* refers to a specific instance of Bhabha's liminality, one which describes the interstitial space between France and Algeria.

and between Self and Other, guardians of postmemory have a fundamental role to play in balancing (without necessarily eradicating) the dialectical tension between war history and war memory.

The Bande Dessinée as Imagetext

In *Le Livre, mémoire de l'Histoire*, historian Benjamin Stora examines the relationship between the book and the French-Algerian War in an attempt to understand how France and Algeria have documented and narrativized this event. Despite the apparent absence of memory with regard to the war in both countries, the focus of his seminal study *La Gangrène et l'oubli*, Stora notes the abundance of works published each year on the war. His discovery leads him to conclude that "[l]e livre émergeait alors comme *une archive à part entière*" (Stora 2005a, 7). It has become evident that the book lends itself as an efficient yardstick against which one can measure perceptions of the war on both sides of the Mediterranean. The frequency with which subjects appear, the popularity of specific publications, the low print runs of others, censorship, the reprinting or remaindering of books, and the distribution of literary prizes all testify to which ideologies dominate a given decade. As public opinion is constantly evolving, a study of the French-Algerian War in the history of the book provides a platform for examining what Stora terms the "ajustement mémoriel" in French and Algerian society, meaning the diverse ways in which each generation and even segments of the same generation remember the war (2005a, 8). With his focus on the written word, Stora rejects the strength of the image, stating that "[…] la puissance de l'image aujourd'hui n'a toujours pas atténué la force de l'écrit, du livre, toujours apte à faire fonctionner l'esprit" (2005a, 6). He does not dismiss, however, images published in books including testimonies, critical histories, graphic novels, and comics whose image-text dynamic offers viable representations of the French-Algerian War. It is thus the imagetext, defined by W.J.T. Mitchell as "composite, synthetic works (or concepts) that combine image and text"

(1994, 89),[4] which takes precedence over the image. As Hillary Chute contends, "the compounding of word and image has led to new possibilities for writing history that combine formal experimentation with an appeal to mass readerships" (2008, 459).

The purpose of this dissertation is therefore to explore a topic only briefly mentioned in Stora's research: the representation of the French-Algerian War in the bande dessinée, also known as French-language comics.[5] In addition to analyzing bandes dessinées in which the war is represented (however minor that representation may be), the present study investigates how this medium uniquely problematizes questions of history, collective memory, postmemory, and postcolonial identity. This project encourages scholars to open new fields of inquiry which explore the relationship between postcolonialism, popular culture, and word and image studies. Preference for this particular medium over other imagetext formats such as the photographic imagetext stems from my reading of the bande dessinée as a self-reflexive genre, one in which the reader is constantly aware of the image as representation rather than Truth. Furthermore, given its marginal status in literary and academic circles, the bande dessinée is a medium in which just about anything goes. Certain taboos, like the French-Algerian War, are more easily addressed in the bande dessinée than in highly codified canonical literatures

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[4] In *Picture Theory*, Mitchell differentiates between "image/text," "imagetext," and "image-text." "Image/text" refers to the problematic rupture in representation between image and text; "imagetext" to the synthetic works combining image and text; and "image-text" to the relationship between visual and verbal representation (Mitchell 1994, 89).

[5] Mark McKinney, currently at Miami University, has been publishing on the bande dessinée since the late 1990s. His work focuses on *métissage* and postcolonial identity. While he has written articles and book chapters on Jacques Ferrandez, Farid Boudjellal, and Baru (select publications are listed in my bibliography), he has yet to publish the kind of study proposed here. In his chapter, "The Algerian War in *Road to America*," he states: "*Le chemin de l'Amérique*/ *Road to America* is part of a now well-established French tradition of making comics and graphic novels about the Algerian War, which I analyze at length elsewhere" (McKinney 2008a, 162). His comment refers the reader to a footnote in which McKinney mentions a forthcoming book entitled *Redrawing Empire: Imperialism, Colonialism and Post-Colonialism in French Comic Books and Graphic Novels*. One chapter of his manuscript is dedicated to the French-Algerian War in the bande dessinée (McKinney 2008a, 165).

or in cinema whose plotlines, character development, and visual representation are controlled by commercial film producers. The hybrid nature and liminal status of the bande dessinée allow artists to engage with various sources and to provide an interesting interpretation of existent cultural production about French Algeria and the war.

Writing on the bande dessinée in 1971, Francis Lacassin underscores the medium's aptitude for providing witness accounts:

> [p]lus importante est encore leur aptitude au témoignage. Destinées à la masse et reflétant ses préoccupations, souvent en prise très étroite avec la réalité, [les bandes dessinées] jouent le rôle d'un miroir qui conserverait indéfiniment les images qu'il reflète. (340)

If twenty-first-century historians wish to know how the public perceived the French-Algerian War, Lacassin argues, they should consult bandes dessinées published between 1954 and 1962. However, they will find neither albums in favor of Algerian independence nor those which celebrate France "from Dunkirk to Tamanrasset," leaving historians to conclude that the public did not feel particularly concerned by the war or, at the very least, by certain aspects of the war (Lacassin 1971, 318). Lacassin's assessment is not false, given that France waited nearly forty years after signing the Evian Accords before recognizing the war and given that Algeria has yet to pardon those who did not participate in the revolution or who fought on the "wrong" side. Once France and Algeria began to initiate dialogues about their historical taboos, the war started to appear in the bande dessinée with greater frequency.

In addition to the marked increase in albums published on the war, one should note that these albums are winning awards. The increased visibility of the war among laureates at the Angoulême International Comics Festival signifies that these albums have artistic merit, and that a shift has occurred within the reading public from indifference (observed by Lacassin in 1971) to fascination vis-à-vis the war. Such a shift indicates that the current memory war in France with respect to Algeria and in Algeria with respect to France has spread to the bande dessinée, a genre once associated with escapism and

lowbrow entertainment. Among corpus albums, five have been recognized at Angoulême: Baru and Jean-Marc Thévenet's *Le Chemin de l'Amérique*, the first volume of Christian Lax and Frank Giroud's *Azrayen'*, the first volume of Farid Boudjellal's *Petit Polio*, Jacques Ferrandez's *La Guerre fantôme*, and Manu Larcenet's *Le Combat ordinaire*. Of these albums, two were awarded Best Album (*Le Chemin de l'Amérique* in 1991 and *Le Combat ordinaire* in 2004), one received the Critics' Award (*Azrayen'* in 1999), one the Ecumenical Jury of Comic Books Award (*Petit Polio* also in 1999), and one the France Info Prize (*La Guerre fantôme* in 2003). The choice for these awards suggests that not only are artists willing to open the Pandora's Box of cultural memory and amnesia, but that the public is as well.

Despite the current popularity of historical bandes dessinées, the medium's paraliterary status continues to affect artists and the reception of their work. For example, while teachers in secondary schools often incorporate bandes dessinées into their lessons on national history, students remain reticent about their usage as pedagogical supplements. However, more so than novelists and artists working in other media, bédéistes exploit authentic textual and iconographic source material in an attempt to confer a measure of historical and visual accuracy on their representations of history. According to Fanch Juteau,

> [l]a Bande Dessinée historique […] offre un travail de reconstitution et de synthèse qui, même s'il est partiel, est forcément intéressant. Même scientifiquement. En fait, ce travail intègre des données, des sources que l'Histoire universitaire s'autorise rarement—du moins pas ainsi mêlées—, en piochant à la fois dans le roman, le cinéma, le livre d'Histoire et l'archive. (2001, 86)

This dissertation proposes to study the numerous sources consulted by bande dessinée artists including critical histories, colonial archives, press photography, period newspapers, colonial postcards, Orientalist paintings, and nineteenth-century travelogues. The bande dessinée's status as popular culture and recycling of texts and images

encourage reader participation by engaging with (and subsequently problematizing) dominant memories and official histories.

While not all artists function as guardians of postmemory or as *frontaliers,* their albums make a unique contribution to how the war is transmitted to future generations of French and Algerian citizens because they re-contextualize iconic and often problematic representations of otherness and war. Of course not all artists use the bande dessinée to challenge dominant ideologies. In Algeria, for example, the medium has largely served to disseminate FLN narratives on the war. For this reason, special attention will be paid to artists who capitalize on their personal connection to Algeria or the war such as Jacques Ferrandez, Anne Sibran, Morvandiau, Farid Boudjellal, Frank Giroud, and Sid Ali Melouah. Each of these artists identifies with at least one memory community. Jacques Ferrandez, Anne Sibran, and Morvandiau, come from *pied noir* families now living in France. Farid Boudjellal is the son of Armenian-Algerian immigrants and was born in Toulon. Frank Giroud's father was a soldier during the French-Algerian War. Sid Ali Melouah was born in Algeria but later chose voluntary exile in France to avoid persecution by Islamic fundamentalists. Readers may therefore perceive an imbalance in my approach and find that sections on the Algerian bande dessinée are less developed than those on Franco-Belgian albums.[6] This imbalance stems from the underdevelopment of the medium in Algeria as well as from the lack of secondary sources on bande dessinée production, distribution, and readership in this country.

Another difficulty with the study of bandes dessinées is a pronounced inconsistency in critical approaches. Due to the medium's representational hybridism, critics have found it difficult to choose an appropriate theoretical framework to study the

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[6] While the difference between "Franco-Belgian" and "French" bande dessinée production is explained in Chapter 1, the reader should note that the modifier "Franco-Belgian" refers to albums by French bédéistes published in Belgium. Francophone Belgian albums are widely distributed in France.

duality of words and images.[7] Some highlight the narrative structure of bandes dessinées using methods suitable for prose analysis (character development, plot, and discourse analysis). Others focus on the pictorial quality of the images, opting for a visual approach using techniques applied to the study of art history (perspective and composition). Still others recognize similarities between the bande dessinée and film and draw their arguments from film theory (suture). Most, however, favor a combination of the three. In France and Belgium, there is a tendency to structure bande dessinée analyses on semiotics. This particular approach is perhaps the best suited to the study of the bande dessinée because the image and the word both function as language. W.J.T. Mitchell writes, "from the *semantic* point of view, […] there is no essential difference between texts and images and thus no gap between the media to be overcome by any special ekphrastic strategies" (1994, 160). He goes on to argue that speech acts are never medium-specific. Indeed they may be expressed as verbal or visual signs (Mitchell 1994, 160). The use of pictograms as written language from Egyptian hieroglyphics to Chinese ideograms supports Mitchell's postulate. Even cultures whose communication is largely dependent on the written word still use symbols and logograms for the expression of certain ideas. Nevertheless my approach to the bande dessinée is highly indebted to the writings on photography by Susan Sontag, Roland Barthes, and Marianne Hirsch as well as to Pascal Blanchard, Nicolas Bancel, and Sandrine Lemaire's notion of French "colonial culture" to be defined in later chapters.

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[7] In *Reading Bande Dessinée: Critical Approaches to French-language Comic Strip*, Ann Miller presents different theoretical frameworks within which the bande dessinée's formal features can be analyzed. In the second part of her book, she demonstrates how these frameworks can be used individually to interpret an album or series. For example, she proposes various readings grounded in word and image theory (in her fifth chapter), narrative theory (her sixth chapter), and art theory (her seventh chapter). Different theoretical approaches are also described in Scott McCloud's seminal work, *Understanding Comics*. McCloud's book is noteworthy because it uses comics to explain the theory of comics. Similar texts include Will Eisner's *Comics and Sequential Art* and Benoît Peeters's *Case, planche, récit*. McCloud, Eisner, and Peeters are three artists (as opposed to cultural critics) who have furthered the public's understanding of comics.

When using the term "bande dessinée," my objective is to differentiate between Arabic-language and French-language comics. The term "comics," first applied to American strips published in newspapers, is misleading. Since most strips were funny, they soon became known in colloquial speech as "the funny pages" or "the funnies." As the medium evolved in the United States and elsewhere, it outgrew its original nomenclature. Yet despite Will Eisner's attempts to replace the term "comics" with "sequential art,"[8] "comics" remains prevalent in English-language critique and theory. Nowadays some scholars prefer "graphic novel" to "comics." However, "graphic novel" is an umbrella term not limited to how comics (including bandes dessinées) have been defined by theoretical purists in Europe. While a discussion of generic definitions appears in the first chapter, the reader should understand that, for the purposes of the current analysis, the bande dessinée is a text in which French is the dominant language, in which speech balloons are present, and which can best be described as a word-in-image text. Due to the specificity of this definition, neither "bande dessinée" nor "bédéiste" (the author-illustrator of a bande dessinée) have been italicized.

Similar to other genres, the bande dessinée has developed a specialized lexicon. One or more panels (*cases* or *vignettes* in French)[9] sequenced horizontally form a strip (*bande*). Panels are often separated by inter-panel spaces or gutters. One full page of a bande dessinée album constitutes a plate (*planche*). Plates can include one or more panels. The size and number of panels per plate may vary in order to achieve desired narrative effects (specific examples are discussed in later chapters). Rounded speech balloons (*bulles* or *phylactères*) with "tails" connecting speech balloons to their source denote direct discourse. Square text boxes without tails indicate narrative voice-overs

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[8] See Eisner's seminal *Comics and Sequential Art*.

[9] "*Case*" is sometimes translated as "frame" recalling film studies. In order to promote the use of bande dessinée terminology, I prefer "panel" to "frame."

(*récitatifs*). *Récitatifs* can signal different narrative modes such as an omniscient narrator, but they can also be used by bédéistes to relay information to the reader (e.g. historical precisions, explanation of acronyms). Of the original French terms, I have decided to reuse "*récitatif*" due to its prominence in English-language scholarship on the bande dessinée.[10]

Chapter Organization

Because the bande dessinée constitutes a relatively unexplored territory in academia, the first chapter proposes an inventory of albums in which the French-Algerian War appears. The purpose of this introductory section is to familiarize readers with the corpus and to outline general tendencies regarding how the war has been represented in France, Algeria, and over time. I argue that the war bande dessinée evolves differently in these countries due to their distinct historical trajectories and cultural traditions. In Algeria, post-war leaders have used the revolution to validate their political agenda and claims for power. After the inauguration of Algeria's multiparty system, contemporary issues such as Islamic fundamentalism and the Algerian civil war soon replaced independence as topics of debate and as sources of artistic inspiration. Furthermore, press cartoons (political cartoons and caricatures) are more popular than bandes dessinées. Contrary to France, Algeria has yet to institutionalize the bande dessinée as a respected art form. On the other side of the Mediterranean, the evolution of the war bande dessinée closely mirrors that of French war historiography and the opening of critical dialogues regarding France's colonial past. In addition, the bande dessinée enjoys a better status in Europe where the medium has been intellectualized as a viable literary and artistic form

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[10] See, for example, Ann Miller's *Reading Bande Dessinée: Critical Approaches to French-language Comic Strip*. According to Mark McKinney, the term "*récitatif*" is not unique to the bande dessinée (2008b, xiv). It is derived from the Italian *recitativo* defined as "[a] musical form within an opera which, by imitating rapid speech, advances the plot […]" (Virginia Opera Association 2010).

and institutionalized (the French government supports bande dessinée schools, artists, and festivals via generous subsidies).

Despite government attempts to improve the bande dessinée's status in Algeria and France, the medium retains its paraliterary stigma. Consequently, bédéistes working on the French-Algerian War use source material to validate their representation of history. In the second chapter, I argue that bédéistes use textual sources such as critical histories and biographies in order to concede a measure of authenticity and respectability on their narratives. War bandes dessinées frequently include detailed bibliographies and paratextual elements such as prefaces, forewords, and afterwords contributed by noted scholars in order to contextualize their fictional narratives within Franco-Algerian history. Not only do bédéistes engage with national history, they also engage with French and Algerian cultural traditions. Additional textual sources such as novels, poetry, songs, and proverbs insert the bande dessinée into existent cultural hierarchies, creating a particular niche for the medium. It is my conviction that bédéistes use textual sources to associate their narratives with current scholarly interests and canonical literature while concurrently emphasizing the bande dessinée's unique contribution to debates on the war. The bande dessinée engages with history and collective memory in order to constitute a postmemory (or postmemories) of this period in both France and Algeria.

The third chapter explores artist reliance on colonial sources consulted throughout the creative process. If bédéistes rely on source material to authenticate their narratives, they fall prey to colonial and Orientalist ideologies dictating the representation of Self and Other. In this chapter, particular emphasis is placed on Orientalist tropes that bédéistes have re-appropriated in their anti-colonialist narratives. While underlining the problematic representation of colonized peoples and indigenous spaces, this chapter aims to define the "postcolonial paradox" in French and Algerian cultural production. The recycling of colonial iconography such as Orientalist painting and erotic postcards in historical bandes dessinées suggests that postcolonial artists are simultaneously attracted

to and revolted by images conveying symbolic violence (e.g. racism). While postcolonial Francophone literature is normally understood as "l'ensemble des littératures d'expression française issues de l'expansion coloniale (donc produites hors d'Europe)" (Moura 1999, 33), it is my conviction that writers and artists of European origin such as Jacques Ferrandez, Anne Sibran, and Morvandiau should be labeled as "postcolonial". Failure to include them in discussions on postcolonial literature implies that the colonies did not influence metropolitan France. Throughout this chapter, I argue that artists use the bande dessinée's image-text dynamic to explore the postcolonial paradox and to understand their relationship to it.

Colonial iconography is only one visual source material for historical bandes dessinées. The fourth chapter examines the recycling of documentary, press, and personal photographs in select albums. In this chapter, I explore how bédéistes use photography to engage with established collective memories of the war in France and Algeria as well as to constitute personal postmemories of this period in Franco-Algerian history. The recycling of iconic images of war often reproduced in secondary school textbooks, newspapers, and newsmagazines implicates contemporary readers who would be familiar with these images. The additional focus on personal source material such as family photographs suggests that bédéistes are also concerned with establishing and transmitting a more personalized memory of the war. Because the war figures prominently in the family history of several bédéistes, I propose reading their albums as instances of postmemory in which material traces of the past are recycled in order to establish a direct line of communication between bédéiste and the war. Throughout this chapter, I highlight differences between photographic representations of the war and the bande dessinée image. By reproducing photographs in their own graphic style, bédéistes transcribe violence and emotion in ways unavailable to photography without desensitizing viewers to visual atrocities. The bande dessinée forces readers to question common visual

representations of the war while establishing definite relationships between anonymous iconic photographs and the personal stories of affected individuals.

The fifth and final chapter studies how historical bandes dessinées, which pilfer the same textual and iconographic source material as schoolbooks, can be used as pedagogical supplements in French secondary school classrooms. Conceived as a case study, this chapter presents one history teacher's addition of bandes dessinées to lessons on colonialism and decolonization. Despite teacher and student reticence regarding the exploitation of popular culture in the classroom, the bande dessinée's relationship with history and collective memory suggests that this medium would complement school textbooks and their reductive depiction of the French-Algerian War often covered in two to six pages. Through a close examination of the bande dessinée's pedagogical potential in one specific instance (Étienne Augris's class blog), I attempt to answer the following question: is the bande dessinée a historical document capable of teaching history or a document of history reflective of trends in public opinion and hegemonic discourse?

For my contribution to Augris's blog, I answered student questions about my research on the representation of the French-Algerian War in the bande dessinée. This interview is included in the appendix. Questions ranged from stylistic approaches of specific bédéistes to generic distinctions (e.g. representational differences between the bande dessinée, the novel, and film). Augris's students demonstrated a strong capacity for critical thinking about the representation of history and raised important questions about my research with which I have been grappling over the course of this project. How do Algerian and French war bandes dessinées differ? How does the bande dessinée transcribe violence and emotion? What specifically does the bande dessinée contribute to debates on the war in comparison to novels and films? While the current analysis is less concerned with differences among genres, it highlights the unique character of bande dessinée representations of the French-Algerian War by focusing on the medium's image-text dynamic and didactic qualities. It demonstrates that this medium generates

and transmits a specific memory (or, more appropriately, memories) of the war which actively engages with other vectors of memory transmission in France and Algeria and which targets a large and diverse readership often excluded by other genres.

CHAPTER 1

THE FRENCH-ALGERIAN WAR IN THE BANDE DESSINÉE

Due to inherent differences regarding how the French-Algerian War is perceived across the Mediterranean, this study distinguishes between Algerian and French bande dessinée production. This distinction stems from two factors. Firstly, France and Algeria have historicized the war differently. If the war is known in France as the "Algerian War" and signifies the end of the French colonial enterprise, in Algeria the war is referred to as the "Algerian Revolution" or "War of National Liberation."[1] Writing about the Algerian perspective, Benjamin Stora observes: "[n]ous sommes là dans un autre univers, et un autre imaginaire national" (2005a, 63). This other universe and national imaginary are radically other with respect to the French national imaginary from cultural, economic, political, and religious standpoints. Secondly, alongside the creation of an independent Algerian state comes that of a new economy, new educational standards, and a new official language. While the advent of France's postcolonial era forced the country to make political, economic, and social adjustments,[2] the French nation-state was not born from the loss of French Algeria.

One could argue that separating French and Algerian bande dessinée production is problematic because it reduces the war to binary oppositions and minimizes the complexity of existent memory communities such as the *harkis*, *pieds noirs*, Algerian immigrants in France, Sephardic Jews, French soldiers, French and Algerian civilians, and mujahidin. These communities defy separation into sides due to their overlapping

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[1] For this reason, the war will be referred to throughout the dissertation as the "French-Algerian War."

[2] Kristen Ross argues in *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* that the period spanning the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s was pivotal. This historical moment marks France's transition from a largely agrarian, insular culture to a highly industrialized and Americanized one.

histories and collective memories as well as to their transnational character. Still one cannot ignore that the cultural productions of France and Algeria have followed different trajectories. Press illustrations are more popular in Algeria than French- and Arabic-language comics whereas both media are widely respected in France. In addition, different political, economic, and social pressures affect the French and Algerian publishing industries. Unlike their French counterparts, Algerian publishers are government controlled. Despite this major difference, the memory communities with the greatest power and financial resources succeed in publishing and distributing their constructed discourses more often than marginalized communities. While subsequent chapters examine the contribution of all bandes dessinées to debates on the French-Algerian War, this chapter presents the corpus according to country of origin in an attempt to establish parallels between war historiography and bande dessinée representations of the war in both countries. The organization of this chapter further emphasizes important differences between French and Algerian bande dessinée readership.

The Algerian Bande Dessinée

Because the focus of the current analysis is the representation of the French-Algerian War in the bande dessinée, only albums in which the war is depicted either directly or tangentially have been added to the corpus. It should be noted that Algeria has bandes dessinées illustrating Algerian history, politics, Arab identity, mythology, and women's rights. Algeria also has a long tradition of publishing comic strips, caricatures, and political cartoons in newspapers and newsmagazines, such as *Algérie actualité* and *El Moudjahid*. While the evolution of Algerian French- and Arabic-language comics parallels trends in journalism, the frequency with which the French-Algerian War appears reflects changes in contemporary politics. The war essentially disappears during the 1990s when the country found itself in the midst of a civil war and faced with increased

Islamic fundamentalism. Quite often, bédéistes like Brahim Guerroui, who focused on the revolution during the 1980s, used their art to criticize Islamists one decade later. Yet if Algeria once boasted a rich comics culture, this is no longer the case due in part to the flushing out of the country's intellectuals, journalists, and cartoonists for their critique of the Islamist vision of Algerian society. Several cartoonists have either been assassinated (e.g. Guerroui) or have sought voluntary exile in France (e.g. Sid Ali Melouah, Slim) (ToutenBD 2004).

Since the Algerian bande dessinée as a cultural artifact contributes to the constitution of a national imaginary and has been manipulated by parties to constitute a specific national imaginary congruent with their political agendas, we now turn to a brief outline of how this medium has evolved. Any evolutionary differences between Algerian war historiography and war bande dessinée production result from their distinct functions with respect to Algerian collective memory. The bande dessinée image, for example, may contain elements which allude to cultural references whose interpretation largely depends on knowledge of a specific culture and collective memory. Conversely, history, according to Pierre Nora, has always been suspicious of memory and the way it is used to reinforce communal bonds (1984, xix-x). One example would be the FLN's discourse on the war as it is articulated in bandes dessinées published during the 1980s. In these texts, frequently framed as memories transmitted from fathers to sons, a clear demarcation separates the French colonizer and the colonized Algerian, the loyal Algerian patriot and the disloyal Algerian *harki*. These albums emphasize the myth of a unified Algerian people under FLN leadership and oversimplify the Algerian context.[3] As the only

[3] According to Frantz Fanon, the trauma of colonialism engendered Algerian solidarity: "[e]n brassant ces hommes et ces femmes, le colonialisme les a regroupés sous un même signe. Également victimes d'une même tyrannie, identifiant simultanément un ennemi unique, le peuple objectivement dispersé, réalise son unité et fonde dans la souffrance une communauté spirituelle qui constitue le bastion le plus solide de la Révolution algérienne" (1959, 110).

political party, the FLN perpetuated its version or memory of the war throughout the single-party period, documenting its memory of events as official history.

In *Le Livre, mémoire de l'Histoire*, Benjamin Stora summarizes the work of Algerian and French historians to demonstrate the evolution of national historiographies of the war. His research led him to tag three specific movements in Algerian war historiography and four in French war historiography. While our intention is not to question the validity of Stora's historical markers, his research elucidates the evolution of the war bande dessinée and provides insight into Algeria's publishing industry. However, Stora's three periods in Algerian war historiography respectively referred to as "national affirmation," "the emergence of a critical history," and "history in times of war" do not mirror changes in Algeria's political system from a single-party state, to a multiparty state, to the outbreak of civil war (2005a, 65). If Stora acknowledges the need for the FLN to legitimize its political power in the newly independent Algeria, he does not adequately emphasize the opening of Algeria's political scene to new parties in the late 1980s. This change in policy is significant because it granted all voices the right to political expression and participation in the decision-making process. The country's new political pluralism also engendered the emergence of private publishing houses (responsible for publishing both critical histories and bandes dessinées), thereby breaking the monopoly of the state-controlled *Entreprise nationale du livre* (ENAL) (Madi 2001, 108).

After an initial period of nationalist affirmation, comes one during which critical histories of the war began to appear. According to Stora, the late 1970s and early 1980s constitute a period of investigation not only of the war's origins, but of previously discredited Algerian leaders like Messali Hadj (2005a, 66). The mid-1970s also have their political and cultural milestones. On April 10, 1975, Presidents Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and Houari Boumediene met in Algeria and declared the war a positive turning point in Franco-Algerian relations. That same year, Mohammed Lakhdar-Hamina's film,

Chronique des années de braise, which depicts the origins of the war was awarded the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival. Equally important was the publication of Mohammed Harbi's *Aux origins du FLN*, considered the first critical text to demystify the FLN (Stora [1991] 1998, 336). If these three occurrences invited historians, writers, and filmmakers to regard the war and Algerian history critically, the emergence of critical historiographies did not engender the rewriting of Algerian school history books or bandes dessinées. Schoolchildren would have to wait until 1992 before photographs of Messali Hadj appeared in their textbooks (Manceron and Remaoun 1993, 229). Similarly, Hadj never figures in bandes dessinées published during the single-party period. The second period in Algerian war historiography nevertheless initiates the exploration of new themes in Algerian history, most notably Algerian immigration in France and the internecine struggles between Algeria's pre-independence nationalist parties (Stora 2005a, 70).

Stora's final period in Algerian war historiography, even though it does not coincide with the end of the single-party period, establishes an important parallel between the rise in Islamic fundamentalism during the 1980s and 1990s in Algeria and Islam's role in the construction of Algerian nationalism during the 1950s and 1960s (2005a, 71). Owing to the modification of Algeria's constitution, the late 1980s witnessed the proliferation of religious-based parties including the *Front islamique du salut* (FIS). The FIS's popularity incited the FLN to cancel the 1991 legislative elections in an attempt to regain control of the country and to avoid the creation of an Islamic state. Civil war ensued. Stora published his book just as President Bouteflika announced his 2005 Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation. Could 2005 mark the beginning of a new period in Algerian war historiography? This seems improbable. One could argue that a new period in Algerian war historiography can only arise once a president unaffiliated with the revolution and the FLN is elected. The French-Algerian War is not yet part of a distant past: the youngest generation of Algerian citizens and historians knows someone who

directly experienced the war including Bouteflika himself. Historian Omar Carlier writes: "[i]l faudra attendre le successeur du président actuel pour que s'achève pleinement le passage d'un cycle historique à un autre" (2004, 84).

Although Stora was not the first historian to map the evolution of war historiography,[4] he derives his arguments from various sources including dissertations, published critical histories, and colloquia. He also incorporates fiction into his chapter on Algerian historiography, placing particular emphasis on Rachid Mimouni's and Tahar Djaout's novels. By including literary texts in his survey, Stora points to their undeniable influence on Algerian historians who, despite their desire for intellectual analysis and critical discourses, share and are affected by Algerian collective memory. Stora's focus indicates that all texts contribute to the constitution of a national imaginary which, in turn, dictates the evolution of a national historiography. Therefore, while it is impossible to determine the influence of any given bande dessinée, the contribution of the bande dessinée medium to debates on the war deserves attention. Before introducing the Algerian albums of the corpus in greater detail, the remainder of this section offers a general history of the war in the Algerian bande dessinée. Because the Algerian bande dessinée is a predominately historical medium, its evolution corresponds to changes in how bédéistes have represented the French-Algerian War. For this purpose, we can distinguish three periods. The first period includes the war years and continues with the appearance of Algeria's first bande dessinée albums in the late 1960s. The year 1969 begins the second period with the launching of *M'quidèch*, Algeria's first bande dessinée magazine and ends, alongside the single-party system, in 1987. The final period coincides with Algeria's multiparty system.

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[4] Until 1993, Guy Pervillé diligently recorded and commented on scholarly publications on the war. Pervillé's project has since been continued by other historians (McCormack 2007, 25).

The first period of bande dessinée production includes the years of the Algerian revolution. Although Stora's research suggests that few critical histories were published during the war, a review of Algeria's journalistic history reminds scholars that newspapers affiliated with political organizations such as the Algerian Communist Party and the FLN were used to propagate ideas and party platforms. The most prominent example is *El Moudjahid* which published the FLN's November 1, 1954 proclamation. Another case is the pro-independence daily, *Alger républicain*, whose contributors included a mix of French and Algerian journalists. Since caricatures and political cartoons are printed in newspapers and since Algerian bédéistes commonly work in several media, I am including the war years in my chronology. However, the current study is strictly concerned with bandes dessinées as published albums as opposed to comic strips or single cartoons (*dessins de presse*). Future scholars interested in other types of drawings such as editorial cartoons may wish to investigate newspapers published during the war. For example, Ismaël Aït Djaffar published pro-independence cartoons in Algerian newspapers throughout the 1950s (ToutenBD 2004).

There is evidence that the publication of political cartoons and caricatures in newspapers skyrocketed immediately after the war (ToutenBD 2004). This increase is credited to the absence of colonial surveillance and control of the Algerian population. Newspapers and newsmagazines such as *Le Peuple* and *Algérie actualité* were able to enjoy new freedoms including the denigration of France's colonial enterprise and its civilizing mission. Yet journalists were not granted absolute freedom. Karima Benremouga explains that, prior to 1988 and the inauguration of Algeria's multiparty system, journalists were restricted to promoting the FLN's social vision and conceptions of nationalism. From 1962 until 1988, newspapers were edited first by intellectuals affiliated with the FLN, then by civil servants appointed by the state (Benremouga 2007). The Algerian government also controlled Algeria's publishing houses. This level of

control signifies that the content of both cartoons and bandes dessinées were limited to illustrating the FLN's anticolonial, nationalist, and moderately Islamic ideology.

This first bande dessinée period is idealistic, revealing my hope that bandes dessinées or at least editorial cartoons were published during the war. More realistic are the years directly subsequent to independence. Zineb Tazi writes: "[a]près l'indépendance et jusqu'à la fin du parti unique, c'est la courte bande dessinée qui a eu la primeur dans la presse" (2003, 44). The year 1968 is a more logical delimitation because it is the last year Algeria would be without its own bande dessinée magazine, *M'quidèch*.[5] It is also the year that Slim, Algeria's premier bédéiste, made his debut in *Algérie actualité* with "Moustache et les Belgacem." Slim's first "album" presents an alternative depiction of the Battle of Algiers, one which incites laughter rather than disgust.[6] Slim (pen name for Menouar Merabtene) would later gain renown in Algeria, France, and the United States for his humorous yet political bandes dessinées (Douglas and Malti-Douglas 1994, 188).

Although Slim's debut in comic art occurred in *Algérie actualité*, he was one of the creators of and first contributors to *M'quidèch*. Founded by Mohamed Aram, Ahmed Haroun, Maz, Slim, and Brahim Guerroui in February 1969, this children's magazine was meant to provide Algeria's youth with an alternative to the Western comic journals (*Kiwi*, *Blek le Roc*) inundating the Algerian market (ToutenBD 2004). Based on the success of *Blek le Roc*, whose depiction of a trapper's struggle for independence in colonial America was easily transposed to Algeria, *M'quidèch* focused on themes such as Algerian

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[5] Allen Douglas, Fedwa Malti-Douglas, and Victor-Yves Ghebali mention *Jeunesse-Action* and its offshoots, *M'Cid* and *Djeha*, as the first Algerian comic strip periodicals published by the FLN youth organization (Douglas and Malti-Douglas 1994, 175; Ghebali 2001, 42-3). These publications are not discussed here due to their unavailability.

[6] The word "album" is placed in quotation marks because Slim's first bande dessinée was originally printed in the weekly newsmagazine, *Algérie actualité*, probably in installments.

independence and social satire (Brada 2006). Contributing artists, who were on average seventeen years old, were asked to favor typical Algerian heroes, clothing, and landscapes framed within entertaining representations of Algerian history (ToutenBD 2004).[7] Its first issue, published in French and Arabic, featuresepisodes from Mustapha Tenani's album *De nos montagnes*, celebrating the mujahidin's battle with the French army (Régennes 1985, 19). Artists used the magazine as a springboard for creating albums and signature characters such as Melouah's M'Barek family.

Because *M'quidèch* was published by the *Société nationale d'édition et de diffusion* (SNED), a government-controlled publishing agency and ENAL's precursor, it seems improbable that this magazine would allow its contributors the freedom to depict anything other than nationalist discourses. One should therefore question Slimane Brada's assertion that *M'quidèch* was used to convey critiques of the Algerian government during the years of its publication, 1969-72.[8] Brada claims that "[s]ous un mode allusif, par des codes que tout le monde comprenait, la critique politique s'est aussi faufilée dans la revue" (2006). Despite probable restrictions placed on *M'quidèch*'s content as well as the magazine's short life cycle, its existence paved the way for the publication of other bande dessinée magazines in Algeria such as *El Manchar* founded in 1990 on Melouah's initiative. SNED stopped publishing the French-language edition of *M'quidèch* after just thirty issues. If SNED's decision to cease publication of *M'quidèch*

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[7] After independence, the FLN made a clean slate of Algerian history so that it began on November 1, 1954: "en ce jour aurait commencé ou recommencé l'histoire de l'Algérie par la volonté de quelques hommes ayant fait table rase du passé" (Gadant 1988, 71). Consequently, the representation of Algerian history in *M'quidèch* is almost entirely limited to the revolution.

[8] While there appears to be a consensus concerning *M'quidèch*'s 1972 publication end date, I have also found a 1974 end date for the bilingual (French-Arabic) edition. The same source cites a second life for the magazine in Arabic from 1978 until the 1980s (Boualem). Allen Douglas and Fedwa Malti-Douglas also found evidence of the magazine's second run (1994, 177).

remains unclear, its impact on the Algerian bande dessinée does not: "[*M'quidèch*] a été une véritable école où les dessinateurs se sont forgés" (Brada 2006).

M'quidèch's life cycle coupled with the bande dessinée production of the 1980s constitutes an important period for the Algerian war bande dessinée. Firstly, there is some overlap regarding artists. Before publishing their bandes dessinées as albums, Amouri, Mohamed Bouslah, Brahim Guerroui, and Mustapha Tenani contributed to *M'quidèch*. After SNED's restructuration in 1983 which gave birth to ENAL, artists were given the opportunity to make their work known to the public through government sponsored publications. These publications constitute the majority of Algerian bandes dessinées of the corpus. The bédéistes of theses albums include the *M'quidèch* contributors listed above as well as Benattou Masmoudi and Noureddine Hiahemzizou. Secondly, by grouping *M'quidèch* with the SNED and ENAL albums of the 1980s, I wish to focus the reader's attention on Algeria's single-party system. As Anne Régennes observes: "[l]a bande dessinée au même titre que toute autre publication appartient au monopole de l'État algérien" (1985, 17). Because SNED and later ENAL were national agencies controlled by the Algerian government, and thus the FLN, their mission was to reproduce and disseminate official discourses while censuring critiques. SNED and ENAL encouraged politically engaged works which promoted party ideology (Madi 2001, 103-4). Hence the repetition of anticolonial, revolutionary themes seen in bandes dessinées which unquestioningly associate the FLN with independence.

Algeria would encounter social, economic, and political upheavals during the late 1980s when rising unemployment and inflation resulted in civil unrest. In 1988, President Bendjedid responded by lifting the ban on political parties. His decision inaugurated Algeria's multiparty system and deprived the FLN and ENAL of their privileged status. If SNED and ENAL controlled the content of bandes dessinées and other books, they also provided the financial backing necessary for their publication and distribution. Without the support of these agencies, many bédéistes and their works would never have been

introduced to the Algerian public. ENAL and SNED were poisoned chalices. In their attempts to decolonize the publishing industry, to liberate it from the French colonial yoke, they placed the industry under the FLN's repressive control. A children's book editor at ENAL commented in the late 1980s that, in spite of Algeria's economic downturn and its repercussions on the publishing industry, the Algerian bande dessinée could only improve because "[l]a création, jusqu'à présent, n'est pas sélective, car les thèmes ne sont pas variés et la formation des bédéistes n'est pas formidable" (Lalmas 1988, 22).

Did the Algerian bande dessinée improve as Lalmas predicted? If 1988 signaled the opening of Algerian politics, it also signaled the liberalization of the press with the creation of privately owned newspapers (Benremouga 2007). Journalists were no longer required to report only on government-issued information and began openly criticizing politics. Since editorial cartoons and caricatures are based on current events, press illustrations flourished in post-1988 Algeria while the bande dessinée fell into relative disuse. The critic Chawki Amari believes that the bande dessinée is a lesser art when compared to cartoons and caricatures: "[a]vec tout le respect que l'on doit aux bédéistes, ils sont en Algérie aux dessinateurs de presse ce qu'est le coloriage d'enfant à l'impressionnisme" (2008). Contrary to Amari, Lazhari Labter believes that the decline in the bande dessinée's status in Algeria is related to a general crisis in culture. He states that in a country ravished by civil war, there is an urgent need for its citizens to find or rediscover their cultural and artistic identities (qtd. in Kharfi 2008).

Without denying the validity of Labter's statement, one could argue that the bande dessinée is simply more expensive to produce and circulate than press illustrations. Creating cartoons and caricatures for newspapers and newsmagazines offers a cost advantage to artists and readers. Bande dessinée magazines such as *M'quidèch* cost on average 100 DA (approximately $1.38) (Matarese 2008). Children constitute the primary audience for these magazines, but can they afford them? Moreover, bande dessinée

albums are costly to produce, especially when they are printed in color. All Algerian bandes dessinées of the corpus have been printed in black and white and on low-quality paper. Most have a soft cover instead of the standard hardcover of French albums. Even with these economic shortcuts, albums cost around 1000 DA or $13.75 (T. 2008). If publishers hope to turn a profit, they must impose heavy price tags on albums. For the average Algerian, high prices make bandes dessinées a luxury item rather than an object of mass consumption.[9] Compare bande dessinée prices to those of Algerian newspapers (10 DA or 18¢ for *El Moudjahid, El Watan, Le Maghreb,* and *Liberté*), and one understands why the bande dessinée has been in decline since the late 1980s.

The liberalization of the press was too utopian for the new multiparty Algeria. Once the country entered its reign of terror in 1992, Islamic terrorists and the government began targeting journalists, intellectuals, cartoonists, and caricaturists. Artists were discouraged, and cultural initiatives came to a grinding halt. When the violence started to subside in the early 2000s, journalists and artists did not regain the freedom of expression they once enjoyed. In 2001, President Bouteflika expanded Algeria's penal code to punish libel against himself and his government. The Algerian civil war and the repressive press laws which followed caused members of Algeria's intellectual elite including cartoonists, caricaturists, and bédéistes to flee the country in order to avoid persecution. The quasi-demise of the Algerian bande dessinée can therefore be attributed to economic and political problems.

Although editorial cartoons and caricatures flourished during a brief time in Algeria, the bande dessinée did not and has been on a downward spiral since the end of ENAL's publishing monopoly. The final period in Algerian war bande dessinée

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[9] In 2007, the World Bank estimated Algeria's gross national income per capita at $3620. That same year, France's and the United States' per capita income were $38,810 and $46,040, respectively (World Bank).

production extends from 1988 to the present and encompasses all attempts at the genre's renewal. While it is my contention that a new period in both Algerian war historiography and bande dessinée production can only begin with the inauguration of a new political regime, Algeria has recently made efforts to push its bande dessinée culture forward. The *Entreprise nationale des arts graphiques* (ENAG), born from the restructuration of SNED in 1983, recently re-edited Noureddine Hiahemzizou's *À l'aube d'un jour de novembre*, first published in 1981 by SNED, and *Commando en mission* originally published in 1968. To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the revolution in 2004, Algeria's *Entreprise nationale de communication, d'édition et de publicité* (ANEP) re-edited three of Mohamed Bouslah's albums: *Quand résonnent les tam-tams, La Ballade du proscrit,* and *Pour que vive l'Algérie* (Merzouk 2004).[10] In 2008, Algiers hosted its first international bande dessinée festival, the *Festival international de la bande dessinée d'Alger* (FIBDA).[11] Organized by Algeria's Minister of Culture, Khalida Toumi, and members of the European Commission, the festival brought together ninety-eight bédéistes from twenty-seven countries. The festival's objective was to stimulate Algeria's bande dessinée culture by introducing young artists to potential editors (Sifouane 2008). The festival also sought to renew the public's interest in the bande dessinée medium. The second FIBDA was held in October 2009.

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[10] Unfortunately, I was unable to acquire a copy of *Pour que vive l'Algérie*. I therefore cannot provide my own interpretation as to why ANEP would reprint this particular album and not others. Perhaps because Bouslah's albums represent two distinct moments of Algerian resistance in French Algeria (*La Ballade du proscrit* is set during the 1930s and *Pour que vive l'Algérie* during the French-Algerian War), they were selected as being most representative of bandes dessinées published during the 1980s (*Quand résonnent les tam-tams* is set in Sub-Saharan West Africa and not in Algeria). As I was unable to find information explaining ANEP's choice, my comments are purely conjectural.

[11] The first festival was actually held in 1986 in Bordj el Kiffan. However, the 1986 festival was intended to celebrate the bande dessinée and caricatures. The FIBDA only hosts bédéistes.

Notwithstanding these projects, negative perceptions about the bande dessinée persist. Writing about press illustrations in Algeria, Chawki Amari comments on their close relationship to politics: "[…] un dessinateur de presse pose problème au régime en ce sens qu'il ne se contente pas de dessiner des bidons d'huile et des files d'attente" (2008). Stated differently, caricatures and editorial cartoons are the privileged instrument of political contestation whereas the bande dessinée and comics in general are associated with childish humor and slapstick comedy. For Amari, comics will never achieve the same professional maturity and critical insight as press illustrations. Such remarks elucidate why the bédéiste profession has yet to be officially recognized in Algeria (Régennes 1985, 19). One of the primary objectives of the FIBDA is to create a bande dessinée curriculum at the *École supérieure des Beaux-Arts d'Alger* for aspiring bédéistes (Morjane 2008). Nevertheless, content analyses of the SNED and ENAL albums of the 1980s contradict Amari, proving that bandes dessinées can be used to diffuse political ideologies.

SNED/ENAL Publications

Although there are no Algerian bande dessinée series on the French-Algerian War, the SNED and ENAL publications of the corpus can be grouped together due to their thematic, graphic, and narrative similarities. After reading several SNED and ENAL albums, the reader becomes aware of their potential as strong political weapons via the promotion of personal sacrifice, Islam, and martyrdom. This potential is absent from albums published elsewhere: "Moustache et les Belgacem" and *Pierrot de Bab el Oued*. One common manifestation of FLN socialism is the sacrifice of individuals for the greater good. SNED and ENAL album titles often reference a community to which the intended reader also belongs: *De nos montagnes* (the "nos" includes Algerian readers while excluding French ones), *Les Enfants de la liberté* (the plural encompasses all

"children" of the revolution and refers to a unified Algerian people), and *Le Village oublié* ("village" underscores the importance of communal living).

Similarly, martyrdom is a recurring theme. In Tenani's "Le Combattant" (from *De nos montagnes*), a mujahid drudges through a wintery landscape attempting to join the maquis. He has left his family behind in order to help liberate Algeria. Rather than bemoaning the difficult separation, he scolds himself for not having left earlier. Before reaching the mountains, the mujahid is killed by a French soldier. It is as this moment that the narrator addresses the Algerian reader directly as "vous," as if the reader's identity and that of the fallen martyr are transposable elements: "[h]ommes que rien ne tuera jamais, hommes qui endurez tout, ouvertes, vos faces rayonnent, un nouveau jour commence. Et tout grain planté donne espoir" (Tenani 1981a, 25). The metaphor is clear: by sacrificing himself for his country, the combatant/reader (the "grain planté") provides hope that one day the Algerian people will prevail. Incidentally, the majority of Algerian war bande dessinée protagonists die courageously for the Algerian cause.

To my knowledge, only one album has been published in French and Arabic: Amouri's *Sur les sentiers escarpés*.[12] The Algerian government implemented its arabization policy in 1962, and the process has undergone several phases throughout Algerian history. Farida Abu-Haidar estimates that nearly thirty laws, decrees, and injunctions on arabization have been passed since independence (2000, 151). Laws concerning the arabization of all administrative offices and schools and later higher education would not come into effect until the 1990s. Consequently, the majority of the SNED and ENAL albums published during the single-party system were in French, not

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[12] In *Mémoire et enseignement de la guerre d'Algérie*, Christiane Achour analyzes seven Algerian albums two of which were published in Arabic: *Recueil de 4 histoires* (1981) and *Sur les sentiers escarpés* (1984-5) (1993, 468). Because the first album was never published in French, I have excluded it from the corpus. Amouri's album, *Sur les sentiers escarpés*, was published in French and is therefore included. Amouri published the French version in 1983 which suggests that the Arabic version is a translation, rather than an original text.

Arabic. Abu-Haidar believes that the French language allowed Algerian writers such as Mouloud Feraoun, Kateb Yacine, and Assia Djebar, to have an impact on the French literary scene. They used French to draw attention to the plight of their fellow countrymen as well as to inspire future generations of Algerian novelists (Abu-Haidar 2000, 153).

Allen Douglas and Fedwa Malti-Douglas, whose focus is on Algerian comics, state that "[b]y setting comics in French (or less often in Arabic), the Algerian artist or scenarist makes a potent choice, whether or not he or she admits its consequences, in terms of audience and cultural identification" (1994, 175). Douglas and Malti-Douglas make a valid point. Audience and cultural identification, especially for popular culture, determines which collective memory a particular publication constitutes. One expects popular literature such as comics to permeate the masses in contrast with the educated elite. French-speaking Algerians, at least those of the first post-war generation, benefited from the educational system put into place during colonialism. Rural monolingual Algerians (either Algerian Arabic or Tamazight speakers) generally lacked formal education. Philippe Ostermann, Dargaud's editorial director, believes that those Algerians who can afford to buy albums would also speak French, thereby eliminating the need to translate albums into Arabic or Tamazight (2009).

However, comics have the advantage of sporting both visual and verbal components. This characteristic suggests that comics also target the illiterate who might understand a story based solely on its images. Content analyses of SNED and ENAL albums confirm that few discrepancies exist between their verbal and visual narratives. Due to Algeria's low literacy rates (when compared with France), the image was intended to supplant the word in the case of an illiterate audience. Anne Régennes specifies that

> la B.D. algérienne s'est découverte une mission de premier plan à remplir, car la facilité avec laquelle passe son message auprès des personnes d'origine modeste ou illettrée implique que la B.D. puisse être un média efficace au service de tous. (1985, 19)

Two problems arise from this theory: the interaction between word and image is the medium's defining trait, and illiterate people often belong to lower social classes with insufficient disposable incomes for purchasing books. Readers buying albums such as *Commando en mission*,[13] *De nos montagnes*, and *Les Enfants de la liberté* would, in all probability, be members of the Algerian elite and already affiliated with the ruling party. I would hypothesize that the albums were used to teach FLN ideology to the children of the elite in the hopes of maintaining the FLN's political dominance. Without sufficient information concerning the circulation of albums within the Algerian population (e.g. among friends and family, library loans), it is impossible to draw definitive conclusions. Furthermore, the circulation of bandes dessinées in France does not provide an adequate model for Algeria due to differences in language, standards of living, and literacy. The French bande dessinée does not have to contend with the challenges of illiteracy and newly implemented (and unevenly applied) arabization policies, allowing for greater semiotic tension between word and image.

Each of the SNED and ENAL albums depicts the FLN's vision of the French-Algerian War, one in which individuals sacrifice themselves for the good of a unified Algerian people. The albums which form this "series" are Noureddine Hiahemzizou's *Commando en mission* (1968) and *À l'aube d'un jour de novembre* (1981), Mustapha Tenani's *De nos montagnes* (1981) and *Les Hommes du djebel* (1985), Benattou Masmoudi's *Le Village oublié* (1983), Amouri's *Sur les sentiers escarpés* (1983), Mohamed Bouslah's *La Ballade du proscrit* (1984), and Brahim Guerroui's *Les Enfants de la liberté* (1986). Rather than providing a detailed plot summary of these albums, all

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[13] The publication history of *Commando en mission* is unclear. This album may have first appeared in *Algérie actualité* before SNED published it as an album. The 2002 ENAG re-edition of this album does not provide original publication information for Hiahemzizou's albums. Victor-Yves Ghebali writes that "*Actualité Algérie* [sic] publia au moins un album de bandes dessinées: *Commando en mission*, de N. Hiahemzizou, sans date […]" (2001, 43).

of which depict courageous mujahidin and the revolution framed within unoriginal storylines, it is interesting to note that several albums are divided into short episodes and incorporate photographic and textual (poems or biographies of notable martyrs) inserts: *Les Enfants de la liberté* (divided into three episodes), *Les Hommes du djebel* (divided into three episodes and several poems), and *De nos montagnes* (divided into five episodes with poems, biographies, and literary excerpts).[14] *Commando en mission*, *À l'aube d'un jour de novembre*, *Le Village oublié*, and *Sur les sentiers escarpés* each depict one episode which takes place during the war. Of the three single-episode albums, Amouri's is the only one which includes additional texts. Unlike the inserts in Tenani's albums which were taken from different sources, Amouri includes his own short story, "J'ai vu mourir mon père," and watercolor illustrations printed in black and white.

Two of the albums described above are noteworthy due to their representation of nontraditional characters: the *harki* in *Le Village oublié* and the mujahida (female fighter) in *Sur les sentiers escarpés*. In the opening plates of *Le Village oublié*, the *harki* Belaïd is shown refusing food rations to villagers thought to harbor mujahidin, beating women and the elderly, and over zealously following French orders. The ox standing next to his residence and the food his wife is eating when the mujahidin arrive later in the narrative symbolize Belaïd's relative wealth with respect to other villagers who frequently go hungry. While visual representations of the *harki* reinforce his status as a "vendu" (Masmoudi 1983a, 9), his wife is equally guilty of collaborating with the French for personal gain. She accepts money intended for two of Belaïd's victims from a mujahid and alerts the French of the mujahid's plan to return to the village the following day. Although Belaïd and his wife appear in a limited number of plates, their actions trigger a

[14] These albums were probably first published in *M'quidèch*, thus explaining their division into several episodes. Due to limited space, bande dessinée magazines cannot publish album-length works in a single issue. In all likelihood, episodes from Guerroui's and Tenani's albums were serialized in *M'quidèch* before being published collectively in album form.

long chain of events culminating in the liberation of the "village oublié." If Masmoudi's illustrations demonstrate the violence of the *harki*, the bédéiste's text articulates the hate responsible for post-war *harki* purges. The appellation "vendu" frequently appears, implying that the *harki*, weakened by greed and materialism, voluntarily sided with the French. In addition, he is commonly referred to as a traitor.

Masmoudi places slight emphasis on the precariousness of Belaïd's position. In one panel, Belaïd, with his checheya removed, addresses a French captain sitting at a desk. The panel's composition is noteworthy due to Masmoudi's interesting use of perspective: Belaïd is drawn significantly smaller than the French officer, indicating that he is of lesser rank even though the two figures are positioned within the same spatial plane. Consequently, Belaïd, who remains at the panel's focal point and framed by large speech balloons, literally appears crushed by his position. The French officer's response to Belaïd when he comes forward in this panel about his wife's conversation with the mujahid is mixed. If Belaïd is wrong, he warns, Belaïd and his wife will be treated as cruelly as the *harki* treats the villagers. If Belaïd is correct, he will be rewarded. Belaïd tells the truth, allowing the French to apprehend and kill the recalcitrant mujahid. While the reader never learns if the French rewarded Belaïd for his loyalty, they did not post soldiers outside of the *harki*'s home, leaving him and his wife vulnerable to attack. The mujahidin take their revenge that evening, slitting both of their throats.

While other Algerian bédéistes such as Sid Ali Melouah and Rachid Aït Kaci have made an attempt to emancipate women through the bande dessinée, the mujahida is regularly excluded from both official discourses and bande dessinée representations of the revolution. According to Omar Carlier, "[l]a moudjahida représente en effet une menace potentielle. La Révolution est celle de la nation, pas celle du 'deuxième sexe'" (2004, 78). The albums of the corpus omit most female contributions to the war effort, the sole exceptions being the mother in Guerroui's *Les Enfants de la liberté* and Amouri's *Sur les sentiers escarpés*. The mother figure in "Aube brumeuse" (one episode

of *Les Enfants de la liberté*) is far removed from the mujahida. Her main prerogative is the protection and maintenance of her family and home. This episode centers on a mother's inner conflict: should she let her son join the maquis and risk losing him, or should she let him leave and selflessly contribute to the revolution? In this respect, Guerroui's character fulfills the FLN-tailored female destiny as keeper of the home and of traditions (Carlier 2004, 78).

While Amouri is the only Algerian bédéiste of the corpus who depicts the mujahida fighting alongside mujahidin, her role remains minor and perfunctory. The lone mujahida in *Sur les sentiers escarpés* appears in a limited number of plates and ceases to appear after the twenty-fourth plate (approximately halfway through the album). Not only is the mujahida less prominent than the other characters, she is often scared and incapable of taking certain initiatives. On the seventh plate, the mujahidin prevent her from walking on a mine, implying that she was not properly trained or perhaps lacked the prowess to identify and avoid military traps: "[m]on Dieu! Si j'avais été seule, j'y aurais couru tout droit!" she exclaims (Amouri 1983, 7). Contrary to the mujahidin, the mujahida's first instinct is to run from danger. While waiting for the perfect moment to act, the mujahidin wait patiently beside an ignited powder keg. Si Ali, the group leader, bides his time, while the nameless mujahida cries out, imploring everyone to flee. Amouri emphasizes the emotional charge of the mujahida's words by using a large font in comparison with Si Ali's speech balloon. The larger font achieves two sound effects: an increase in volume and an increase in emotional intensity. The reader understands that, in the face of adversity and possibly death, the mujahida is terrified whereas Si Ali and the mujahidin demure calm, collected, and courageous.

Bouslah's *La Ballade du proscrit* is somewhat exceptional when compared to the other SNED and ENAL albums. Similar to *Commando en mission*, *À l'aube d'un jour de novembre*, *Le Village oublié*, and *Sur les sentiers escarpés*, Bouslah's album illustrates one episode. And similar to Tenani's albums, Bouslah's makes use of historical texts

including Mahfoud Kaddache's *Histoire du nationalisme algérien* and Charles-Robert Ageron's *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*. The album's uniqueness stems from its depiction of pre-war, inter-Algerian tensions during the centennial commemoration of French Algeria in 1930.[15] Bouslah's album underscores the humiliation that the Muslim population sustained during festivities celebrating the conquest of Algeria. Bouslah explains in his introduction that this moment marked the beginning of an Algerian nationalist movement whose objective was to reduce the influence of the *caïds*, *aghas*, and *bachaghas* or the "valets du colonialisme […qui] profitent de la situation pour faire main basse sur les terres" (1984, 5). *La Ballade du proscrit* tells the story of Ali a young peasant who, after humiliating the *caïd* who confiscated his brother's flock, must join the maquis in order to avoid persecution. If Bouslah's album remains graphically unremarkable, it reads like a history textbook with its constant citation of seminal historical and literary works, illustrating that the bande dessinée can be used as a pedagogical tool in the classroom.

Slim and Sid Ali Melouah

The two non-SNED and ENAL Algerian bandes dessinées of the corpus were published thirty-five years apart, the first (Slim's "Moustache et les Belgacem") during the single-party system in 1968 and the second (Sid Ali Melouah's *Pierrot de Bab el Oued*) after the Algerian civil war in 2003. While neither bande dessinée mimics the

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[15] There are other albums which transpose the revolution onto other conceptually related struggles such as those against international imperialism. Allen Douglas and Fedwa Malti-Douglas cite Ramzi Rafik's (pseudonym for Noureddine Hiahemzizou) *SM-15: Halte au "Plan Terreur"* and *SM-15: Échec au "Plan Terreur"* about an Israeli plot to import American ballistic missiles into Algeria: "[t]hough the story is contemporary not historical, enough references are made to tie this adventure with the great war of liberation" (1994, 184-6). Douglas and Malti-Douglas cite another album by Mustapha Tenani, *Le Fusil chargé* (1986), which describes the birth of the Algerian nation-state as early as the 1830s. Tenani's and Bouslah's albums are significant in that they challenge the idea that the revolution and Algerian history began on November 1, 1954. They also challenge the myth of an Algerian people united in their struggle against French colonial imperialism.

political propaganda permeating the SNED and ENAL publications, Slim's album with its comical depiction of the Battle of Algiers reiterates FLN hatred for the *harkis*. "Les Belgacem" refer to three pro-French brothers employed by the French army to flush out Moustache, an FLN militant and local hero hiding in the Casbah. Similar to the *harki* Belaïd in *Le Village oublié*, the Belgacem brothers find themselves in a difficult situation: their French superior officers disrespect them while their fellow countrymen consider them traitors to the Algerian cause. The two albums differ in their illustration of violence. Belaïd is unscrupulously murdered after betraying his village, whereas the Belgacem brothers walk away unscathed from explosions and car wrecks until the album's final panels. Slim's album satirizes the idea of martyrdom, one of the central themes in SNED and ENAL bandes dessinées, depicts corruption within Algerian society, hints at gender equality, and deconstructs the notion of arranged marriages. For these reasons, Slim and his work are considered pioneers in Algerian bande dessinée production. As one of Slim's first albums, "Moustache et les Belgacem" does not share the artistic maturity of his more recent albums. The drawings are highly stylized and devoid of realism, or as Scott McCloud might say, "Moustache et les Belgacem" appears "cartoony" ([1993] 2000, 31).

Equally remarkable is Sid Ali Melouah whose *Pierrot de Bab el Oued* is (to my knowledge) the last Algerian bande dessinée published on the war. Melouah's album is the only example I have found which paints a hopeful picture of peaceful Franco-Algerian cohabitation despite the realities of colonialism, independence, and civil war. Predominately told through the eyes of the eponymous *pied noir* character, the album simultaneously echoes the disappointment and optimism of Jean Pélégri's novel, *Les Oliviers de la justice*. Pierrot, akin to Pélégri's narrator, returns to Algeria and discovers his beloved childhood home destroyed by war, racism, and corruption. During his journey, he reconnects with a childhood friend, Ali, proving that Franco-Algerian peace was and is still possible. By prioritizing a European point of view, Melouah gives voice

to the *pied noir* whose historical perspective, like the *harki*'s, remains largely unacknowledged and taboo in Algerian war historiography (Stora 2005a, 73). Writing more than forty years after Pélégri, Melouah persists in his optimism about Franco-Algerian relations and foreshadows a defining moment in the nations' shared histories: *El Djazaïr* 2003, a year of Algeria in France.

Unfortunately, Algerian albums have not succeeded in penetrating European markets. Benjamin Stora's observations on the circulation of Algerian historical texts also apply to the bande dessinée. He writes that "les écrits ne circulent pas (les éditions algériennes SNED ont un différend financier avec leur diffuseur Hachette) […]" (Stora 2005a, 64). Philippe Ostermann, in contrast, attributes the low circulation of Algerian bandes dessinées to their inferior graphic and narrative qualities. His comment is particularly applicable to the bandes dessinées mentioned above, with the exception perhaps of Melouah's *Pierrot de Bab el Oued* whose illustrations and narrative resemble some of the French albums of the corpus.[16] Ostermann believes that for an Algerian album to stand out from the thousands of French albums published each year, it must be of exceptional quality. Algerian bédéistes talented enough to make their mark in France, he states, would work directly with a French editor to guarantee better sales (Ostermann 2009). While an attempt has been made to acquire all Algerian albums depicting the war, I have encountered several obstacles including the fact that most albums were never integrated into the collections of the Library of Congress in the United States, the French National Library, Paris's Algerian Cultural Center, or the Arab World Institute in Paris.[17] Despite the recent reprinting of Noureddine Hiahemzizou's *À l'aube d'un jour de*

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[16] Melouah is one of the rare Algerian bédéistes of his generation to have studied graphic arts. He graduated from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen in 1978.

[17] Since I could not find an online catalogue for the Algerian National Library, I am not certain that the albums in question are part of that collection either.

novembre and *Commando en mission* in 2002 and of Mohamed Bouslah's *Quand résonnent les tam-tams*, *La Ballade du proscrit*, and *Pour que vive l'Algérie* in 2004, most war bandes dessinées remain out of print and are inaccessible to the public and researchers. For instance, in addition to the *Cité internationale de la bande dessinée et de l'image*'s (CIDBI) quasi-exhaustive collection of French albums published after 1984, the *Cité* boasts of a collection of "highly representative" foreign comics (CIDBI).[18] Yet it does not own copies of Algerian bandes dessinées published in the 1980s. This reality did not prevent Kacem Basfao from writing that "en Algérie, ce sont […] les bandes dessinées […] sur la guerre de libération qui se ramassent à la pelle […]" (1990, 228). Although Basfao's research focuses on the representation of Franco-Maghrebi relations and not exclusively on the French-Algerian War, his bibliography does not substantiate his claim.[19]

Franco-Belgian Publications

Benjamin Stora's research indicates that the evolution of French war historiography mirrors that of its Algerian counterpart. Throughout much of Algeria's post-war history, major actors in Algerian politics have exploited the war for self-legitimization and for the privilege of defining Algerian nationalism. In France, major actors have advocated forgetting the war to solidify a French national identity, one which is incompatible with the violation of the nation's republican principles in Algeria and

[18] Mark McKinney states that because the CIBDI is associated with the French National Library, it "receives a copy of every bande dessinée or comics periodical published in France" (2008a, 13). He nevertheless admits that the CIBDI is both "understaffed and underfunded" (McKinney 2008c, 13).

[19] Allen Douglas and Fedwa Malti-Douglas make a similar claim writing in 1994 that "[t]he bloody eight-year war through which Algeria wrested its independence from a reluctant France plays an outsized role in the strips of that North African country. It receives more attention than any historical event in the strips of other Arab countries" (182).

other colonies. The words of the nineteenth-century Orientalist, Ernest Renan, continue to find resonance in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries:

> [l]'oubli, et je dirai même l'erreur historique, sont un facteur essentiel de la création d'une nation, et c'est ainsi que le progrès des études historiques est souvent pour la nationalité un danger. L'investigation historique, en effet, remet en lumière les faits de violence qui se sont passés à l'origine de toutes les formations politiques […]. L'unité se fait toujours brutalement. ([1882] 1947, 891)

Perhaps to limit historical inquiries into this political trauma, Algeria and France have used euphemisms to flesh out a positive collective identity. While Algerians tend to replace "war" with "revolution" and "independence," the French prefer replacing the term with "events," "police operations," and "pacification" (Stora [1991] 1998, 13), proving that both nations suffer from selective amnesia. Case in point: Algerians have long accepted the appellation "War of National Liberation" which places emphasis on "national liberation" rather than "war." Such a denomination implies national unity while rejecting the reality of internecine struggles within Algeria. France appears to be faring better, having broken its official silence in 1999 when the National Assembly recognized the Algerian events as a war. Yet France continues to refer to this war as the "Algerian War" instead of the "French-Algerian War," name which veils France's own internal struggles and possibly even the reality of the war as one of decolonization.

Stora's chronology of French war historiography is continuous and deconstructs perceptions that the French-Algerian War exists inside a historical vacuum. He respectively refers to four periods in French war historiography as "on the war, during the war," "testimonies and autobiographies,"[20] "the emergence of historical works," and "the

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[20] The actual title Stora gives to his second period is "[l]'oubli. Témoignages et autobiographies" (2005a, 48). Because the title appears contradictory (the existence of testimonies and autobiographies signifies that the war did not fall into oblivion during this period), I have omitted "l'oubli" from my translation. Stora uses the juxtaposition of terms to emphasize a period of official amnesia in France despite the publication of personal accounts.

explosion of memories and works by historians" (Stora 2005a, 48). The first period includes the war years, the second covers the post-war years until the first publication on the war written by historians in 1982 (Bernard Droz and Évelyne Levert's *Histoire de la guerre d'Algérie*), the third focuses on critical texts written by historians prior to the opening of government archives to the public, and the fourth lists personal and historical works produced once the public gained access to France's war archives.[21] The start of each new period corresponds to significant moments in French war historiography related to the opening of various government archives as well as to changes in French public opinion. Although the evolution of French war historiography is independent of changes in France's publishing industry, it is somewhat analogous to the evolution of the French war bande dessinée because, contrary to Algeria, the Franco-Belgian publishing industry is not government controlled.

While the evolution of the French war bande dessinée certainly reflects that of French war historiography, there are a few differences. Firstly, I have yet to discover war bandes dessinées published in France or Belgium prior to Guy Vidal and Alain Bignon's 1982 album, *Une Éducation algérienne*. This statement does not exclude the publication of press illustrations. The French artist Siné, for example, published numerous anti-Gaullist and pro-Algerian cartoons in *L'Express* from 1958 until 1962. In 1992, he republished a collection of these cartoons in the anthology, *Le Déshonneur est sauf!* Secondly, authoring a bande dessinée requires considerably less academic rigor than a critical history. If bédéistes consult colonial archives and critical histories throughout the creative process, they are mostly concerned with producing good fiction. According to

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[21] According to French law, archives may not be consulted until they have reached thirty years of age. Article L213-2 of the *Code du patrimoine* was recently amended on April 29, 2009, shortening the prescribed waiting period to twenty-five years in certain instances. Researchers may obtain a special dispensation allowing them to consult archives before their maturity date (French National Assembly 2009).

Philippe Ostermann at Dargaud, the purpose of all bandes dessinées, even historical ones, is first and foremost, to tell a good story (2009). The 1992 opening of France's war archives is therefore not directly relevant to the evolution of the war bande dessinée and has led me to identify three French war bande dessinée periods: 1982-97, 1998-2001, and 2002-present. These divisions coincide with the publication of three particularly influential albums (*Une Éducation algérienne* published in 1982, *Azrayen'* published in 1998 and 1999, and *Carnets d'Orient* published from 2002 to 2009).

The evolution of the French war bande dessinée differs significantly from its Algerian cousin. Firstly, if I argued in favor of an Algerian bande dessinée period during the war years, the French bande dessinée chronology begins in 1982, twenty years after the end of hostilities. In a country like Algeria which boasts of strong editorial cartoon and caricature traditions, it is difficult to separate bande dessinée production from press illustrations. As previously mentioned, most Algerian artists work simultaneously as bédéistes, cartoonists, and caricaturists. This is not the case in France, where the majority of corpus artists work primarily as bédéistes. Secondly, by working in two distinctly different media (the press and the bande dessinée), Algerian artists have transformed the bande dessinée into a politically engaged genre. The French bande dessinée, on the other hand, is considerably more novelistic in its approach to the French-Algerian War, recalling Ostermann's opinion that the best way for bédéistes to communicate their message is to conceal it under layers of good storytelling. The SNED and ENAL albums of the 1980s therefore exist without French equivalents. Furthermore, if the Algerian bande dessinée tends to favor political engagement (and some might argue propaganda) while the French bande dessinée is more entertaining, the twenty-year time-lag between the end of the war and the publication of the first album on the war in France is easily explained. A respectable passage of time was needed before bédéistes felt comfortable broaching this topic in popular culture.

Contrary to the doubt surrounding the exact number of Algerian albums on the war, I have reason to believe that my bibliography is virtually exhaustive with respect to French bandes dessinées. Although one should always remain leery of such claims, personal conversations with editors and bédéistes and extensive research on bande dessinée search engines such as BDGest' and at the CIBDI library have led me to conclude that if other war albums exist, they have minimally impacted French collective memory. The first French war bande dessinée period, 1982-97, maps the genre from the first album, *Une Éducation algérienne* to the publication of Lax and Giroud's *Azrayen'*. The innovation in war bande dessinée production during the second period, 1998-2001, is the transition from the single album to the series, beginning with *Azrayen'*. The second period also coincides with the French legislative decision to recognize the French-Algerian War as a war. The publication of Jacques Ferrandez's *La Guerre fantôme* inaugurates the third bande dessinée period in 2002. In addition to the publication of Ferrandez's highly influential album, this period includes 2003, a year of Algeria in France.

A study of the French-Algerian War in the French bande dessinée suggests a greater freedom in representation in comparison to the Algerian bande dessinée. The French albums of the corpus belong to a variety of genres such as crime fiction, bande dessinée *de gare*,[22] historical fiction, (auto)biography, and children's literature. Moreover, the popularity of series as opposed to single albums in France indicates that bédéistes such as Lax, Frank Giroud, Farid Boudjellal, Jacques Ferrandez, and Manu Larcenet have succeeded in making the war interesting and relevant to their readers who impatiently await the publication of sequels. The Algerian war bande dessinée, in

[22] The term "literature *de gare*" refers to literature that one can read easily and finish quickly, usually on a train or airplane. Popular literature (romance novels, detective fiction, and comics) and literature *de gare* are often used synonymously.

contrast, did not yield similar tendencies. As previously mentioned, government-controlled agencies published the majority of Algerian albums during the single-party period. Consequently, the SNED and ENAL albums of the 1980s restrictively champion the FLN's vision of the revolution and Islam.

A close inspection of French and Algerian bande dessinée chronologies indicates a clear difference in the genre's evolution in both countries. The Algerian war bande dessinée evolves in accordance with Algeria's publishing industry, which in turn depends on changes in Algerian politics. Furthermore, Algeria does not share France's enthusiasm for the bande dessinée despite recent attempts to jumpstart Algeria's bande dessinée industry with an annual festival. Conversely, the representation of the French-Algerian War in the French bande dessinée has evolved independently of France's publishing industry. While there is some correspondence between the evolution of the French war bande dessinée and French war historiography, the evolution of the bande dessinée depends more on contributions made by bédéistes than on historical watersheds (e.g. the opening of government archives, the Maurice Papon trial, the National Assembly's declaration that a war was fought in Algeria, *El Djazaïr* 2003). Indeed bédéistes often cite albums which have influenced their work; for example, Jacques Ferrandez cites *Une Éducation algérienne* and *Azrayen'* (2009c).

Shorts and Single Albums

Because most corpus albums are relatively unknown outside of bande dessinée connoisseurs and collectors, a short survey of these albums is necessary to familiarize the reader with bédéistes and their work. Firstly, for reasons outlined above, the corpus has been organized according to country of publication, resulting in the distinction between Algerian and Franco-Belgian bandes dessinées. The reader should note that Franco-Belgian bande dessinée production refers here to French bédéistes whose works have been published by French or Belgian publishing houses. While it is not relevant to the

current discussion to explain Belgium's strong bande dessinée tradition, the reader should be aware that Belgium houses two major French-language publishers: Dupuis (who now has an office in Paris) and Casterman. Due to Casterman's reputation for being highly selective, French bédéistes often choose to submit proposals there in the hope of producing a bestseller.[23] On its website, the publishing giant claims that one out of every seven albums sold in the Francophone world is from Casterman (Casterman 2009). This tangent on Belgian publishers is intended to reassure the reader that albums published in Belgium are widely distributed in France and have the same impact on French collective memory as albums published directly in France. One could argue that albums published by Casterman, such as *Carnets d'Orient*, might enjoy better sales and have more influence thanks to Casterman's status in the bande dessinée world.

Secondly, after grouping the corpus based on country of publication, series are separated from single albums. Series generally have more impact on their target audiences than single albums; a single album will never become a series if the public does not respond favorably to it. In addition, series allow bédéistes to develop a project that would have been impossible to complete in one album.[24] When Jacques Ferrandez first proposed his *Carnets d'Orient* series to Casterman, he did not intend to depict the French-Algerian War, only the French colonization of Algeria (2009c). Ferrandez waited seven years after the completion of the series' first cycle to begin the second. The

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[23] Casterman, like Dargaud and Dupuis, publishes general interest bandes dessinées. Philippe Ostermann recommends that new bédéistes publish their first albums with general interest publishers who excel in the marketing and selling of albums. However, there are smaller publishers who specialize in bande dessinée genres such as heroic fantasy (Soleil), science fiction (Delcourt), and historic (Glénat). Bédéistes wishing to make their mark in a particular genre may find it more beneficial to work with one of these publishers (Ostermann 2009).

[24] Traditionally, French and Belgian bandes dessinées are limited to forty-six plates. Although publishers and bédéistes no longer respect this restriction, albums usually contain between forty-five and sixty plates. The corpus only contains four exceptions: *L'Arlésien*, *D'Algérie*, *Retour au bercail*, and *Quand ils avaient mon âge: Alger 1954-1962*.

interruption that the delayed publication of each successive album in a series generates allows bédéistes to experiment with time and space in ways not possible in a single album. For instance, Ferrandez uses five albums to depict the colonization of Algeria from 1830 until 1954. Each album corresponds to one generation. The sequence implies continuity despite temporal and spatial shifts. The reader easily forgives narrative ellipses created between volumes because each album becomes a narrative whole, one complete story, within the series. Lax and Frank Giroud (*Azrayen'*), Manu Larcenet (*Le Combat ordinaire*), and Farid Boudjellal (*Petit Polio*) use similar strategies.

Furthermore, it is useful to group single albums under the following broad categories: children's literature, shorts,[25] and adult bandes dessinées. The association of albums with a specific category depends on the work's publisher, format, and content. The first category (children's literature) should not, in theory, be studied alongside the bande dessinée. Theoretical purists identify the speech balloon or *phylactère* as the bande dessinée's defining characteristic. This analysis follows suit, differentiating between word-in-image texts (the bande dessinée and comics) and word-under-image texts (illustrated children's books and graphic novels). Pierre Fresnault-Deruelle provides a definition of the bande dessinée which will be used to distinguish between the bande dessinée and other types of illustrated texts:

> [f]orme moderne de narration figurative, la bande dessinée (B.D.) se caractérise comme une production intégrant des séquences d'images manufacturées, dotées ou non de textes s'y insérant, et complétées de divers signes idéologiques parmi lesquels les ballons sont les plus notables. Nous distinguerons donc les B.D. proprement dites des histoires illustrées (texte sous l'image) […]. (1986, 62)

[25] A "short" refers to a bande dessinée published in a magazine or other periodical. These bandes dessinées are typically shorter than the average bande dessinée published as an album. In addition, shorts are rarely published in album form.

Since some children's books use speech balloons to integrate text (in France this category is called the bande dessinée *pour enfants* in opposition to the bande dessinée *pour adultes*), I have restricted the corpus to those albums which conform to the standard bande dessinée format (e.g. the presence of speech balloons, a clear division of plates into panels). Most children's books on the French-Algerian War such as Jacques Ferrandez and Jean-Pierre Vittori's *Midi pile, l'Algérie* do not integrate speech balloons into the narrative flow. While such texts have pedagogical value, they do not conform to Fresnault-Deruelle's definition of the bande dessinée and have been excluded. Similarly, adult graphic novels which sporadically incorporate images into text such as Didier Daeninckx and Tignous's *Corvée de bois* have been discarded as well.

The corpus includes two examples of children's or young adult bandes dessinées: Farid Boudjellal's *Jambon-Beur* (1995) and Gilles Bonotaux and Hélène Lasserre's *Quand ils avaient mon âge: Alger 1954-1962* (2002). The former is not specifically marketed for children or young adults. However, Boudjellal's inclusion of testimonies written by French adolescents of mixed-race families in addition to his focus on a biracial child speak more to a young adult audience than a mature one. Boudjellal also mentioned during a personal interview in April 2009 that this album has been used to teach children how to read in primary schools. In *Jambon-Beur*, Boudjellal demonstrates how France's post-war racial divide affects the personal development of a biracial child, Charlotte-Badia. Due to familial conflicts related to the war (her paternal grandfather was tortured, and her maternal grandfather died during his military service in Algeria), Charlotte-Badia learns to deal with this trauma by splitting into two distinct personalities: Charlotte, a French Christian who identifies with her maternal grandmother, and Badia, an Algerian Muslim who identifies with her paternal grandparents. Only when her grandparents learn to reconcile their differences does Charlotte-Badia become whole again. Manifestations of Charlotte-Badia's hybrid identity are easily depicted in the bande dessinée medium. Boudjellal arranges clusters of panels, creating distorted mirror images, on the same page

in which Charlotte and Badia simultaneously learn Christian and Muslim cultural traditions (fig. 1.1). Charlotte and Badia are identical (undistinguishable to other characters and to the reader when the girls are silent) which creates moments of situational irony when they are accidentally sent to the wrong grandparents. By separating Charlotte-Badia into a French self and an Arab self, Boudjellal humorously yet accurately portrays the conundrum of France's *beur* generation. Alec Hargreaves writes that "[l]ike it or not, every Beur has a foot in two cultures, and this is a situation with which he or she must learn to live" (1997, 26).

Quand ils avaient mon âge: Alger 1954-1962 is part of a series of children's books. The series includes albums on various topics including World War I (*Quand ils avaient mon âge: Petrograd, Berlin, Paris 1914-1918*), television (*Quand ils avaient mon âge: 40 ans devant la télé (et autour)*), and summer vacations (*Quand ils avaient mon âge: 50 ans en vacances 1936-1986*). The album *Quand ils avaient mon âge: Alger 1954-1962* presents the war through the eyes of four friends who attend the same elementary school in Algiers: Youssef, Khellil, David, and Jean-François. Youssef is the only child whose family does not live in Bab el Oued, a largely European neighborhood in Algiers, and is the only child who remains in Algeria after independence. The seven-year old children (seven at the beginning of the story) continue to play together despite their racial differences, religious beliefs, and parents' political affiliations (Youssef's father is pro-FLN, Khellil's father works for the French administration, and Jean-François, David, and their families are *pieds noirs*). The war permeates their everyday lives. Yet the children do not fully understand official speeches and adult political ideologies. When racial and political antagonisms begin infiltrating the playground, it is evident that the children simply repeat parental discourses without understanding their deeper significance. Bonotaux and Lasserre's album emphasizes the innocence of childhood friendships which defy religious and political difference.

Boudjellal uses a similar approach in his bande dessinée short "Amour d'Alger" (1984) in which the friendship between two children, Ramdane (Arab) and Mireille (European), is met with their parents' disapproval. Not unlike *Pierrot de Bab el Oued* and *Quand ils avaient mon âge: Alger 1954-1962*, "Amour d'Alger" suggests that the real cost of war is the destruction of human relationships and the loss of childhood innocence. Another short, "Vengeance Harkie" (1994), for which Boudjellal wrote the dialogue and Denis Merezette provided illustrations, carries the same message. This short does not target a young adult audience. For this bande dessinée *de gare*, Boudjellal and Merezette were required to produce a scenario and drawings showing mostly sex and violence (Boudjellal 2009). Violence engendered violence is the subject of this bande dessinée short in which the protagonist, Driss, tracks and kills the three *harkis* responsible for murdering his family during the war. One of the *harkis*' sons witnesses his father's murder, just as Driss witnessed that of his family some twenty years earlier. In the final panel, the young witness shoots Driss and is left, with the reader/viewer, pondering the carnage of a war he never directly experienced. While the foci of "Amour d'Alger" and "Vengeance Harkie" differ dramatically, their morals do not. Both question the transmission of hate and violence in lieu of memory.

The last bande dessinée short of the corpus is Xavier Mussat's "L'Étoffe des lâches" (1996). This short also broaches the *harki* question. If Boudjellal and Merezette's short depicts sex, violence, and *harki* cowardice, Mussat's relays a more poetic, realistic perspective.[26] The nameless protagonist meets Salah, a *harki* during the French-Algerian War. Both are friendless in the city and find solace in sharing a cup of coffee. Salah explains that his daughter is ashamed of him for his chosen alliances. Salah meets the

[26] Mussat's title, "L'Étoffe des lâches," references *harki* cowardice. However, due to the short's content, I would argue that the title alludes to *harki* stereotypes that Mussat endeavors to deconstruct.

protagonist in 1989, decades after his family and his country (France) abandoned him. While shorts might not have the space to develop an idea (magazines usually limit the number of pages allotted to each bande dessinée published), Mussat's proves that their message can be just as potent as that of full-length albums. Through metonymical representation (a photo, scarred hands, four flashback panels showing a patrol and Algerian landscapes rather than militarized combat), Mussat provides a portrayal of the *harki* akin to Dalila Kerchouche's in her nonfiction book, *Mon père, ce harki*. Kerchouche, whose father was a *harki*, investigates her family's move from Algeria to France through internment camps, moves made necessary by her father's "political" alignment. She eventually learns that *harkis* were often forced to choose sides regardless of their personal convictions and that they rarely engendered the barbaric traitors depicted in "Moustache et les Belgacem," *Le Village oublié*, and "Vengeance Harkie."

The corpus also includes ten single adult albums: *Une Éducation algérienne*, *Algérie française!*, *Le Chemin de l'Amérique*, *O.A.S. Aïscha*, *L'Arlésien*, *Guy Gilbert: Aimer à tout casser*, *Là-bas*, *Retour au bercail*, *Babel 2*, and *D'Algérie*. Each album offers its own vision of the French-Algerian War. Some explore the consequences of military action (*Une Éducation algérienne*, *Algérie française!*, *Babel 2*), some examine the war in relation to family or personal histories (*Le Chemin de l'Amérique*, *Guy Gilbert: Aimer à tout casser*, *Là-bas*, *D'Algérie*), and some use the war as a key to unlocking a murder investigation (*O.A.S. Aïscha*, *L'Arlésien*, *Retour au bercail*). While the purpose of the current analysis is not to make claims concerning the historical implications of specific bande dessinée genres (e.g. action, biography, crime fiction), this division is meant to facilitate the task of introducing and organizing the corpus.

The first bande dessinée genre, action, includes three albums which explore the human cost of war: *Une Éducation algérienne*, *Algérie française!*, *Babel 2*. Despite commonality of theme, these albums are dissimilar in narrative structure, graphic quality, and character development. Guy Vidal and Alain Bignon's *Une Éducation algérienne*

(1982), the first bande dessinée on the war published in France, portrays the generals' putsch from the perspective of a soldier, Albert, who is dating a *pied noir* and who pledges loyalty to his commanding officer, an OAS (*Organisation de l'armée secrète*) sympathizer. Throughout the album the majority of which appears as excerpts from Albert's diary (a mix of handwritten commentaries and photographs taken in Algeria), the protagonist progresses from relative apathy to an acute antimilitaristic sentiment. He can no longer hide his disgust for the military's use of torture and for the colonialist exploitation of the native population. The diary is an interesting addition to the album because it fashions Albert into a homodiegetic narrator whose subjective commentaries supplement the relatively objective *récitatifs*. As a result, the album becomes strongly antimilitaristic, emphasizing military errors in addition to fleshing out struggles within the French army. Vidal and Bignon use the album, and in particular Albert's insider perspective, to convey the decadence of the French colonial enterprise with its numerous depictions of promiscuity, boredom, and economic exploitation.

Denis Merezette and Duménil's *Algérie française!* (1985), despite its provocative title, articulates a similar discourse. Before reading the album, readers might assume that it subscribes to an anti-Gaullist ideology. On the album's cover, the title and its accompanying exclamation point are fixed above a scene showing a European man holding a rifle (fig. 1.2). In the background are two abandoned armored military vehicles and a corpse, possibly a soldier. Readers are led to infer that the characters on the cover are affiliated with the OAS. Only after reading the album's text does the reader understand that the exclamation point is ironic. Merezette and Duménil use the title to purposely mislead the reader with respect to the album's content. Kerbronec (one of the main protagonists and pictured on the cover) does not have strong political beliefs and becomes a victim of circumstance, held hostage by a war about which he does not care. The album depicts the escape of two disillusioned men, Kerbronec and Ahmed, from Algiers. Ahmed is an anarchist and wanted by the FLN and the French army; Kerbronec

comes to Algeria to sell his car before Ahmed recruits his services. Although the two characters fail to see eye to eye on the current political situation, Kerbronec (marginally pro-colonialist) and Ahmed (radically anti-colonialist) become friends during their journey and eventually flee to Tunisia together. While the scenario and overall quality of Merezette and Duménil's album is mediocre when compared to Vidal and Bignon's album, both aptly portray the disillusionment caused by the war on individuals, leading to insubordination and debauchery.[27]

The third album, David B.'s *Babel 2* (2006) is not restricted to the French-Algerian War. David B. also illustrates tribal wars and the Cold War. The protagonist derives his memory of war from photographs published in magazines such as *Paris Match*. Because he was only three when the French-Algerian War ended, he lacks a direct memory of the war and has had to decode elliptical parental conversations on death, torture, and Algeria. The last section of *Babel 2*, entitled "L'Algérie: Histoire-Histoires," chronicles the imagined arrival of a regiment in Algeria. Despite Western perceptions of tribal warfare as barbaric, the Papuan warrior accompanying the young protagonist on his imaginary journey to 1950s' Algeria has difficultly visualizing "civilized" warfare (e.g. French wars of decolonization) precisely because he deems it uncivilized. Each panel reiterates the injustice of a war fought by those incapable of understanding it and reminds the reader of photographs taken by Lee Miller and Margaret Bourke-White after the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps. The ghastly, bony figures (French soldiers en route to Algeria) populating the album's panels are engulfed in streams of smoke. These panels contrast with those showing abandoned suitcases and other belongings and in which soldiers are completely absent. In this way, David B. pulls from iconic images of war, specifically of World War II, in order to communicate the horrors of war to his

[27] Both albums, *Une Éducation algérienne* and *Algérie française!*, explore wartime sexuality namely homosexuality and female promiscuity.

readers. In addition, the subtitle, "L'Algérie: Histoire-Histoires," highlights personal experiences of war ("Histoires") within the larger context of a national, historical event ("Histoire"). The visual perspective of each panel coupled with the use of the pronoun "tu" in *récitatifs* allows the protagonist (and potentially the reader) to experience the war vicariously so that he (we) may understand the dehumanizing effects of war.

The second bande dessinée genre, biography, includes four fictional and (relatively) nonfictional albums: *Le Chemin de l'Amérique*, *Guy Gilbert: Aimer à tout casser*, *Là-bas*, and *D'Algérie*. Baru and Jean-Marc Thévenet's *Le Chemin de l'Amérique* (1990), is the only fictional account in this category. The album narrates the short career of a fictitious Algerian boxer, Saïd Boudiaf, who was discovered in Philippeville (now Skikda) in eastern Algeria in the late 1950s.[28] His career takes him to Paris where he witnesses anti-Arab racism in the form of racial slurs and physical violence. The album ends with his disappearance during the October 17, 1961 massacre. While the narrator can only speculate about what happened to Saïd, it is implied that if the boxer did not succumb during the massacre, then he abandoned his career to fight for Algerian independence. In his chapter entitled "The Algerian War in *Road to America*," Mark McKinney provides a detailed analysis of the image-text dynamic in Baru and Thévenet's work, underlining the album's colonial allegories of which Saïd's boxing career becomes a metaphor. His triumph as a boxer could either signify that he has been successfully assimilated into French culture or that he, the colonized, is fighting against the colonizer through boxing (his opponents are European). Yet by professing himself to be "du côté de la boxe" (Thévenet, Baru, and Ledran [1990] 1998, 14), Saïd naïvely believes that he is engaging in complete political neutrality; he is in favor of neither Algerian

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[28] Although *Le Chemin de l'Amérique* is fictional, Baru and Thévenet based the protagonist on an Algerian boxer named Cherif Hamia (Berthelot, Poncet, and Morin 2000, 34).

independence, nor the perpetuation of French Algeria. Despite his ardent efforts, the war eventually consumes him and the other characters.

Jean-Marc Kulawik and Benoît Despas's, *Guy Gilbert: Aimer à tout casser* (1999), is biographical in the same sense as Baru and Thévenet's album in that it presents the life of someone not related to the bédéiste. This is not the case for *Là-bas* (2003) and *D'Algérie* (2007), albums which chronicle Anne Sibran's and Morvandiau's family histories, respectively. Contrary to Saïd Boudiaf, Kulawik and Despas's protagonist is not solely defined by the French-Algerian War and Franco-Algerian relations: the war represents one episode in Father Guy Gilbert's life. Similar to other men of his generation, Gilbert was drafted to serve in Algeria. The album depicts this period of his life while highlighting his open contestation of torture and racial discrimination. Gilbert completed his seminary training in Algeria where he remained until 1970 before returning to France. *Guy Gilbert* differs from the other biographical albums in that the war only appears in twelve out of the album's forty-five plates. The war is used to demonstrate one specific instance in which Father Gilbert revolted against man's inhumanity to man, and, in this particular instance, against the dehumanization of man through colonization and war.

The last two biographical albums mirror Ferrandez's series. The bédéistes use the bande dessinée medium to reach a better understanding of family histories which are intimately linked to the war and to the loss of French Algeria. *Là-bas* is adapted from Anne Sibran's novel, *Bleu figuier*, and narrates her father's hasty departure from Algeria and his subsequent attempts at integrating metropolitan French society. While the narrative reveals certain aspects of Sibran's childhood and early adulthood, the focus remains on her father and his feelings of loss, alienation, and disillusionment as a *pied noir*. Similar sentiments arise after reading Morvandiau's *D'Algérie* which flutters between family history and national history. The starting point for this album is the assassination of the bédéiste's maternal uncle in Tizi-Ouzou, tragedy which stimulates

certain memories such as a family vacation to Algeria when Morvandiau was thirteen years old. *D'Algérie* diverges from the other biographical albums listed above due to its concern for historical precision. Morvandiau's family history often fades into the background, making way for historical documentation.

Graphically, *Là-bas* resembles "typical" bandes dessinées with its regular organization of plates into bands of panels. In addition, Tronchet, the illustrator, renders the emotional affect of certain scenes more tangible by changing the tonal variation of groups of panels (e.g. when Sibran's father is distressed, the panels are red-toned; when he is euphoric or nostalgic, they are sepia-toned; when the characters discuss illness or death, the panels are green-toned). In contrast, *D'Algérie* is printed entirely in black and white with the majority of its plates containing one or two panels. Illustrations of the bédéiste's family are highly stylized with a low level of iconicity, whereas panels representative of historical events or public locations imitate postcards and iconic press photographs. As a result, Morvandiau's narrative is significantly less personal than Tronchet and Sibran's and assumes a more documentary character.

The last bande dessinée genre, crime fiction, displaces the war so that it no longer represents the primary focus of an album's narrative structure. Louis Joos and Yann's *O.A.S. Aïscha* (1990) is the first example and transitions us towards more anecdotal usages of the French-Algerian War in the bande dessinée. The album opens on March 5, 1962 while the crew of the Divona watches OAS-authored explosions off the coast of Algeria. The narrator is the ship's twenty-five year old captain whose only concern is to safely deliver his cargo of oranges to Marseille. The trip does not proceed as planned. Two stowaways are soon discovered (Aïscha and her captor), leading to sexual infidelity, heated political debates, murder, and the eventual foundering of the Divona in the Mediterranean. This album uses history not only as a backdrop, but as a way to define its characters (some are Gaullists, some are pro-OAS, some try unsuccessfully to remain neutral).

The war fades completely into the background of the two remaining examples of crime fiction: Autheman's *L'Arlésien* (1992) and Bruno Heitz's *Retour au bercail* (2003). The former focuses on a Van Gogh forgery and the latter investigates a solicitor's murder. The plots of both albums center on men who deserted during the French-Algerian War: Thomas Cornille in *L'Arlésien* and Richard Janvier in *Retour au bercail*. Cornille's and Janvier's status as deserters transforms them into social outcasts and forces them to perform illegal activities (Cornille eludes the police while investigating his brother's murder; Janvier is blackmailed into producing counterfeit money). Cornille's and Janvier's status serves to add a dose of mystery and suspicion to Autheman's and Heitz's detective narratives, rather than historical accuracy. The fact that the French-Algerian War plays such a minor role in French bandes dessinées indicates, however, that this event has had a profound impact on French national identity and has become a cultural topos.

Bande Dessinée Series

Contrary to representations of the war in Algerian bande dessinée "series," depictions of the war in Franco-Belgian publications are not restricted to the political and religious ideologies of a single party. In addition to the lack of blatant agenda pushing, the war plays a more important role in French bande dessinée series than in single albums. Farid Boudjellal's *Petit Polio* portrays the childhood of Mahmoud, a young Arab suffering from poliomyelitis in the southern French city of Toulon during the late 1950s and early 1960s.[29] Deemed remarkable for its graphic quality and expression of human

[29] *Petit Polio* includes four volumes: *Petit Polio* (volume 1), *Petit Polio* (volume 2), *Mémé d'Arménie*, and *Les Années ventoline*. During an interview conducted on April 1, 2009, Boudjellal indicated that he was currently working on a fifth album which would focus on post-war attitudes regarding the *harkis*. He did not disclose the album's projected release date. Because *Mémé d'Arménie* and *Les Années ventoline* do not mention the French-Algerian War, they are not discussed here.

values, the first volume of the series was awarded the Ecumenical Jury of Comic Book Awards in 1999. While the war affects several of the series' main characters (e.g. one of Mahmoud's neighbors serves in Algeria), it remains an event which defies the young boy's comprehension. Particular emphasis is placed on Mahmoud and his family's daily experiences which differ from those of "ordinary" French citizens. In spite of the protagonist's six years of age, he is confronted with brutal reminders that he is not like everyone else. He witnesses racial discrimination, his neighbor's newfound anger towards Algerians living in France, a police raid of his parents' apartment, and his father's unlawful arrest. For the young boy to whom Algeria and its revolution are foreign, what matters is his growing sense of social alienation that the war amplifies in his hometown.[30]

One afternoon on their way home, Mahmoud and his friends witness a racially motivated police aggression: an Arab male is beaten and arrested in public because he took the trolley without paying (fig. 1.3). The red tone dominating the scene expresses the anger of the crowd in tune with the policemen's rage. While Mahmoud stomps off in disgust, his friends come to the realization that, similar to the delinquent trolley passenger, Mahmoud is also Algerian. When later asked why he does not want to visit family in Algeria, the eponymous character replies that he no longer desires to be Algerian and blames his father for his Algerian identity and for the fact that he suffers from polio. In his childhood innocence, Mahmoud internalizes colonialist discourse and equates his Algerian-ness with disease. Similar to the series' protagonist, Boudjellal contracted polio at an early age. He states, however, that he only shares his handicap and his Armenian-Algerian heritage with his character (Boudjellal 2009). The bédéiste denies

[30] Although Boudjellal's narrative takes place during the war, it is set in France where the war has been transposed onto everyday social interactions between the French and Arab populations.

that his series is autobiographical. Although Boudjellal refuses to be labeled as a *beur* bédéiste, his albums embrace social realism as well as the cultural dilemmas facing North African immigrants in France: "[Boudjellal] fait partie de ces quelques dessinateurs qui vivent en France et qui souhaitent exprimer à travers leur B.D. les différences ethniques, sociales et culturelles qu'ils rencontrent" (Régennes 1985, 18). Boudjellal's albums resemble the 1980s' *beur* novel in which French-born authors of Algerian or Maghrebi descent write about the cultural and linguistic hybridism inherent in their *beur* identity.[31] Consequently and despite his objections, Boudjellal has become associated with the postcolonial, *beur* bande dessinée (McKinney 1997, 171; Sebbar 2004, 104).

Another bédéiste who references the war in his work is Manu Larcenet. His four-volume series, *Le Combat ordinaire,*[32] is similar to Boudjellal's *Petit Polio* in that it takes place in metropolitan France in a working-class community, this time near Lyon in the early 2000s. Larcenet's series stars a neurotic photographer named Marco who has lost his creative impetus. Ironically, the series visualizes Marco's inability to create (photographic) images. Ann Miller believes that this series "illustrates the ambivalence of postcolonial identities, both individual and national, in a former colonial power" (2007, 168). Although her comment applies to the entire series, the first volume, which won Best Album at Angoulême in 2004 revolves specifically around the themes of memory, forgetting, both political and personal trauma, and war. The opening plate shows Marco negotiating with his psychoanalyst to end his psychotherapy sessions. The sessions were

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[31] Michel Laronde, author of *Autour du roman beur*, offers the following definition of the *beur* novel: "[il inclut] tous les romans dont un certain *contenu* (ingrédients géo-historiques, personnages, situations) donne au terme *beur* le sens d'un *esprit* particulier à un milieu et à une époque: celui de l'Immigré d'origine maghrébine dans la ville française des années 1980 […]" (1993, 5-6). Laronde's definition depends on content rather than on author identity.

[32] Only the first three volumes of the series (*Le Combat ordinaire* (2003), *Les Quantités négligeables* (2004), and *Ce qui est précieux* (2006)) mention the French-Algerian War. The fourth volume, *Planter des clous* (2008), has therefore been excluded from the corpus.

not entirely futile: he learned that his childhood, once thought to be the source of his anxiety, was nothing more than a misunderstanding between himself and his parents. This misunderstanding comes to the fore when Marco discovers a photograph of his father taken with a French officer in Algeria in 1958. The silence surrounding the war is doubly symbolized by Marco's father who is suffering from Alzheimer's disease and who refuses to speak to his son, symbolic of subsequent generations of French citizens, about his wartime activities. The series is replete with references to current political issues (e.g. when Jean-Marie Le Pen is voted to the second round of the 2002 presidential elections) and to France's social climate created by immigration (e.g. Marco's brother is dating a woman of North African descent). Contrary to the other series of the corpus, *Le Combat ordinaire* favors visual over verbal representation so that the reader/viewer understands character reactions through facial expressions and body language rather than speech. Larcenet's choice reflects Marco's inability to communicate effectively with others including his father and girlfriend.

The two remaining series, *Azrayen'* and *Carnets d'Orient*, differ from *Petit Polio* and *Le Combat ordinaire* in that they take place in Algeria during the war. In addition to the obvious change in decor, these series use the war as their primary plot material, often basing fictional episodes on actual events such as the Battle of Algiers and personal war experiences. Winner of the 1999 Critics' Award at Angoulême, *Azrayen'* (1998-9) illustrates the search for a French patrol lost in Kabylia during the winter of 1957. The series fictionalizes an occurrence that a lance corporal stationed near the Algerian-Tunisian border in the late 1950s told to the scenarist Frank Giroud (Giroud 2008b, 124). Throughout the French soldiers' quest to locate the missing patrol, the war's atrocities are unearthed, including the brutalization and humiliation of Algerian civilians as well as the French army's questionable interrogation methods. In addition, the drab color scheme used by the artist, Christian Lax, is in stark contrast to the bright colors used by Larcenet and Boudjellal and emphasizes the dreary winter landscapes with their sometimes

insurmountable obstacles, the soldiers' physical and moral fatigue, and the villagers' disarray. This particular series, recently re-edited as a single album, is as historical as some of the SNED and ENAL albums examined above with their citation of historical documents. Furthermore, Frank Giroud is an aggregated historian. His academic training explains his concern with historical accuracy even within a fictional framework. The new edition closes with a "making of" section which includes photographs that Giroud's father took during his military service, journal entries dating back to 1956, the front pages of several period Algerian newspapers such as *El Watan* and *Alger républicain*, the front cover of Amouri's *Sur les sentiers escarpés*, and a limited bibliography of historical, fictional, and iconographic sources that Lax and Giroud consulted while creating the series.

*Azrayen'*s historicity is only matched in Franco-Belgian bande dessinée production by Jacques Ferrandez's popular series *Carnets d'Orient*.[33] Ferrandez's series has enjoyed great publicity and sales, making it the best known and easiest to attain series on the French-Algerian War. For this reason, *Carnets d'Orient* will probably have the most influence on future bédéistes interested in portraying the war. Similar to Anne Sibran, Morvandiau, Farid Boudjellal and Frank Giroud, Jacques Ferrandez's understanding of Algeria and the war stems from the deeply personal: all have parents who either fought or were born in Algeria. Ferrandez was born in Algiers in 1955 to *pied noir* parents who immigrated to Nice, France not long after he was born. With few memories of his own, Ferrandez turned towards his grandfather, a former station master in Béni Ounif, and later written testimonies, critical histories, news articles, and Orientalist painting for inspiration (Ferrandez 2009c). Ferrandez's initial reason for

[33] Of the series' ten albums, only those which are set during the war, *La Guerre fantôme* (2002), *Rue de la Bombe* (2004), *La Fille du Djebel Amour* (2005), *Dernière demeure* (2007), and *Terre fatale* (2009), are discussed here.

creating the series was not to the retrace the history of French Algeria, but to retrace and understand his family's history in Algeria: "par quelle suite d'enchaînements se fait-il que moi, Jacques Ferrandez, je sois né un jour en Algérie?" (Vidal 2002, 62).

The five albums of the series' first cycle each represent one generation between 1830 and 1954. The chronology of the second cycle is greatly reduced: *La Guerre fantôme* chronicles the period from October 1954 to October 1956, *Rue de la Bombe* August 9, 1956 to the spring of 1957, *La Fille du Djebel Amour* the summer of 1957 to June 4, 1958, *Dernière demeure* October 23, 1958 to February 1, 1960, and *Terre fatale* March 10, 1960 to July 4, 1962. Each album focuses on a specific event related to the war: the first volume portrays the war's outbreak, the second the Battle of Algiers, the third De Gaulle's infamous "je vous ai compris" speech, the fourth Algerian self-determination, and the fifth the generals' putsch and Algerian independence. All of Ferrandez's characters are, to some degree, participants in the war: Octave is a *pied noir* and captain of the Tenth Parachute Division, Saïd a young member of the FLN before joining ranks with the French, Samia an Algerian torn between her love for Octave and her love for Algeria, and Bouzid an overly zealous FLN militant. Ferrandez's series weaves a tangled web of revenge, counter-revenge, love, patriotism, religious fanaticism, and nostalgia.

Although Ferrandez's style can be described as realistic, with its non-stylized character portraits, detailed landscapes, and occasional watercolor illustrations, the bédéiste readily makes use of visual metonymy. The inter-panel spaces often show glimpses of civil unrest, military operations, patrols, and political demonstrations. These scenes become the backdrop for the numerous plots running concurrently throughout the series including Marianne's (Octave's sister) search for Joseph Constant's journals,[34] the

[34] Joseph Constant first appears in the first volume of the *Carnets*' first cycle. Ferrandez based this character, an Orientalist painter travelling to Algeria, on Eugène Delacroix.

conflict between Octave and his commanding officer Loizeau, Octave and Samia's love affair and their self-imposed exile in Canada, Samia's involvement with the FLN, Octave's quest for his biological father, and Saïd's struggle for survival after his father's murder. Despite the omnipresence of acts of terrorism, torture, and militarized combat, the focus is on personalizing the war and on demonstrating the war's extreme complexity in order to arrive at a better understanding of this historical period and of Ferrandez's relationship to it.

The series' most significant contribution to debates on the French-Algerian War is Ferrandez's simultaneous portrayal of several memory communities. Throughout the series, Ferrandez demonstrates that divisions into groups such as pro-French Algerian, pro-Algerian French, French, and Algerian are not black and white. What distinguishes this series is Ferrandez's desire to retell history through the lens of several parallel narratives or personal histories originating from various memory communities. The multifaceted narrative places *Carnets d'Orient* within the larger framework of postmodernism with its deconstruction of grand narratives; for example, the series rejects binary oppositions as evidenced by Octave's controversial renunciation of the French army and its values. However, Ferrandez's perspective is not entirely objective: he is a *pied noir*. His identification with this particular group elucidates why Octave plays such an integral role in the series, acting as a liaison between different communities. Even so, Ferrandez utilizes the image-text dynamic to expose the war's complexities, to question national mythologies, and to offer alternative realities of the war.

One prominent example of how Ferrandez exploits the bande dessinée's defining image-text component is his deconstruction of visual clichés. The comics code of verbal and visual representation is well suited to unearthing clichés, stereotypical representations, and historical inaccuracies. The medium excels when it exploits what Hillary Chute calls its "double vision" or the intricate weave of often incongruent verbal and visual narratives: "[i]n one frame of comics, the images and words may mean

differently, and thus the work sends out double-coded narratives or semantics" (2008, 459). The cover of *La Guerre fantôme*, for instance, depicts a French paratrooper wearing a typical red beret which contrasts with the Algerian boy's red checheya. The Algerian landscape, complete with rural village and men wearing the traditional North African burnoose, would be easily recognizable to a French audience. The same can be said about the cover of *Rue de la Bombe* with its representation of the Casbah in Algiers including patrolling conscripts and a woman dressed in a white haik.

Yet these images are replete with irony, as only a close reading of the text reveals. The woman pictured on the cover of *Rue de la Bombe* is actually Samia who, normally wearing the latest European fashions, poses as a *porteuse de feu*—term used to describe women who planted bombs in public places for the FLN. Appearances, and by extension visual representation, cannot alone convey meaning unless the reader is provided with the necessary tools for interpreting visual cues. It follows that the paratrooper on the cover of *La Guerre fantôme*, symbol of the French army and France's colonial enterprise, is soon deconstructed. The reader discovers that the paratrooper is Octave and learns that because this character endured torture during the Indochinese War, he cannot condone acts of barbarism hidden behind the cloak of the French civilizing mission and pacification. Ferrandez's series exploits what Benoît Peeters has coined the "rhetorical mode" when a bande dessinée's storyline determines graphics (1991, 34-53).

Ferrandez is one of the few bédéistes who incorporate linguistic differences into the bande dessinée. Contrary to Farid Boudjellal (*Jambon-Beur*) and Lax and Frank Giroud (*Azrayen'*) who include speech balloons written directly in Arabic (Boudjellal) or Tamazight (Lax and Giroud), Ferrandez uses a different technique so that the reader understands text while recognizing changes in language: a different font is used for French and Arabic, even though text is always printed in French (fig. 1.4). If Ferrandez never clearly defines this visual strategy, the reader is able to identify what each font represents through visual cues and dialogue. As previously indicated, a bédéiste's

preference for French or Arabic, at least in Algeria, has political, cultural, social, and even economic implications. French bédéistes, perhaps to contribute to their albums' cultural realism, are more concerned with linguistic differences. Lax and Giroud, Boudjellal, and Ferrandez incorporate language differently, achieving distinct narrative objectives. By failing to translate Arabic script, Boudjellal articulates the linguistic difficulties of the *beur* generation who learn French in school and are sometimes exposed to Arabic at home (fig. 1.5). The fact that Badia and most readers are unable to understand what Badia's paternal grandmother is saying is symptomatic of France's linguistic pluralism. In contrast, Lax and Giroud draw Kabyle characters speaking in Tamazight, thereby enhancing *Azrayen'*s linguistic accuracy (fig. 1.6). Unlike Boudjellal, Lax and Giroud print conversations in Tamazight using the Latin alphabet and include footnotes with French translations. Ferrandez goes one step further, including only French text but printed in two different fonts. Although bande dessinée speech constitutes text, it adds an aural component to narrative, giving an almost audible voice to characters.

The corpus catalogs nearly forty bandes dessinées in which the French-Algerian War is represented. While there is no guarantee that Algerian and Franco-Belgian publishers will maintain their present level of interest in this material (indeed Algerian publishers have already lost interest and have moved on to other topics including the Algerian civil war, Islamic fundamentalism, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and Algerian immigration in France),[35] the increased visibility of the war among Angoulême laureates (*Le Chemin de l'Amérique*, *Azrayen'*, *Petit Polio*, *La Guerre fantôme*, and *Le Combat ordinaire*) signifies that these albums have artistic merit and that sufficient time has passed for postcolonial interpretations of the war to appear with greater frequency in

[35] Franco-Belgian publishers, on the other hand, continue to publish new albums. Jacques Ferrandez recently published a bande dessinée adaptation of Albert Camus's short story "L'Hôte" in November 2009, and Laurent Galandon and A. Dan published the first volume of their new series, *Tahya El-Djazaïr*, in June 2009.

popular culture.[36] Francis Lacassin, a bande dessinée scholar, believes that bande dessinée production depends primarily on the public and current events: "[p]ar sa dépendance du public, et de l'actualité qui reflète les préoccupations de celui-ci, la bande dessinée acquiert une valeur de témoignage" (1971, 256-7). The war's relative disappearance in Algerian bandes dessinées coupled with its recent explosion in French albums reflects changing cultural attitudes concerning the war's influence on French and Algerian national identity at different historical moments. In the following chapters, focus will be placed on specific textual and iconographic strategies used by bédéistes to depict the war and to articulate the dialectal relationship between history and memory in a popular medium.

[36] The French city of Angoulême has been hosting its annual International Comics Festival for over thirty years.

Figure 1.1. Charlotte-Badia splits into Charlotte and Badia.

Source: Boudjellal, Farid. 1995. *Jambon-Beur: Les couples mixtes*. Toulon: MC Productions. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

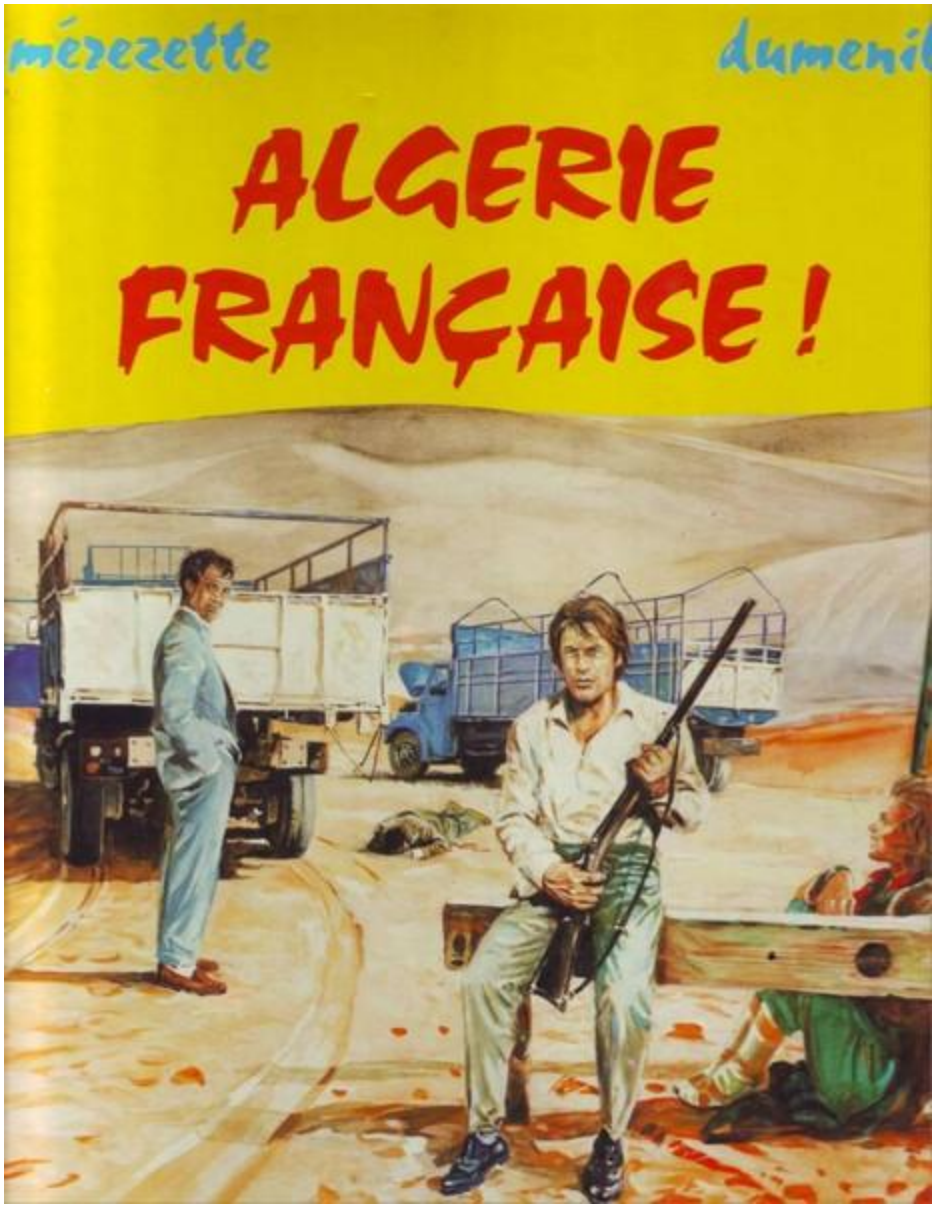

Figure 1.2. Cover of *Algérie française!*

Source: Duménil, and Denis Merezette. 1985. *Algérie française!* Brussels: Éditions Michel Deligne. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

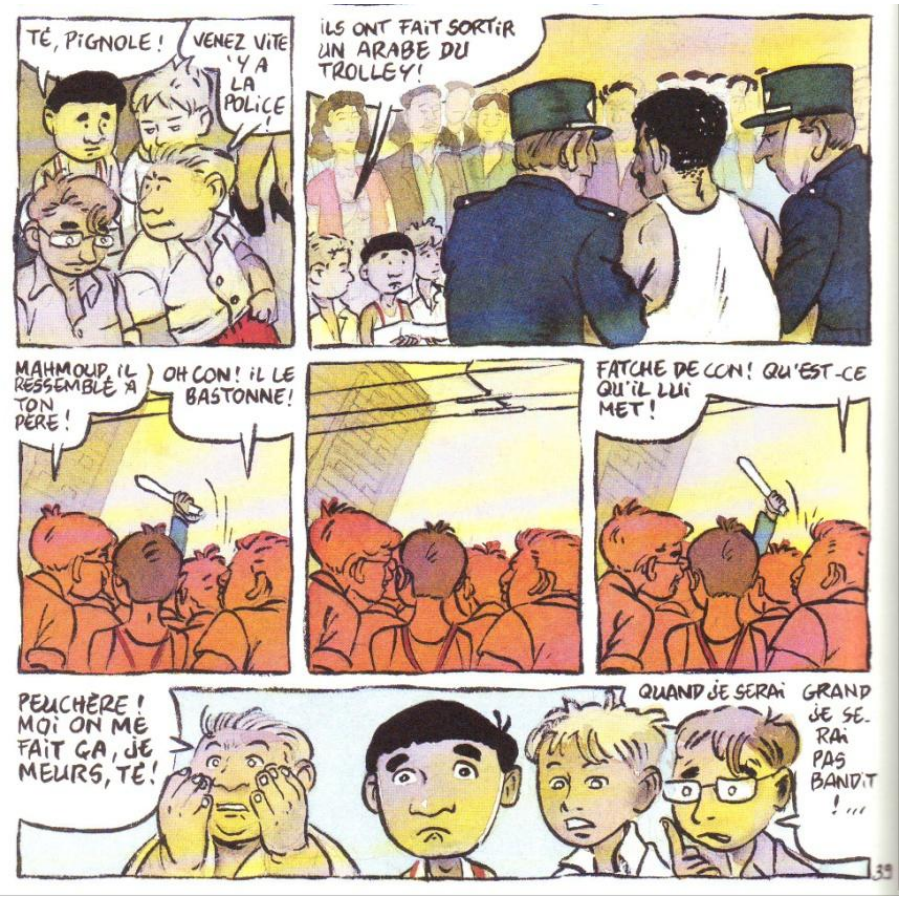

Figure 1.3. The police beat an Arab male after he steals a ride on the trolley.

Source: Boudjellal, Farid. [1998, 1999] 2006. *Petit Polio*. Paris: Futuropolis. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 1.4. Textual representation of French and Arabic in *Dernière demeure*.

Source: Ferrandez, Jacques. 2007. *Carnets d'Orient: Dernière demeure*. Brussels: Casterman. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 1.5. Textual representation of Arabic in *Jambon-Beur*.

Source: Boudjellal, Farid. 1995. *Jambon-Beur: Les couples mixtes*. Toulon: MC Productions. This images is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 1.6. Textual representation of Tamazight in *Azrayen'*.

Source: Giroud, Frank, and Lax. [1998, 1999] 2008. *Azrayen'*. Paris: Dupuis Aire Libre. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL ACCURACY AND LITERARY APPEAL

Representations of the French-Algerian War blossomed with the artistic maturity of second-generation bédéistes, specifically bédéistes with little or no memory of the war, such as Anne Sibran, Jacques Ferrandez, Frank Giroud, and Farid Boudjellal. It follows that their creative processes depended on the exploitation of historical and family documents. Whether or not corpus albums are purely historical, the war furnishes an inexhaustible amount of material for verbal and visual content. Consequently, the majority contain well developed paratextual, intertextual, and metafictional elements. In this chapter, we will assess the significance of textual elements in corpus albums in an attempt to determine how bédéistes have used these raw materials to shape their verbal and visual narratives. Particular emphasis will be placed on the inclusion of specific textual components for the purpose of authenticating historical and biographical models and of affiliating the bande dessinée medium with literary canons and other cultural traditions. Only upon close examination of source material can important aspects of the creative process be understood.

Claiming Historical and Biographical Authenticity

While the inclusion of supplementary material functions to orient the reader towards one specific interpretation, its purpose may also be to ensure an album's historical accuracy. Textual material in this category includes paratextual elements such as prefaces, forewords, and afterwords. Gérard Genette explains that the purpose of these specific elements is to produce a discourse on the ensuing or preceding text (1987, 150). The bédéiste often writes the preface and afterword in order to delineate the album's evolution from project to publication and to provide insight into author intentionality. Genette's analysis of the preface and its variations furnishes a suitable model for the study of bande dessinée paratext because it suggests that through the addition of

paratextual elements, the bande dessinée crosses literary thresholds. The corpus includes several albums which have surpassed their paraliterary status, becoming novels in bande dessinée form. One prominent example is Ferrandez's *Carnets d'Orient* series often compared to Jules Roy's saga *Les Chevaux du soleil* (Pierre 2005, 6). While one cannot ignore the graphic and narrative qualities of certain albums, album paratext plays an important role in reader reception, allowing the war bande dessinée's historicity and literary character to contend with other media. Yet how do prefaces, forewords, and afterwords function (according to Genette), and how do these functions enhance specific corpus albums?

Authorship determines paratextual content. Genette specifies that when the author of the primary text writes a preface, it may serve one or more functions. The author may use the preface to underline the importance of the work's subject, and by extension, why the reader should continue reading. Genette suggests that only the work's author can prove the work's usefulness to the reader. Furthermore, an author may write a preface to provide evidence for truth claims made throughout the text. Prefaces also offer insight into how the text should be read or outline its genesis and evolution as a project. Finally, prefaces can define authorial intentions and genre, indicating to the reader how the text was meant to be interpreted (Genette 1987, 183-212). Genette implies that authorial texts are more poignant than allographic texts in that they allow authors to communicate directly with their readership. He believes that while most of the functions attributed to prefaces can also be attributed to forewords and other allographic texts, he maintains that authorial texts are typically more appropriate than those contributed by a third party (Genette 1987, 243).

Genette bases his analysis on novels and poetry. One could argue that the bande dessinée with its paraliterary status uses paratextual elements differently in order to valorize itself as a medium. As the bande dessinée retains its cultural stigma, the choice of a third party such as a respected historian or prominent literary figure to author a

foreword would result in ameliorating the album's reception with readers and critics. When questioned about his inclusion of forewords, Jacques Ferrandez stated that it was an attempt to authenticate his historical vision: if a prominent historian or writer touted the artistic, literary, and historical merits of his series, then it stands to reason that the public would take his contribution to debates on the French-Algerian War seriously, rather than dismissing his albums as "disposable kiddie fare" (Ferrandez 2009c; McCloud [1993] 2000, 3). All five albums of the *Carnets*' second cycle include forewords contributed by noted historians or Algerian writers: Gilles Kepel (a professor at Paris's *Institut d'Études Politiques*), Bruno Étienne (a member of the *Institut Universitaire de France*), historian Michel Pierre, Fellag (an Algerian actor and author), and Maïssa Bey (another Algerian author).[1] Similarly, Benjamin Stora's foreword to Lax and Giroud's *Azrayen'* lends credence to the album's historicity given that Stora is a leading historian researching the French-Algerian War.[2] The *Carnets* and *Azrayen'* forewords invite readers to use the albums as springboards for further historical inquiry as well as for investigating the relationship between history and memory in a popular medium.

As the first contributor to the *Carnets*' second cycle, Gilles Kepel addresses the series' transition between colonization and decolonization as well as Ferrandez's overall contribution to our understanding of the war and of the Arab world. Kepel's foreword engages not only with the *Carnets* but also with Ferrandez's parallel *Carnets d'Orient* travel series published during the seven years separating the publication of the original *Carnets*' first and second cycles. According to Kepel, Ferrandez's inspiration and credibility as a storyteller lies in his passion for and knowledge of both Algeria and the

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[1] Ferrandez's adaptation of Camus's "L'Hôte," while not a historical bande dessinée, also includes a foreword contributed by Boualem Sansal, a former government official and now an award winning novelist in Algeria.

[2] Stora contributed a foreword to one of the album's of the *Carnets'* first cycle: *Le Centenaire*.

Middle East, namely Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq, and Iran to which he traveled to produce his other *Carnets*. As a noted scholar of Arab history and politics, Kepel's testimony attributes a degree of academic and poetic competency to Ferrandez's historical reconstitution. Almost minimizing the value of academic research and historical training, Kepel indicates that Ferrandez and his artistic eye have reached a better understanding of the world and historical events than academics such as himself after years of critical inquiry. During a chance encounter with the bédéiste in Lebanon, Kepel experienced the following:

> […] je le vis sortir de son nécessaire de voyage un pinceau et des couleurs et peindre, en quelques minutes, le petit monde qui nous entourait. L'espace d'un instant, l'œil de l'artiste avait déchiffré ce que les connaissances accumulées de l'universitaire avaient mis des années à constituer, la fulgurance de l'homme de pinceau illuminant l'homme de plume pour lui montrer ce qu'il y avait à voir. (2002, 3)

Kepel's endorsement of Ferrandez and his work stems from his incredulity with the bédéiste's ability to capture the veracity of the world around him more faithfully than a trained historian. While Kepel's foreword to *La Guerre fantôme* does not describe the academic rigor implicit in Ferrandez's creative process (e.g. the study of critical histories, written testimonies, media coverage, and archival documents), it argues in favor of reading the *Carnets*' as an unbiased history of the French-Algerian War. Kepel claims that, by traveling throughout the Arab world, Ferrandez gained an insider's perspective which allowed him to simultaneously and fairly represent multiple viewpoints in his work. Throughout *La Guerre fantôme* in which major characters of the second cycle are introduced, Ferrandez equally and impartially emphasizes the perspective of several memory communities. Finally, Kepel's foreword addresses the representation of history in the bande dessinée, stating that Ferrandez transforms the medium into a forum for intellectual debate on topics that governments and historical revisionists have often concealed from the public. Due to the bande dessinée's inferior literary status (meaning it stays off censors' radars), Kepel believes that it is an excellent medium through which

historical taboos such as the French-Algerian War can be broached and transmitted to future generations. Ferrandez's work in particular, Kepel notes, efficiently brings together historical research and survivor testimony in order to articulate to those who did not experience the war how and why it occurred.

Transmission and remembrance is also the focus of Bruno Étienne's foreword to *Rue de la Bombe* in which Ferrandez illustrates the Battle of Algiers as well as the torture, mutilation, and murder of French and Algerian victims. While describing French and Algerian brutality during the war, Étienne, a scholar of Algerian history, indirectly references scenes from Ferrandez's album in which tempers flare between individuals on the same "side," bombs are detonated in public places, Algerian characters are tortured in French custody, and the FLN retaliates against other Algerians by cutting off their noses and tongues. This album is considerably more violent than the other *Carnets*. While Étienne's presentation does not directly praise Ferrandez and his contribution, it underlines the importance of any contribution in which violence is depicted and condemned rather than forgotten and amnestied. Étienne's foreword highlights an important aspect of Ferrandez's series and, in so doing, endorses the bédéiste's historical vision. In the *Carnets* and, more specifically, *Rue de la Bombe*, Ferrandez's representation of the French-Algerian War is an anamnestic response to France's official amnesia and later amnesty of crimes committed during this period. If Étienne focuses on France's and Algeria's failure to transmit a viable collective memory of the war, his foreword expresses hope that researchers and artists like Ferrandez will contribute to liberating both nations from their political and historical biases.

Contrary to Bruno Étienne, Michel Pierre, an aggregated historian interested in French colonial history, engages directly with *La Fille du Djebel Amour* in his praise for Ferrandez's depiction and in his contextualization of this particular album. Although Pierre presents the album within a specific historical context, the organization of France's *Sections Administratives Spéciales* (SAS) in Algeria during the late 1950s, he stresses the

importance of fiction in creating viable memories of the war and in healing wounds. He writes:

> [p]armi ce qui contribue à ce travail de mémoire, à la lucidité souvent douloureuse qui irrite et avive les plaies mais en permet la guérison, l'œuvre de fiction apparaît essentielle. Il y eut des romans, des films et, depuis quelques années, les bandes dessinées de Jacques Ferrandez. Seuls l'écriture, l'image, le récit parviennent à pénétrer une forme de réalité, à faire saisir la complexité des vies et des engagements, les destins brisés et l'inextricable mélange de croyances antagonistes. (Pierre 2005, 6)

Without directly conceding a measure of authenticity to Ferrandez's historical representation, Pierre underscores France's need to look beyond official commemorations and other similar manifestations in the constitution of a collective war memory. For the historian, official commemorations such as monuments and ceremonies (Pierre Nora's sites of memory) are fixed and resistant to new interpretations. The bande dessinée and, in general, fiction are not because they create open dialogues with readers about the hegemonic discourses infiltrating official sites of memory. In other words, the bande dessinée is an example of Roland Barthes's "writerly" text in which the reader produces rather than consumes meaning.[3]

In *La Fille du Djebel Amour*, Ferrandez explores the internecine struggles inherent to both sides of the conflict, namely Algerians recruited for France's SAS, the short-lived public fraternization of Europeans and Arabs in May 1958, and the growing disillusionment of French generals regarding the assured maintenance of French Algeria. Yet instead of merely picturing key events, operations, and speeches in bande dessinée form, Ferrandez articulates multiple viewpoints, delving deeper into the recesses of, for example, De Gaulle's "je vous ai compris" speech. Several main characters are present at

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[3] In *S/Z*, Barthes distinguishes between "readerly" (*lisible*) and "writerly" (*scriptible*) texts: "[l]e texte scriptible est un présent perpétuel, sur lequel ne peut se poser aucune parole *conséquente* (que le transformerait, fatalement en passé); le texte scriptible, c'est *nous en train d'écrire* […] Mais les textes lisibles? Ce sont des produits (et non des productions) […]" (1970, 10-1)

De Gaulle's proclamation (fig. 2.1). While his words of hope literally fill the inter-panel spaces, the real focus is on Octave and Samia's conversation concerning the future of Algeria in which Europeans and Muslims peacefully coexist. The fact that their conversation is interrupted by the unlawful arrest of an Arab, unjustly accused of terrorism, indicates the implausibility of Octave and Samia's utopian vision of Algeria. Michel Pierre cites several of these important events, establishing a parallel between his foreword and album content. His commentaries provide supplementary background information which allows the reader (and Ferrandez) to remain in the fictional realm of the series whilst guaranteeing the reader that Ferrandez's unconventional representation is grounded in historical accuracy.

The two remaining contributors to the *Carnets* differ significantly from the aforementioned academics. Firstly, Fellag and Maïssa Bey are Algerian and experienced the war as children growing up in Algeria in the 1950s and 1960s. Secondly, they are writers, not historians, whose words center on their *vécu*. Both share glimpses of their childhood with potential readers, highlighting not only hardships in times of war but also the joys of childhood when racial, religious, and socioeconomic differences scarcely register. Due to their non-academic standing, Fellag and Bey cannot solidify the series' claims for historical authenticity in the same way as Kepel, Étienne, and Pierre. Yet, speaking as "native" eyewitnesses to this historical period, they accomplish two important tasks. They confirm that the series' presentation of the war is realistic and recognizable to those who lived it. Their endorsement also implies that Ferrandez's perspective is not biased in favor of his *pied noir* heritage. Bey develops the notion of a shared heritage even further, echoing Étienne's condemnation of violence in her description of the horrors that everyone, French and Algerian, was forced to endure.

Perhaps speaking as a novelist concerned with the representation of history in her own work, Bey enumerates the ways through which Ferrandez authenticates his fictional narrative:

> Jacques Ferrandez ne prétend pas réécrire l'histoire, même si, tout au long de ses *Carnets*, des documents authentiques, des reproductions des pages des journaux de l'époque attestent de son désir d'inscrire le parcours de ses personnages dans les faits tels qu'ils ont été vécus, au moment où ils ont été vécus, dans le fil des évènements. Il restitue, avec le souci de l'inexactitude et de la précision du trait qui caractérise toute son œuvre, la part de lumière et la part d'ombre qui se disputent cette terre. (2009, 5)

Ferrandez's desire for historical accuracy led him to objectively represent a multitude of voices regardless of their political affiliations and ingested discourses, because, to quote Fellag, all voices are embedded in the same "matrice mémorielle" (2007, 5). Instead of historically contextualizing album content, Fellag and Bey address the question of why. Why represent the war in the bande dessinée or at all? Similar to Michel Pierre, both suggest that fiction and, in particular, the bande dessinée hold the answer. Fiction opens up a dialogue once removed from the original trauma, resulting in a protective yet creative screen. The reader focuses on the paths that each character takes rather than on the number of causalities recorded in official documents, important dates, or the terms of international treaties. Instead, writers and artists offer their stories and designs to facilitate healing, "pour mettre du baume sur 'tout ça'" (Fellag 2007, 5).

Healing requires new ways of viewing the war and its actors. Several of the *Carnets*' episodes, for example, offer Ferrandez the opportunity to explore the moral and ethical dilemmas confronting his protagonists, often stand-ins for real individuals. Two of the most prominent examples are Octave and Saïd, both of whom are based on historical personalities: Hélie Denoix de Saint-Marc, a *putschiste* and member of the French resistance during World War II and Saïd Ferdi, a child soldier who alternately fought for both "sides" (the FLN, then France) (Le Saux 2009).[4] If Octave becomes increasingly more antimilitaristic as the series progresses (first in *La Guerre fantôme* when faced with the French army's scorched earth policy and questionable interrogation methods, and

[4] See Saïd Ferdi's *Un Enfant dans la guerre*.

later culminating is his defection to Canada in *Dernière demeure*), the evolution of Algeria's political climate forces him to join the generals' putsch in *Terre fatale*. His decision does not reflect his siding with OAS political extremism, but rather his tenacious belief in a utopian French Algeria, symbolized by his romantic relationship with the Algerian Samia. Octave's seemingly radical shift dispels French perceptions of OAS-affiliated *pieds noirs*, commonly associated with the far right in contemporary French politics. His character embodies the moderate *pied noir*, overshadowed by the more vocal (and radical) members of the *pied noir* community in France today.

As the series nears its conclusion, Octave and Saïd find themselves in a bleak situation. In one panel of *Terre fatale*, Ferrandez illustrates a conversation between these two characters about what they should do: continue with the putsch or turn themselves in. Octave and Saïd are drawn discussing their situation while sitting in front of an enclosed garden space (fig. 2.2). The fence bars and panel boundaries together form an impenetrable physical and metaphorical space from which Octave and Saïd have little chance of escaping. Saïd, now a *harki*, finds himself in a more complicated predicament than Octave. Despite that fact that the FLN murdered his teacher and father as supposed traitors, Saïd joins the maquis to avoid the same fate. Octave rescues the young boy during an ambush and integrates him into the French army where he then becomes the target of racial discrimination. As such, Saïd's existence problematizes Algeria's nationalist and France's colonial ideologies which fail to recognize grey areas. In the last volume of the series, the bédéiste emphasizes his rejection of historical models and public opinion which categorize personal choices as either black or white. Saïd, for instance, first joins the FLN out of necessity and later joins the anti-Gaullist putsch in order to pledge his loyalty to Octave rather than to the OAS.

Saïd's story is not one of political alliances. Instead Ferrandez focuses on his coming of age during decolonization. Saïd develops linguistically (he progresses from essentially no French in *La Guerre fantôme* to mastery of the French language in *Terre*

fatale), physically (he first appears as a young boy and later as a young man), and ideologically (initially unconcerned by the war, he soon realizes that his alliances are arbitrary and not manifestations of his political beliefs). Saïd is last seen in the series after he deserts the army to join a renegade OAS faction. Before leaving, he exclaims: "[j]e suis plusieurs fois traître, alors maintenant je dois aller jusqu'au bout… […] Moi, je suis perdu! Ça fait longtemps que je le sais!" (Ferrandez 2009a, 57). Similar to Saïd Ferdi and thousands like him, Ferrandez's Saïd unjustly faces an uncertain future at the end of the war. As he rushes off, Saïd passes in front of a store window where the words "totale liquidation" are written (Ferrandez 2009a, 57). Although these words reference inventory liquidation (French merchants were forced to close their businesses and evacuate the country), Octave's speech balloon (when he calls out Saïd's name) is positioned next to the text on the window, visually associating Saïd with death ("liquidation") (fig. 2.3). If Saïd's vitality, youth, and humanity should guarantee him a place in Algeria's future alongside other children of the revolution, the reader and Octave recognize that Saïd's future has been irrevocably erased. As a "traitor," he is no longer welcome in Algeria; as a colonial subject, he does not belong in metropolitan France despite evidence of his linguistic and cultural assimilation. Through character development, Ferrandez calls attention to the war's lost generation and asks his readers to challenge categorical representations of memory communities.

In addition to soliciting forewords and breathing historical realism into his characters, Ferrandez's desire to authenticate his representation of history led him to conduct extensive research in France's colonial archives in Aix-en-Province and at France's National Library in Paris. While not all contributors to Ferrandez's albums discuss the research involved in creating works of fiction in their preliminary remarks, Ferrandez includes detailed bibliographies at the end of each album. Lax and Frank

Giroud do the same for *Azrayen'*.[5] Frequently cited in both series are prominent historians Raphaëlle Branche, Pierre Nora, Benjamin Stora, and Guy Pervillé and war photographers Marc Garanger and Marc Flamand. Other than providing evidence for album historicity, bande dessinée bibliographies like those found in *Carnets d'Orient*, *Azrayen'*, and *D'Algérie* invite readers to learn more about the war. As if to prove their impartiality, Ferrandez, Lax, and Giroud list both Algerian and French sources spanning several decades including controversial publications like Paul Aussaresses's *Services spéciaux, Algérie 1955-1957* which vindicates the French army's use of torture in Algeria. Moreover, Ferrandez accentuates the relationship between history, memory, and narrative when he specifies before each album's bibliography that "[c]e récit, bien qu'imaginaire, est librement inspiré de faits tels qu'ils ont été relatés par les acteurs et les témoins de la guerre d'Algérie, ainsi que par le travail des historiens" (2002, 65; 2004, 63; 2005, 63; 2007, 63; 2009a, 63).

If the *Carnets* and *Azrayen'* forewords highlight the contribution of the bande dessinée to discourses on the war, they only serve informative and recommendatory functions. They provide information on the bédéiste, his project, the album's historical context, and whether the album is worth reading (presumably a third party would not write a foreword if they could not endorse the book). Or, as in the case of Fellag's and Bey's forewords to *Dernière demeure* and *Terre fatale*, respectively, they can demonstrate a deep personal bond between the work and the contributing author. Unless the bande dessinée is (auto)biographical such as *Guy Gilbert*,[6] the purpose of the preface and/or foreword is not to vouch for absolute verisimilitude. Due to the bande dessinée's

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[5] Morvandiau also includes a short formal bibliography of works consulted during the creative process in *D'Algérie*.

[6] *Guy Gilbert* is the only true biography of the corpus not authored by a family member. The album contains a foreword written by Father Gilbert attesting to its truthful representation of his life: "[e]lles sont vraies de bout en bout, ces pages. Oh que oui!" (Gilbert 1999,2).

paraliterary status, the reader might be suspicious of such claims. Yet the medium's status often motivates the inclusion of prefaces and forewords in albums: historical albums endorsed by influential historians typically enjoy better sales. Once the war fades into the background, becoming anecdotal with respect to the plot, the need for preliminary and postliminary texts dissipates. *Azrayen'* and *Carnets d'Orient*, owing to their historical label, exploit paratextual elements to validate and legitimize their representation of history more so than other corpus albums. It is therefore not surprising that these particular albums include bibliographies of historical, non-fictional, and fictional texts; nor that in albums not marketed as historical such as crime fiction, preliminary and postliminary texts are absent.

If the authors of the *Carnets* forewords engage with album content and, more specifically, Ferrandez's representation of history, they tend to emphasize historical veracity over the quality of verbal and visual representation. Such endorsements may have led critics to celebrate the series as "[une] exemplaire réussite d'une reconstitution historique aussi scrupuleusement exacte que passionnément vraie" (Anon. 1995). In contrast, the authors of *Azrayen'*s preliminary additions focus less on historical accuracy than on the album's narrative structure and visual elements. They also offer an educational and historical context with which the album's fictional content is meant to comply. In addition to Stora's foreword on the album's historicity and the bédéistes' artistic achievements within the series, Giroud contributes contextualizing information regarding French Algeria from 1830 until 1954 (2008a 6-7). Unlike *Carnets d'Orient*, *Azrayen'* narrates one event rather than the entire war and explores the war's rural character rather than focusing on urban battles. Stora's and Giroud's preliminary comments situate *Azrayen'*s action during a specific historical moment, the winter of 1957, and in a specific geographical location, Kabylia. Furthermore, they invite the reader to consider *Azrayen'* within a larger historical context: the shared history between France and Algeria. Without contextualizing arguments, the album's significance and

historical relevancy are lost to the uninformed reader. By relegating this information to the paratext, Lax and Giroud can focus their efforts on developing their fictional account within a historical framework.[7]

More specifically, Benjamin Stora fleshes out the significance of *Azrayen'*s landscapes, underscoring the harshness of winter in a mountainous area as well as the impenetrable tangle of roots, branches, and succulent plants hindering the soldiers' movements. Lax visualizes the chaos of the Kabyle landscape with dense vegetation drawn in yellowish sepia hues. The album's color scheme is meant to portray the region's aridity and barrenness. As Stora aptly observes, Lax's depiction of nature personifies the Kabyle mentality which he describes as "une volonté de refus et d'indépendence" (Stora 2008, 5). Kabylia and the Kabyle population actively resist the French throughout the series. The soldiers discover over the course of their mission that the landscape presents more of an obstacle than do the insurgents. The hillsides and vegetation obstruct visibility, leaving the patrol vulnerable to attack; animals surprise soldiers who mistake them for fellagha; and melting snow frequently washes out bridges and roads (fig. 2.4). The search patrol is often depicted changing flat tires, repairing their vehicles, and consulting maps. While French officers provide several plausible reasons for the disappearance of the lost patrol (e.g. they were ambushed), the search patrol discovers that their compatriots were victims of unexpected severe weather conditions. The find is significant because it absolves the native population of any crimes. When the French recover personal effects of lost soldiers in a nearby village, they execute the villagers and burn the village before learning the truth about what happened to the lost convoy several panels later.

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[7] Lax and Giroud also include footnotes throughout the series in order to explain references or abbreviations used by characters to the reader. Footnotes are generally short so as to avoid disrupting the narrative flow and positioning of panels on plates.

Similarly, Giroud emphasizes the importance of the Kabyle landscape in his afterword. He chose *Azrayen'*s wintery mountain setting so as to offer a different vision of Algeria to his French reading public familiar with its deserts, drifting sands, and dry heat. He writes: "[c]ar si dans l'imaginaire populaire la guerre d'Algérie reste liée à des paysages ocres et poussiéreux, écrasés de soleil, le souvenir d'un 'gus', dans la réalité, se colore souvent d'une tout autre nuance" (Giroud 2008b, 124). Through this commentary, Giroud indicates his desire to challenge reader perceptions of Algeria and, by extension, the French-Algerian War. His remarks also underline his desire to use a hostile landscape to express the harsh realities of war more effectively. More so than in any other corpus album, the setting plays a vital role. In it are translated the soldiers' anxieties and fears about being in unfamiliar territory "où chaque ombre insolite, chaque tronc déformé distillait la peur parce que chaque roc, chaque repli de terrain abritait une menace potentielle" (Giroud 2008b, 127-8). Interestingly, the series' illustrator, Christian Lax, was unable to travel to Algeria to view the Kabyle landscape firsthand. His sketches are therefore based on images published in France (e.g. tourist guidebooks which promote a certain vision of exotic locales) and Giroud's own photographs taken during his journey to Algeria in 1993. Lax travelled to an analogous region in Morocco (in the Atlas Mountains) one year before completing the album.

In contrast to Stora's foreword, Giroud's preface only provides background information relative to the war. It differs significantly from his afterword more aptly described as a "making of." Gérard Genette suggests that prefaces and afterwords each have a specific *raison d'être* with respect to the main text. While prefaces speak to potential readers, afterwords address actual readers. Due to their placement, afterwords are not meant to recruit and orient readers, but rather to act as an addendum to the main text (Genette 1987, 220). However, Giroud's afterword does not merely serve curative and corrective functions. If his preface serves to contextualize *Azrayen'* within the larger framework of Franco-Algerian history, his afterword provides a detailed explanation of

Lax and Giroud's creative process. This clear delimitation between preface and afterword points to the existence of two distinct yet vital texts without which the album would be incomplete and any claims for the album's historical and biographical authenticity would be unjustified.

Giroud's afterword expounds the difficult situation which confronted military draftees like his father in Algeria: the individual often becomes trapped within the confines of history. Therefore while "Une Épopée algérienne" outlines the creative process behind *Azrayen'* the album, it also underscores the album's *Histoire-histoires* dialectic. Writing from the perspective of an aggregated historian,[8] Frank Giroud uses his afterword to explain his obsession with historical verisimilitude. After describing how and why he chose his narrative focus, Giroud explains the research involved in producing *Azrayen'* which included the consultation of textual and iconographic documentation, interviews of French soldiers and *pieds noirs*, and "scouting" in Algeria (e.g. traveling to Algeria to familiarize himself with its landscapes and to find mujahidin willing to retell their war stories) (2008b, 125-6). He stipulates that extensive on-site research is incongruous to the bande dessinée medium whose primary objective, when it comes to history, is to create a historical effect:

> [à] vrai dire, [le repérage sur place] n'est pas incontournable: quel que soit le récit, on peut toujours le mener à bien en bornant son odyssée aux bibliothèques et aux librairies; après tout, un scénariste n'est ni un historien, ni un journaliste, et en cas d'ignorance, il lui suffit de passer habilement sous silence les éléments qui lui manquent. Mais chez moi c'est une vieille habitude. (Giroud 2008b, 126)

In the spirit of Genette, Giroud addresses his afterword to actual rather than anticipated readers who may question the album's veracity despite Benjamin Stora's prefatory contribution. Speaking as a historian, Giroud does not discredit history. He does,

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[8] Giroud's interest in the relationship between the bande dessinée and history stems from his Master's thesis, "Le Chevalier dans la BD" (Juteau 2001, 28).

however, suggest that through research, his historical vision retains its fictional quality with his fictionalized characters and plot all the while transmitting the stories and memories (*histoires*) of those he interviewed.

A close reading of *Azrayen'*s paratextual elements, and in particular Giroud's afterword, determines that they fulfill two major objectives within the series itself: firstly, they make important claims regarding the series' authenticity as a historical and semi-biographical bande dessinée; secondly, they suggest that a bande dessinée's authenticity establishes a causal relationship between narrative and history, on the one hand, and narrative and memory, on the other. As previously indicated, Giroud's closing remarks outline the research involved in creating *Azrayen'*. Contrary to Ferrandez's bibliographies and prefatory material, Giroud's text emphasizes personal contacts with people and places. The series' plot, characters, and landscapes surfaced through a reading of his father's war diary, detailed discussions with his father about his wartime experiences, face-to-face interviews conducted in Algeria, and hikes in and around Kabylia. Giroud mentions that the majority of the series' episodes and characters are based on real people and events. For example, his father reappears as the soldier Paturel. While this is certainly true of *Carnets d'Orient*, Giroud unearths his father's personal rather than national memories and re-contextualizes them in the bande dessinée. Again in contrast with Ferrandez's research, Giroud sought to highlight forgotten events and everyday life in the French army. His representation of the war is therefore more personal "[dont l']objectif est de restituer les sentiments et les sensations d'un appelé plongé malgré lui dans ce conflit" (Giroud 2008b, 122).

Giroud's afterword offers additional information about the creative process and how it affected Giroud's relationship with his father. If the discovery of his father's photographs and journals initially piqued Giroud's interest, following through with *Azrayen'* the project allowed him to reconnect with his father. Giroud writes that before finding his father's journals, he knew little about him:

> […] lorsque je découvre le carnet dans lequel il a consigné ces images et ces réflexions, il n'est encore pour moi qu'un père de famille attentionné, que je ne vois plus très souvent mais dont je conserve une vision forte éloignée de celle que transparaît dans ce cahier-souvenir. (2008b, 122)

The relationship between Giroud and his father mirrors that between Marco and his father in Larcenet's series. Yet Marco's father never breaches his silence whereas *Azrayen'* instigates a dialogue between Giroud and his father who actively participated in researching the subject and in setting up interviews for his son. He even returned to Algeria during the civil war in order to share his past with Giroud. Because Giroud is an aggregated historian, his research was not limited to survivor testimonies. Indeed his initial task was to collect information, not only from eyewitnesses like his father, but also from critical histories, documentaries, and period newspapers and newsmagazines. His emphasis on written and spoken testimonies in the afterword suggests that history and memory are inseparable. Regarding historical taboos such as the French-Algerian War which are "si bien cadenassé" in hegemonic discourses (Giroud 2008b, 122), memory often supplants history in private spaces. Only when such topics are broached, as between Giroud and his father, can healing begin.[9]

Giroud observes during his pilgrimage to Algeria that the revolution is deeply ingrained in national mythology. If he finds fault with representations of the war in the Algerian press, literature, and popular culture (Giroud cites Amouri's *Sur les sentiers escarpés*), he is equally judgmental of how the war has integrated French national history. It is my contention that Giroud relies more on personal interviews than historical documentation due to his mistrust of official histories and their ability to manipulate the

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[9] Giroud cites another interesting example in his afterword. While interviewing mujahidin, he and his father meet Abdellah who deserted the French army after World War II and later joined the FLN. Giroud's father and Abdellah, who fought against each other during the war, were able to share their experiences with great interest and without animosity. Giroud writes: "[a]musé, ébahi, j'assiste à cette discussion technique et surréaliste entre deux hommes qui, quarante ans plus tôt, combattaient dans des camps opposés!" (Giroud 2008b, 133).

public. Furthermore, his attempts to question several types of participants failed. He could not locate *harkis* or supporters of Messali Hadj (or perhaps they would not come forward for fear of retaliation). Consequently, his representation of the war remains limited to a single major episode based on his father's experiences instead of a more generalized representation based on historical texts and media coverage. Similar to his father's journal, whose limited scope articulates the war's complexities and ethical dilemmas, Giroud's narrative aims to capture the essence of the French-Algerian War so as to stimulate public debate, to open new fields of inquiry, and, most importantly, to "tire[r] l'épisode de son purgatoire" (Giroud 2008b, 124).

Prefatory material also figures in several Algerian albums of the corpus. Rather than making direct claims for historical accuracy, this material positions albums within dominant historical discourses consistent with Giroud's critique of Algerian popular culture. Yet references to the FLN and its historical vision serve a purpose similar to the *Carnets* and *Azrayen'* forewords within their respective cultures: they establish a continuum between albums and contemporary war historiography, thereby allowing bédéistes to make claims for historical authenticity. Mustapha Tenani's *Les Hommes du djebel* and *De nos montagnes* contain identical prefaces situating the plots of each album during the Algerian revolution. In his preface, Tenani reiterates FLN discourse on the war, emphasizing the achievement of independence as a collective, community effort led by a single party: "[l]a lutte fut déclenchée par tout un peuple et répandue à travers tout le territoire national. Un parti révolutionnaire, le Front de libération nationale jaillit. Il est appelé à regrouper tous les patriotes militants […]" (1981b; 1985b). Tenani's introductory text reflects party ideology rather than his own personal motivation for publishing the albums. A similar discourse appears in Benattou Masmoudi's preface to *Le Village oublié* in which the bédéiste condemns the "barbarie aveugle du colonialisme" and celebrates the struggle of a united Algerian people (1983b).

Algerian prefaces often stress the importance of November 1, 1954 as the start of Algerian contemporary history. This date has indeed taken on mythical proportions in the Algerian collective consciousness. The rewriting of Algerian history entailed the complete erasure of the past despite the FLN's expressed desire to promote the country's pre-colonial, Arab-Islamic heritage (Stora 2006, 11). Until the mid-1990s, history textbooks used in primary and secondary schools also promoted a lack of historical continuity (Le Dain et al 1993, 363). By disenabling students to contextualize and understand the events which occurred on November 1, 1954, the Algerian government perpetuated the mythologization of this date. Consequently, November 1, 1954 becomes a turning point before which Algeria and the Algerian people did not exist. Whereas one could argue that Algeria as a nation-state did not exist before independence due to its conquest at the hands of several successive foreign invaders, the de-contextualization of the revolution minimizes the importance of events which preceded it, namely the May 8, 1945 massacres in Sétif, Guelma, and Kherrata. If Tenani never explicitly cites November 1 as the start of the Algerian revolution is his prefatory remarks, he never refers to dates anterior to 1954, thereby aligning his narrative with the FLN's officialized perspective. After reading Tenani's preface, readers expect that his albums will engender different facets of FLN ideology like martyrdom, self sacrifice, anti-colonialism, and the myth of a unified Algerian people.

Perusing Tenani's *De nos montagnes*, the reader first notices the inclusion of several biographies of FLN leaders and notable revolutionaries such as Mohamed Larbi Ben M'hidi, Amirouche Badji Mokhtar ("Colonel Amirouche"), and Abderahmane Taleb inserted in between bande dessinée episodes. Biographies and their accompanying photographs come from archives managed by Algeria's Ministry of Information and Culture. If Tenani's citation of this source does not concede a measure of historical authenticity to the entire album, it does align Tenani's representation with official FLN discourses on the war. The biographies, in particular, become fodder for narrative and

character development. While the fictional episodes of this album were first published separately in *M'quidèch*, the biographies grant thematic unity to the entire album (composed of five episodes: "La Gourde," "La Dernière carte," "Le Combattant," "Le Survivant," and "L'Éclaireur"), contextualize plots within Algerian national history, and elucidate why Tenani's protagonists often die at the end of each episode. By privileging famous martyrs over war survivors, Tenani's biographical texts imply that true Algerian heroes are not afraid to sacrifice themselves for the good of the Algerian people. Protagonists are portrayed as pensive, poetic, courageous individuals who trust that their sacrifices are part of God's plan.

"Le Combattant," for example, narrates the journey of an Algerian man who attempts to join the maquis. Tenani's visual representation of the would-be mujahid's journey accentuates Algeria's harsh and unforgiving winter climate which fails to deter the protagonist. As the episode progresses, the man and landscape become increasingly more snow-covered. Yet he never stops to rest or warm himself, and his thoughts (the textual component of this episode) center on the importance of his mission. Although his fate remains uncertain, the protagonist's loyalty to Algeria is never shaken and his decision to join the maquis is never questioned. Indeed this journey serves as a rite of passage for Tenani's character and, arguably, for Algeria's war generation. This notion is articulated in the first lines of the episode: "[m]aintenant, le voilà devenu ALGÉRIEN: révolté, opiniâtre, confiant en son destin […]" (Tenani 1981a, 22). This statement suggests that the title character becomes Algerian only after leaving his family and home to fight for independence. When the protagonist dies, the French soldier responsible for his death is proud of himself because surely this Algerian was a messenger. While Tenani's protagonist was not carrying important documents for the FLN, his determination and death communicate a message to Tenani's readers. By progressively moving through three subject pronouns ("je," "nous," and "vous"), Tenani shifts the focus from his protagonist ("je") first to the Algerian population ("nous"), to which both

the protagonist and the target audience belong, and second to the reader after the protagonist dies ("vous"). Passing a figurative torch to the reader, Tenani emphasizes the collective participation of the Algerian nation in the struggle for independence. The "vous" suggests that readers, like the title character, must be prepared to sacrifice themselves.

Another episode in *De nos montagnes* illustrates the idea of self sacrifice: "Le Survivant." In this particular episode, whose graphic and narrative qualities are relatively unexceptional, the sole survivor of a mine field is on a mission to protect an important armory from the French. Before leaving his fallen comrades, he declares: "[c]ompagnons, votre sacrifice ne sera pas vain" (Tenani 1981a, 33). The mujahid reaches the armory minutes before the French. Instead of surrendering, tantamount to treason, he detonates the armory's entire supply of explosives shouting: "[f]rères, le but de notre mission est atteint! Pour que vive l'Algérie!" (Tenani 1981a, 39). The episode ends with an explosion on which the (cartoon) faces of fallen mujahidin are superimposed, reminding the reader of Algeria's "thousand and one" martyrs. Similarly, "L'Éclaireur" depicts the determination of an Algerian scout who must ensure the safe passage of fellow mujahidin while transporting much needed medical supplies to a remote location. Traveling alone, the scout is ambushed and left for dead. On the following plate, Tenani draws close-ups of the injured mujahidin: first showing his clenched fist, then his eyes, until finally the reader is offered a global vision of the scout as he struggles to stand. Although the scout is seriously, perhaps fatally, wounded, he persists in his mission: "[l]a blessure est grave… je perds tout mon sang […] je suis leur seule chance…" (Tenani 1981a, 44).

Tenani's title characters stand in as archetypes of the Algerian revolutionary hero. The nameless combatant ("Le Combattant"), survivor ("Le Survivant"), and scout ("L'Éclaireur") are, however, based on national heroes such as Ben M'hidi, Colonel Amirouche, and Taleb. Consequently, parallels can be established between the biographical inserts and fictional episodes, namely with respect to character development.

As indicated above, the mujahid (combatant) and shahid (martyr) play key roles in the Algerian bande dessinée of which Tenani's albums are not isolated examples. The central figure of the mujahid in particular exemplifies the importance of the FLN's armed struggle which distinguished the FLN from Hadj's *Mouvement national algérien* (MNA) and its opposition to military action. The leaders of the FLN even baptized their newspaper *El Moudjahid*, further underscoring their identification with the figure of the mujahid. Anticolonial (read anti-French) sentiment is also manifest in FLN discourse. As a result, Tenani and other bédéistes often juxtapose their representation of the mujahid with caricatures of the French illustrating their deceptive practices (the French disguise themselves as mujahidin when they ambush "l'éclaireur"), their lack of military intelligence (in "La Dernière carte," a French captain foolishly exposes himself to enemy fire; in "Le Combattant," the sniper misinterprets the mujahid's objectives), and their false promises (the French offer protection to surrendering mujahidin, yet biographical inserts mention the army's use of torture on suspected terrorists).

Mohamed Bouslah's *La Ballade du proscrit* presents an interesting counterexample to the other SNED and ENAL albums, Tenani's included, because its plot takes place during the interwar period (between World Wars I and II). Why would the Algerian government recently reprint an album (in 2004) which contradicts the historical vision dominating Algerian schoolbooks?[10] The content of Bouslah's album is congruous, however, with the evolution of Algerian war historiography. Benjamin Stora explains that during the period which includes *La Ballade du proscrit*'s first publication

[10] The most recent study of Algerian history textbooks that I have been able to consult dates to 1993, eleven years prior to the reprinting of Bouslah's album. While it is possible that Algerian textbooks have been revised since the date of this study, I have not found any new information concerning this subject. Lydia Aït Saadi, a student at the *Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales* (INALCO) working under Benjamin Stora, recently defended her doctoral dissertation on January 20, 2010. Her dissertation, entitled "La Nation algérienne à travers les manuels scolaires d'histoire algériens: 1962 à 2008" is not yet available to the public.

date (1984), historians became interested in the origins of the war. Stora adds that during the 1980s, publishers began distributing critical histories authored by foreign historians such as Charles-Robert Ageron in Algeria (2005a, 69). Yet the emergence of new critical histories did not prompt the revision of Algerian school textbooks and their reductive historical perspective akin to Tenani's representation of history. Bouslah's inclusion of historical documentation, beginning in his preface, therefore ascribes a pedagogical role to the bande dessinée. As if unsatisfied with the representation of Algerian history, *La Ballade du proscrit* proposes an alternative version respective of the same bibliographic standards of other schoolbooks. While contextualizing the album historically, Bouslah also substantiates the album's historical vision via frequent quotations of noted historians such as Slimane Chikh, Charles-Robert Ageron, Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi, and Mahfoud Kaddache.[11] Although Bouslah's album does not include endorsements contributed by historians, the bédéiste's exploitation of historical material validates the representation of history in a popular medium or, at the very least, provides evidence for the album's narrative realism.

If Bouslah cites seminal texts (e.g. Ageron's *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*, Kaddache's *Histoire du nationalisme algérien*), his purpose is to substantiate questionable aspects of his historical representation—questionable to those who deny that members of the Algerian elite benefited from French colonialism or that the revolution was already germinating prior to 1954. One striking example is when the *caïd* B confiscates a peasant's flock and nearly tramples the young boy with his horse as a warning. As if to prove the accuracy of this panel sequence, Bouslah inserts an excerpt from Kaddache's text on Algerian nationalism: "[e]n plus de la misère, il faut ajouter les

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[11] Allen Douglas and Fedwa Malti-Douglas also comment on Bouslah's inclusion of historical documentation. They argue that "[t]hese passages both provide a broader political and economic context for the actions of [Bouslah's] bandit-hero and serve as evidence for the verisimilitude of fictional incidents" (Douglas and Malti-Douglas 1994, 183).

abus de l'administration. […] Dans les bleds les plus reculés les fellahs se plaignaient surtout des exactions des caïds" (qtd. in Bouslah 1984, 10). Bouslah repeats this strategy several times throughout the album so as to confirm plot details: the organization of insurgents in the early twentieth century; the myth of the "bandit d'honneur;" Algerian resistance to fighting alongside the French in World War I; consecutive bad winters in the early 1930s which lead to poor harvests, generalized famine, and a declining social situation; the consistent use of "tu" when French administrators addressed Algerian Muslims, including the *caïds*; and the significance of the centennial celebration of French Algeria regarding the constitution of Algerian nationalism.

The addition of paratextual material such as prefaces, forewords, afterwords, biographical inserts, direct quotations of critical histories, and extensive bibliographies serves to historically contextualize narrative, provide evidence for an album's historical claims, highlight the contribution of popular (visual) culture to the constitution of a collective war memory, and finally (in the case of Algerian bandes dessinées) to popularize specific historical perspectives. While readers remain acutely aware of the bande dessinée as a fictional representation of the French-Algerian War, bédéistes invite them to consider the wider implications of the bande dessinée as a viable producer and product of discourse. By recognizing both official and critical histories in their albums, bédéistes guarantee a measure of historical accuracy which then allows readers and critics to take their contributions seriously. Furthermore and contrary to Algerian corpus albums, French albums often include or are inspired by personal sources (e.g. Giroud's father's war diary; Ferrandez's discussions with his grandfather). Consequently, French bandes dessinées rely on family biographies in order to further authenticate their historical vision. Of the corpus bédéistes some come from *pied noir* families (Ferrandez, Anne Sibran, Morvandiau, and Denis Mérezette), others are of Algerian descent (Farid Boudjellal), and still others participated in the war (Guy Vidal) or have family who did

(Frank Giroud). For these bédéistes, their focus on personal and family experiences creates interesting alternatives to strict historical reconstitutions.

For example, Anne Sibran and Tronchet's *Là-bas* includes prefatory material which make claims for the album's biographical, rather than historical, accuracy. Born in France while her father stubbornly remained in Algeria waiting for the "events" to quell, Anne Sibran narrates her father's difficult decision to leave Algiers and equally difficult integration into French society. Other than her own prefatory remarks explaining her choice of subject and creative process, Sibran does not include other textual inserts to contextualize or authentic her narrative. Nor does she need to: by stressing that *Là-bas* is her father's story, Sibran eliminates the need for historical endorsements.[12] Yet her preface clearly authenticates her narrative as a fictionalized biography embedded in France and Algeria's shared history. With the help of old postcards, she attempts to recreate her father's guarded memories of Algiers before he immigrated to Paris on July 4, 1962. Sibran explains that due to her father's repressed memories (since leaving Algiers, he fixates on his exodus), she was forced to fill in the gaps not only of her father's biography, but also of her childhood. Despite never having visited Algeria, the scenarist feels a strong personal connection with the country, the culture, and people. Having learned about Algiers in her "fauteuil de velours rouge" (Sibran 2003, 3), Sibran's visualization of the capital is more visceral than objective, relying on emotions that postcard images and her father's words instilled in her.

Sibran's prefatory remarks provide a key for understanding Tronchet's illustrations and his particular use of color to depict emotion. The scenarist's recreation of her father's last days in Algeria as well as his declining psychological state in France is based on the emotional charge of significant moments. In Sibran's own memory, as

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[12] This is also the case for Morvandiau's *D'Algérie* in which the bédéiste presents his family's Algerian history.

described in her preface, she associates colors with these memories, an association easily articulated in the bande dessinée. Remembering times when her father described his departure from Algiers, Sibran writes:

> [m]on père avait sa voix chaude et cassée, cette voix de celtic bleues entre deux tons, et me priant maintenant de refermer la porte. Je m'asseyais devant lui sur le fauteuil de velours rouge, n'osant poser le dos de peur qu'il m'engloutisse, que mes pieds perdent la terre et qu'il s'aperçoive que je n'étais qu'une toute petite fille, à qui il racontait une histoire de grand. (Sibran 2003, 2)

This passage stresses two colors: blue and red. The blue reminds Sibran of her father's voice while the red stirs memories of when her father spoke about Algeria. While these are not the only colors used in the album, they dominate Tronchet's color scheme. Near the end of the album, they are used together, emphasizing the relationship between personal memory and memory transmission (fig. 2.5). In this example, red symbolizes the father's past and blue symbolizes the present connection between father and daughter, bonding over family memories. Blue and red do not always carry the same symbolic value and are often used to convey emotional affect: red for fear or anger (in this particular scene, Sibran's father relives a traumatic shooting in an open-air market of which he was the only survivor), blue for nostalgia and sadness (for example, when the daughter notices her father's fatigue and worsening depression), and green for disease (when her paternal aunt is diagnosed with cancer).

In the end, Sibran resembles her father by fixating on his emigration from Algiers as a decisive moment in the construction of their identity. If her present life is in France, her past and family heritage is to be found elsewhere. Only by listening and ingesting her father's stories and, specifically, the transition between their past and present can the daughter learn to help her father move forward. The reader learns from the preface that *Là-bas* is as much about Sibran as it is about her father. When the daughter character reaches adulthood, her father's stories, once a preferred source of bedtime tales, engender feelings first of anger regarding her father's failures in France, and later of anxiety about

her father's future. Worried about her father's declining mental state as he retreats more frequently and more profoundly into his Algerian memories, the daughter, through a sustained dialogue, helps her father create alternate endings to his traumatic visions. The father's guilt, for example, for having survived the OAS shooting debilitates him, causing him to detach completely from reality at the end of the album. Through words (and Tronchet's images), Sibran transforms the banks of the Seine into the Algerian coastline so that her father can relive his trauma one last time (the shooting scene appears three times in the album: at its beginning, middle, and end). This time, however, Sibran's narrative resuscitates the market victims creating a dialogue of redemption and forgiveness, banishing her father's feelings of guilt. Sibran's words liberate her father and her perception of him from the confines of history, from negative interpretations of her *pied noir* heritage.

While not all war bandes dessinées make claims for historical and biographical authenticity as openly as the albums cited above, several create a historical or biographical effect through the addition of non-authentic material to their narrative structure. One prominent example is Guy Vidal and Alain Bignon's *Une Éducation algérienne* which includes several excerpts from the protagonist's war diary. Though loosely based on Vidal's real-life experiences as a French soldier in Algeria, *Une Éducation algérienne* remains a work of fiction and does not claim to reflect the scenarist's political views or personal affiliations. Yet the diary, which only appears at the album's beginning (1960) and end (1962), creates a portal through which the reader can view the protagonist's shift from apathy to antimilitarism that elements of the album's plot and other characters provoke. Reminiscent of pages from Giroud's father's journals, Albert's diary entries document daily occurrences while providing personal commentaries. If Giroud's father emphasizes the violence he witnesses, Albert enumerates examples of French racism towards the native population as well as tactical errors committed by the French army which injured the European population.

Consequently, the Albert who is finally discharged and sent home barely resembles the Albert who first addresses the reader. Throughout the album, Albert witnesses summary executions, muscled interrogations, and broken alliances (e.g. his commanding officer and role model murders his subordinates and later commits suicide in the name of French Algeria).

When Albert finally arrives in his hometown, he realizes that nothing has changed despite the war. The album's final panels, which depict people leaving on summer vacation, juxtapose those preceding them in which tearful *pieds noirs* are evacuating Algiers *en masse*. This opposition, rendered even more poignant through Bignon's illustrations, articulates metropolitan French apathy, similar to Albert's before being deployed, with respect to the war and its consequences. The visual juxtaposition suggests that by 1962, Algeria, its war, and the impending mass exodus of Algeria's European population scarcely concerned the inhabitants of metropolitan France. This perception comes to the fore in the album's final panel in which Albert is reunited with his mother who exclaims: "[m]on Dieu, Albert mon poulet!... Tu n'as pas changé" (Vidal and Bignon 1982, 56). Of course Albert has changed as evidenced by his diary entries and growing disgust for the French army. Although the album is a largely fictional account, Vidal's military status suggests that the album is based on actual events (or at least portrays possible events), leaving the reader to assume that Albert's diary is perhaps based on Vidal's own war journal. Vidal therefore acts as a credible witness (and source), conceding a measure of biographical and historical authenticity to the album. *Une Éducation algérienne* indeed mirrors the written testimonies of French soldiers with its "photographs," letters and care packages from home, and journals which fail to erase the horrors of war experienced by young men in their twenties. The reader is left wondering if Vidal and Bignon's album is, like other soldier testimonies, "une façon de résister au temps perdu, de retrouver cette part de soi que la condition militaire voulait nier en effaçant ce qui la reliait à la vie civile" (Stora 2005a, 39).

The Bande Dessinée as a "Mosaic of Quotations"

When discussing literary allusions, direct quotations, and the reproduction of fictional texts in (para)literature, scholars often turn to Julia Kristeva's conceptualization of intertextuality. However, critics such as William Irwin and Leon S. Roudiez ascertain that intertextuality has been widely misunderstood and abused in literary circles (Irwin 2004, 227-8; Roudiez 1980, 15). Irwin writes that since Kristeva's theoretical articulation of intertextuality in the late 1960s, the term "has come to have almost as many meanings as users, from those faithful to Kristeva's original vision to those who simply use it as a stylish way of talking about allusion and influence" (2004, 227-8). He later adds that "[a]t its worst, intertextuality becomes fashionable jargon for traditional notions such as allusions and source study" (Irwin 2004, 229). From a post-structuralist perspective, intertextuality refers to any text as a "mosaïque de citations," as the "absorption et transformation d'un autre texte" (Kristeva 1969, 146). While my usage of "intertextuality" does not directly depend on linguistic theory, the inclusion of literary texts in the bande dessinée affects the composition of textual and iconographic systems. "Intertextuality" will therefore be placed in quotation marks, alerting the reader to a particular usage of the term, one which differs from Kristeva's post-structuralist point of view. "Intertextuality," as it is used here, corresponds more to Gérard Genette's theoretical paradigm in which "intertextuality" designates "une relation de coprésence entre deux ou plusieurs textes, c'est-à-dire, eidétiquement et le plus souvent, par la présence effective d'un texte dans un autre " (1982, 8). This presence can manifest as a direct quotation, plagiarism ("un emprunt non déclaré, mais encore littéral" (Genette 1982, 8)), or allusion ("un énoncé dont la pleine intelligence suppose la perception d'un rapport entre lui et un autre auquel renvoie nécessairement telle ou telle de ses inflexions, autrement non recevable" (Genette 1982, 8)).

Irwin would certainly qualify my usage of the term as "fashionable jargon." I would argue, however, that new definitions of "literature" prompt new perspectives on

"intertextuality." Because the bande dessinée remains stigmatized by its paraliterary status, the medium avoids indirect allusions and invites source studies in an attempt to legitimize and communicate discourse. Bédéistes commonly use "intertextuality" (e.g. direct citation, literary figures as secondary characters) to establish important parallels between the bande dessinée and literature, poetry, and music. By constantly and ostentatiously referencing canonical and even popular works, bédéistes introduce generic hybridity in the bande dessinée, raising the standard for representations of the war in this medium. As a result, the inclusion of other literary sources allows bédéistes to dispute categorical representations of the bande dessinée which qualify the medium as inferior and paraliterary. "Intertextuality" establishes a direct line of communication between the bande dessinée and respected French and Algerian literary traditions, allowing bédéistes to integrate themselves and their albums into existent professional and reputational structures.

This strategy is not, however, unique to the bande dessinée. *Beur* writers also rely on "intertextuality" as a way of inserting their novels into canonical literary traditions. Alec G. Hargreaves underlines that *beur* writers often borrow from several competing cultural traditions (France, North Africa) as a way of carving their own niche in world literature (1997, 117). Bédéistes employ a similar strategy, using "intertextuality" to associate their art with canonical literature while simultaneously accentuating the unique qualities of the bande dessinée medium. Furthermore, "[i]n the absence of a formal professional structure, writers depend on others who are both peers and competitors for their self-image, reputation, and social position" (Anheier and Gerhards 1991, 139). The bande dessinée has a formal professional structure in France (but not in Algeria) thanks in part to government-sponsored programs and schools. The medium itself, however, lacks narrative and aesthetic standards especially when it comes to representations of the war. Consequently, it is not uncommon to find references to *pied noir* literature (Marie Cardinal, Jules Roy, Jean Pélégri), the Algerian novel (Mouloud Mammeri, Mouloud

Feraoun), and works by politically engaged authors (Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus) in which certain aspects of the war have become literary topoï such as the *pied noir* exodus, utopian visions of French Algeria, and the colonial exploitation of native populations.

Jacques Ferrandez, for example, includes epigraphs taken from prominent French and Algerian literary figures throughout his series: Albert Camus (quoted in *La Guerre fantôme*, *Rue de la Bombe*, *Dernière demeure*, and *Terre fatale*), Jean-Paul Sartre (*Rue de la Bombe*), Mouloud Feraoun (*La Fille du Djebel Amour*), and Jules Roy (*Dernière demeure*). The inclusion of quotations from writers known for their activism during the war and for their personal ties to Algeria assigns the series literary and historical buoyancy, keeping it afloat with the publication of each successive volume. Ferrandez's familiarity with major literary texts associated with the French-Algerian War suggests to readers that his representation does not cater to the bande dessinée's reputation as "entertainment designed for mass appeal and minimal thinking" (Versaci 2007, 2). Instead his representation is the culmination of years of reading and research. Each epigraph is carefully chosen and reflects the central thematic of the album in which it appears.

Rue de la Bombe includes two epigraphs: an editorial written by Camus published in 1944 and an excerpt from Sartre's foreword to Henri Alleg's *La Question* (1958). In addition to prefacing the violence depicted in this particular album, Camus's and Sartre's words enter into their own dialogue condemning France's abuse of power in Algeria after being victimized by Nazi Germany one decade earlier. Camus writes,

> [r]ien n'est donné aux hommes et le peu qu'ils peuvent conquérir se paie de morts injustes. Mais la grandeur de l'homme n'est pas là. Elle est dans sa décision d'être plus fort que sa condition. Et si sa condition est injuste, il n'a qu'une façon de la surmonter qui est d'être juste lui-même. (qtd. in Ferrandez 2004)

If Camus's epigraph condemns man's weakness when it comes to power, Sartre's emphasizes France's hypocrisy with respect to Algeria. How could a nation who suffered the Nazi Occupation endorse the continuation of colonial oppression in Algeria? Sartre's

words, first published in Alleg's seminal text about the French army's use of torture in Algeria, find resonance in Ferrandez's album in which Octave distances himself from France's newly crowned *bourreaux*:

> [s]i rien ne protège une nation contre elle-même, ni son passé, ni ses fidélités, ni ses propres lois, s'il suffit de quinze ans pour changer en bourreaux les victimes, c'est que l'occasion décide seule: selon l'occasion, n'importe qui, n'importe quand, deviendra victime ou bourreau. (qtd. in Ferrandez 2004)

Although his insubordination stems from his own experience of torture as a prisoner of war in French Indochina, Octave cannot reconcile the army's mission with his respect for human rights, even those of France's enemies. Octave's disgust for France's shift from victim (in Indochina) to executioner (in Algeria) presses him to rise above the army's injustices by refusing to participate and by speaking out against his commanding officer. Camus's and Sartre's epigraphs establish the album's narrative framework from France's shift in policy that Sartre articulates to Octave's revolt that Camus celebrates.

A similar epigraphic dialogue occurs in *Dernière demeure* between Camus and Jules Roy. In this album, Ferrandez cites Camus's controversial remarks prioritizing his love for his mother over justice:

> [j]'ai toujours condamné la terreur. Je dois ainsi condamner un terrorisme qui s'exerce aveuglément dans les rues d'Alger, par exemple, et qui un jour peut frapper ma mère ou ma famille. Je crois à la justice, mais je défendrai ma mère avant la justice. (qtd. in Ferrandez 2007)

Jules Roy's epigraph responds to Camus's: "[p]our moi, j'ignore, Camus, si je suis comme toi capable de placer ma mère au-dessus de la justice (…) Il ne s'agit pas de préférer sa mère à la justice, il s'agit d'aimer la justice autant que sa propre mère" (qtd. in Ferrandez 2007). Once again, the epigraphs foreshadow Octave's character development. In the penultimate album of the series, Octave returns to Algeria after a brief hiatus in Canada where he and Samia try to distance themselves from the war and its consequences. Then his mother sends an urgent telegram: his father is dying. The couple returns to Algeria where they are confronted with difficult decisions leading to their

separation. Octave defends his parents' farm-cum-military base while Samia escapes to her childhood home in the Djebel Amour. Similar to Camus, Octave and Samia choose their family over their political and ethical principles. Only when Samia's grandmother passes away in the final album can she leave Algeria behind her and start a new life in France. Octave, on the other hand, chooses to side with the OAS in his family's honor (the subject of the last album) before realizing that his dream for a utopian French Algeria is over. Incidentally, at the end of *Dernière demeure*, the main *pied noir* characters (Octave and his family) learn about Camus's fatal car accident. Setting the tone for *Terre fatale*, Octave exclaims: "[a]lors Camus lui aussi nous abandonne…" (Ferrandez 2007, 59).

Once the war is set in motion, Mouloud Feraoun warns (in the epigraph to *La Fille du Djebel Amour*), no one can escape it:

> [i]l arrivera un moment où l'armée et le maquis rivaliseront de brutalité et de cruauté les uns au nom d'une liberté difficile à conquérir, l'autre au nom d'un système périmé qu'elle s'acharne à défendre. Ceux qui font les frais de ces colères implacables les subissent sans étonnement et sans panique, ayant enfin conscience de se trouver engagés dans un circuit infernal d'où toute tentative d'évasion est devenue une utopie. (qtd. in Ferrandez 2005)

Feraoun's words prefigure Samia and Octave's failure to detach themselves from Algeria and the war even in Canada. This epigraph alludes to the public's naïve reaction to De Gaulle's "je vous ai compris" speech depicted at the end of *La Fille du Djebel Amour*. Blinded by their hope that a utopian French Algeria is still possible, *pieds noirs* and native Algerians publically manifest their solidarity. Yet as Ferrandez so aptly demonstrates in the two remaining *Carnets*, the French army and the FLN continue to respond violently to each other creating a vicious cycle of revenge and counter-revenge as well as terrorizing the Algerian and European civilian populations. By choosing Feraoun's quotation, the bédéiste underlines that although the situation may appear hopeful at the end of the album, the wheels of decolonization have already been set in

motion. Readers should therefore expect more death and destruction in subsequent albums.

While the above discussion indicates that the majority of Ferrandez's epigraphs elucidate the content of individual albums, they also speak to the entire series and its historical context.[13] The epigraph to *La Guerre fantôme*, however, has greater thematic and narrative importance relative to other quotations. As previously noted, *Carnets d'Orient* consists of two cycles: the first narrates the colonization of French Algeria and the second its decolonization. The narrative, thematic, and temporal[14] breaks separating the two cycles warrants a strong epigraph at the beginning of the second cycle because the quotation constitutes one of the first elements noticed by the reader. Unlike the majority of Ferrandez's epigraphs, this one is short and remarkable due to Camus's use of anaphora: "[b]ientôt l'Algérie ne sera peuplée que de meurtriers et de victimes. Bientôt les morts seuls y seront innocents" (qtd. in Ferrandez 2002). A French audience would not need this quotation to understand the album's content. Indeed the album's title, *La Guerre fantôme*, and accompanying cover illustration clearly reference the French-Algerian War. The title and epigraph call attention to the inter-cycle transition, mentally preparing the reader for the new cycle's graphic violence and sensitive material.

Camus's words also find resonance in character development. In *La Guerre fantôme*, the reader is introduced to Samia and Ali, cousins and Muslim Algerians who find it increasingly difficult to navigate the widening divide separating the native and European populations; to Sauveur and Marianne, a young French couple who will soon witness the violent uprooting of their family and cultural heritage; to Octave, a French

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[13] The last *Carnets*' epigraph (published in *Terre fatale*) pertains more to the series as a whole than to the content of the final album: "[c]omprendre le monde pour un homme, c'est le réduire à l'humain" (Camus, qtd. in Ferrandez 2009a).

[14] Jacques Ferrandez waited seven years after the end of the first cycle before publishing the first volume of the second cycle.

officer whose professional loyalties and kinship will be tested; to Bouzid, an Algerian so disgruntled with colonial ideologies that he joins the FLN; and to Saïd, a young boy engulfed by Algeria's declining political climate. Camus's quotation placed at the beginning of the album challenges readers to ponder which characters are murderers and which are victims. Or will they all be proven innocent through death? The epigraph signals to readers that, despite the war's outcome, there are no clear winners.

Ferrandez's preference for Camus's quotations and even persona (he makes a cameo appearance in *La Guerre fantôme*) suggests that the bédéiste uses "intertextuality" to honor Algeria's "native son" (Cohen-Solal 1998, 45).[15] Camus's near withdrawal from intellectual debates on the French-Algerian War during the 1950s stemmed from dissonance between his utopian vision of what Algeria might have been and the reality of what it had become. Camus, however, would not witness the decolonization of French Algeria: he died in a car accident on January 4, 1960. Because the *Carnets*' main characters (Octave, Samia, and Saïd) embody Camus's desire to reconcile the native and European communities, the series' second cycle, reminiscent of Jean Pélégri's *Les Oliviers de la justice*, bemoans France and Algeria's failure to create a socio-cultural utopia in which both communities could peaceably coexist. Camus's words are later recycled in *La Fille du Djebel Amour*. Samia's cousin Ali, when asked to betray the FLN, chooses death, absolving himself of any crimes because "les morts seuls y seront innocents" (qtd. in Ferrandez 2005, 25). Ali understands that even if the French release him, the FLN will condemn him as a traitor. His decision to commit suicide breathes life into Camus's words written on the wall next to his motionless body.

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[15] In addition, Ferrandez recently published a bande dessinée adaptation of Camus's "L'Hôte," the only fictional work in which Camus openly discusses the French-Algerian War. Daru, a young *pied noir* teacher who wants no part in the war, receives an order to escort an Arab prisoner to a neighboring village.

Ferrandez does not restrict his direct quotations to Camus. He also quotes Sartre, Feraoun, and Roy, three men known for their political activism during the war as well as their literary talents—especially Feraoun and Roy whose novels are set in Algeria. Consequently, Sartre, Feraoun, and Roy's notoriety and relationship to Algeria often outweigh their words within the series. If Ferrandez had chosen quotations from authors unrelated to the French-Algerian War or Algeria, they would have been less effective as epigraphs unless their content was thematically significant. Ferrandez, in his desire to validate his representation of history, privileges authors over epigraphic content. Even though quoting Camus, Sartre, Roy, and Feraoun does not imply their endorsement, it does elevate the *Carnets* to a higher literary standard, achieving an objective similar to the inclusion of prefatory remarks written by noted historians. Ferrandez's epigraphs affiliate the *Carnets* with canonical literature on or about Algeria and its revolution.

While Ferrandez's series is exceptional in its desire for authenticity and validation, it is not unique in its focus on Albert Camus. More so than any other French writer, the French associate Camus with the French-Algerian War due to his *pied noir* heritage, his political engagement and later disengagement with respect to the war, and finally the frequency with which Algeria figures in his novels and short stories such as "L'Hôte," *La Peste,* and *L'Étranger*. Indeed Boualem Sansal asks in his foreword to Ferrandez's adaptation of "L'Hôte": "[l]irons-nous un jour Camus autrement qu'à travers le prisme de la guerre d'Algérie?" (2009, 3). In *Algérie française!* Denis Merezette and Duménil reference Camus's seminal novel on the absurd, *L'Étranger*, in which the protagonist irrationally murders an Arab and is later sentenced to death because he did not cry at his mother's funeral. Rather than addressing the racial discrimination inherent in French colonialism (which does not motivate Meursault's actions in *L'Étranger*), Camus explores the absurdity of the human condition. In Merezette and Duménil's album, Kerbronec finds and reads Camus's novel in the apartment where he is being held captive (fig. 2.6). The situation in which Kerbronec finds himself is absurd. Nadine and

Ahmed hold him hostage so that he will drive Ahmed out of Algiers the following day. To prevent Kerbronec from escaping, they confiscate his clothing and lock him in Nadine's bedroom. Initially hoping for a sexual encounter with Nadine, the protagonist is humiliated and forced into participating in the war, albeit indirectly. Unable to sleep, he reads *L'Étranger* from cover to cover. Changing shadows and panel inserts depicting day moving into night suggest the passage of time as Kerbronec reads the novel's incipit and later final passage, both quoted in the album.

The reference to Camus is less significant than the reference to *L'Étranger*. In many respects, Kerbronec becomes a second Meursault. While Kerbronec is neither completely indifferent to the world around him nor entirely amoral, his motivations for being in Algeria are suspect. He is a trafficker. Hoping to obtain a better price for his car in Algeria, he risks his life for the opportunity to make money. Indifferent to the fact that Algeria is a country ravaged by war, he spends his time scouting potential buyers, women, and bars. His involvement in Ahmed's escape from Algiers and later Algeria is accidental and does not reflect his political beliefs—indeed he remains largely apathetic to the war and decolonization. If Ahmed speaks volumes about his own political activity and militancy, Kerbronec, like Meursault, only appears concerned with the physical: the heat, the taste of sardines, his thirst, and his sexual desires. However, unlike Camus's protagonist, indifference is what saves Kerbronec several times throughout the album. Because he wears his political apathy as a shield, other characters who are more politically minded such as Ahmed and Scotti, the quintessential *colon*, find him likeable and unthreatening. At the album's climax, Ahmed's anger for Scotti and what he represents literally explodes when Ahmed bombs Scotti's garage, killing him in the process. In contrast, Kerbronec disengages himself from Ahmed and Scotti's political discussion the moment Nadine and the opportunity for sexual gratification arrive.

Moreover, the trio Kerbronec-Ahmed-Nadine mirrors that of Meursault-Raymond-Marie in *L'Étranger*. Marie and Nadine resemble each other in their sex appeal

and physical hold on Meursault and Kerbronec. Yet while Marie remains hopeful and fails to understand Meursault and the absurdity of the human condition, Nadine is a cynical character who uses her sexual prowess to manipulate men. She is no more loyal to Kerbronec than she is to Ahmed or Marcel, the French officer she persuades to desert so that he can escort the threesome to Tunisia at the album's close. Similarly, Ahmed shares Raymond's violent personality, murdering several people in his escape from Algiers. Akin to Raymond in his "friendship" with Meursault, Ahmed establishes an ambiguous relationship with Kerbronec in which he first takes advantage of him and even hates him, but later demonstrates a certain loyalty to him. For example, he expresses sincere regret when he realizes that Kerbronec may have been injured in the explosion. Consequently, references to Camus in *Algérie française!* serve to elucidate character development and the absurdity of the human condition not in life but, rather, in times of war. Despite its title, setting, and historical context, *Algérie française!* is not meant to engender reflections on album historicity. Instead the album, with its frequent references to Camus and his philosophy of the absurd, examines human responses to war when differences in perspectives result in violence and death.

Contrary to historical albums such as *Carnets d'Orient* and *Azrayen'*, Manu Larcenet's series is less concerned with historical accuracy than with the ebb and flow of everyday life. Because Marco's father never discloses information about his military service in Algeria, *Le Combat ordinaire* reveals itself to be more about strained family relationships than France's official amnesia regarding its wars of decolonization. While Larcenet's series challenges the bande dessinée's paraliterary status with its focus on the existentialist questions Marco poses throughout each of the four albums, it does not concern itself with the accuracy of its historical representation. The war becomes one more obstacle separating father and son, one more experience these two characters do not share. Direct references to the French-Algerian War are limited and are used to explore questions of identity. Endorsements, bibliographies, extensive research, and affiliations

created through paratextual elements were neither necessary for inspiring the creative process nor for the album's positive reception among readers and critics. Indeed the first album of the series, *Le Combat ordinaire*, was awarded the prize for best album at the Angoulême International Comics Festival in 2004.

Yet Larcenet does not entirely avoid "intertextuality." He includes epigraphs from Jacques Brel's "Jaurès" in *Les Quantités négligeables* and the Clash's "I'm Not Down" in *Ce qui est précieux*. The chosen quotations reflect the thematic importance of each album. The resulting mosaic of popular sources (pop music and punk rock in the bande dessinée) creates new levels of meaning, transposing the verbal sign system of music onto the verbal and visual sign systems of the bande dessinée. A reader unfamiliar with Jacques Brel's or the Clash's music would undoubtedly find the quotations' brevity and relevance to album titles appealing and would realize that therein lies the key to unlocking each album's significance. Brel's lyrics, "[o]n ne peut pas dire qu'ils furent esclaves / De là à dire qu'ils ont vécu…" (qtd. in Larcenet and Larcenet 2004), are intriguing when read in tandem with the album's title: *Les Quantités négligeables*. Brel accentuates "esclaves"—negligible quantities in the eyes of those who exploit them—by placing the noun at the end of the verse. The short quotation is a textual key in that it leads the reader to Brel's song, "Jaurès," whose title honors one of France's staunchest defenders of socialism and worker solidarity. The selected verse is one of the song's most potent owning to its emphasis on "esclaves." Brel wrote the song in tribute to his grandparents and their generation, lamenting the plight of the working class in the rising face of capitalism (Smal 2007).

Although Brel's lyrics describe the injustice of sending seemingly disposable people to die in World War I, they find resonance in Larcenet's album which broaches contemporary issues of unemployment, immigration, and xenophobia. The main subject of *Les Quantités négligeables* is Marco's return to photography with an exhibit honoring his father's shipyard coworkers who fear losing their jobs in the months ahead. While this

particular subject appears far removed from postcolonial topics, Marco's reasoning for creating the exhibit echoes his sister-in-law's concerns regarding the North African community in France. Marco explains to Bastounet, Pablo, and Ümit (three shipyard workers) that "dans les grandes villes, on oublie vite… Les gens croient que leurs bureaux, leurs immeubles, leurs voitures se construisent tout seuls" (Larcenet and Larcenet 2004, 29). Yet in the previous volume, Naïma (the only character of North African descent and Marco's sister-in-law) responds to Le Pen's popularity by stating that "[l]es Français ont tellement peur pour leurs maisons qu'ils en oublient que ce sont nos parents qui les ont construites…" (Larcenet and Larcenet [2003] 2008, 38). Through Brel's lyrics, Larcenet underscores legitimate concerns of the French working class which, due to years of immigration, now has a distinctly cosmopolitan face. Bastounet, the only blue-collar worker with a typically French surname, suffers alongside France's "undesirables" and, in doing so, establishes a new postcolonial solidarity. Working class white males are as marginalized in French society as France's immigrant community.

Fearful of losing his job at the shipyard due to increased immigration, Bastounet votes for Le Pen in the 2002 presidential elections. Arguing with Marco, he screams: "[t]u sais plus comment ça se passe ici! Tu sais plus comment on vit!" (Larcenet and Larcenet 2004, 30). Larcenet's depiction of the elections is one of understanding and concern. In addition to elucidating certain truths regarding immigration (e.g. Naïma's reaction), Larcenet focuses on genuine fears of the working class, namely rising unemployment. If Bastounet loses his job, he will no longer be able to provide for his wife and child. The real issue is therefore not Bastounet's contempt for immigrants—his friendships with Portuguese (Pablo) and Turkish (Ümit) characters attests to this—but rather the dissolution of his "dominant fiction." According to Kaja Silverman, industrialized societies have created a dominant fiction or ideological reality dependant on two factors: the unity of the family which serves as the model for social formation and the adequacy of the male subject. Silverman writes that "it is through ideological belief

that a society's 'reality' is constituted and sustained, and that a subject lays claim to a normative identity" (1992, 15). It is easier for those in Bastounet's situation (e.g. those who voted for Le Pen in 2002 and, one could argue, for Sarkozy in 2007) to blame government scapegoats like France's cultural Others, Arab Muslims. According to Anne Donadey, reactions such as Bastounet's are symptomatic of France's unresolved French-Algerian past: "[t]he war, rather than being simply relived through memory, is actually being waged again and again on French territory through racially motivated incidents and racist discourse" (2001, 8).[16] Rather than deconstruct his dominant fiction, Bastounet decides to abandon his wife and child in the third volume before he is metaphorically castrated by France's declining economy. Incidentally, Georges (Marco's brother), Naïma, and their daughter Chahida constitute the only stable family in the first three volumes of the series. Larcenet suggests that through immigration and France's resulting multiculturalism, the country has been able to rejuvenate itself and to create new social realities.

The third volume of the series, *Ce qui est précieux*, shifts the narrative focus back onto Marco and his dominant fiction. At the end of *Les Quantités négligeables*, he learns about his father's suicide, trauma with which he, his mother, and brother must come to terms. Marco's grief is visibly less acute than his mother's and brother's. As the eldest son, he becomes the glue which holds his family together. This new responsibility proves overwhelming. It is difficult for him to deal with his mother's loneliness and his brother's increasingly frequent disappearances. Marco's relationship with Émilie, his girlfriend, also becomes more complicated. After giving him several ultimata in previous volumes regarding their relationship status and living situation, Émilie expresses her desire to have

[16] Mireille Rosello cites, for example, a 2001 soccer match between Algeria and France in which fans booed the French national anthem and later overran the field, causing the game to end prematurely (2005, 18-9).

a child—with or without Marco. The reader (and not Marco) learns at the end of *Ce qui est précieux* that Émilie is pregnant. Outside of familial strife, Marco's career prospects begin to open up. In *Les Quantités négligeables*, Marco exhibits his shipyard photographs in a Parisian gallery. Although Paris's art crowd lampoons his attempts to represent the dignity of the working class, his work is noticed by a publisher who offers him a book deal in *Ce qui est précieux*. A balanced tension between Marco's personal and professional lives characterizes Larcenet's third volume.

The album's defining characteristic is articulated in the epigraph taken from the Clash's "I'm Not Down." The quotation is short, relatively simple, and repeats parallel structures: "I've been beat up / I've been thrown out / but I'm not down" (qtd. in Larcenet and Larcenet [2006] 2007). The song echoes the album's central thematic: Marco prevails in the face of adversity, allowing Larcenet to push forward with a fourth and final volume. The epigraph reflects both album content and title, highlighting the positive and negative aspects of Marco's life. The epigraph and title (*Ce qui est précieux*) provide subtle clues suggesting that this volume will be about prioritizing life values, about personal achievements as well as personal failures. One particular failure which comes to the fore in this album is Marco's failed relationship with his father. After his father's suicide, Marco realizes that his memories of him amount to his father's cork collection, several photographs, letters, and his diary. His entire life, or so it would seem, barely fills a small cardboard box (fig. 2.7). While Marco's obsession with his father's personal effects in the third volume fills a void, the diary frustrates him with its lack of "intimacy."[17] Believing that the diary will allow Marco to better understand his father, he reads and re-reads his words looking for clues explaining his acceptance of torture in

[17] In French, "diary" translates as "journal intime." When Émilie comments that his father's notebook is actually a "journal intime," Marco indignantly screams: "'[i]ntime'? C'est aussi intime qu'un annuaire! C'est d'ailleurs tellement intime que ni mon frère ni moi n'y sommes mentionnés… Pas une fois!" (Larcenet and Larcenet [2006] 2007, 24).

Algeria, his feelings for his children, and his reasons for committing suicide. After questioning Mesribes (his father's commanding officer in Algeria) about his father's wartime activities, Marco realizes that his father was not heartless or inexpressive. He was instead profoundly affected by the events he witnessed but could neither prevent nor stop: "[i]l était comme nous tous, un minuscule boulon de la machine d'État, créée par les élus du peuple, qui tenait par tous les moyens de garder l'Algérie dans la République" (Larcenet and Larcenet [2006] 2007, 55). Consequently, the epigraph introducing *Ce qui est précieux* also applies to Marco's father, forever marked ("beat up") by the horrors of war. Sooner than contaminate his family with stories of a war he would rather forget, Marco's father opts for silence.

Contrary to France, Algeria has maintained a relatively open dialogue about the war. Beginning in 1962, Algerians have consistently transmitted a collective memory of the revolution to each successive generation. Although this memory differs significantly from France's, the war has never been a historical taboo in Algerian culture (only certain aspects of the war such as Algerian "collaborators" and the FLN's political adversaries). Corpus albums are sometimes framed as flashbacks introduced by a narrator who is passing the narrative on to readers (*Le Village oublié*) or to a fictitious son (*À l'aube d'un jour de novembre*). In these particular instances, bédéistes emphasize the war as a "vivant souvenir" (Masmoudi 1983a, 2), one which comes to life as the story unfolds. This preferred narrative structure is related to Algeria's oral storytelling tradition. While Algerian writers, playwrights, and poets frequently incorporate myths and legends into their work, the revolution becomes a myth in its own right in SNED and ENAL albums. As a result, these albums mirror the oral quality of folktales. One way in which this characteristic manifests itself is through the inclusion of poems and proverbs. Starting in the 1930s, Algerian francophone poetry has focused on the enslavement of Fanon's

"damnés de la terre."[18] While Algerian poets have since expanded their thematic repertoire, they continue to highlight the plight of the oppressed and promote a universal humanism (as evidenced in several poems reproduced in bandes dessinées) (BabelMed 2009). Tenani includes several poems in *De nos montagnes* including Malek Haddad's "Le Malheur," Rachid Boudjedra's "Hurlements," and selections from A. Lahbabi's anthology *Douleurs rythmées*. These poems stress human suffering, articulate the indignation of colonized peoples, and recall Tenani's narrative focus: to demonstrate how the Algerian people liberated themselves from colonial oppression. Inserted in between bande dessinée episodes in *De nos montagnes* and *Les Hommes du djebel*, these poems contribute to the albums' unifying theme (the revolution) and associate Tenani's work with Algerian literary canons and oral cultural heritage.

Mohamed Bouslah includes Algerian poems from Lahbabi's *Douleurs rythmées*, quotations from Mohamed Iqbal (an early twentieth-century Pakistani poet and philosopher), and Hindu proverbs which are intended to reiterate or clarify important aspects of his narrative. These additions serve the same purpose as Bouslah's historical inserts examined above. While literary sources are cited considerably less frequently than historical ones, poems and proverbs help shape the fabric of Bouslah's album. His mix of French, North African, Hindu, and Pakistani sources suggests that the bédéiste looked beyond Algerian cultural traditions to launch the creative process. Consequently, *La Ballade du proscrit,* which is specifically about colonial oppression in 1930s' French Algeria, exposes its readers to other perspectives and establishes important parallels between the Algerian revolution and other nationalist struggles. Perhaps the desire for universalism motivated Bouslah's focal shift from the revolution to a pre-revolutionary era. One could argue that Bouslah's album is less about Algeria than it is about the

[18] See Frantz Fanon's seminal text *Les Damnés de la terre*.

human condition, sentiment articulated by Iqbal several decades earlier with respect to a different geo-historical context: "[q]u'est-ce que la vie sinon une mort quand elle perd le désir du combat" (qtd. in Bouslah 1984, 14).

Similarly and with respect to the *beur* novel, Alec G. Hargreaves observes that "[i]n their choice of reading and in some cases of mentors, Beur writers have clearly not opted *en bloc* for one particular part of the varied literary heritage which is open to them. Nor has their attention been confined solely to French or North African writers" (1997, 124). While evidence of various cultural influences is not immediately visible in Farid Boudjellal's work (the only *beur* bédéiste of the corpus), he stated in an interview that he has always been a fan of American superhero comics and has a small collection of SNED and ENAL war albums as well as back issues of *M'quidèch* (2009). Moreover, his child protagonists are often drawn reading popular comics periodicals of the 1950s and 1960s such as *Blek le Roc* and *Kiwi*. More so than any other corpus bédéiste, Boudjellal advertises the influence of American and Algerian comics on his work, thereby inserting himself into various comics traditions and reputational structures. Incidentally, Boudjellal also stated that he does not extensively research the content of his albums and therefore does not make claims for their historical or biographical authenticity. Yet if Boudjellal focuses on other comics in discussions about his "literary" influences, distinct similarities between his albums and the *beur* novel stand out.

Jambon-Beur presents an interesting example in which Boudjellal uses textual inserts to develop his protagonist's hybrid identity. This central theme likens *Jambon-Beur* to *beur* novels published throughout the 1980s such as Tassadit Imache's *Une Fille sans histoire*. Akin to Charlotte-Badia, Lil (Imache's title character) was born to a French (Christian) mother and an Algerian (Muslim) father. Like Charlotte-Badia, Lil feels divided between two cultures (France and Algeria). Lil and Charlotte-Badia realize that the French colonization of Algeria and the French-Algerian War constitute the source of their cultural hybridism. Because the (de)colonization of Algeria is discussed neither in

school nor at home, they have difficulty identifying why their hybridism is so debilitating. In Lil's case:

> [t]ant de fois elle avait tremblé à l'idée qu'elle pût se fendre en deux morceaux avides d'en découdre. La France et l'Algérie. Un temps, elle avait cru trouver refuge à l'École […]. Là où l'Histoire, quand elle est insoutenable, n'est pas écrite dans les manuels. (Imache 1989, 123)

Only when Lil and Charlotte-Badia learn to reconcile national history with their own personal histories can they fully embrace their unique bi-cultural heritage. Due to its strong visual component, one could argue that the bande dessinée illustrates important tropes more effectively than the *beur* novel. The most prominent example in *Jambon-Beur* is Charlotte-Badia's literal separation into two physically identical yet culturally distinct characters: Charlotte and Badia who rarely appear together except when they are alone with their parents.

Several *beur* novels such as *Une Fille sans histoire* exploit visual elements (family and identity photographs) in their narrative structure. Lil's quest to reach a better understanding of her family's history and composition begins, for instance, when she (the adult narrator) discovers a photograph from her childhood showing her with her parents. She accidentally finds the photograph while rummaging through her father's belongings after his death. With the photograph are his French *carte de séjour* and Algerian national identity card, symbols of his own cultural hybridism. Contrary to the novel which can only represent the visual through words, the bande dessinée uses a combination of visual and verbal representation. Interestingly, Boudjellal capitalizes on textual inserts to broach the question of identity, including Charlotte-Badia's birth page in her parents' *livret de famille* (fig. 2.8) and several written testimonies contributed by children like Charlotte-Badia living in France. While testimonies authenticate Boudjellal's representation of how children deal with their cultural hybridism, they also reflect why *beur* writers began articulating their unique discourse using various modes of representation such as the novel, the bande dessinée, and popular music. Boudjellal's textual inserts authenticate his

representation of cultural hybridism inherent in the *beur* generation and, at the same time, allow readers to associate his contribution with that of other *beur* writers. Notwithstanding Boudjellal's vehement objections to being called a *beur* bédéiste (he considers himself a bédéiste *tout court*), his thematic focus and particular representation of France's Algerian immigrant community assimilate his work into the spectrum of *beur* cultural production while expanding its predominately literary character to include instances of popular culture.

Despite attempts to concede a measure of authenticity (via historical and biographical sources) or respectability (via literary and cultural references) to their albums, corpus bédéistes are primarily concerned with questions of representation in a largely fictional medium. The inclusion of textual inserts by noted historians, writers, poets, and other bédéistes calls attention to the bande dessinée as a self-reflexive medium, one which is intensely aware of its status in literary and cultural hierarchies. Yet the bande dessinée, akin to other forms of cultural production, is not immune to hegemonic discourses which dictate visual and verbal representation within a specific cultural context. Regardless of the bande dessinée's desire to "truthfully" represent the French-Algerian War and (French) Algeria, the medium recycles Orientalist discourses and even contributes to the solidification of a neo-Orientalist discourse in France and Algeria. While striving to deconstruct certain discourses on the war and colonialism, the bande dessinée reinforces others related to Franco-Algerian conceptions of the Maghreb.

Figure 2.1. Octave and Samia attend De Gaulle's "je vous ai compris" speech.

Source: Ferrandez, Jacques. 2005. *Carnets d'Orient: La Fille du Djebel Amour*. Brussels: Casterman. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 2.2. Octave and Saïd discuss their difficult situation.

Source: Ferrandez, Jacques. 2009. *Carnets d'Orient: Terre fatale*. Brussels: Casterman. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 2.3. Saïd's final appearance in the *Carnets*.

Source: Ferrandez, Jacques. 2009. *Carnets d'Orient: Terre fatale*. Brussels: Casterman. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

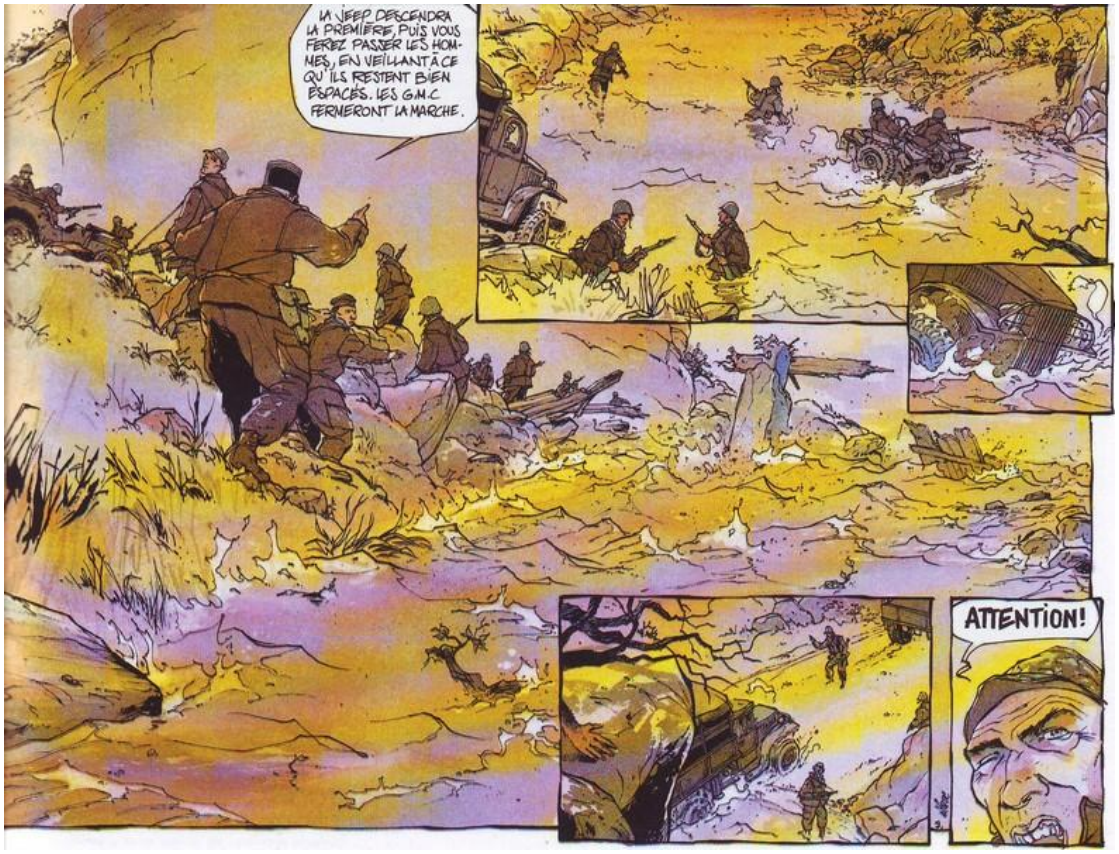

Figure 2.4. Melting snow washes out a bridge, hindering the convoy's passage.

Source: Giroud, Frank, and Lax. [1998, 1999] 2008. *Azrayen'*. Paris: Dupuis Aire Libre. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 2.5. Tronchet's use of color creates different levels of narration.

Source: Sibran, Anne, and Tronchet. 2003. *Là-bas*. Paris: Dupuis. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 2.6. Kerbronec begins reading Camus's *L'Étranger*.

Source: Duménil, and Denis Merezette. 1985. *Algérie française!* Brussels: Éditions Michel Deligne. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 2.7. What remains of Marco's father's life.

Source: Larcenet, Manu, and Patrice Larcenet. [2006] 2007. *Le Combat ordinaire: Ce qui est précieux*. Paris: Dargaud. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

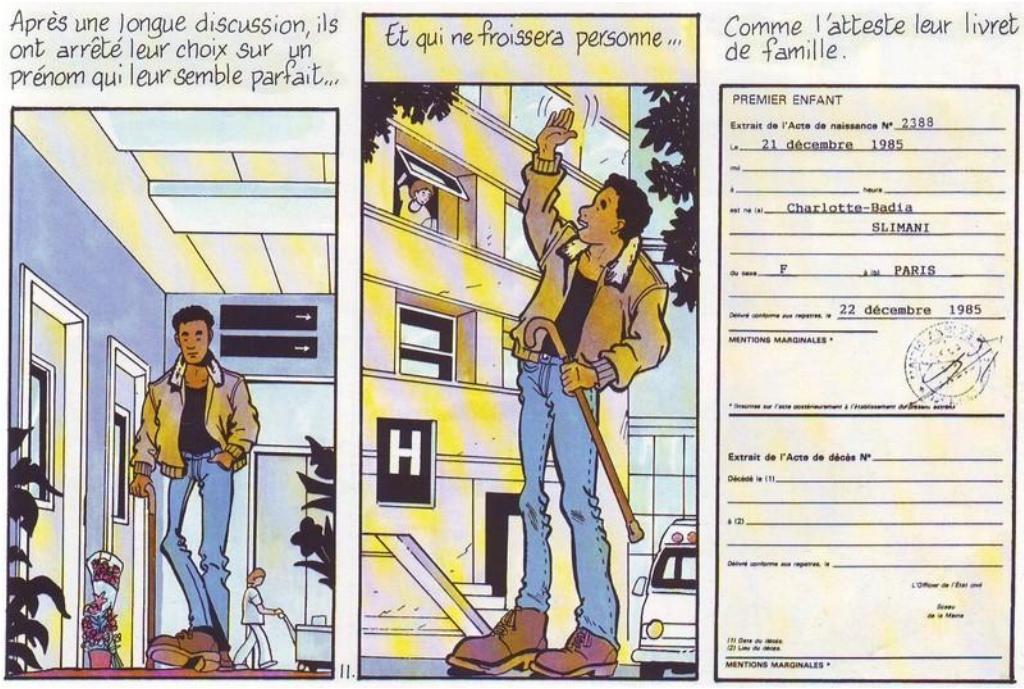

Figure 2.8. Charlotte-Badia's birth page in her family's *livret*.

Source: Boudjellal, Farid. 1995. *Jambon-Beur: Les couples mixtes*. Toulon: MC Productions. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

CHAPTER 3

RECYCLING THE ORIENTALIST AESTHETIC

The representation of colonial Algeria in French and, to a lesser degree, Algerian albums suggests that bédéistes rely on colonial iconography and Orientalist tropes (e.g. Eastern sensuality, the Oriental despot) for inspiration. This is problematic in that Orientalism and colonialism in the "Orient" are two sides of the same coin. Edward Said's theorization of Orientalism in the late 1970s demonstrates that Western perceptions of the East are based on stereotypes which denigrate the latter in order to elevate the former. Defining the Orient, and thus the Oriental, as "irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, 'different'" justifies the West in seeing itself as "rational, virtuous, mature, 'normal'" (Said 1979, 40). Colonial manifestations of Orientalism engender the belief in Western cultural hegemony. Central to the Orientalist aesthetic are military campaigns, "exotic" architecture devoid of neoclassical motifs (even if some nineteenth-century artists considered the Orient a new Rome), Arab beauty and eroticism, the East as biblical (e.g. the Palestinian model), but also decadence and disease. Notwithstanding deconstructionist critiques of Orientalism starting with Said,[1] it remains an integral part of French and Algerian cultural history. Bédéistes consequently recycle the Orientalist aesthetic (sub)consciously in their work resulting in either a distinct tension between visual and verbal elements or in the articulation of a neo-Orientalist discourse. This chapter focuses on the recycling of Orientalist tropes in the bande dessinée's representation of the colonial Other and colonial spaces, both urban and rural. Particular emphasis will be placed on how bédéistes have reshaped their "inherited" Orientalist

[1] Ali Behdad argues in *Belated Travelers* that "Said's inadequate attention to the complexities of power relations between the orientalist and the Oriental makes him reaffirm in a sense an essentialist epistemology that derives its authority from the dichotomies that it puts forth" (1994, 11).

tradition in postcolonial narratives via strategic re-appropriations of specific visual themes.

(Re)Imagining the Self and the Other

While nineteenth-century Orientalist painting may have influenced corpus bédéistes, Jacques Ferrandez is alone in openly admitting the appeal of the movement's visual motifs. The entire *Carnets d'Orient* series differs from other corpus albums due to its representation of French Algerian history from conquest to decolonization. Ferrandez stated during a personal interview that he spent several hours studying the Orientalist collection of Paris's D'Orsay Museum prior to drafting the first volume of his series (2009c). Indeed his watercolors, sketches, and illustrations recall the canvases of Eugène Delacroix and Eugène Fromentin. The title of the first album, which later became that of the series,[2] refers to the travelogues of Joseph Constant, an artist modeled after Delacroix. Ferrandez commented elsewhere on the content of his first album, stating that it is based on period travel journals of notable Orientalist painters and writers from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Ferrandez 2002, 63). If Ferrandez understands the problems associated with Orientalism and its representation of the colonial Other, he admits that the Orientalist aesthetic has nevertheless shaped his perception of the Orient (Ferrandez 2009c). How could his vision of (French) Algeria not reflect that of his French cultural heritage? Given the importance of the Orientalist aesthetic in French art and literary history, Ferrandez's European readers would expect a certain representation of Algeria in an album whose title carries considerable thematic weight.[3] To some

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[2] Ferrandez later renamed this album *Djemilah*.

[3] Ferrandez explains that although the title, *Carnets d'Orient*, is no longer appropriate for the second cycle of the series, the retention of the original title is necessary for marketing purposes. The titular label allows readers to easily identify new volumes of an existing series (2009c).

degree, these readers are not disappointed. Orientalist paintings depicting the harem, Moorish architecture, and Arab barbarism permeate the series. The fact that Constant paints his canvases upon returning to Paris emphasizes the artificiality of his representation of the Orient. His paintings are physically and aesthetically distant from his subject matter (McKinney 2001, 46). The same distance separates Ferrandez's art from his subject. The gap between artifice and reality in the *Carnets* causes the reader to raise important questions concerning the recycling of Orientalist tropes in an astutely anti-colonialist series.

Edward Said's analysis of Orientalist literature and art demonstrates that they are a representation rather than a natural depiction of the Orient. Orientalism is governed by the conviction that the Orient, incapable of representing itself, must be represented by the West (1979, 21). Said's reading of Orientalism underscores a strict binary opposition juxtaposing East and West, resulting in an us-them dialectic. Furthermore, Said understands Orientalism as a "one-way exchange" in which the Orientalist observes and records the Orient, never the other way around (1979, 160). Yet by reducing Orientalism to this dichotomy, Said minimizes the importance of the aesthetic's cross-cultural nature and implicit hybridism. To what degree did the Orient influence Orientalists and how does the Orient perceive its "orientalization"? Writing about the collection of Orientalist paintings in the East, Roger Benjamin states: "Orientalism is no longer a one-way journey, a stream of visions frozen by European travelers and carted home for consumption, without reference to the responses of those objectified in the process" (2003, 4). While Ferrandez's re-appropriation of Orientalist tropes is thematically significant, it is important to mention that Algerian bédéistes also re-appropriate the same tropes in their art.

Sid Ali Melouah's *Pierrot de Bab el Oued* provides an interesting example because the narrative is told through the eyes of a *pied noir* and because the bédéiste parodies Orientalist perceptions of the native Algerian population. The album opens with

a flashback of Pierrot and Ali's first meeting when they were children living in Algiers. Ali's father works for the French government and comes to the Prefect's palace to enroll his son in school. Melouah's depiction of the father figure is ridiculous: he uses an exaggerated military salute to greet the Prefect, he presents two live calves as gifts (so that he may "présente[r] [s]es meilleurs veaux" (2003, 3)), he misunderstands questions and expressions, and he does not know how to use the telephone. Clever puns, stereotypes, and physical comedy dominate the scene. For example, when learning how to use the telephone, Ali's father is concerned that he will not be able to talk since he must hold the receiver with one hand and dial with the other (a common joke is that Arab men cannot speak without making hand gestures). Melouah uses Orientalist tropes such as backwardness and primitiveness to create a comedic tone and to produce a caricature of France's colonial Other. Self-derision permeates the album allowing the bédéiste to criticize certain aspects of contemporary Algerian society such as the *trabendistes*,[4] the corruption of public officials, and the FLN. In one panel, the adult Pierrot dines in a restaurant whose name has been changed from "Anatole France" to "Anatole Algérie" (Melouah 2003, 22). The idea communicated is that the FLN only made cosmetic changes to the country following independence.

Melouah's contribution is noteworthy due to his focus on characters marked by cultural hybridism. Pierrot is a *pied noir* whose family left Algeria in 1962. When he reaches adulthood, he finds himself plagued by feelings of loss which motivate his decision to revisit his childhood home. As the son of a *harki*, Ali was also forced to leave Algeria at the end of the war. Searching for reasons why his father left, he too returns to Algeria. By highlighting the experience of two individuals who have been equally

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[4] Chris Hedges, a journalist for the *New York Times*, writes: "[t]hose who are called 'trabendistes' in Algerian slang work in the black markets that have sprung up in every major city, making illegal currency exchanges or selling shoes and clothes smuggled from abroad. The word is a corruption of the Spanish word *trabajo*, which means work" (1991).

influenced by East and West, Melouah narrates a different story than that told by other Algerian bédéistes. During their short visit in the autumn of 1988, Pierrot and Ali reunite and realize that Algeria has changed considerably since their departure twenty years earlier. Satisfied with the experience, they both decide to return to France. In addition, their visit coincides with the 1988 October riots which eventually led to the end of Algeria's single-party system. The political climate at the end of the album mirrors that of 1962 (when Pierrot and Ali first left Algeria) with street-level riots, civil unrest, and bloodshed. No longer able to identify with the Algeria they once knew, Pierrot and Ali leave the country. Interestingly, Pierrot's travel companion (a Parisian who had never been to Algeria before this trip) decides to remain in Algiers. Although this nameless character falls in love with the Tuareg woman who rescues him and Pierrot during one of their misadventures, his desire to stay does not reflect the Orientalist trope of the Orient as a place of unbridled passion. Rather Melouah channels hope into the Algerian saga through this unlikely union. Amidst more realistic illustrations depicting the October 1988 riots, emerges a new love story between France (the Parisian) and one of Algeria's minorities (the Tuareg).

One could argue that Melouah's partial recycling of Orientalist tropes stems from his spatial separation from Algeria. Fearing retaliation from Islamists, the cartoonist sought voluntary exile in France where he continued to publish bandes dessinées, editorial cartoons, and caricatures inspired by the Algerian civil war and Algeria's declining political situation. Did Melouah's close contact with French culture "contaminate" his vision of Algeria? It is my contention that Melouah uses his knowledge of Orientalism and French culture to explore the identity of marginalized memory communities such as the *pieds noirs*, the *harkis*, and the Tuaregs. All three communities are caricatured to some degree for the sake of comic relief. More important are his historical representations of the French-Algerian War, independence, and October 1988. A perceptible shift occurs with respect to Melouah's drawing style. Highly stylized

or "cartoony" illustrations form the core narrative (Pierrot's return to Algeria) whilst more realistic drawings depicting historical events constitute the background plot. Consequently, *Pierrot de Bab el Oued* has two levels of narration: one fictional in which Melouah plays with conventional representations and stereotypes and the other historical in which photojournalistic realism takes over.

Lacking a similar narrative division, the *Carnets* are largely realistic in their representation of history and people. If narrative objectivity is indeed one of Ferrandez's goals, then his recycling of Orientalist tropes should have doomed his project from its conception. Yet like Melouah, Ferrandez can also claim "insider" status due to his *pied noir* heritage. With each successive generation born on Algerian soil, *pieds noirs* further solidified their own Algerian identity and culture so that by 1962 they no longer resembled their metropolitan cousins. Even though Ferrandez grew up in France, he was equally influenced by his *pied noir* heritage and French education. Ferrandez's relationship to Orientalism is therefore ambiguous because he is writing from both inside and outside the Orient. According to Edward Said, "the Orientalist is outside the Orient, both as an existential and as a moral fact" (1979, 21). Rather than capitalizing on Orientalist discourse, Ferrandez's usage of colonial postcards and Orientalist painting allows him to understand and question his cultural heritage. At the end of *Djemilah* before Constant sets sail for France, another painter tells him that "la peinture est insuffisante à traduire ce qui relève de la mystique, de la tentation, de la promesse…" (Ferrandez 2008, 69). As if to prove the validity of this statement, the next two plates depict Constant struggling to recapture the Orient in his Parisian studio. When his attempts fail, he leafs through his sketchbook in the album's final panels. For the artist, his sketchbook is the only "unmediated, authentic" representation of Algeria left in his possession (McKinney 2001, 46).

As Mark McKinney observes, the first cycle of the series includes several critical discussions about nineteenth-century Orientalist painting. When Marianne, who later

inherits Constant's journal, retraces the artist's Algerian itinerary, she rediscovers the beauty of Algeria's rural landscapes and people. The juxtaposition between what she sees and how Algeria has been represented in painting confuses her: "[c]'est ça qui m'étonne: comment tous ces peintres qui ont fait le voyage et pris des croquis sur place ont pu donner de retour dans leurs ateliers une représentation de l'Orient aussi artificielle?" (Ferrandez 2008, 340). If Ferrandez eliminates such commentaries from the second cycle, his desire for authenticity emanates from his inclusion of historical documentation and professional endorsements. McKinney questions, however, Ferrandez's critique of Orientalist painting due to his recycling of erotic postcards whose female subjects become prostitutes in his narrative (we will return to this point in a moment). Why would Ferrandez include critical dialogue centered on Orientalist painting but not on colonial photography and postcards (McKinney 2001, 49)? Ferrandez's ambiguous relationship with Orientalism produces an irreconcilable tension within his narrative. This tension implicates his Western readers who are susceptible to Western aesthetic traditions like Orientalism. In addition, his readers are viewing the series from a postcolonial perspective in which East and West are deconstructed concepts.

How does Ferrandez (and other bédéistes) work through this representational tension? If his reproduction of certain Orientalist tropes serves to critique both the aesthetic and colonialism, Ferrandez's reproduction of others perpetuates notions of Western cultural hegemony. Jennifer Meagher with the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art posits that the most popular Orientalist scene reproduced in paintings and postcards is the harem, normally forbidden to the Western gaze (2004). In the *Carnets*' first cycle, Ferrandez recycles pornographic colonial postcards, taken from Malek Alloula's *Le Harem colonial*, to create stock characters, usually prostitutes. Alloula's presentation of erotic postcards implies that they are metaphors for sexual conquest: postcards allow Western viewers to "collect" unveiled and partially nude Arab women. In his analysis of Ferrandez's use of colonial postcards in the first cycle of the series, Mark

McKinney posits that the recycling of these iconographic sources "limits his ability or willingness to critique certain aspects of colonial society and the aesthetic movements that it helped to foster" (2001, 45). The series' first cycle, which depicts the conquest and colonization of Algeria, aims to illustrate the history of French Algeria to a predominantly French audience. The colonial Other fades into the background as the series progresses in order to focus on the French presence in Algeria. While Ferrandez does not openly critique certain aspects of colonial society, his re-appropriation of Orientalist tropes such as the harem and Eastern sensuality creates a narrative window through which an interesting dynamic emerges.

In *Le Centenaire* (the fourth volume of the first cycle), Paul (Octave's biological father) recalls a sexual encounter with an Algerian prostitute, Naïma. This scene stands out from the plate's other panels due to Ferrandez's use of watercolors (fig. 3.1). As a result, the images are softer and more fluid than the preceding inked panels. Although his aesthetic choice calls attention to a chronological shift in narration (the sequence constitutes a flashback), it allows Ferrandez to show less detail, underscoring the scene's romantic (not erotic) orientation. In this scene, Paul begins with a description of Naïma's beauty and taut body. His narrative voice soon gives way to Naïma's who elucidates how she became a prostitute. She explains that her father arranged her marriage to an older man when she was only thirteen years old. Her husband, whom she had never met before the wedding, began beating her once they were married. Attempting to avoid one bad situation, she found another in the bordello: "mais maintenant je peux plus bouger d'ici. Si mes frères ils savent ce que je fais, ils me cassent la tête…" (Ferrandez 2008, 221). This flashback scene recycles the Orientalist aesthetic of Arab beauty in the unveiled, reclining Naïma. However, Paul in his remembrance of possibly his first sexual experience concentrates more on Naïma and her story than on the act itself. Even though Ferrandez uses Alloula's postcards as fodder for the album's visual representation of Arab women, his particular usage is not emblematic of Orientalist and colonialist

discourses. In this scene, Ferrandez gives voice to the Algerian prostitute much in the same way as Assia Djebar in her collection of short stories, *Femmes d'Alger dans leur appartement.*

What appears more problematic is Ferrandez's continued recuperation of Orientalist motifs in his representation of decolonization. In the *Carnets*' second cycle, Ferrandez recycles the Orientalist aesthetic by frequently representing Samia in the nude. Whereas one interpretation of Islam dictates that women are to be veiled as a measure of protection against men's inability to control their own sexual impulses, Westerners have interpreted the veil as a source of erotica. The women are veiled so as to invite unveiling. Orientalist painting and colonialist photography have thus become objects of criticism for postcolonial women writers such as Assia Djebar and Leïla Sebbar. Notwithstanding his personal objectives in creating the *Carnets,* Ferrandez's illustrations of Arab women are not entirely independent of erotic motivation and colonial determination. In *La Guerre fantôme*, after a morning swim with her *pied noir* friends, Samia goes to a secluded area of the beach to change out of her bathing suit. Unbeknownst to her, two of her male companions—the two most racist of the group—watch her undress. Marianne, a *pied noir* and the only other female present in this scene, is never violated by a trespassing gaze. Content analyses have shown that comics contain a high degree of political conservatism, crime, ethnocentrism, violence, and sex (Wigand 1986, 39). One could argue that Ferrandez's representation of the unclothed Samia reflects general tendencies in comics. However, Marianne and other European women are never drawn without clothes in the series' second cycle. If Marianne poses in the nude for a male painter in the first cycle, her nudity differs from that of Arab women in that she chooses to reveal her body to the male gaze. Ferrandez gives Marianne, not Samia, corporal agency.

Samia is indeed victimized several times throughout the series. In *Rue de la Bombe*, Samia travels to the countryside after French paratroopers question her about her involvement with the FLN. Bouzid, an FLN militant unconvinced of her loyalty, rips

open her shirt to see if the French tortured or mutilated her during their interrogation. *La Fille du Djebel Amour* opens with illustrations of Samia, naked and bound, in an FLN hideaway. On his way to rescue her several panels later, Octave visualizes her sleeping post-coital in the nude. Finally, in *Dernière demeure*, a half-clothed Samia once again becomes the object of Bouzid's voyeurism when he enters her bedroom. This nocturnal visit is followed by a second when Octave enters and makes love to her. The scene's last panel shows Octave cupping Samia's breast in his hands. As these examples demonstrate, Ferrandez uses Samia to channel eroticism into the series. If Bouzid's voyeurism criticizes the violation of women's rights in Algeria (these panels engender feelings of injustice and outrage in the reader because his advances are uninvited and violent), colonial erotica partially dictates Octave's objectification of Samia. As the declining political climate threatens to efface French Algeria, Octave begins to regard Samia as a potential replacement, transforming her into an allegory for Algeria.[5]

Contrary to other Algerian female characters, namely prostitutes in the series' first cycle, Samia plays an active role in her own destiny throughout the series. She freely navigates both colonial and indigenous spaces, speaks fluent French and Arabic, and even alters her appearance by dyeing her hair blond and alternately dressing in European and traditional Algerian attire. In the final volume of the series, Octave finds her in the Djebel Amour where her grandmother was hiding her. Here her hair has been cropped and dyed with henna. When Octave reunites with her, she is dressed in men's clothing which serves to conceal her identity and pregnancy. At the outset of *Terre fatale*, Samia

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[5] Women frequently appear as allegories for Algeria in *pied noir* and Algerian literature. See, for example, Kateb Yacine's *Nedjma* and Assia Djebar's *Femmes d'Alger dans leur appartement*. In *L'An V de la révolution algérienne*, Fanon establishes a parallel between the oppression of Algerian women and the French colonization of Algeria, elucidating why Algerian women are often metaphors for Algeria in French and Algerian cultural production: "[o]n voit […] la fille algérienne, illettrée, voilée, stoppée, comme l'Algérie tout entière par la domination coloniale […]" (1959, 95).

resembles Isabelle Eberhardt who appears in *Les Fils du Sud* (the third volume of the first cycle). According to Jean-Robert Henry, Eberhardt belongs to a special category of historical figures deemed "frontaliers" with respect to French and Maghrebi culture (1991, 304).[6] These figures act as mediators between the two cultures and emblematize the potential for cross-cultural understanding and cooperation. Even though this potential was never realized on Algerian soil (as evidenced by the outbreak of the French-Algerian War), Eberhardt is visually and symbolically reincarnated as Samia in Ferrandez's series. As one of the central mediating characters, Samia's objectification signifies more than the recycling of colonial eroticism. By violating her, the other characters (both French and Algerian) create a space in which dialogue is no longer possible, in which all systems of communication begin to break down.

Representations of a sexual Samia disappear in the final volume, *Terre fatale*, when she gives birth to her and Octave's son. By drawing Samia bare-breasted in this album, Ferrandez no longer emphasizes her sexuality in a colonial erotic fashion, but rather her new maternal role. The representation of Samia's motherhood is symbolic and reminiscent of Delacroix's 1863 painting *La Liberté guidant le peuple* in which a half-clad female allegorizes Liberty during the first French revolution. Liberty's exposed chest is doubly significant, recalling classical representations of the human form as well as suggesting that Liberty (as a woman) literally feeds France's citizens. Similarly, Samia nurses, both figuratively and literally, a new generation of citizens born from the fusion of France (Octave) and Algeria (Samia). Samia symbolizes a positive future for Franco-Algerian relations. While Octave and Samia's emblematic union is the most developed in the series, other unions exist which are equally representative of Ferrandez's utopian

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[6] I owe my discovery of Jean-Robert Henry's concept of the *frontalier* to Mark McKinney's article "'Tout cela, je ne voulais pas le laisser perdre': colonial lieux de mémoire in the comic books of Jacques Ferrandez."

vision of French Algeria. One prominent example is Joseph Constant's relationship with Djemilah (in the first *Carnets d'Orient*). Even though Joseph and Djemilah never have children, their story becomes an integral part of French and Algerian cultural history through Constant's travelogues, his portrait of Djemilah, and their shared tomb in the Casbah's *Cimetière des princesses*. From a structural point of view, their story opens and closes the *Carnets*' first cycle and provides Ferrandez with a narrative hook in the second cycle: Samia and Octave take over where Djemilah and Constant left off. Rather than accentuate the Orient as a place of "untiring sensuality, unlimited desire" (Said 1979, 188), Ferrandez weaves a Shakespearean tragedy complete with war, death, and star-crossed lovers.[7]

Ferrandez is not alone in his representation of mixed-raced couples defined by Jean-Robert Henry as "'frontaliers' de l'espace franco-maghrébin" (1991, 301). They appear in several corpus albums including *Azrayen'* and *Jambon-Beur*.[8] As previously indicated, the former narrates the search for a lost patrol in Kabylia and, in particular, the patrol's commander Francis Messonnier. In their search for the missing patrol, a young Kabyle woman and schoolteacher, Taklhit Allilat, is questioned and forced to participate due to her personal relationship with Messonnier: they were lovers. Contrary to Ferrandez who always presents flashbacks of sexual encounters from Octave's perspective (e.g. when Octave fantasizes about Samia), similar flashbacks are viewed from Taklhit's perspective. While *Azrayen'* is organized around Messonnier's absence

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[7] Jean-Robert Henry posits the following concerning interracial sex in colonial and postcolonial literature: "[l]a littérature coloniale ainsi que les littératures postérieures à l'indépendance offrent de nombreuses illustrations de cette quête à la fois ardente et tragique de l'union des corps qui n'ouvre que rarement sur un dialogue serein avec l'autre société" (1991, 307).

[8] Laurent Galandon and A. Dan's recent album, *Tahya El-Djazaïr: Du sang sur les mains*, focuses on the romantic relationship between a *pied noir* and an Algerian woman resulting in an unplanned pregnancy.

(and thus Messonnier cannot objectify Taklhit),[9] Taklhit remains a strong female presence throughout the album, defending herself against the lewd remarks and misogyny of her travel companions. She also defends her country and culture during frequent ideological debates with French officers. In this way, Lax and Giroud re-imagine the colonial Other as an educated, independent woman who speaks for those who cannot speak for themselves (e.g. the numerous villagers terrorized by the patrol's passage in their search for Messonnier).

When Taklhit leaves the patrol of her own volition (at the end of the first volume), she exchanges her European clothes for a traditional Kabyle costume (fig. 3.2). Her costume change is visually arresting because her colorful new attire stands out from the drab sepia tones dominating the album. Her change is thematically significant because it articulates her desire to return "home," to her family and cultural heritage. Her relationship with Messonnier, altered after the Val Doré incident,[10] makes her realize that any long-lasting union with the French is unrealistic. After accepting Messonnier's departure and the end to their relationship, Taklhit fully embraces her Kabyle self. The French fail to take her self-othering seriously because she never fits their perception of the colonial female Other. Indeed they interpret her change of clothing as another act of defiance rather than as a cultural re-identification. Throughout the first album, she witnesses acts of French brutality targeting defenseless people including the near rape of an adolescent girl and remembers the crimes committed at Val Doré. While not directly stated, Taklhit distances herself from the French ideals she once taught to her students.

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[9] Again according to Henry, "le contact physique avec le corps de l'autre, la recherche de corps perdus durant la guerre s'offrent en permanence comme un moyen d'établir ou de rétablir un contact intersociétal [France-Algérie]" (1991, 307).

[10] Following orders, Messonnier and his fellow officers locked suspected members of the FLN in a fermentation tank at the Val Doré vineyard over night. Before they could be interrogated, all suspects succumbed to asphyxiation.

Her experience of the exploitative nature of the colonial system provokes the complete rejection of her Europeanized self, resulting in her dramatic farewell at the end of the first volume.

Jambon-Beur presents a different perspective on biracial couples. Perhaps owing to Boudjellal's own cultural heritage (as the son of Algerian immigrants living in France), he projects a different vision of Franco-Algerian unions. Male and female roles are reversed: an Arab man (Mahmoud) marries a French woman (Patricia). Boudjellal's album is provocative in that it plays with stereotypes of France's marginalized populations, namely Maghrebi immigrants. Before meeting Mahmoud, Patricia's mother feels confident that she raised her daughter to choose the "perfect" husband: "Éliane sait que sa fille a choisi le gendre idéal… Il n'est ni arabe, ni handicapé, ni chômeur" (Boudjellal 1995, 7). Much to her mother's dismay, Mahmoud is all three: Arab, handicapped, and unemployed. Rather than emphasize the exotic in their relationship, the bédéiste suggests that Patricia and Mahmoud are a reflection of contemporary French society which is increasingly more multicultural. In addition to Patricia and Mahmoud are Djamila (Mahmoud's sister) and René (her Senegalese husband). Boudjellal includes biracial couples in his album to enhance social realism. His underlying message is one of tolerance and acceptance. Mahmoud's parents, despite their initial objections to Patricia, accept his decision as well as Djamila's for fear of losing another child: "[…] le souvenir de Latifa leur fille aînée empêche les parents de trop insister… Enceinte d'un Français, elle s'est suicidée par peur de la colère de son père" (Boudjellal 1995, 9).

Similarly, Charlotte-Badia's personality splits when she senses that her cultural hybridism is problematic and undesirable. Instead of embracing her unique identity and individual character, Charlotte-Badia perceives her difference with respect to her friends and family. The only way this difference can be resolved is if she completely assimilates one of two antithetical identities. Unable to choose, Charlotte-Badia splits into Charlotte and Badia. A similar dualism occurs with Djamila and René's biracial twin boys, Moussa

who is white and Mathieu who is black. If the boys are already doubled as twins, they establish unexpected relationships with other children: Moussa chooses black friends while Mathieu's friends are white. As the adult protagonists comment on their children's behavior, it becomes evident to the reader that children are initially immune to cultural and racial difference. Once their differences are pointed out to them, children like Charlotte-Badia begin to ingest parental discourse without fully understanding it. Charlotte-Badia becomes whole again when her grandparents reconcile their differences and accept her hybrid identity. With his focus on 1980s' France and biracial children, Boudjellal's representation of mixed couples differs from that of other corpus bédéistes. Rather than symbolizing the potential of Franco-Algerian relations in harmonized couples such as Octave and Samia or Messonnier and Taklhit, Boudjellal explores the impact of the French-Algerian War and immigration on French identity today.

Sexuality and the Orient nevertheless remain entwined in Orientalist thought as evidenced by certain representations of Samia in the *Carnets* and of young Arab women in *Azrayen'* (with the exception of Taklhit). Joseph Constant writes at the end of the first *Carnets d'Orient*: "[l]'Orient est une femme que nous voulons prendre et posséder en allant jusqu'au viol… L'Orient est une femme qui nous échappera toujours" (Ferrandez 2008, 72). Constant's emphasis on "rape" captures two Orientalist themes: domination (rape is more about power than sexual gratification) and sexual deviance (Oriental decadence). The fact that a sexual element is still present in the *Carnets* and *Azrayen'* does not signify a definitive alignment with colonial ideology and nostalgia for French Algeria. The eroticization of Arab women in these albums is either symbolic (Samia) or creates a reality effect. Desiring to produce a narrative embossed in historical verisimilitude, bédéistes must represent multiple viewpoints even if some are incongruent with their own. Because rape is a common war crime, it seems logical that Ferrandez,

Lax, and Giroud would incorporate it into their narratives.[11] In *Azrayen'*, for example, French soldiers rip off an adolescent girl's clothing and nearly violate her before being called away. Sexual violence is a persistent motif in war literature, and the war bande dessinée is no exception.

What about sexual deviance? Said notes that "the Orient was a place where one could look for sexual experience unobtainable in Europe" (1979, 190). Interestingly, *pied noir* women are objectified and "othered" in select French bandes dessinées. While not all *pieds noirs* supported the OAS, this organization created a negative image of the *pied noir* population in metropolitan France, one that the media and politicians publicly recognized. Pierre Nora's *Les Français d'Algérie* (1961) was instrumental in articulating a difference between the French of Algeria and the French of France. According to Nora, colonial structures of domination perverted the settler population, resulting in a decadent subculture dependent on the continued exploitation of Algeria and the Algerian people without which the *pied noir* population would fail to thrive. Unflattering representations of the *pied noir* soon began to appear in literature and popular culture, highlighting colonial corruption and licentious behavior.[12] For metropolitan Frenchmen arriving in Algeria during the war, the *pied noir* population appeared as foreign and exotic as the native Algerian population.

David B.'s largely black and white images in *Babel 2* depict soldiers embarking on Algerian soil for the first time. The bédéiste uses a splash of pink in his representation of the *pied noir* women who are waiting on the dock: the bow in one woman's hair,

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[11] Similarly, Boudjellal incorporates racist attitudes (anti-Arab and anti-French) in *Petit Polio* and *Jambon-Beur*. The eradication of racism is, however, one of Boudjellal's narrative objectives.

[12] Frantz Fanon deconstructs this misconception of the *pied noir* in *L'An V de la révolution algérienne*: "[u]n autre mythe à détruire est celui des colons d'Algérie présentés de façon indifférenciée comme opposés à la fin de la domination coloniale" (1959, 154).

another's blouse, their lips, and the flowers they are carrying. The color change and female presence distinguish this panel from the rest of the plate. While the women are not portrayed in a sexual way (they are simply there to welcome soldiers), the young recruits objectify them and pervert their intentions through chauvinistic dialogue: "[m]ême les moches ê sont belles… […] Les gonzesses ê nous ont même pas attendus! Ha les putes!" (B. 2006, 62). The women soon disappear, and the men travel to remote regions of the country. This female presence creates a brief diversion which transitions the soldiers (and the reader) from the boat (which brought them to Algeria) to the trauma of war.

The representation of *pied noir* women is quite different in *Une Éducation algérienne*. Vidal and Bignon include three female *pied noir* characters: Françoise (Albert's fiancé and daughter of a wealthy businessman), Catherine Blois (the wife of Albert's commanding officer), and Emmanuelle (Catherine's friend). While Emmanuelle plays a minor role in the narrative, Françoise and Catherine have sexual encounters with Albert. If intercourse between Albert and Françoise is a natural part of their romantic relationship, Albert and Catherine's affair is one of dominance and manipulation. Despite Catherine's beauty, she is much older than Albert and views him as a conquest necessary for self-validation: she must seduce Albert to feel sensual and beautiful. She repeatedly asks him to compare her body to Françoise's and is drawn in several provocative poses as if to show her body to good advantage. Once her husband returns home (moments after she finishes with her young lover), she caresses and kisses him in front of Albert who quickly understands her game, murmuring "[a]h la pute…" (Vidal and Bignon 1982, 34). Catherine's infidelity and apparent lack of morals is shocking. But Catherine's and Françoise's ability to indulge in sexual activity in the middle of a war reveals more about their personalities. One could argue that Albert is a willing participant. His character is, however, more developed and is often in conflict with himself. For example, when confronted with Catherine's advances he questions whether he should sleep with her because she is his commander's wife. With Françoise, he quotes Rimbaud, Baudelaire,

Sartre, Gide, and Camus, changing the tone of their encounters from romantic to philosophical, even fatalistic.

All three women, Catherine, Françoise, and Emmanuelle, are portrayed as carefree and continue to enjoy afternoons on the beach and social gatherings despite bombings and street shootings. In one scene, Albert is riding on the back of Françoise's scooter. As they drive along, they witness a shooting. Albert is horrified that Françoise continues without stopping to help the victim. She does not see the point given that the victim is, in all probability, already dead. Several plates later after intercourse, Albert and Catherine watch while a car bomb explodes beneath their bedroom window. In the following panels, the victims of the bomb are drawn trapped in their car. OAS supporters block their escape. The juxtaposition between sexual scenes and acts of OAS terrorism suggests a certain vision of *pied noir* culture which condones the use of violence to protect a perverse way of life.

Female promiscuity is not the only stereotype accentuated and criticized in the album. Vidal and Bignon also critique colonial exploitation in the character of Monsieur Denizi, Françoise's father. He is gluttonous, racist, and a particularly despicable individual. He decides to liquidate his inventory without offering severance or protection to the "melons" who helped build his business (Vidal and Bignon 1982, 37).[13] When Albert accuses Denizi of taking advantage of the native population, Françoise ends their relationship stating: "[c]'est trop facile. Vous les gens de la métropole, vous ne vous êtes jamais souciés de nous. Vous n'avez pas à nous juger jusqu'à présent" (Vidal and Bignon 1982, 38).[14] At this point in the narrative, Albert no longer believes in *Algérie française*

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[13] Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, farmers depended on migrant Arab workers to harvest their melon crops in the South of France. As a result, "melon" became an ethnic slur used to designate North Africans.

[14] Françoise's comment recalls a passage from José Castano's *Les Larmes de la passion* in which a *pied noir* explains the difference between colonialism (the exploitation of an underdeveloped country) and colonization (the valorization of an underdeveloped country) to her

(and perhaps never did) and irrevocably distances himself from his *pied noir* companions and military duties.

Merezette and Duménil's portrayal of the *pied noir* population resembles Vidal and Bignon's in its focus on corruption and sexuality. Nadine, the major *pied noir* female character, uses her sexual appeal to manipulate three male characters: Ahmed, Kerbronec, and a French soldier. Contrary to Catherine, Nadine is a self-confident woman who does not use sex to feel beautiful. She remains cognizant of her beauty which she uses to dominate men. She lures Kerbronec to her apartment with sex and, later, convinces a French officer to desert the army so that he can escort her out of Algeria. While Nadine's behavior is not particularly moral, her sexuality places her in a position of power with respect to other characters. Her behavior recalls Albert's assertion in *Une Éducation algérienne*: "[à] la guerre comme à la guerre" (Vidal and Bignon 1982, 31). Desperate times call for desperate measures, leaving the reader to question the bédéistes' seemingly misogynistic representation of Nadine. The representation of other *pied noir* women sharply contrasts Nadine's character development. Despite emphasis placed on Nadine's sexuality, she is never objectified and retains her female agency. Nadine contrasts sharply with the *pied noir* prostitutes that Scotti orders near the end of the album. This scene paints an overtly negative image of the *pied noir* with a corrupt *colon* and his female playthings (fig. 3.3). The scene takes place in a Moorish hotel with lavish fountains and furnishings. By setting the scene in an Orientalist decor, the bédéistes underscore the moral perversion of the *pied noir colon*. When Ahmed bombs the hotel and kills Scotti and his prostitutes, Merezette and Duménil suggest that the future postcolonial order has

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French friend. Albert Memmi makes a similar distinction in his "Portrait du colonisateur" between "le colonisateur qui se refuse" ("le colonisateur de bonne volonté") and "le colonisateur qui s'accepte" ("le colonialiste") ([1957] 1985, 47, 70). Françoise believes her father's business is an example of colonization not colonialism. She realizes that Albert will neither understand nor respect her cultural heritage and leaves him.

no need for such individuals. Finally, if the scene visually mimics nineteenth-century Orientalist painting, the *pied noir* replaces the Oriental Other, becoming France's new colonial Other.

In addition to Orientalist painting, colonial postcards serve as iconographic source material for the bande dessinée. Although Ferrandez admits using colonial postcards as iconographic sources (e.g. those published in Alloula's anthology), rarely are they reproduced in his albums. One exception is a postcard in which Abd al-Qadir is shown protecting Christians (fig. 3.4). Due to Abd al-Qadir's early resistance to colonialism in the nineteenth century, Algerians venerate him as the first hero of Algerian independence. Forced to surrender in the 1840s, he sought exile in Damascus where he and his guard saved Christians from the Druzes. For this reason, France later pardoned him for his armed opposition to the French colonial enterprise. Ferrandez's reproduced postcard serves an extra-diegetic function. The characters do not pass around a copy of the postcard, but rather a letter that Abd al-Qadir supposedly sent to the fictional Joseph Constant. By including a postcard depiction of Abd al-Qadir's "conversion" as a French ally, the bédéiste accomplishes two narrative objectives. Firstly, the postcard serves as narrator, illustrating in one panel a past event of monumental importance in Franco-Algerian history. Secondly, by positioning Marianne (whose name is not without consequence) in front of the postcard, Ferrandez suggests that the characters' interpretation of the letter is deeply rooted in French, not Algerian, hegemonic discourse. Sauveur ("Savior") hopes to publish the letter "pour que l'attitude de Abd el Kader serve d'exemple aux musulmans, et qu'ils se détournent du FLN…" (Ferrandez 2004, 23). The postcard and its positioning within the album reinforce colonial ideology, re-appropriating an Algerian national hero so as to defend the ideals of French Algeria. Indeed, Marianne and Sauveur wish to show Algerians the error of their ways.

Ferrandez's re-appropriation of this image within his anti-colonialist narrative is strategic. Despite their colonialist perspective, Marianne and Sauveur hope to quell FLN

violence targeting both the Algerian and European populations. While their objective is to promote Abd al-Qadir as a universal figure, their plan mirrors general tendencies in colonial and postcolonial literatures. Jean-Robert Henry writes, "les personnalités frontières de I. Eberhardt et Abdelkader […] ont sans cesse été reconstruites—et romancées—en fonction des contingences du présent" (1991, 305). Octave and Camus's editor, Edmond Charlot, (two contemporary *frontaliers* with respect to France and Algeria) warn Marianne and Sauveur that the publication of Abd al-Qadir's letter in which he pledges his loyalty to the French will never obtain the desired results. They explain that because Messali Hadj and his followers closely identify with Abd al-Qadir, the FLN will use the letter as proof of the MNA's political alliance with the French, thereby justifying its use of violence against the French and other Algerians. Ferrandez uses the ensuing debate to critique colonialism and the obtuseness of its staunchest supporters who believe that publishing a letter, translated into French, in a newspaper most Algerians would never read would dissolve Algerian discontent and desire for autonomy. This scene also cautions against the manipulation of transnational historical figures: "l'homme-frontière médiateur peut être ressenti comme tel par les deux sociétés, ou seulement par une seule. Ou encore plus souvent, la médiation n'a pas le même sens pour les deux sociétés" (Henry 1991, 304). Although Marianne and Sauveur's intentions are honorable, Octave and Charlot's admonitions suggest that the *pieds noirs* have never really understood their Algerian neighbors.

In contrast to Ferrandez, Morvandiau illustratively reproduces several type postcards (e.g. ethnographic images) in his album as independent panels. His approach calls attention to photographic presentation as representation. By recreating postcard images in his own graphic style, Morvandiau implies that colonial postcards embody a subjective (read colonialist) vision of Algeria and its people. In one postcard panel, Morvandiau's *récitatif* explains that to the bédéiste's grandfather (Paul), before settling there at the age of seventeen, Algeria was an exotic locale inhabited by exotic people.

The chosen image shows a replica of an African village on display at a colonial exposition in Bordeaux (fig 3.5). Morvandiau's choice suggests that French representations of the colonies tailored to French expectations of exoticism and perpetuated Orientalist discourse. The narrator stipulates that "[v]ue de là-bas, l'Algérie est une planète fondamentalement exotique et propice à tous les fantasmes. Mais Paul n'est pas encore l'aventureux berrichon parti à 17 ans pour l'Afrique du Nord" (Morvandiau 2007). This statement suggests that upon Paul's arrival in the Maghreb, perceptions of Algeria's exoticism dissipate, giving way to new realities. Colonial postcards and exhibits place Western viewers in a position of power over the colonial Other: viewers are invited to violate the Other's intimacy. Viewers gain access to their cultural Others while protecting their own space: "[p]icture postcards simultaneously bring us nearer to those depicted and distance us from them" (Prochaska 1990, 407).

Morvandiau's usage of type postcards testifies to the evolution of the native population from colonized to autonomous. As Morvandiau's narrative accelerates into the mid-twentieth century, documentary and press photographs of Algerian leaders begin to replace earlier ethnographic postcards. Except for a few isolated examples, visual representations of the native population function as a backdrop for text. On the same plate as the type postcard described above is an image reminiscent of Alloula's erotic postcards (fig. 3.6). The text, however, does not engage with the image. Colonial prostitution, clearly referenced in the image, is not discussed until several panels later. The frequent gap between Morvandiau's visual and verbal representation results in a narrative schism: the reader is invited to consult a visual history of Algeria based on available iconography (first colonial sources, then press photography and television) while alternately reading Morvandiau's family history and his version of French history. Moreover near the beginning of the album, the narrator describes a trip to New York. While this tangent appears irrelevant to the overall narrative, his disdain for American free market capitalism foreshadows his disdain for colonialism and its exploitative nature.

Consequently, the reader understands that the reproduction of colonial iconography does not imply a fascination with the Orientalist aesthetic. Rather this reproduction furnishes incomplete views of Algeria and Algerians (e.g. colonial iconography is an inadequate mode of representation). This notion is further reinforced by Morvandiau's fragmentary illustration of Algerian daily life (fig. 3.7).

(Re)Mapping Colonial Landscapes

Morvandiau's particular depiction of colonial Algeria results in the remapping of Algerian space, providing partial views similar to those photographed for picture postcards. One way in which the colonial landscape is (re)mapped in postcolonial narratives is the recycling of view postcards (e.g. cityscapes, landscapes) in the bande dessinée. Because view postcards were an important means of promoting France's largest colony to tourists and private investors, the French government regularly incorporated these images in travel guides and historic records (DeRoo 2002, 159). Jacques Ferrandez, Frank Giroud, and Christian Lax, for example, consulted such guides and records in researching their albums. This method of advertising in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries heralded France's overseas accomplishments and civilizing mission. Viewers notice a differentiation between rational French urban planning in modern, European quarters such as Bab el-Oued and the asymmetric, dilapidated indigenous neighborhoods like the Casbah in Algiers. Rebecca J. DeRoo analyzes this important juxtaposition in colonial postcards depicting different areas of Algiers. She states that representations of French quarters and administrative buildings highlight their neoclassical architecture, urban symmetry (evident, for example, in the organization of streets), and symbols of colonial control such as mounted police officers. Conversely, views of native sections draw attention to poor lighting, chaos, and poorly maintained infrastructures (DeRoo 2002, 161-2). When viewed in tandem, these postcards tout France's accomplishments in the colonies, notably urban planning and renewal, while

depreciating those of the Ottoman Empire in their failure to civilize and modernize Algeria. Some corpus bédéistes represent both quarters so as to diversify their representation while others focus entirely on the European neighborhoods that their *pied noir* families frequented. An example of the latter category is Anne Sibran.

In her preface to *Là-bas,* Sibran reproduces four postcards of Algiers. Because she was born in France and has never visited Algeria, she uses view postcards to ensure herself and her readers a degree of pictorial verisimilitude. Writing about the creative process, Sibran notes: "[j]'ai utilisé aussi des cartes postales anciennes. Je les voulais un peu sombres, imprécises, pour me laisser des libertés, des vérités plus importantes que le regard" (2003, 3). Sibran relies on postcards and her father's stories to stimulate her imagination. Yet these sources of inspiration posit Algiers as an idealized space with respect to Paris. The reproduced view postcards depict European quarters or the Algerian coastline. Their failure to show war, racial tensions, and indigenous spaces such as the Casbah reinforce her father's utopian vision of Algeria. If the postcards reproduced in Sibran's preface do not accurately represent colonial Algeria, they do set the tone for the album. *Là-bas* documents Sibran's father's feelings of loss for familiar places, for family traditions, for a way of life. The album articulates his humiliation and growing sense of abandonment in metropolitan France. Rather than perpetuating an Orientalist discourse, the postcards provide substance for a *pied noir* narrative of exile.[15]

As an exile, Alain Mercadal (Sibran's bande dessinée father) develops a special relationship to space. Before leaving Algeria, he creates a work fantasy intended to calm his anxieties concerning his family's future. Prior to leaving the country, he receives a call from the Paris office: he is asked to deliver the company's client files in person.

[15] Sibran's inclusion of early twentieth-century postcards in a narrative of exile is significant. Postcards are typically sent from one space to someone located in another space. The act of receiving a postcard thus emphasizes the recipient's absence from the space pictured.

Interpreting the request as an official mission of the utmost importance, Alain entertains notions of job security and career advancement: "[u]ne voix de directeur, ferme et grave. Il t'avait dit: Mercadal, vous pourrez compter sur moi, quoi qu'il arrive" (Sibran and Tronchet 2003, 11). The fantasy allows him to leave Algeria and reunite with his wife and newborn daughter in France without losing hope. Yet when he finally arrives at the Paris branch of *Urbaine-Vie*, his confidence falters: the secretary neither recognizes his name nor understands the significance of his mission. While waiting several hours for the director, Mercadal begins imagining reasons for the delay: he pictures a busy and apologetic director who is embarrassed for making Mercadal wait (fig. 3.8). In reality, the office has forgotten about him, and he must beg for a job. Too embarrassed to explain the truth to his growing daughter, he compartmentalizes space. He soon moves his family away from the hustle and bustle of Paris and from his work fantasy by buying a house in the capital's outer limits. This new space allows him to recreate an Algerian space: here he wears his burnoose, drinks anisette, plants trees to shield his house from his French enemies, and retreats deeper and deeper into his memories of Algeria. When Jeanne (Sibran's bande dessinée double) finally witnesses Alain's work environment as a young woman, she learns the extent of her father's delusions: "[j]'étais venue chercher un tyran, je ramenais un souffre-douleur… Qui n'avait pas quitté son placard depuis plus de 20 ans…" (Sibran and Tronchet 2003, 56).

The shameful discovery coupled with the deaths of Mercadal's sister and mother, his last physical connections to the past, act as catalysts. Alain begins to withdraw completely from his family and reality. Paris, site of his hostile work environment, becomes threatening and unwelcoming further underscoring his sense of abandonment by metropolitan France. Sibran's representation substantiates Pierre Nora's observation of the *pied noir* community: "[l]es Français d'Algérie ne veulent pas être défendus par la métropole, ils veulent en être aimés" (1961, 43). Unloved and misunderstood, Alain finds solace in his Algerian fantasy. His recreation of French Algeria does not, however,

recycle colonialist motifs. His imagination fails to juxtapose European and Algerian quarters. Instead it focuses on the familiar, positive spaces of his youth. As the narrative progresses, Alain loses his ability to effectively navigate the Parisian landscape. He can no longer function as a father or as a productive member of society. His degeneration manifests in several ways: he gets lost looking for his sister's grave, he becomes violent with others, and he starts wandering off in search of the past.

Near the end of the album, Jeanne finds her father immobile gazing wistfully at the Seine where he asks for his daughter's help in reconstituting Algiers. She complies and gradually transforms the banks of the Seine into the Algerian coastline in his mind's eye: "[j]'ai d'abord fait pousser des palmiers sur les quais. Puis j'ai fait venir d'autres hommes, avec une autre lenteur, et leurs habits, et leurs mots" (Sibran and Tronchet 2003, 60). Soon one body of water, the Seine, gives way to another, the Mediterranean. Tronchet's visual transformation of the Seine closely follows Sibran's *récitatif*. Because Jeanne has never seen the spaces she recreates, she contributes to her father's unrealistic representation of Algeria. Alain quickly forgets traumatic memories such as the shooting at the open-air market to which Jeanne offers an alternative ending, one in which everyone survives. Despite its painful history, Algiers becomes a safe haven for Alain, an idealized space in comparison to Paris. The fact that Jeanne recreates this space for him suggests that Alain is not interested in visual realism. Unable to physically return to Algeria, Alain is free to romanticize his past in order to make the present more bearable. Jeanne's participation in sustaining this particular vision of French Algeria ensures that future generations of *pieds noirs*[16] will perpetuate positive images of this time and space, despite negative images and associations prevalent in metropolitan French thought. One

[16] Because French Algeria no longer exists, one could argue that the expression "future generations of *pieds noirs*" represents a historical impossibility. It is my contention, however, that the *pied noir* community regenerates itself on French soil through the transmission of a shared cultural heritage which is distinct from that of metropolitan Frenchmen.

large panel constitutes the album's final plate (fig. 3.9). As Jeanne escorts the rejuvenated Alain back home, they turn their backs to a hybrid cityscape where Paris and Algiers meet. Tronchet's final image suggests that although Alain has left Algeria, Algeria has not left Alain. This image underscores the intimate relationship between France and Algeria even after decolonization.

Similar to Anne Sibran's reliance on view postcards for narrative substance, Morvandiau uses view postcards as visual surrogates for colonial spaces. Contrary to Sibran, Morvandiau has traveled to Algeria, albeit only once when he was thirteen years old. Morvandiau's and Sibran's narratives represent instances of postmemory meaning they articulate indirect memories of French Algeria derived from family histories, photographs, personal correspondence, and postcards. While Morvandiau sometimes uses early twentieth-century type postcards to deconstruct them, he incorporates view postcards to produce a visually coherent representation of space. When discussing his grandfather's educational background, Morvandiau mentions that Paul studied engineering at the *Institut agricole* in Algiers where he met Ferhat Abbas. Perhaps to provide evidence for the school's existence, to better visualize his grandfather's youth, or to feed the reader's imagination, Morvandiau reproduces a postcard panel depicting the school (fig. 3.10). Due to the volume of Algerian postcards printed around the turn of the twentieth century, it would be difficult to confirm the accuracy of Morvandiau's rendition. However, a survey of similar postcards on the Internet reveals that several views of this school (which roughly correspond to the bande dessinée panel) were sold as postcards. While it is not vital that the reader find an exact postcard model for Morvandiau's image, the existence of similar views lends credence to his representation of space.

Contrary to Sibran, Morvandiau remains faithful to his postcard models: he inserts neither characters nor text into his illustratively reproduced postcards. The majority of the album's textual component appears as *récitatifs* positioned below individual panels.

D'Algérie looks like a photo album or scrapbook (as opposed to a bande dessinée album) showcasing the bédéiste's collection of postcards and press photographs rather than family pictures. In addition, Morvandiau fails to include page or plate numbers and passes randomly between distant spaces (Rennes, New York, Algiers, Angers, Tizi-Ouzou). The album's organization is not linear, implicating the reader who must decipher the narrative's direction as well as the bédéiste's relationship to French Algeria.

The album's title, *D'Algérie*, also references spatial categories: Morvandiau's family is from Algeria. Although most of his family now resides in France, the title emphasizes the significance of their Algerian past. If the bédéiste attributes considerable importance to his *pied noir* heritage, he openly admits that Algeria remains "un étrange pays, assez familier mais surtout inconnu" (Morvandiau 2007). The inclusion of view postcards helps Morvandiau conceptualize this strange yet familiar space. Because he does not include family members in his reproductions, his narrative becomes considerably less personal than Sibran's. Unlike Sibran who uses postcards to stimulate her imagination in the recreation of her father's Algeria, Morvandiau opts for more objectivity. His fragmented drawings and arbitrary panel divisions (as mentioned above) call attention to his lack of familiarity with respect to his family's homeland. The large white spaces which separate panels and cut through certain images reflect Morvandiau's own fragmentary knowledge of Algeria "[qui] se limite […] aux oranges que [s]on père se souvient cueillir, aux feux d'artifices du port d'Alger bombardé pendant la guerre et aux meubles si singuliers du pavillon de [s]es grands-parents près d'Angers" (Morvandiau 2007).

Morvandiau's and Sibran's reworking of view postcards in their albums sparks some concerns. Does their recycling of colonial iconography and Orientalist source material create problems or possibilities for the bande dessinée as a *pied noir* site of memory? According to Mark McKinney, comics can function as "a *virtual* place of memory, as a substitute for lost or physically inaccessible places of memory" (2001, 43).

Morvandiau and Sibran rely on view postcards to recreate French Algeria with visual accuracy because they lack physical access to this space. As indicated in the preceding chapter, textual documentation is a common practice in historical bandes dessinées, one which authenticates the representation of history in this popular medium. Yet the reliance on colonial iconography originally used to promote tourism and financial investment in the colonies implies a tendency for bédéistes to (sub)consciously reproduce colonialist ideology. One could argue that Morvandiau and Sibran are less concerned with colonial discourses than with understanding their own family heritage. However, as with Ferrandez, Morvandiau and Sibran establish an ambiguous relationship with colonialism and Orientalism. As *pieds noirs,* all three bédéistes act as cultural mediators between France and Algeria, as *frontaliers*: "[…] les individus ou les groupes qui habitent la frontière symbolique entre des sociétés placées en situation d'antagonisme ou d'exhibition de leurs différences" (Henry 1991, 301).

Contrary to *Carnets d'Orient,* the representation of colonial space is greatly limited in Morvandiau's and Sibran's albums. Whereas Ferrandez provides multiple perspectives and thus geographical diversity from which these perspectives emerge, Morvandiau and Sibran limit their narratives to their *pied noir* viewpoint. Nevertheless all three bédéistes, like the majority of corpus artists, rely on family and national histories throughout the creative process. They do not possess their own direct memory of French Algeria or the war. Could Morvandiau, Anne Sibran, and Jacques Ferrandez (as well as other bédéistes) have created their albums without colonial iconography? This seems improbable due to the generational gap separating them from French Algeria. Bédéistes lacking a direct memory must rely on family and cultural inheritances in order to constitute a postmemory (their own personal, indirect memory) of this familiar yet unfamiliar past. Mark McKinney writes:

> […] as time passes and as assimilation progresses, the links that younger generations from all [memory] groups […] have to their parents' homeland become more tenuous and are contingent upon

> access to the memory of parents and grandparents, and increasingly to historical writing and iconographic archives—especially as those with direct memory of Algeria grow old and die. (2001, 44)

The death of Morvandiau's uncle and the faltering mental health of Sibran's father catalyze narrative. Similarly, Ferrandez's decision to create the *Carnets* in the late 1980s was partially triggered by his grandfather's old age (2009c). Unable to experience *Algérie française* (which has become an ideological space for the *pied noir* memory community), several bédéistes have reconstituted this space both verbally and visually in order to make sense of their own identity as descendants of *pieds noirs*.

As the above discussion indicates, *Là-bas* and *D'Algérie* use colonial iconography differently. Sibran uses view postcards to help her "remember" the sights, sounds, and smells of her father's Algeria. In contrast, Morvandiau inserts postcard panels directly into his narrative and their inclusion increases as the album progresses. The history of French Algeria soon usurps family history in *D'Algérie*, suggesting that in order to understand his family Morvandiau must first understand France and Algeria. His view postcards, the majority of which depict colonial buildings, churches, and farms, engender feelings of nostalgia and provide a virtual *pied noir* site of memory from which the colonial Other is largely absent. Despite their divergent objectives and narrative foci, Morvandiau's and Sibran's albums invite a critical examination of aesthetic records as well as reinstate the memories of a disappearing community. The *Carnets* exploit a more universal approach to French Algeria and the French-Algerian War. Ferrandez attempts to give voice to several memory communities simultaneously and therefore reconstitutes colonial and indigenous spaces. In contrast to DeRoo's analysis of colonial postcards which offer unflattering views of Algerian spaces, Ferrandez draws all spaces with equal clarity and respect. Furthermore, European and Algerian characters freely navigate these spaces transforming Algeria into a place of contact and communion, reiterating Ferrandez's main narrative objective and historical vision.

If Ferrandez includes urban, rural, and natural (mountains, beaches, and deserts) settings to show the diversity and vastness of the Algerian landscape, Lax and Giroud restrict their narrative to a mountainous region in Kabylia in order to illustrate the country's impenetrability. As previously indicated, Giroud purposefully sets his story in Kabylia during the winter in order to distance his representation from popular conceptions of the Algerian landscape as arid and hot. If Giroud hopes to dispel certain misconceptions about Algeria in his bande dessinée, he photographed evidence of Algeria's technological backwardness rather than its modernity during his *repérage sur place*. The Algeria he sought and found was timeless, confirming that the Orient never changes (Said 1979, 104). Redolent of neo-Orientalist attitudes, Giroud writes:

> [l]a plupart du temps, la modernité les [les villages kabyles] a défigurés, plantant ici des pylônes électriques, là un cube de béton, ailleurs des bâtiments inachevés, amas grisâtres de parpaings qu'hérissent des ferrailles rouillées. Heureusement, il reste quelques bourgades épargnées. Azrou, par exemple, qu'il faut gagner par chemins défoncés, à travers des forêts de pins et de cyprès, d'eucalyptus et de cèdres de Numidie. Là, passé une lande escarpée semée de cactus et de genêts, un nouveau piton auquel s'accrochent des maisons d'un autre âge. […] Une pellicule entière y passe. Les photos serviront à camper le village qui apparaît dans les premières pages d'*Azrayen'*. (Giroud 2008b, 129)

Rather than relying on Lax's creativity to transform modern landscapes into 1950s' colonial Algeria, Giroud uses his camera to validate and document his preconceived notions. Disappointed that modernity has disfigured the Orient, he searches for villages and houses from another time, those which have scarcely changed since the war. During another outing, Giroud discovers a different town whose charm lies in its "ruelles étroites et mal pavées" and its "mosquées aux coupoles mangées d'herbes sauvages" (2008b, 131). The few buildings unscathed by decay are those maintained by the French (e.g. the vineyard model for the Val Doré).

While Giroud is not a liminal figure or *frontalier*, his historical training should have taught him to think critically about the representation of colonial and postcolonial spaces. The fact that neo-Orientalist discourse permeates the afterword to his anti-

colonialist narrative suggests that despite our ability to criticize and deconstruct problematic concepts such as Orientalism, we (as Westerners) can never completely free ourselves from our cultural heritage and founding mythologies (e.g. that the West is superior to the East). The love-hate relationship that we have established with our view of our cultural Others contaminates French bande dessinée representations of Algeria as well as reader reception.[17] Even though certain bédéistes such as Ferrandez engage quite openly with this "postcolonial paradox," others do not appear aware of their cultural biases. For example, Giroud's narrative would be less problematic from a postcolonial standpoint if he were not so explicit in his afterword. Giroud's seemingly ambiguous relationship with Orientalism does not signify that readers should dismiss his narrative which is highly critical of colonial practices. Instead readers should note the degree to which colonial ideology continues to permeate collective consciousness even in academia—readers must not forget that Giroud is an aggregated historian.[18]

Despite these underlying problems, *Azrayen'* makes interesting use of colonial and indigenous spaces. Commenting on Lax's visualization of space, Benjamin Stora notes:

> [l]a Kabylie devient alors lieu de l'enfouissement où se perdre. Les soldats pénètrent dans les villages et les maisons, espaces à la fois transparents et impénétrables. On regarde ces portes, ces seuils béants et opaques, qui s'ouvrent par la force et se ferment par l'expression sur les visages des paysans algériens. (2008, 6)

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[17] Several bandes dessinées of the corpus like *Azrayen'* and the *Carnets* have been heralded by critics, have received prestigious awards at Angoulême, and are considered commercial successes. This suggests that readers relate to the articulated discourses and value the visual aesthetics of these albums despite their representational biases. Fanch Juteau writes: "[o]n se situe ici dans la sphère du commercial, du loisir. Le lecteur n'achète pas une B.D. pour se retrouver dans la position de l'élève à l'école. Sa culture (étendue ou non) est déjà en partie faite et orientée. Elle guide ses choix" (2001, 87).

[18] One could argue that my use of terms like "indigenous" demonstrates that my work is also tainted by the postcolonial paradox.

In addition to the difficult terrain impeding the search patrol's movement discussed in Chapter 2, Lax distinguishes between interior and exterior spaces. With the exception of military transportation and one office scene at the beginning of the series, interiors are limited to Kabyle homes and villages which form a second visible barrier to the French. Soldiers are often drawn beating down doors and forcefully penetrating civilian buildings and infrastructures. The demarcation is both physical and cultural, separating Algerians from the French. The only character who moves freely within and between these spaces is Taklhit. Her status as a *frontalier* allows her to permeate different settings and to communicate with both communities. When discussing the concepts of familiar and unfamiliar spaces, Edward Said observes that this distinction is a universal practice which reinforces the us-them dialectic. Areas located outside of familiar space designate "barbarian land" (Said 1979, 54). The erection of physical barriers maintains a literal and symbolic separation: barriers prevent "them" from invading the familiar as well as acknowledge the difference between "us" and "them."

Throughout *Azrayen'*, the French remain outside Kabyle familiar space. This narrative choice is doubly significant. Firstly, because French soldiers must force their way into indigenous spaces, the reader associates their action with penetration and colonization. Kabylia appears as virgin territory whose natural force resists colonial development: melting snow frequently washes out bridges; the rugged terrain renders the task of paving roads difficult; exotic vegetation obstructs visibility. Lax highlights Kabylia's inaccessibility in his illustrations. Notwithstanding this inherent symbolism, the Kabyle region remained an active center of Algerian resistance throughout the colonial period. Furthermore, the path of destruction left in the patrol's wake recalls Bugeaud's scorched-earth policy in the nineteenth century. The patrol unscrupulously kills livestock, breaks down doors, burns villages to the ground, and murders innocent civilians. The idea of spatial penetration coupled with the violation of young female villagers finds resonance in Orientalist discourse with its gendered representation of the

East. Secondly, the French are rarely drawn in their own familiar space. They navigate natural landscapes in helicopters, armored trucks, and jeeps. The rugged terrain often results in flat tires, fatal crashes, and other accidents. The search patrol never succeeds in conquering and appropriating space. Instead Kabylia overpowers them by washing away their vehicles and by swallowing the missing patrol (fig. 3.11). Although *Azrayen'* narrates a French experience, the reader soon realizes that the French play the role of outsiders. This notion is further emphasized by the use of Tamazight when Kabyle characters are speaking. French characters and readers unable to understand Tamazight are thrust into an outsider position with respect to the Kabyle population.[19]

The indigenous space *par excellence* is the Casbah which figures prominently in the bande dessinée and film (see, for example, Julien Duvivier's *Pépé le Moko* and Gillo Pontecorvo's *La Bataille d'Alger*). Visual representations of the Casbah capitalize on its labyrinthine character and poor lighting. For narratives set during the French-Algerian War, the Casbah parallels Lax and Giroud's depiction of Kabylia: both are dangerous and virtually impenetrable to the French army. While this specific representation dominates French conceptions of this unfamiliar space, two corpus bédéistes offer alternative visions. The first is Jacques Ferrandez who transforms the Casbah into a familiar space. Since several of his main characters live in or are from the Casbah (Samia, Bouzid, Momo), the reader is offered an insider's perspective—albeit a simulated one due to Ferrandez's own outsider status. Samia's apartment, for instance, is warm and inviting (fig. 3.12) when compared to Nadine's dark, crowded apartment in *Algérie française!* (fig. 3.13). The latter appears more like a secret hideaway than a living space. The idea of

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[19] Because Giroud provides French translations in footnotes, one could argue that he interprets the Orient for his readers, that he acts as both a literal and metaphorical translator. The use of footnotes creates a particular dynamic between *Azrayen'* and the reader who must frequently "leave" the narrative (e.g. by consulting footnotes) in order to understand it. As a result, the French reader becomes a double outsider with respect to the Kabyle characters as well as to the series itself.

the Casbah as a safe haven or refuge, rather than a terrorist hotbed, comes to the fore near the end of the series when Octave returns to the Princesses' Cemetery, Constant and Djemilah's final resting spot. At this moment in the narrative, Ferrandez visually juxtaposes the crowd of Algerians celebrating independence and the crowd of Europeans rushing to leave with whatever they can carry. In the midst of chaos, Octave revisits the Casbah and the cemetery. Here Octave, the only French character pictured on the entire plate, moves towards the Casbah while the Algerian characters are drawn moving away from this space. This directional opposition symbolizes independence: the Algerians run from their highly segregated indigenous space in order to reclaim Algeria. Similarly, Octave's gravitation towards the Casbah and the cemetery suggests his deep attachment to (French) Algeria as well as his desire to remain in the country. As an urban green space, the cemetery becomes a terrestrial Eden, one from which he and Samia have been expulsed: "…c'est l'Algérie nouvelle… ni toi [Octave], ni Samia n'en font [*sic*] partie…" (Ferrandez 2009a, 59).

In contrast, the representation of the Casbah in *Pierrot de Bab el Oued* emphasizes this space as one of dilapidation and decay. While this visualization of the Casbah finds resonance in the colonial view postcards described above, Melouah's objective is quite different. Rather than representing the Casbah as an irrationally organized space in order to tout the accomplishments of French urban renewal in other neighborhoods of Algiers, Melouah blames the state of the Casbah in 1988 on the government's lack of initiative. When Pierrot and his Parisian friend visit the Casbah, the Parisian asks if what they are seeing are actually Roman ruins (Melouah 2003, 25). Indeed the walls of the Casbah appear to be falling down around them. Melouah's representation critiques the FLN's failure to renovate the country after independence. In one band of panels, an inhabitant explains to Pierrot and his friend that nothing changes despite regular elections: "[d]epuis 1962 c'est à l'image de cette affiche", he exclaims (Melouah 2003, 26). His statement refers to a promotional poster for the FLN on which

the candidate's face creates an optical illusion: it appears exactly the same upside down and right side up. The social commentary is evident. Throughout the single-party period, it did not matter which candidate Algerians elected because they all embraced the same political ideologies. Melouah's representation of the Casbah mirrors Ferrandez's in his depiction of green space and the Casbah's hidden beauty. For example, the Algerian character that Pierrot and his friend meet during their visit invites them into his home inside the Casbah. Here Pierrot and his friend are confronted with a different view of this space: the Casbah's interior is decorated with plants and elements of Moorish architecture such as horseshoe arches and intricately carved columns.

For French bédéistes, however, the most significant and often underemphasized space is located neither in Algeria nor in France but in the space between. Ships crossing the Mediterranean form a transitional landscape whose symbolism varies according to the characters involved.[20] Jean-Robert Henry writes that "[l]e plus souvent […] les 'espaces frontières' sont des *no man's land*. Le plus valorisé d'entre eux est bien sûr la Méditerranée. Elle est un entre-deux, une zone médiane, un 'continent liquide' […]" (1991, 311). Boats and ferries become a metaphor for the Franco-Algerian cultural hybridism observed in *frontaliers*. For *pieds noirs*, ships mark the first moment of their mass exodus. The boarding of a ship often constitutes the end of a war narrative (e.g. *Terre fatale, Une Éducation algérienne*) or the beginning of a narrative of exile (e.g. *Là-bas*). When Jeanne transforms the banks of the Seine into Algiers for Alain, she describes a ship about to set sail across the Mediterranean, this time minus her father as a passenger (Sibran and Tronchet 2003, 60). Her focus on the departing ship suggests that this vessel remains a source of anxiety and depression for her *pied noir* father.

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[20] The majority of Akli Tadjer's novel, *Les "ANI" du Tassili*, takes place on a trans-Mediterranean ferry. The ferry's trajectory from France to Algeria and from Algeria to France symbolizes the cultural oscillation of its passengers who include *pieds noirs*, Algerian immigrants, a *harki*, French social workers, and representatives of the *beur* generation.

Contrary to other corpus albums, *O.A.S. Aïscha* is the only bande dessinée whose action occurs entirely on a boat, the Divona. While the ship's crew attempts to transport its cargo of oranges from Algiers to Marseille, they discover two stowaways: Aïscha, a *harki* and OAS terrorist, and her captor, a French secret agent. The most significant narrative moment occurs when the ship founders in the Mediterranean with Aïscha trapped inside. For the secret agent, "une seule chose compte… que cette fille disparaisse…" (Yann, Joos, and Willmot 1990, 14). By sinking Aïscha's body with the Divona, the bédéistes achieve a narrative objective which is to resolve their murder mystery. This conclusion suggests that *frontalier* characters such as the *harki* are displaced individuals who float between Algeria and France without truly belonging to either space.

The quiet omnipresence of transitional landscapes such as the Mediterranean serves more than aesthetic functions. They are no man's lands, devoid of human life yet endowed with considerable symbolic value. Because bédéistes are less directly concerned with these landscapes (from a narrative standpoint) than with the representation of colonial (living) spaces and colonial Others suggests that bédéistes are attempting to work through their cultural biases and to establish postcolonial contact with French Algeria. Due to its image-text format, the bande dessinée allows artists to engage with problematic representations of space and people while simultaneously forcing them to recognize the influence colonial iconography has had and continues to have on their perception of the Orient. The ambiguous relationship established between postcolonial artists and colonialist aesthetics results in irreconcilable narrative tensions. Still some *frontalier* bédéistes such as Jacques Ferrandez do not deny the presence of a postcolonial paradox in their work. Instead, they use the bande dessinée to acknowledge and explore these tensions in the hopes of opening a direct line of communication between (and among) Self and Other. In addition to the historical bande dessinée's problematic recycling of Orientalist tropes, the medium recycles other problematic source material,

namely iconic images of war and photography. In the next chapter, we will examine how bédéistes engage with more contemporary iconographic sources in their representation of the French-Algerian War, placing particular emphasis on the narrative tensions and possibilities created by a mixed medium.

Figure 3.1. The sexual encounter between Paul and Naïma, an Algerian prostitute.

Source: Ferrandez, Jacques. 2008. *Carnets d'Orient: Premier cycle*. Brussels: Casterman. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 3.2. Taklhit changes into a traditional Kabyle costume.

Source: Giroud, Frank, and Lax. [1998, 1999] 2008. *Azrayen'*. Paris: Dupuis Aire Libre. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 3.3. Scotti and his *pied noir* prostitutes.

Source: Duménil, and Denis Merezette. 1985. *Algérie française!* Brussels: Éditions Michel Deligne. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

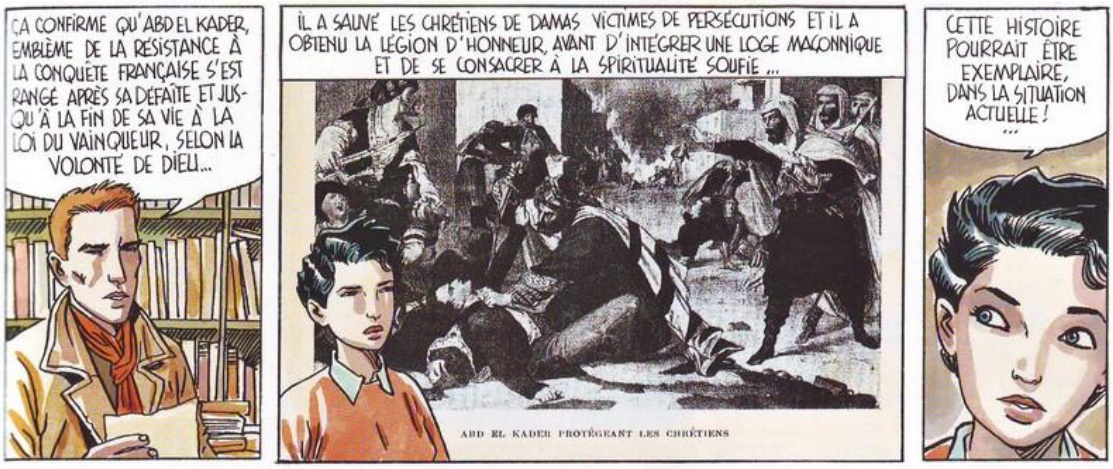

Figure 3.4. Marianne and Octave discuss Abd al-Qadir's letter to Joseph Constant.

Source: Ferrandez, Jacques. 2004. *Carnets d'Orient: Rue de la Bombe*. Brussels: Casterman. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 3.5. Colonial postcard of an African village.

Source: Morvandiau. 2007. *D'Algérie*. Rennes: Maison Rouge. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 3.6. Image reminiscent of Alloula's erotic postcards.

Source: Morvandiau. 2007. *D'Algérie*. Rennes: Maison Rouge. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

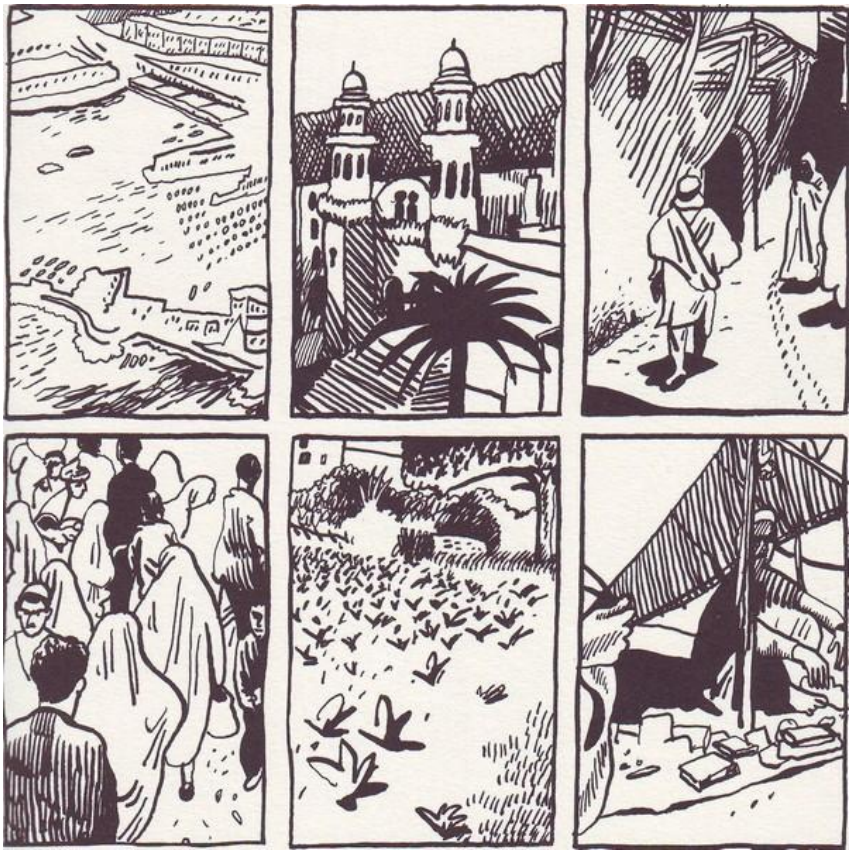

Figure 3.7. Morvandiau's fragmentary visualization of Algeria.

Source: Morvandiau. 2007. *D'Algérie*. Rennes: Maison Rouge. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 3.8. Mercadal imagines the director's embarrassment about making him wait.

Source: Sibran, Anne, and Tronchet. 2003. *Là-bas*. Paris: Dupuis. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

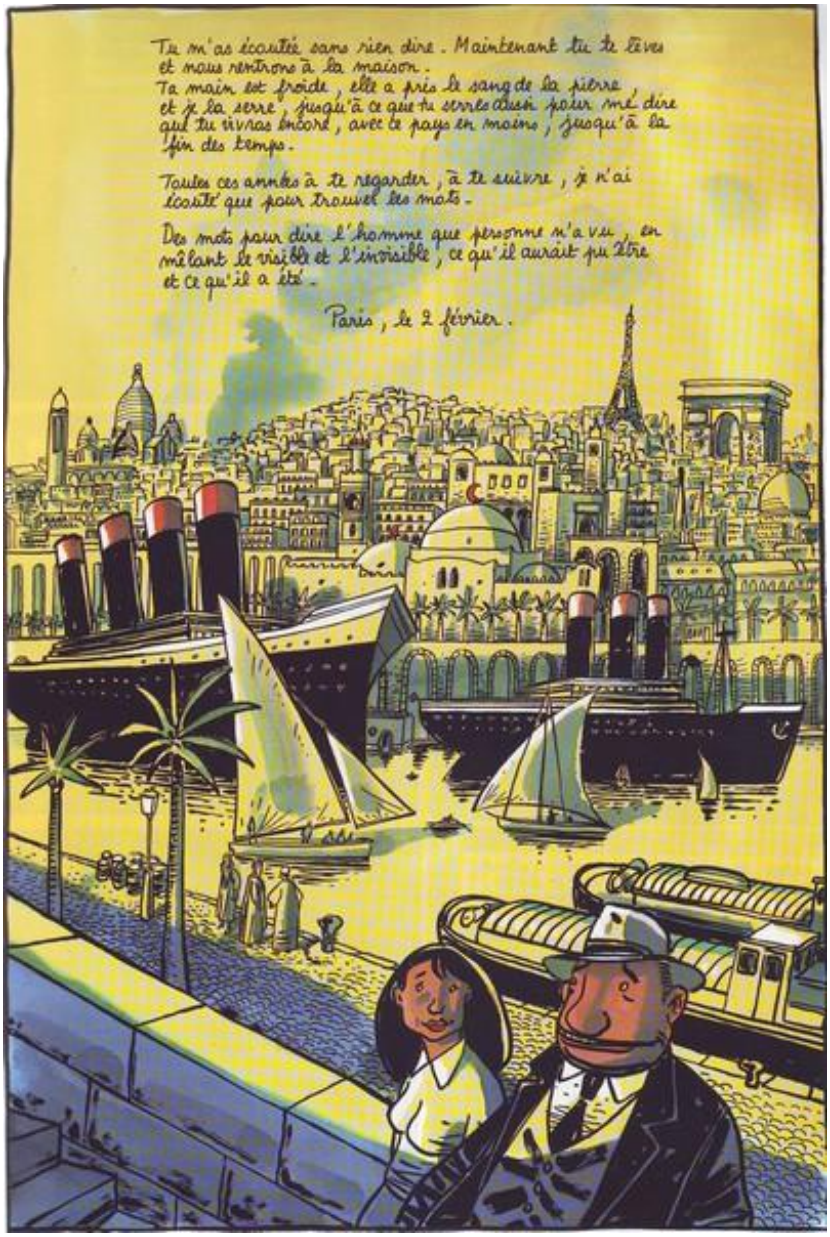

Figure 3.9. The hybridization of cityscapes.

Source: Sibran, Anne, and Tronchet. 2003. *Là-bas*. Paris: Dupuis. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

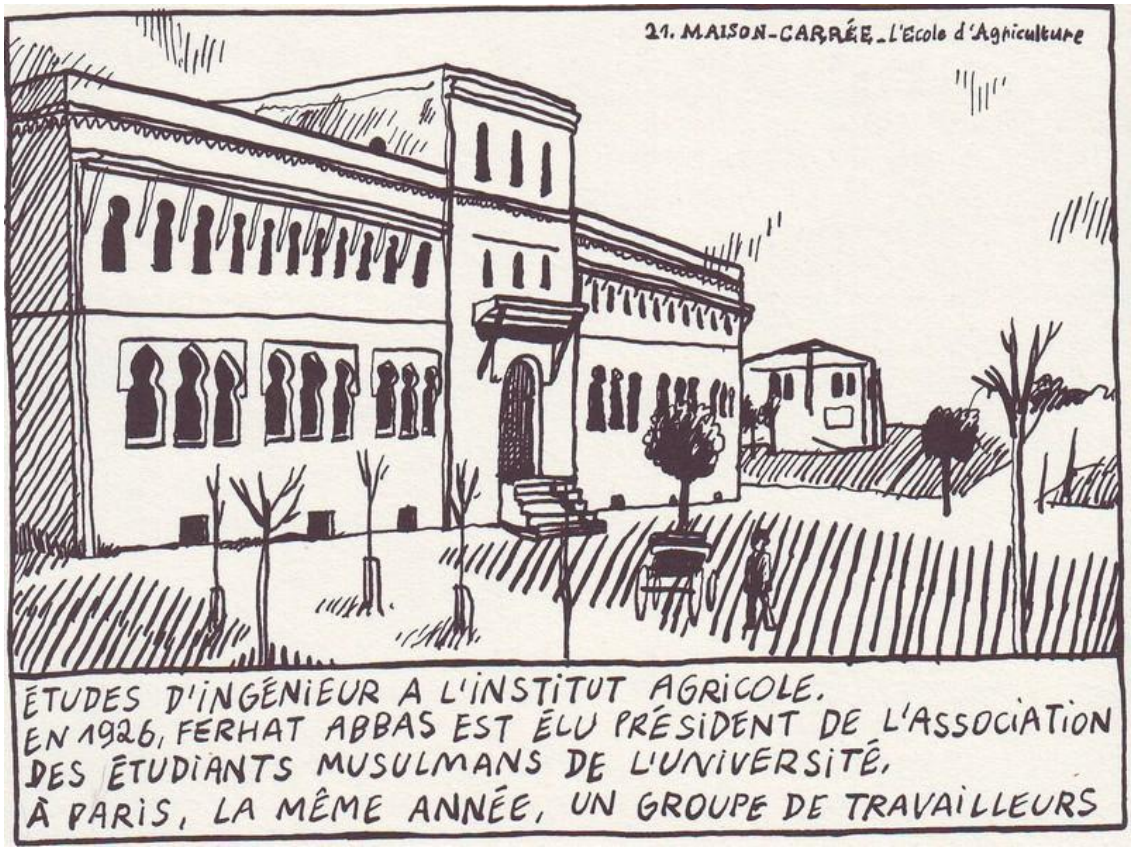

Figure 3.10. Postcard panel of the *Institut agricole* in Algiers.

Source: Morvandiau. 2007. *D'Algérie*. Rennes: Maison rouge. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 3.11. The Kabyle landscape engulfs the military convoy.

Source: Giroud, Frank, and Lax. [1998, 1999] 2008. *Azrayen'*. Paris: Dupuis Aire Libre. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 3.12. The Casbah in *Carnets d'Orient*.

Source: Ferrandez, Jacques. 2004. *Carnets d'Orient: Rue de la Bombe*. Brussels: Casterman. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 3.13. The Casbah in *Algérie française!*

Source: Duménil, and Denis Merezette. 1985. *Algérie française!* Brussels: Éditions Michel Deligne. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

CHAPTER 4

PHOTOGRAPHY, NARRATIVE, AND MEMORY

In addition to colonial iconography, bédéistes frequently recycle other iconographic sources such as documentary, press, and personal photography (e.g. family photographs) in their work. The translation of "realistic" material like photographs into bande dessinée images allows artists to "uncover their own connections with [the] past, and retell history in their own unique manner" (Versaci 2007, 86). The bande dessinée also depends on the commonality of human experience. The reader best understands an image if it evokes a common life experience shared by both reader and bédéiste (Eisner 1985, 13). Artists recycle or recreate photographic images in their bandes dessinées to achieve several narrative effects. The recycling of iconic images of war circulated in the press allows bédéistes to tap into the collective consciousness of their target audience who would recognize those or similar images. Rather than simply feed hegemonic discourses, bédéistes re-contextualize iconic images in anti-colonialist narratives which force readers to question mass media representations of the French-Algerian War. Finally, several corpus bédéistes come from *pied noir* families and have grown up hearing stories about French Algeria. Because they lack direct memories of this past, they incorporate personal sources into their narratives so as to communicate their intimate relationship with French Algeria to readers. The recycling of different kinds of photographs in the bande dessinée therefore contributes to the formation of two distinct types of memory: collective memory and postmemory.

Press Photography and French Collective Memory

Recent studies on photography stress contemporary society's relationship with the image,[1] arguably one of today's most important vectors of memory transmission due to the circulation and availability of photographs on the Internet. As material traces of the past, documentary images—more so than aesthetic ones—are thought to provide evidence for the existence of something or someone past. Their goal is to remove doubt and to counter historical revisionism. Aesthetic images, on the other hand, "introduce agency, control, structure, and therefore, distance from the real, a distance which might leave space for doubt" (Hirsch 1997, 24). Documentary photography nevertheless remains a problematic medium in that viewers often believe in its power of authentification. Viewers forget (or choose to ignore) that photographs are not objective. Indeed they can be easily manipulated to distort meaning. Regarding the bande dessinée in which photographs are frequently reproduced as illustrations in the bédéiste's own graphic style, the reader/viewer becomes aware of photographic images as representation rather than Truth. Because the bande dessinée functions on a different level of iconicity than photographic realism, the medium can focus on specific details and eliminate others, amplifying meaning in a way that photography cannot. Photographic reproduction in the bande dessinée thus blurs the documentary/aesthetic divide. If all bande dessinée "photographs" retain their original documentary appeal, their graphic aesthetic distances them from the objective realism associated with photography.

The inclusion of photographs in the bande dessinée is, however, symptomatic of the medium's desire to authenticate its portrayal of the French-Algerian War. Several corpus albums recycle examples of documentary and press photography. The

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[1] See, for example, Susan Sontag's *On Photography* and *Regarding the Pain of Others*, Marianne Hirsch's *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory*, and Roland Barthes's *La Chambre claire*.

reproduction of authentic period material (either as photographic reprints or drawings) serves to confirm album historicity. A bédéiste's familiarity with period iconography and, in particular, media coverage of the war suggests to the reader that the narrative is anchored in national history and engages with national photo icons. The re-appropriation of documentary and press photography in the bande dessinée creates new levels of signification relative to the original contexts of these images. The power of the bande dessinée lies in its ability to weave a narrative web around de-contextualized photographs, to re-contextualize de-contextualized images. Viewers tend to understand images better when they are printed in a specific context such as part of a fictional or personal narrative. For bandes dessinées whose primary purpose is narratological rather than pedagogical, bédéistes incorporate documentary and press photography as diegetic or extra-diegetic elements. As bande dessinée characters directly experience the French-Algerian War, they are also reading newspapers and responding to photojournalistic sensationalism in the same way that people living in the 1950s and 1960s might have. Fanch Juteau writes that "la bande dessinée est forcément une vision actuelle du passé […] [a]vec pour obligation […] de parler aux gens sur une base qu'ils connaissent" (2001, 87). Hence the frequent reproductions of news articles and their accompanying photographs in corpus albums.

Near the end of Baru and Jean-Marc Thévenet's *Le Chemin de l'Amérique*, Saïd (the boxer protagonist) is drawn reading an issue of *Paris Match*. This panel sequence occurs after he travels to Algeria and meets with his brother Ali. During their conversation, Saïd learns that Ali works for the FLN in Algiers. Throughout the album, Saïd struggles to maintain his political neutrality, hoping that boxing will shield him from the war and its consequences. Yet his visit with his brother demonstrates that the war has already touched him personally: Ali lost his hand during armed combat against the French. While Saïd persists in his delusion that he can remain on the fence politically, he learns that his manager has been paying his FLN dues and that Sarah, his girlfriend, is not

the person he thought she was. The conversation between Ali and Saïd represents a turning point in the narrative after which Saïd understands that he cannot remain indifferent. When reading *Paris Match,* Saïd discovers the truth about Sarah, elucidating Ali's enigmatic end to their conversation: "[a]u fait, pour Sarah, je sais surtout que tu as tort…" (Thévenet, Baru, and Ledran [1990] 1998, 38). The article of interest is on the Jeanson Network, a French organization which provided financial and administrative support for FLN operatives in France. Saïd recognizes Sarah pictured behind a suspected FLN terrorist whose arrest forms the photograph's central focus (fig 4.1). Saïd's meeting with Ali coupled with the unearthing of Sarah's involvement begins a downward spiral towards the album's denouement. The inclusion of a fictionalized *Paris Match* article serves to create a tangible link between Saïd and the war: the woman he loves is politically active. While Saïd suspects Sarah's involvement before seeing the image, the image indisputably confirms his suspicions. The reference contextualizes Baru and Thévenet's narrative within the history of the French-Algerian War, creating a historical effect within the album.

The album's remaining plates are almost devoid of dialogue and depict Saïd's return to Paris. From this moment forward, history and politics overtake Saïd's life as well as the album. For example, the October 17, 1961 massacre interrupts his final boxing practice. When his coach opens the gym to protestors seeking refuge from the police, Saïd sees Sarah and runs after her. Images of police brutality overshadow the couple's reunion. While his and Sarah's destiny remains unclear (did they die during the massacre?), a mix of news clippings, photographs, and *récitatifs* allude to Saïd and Sarah's political activism in Algeria and elsewhere after 1961. The last news clipping included in *Le Chemin de l'Amérique* pictures Saïd the boxer next to the following caption: "[q]u'est devenu Saïd Boudiaf? On est toujours sans nouvelles du champion d'Europe cinq jours après sa disparition dans la nuit tragique […]" (Thévenet, Baru, and Ledran [1990] 1998, 44). This insert sets the tone for the album's remaining two plates in

which the narrator speculates on what happened to Saïd: "…qu'est devenu Saïd Boudiaf? A-t-il lui aussi péri dans cette horrible nuit d'octobre 61? Son cadavre a-t-il aussi été repêché dans la Seine au petit matin?" (Thévenet, Baru, and Ledran [1990] 1998, 45). In addition, the news clipping resolves issues related to Saïd's desire for political neutrality. If the newspaper's target audience knows Saïd as a boxer, the inclusion of a boxing photograph underscores the protagonist's double identity as a neutral sports figure and as a future Algerian political activist. The headline positioned directly adjacent to the photograph of Saïd the athlete challenges the reader to question not what happened to Saïd but rather to his indifference. The penultimate panel is an illustratively reproduced photograph in which Saïd is shown standing among Algerian leaders (Houari Boumediene and his followers). The reliance on photographs and news clippings near the end of the album removes Saïd from the main narrative structure. He is no longer directly involved with the plot because he is represented indirectly through iconographic source material. Period material establishes a direct line of communication between the album and history as well as creates several layers of narration within the story.

Jacques Ferrandez does not develop the same level of personal connection between period material and his protagonists. If his characters read or discuss newspapers and newsmagazines to stay abreast of the Algerian events, they fail to recognize their friends or family in major news stories. This difference does not suggest that Ferrandez's photographic inserts are narratively less significant. News clippings permeate the inter-panel spaces of four of the five *Carnets* albums. Of the series' second cycle, only *La Guerre fantôme* fails to incorporate news clippings into its pages. This narrative choice implies that before the Battle of Algiers (the historical context of the next album in the sequence), newspapers did not regularly cover the Algerian events. Consequently, characters are not yet aware that a war is being waged around them. The frequency with which clippings appear increases as the series progresses. *Rue de la Bombe*, *La Fille du Djebel Amour*, *Dernière demeure*, and *Terre fatale* include newspaper collages at

significant historical moments such as De Gaulle's visits to Algeria, the barricades week, and the generals' putsch. For each album, Ferrandez selects headlines, articles, and images from several French and Algerian sources like *La Dépêche*, *Paris Match*, *L'Écho d'Alger*, *Le Journal d'Alger*, and *Le Monde*. Due to their spatial arrangement within plates, the textual and iconographic content of clippings fulfills an extra-diegetic purpose. Characters are able to discuss events elliptically, only mentioning important names or places rather than detailed descriptions of events. News clippings can also authenticate album historicity by confirming the occurrence of events directly discussed in dialogue.

Concerning the barricades week in Algiers, headlines provide supplementary information so that readers understand the context of panels positioned on the same plate (fig. 4.2). The plates appearing before and after the plate in question are part of Ferrandez's fictional narrative: first, Octave's family abandons their farm after the death of Octave's father; later, Octave discusses Samia's departure with a friend in Algiers. The intruding "historical" plate in which none of Ferrandez's main characters figure transitions the narrative from the family farm in Mascara to Algiers. Although Octave's mother feels that the capital is the only safe place for her, the following plate demonstrates that the *pied noir* community is holding Algiers hostage. This transitional plate lets Ferrandez fast forward in time and space, from January 4, 1960 in Mascara to February 1, 1960 in Algiers. The spatio-temporal shift coupled with the abandonment of family property prepares the reader for the *pied noir* exodus represented in the final album of the series. The inserted news clippings contextualize Ferrandez's fictional narrative and provide evidence for both the decline of French Algeria and the soured relations between France and the *pied noir* community. In addition, Ferrandez creates panels based on period photographs such as Michel Marcheux's picture of barricaders with their white "Vive Massu" banner. While readers would not necessarily be familiar with Marcheux's specific photograph, similar images were widely circulated in France.

This image along with period headlines does more than achieve a historical effect: it assures readers that Ferrandez's narrative is grounded in historical realism.

The insertion of period source material into the bande dessinée also serves to confirm historical claims made in fictional dialogue. In *Terre fatale*, Octave meets with one of his superiors about the imminence of the generals' putsch: "[l]es généraux Challe, Zeller et Jouhaud rejoints par Salan s'apprêtent à prendre le pouvoir à Alger avec quelques régiments de paras et de la légion… C'est pour demain ou après-demain" (Ferrandez 2009a, 30). Their conversation becomes a debate about what the army should do: follow De Gaulle and abandon Algeria or stay and defend French Algeria. Octave's decision to support the putsch stems from his belief that French and Algerians can peacefully coexist on Algerian soil. While he does not support political extremism and violence, the necessity of protecting the land where his ancestors are buried trumps his political and moral principles. At the end of their conversation, Octave comes to the conclusion that he must side with the *putschistes* because, as he explains, "[j]e suis pied-noir! C'est ma famille! Elle a beaucoup de défauts, mais je n'en ai pas d'autre!..." (Ferrandez 2009a, 32). The plate which follows their conversation is cluttered with news clippings announcing the putsch (fig. 4.3). The news clippings transition the narrative from a conversation about the imminent putsch to the putsch itself. Furthermore, they provide evidence for historical claims made on the preceding plates. Period newspapers mention the generals responsible for the initiative as well as their *pied noir* supporters. As headlines and press photographs encroach upon Ferrandez's fictional narrative, they overwhelm the reader by creating a reduced narrative space on the plate. The haphazard arrangement of newspapers accelerates the narrative. Readers skim headlines and images before returning to the album's fictional components. The proliferation of newspapers along with the resulting visual disorder instills the narrative with a sense of urgency. Consequently, the reader understands the importance of the putsch both historically and within the *Carnets*.

One particular example, taken from *Rue de la Bombe*, demonstrates the effectiveness of Ferrandez's style (fig. 4.4). The plate contains three panels superimposed on a collage of headlines, articles, and photographs. The imagetext inserts appear after Ali asks Samia to become a *porteuse de feu*. Because she frequents European areas of Algiers, he argues, she could place bombs without attracting unwanted attention. Samia, however, refuses to comply. News clippings of the Milk Bar bombing link Samia and Ali's conversation with the next narrative sequence in which European characters discuss recent bombings. The first photographic insert, whose gray tones contrast sharply with the color red (blood) added by Ferrandez, lessens the impact of trauma on the reader. The bande dessinée allows artists to engage with period iconography on a different level than prose alone through the re-appropriation and manipulation of more realistic (photographic) images. Caryn James posits that "[t]he farther the war recedes into the past, the more imagination is needed to wrench it into the present" (1992). And if, as critics have argued, the proliferation of graphic photographs has desensitized viewers to the visual impact of trauma, then the bande dessinée triggers new responses to violent images. Historical distance and the public's desensitization to sensitive material necessitate Ferrandez's imaginative revision of realistic traumatic images. The inclusion of period newspapers in a fictional framework provides readers with a personal vision of events. Bédéistes can depict how newsworthy occurrences such as acts of terrorism might have affected individuals (both perpetrators and victims) whose own personal stories are tightly bound to Franco-Algerian history. Distant historical events pictured in newspapers engage the reader through their transformation into personalized war narratives. The recycling of familiar images also forces the reader to reconsider the dominant representations constituting collective war memories.

Sauveur's reference to "tous ces événements" immediately after the inserted news clippings suggests that the chosen image is an instance of visual metonymy (Ferrandez 2004, 7). The Milk Bar incident stands in for all such tragedies, for "tous ces

événements." The reduction of trauma to one moment, one photograph which is then translated into a drawn representation helps Ferrandez achieve several narrative goals. Firstly, photographs create extra-diegetic levels of narration which run parallel to the album's main narrative structure. Secondly, the bédéiste's reworking of press photographs makes their traumatic images more bearable: chiaroscuro emphasizes movement while obscuring graphic violence. Thirdly, by including news clippings into the narrative framework regardless of the diegetic situation, Ferrandez animates still images. Press and documentary photographs taken in the 1950s and 1960s come to life in the *Carnets*. To the characters, the images are of current events and represent everyday life in Algeria during the war. Moreover, the photograph of the Milk Bar bombing prepares readers for the fictional café bombing which occurs later in the album and during which several main characters are injured. Ferrandez's depiction also questions common assumptions about the FLN. His representation implies that these bombings were acts of revenge, a response to European extremists who bombed the Casbah. Even so, rather than portraying his Algerian characters as merciless criminals, the bédéiste underscores their inner turmoil. Indeed they often question the necessity of violence.

Positioned on the same plate are images which illustrate the arrest of Ben Bella as well as an article published in *L'Écho d'Alger* which contextualizes Octave's observation that "[t]out cela va cesser… maintenant qu'on a coffré Ben Bella et les principaux chefs terroristes en interceptant leur avion" (Ferrandez 2004, 7). If the news clippings contextualize a short and relatively obscure conversation for readers, then the panels reciprocally aid in creating a link between the three sets of clippings illustrating the Milk Bar bombings, Ben Bella's arrest, and Nasser's involvement.[2] Furthermore, the mélange of visual and verbal elements of the individual clippings creates several layers of

[2] Gamal Abdel Nasser was the president of Egypt from 1956 until 1970. He supported the pan-Arab and anti-colonial movements in Algeria.

meaning within the plate. Using the second set of clippings relative to Ben Bella's arrest, the reader must derive meaning from five main elements: the photograph of an airplane, a partial headline, one photograph of a group of men with a gendarme, one photograph of a man against a wall, and the bande dessinée panel showing a close-up of Octave. Viewed independently, the elements are devoid of meaning with respect to one another (in particular the airplane picture which introduces this grouping) and, more importantly, with respect to album content. In addition, the recycling of newspaper headlines and photographs implicates French readers who are familiar with the events of the French-Algerian War as well as with how these events have been "officially" represented in the press and in textbooks. Newspaper excerpts provide narrative cohesion while successfully inserting Ferrandez's story into France's collective memory of the war.

Rarely do new clippings constitute a major element of the *Carnets*' central plot. When they do (for example when a character is reading a newspaper), they quickly shift from a diegetic level (e.g. recipients of a character's actions) to an extra-diegetic level (e.g. they provide background information exterior to a character's thoughts and actions). For instance, again in *Rue de la Bombe*, Sauveur informs Octave that there has been another bombing. Before he can answer Octave's questions about the incident, Marianne shows Octave the specifics outlined in a newspaper article. The panel progresses from a diegetic situation (the discussion between Sauveur, Octave, and Marianne) to an extra-diegetic one (a newspaper clipping about the rue Michelet bombing). Ferrandez's organization of panels, clippings, and other inserts on plates alerts the reader to shifts in diegesis: news clippings and similar inserts are almost entirely relegated to interstitial spaces. Regarding narrative structure, this particular usage and placement of news clippings allows Ferrandez to say and show more than normally possible due to the limited number of bande dessinée plates. For editorial reasons, choices must be made

regarding album content.[3] The use of press material contextualizes an album's narrative so that bédéistes can effectively situate their fictional stories within French or Algerian national history. Similar to other corpus bédéistes, Ferrandez breathes life into archived documents, challenging readers to view them in new contexts.

As the above discussion demonstrates, the inclusion of news clippings, press photographs, and documentary images are examples of diegetic bolstering. The addition of these sources contextualizes fictional conversations and provides necessary background information for the reader. The recycling of familiar news items implicates contemporary readers (namely French readers) whose memory of the French-Algerian War would have been partially constituted by the same documentary and press images recycled in the albums studied here. Bédéistes do not limit their source material to photography and historical documentation. Several corpus albums such as the *Carnets* and *D'Algérie* include examples of television and radio broadcasts dating back to the war. The inclusion of this additional audiovisual material within the bande dessinée serves a similar purpose: to authenticate an album's historical vision as well as to contextualize fictional narratives within French national history. Furthermore, the reproduction of television stills and radio broadcasts has implications for an album's visual aesthetics and narrative voice. Jacques Ferrandez, for example, reproduces television broadcasts of presidential addresses and news reports (e.g. about the nationalization of the Suez Canal). Stills are blue-toned and narrated using *récitatifs* rather than speech balloons. These panels are narrated by historical figures such as De Gaulle or by token journalists instead of an omniscient narrator. They contrast visually with surrounding panels and are easily positioned inside or outside the main narrative structure. *Dernière demeure* opens with

[3] Farid Boudjellal's short, "Amour d'Alger," uses newspapers to a similar end. Due to the short's greatly reduced narrative space, Boudjellal's insertion of a newspaper clipping in the first panel quickly contextualizes the short's time, place, and historical context for the reader.

De Gaulle's televised appeal to the FLN offering "la paix des braves" broadcast on October 23, 1958 (fig. 4.5). This representation highlights notable moments of the presidential address. The rather lengthy speech is reduced to five succinct panels. Television stills soon give way, however, to more typical bande dessinée panels in which characters are drawn watching De Gaulle's speech on a small television screen. Ferrandez's inclusion of several television broadcasts throughout the series not only creates a unique visual dynamic, it stresses the geographical distance separating French Algeria from metropolitan France where decisions about the future of French Algeria were made. If De Gaulle is shown addressing crowds in Algeria earlier in the series, his presence is reduced to televised addresses in the remaining albums. While Ferrandez's representation mirrors history, it emphasizes the growing divide between France and French Algeria, resulting in Algerian independence and France's subsequent abandonment of the *pied noir* and *harki* populations.

Several bande dessinée characters read news articles in real time because the narrative chronologies of their respective albums coincide with the war years. By reading the news, characters discover more about themselves and their situation.[4] In other albums, such as David B.'s *Babel 2*, the war is part of an unfamiliar past. Consequently, news clippings aid protagonists in their quest for knowledge and understanding. *Babel 2*'s opening panel shows the main character (the bédéiste as a child) and his brother leafing through old issues of *Paris Match*, two of which are on the French-Algerian War. The album is not specifically about this war. Instead it describes the folly of war, human cruelty, and the absurdity of the human condition. As the album progresses, the war becomes a metaphor for illness: David B.'s brother suffers from epilepsy. What unites the two brothers is their obsession with history and war. After drawing parallels between the

[4] In addition to *Le Chemin de l'Amérique*, the *Carnets*, and "Amour d'Alger," see *Algérie française!* and *Tahya El-Djazaïr*.

Papuan War and his brother's battle with disease, the protagonist realizes that he too grew up in a country at war: "[j]'avais trois ans en 1962 lors du cessez-le-feu en Algérie et je n'en ai aucun souvenir" (B. 2006, 56). He attributes his gap in memory to France's official amnesia concerning the war, fact which made it difficult for him to find adequate documentation for his research. In addition, images of other wars eclipsed the memory of decolonization in the press of David B.'s youth, but not in everyday conversation. A three-panel sequence portrays a family dinner in which certain words such as "mort," "djebel," and "torture" are elliptically associated with "Algérie" (B. 2006, 57). The *récitatif* framing this sequence (narrated by the protagonist as an adult) contextualizes snatches of conversation that the protagonist as a child was unable to process. These words later fuel the protagonist's research in press archives. Yet there are never enough images to quench the protagonist's thirst for information. According to the protagonist,

> [a]près 1962 il n'y en avait plus d'écho ni de trace. Au moment ou [*sic*] je commençais à ouvrir les yeux sur le monde je n'avais pas d'images de ce conflit. […] L'Algérie était le fantôme des conversations. Une histoire mystérieuse. Une histoire qu'il fallait surprendre. (B. 2006, 57)

Press photographs function simultaneously in David B.'s narrative as sources of information and of frustration.

Unable to satisfy his curiosity, the child protagonist takes an imaginary journey in time and space allowing him to "experience" the French-Algerian War as a young French soldier. Contrary to the album's preceding plates, the absence of color dominates the panel sequence in which the protagonist visualizes the war. And in contrast to the simulated objective realism of reproduced press photographs, the artist relies on visual expressionism similar to Edvard Munch's paintings to depict the arrival of young, naïve soldiers in 1950s' Algeria. This stylistic choice allows David B. to emphasize the soldiers' fear of the unknown, the deplorable conditions of their deployment, and their first impressions of the Algerian landscape as well as the bédéiste's own sensibility to his subject. Soldiers are reduced to indistinguishable skeletons sleeping in striped chairs

contained within the ship's hold. In this way, David B. establishes a visual parallel between Holocaust photographs such as those taken by Margaret Bourke-White in which the survivors of concentration camps are pictured in their striped uniforms and his own representation of French soldiers being sent to war or, as their emaciated figures imply, to a certain death. Once on land, soldiers struggling to locate and then carry their duffle bags are quickly herded onto trains. The seemingly lost recruits are greeted by barking officers ordering them to grab their belongings and to board the waiting trains. The scene is rendered chaotic through multiple close-ups which crowd soldiers within panels. In addition, the officers' jagged-edged speech balloons (a bande dessinée device typically reserved for radio, television, and telephone communication) dominate the space of these panels creating a tense narrative moment again reminiscent of Holocaust imagery. Rather than focusing on significant historical events (e.g. famous battles, speeches, the signing of treaties), David B. offers his readers an overtly antiwar narrative throughout which young dehumanized Frenchmen become disposable elements of the French nation.

Finally, a word on the reproduction of documentary photographs in Algerian albums. The Algerian bande dessinée exploits the same iconography present in Algerian history textbooks used in secondary schools. Contrary to France where editors are granted the freedom to develop how a clearly defined history is represented (e.g. through the choice of textual and iconographic inserts as well as the amount of emphasis placed on particular events),[5] in Algeria there is only one history textbook published for every grade. The *Institut pédagogique national* (IPN) which is controlled by the Algerian Ministry of Education publishes these schoolbooks. In France, schools can choose

[5] By a "clearly defined history," I am alluding to the state-mandated history curriculum. The latest significant change occurred in 1989 when French history was organized around three major axes: the development of the modern world, contemporary history, and France since 1945. This division allows for more emphasis to be placed on decolonization (Manceron and Remaoun 1993, 240).

between a dozen different textbooks for each level (Manceron and Remaoun 1993, 225-6). Despite problems regarding how Algerian textbooks represent the war (see Chapters 1 and 2), Gilles Manceron and Hassan Remaoun underline the importance that these same texts attribute to war iconography. The textbook used during the fifth year of school,[6] for example, contains seventy photographs and other drawings, including photographs of the sixteen most famous martyrs of the revolution. Among those pictured are Larbi Ben M'Hidi, Abderahmane Taleb, and Amirouche. Manceron and Remaoun add that the images tend to be graphic, exposing children to scenes of torture, disfigured corpses, and the harsh realities of war (1993, 227). The textbooks used in the sixth and ninth years reproduce several images used in the fifth-year textbook so that children become familiar with and learn to associate certain photographs with the revolution.

As a pedagogical tool, the bande dessinée is no different—especially in a country plagued by relatively low literacy rates. Algerian war bandes dessinées rely heavily on photographic documentation to authenticate their historical narratives. Mustapha Tenani's album *De nos montagnes* represents a striking example due to its exploitation of photographic archives as well as its insertion of additional historical and poetic textual sources. The first segment of this album consists of a four-page biography of Mohamed Larbi Ben M'Hidi which focuses on the role he played during the Battle of Algiers. Five uncaptioned photographs accompany this textual insert. While I have been unable to consult an Algerian history textbook, I would argue that the missing captions point to the omnipresence of these photographs in Algerian history classes. As iconic images of the

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[6] The Algerian school system is divided into three levels. The first is roughly equivalent to the American elementary and middle schools and is known as the first through ninth *années fondamentales* or AF, the second includes three years (the first through third *années secondaires* or AS), and the third designates higher (university) education (Manceron and Remaoun 1993, 226). It is interesting to note that the Algerian educational system closely resembles the French system from which it originated. French schools include nine years of elementary (*école primaire*) and middle school (*collège*) education and three years of high school or *lycée* education.

revolution and of its heroes, these images render the inclusion of a verbal description unnecessary and redundant. One could argue that photographs illustrate biographical inserts. However, image and text are not always (or immediately) congruent. Photographs appear to be general (perhaps iconic) images of the revolution whereas texts are about specific national heroes. Two more biographies follow Ben M'Hidi's and are inserted at irregular intervals throughout the album: that of Amirouche Badji Mokhtar (five pages with six photographs) and that of Abderahmane Taleb (three and a half pages with four photographs). Tenani's *Les Hommes du djebel* includes similar images, this time inserted at the beginning of bande dessinée episodes. In both albums, photographs serve to contextualize Tenani's albums within Algerian metanarratives in addition to providing visual models for his illustrations.

If Algerian schoolchildren are exposed to graphic images of violence and war, French schoolchildren generally are not.[7] The majority of textbook images which depict decolonization and the French-Algerian War focus on De Gaulle, demonstrations orchestrated by Algeria's European population, or the *pied noir* exodus. However, French bédéistes often represent violence and taboo topics in their albums such as mutilation, torture, rape, summary executions, and the military's scorched-earth policy. Extreme violence (not death) is relatively absent from Algerian bandes dessinées. It is my contention that one of the primary objectives of Algerian albums with their reproduction of martyr photographs is to emphasize the bravery and self-sacrifice of national heroes. Conversely, French albums recycle violent images so as to unearth dark periods of France's national past, periods which have yet to securely anchor themselves in collective memory such as the October 17, 1961 massacre in Paris reenacted in *D'Algérie, Terre*

[7] Textbooks published by Hatier and Hachette in 2008 each include one violent image showing Algerian corpses in the Casbah during the Battle of Algiers (Hatier) and in Paris after the October 17, 1961 massacre (Hachette).

fatale, and *Le Chemin de l'Amérique*. The reason motivating the inclusion of violent images in French albums is not to engage in photojournalistic sensationalism, but rather to force readers to recognize historical omissions and to question common visual representations of the war. While drawn representations of explicitly violent acts are easier to endure, they do not efface the horrors depicted by desensitizing viewers to the pain of others. According to Susan Sontag, "[t]he hunt for more dramatic […] images drives the photographic enterprise, and is part of the normality of a culture in which shock has become a leading stimulus of consumption and source of value" (2003, 23). French bandes dessinées propose a solution to contemporary society's desire to consume atrocity photographs whilst tastefully reminding readers that the French-Algerian War was indeed atrocious.

Picturing the Family: The Bande Dessinée and Postmemory

Despite the documentary nature of several corpus albums, they remain works of fiction to varying degrees. The fictionalization of historical material partly responds to demands of the bande dessinée market in which straight pedagogical albums rarely fare well in terms of sales (Ostermann 2009). The fictionalization of family and personal histories also responds to the demands of postmemorial narratives. According to Marianne Hirsch,

> [p]ostmemory is distinguished from memory by generational distance and from history by deep personal connection. Postmemory is a powerful and very particular form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through an imaginative investment and creation. (1997, 22)

Hirsch's theorization of postmemory originated from her study of second-generation Holocaust literature in which family photographs figure prominently. One example cited in her analysis is Art Spiegelman's comic book series *Maus*. She posits that Spiegelman's sporadic use of photography (either as true or drawn reproductions) is significant because it calls attention to Spiegelman's fragmented memory of his parents' past and of an event

neither he nor his readers can fully assimilate (Hirsch 1997, 40). Furthermore, the act of drawing photographs rather than reprinting them allows Spiegelman to translate his parents' as well as his own memories before transmitting them to readers. As a result, *Maus* transmits a memory and history of the Holocaust through several layers of mediation.

Similar to Spiegelman's *Maus*, several corpus albums create meaning through the inclusion of different types of material evidence such as photographic images, diaries, and personal correspondence. This diversity, in addition to the medium's specific narrative form, produces multilayered texts which are well suited to communicate the war's complexities. The reproduction or creation of personal sources in war bandes dessinées suggests that bédéistes wish to be seen as plausible historical witnesses. The inclusion of such sources personalizes their representation of history. This level of personalization means that, due to family or personal experiences, bédéistes have vested interest in their representation. While their vision has the potential to forge or destroy ties to existent memory communities, it helps bédéistes understand their family history within the context of the French-Algerian War. Although Jacques Ferrandez's personal relationship to French Algeria and the *pied noir* community stimulated his research, conservative members of this same community have condemned him for pillaging France's military and colonial iconography and for sullying France's civilizing mission in Algeria. For one contributor to *Présent*, a Christian and nationalist French newspaper, Ferrandez is a "salopard" and a "renégat" with respect to France and the *pied noir* community (D'Elbe 1987, 4). If Ferrandez creates an anti-colonialist narrative, he still embraces Camus's utopian vision of French Algeria in the face of the inevitable: war and decolonization. The mixture of public and personal sources in the bande dessinée endeavors to answer the question posed by Morvandiau in *D'Algérie*: "[c]omment confronter nostalgie, souvenirs, fantasmes de l'enfance aux réalités et à l'histoire de ces trois départements français qui n'existent plus?" (2007).

In an attempt to answer his own question, Morvandiau creates, quite arguably, the best example of a postmemorial narrative relative to other corpus albums. While bédéistes such as Anne Sibran certainly establish a personal connection between the history of the French-Algerian War and family history, Morvandiau recycles colonial iconography, press clippings, and personal photographs in order to insert his family's history into French metanarratives. His narrative results in the intersection of public and private history, of national history and *pied noir* memory. Contrary to Sibran's album in which family history takes precedence over official representations of the war, Morvandiau's family initiates his album but later fades into the background. Before his narrative begins, the reader is confronted with a schematic representation of his family tree in which several photographs are missing (fig. 4.6). Names and birthdates are sometimes supplied without images and in other instances anonymous images are included (e.g. pictures without names). His family tree is unbalanced: more information is provided for his father's side than for his mother's. Furthermore, while Morvandiau's style lacks Ferrandez's realism and attention to detail, how he represents family members varies from person to person. Gabriel, the bédéiste's great-uncle, is highly stylized and "cartoony" whereas his great-great-grandparents are rendered more realistically. Interestingly, more immediate family members such as his brothers and sisters are visually absent. With the inclusion of a pictorial history of Morvandiau's family marked by its many lacunae the reader first assumes that the album is deeply personal and whose purpose is to retrace the bédéiste's family history in order to arrive at a better understanding of the Self.

The first narrative sequence depicting his great-uncle's birthday celebration reinforces Morvandiau's quest for self-understanding. If Gabriel's speech is largely incoherent due to his inebriated state and frequent usage of the local patois, two panels grab the reader's and the bédéiste's attention (presumably Morvandiau is recreating a scene in which he was present and that he deems foundational for his narrative). In these

panels, Gabriel emphasizes that his father was a *pied noir*. Contrary to surrounding panels invaded almost entirely by loquacious speech balloons, Gabriel's speech is reduced here to "pied-noir?" and "pied-noir mon père?" (Morvandiau 2007). By focusing on the term "*pied noir*" with its accompanying question mark, the bédéiste references his own questions regarding his family heritage.

The next narrative sequence takes him back to a childhood memory when his family travelled to Algeria on vacation. Although the trip provokes feelings of nostalgia for his parents who were born in Algeria, the memory helps Morvandiau explain to his readers why he decided to undertake his bande dessinée project. In fact several passages from the first half of the album are quite personal. For example, Morvandiau discusses his uncle's assassination in Tizi-Ouzou by members of the *Groupe islamique armé* (GIA) and later his father's failed suicide attempt in Rennes. The fact that Gabriel is celebrating his eighty-first birthday in addition to his uncle's death and his father's near-death experience create an impending sense of loss with respect to family history. When those who directly experienced French Algeria and the war are gone, who will tell their stories, and perhaps more importantly who will tell him the story of French Algeria?

By reproducing personal photographs, postcards, and news clippings in his own graphic style, Morvandiau engages with source material so as to connect with both personal and national history. His rendition of iconographic sources allows him to translate the past. His graphic style becomes the lens through which he views the world around him. This explains why distant relatives are depicted more realistically than more immediate family members. Morvandiau's caricatured portrayal of his great uncle, for instance, allows the bédéiste to communicate his uncle's colorful personality to his readers. Yet as the narrative progresses, his family history and thus his family become less important than the history of French Algeria that he retraces from colonization to Algerian independence. While the reasons for this shift in narrative focus are unclear, Morvandiau's fragmented visual representation of both personal and national history (e.g.

panel divisions often cut people or landscapes into fragments rather than allowing them to dominate a single panel) suggests that his understanding of both are incomplete. In contrast to Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, *D'Algérie* does not document parental testimony. The failure of intergenerational dialogue in Morvandiau's narrative pushes him to privilege other sources of information such as newspapers, postcards, television broadcasts, and critical histories. This is not the case in Sibran's narrative which is derived from her father's stories of Algeria. Consequently, Morvandiau opts for a more historical approach in comparison to Sibran's phantasmagoric representation nourished by her father's nostalgia for French Algeria. Because *D'Algérie* does not represent a linear narrative (Morvandiau constantly shifts his narrative in both time and space), Morvandiau does not attain the same level of closure as Sibran at the end of her narrative. The final panel of *D'Algérie*, rather than looking towards the future, returns to the past when Morvandiau first realized his difference with respect to his French classmates. The narrative ends with a rhetorical question; "[t]'es quoi quand tu viens d'Algérie?" (Morvandiau 2007). The bédéiste's decision to favor reality and history over nostalgia, memories, and childhood fantasies did not grant him access to a heightened sense of self as part of French national history. This implies that in order to reach a better understanding of trauma, one must examine the intersection of, not the discrepancies between, memory and history.

Although personal sources are not always exploited to create a postmemorial narrative, the addition of personal material traces such as family photographs, diary excerpts, and letters[8] suggests that bédéistes cannot escape the war's deeply personal nature which is based on the collective experiences of different communities such as the *harkis*, *pieds noirs*, French soldiers, mujahidin, and *beurs*. Susan Sontag argues that

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[8] Personal sources can be fictional additions. For example, *Le Combat ordinaire* is a fictional account organized around the discovery of a fictional photograph of Marco's father taken during his military service in Algeria.

"[t]he memory of war […] is mostly local" (2003, 35). Depending on with whom the bédéiste identifies, personal sources serve to further affiliate him or her with that community. Algerian bédéistes (or narrators) include photographs of mujahidin; *pieds noirs* feature family photographs taken in Algeria before the war; French soldiers insert regiment photographs taken during the war; *beurs* use family photographs highlighting their cultural hybridism. The most common image reproduced in corpus albums is, however, the family photograph. Family photography often underscores the loss of tradition and even home for those who experienced the war. The inclusion of photographs taken before the end of the war emphasizes independence as a defining moment in the lives of those involved. Antebellum images can therefore perpetuate feelings of nostalgia. They can provide a safe haven from the present or document the end of an era. Grief over the loss of French Algeria as an ideological space in which individual and community identities have been constructed leads these individuals and communities to engage in reparative measures (nostalgia) so as to reconstitute their now disrupted identity. For this reason, it is not uncommon for grief and nostalgia to coincide in war narratives. One example is *Là-bas* in which Anne Sibran recreates French Algeria as an idealized space despite the war and the exploitative nature of colonization so that her father may salvage his *pied noir* identity. In war bandes dessinées whose personal tone characterizes them as narratives of loss, nostalgia, or the idealized feelings one associates with a bygone era or space, often vacillates with grief.

Proof of France's continued grief over the loss of Algeria can be found in the ongoing and highly publicized debate over how to teach colonization and the French-Algerian War in French secondary schools. Recent legislative debates in the National Assembly regarding the revision of textbooks atone to this. In 2005, lawmakers recommended that French publishers of high school textbooks recognize the positive role that France played in its overseas colonies. Public outcry led President Chirac to repeal the law nearly one year later. In the face of such controversies, education has long

remained a pillar of the French Republic and represents an important vector of memory transmission. Dominique Borne, who developed the 1989 history program for students in *terminale* (the last year of high school) and who co-chaired the committee responsible for the 1998 curriculum, likens school history programs to "[the national photo album] that binds together a community like the family album gives depth to families" (qtd. in McCormack 2006, 136). Yet as Marianne Hirsch ascertains, family photographs have themselves become objects of public scrutiny at the hands of writers, artists, filmmakers, and cultural critics. Using family photography in their own work, they have moved beyond the family's conventional surface and have exposed the hidden stories of antagonistic family relations: "the passions and rivalries, the tensions, anxieties, and problems that have, for the most part, remained on the edges or outside the family album" (Hirsch 1997, 7). In light of this observation, Borne's analogy proves accurate. After all photographic processing is nothing more than the positive development of a negative image after exposure. Only upon close examination of an Ideological State Apparatus's "photo album" can one convert this instrument of ideology into a method of "questioning, resistance, and contestation" (Hirsch 1997, 7).

Farid Boudjellal's inclusion of family photographs in *Jambon-Beur* raises questions concerning Charlotte-Badia's family as well as the constitution of her personal identity. In one particular instance, the bédéiste narrates Patricia and Mahmoud's wedding using captioned "photos" rather than narrated panels. Although Charlotte-Badia is not yet born, her Franco-Algerian identity is clearly articulated in these photographs replete with cultural misunderstandings and superficial politeness. For example, her European relatives appear shocked by an Arab woman's ululations (fig. 4.7); Patricia's and Mahmoud's parents politely shake hands despite their racial prejudices (fig. 4.8). As the ensuing narrative demonstrates, their differences stem from the French-Algerian War. Patricia's father died in combat against Algerians whereas Mahmoud's father was tortured by the French. Including a family photo album early in *Jambon-Beur* forces

readers to question the importance of family relationships in the construction of postcolonial subjectivity. Hirsch maintains that "photographs can more easily show us what we wish our family to be, and therefore what, most frequently it is not" (1997, 8). Charlotte-Badia would not have split into two distinct, antithetical personalities if her extended family had not been so divided despite the artificial family unity projected in Patricia and Mahmoud's wedding album. Once the conflict is resolved (e.g. when Charlotte-Badia's grandparents succeed in discussing how the war affected them personally), Charlotte and Badia come together as Charlotte-Badia. The girls' reunification symbolizes their acceptance of their cultural hybridism: Charlotte cannot exist independently of Badia and vice versa.

Jambon-Beur closes with a second family photo album intended to remind Charlotte-Badia and children like her of their rich cultural heritage. Gazing at the family tree, Mahmoud realizes that his and Patricia's ancestors have been in opposition since they first came into contact with each other. Although they are left wondering about the future of their family's newfound happiness, they remain optimistic that both sides have begun to turn this difficult page of their shared histories. Charlotte-Badia, whose photograph forms the central focus of the final double plate, symbolizes the fusion of two families, of two cultures, and of two spaces. The family tree includes images of Europeans and Arabs and is planted between a mosque located in a desert oasis and a provincial church in a lush valley. While family trees are a common (Western) representation of ancestry, Boudjellal's depiction recalls Deleuze and Guattari's conception of the rhizome as a model for cross-cultural identity.[9] The rhizome contrasts with arboreal roots in that they spread out horizontally without establishing a vertical hierarchy. I would argue, however, that Boudjellal's family tree does not establish a

[9] See the second volume of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's *Capitalisme et schizophrénie*, entitled *Mille plateaux* for their theoretical discussion of the rhizome.

vertical hierarchy with respect to Charlotte-Badia's identity, but rather retraces her roots back to historically antagonistic religious and cultural categories. As the last individual pictured on the tree trunk, Charlotte-Badia's roots spread out around her, receiving sustenance from both cultures. As her parents gaze lovingly at a photograph of their only child, the reader realizes that Charlotte-Badia's identity has been (re)constituted more through parental love and acceptance of her individuality than through an awareness of her cultural hybridism.

Patricia Holland observes that the act of taking and safeguarding family pictures "is an act of faith in the future" (1991, 1). Leafing through family photo albums allows us to recognize the past and to imagine continuity with both the present and the future, as demonstrated in the final plates of Boudjellal's narrative. The more time distances us from these images, the more we interpret our past through the lens of history. When trauma enters into the equation, family photo albums testify to the solidity and cohesion of family relations when confronted with trauma. Viewed from this perspective, the importance of family photographs in corpus albums creates personal fantasies about the French-Algerian War in which a sense of identity and community predominates. War bandes dessinées often incorporate photography to define a deep familial connection to place (French Algeria) and time (before the war). If loss and mourning figure prominently in French narratives, it is not due to the individuals pictured, but rather to what they represent. In addition, Holland stresses that the need to belong to or identify with a community contends with conflicts within the family (1991, 1). Family photographs in the bande dessinée can therefore symbolize schisms in family relations which were caused by the war and which seem too great to overcome.

Among the innumerable crimes committed against humanity during the war were torture, summary executions, and the razing of entire villages. Even though war criminals were granted general amnesties beginning in 1962, not everyone was able to forgive and forget. For children of combatants, the truth was even more difficult to swallow: how

could their parents, who loved and cared for them, commit unspeakable atrocities in times of war? To what extent does parental identity define children?[10] When Marco in *Le Combat ordinaire* discovers a photograph of his father taken during his military service in Algeria in 1958 (fig. 4.9), he realizes just how little he knows about his father's life prior to his own birth. His father never spoke to him about Algeria because, according to his father, "il n'y a rien à en dire" (Larcenet and Larcenet [2003] 2008, 18). Marco later finds the same photograph in his neighbor's home. The neighbor, standing next to Marco's father in the picture, turns out to be Lieutenant Gilbert Mesribes who unscrupulously tortured Algerian prisoners during the war. Marco's discovery of Mesribes's wartime activities is less significant than his association with Marco's father. Did Marco's father participate in strong-arm interrogations? If Marco expresses his disgust with Mesribes's apparent apathy regarding his crimes, his anger can be interpreted as an emotional transference. Due to his inability and perhaps even unwillingness to question his father about the war (his father suffers from Alzheimer's disease and later commits suicide), Marco redirects his anger towards a new object, towards this paternal surrogate. Consequently, Mesribes's questions strike a personal nerve with the protagonist: "[c]ontre qui êtes-vous en colère? Contre moi parce que je ne suis pas tel que vous le vouliez, ou contre vous pour ne l'avoir pas vu?" (Larcenet and Larcenet [2003] 2008, 51). Is Marco angry with his father because he did not live up to his filial expectations, or is he angry with himself for not having recognized his father as a *bourreau*?

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[10] At the beginning of the *Le Combat ordinaire*, Marco is a celebrated war photographer. His inability to continue working in this field suggests that he can no longer remain a passive witness to death and destruction. The reader later discovers similarities between Marco (as a photographer unable to stop the wars he documents) and his father (as an obedient soldier in 1950s' Algeria).

Following his father's suicide, Marco's mother gives him several photographs along with his father's diary. If the diary fails to elucidate why his father hung himself, it also falls short of answering Marco's questions concerning the role his father played during the war. After ending his friendship with Mesribes earlier in the series on account of his past, Marco decides to pay him one last visit in *Ce qui est précieux*. Mesribes is the only person who knows the truth about his father the soldier. When questioned, Mesribes contextualizes his own war narrative within French national history to justify his use of torture: "il était impensable pour la France de perdre Alger. Massu utilisa alors tous les moyens à sa disposition…" (Larcenet and Larcenet [2006] 2007, 54). He explains that even if Marco's father did not actively participate in their muscled interrogations permitted under Massu, he did so passively through his quiet acceptance and continued obedience to orders. Despite the disclosure of the military's use of torture in the press, the majority of French citizens, including Marco's father, "a préféré se taire… par lâcheté, indifférence ou pour éviter une guerre civile en métropole" (Larcenet and Larcenet [2006] 2007, 56). For Mesribes, a soldier's silence signified his complicity. After capturing a prisoner attempting to escape, his father was no longer able to cope with his moral burden. Recognizing that Marco's father had reached a breaking point, Mesribes transferred him to an administration position in Algiers for the remainder of his tour of duty. The irony is that because Marco's father brought an escaping prisoner back to the military camp (knowing that he would be subjected to torture while in custody), he was awarded a medal of honor.

Although Mesribes claims to have disliked Marco's father due to his weak character and lack of military experience, the fact that he has kept a framed photograph of himself with Marco's father is revealing. The photograph not only proves that Mesribes and Marco's father knew each other, it shows Marco's father as a decorated soldier, documenting Mesribes's narrative. The photograph, now contextualized, explains why Marco's father spoke about neither the war nor his medal often a source of pride for

veterans. When Marco first encounters the photograph, he asks his father about the medal. His father replies: “tout le monde a été plus ou moins décoré durant cette guerre… les médailles, ça coûte pas bien cher au contribuable et ça donne au soldat la sensation d’être important” (Larcenet and Larcenet [2003] 2008, 18). His medal of honor did not serve this purpose. Instead it became a reminder of his passive participation in the war’s atrocities. Unsurprisingly, the medal is not among his father’s belongings that Marco inherits after his death. While it remains unclear as to why Mesribes has kept the picture (does it remind him of the one individual he was able to rescue?), it is clear that his criminal past haunts him. When Marco asks Mesribes how he can live with himself, he replies: “[q]uand on ne meurt pas, il faut bien se résoudre à vivre…” (Larcenet and Larcenet [2006] 2007, 59). As Marco walks away, Mesribes despairingly holds his head in his hands suggesting that he struggles daily with his resolve to continue living. This image contrasts sharply with the 1958 photograph of two seemingly proud men, demonstrating that Mesribes and presumably Marco’s father have been radically altered by their war experiences.

Mussat uses photography to stress a daughter’s shame for her *harki* father in his bande dessinée short, “L’Étoffe des lâches.” Yet contrary to Larcenet’s album, the photograph does not result in the acceptance of the past or conflict resolution between generations. When the unnamed protagonist meets Salah, a fifty-something Algerian living in France, he learns about his life as a *harki* soldier during the war. Though Salah takes pride in his military service (possibly due to the apparent meaninglessness of his present situation), his daughter Léa refuses to speak to him: “[m]aintenant, elle dit qu’elle veut plus me voir. Je crois qu’elle a honte de son père. Elle veut plus entendre le vieil Algérien qui radote” (Mussat 1996, 43). Mussat and Larcenet use family snapshots to accentuate a relational distance between child and parent. Born after the war, Marco and Léa are unable to comprehend their fathers’ participation in the war’s atrocities. Even so Larcenet’s and Mussat’s presentations are different: Marco must come to terms with

something his father chose not to reveal; Salah must come to terms with his daughter's disapproval of something he did reveal. Since Léa is not an active character in Mussat's narrative, her photograph emblematizes both her absence and the impossibility of reconciliation.

Léa's photograph with its implicit symbolism reflects an important aspect of *harki* identity. Salah's estranged relationship with his daughter is somewhat typical of the *harki* community in which children initially fail to understand their fathers' choices. Dalila Kerchouche, for example, admits in *Mon père, ce harki* that she was once ashamed of her father for having betrayed Algeria: "[j]'ai longtemps cru que mon père était un traître. Harki, pour moi, valait la pire des infamies" (2003, 24). Photographs of Kerchouche's father and Léa prompt narratives which define the *harki*'s unfortunate predicament and which dispel myths of the *harki* as a merciless collaborator.[11] The reader gains sympathy for the *harki* whose family and country (France) have forsaken them. Mussat, for instance, portrays Salah as an individual whose identity and self worth are defined by his unwavering loyalty to the French Republic and whose situation arouses pity in the reader. Despite his past heroism, Salah has become a forgotten veteran who yearns to share his experiences with anyone who will listen. Salah's photograph of Léa is significant because it accentuates her absence as a character from the narrative. Photography renders a person's absence more palpable.

Personal correspondence has the same effect. Contrary to personal photographs, letters give voice to characters not physically present, allowing them to engage with the narrative in ways unavailable to silenced, photographed characters. Because Salah has a photograph of his daughter in his wallet rather than a letter, the reader understands that

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[11] See, for example, Slim's "Moustache et les Belgacem," Farid Boudjellal and Denis Merezette's "Vengeance Harkie," and Benattou Masmoudi's *Le Village oublié* in which the *harki* is depicted negatively.

she has ceased all communication with him. The reader can only learn about her indirectly through Salah's words. Salah's conversation with the main protagonist can therefore be interpreted as a missed encounter with his estranged daughter much like Marco's conversation with Mesribes can be interpreted as a missed encounter between father and son. Salah explains his past to the protagonist as he might have to Léa. Although the protagonist's compassion does not remedy Salah's situation, it allows the *harki* to tell his story.

In addition to *harki* purges in Algeria and the sequestration of *harkis* in French internment camps, another outcome of the French-Algerian War was the mass exodus of *pieds noirs*. As French citizens, *pieds noirs* had few options for settlement. Most "returned" to mainland France, a space few had actually visited prior to the 1960s. Despite shared citizenship, a feeling of foreignness distanced *pieds noirs* from their French compatriots. Todd Shepard argues that, within certain political circles, the French believed *pieds noirs* were incapable of integrating French society and even risked upsetting French unity and peace. Once the certainty of a mass exodus was confirmed in 1962, the French press became fixated on welcoming the newly displaced population and on distilling rumors that all *pieds noirs* were OAS sympathizers. Newsmagazines such as *Paris Match* and *France Observateur* began urging readers to welcome repatriates while emphasizing that France's enemies (the OAS) would be persecuted. In order to quell French fears concerning the appearance and behavior of *pied noir* families as well as the expected population boom, news venues recycled post-1945 baby boom discourse which underscored the need for more manpower and consumers (Shepard 2006, 160). However, as Shepard explains, "[t]o be male and *pied-noir* […] was enough to be associated with fascist terror" (2006, 161). Hence the French government's pro-family policy. *Pieds noirs* were welcome in France, but only as heads of family in order to separate *pieds noirs* from OAS activists. While Marianne Hirsch's study of family photography with respect to postmemory provides one justification for the inclusion of family photographs in second-

generation literatures, Todd Shepard's analysis raises interesting questions regarding second-generation *pied noir* literature.

Hirsch's conception of postmemory relies on material traces which link an individual to a personalized past. Yet representations of the *pied noir* family in the 1960s continue to dictate how *pied noir* bédéistes imagine their own families today. In the bande dessinée, where photographs are drawn more frequently than they are reproduced, bédéistes exercise representational agency with respect to the family unit. They may faithfully reproduce a family portrait or they may elaborate certain details whilst downplaying others. As a result, bédéistes can perpetuate the myth of the family as stable and coherent even when this representation contradicts reality. In *Là-bas*, for example, there is a drawn photograph of Jeanne with her father (fig. 4.10). The image depicts a blissful vacation memory shared between father and daughter. The rest of the album, however, explores their troubled relationship stemming from Jeanne's incapacity to understand her father's sense of loss and disorientation in metropolitan France. The photograph, which appears twice in the album—as an active scene and as a still photograph—, haunts Jeanne as she tries to remember what happened to the happy, carefree man pictured with her. The photograph creates a dominant fiction with respect to the family, one in which Alain Mercadal fulfills the role of husband, father, and provider rather than the emasculated character he has become. By juxtaposing the photographed idealized father with the reality of his advancing moral and mental decline, Tronchet and Sibran deconstruct political propaganda which characterizes the *pied noir* family as whole and wholesome, as vital members of the French workforce and consumer society. Jeanne's family is in fact fragmented with certain characters (Alain and her grandmother) still living vicariously in French Algeria. Alain's story, centered on his alienation from French society, provides evidence that France did not welcome its Algerian repatriates with open arms and explains why Alain believes in his utopian vision of French Algeria despite the eruption of violence that he witnessed firsthand.

The dominant fiction regarding the *pied noir* family was intended to separate France's enemies (the OAS) from "distressed members" of the French family (Algerian repatriates) (Shepard 2006, 160). When women and children emigrated leaving husbands behind, the French government deemed the separation political. Alain never sympathized with the OAS and stayed behind in Algiers hoping that the situation would improve enough for his family to resettle there. Indeed he appears indifferent to politics. In neighboring panels, Alain walks to and from work barely noticing politically oriented graffiti on the walls (fig. 4.11).[12] He remains, however, optimistic that an accord will be reached permitting all Algerians, native and European, to coexist in Algeria. Neither the government nor French society takes into account the reality of Alain's situation. The fact that he stays in Algeria after his family's departure labels him as OAS; the fact that he is a *pied noir* defines him as incompatible with French values. As a result, he becomes an easy target for metropolitan ignorance. His Parisian colleagues leave messages on his desk such as "Mercadal = Bourreau" (Sibran and Tronchet 2003, 21). When Alain finds this sign at his work station, he is confused as is Jeanne when she hears rumors that she is "la fille du boucher" (Sibran and Tronchet 2003, 35). Her father becomes a scapegoat for France's colonial past in Algeria as well as for the negative actions of the OAS regardless of his relative poverty and blatant lack of political convictions.

As the narrative progresses, Alain grows increasingly more despondent. Because his colleagues and neighbors do not respect him, he victimizes his family in order to maintain a semblance of masculinity. When he becomes physically abusive, Jeanne and later Alain realize that the rumors and accusations have generated a self-fulfilling

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[12] This scene comes directly from Sibran's novel, *Bleu-figuier*: "Il [Alain] retrouvait ses slogans [ceux du FLN], à peine repeints en vert, FLN ou ALN à la place d'OAS et le tour était joué. Les mots avaient même envahi les trottoirs et ces murs, qu'il ne voulait plus lire, ricanaient derrière lui" (1999, 17-8). While the bande dessinée seems to highlight Alain's political apathy, the prose passage underlines his growing despondency regarding his future in Algeria. He no longer cares about the FLN or the OAS because he knows that his days there are numbered.

prophecy. The death of Alain's sister, and with her Alain's last physical connection to Algeria, causes Jeanne to reflect on her father's regression from loving father to aggressive patriarch. The recycling of the father-daughter portrait in *Là-bas* thus assumes an elegiac character. Rather than remind Jeanne of a happy childhood memory shared with her father, the photograph stimulates Jeanne's grief over her father's decline. While *Là-bas* is a fictional account about Jeanne and Alain Mercadal, the narrative is based on the difficult integration of Sibran's own father into French society after his emigration from Algeria. Sibran's prefatory remarks underline her personal connection with the album's narrative structure. But why does Sibran's preface include view postcards of Algiers and not a photograph of her father? If Alain's relationship to space is central to the album (see Chapter 3), so is his *pied noir* identity. This omission is symptomatic of two related concepts: Roland Barthes's notion of photographic *punctum* and the bande dessinée image as a visual filter.

Barthes writes that "[l]e *punctum* d'une photo, c'est ce hasard qui, en elle, *me point* (mais aussi me meurtrit, me poigne)" (1980, 49). Stated differently, a photograph's *punctum* provokes an unexpected emotional response in the viewer who establishes a subjective and personal relationship to the photograph and its referent. Sibran's failure to reproduce a photograph of her father in *Là-bas* mimics Barthes's omission of his famed winter garden photograph in *La Chambre claire*. The assumption is that the original potency of these images would be lost on the reader. Several bande dessinée conventions allow artists to filter photography's emotional charge. Firstly, as previously mentioned, bédéistes can alter images so as to obscure the violence of a particularly graphic image. Secondly, bédéistes can insert fictional or illustratively reproduced photographs such as that of Jeanne and Alain in *Là-bas*. One could further argue that bande dessinée panels in which characters are pictured within frames are equivalent to snapshots. Thirdly, actual photographs can be reproduced or omitted from an album. These devices affect both the reader and bédéiste. Sibran's inclusion of fictional photographs and omission of true

photographic reproductions suggest that her narrative establishes distance between herself and her readers. Aware that her memories will not have the same impact on her readers, she filters them through the lens of fiction. Sibran's choice also serves a different and perhaps more important purpose. If still photographs fix their referents in time and space, the visual component of the bande dessinée animates them. Sibran's narrative allows Alain and Jeanne to move through the past, into the present, and towards the future. Rather than focusing on who her father was (in a photograph taken long ago), Sibran focuses on who her father has become as a result of his experiences as a *pied noir* forced to live in metropolitan France.

Similar to *Là-bas,* Bonotaux and Lasserre's album, *Quand ils avaient mon âge…* deconstructs the myth that *pieds noirs* are invariably enemies of the state. Near the end of their narrative, the bédéistes represent the rise in OAS violence on the eve of Algerian independence. Several characters such as Jean-François and his family are caught in the crossfire as they consider leaving Algeria indefinitely. After the French army opens fire on a group of unarmed European protestors in Algiers, the *pied noir* exodus accelerates. In one scene, Jean-François is helping his mother and older sister pack. Jean-François's father receives a threatening letter from the OAS warning him against leaving Algeria: "[n]i valise… ni cercueil! Un fusil… une patrie!" (Lasserre and Bonotaux 2002a). Instead of protecting the rights of French Algerians, the OAS is portrayed holding them hostage. The family photo album, drawn alongside the threatening letter and half-packed suitcases (fig. 4.12), functions differently than family photographs in *Là-bas*. For Bonotaux and Lasserre, the album symbolizes a pre-war French Algeria where Europeans are not yet politically divided. This perception subscribes to a dominant fiction regarding French Algeria as a mythical space "where a plurality of cultures and languages peacefully coexisted in the childhood world of play" (Huffer 2006, 230). The photographs recall a more peaceful time when Jean-François played happily with his childhood friends all of whom came from different sectors of the Algerian population: Khellil (whose parents are

harkis), Youssef (whose family supports the FLN), David (whose family supports the OAS), and Jean-François (whose family appears to have no political connections). Despite their differences and family's political alliances, the children engage in typical childhood activities and games until Algeria's political climate forces them to part ways. The disruption of their Algerian space triggers the disruption of their childhood and utopian vision of human relations.

Told from the perspective of four child protagonists (two Europeans and two Algerians), Bonotaux and Lasserre's narrative embodies the myth of French Algeria in which childhood diversity breeds tolerance. Family and personal photographs also serve to deconstruct this myth as witnessed by the two cover photographs (fig. 4.13): the first shows a European girl enjoying an ice cream cone with her Arab playmate; the second depicts the four protagonists. The second image is of particular interest because it is torn, isolating Youssef from David, Khellil, and Jean-François. Youssef is the only character who lives in the Casbah and whose family does not work for the French administration. His family remains in Algeria after independence, resulting in the painful separation from his childhood friends. At the end of the album, David, Khellil, Jean-François, and their families flee Algeria fully cognizant that they will never again return. Algerian independence is portrayed as a bittersweet victory. In the final panels, the bédéistes contrast collective Algerian elation with Youssef's loneliness: "…et Youssef commençait à réaliser que la liberté avait un prix" (Lasserre and Bonotaux 2002a). Bonotaux and Lasserre's album is not, however, personal and fails to constitute a postmemorial narrative in the way that *Là-bas* and *D'Algérie* do. Instead *Quand ils avaient mon âge…* functions more as a pedagogical tool, familiarizing French children with the context of the French-Algerian War and suggesting that each memory community (symbolized by the children's diversity) has constituted their own collective memory or postmemory.

Pied noir family photographs also figure in Vidal and Bignon's *Une Éducation algérienne*. Contrary to other corpus albums, the recycling of family photography in this

album serves to deconstruct the government-promoted image of the *pied noir* family throughout the 1960s. During a visit to Commander Blois's home, Albert discovers a family photo album. As a soldier from metropolitan France, he does not identify with the *pied noir* memory community. Still the album intrigues him. Catherine explains that it belongs to their friends Emmanuelle and Charles whose families have been in Algeria since 1860. Albert cannot help but notice the absence of Arabs from album photographs: "[i]l n'y a pas d'Arabes sur ces photos. Ou bien, ce sont des figurants silencieux" (Vidal and Bignon 1982, 28). Given that the Blois family and their friends inhabit a spacious mansion and continue to indulge in pleasures such as swimming, parties, and debauchery despite the bloody war ensuing around them, the photographs do not provoke feelings of nostalgia for a bygone era—at least not for Albert. Similar to Albert's fiancée, the Blois family risks losing their way of life, one dependent on the exploitation of the native population. Vidal and Bignon's inclusion of early nineteenth-century *pied noir* photographs produces a double discourse, simultaneously recreating and criticizing colonial nostalgia. Rather than using family photographs to recast *pieds noirs* as distressed repatriates, the bédéistes use them to represent this community as decadent, anti-French colonizers. In this way, the photo album contributes to the formation of a *pied noir* postmemory (presumably Emmanuelle and Charles will bring the album to France in order to share their family history with subsequent generations) as well as to the reinforcement of negative stereotypes of the *pied noir* in French collective memory.

The recycling of press and personal photography in bandes dessinées on the French-Algerian War serves a dual purpose: to engage with collective memory and, for certain bédéistes, to constitute a postmemory of both the war and French Algeria.[13]

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[13] The reader should note, however, that the bande dessinée is not the only medium which recycles press and personal photography for this purpose. Leïla Sebbar frequently incorporates photography into her narratives on postcolonial identity and the French-Algerian War. One striking example is *Le Chinois vert d'Afrique*. For a detailed analysis of how Sebbar uses photography to constitute a postmemory of the war in this novel, see my article

Diversity in bande dessinée source material (textual and iconographic, public and personal) demonstrates that the medium uniquely problematizes questions of history, memory, and postcolonial subjectivity. The inclusion of public sources such as news clippings, press photography, and documentary images implicates readers familiar with official representations of historic events. By re-appropriating and re-contextualizing these sources, bédéistes force readers to question hegemonic discourses on the war based on problematic media representations. In addition, the inclusion of public source material further authenticates and contextualizes fictional narratives within the framework of national history. The additional focus on personal sources such as family photographs suggests that certain corpus albums further explore how the war has entered into local and family memories as opposed to a national collective memory. The fact that several bédéistes come from families directly affected by the war implies that their albums, with their inclusion of material traces of the past, should be read as instances of postmemory in which artists attempt to understand and articulate their own personal connection to France and Algeria's shared history. Does the medium's reliance on different forms of documentation make it a valuable pedagogical tool for teaching bédéistes and their readers about the war? While the inclusion of authentic period material functions to validate the representation of history in a popular medium, the recycling of textual and iconographic source material in historical bandes dessinées clearly establishes a relationship between history, memory, and popular culture, one which history teachers could potentially exploit in their classrooms.

"Reconstituting Cultural Memory through Image and Text in Leïla Sebbar's *Le Chinois vert d'Afrique*."

Figure 4.1. Saïd recognizes Sarah in *Paris Match*.

Source: Thévenet, Jean-Marc, Baru, and Daniel Ledran. [1990] 1998. *Le Chemin de l'Amérique*. Brussels: Casterman. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 4.2. The barricades week in Algiers.

Source: Ferrandez, Jacques. 2007. *Carnets d'Orient: Dernière demeure*. Brussels: Casterman. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 4.3. The generals' putsch.

Source: Ferrandez, Jacques. 2009. *Carnets d'Orient: Terre fatale*. Brussels: Casterman. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 4.4. Ferrandez's effective recycling of press clippings.

Source: Ferrandez, Jacques. 2004. *Carnets d'Orient: Rue de la Bombe*. Brussels: Casterman. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

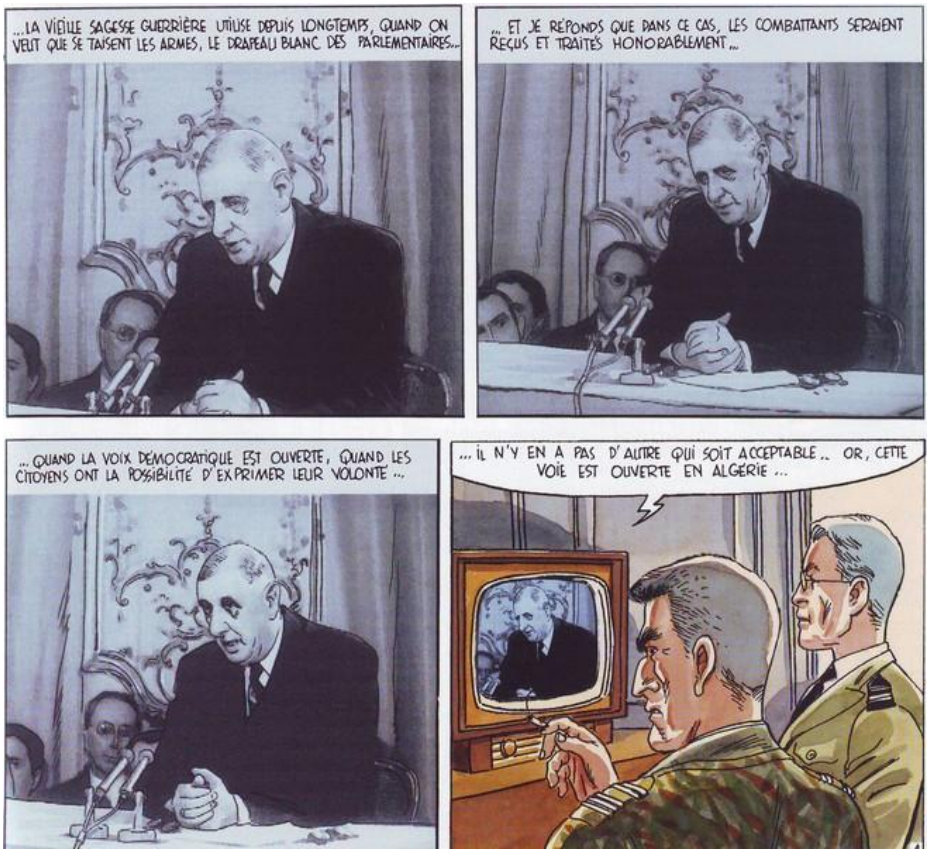

Figure 4.5. De Gaulle's 1958 televised address.

Source: Ferrandez, Jacques. 2009. *Carnets d'Orient: Dernière demeure*. Brussels: Casterman. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

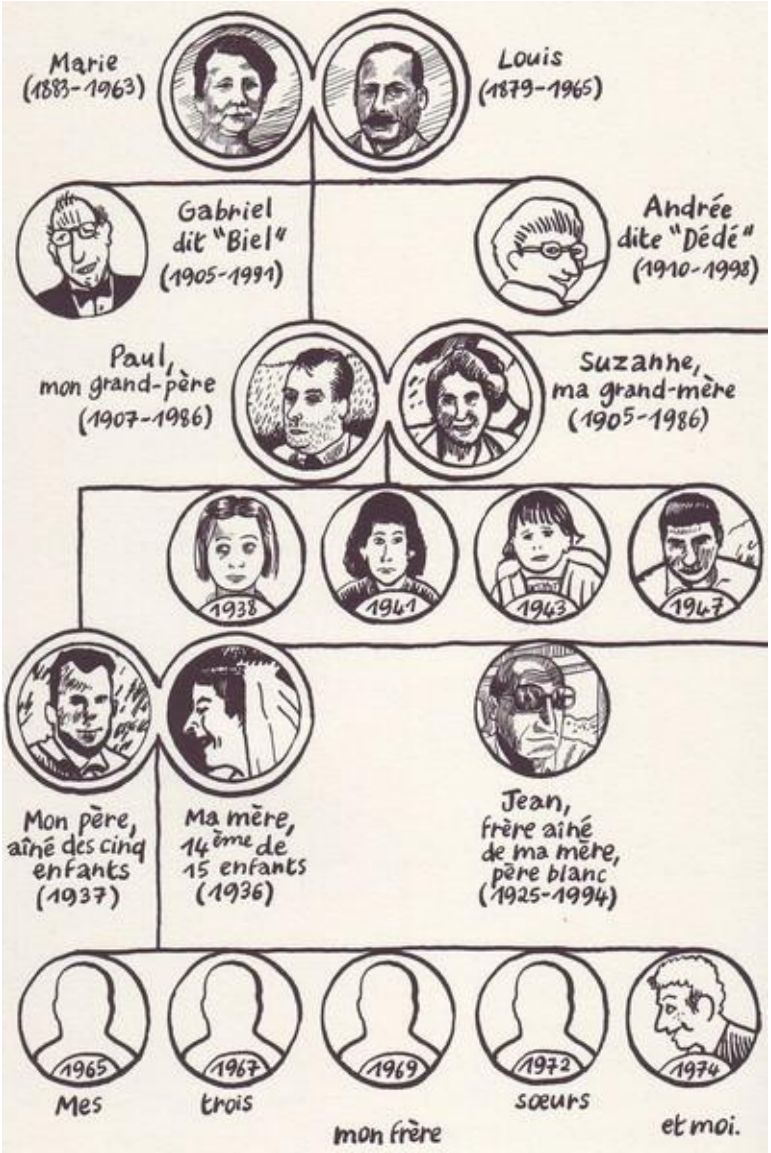

Figure 4.6. Half of Morvandiau's family tree.

Source: Morvandiau. 2007. *D'Algérie*. Rennes: Maison rouge. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 4.7. Patricia's relatives show surprise at Arab ululations.

Source: Boudjellal, Farid. 1995. *Jambon-Beur: Les couples mixtes*. Toulon: MC Productions. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

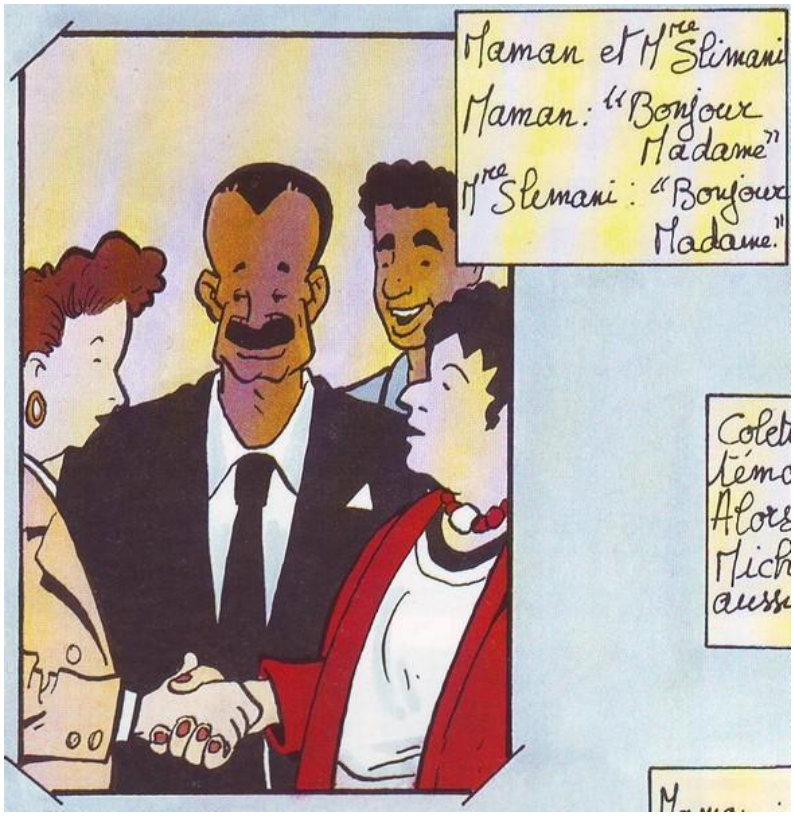

Figure 4.8. Patricia's and Mahmoud's parents politely greet each other.

Source: Boudjellal, Farid. 1995. *Jambon-Beur: Les couples mixtes*. Toulon: MC Productions. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

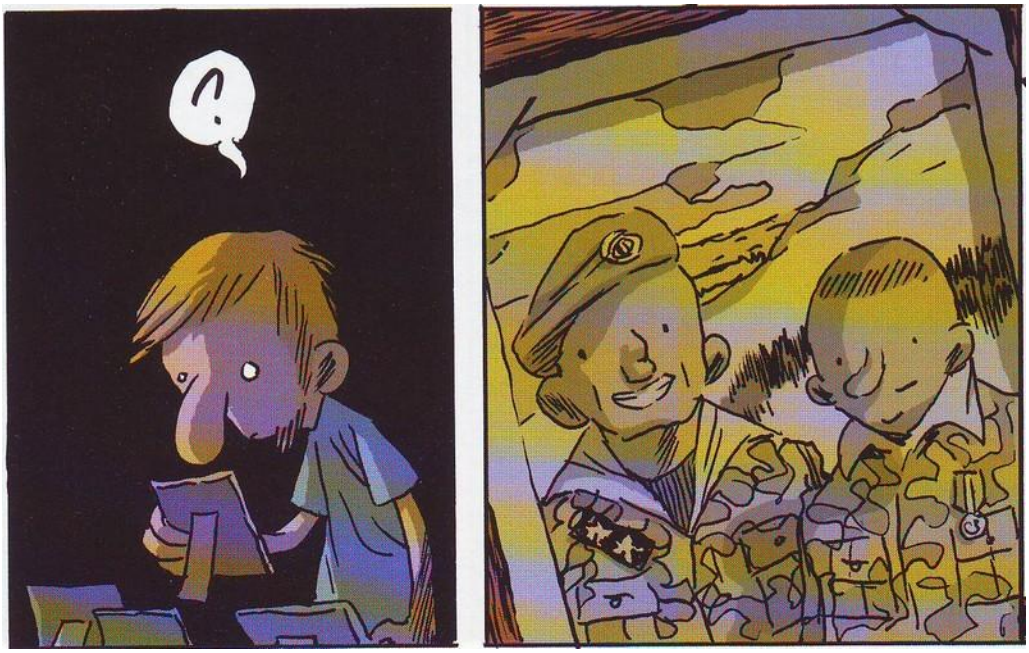

Figure 4.9. Marco discovers a photograph of his father and Mesribes.

Source: Larcenet, Manu, and Patrice Larcenet. [2003] 2008. *Le Combat ordinaire*. Paris: Dargaud. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

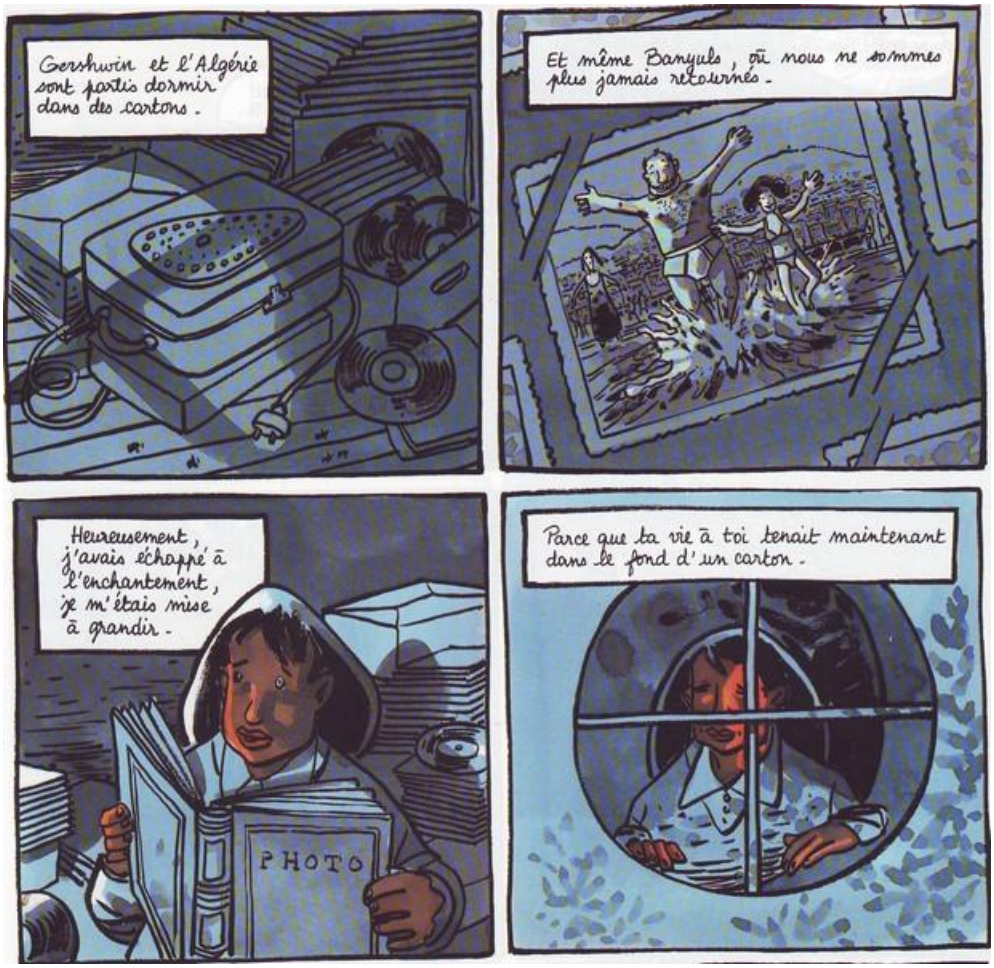

Figure 4.10. Jeanne finds a photograph of her and her father.

Source: Sibran, Anne, and Tronchet. 2003. *Là-bas*. Paris: Dupuis. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

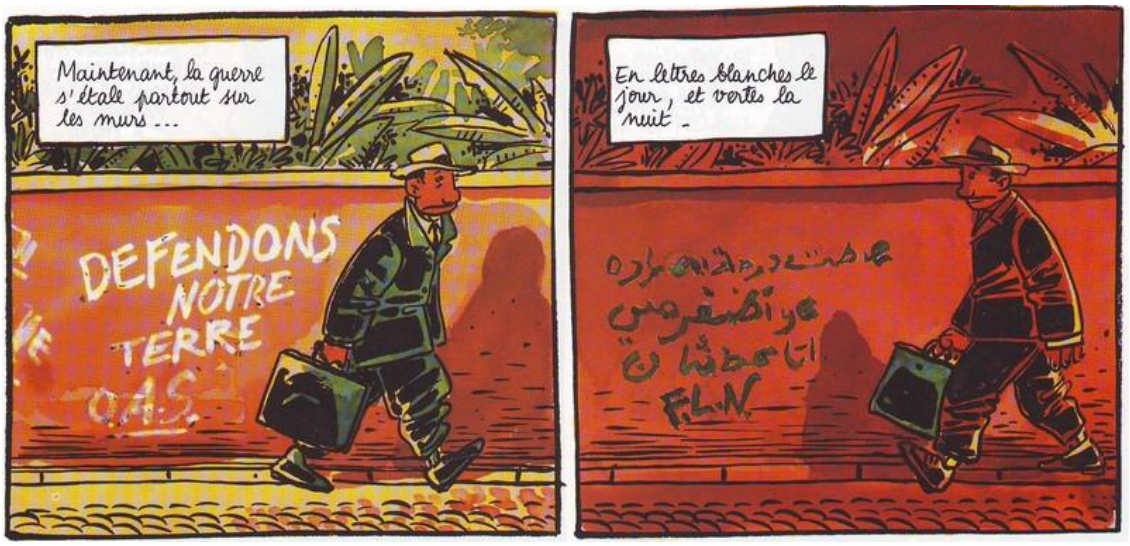

Figure 4.11. Alain passes political graffiti on his way to and from work.

Source: Sibran, Anne, and Tronchet. 2003. *Là-bas*. Paris: Dupuis. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

Figure 4.12. Jean-François's family prepares to leave Algeria.

Source: Lasserre, Hélène, and Gilles Bonotaux. 2002. *Quand ils avaient mon âge: Alger 1954-1962*. Paris: Autrement Jeunesse.

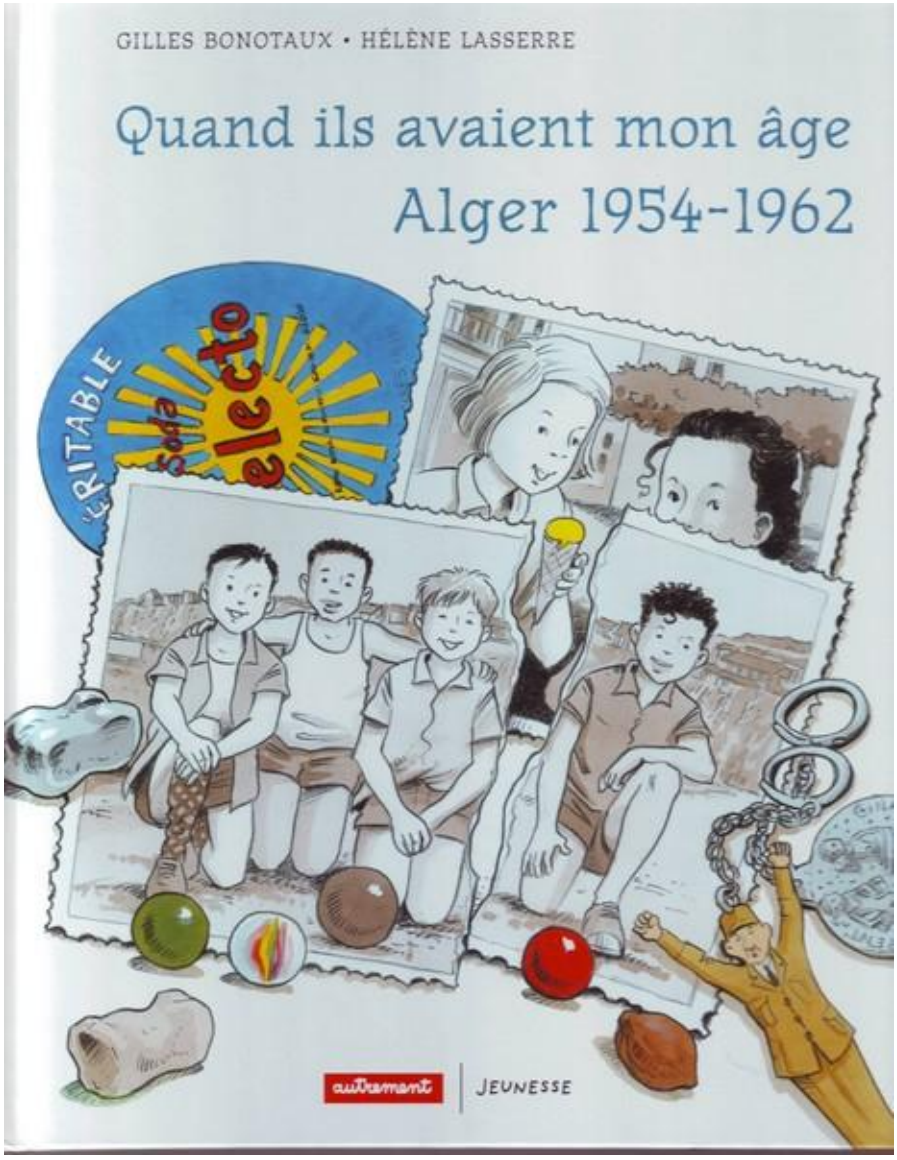

Figure 4.13. Photographs on the cover of *Quand ils avaient mon âge…*

Source: Lasserre, Hélène, and Gilles Bonotaux. 2002. *Quand ils avaient mon âge: Alger 1954-1962*. Paris: Autrement Jeunesse.

CHAPTER 5

THE BANDE DESSINÉE AS HISTORICAL DOCUMENT OR DOCUMENT OF HISTORY?[1]

Because bandes dessinées frequently cite or recycle authentic textual and iconographic source material documenting the French colonization of Algeria, the French-Algerian War, and repercussions on various communities, they represent a valuable resource to history teachers looking to supplement textbooks and classic models of classroom instruction. While bandes dessinées are commonly included among a teacher's arsenal of pedagogical materials (for example, to teach children how to read), teachers and secondary school students remain skeptical concerning their usage in class. Writing about the depiction of nineteenth-century colonial expansion in the bande dessinée, Fanch Juteau argues that

> [l]a valeur didactique réelle de ces bandes dessinées n'est sans doute pas dans la perception que peuvent en avoir les différents lecteurs. Elle serait davantage dans l'usage didactique qui peut en être fait. Mais à condition de la prendre comme telle, et en qualité d'illustration. (2001, 88)

Yet, as we have seen in previous chapters, historical bandes dessinées often meet the same bibliographic standards as school textbooks in their preference for critical histories and documentary images and would therefore make a logical addition to the French and Algerian history curricula. Pierre Fresnault-Deruelle believes that bandes dessinées are effective pedagogical tools because they reflect textbook reliance on iconic images (1986, 72-3). The discrepancy between theory and pedagogical practices nevertheless raises important questions. If historical bandes dessinées mimic the presentation of history in

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[1] This distinction is adapted from Fabienne Castagna and Anne Silvert's analysis of the bande dessinée's role in the teaching of history: "[…] l'utilisation de la Bande Dessinée en tant que 'document d'Histoire' montre contrairement à la 'Bande Dessinée historique' que le 'Neuvième Art' est particulièrement adapté à l'examen de l'évolution des mentalités" (1990-1, 57).

school textbooks, why are professors reticent about using them and why do students fail to take their historical narratives seriously? How can the bande dessinée as a popular medium be used to facilitate difficult dialogues about cultural and historical taboos like the French-Algerian War?

The Bande Dessinée and the History Classroom

While it is undeniable that the bande dessinée foregrounds national history (from pre-history to decolonization and beyond), historical representation as a trend became popular in France starting in the early 1980s (Castagna and Silvert 1990-1, 42). Of course history and politics have always been fair game in the bande dessinée as a quick survey of the *Tintin* albums demonstrates. Hergé's series broaches twentieth-century issues ranging from Bolshevik Russia to the colonization of sub-Saharan Africa. The interrelationship between the bande dessinée and history, however, begs the question of whether the medium is a historical document or a document of history. Stated differently, should the bande dessinée be read as a historical text whose objective is to transmit knowledge of the past or as a cultural byproduct which allows scholars to retrace the evolution of public opinion? Fabienne Castagna and Anne Silvert argue that "[l]'enseignement de l'Histoire peut faire appel à la bande dessinée non pas tant comme moyen de mettre l'Histoire en images mais comme témoin privilégié d'une époque, d'une mentalité, d'une idéologie" (1990-1, 53). From this perspective, corpus albums are more revealing of the period during which they were published than of the 1950s and 1960s.[2] Earlier we examined the evolution of French and Algerian war bande dessinée production which roughly reflected the development of war historiography in both countries. No albums were published during the war, and few appeared before the 1980s when

[2] Fanch Juteau notes that "[…] la Bande Dessinée lorsqu'elle fait l'objet de travaux universitaires, est plus fréquemment étudiée sous l'angle sociologique" (2001, 87).

historians began publishing critical histories which contested dominant discourses. Furthermore, French and Algerian bédéistes use the war for distinct purposes. The majority of Algerian artists were commissioned by the FLN to popularize its version of history before the end of the single-party system whereas French artists are responding to a perceived neglect of this period in French national history.

It is my contention that most Algerian bédéistes fail to document their representation of history to the same extent as their French homologues. (Bouslah's *La Ballade du proscrit* constitutes a notable exception.) One could argue that the discourse articulated in most SNED and ENAL albums reflects party ideology rather than historical "objectivity." Identifiable historical figures and significant events are largely excluded from narratives which aim to solidify the FLN's political agenda promoting a unified Algerian people, self-sacrifice, and moderate Islam. French artists, on the other hand, advertize their reliance on critical histories and period iconography in their attempt to confer a measure of verisimilitude and representational accuracy on their albums. Historical personalities frequently make cameo appearances in these bandes dessinées whose fictional characters participate in documented events. In addition, French albums often include detailed bibliographies of works cited during the creative process.

While French and Algerian war bandes dessinées are historical due to their recycling of textual and iconographic source material as well as to the historical context of their fictional narratives, the differing perspectives in France, Algeria, and over time suggests that they are products rather than producers of discourse, that they are documents of history rather than historical documents. If bédéistes attempt to teach the history of the French-Algerian War, their historical perspectives strongly mimic trends in both war historiography and public opinion. Readers should therefore avoid criticizing Algerian bédéistes for their anti-French narratives, just as they should avoid extolling (or downplaying) the merits of French albums and their strong anti-militarism and quasi-

utopianism. After all, these tendencies are related to how the war has been remembered, historicized, and taught in France and Algeria.

The first French bande dessinée about the war is Vidal and Bignon's *Une Éducation algérienne*. The album's publication date, 1982, coincides with that of the first French critical history of the war, Bernard Droz and Évelyne Levert's *Histoire de la guerre d'Algérie*. Whereas Vidal and Bignon may have been aware of this critical text, their bande dessinée better reflects the period of war historiography in France that Benjamin Stora has labeled "témoignages et autobiographies" (2005a, 55). Because privately printed works authored by soldiers and *pieds noirs* dominate this period (1962-1981),[3] it is not surprising that the war bande dessinée follows suit. Yet witness accounts and autobiographical narratives depicting the war and French Algeria continue to dominate war bandes dessinées published in France and Belgium throughout the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s.

The seemingly irreconcilable tension created in these albums between historical and personal narratives stresses the fact that the French-Algerian War remains a part of France's recent past, one which the French have yet to fully assimilate into their national history. In addition, the personal nature of *Une Éducation algérienne*, the *Carnets*, *Là-bas*, *D'Algérie* and other corpus albums suggests that certain sectors of the population (those who engage in the practice of self-othering such as *pieds noirs*, Algerian immigrants, and soldiers who have yet to reconcile their participation with France's republican ideals) are dissatisfied with official discourses despite the fact that the war has entered the public arena. Until France and Algeria are several generations removed from

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[3] Stora cites several texts including Marie Elbe's *Comme une torche au milieu de notre fête* (1964), General Massu's *La Vraie bataille d'Alger* (1971), Bernard Tricot's *Les sentiers de la paix* (1972), Éric Huitric's *Le Onzième choc* (1976), and Marie Cardinal's *La Mule du corbillard* (1963), *La Clé sur la porte* (1972), *Les Mots pour le dire* (1978), and *Au pays de mes racines* (1980).

this historical period, debates will remain focused on the war's history-memory dialectic and, more importantly, on victimology.

By victimology, I am referring to Stora's assessment of public debates on the war:

> […] les pieds-noirs s'estiment victimes du général de Gaulle, les soldats se considèrent comme ayant été entraînés dans un engrenage cruel, les officiers croient en la trahison des politiques, les Algériens se voient en victimes des Français, les harkis vivent leur situation comme une trahison des autorités françaises… Une sorte de cloisonnement, de communautarisation du souvenir par une position victimaire, s'est installée dans une compétition du statut de la meilleure victime. À partir de là, les différents groupes de mémoire, déjà à la périphérie de la société, ne demandent pas à l'État ou aux responsables politiques de rendre des comptes, mais le demandent à l'autre communauté. (2005b, 64)

From this perspective, the predominance of personal narratives in war bandes dessinées reflects the victim mentality of these groups. Should it come as a surprise then that the majority of corpus artists belong to or identify with marginalized memory communities? One could argue that the emphasis placed on personal postmemories framed within the context of national history and collective memory allows readers to simultaneously classify these albums as historical documents situating the history of marginalized communities within French metanarratives and as documents of history reflecting the evolution of public opinion which now welcomes critical interpretations of France's colonial past. Indeed *pied noir*, soldier, and immigrant bédéistes recycle mainstream historical documents in order to insert their own marginalized memories and histories into national memory and history.

The interconnectedness of personal and historical narratives in the bande dessinée incidentally helps students broach the war in class and at home. Étienne Augris, a high school history and geography teacher states that students often initiate personal dialogues with parents and grandparents as a result of his unit on the French-Algerian War. Their goal is to better understand how this event affected members of their family and greater civic community. Reading fictionalized accounts, especially those which integrate iconic images of war into their narratives, stimulates conversation between teacher and student

and between parent and child. One striking example is *Azrayen'* whose preparation and subsequent publication helped Frank Giroud, the bédéiste, speak with his own father about his war experiences.

According to Pascal Blanchard, Nicolas Bancel, and Sandrine Lemaire, contemporary racial tensions and the quasi-inexistence of postcolonial studies in France are direct consequences of French "colonial culture." This expression refers to the omnipresence of the colonial domain in French society. The purpose of their research is to demonstrate how colonial ideology permeates French cultural production, not as propaganda, but as a *fait culturel*. They argue that the constructed visual memory of colonization has resulted in the transmission of a colonial heritage through cultural production about, rather than knowledge of, France's colonies. In other words, France's perceived notions about the colonies are not entirely fashioned by government propaganda. Blanchard, Bancel, and Lemaire situate the emergence of French colonial culture during the Third Republic with its numerous World's Fairs and Colonial Exposition. Representations of France's colonies and colonial Others persist today in advertising, popular culture, literature, and film. The historians find iconography to be particularly problematic in that it caricatures otherness (e.g. the Banania character).

As previously emphasized, bédéistes frequently recycle colonial and war iconography in anti-colonialist narratives. The risk is that by re-exposing (or further exposing) French readers to images which convey symbolic violence, these artists are perpetuating colonial ideology in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (Bancel 2005, 83). One could argue, for example, that Jacques Ferrandez's fascination with colonial erotica re-colonizes Algerian women. Yet by re-appropriating images in their fictional narratives, bédéistes implicate their readers who are familiar with these images. Consequently, their work encourages dialogue about visual representation and its role in colonization as well as in the solidification of postcolonial subjectivity. If postcolonialism examines how we currently understand colonial exchanges, bédéistes like Ferrandez

remind readers that we, as postcolonial subjects, are still drawn to and repulsed by colonial iconography and iconic images of war even after their problems have been identified and their signification deconstructed.

If Blanchard, Bancel, and Lemaire's theorization of colonial culture alerts readers to the relationship between colonial iconography and popular culture, their research specifically targets the questionable usage of these images in school textbooks. As indicated in previous chapters, the bande dessinée mimics textbook representations of the war in both Algeria and France, often re-appropriating problematic images used in schools. The recycling of textbook images has the double advantage of ensuring reader familiarity with reproduced images and of inviting critical interpretations of them. The parallel evolution of bandes dessinées, critical histories, and, arguably, history textbooks should caution readers against how history is taught rather than against album historicity. Indeed bandes dessinées which recycle textbook images are less problematic than the textbooks themselves which attempt to assimilate iconic images into the budding memories of impressionable schoolchildren. Pierre Fresnault-Deruelle criticizes history textbooks because they highlight historical moments which "font image" (1986, 72). He states that "[…] tout ce qui, à tort ou à raison, est à l'origine de l'imagerie de nos manuels scolaires, continués et comme amplifiés par l'iconographie officielle constitue le noyau autour duquel paraît se constituer le discours historique" (Fresnault-Deruelle 1986, 72).

The addition of historical bandes dessinées to units on colonialism and decolonization has the potential to counteract the effects of textbook representations which reduce complex historical moments such as the French-Algerian War to memorable images like those of the *pied noir* exodus or presidential visits to Algeria. Although bédéistes often use iconic photographs as narrative springboards, their representation is not limited to them. Instead, they use moments which "font image" to create narrative. Starting with iconic images of war, bédéistes propose possible contexts and contemporary reactions to significant events in French and Algerian national history

which have been photographed and later decontextualized in the press and schoolbooks. One example is Ferrandez's usage of period newspapers which inform his readers and protagonists about life in Algeria during the war. Ferrandez transforms news into significant events affecting the everyday lives of his characters. Bombings and torture are no longer anonymous occurrences. They happen to individuals with whom readers presumably identify. According to Juteau, students find this aspect of the historical bande dessinée appealing because "[p]roposer des reconstitutions des ambiances, des scènes de la vie quotidienne, un manuel d'Histoire ne le fait pas ou rarement" (2001, 87).

Bandes dessinées have the additional advantage of communicating historical narratives to children and illiterate adult audiences. Image-text congruency (e.g. images illustrate text and vice versa) in several Algerian albums suggests that they target uneducated sectors of the population in addition to children. French audiences differ from Algerian readers in that they are traditionally assumed to be educated or, at the very least, highly literate. Nevertheless, publishers like Dargaud and Casterman continue to market bandes dessinées in France for large, diverse audiences which include children, adolescents, and adults. As such they can be used to (re)stimulate interest in historical subjects as well as to introduce children to areas of historical inquiry. Given that adolescents constitute a significant percentage of bande dessinée readers, the medium can be used to motivate difficult to reach students who are marginally interested in school textbooks. For this purpose, the *Centre Régional de Documentation Pédagogique de Poitou-Charentes* (CRDP) proposes a series of pedagogical materials on how to exploit the bande dessinée in the classroom entitled *La BD de case en classe*. The center's website posits that "[la] BD est un outil de recherche et d'information tous publics et sans équivalent offrant aux bédéphiles, enseignants de toutes disciplines, des possibilités de recherche multicritères exceptionnelles" (L@BD). The center has published several texts including *Vasco ou comment faire de l'histoire au collège* (1998), *BD et Citoyenneté* (2002), *Dessiner l'indicible autour d'"Auschwitz"* (2005), and, central to our discussion

on the French-Algerian War, François Righi's *La Guerre d'Algérie avec "Azrayen'"* (2003).

Righi's presentation of *Azrayen'* offers detailed analyses of plates and emphasizes "le rapport entre la fiction et la réalité historique permettant à l'élève d'avoir une vraie démarche historique sur un support attrayant" (Cyberlibrairie du CRDP). Each chapter closes with student activities and questions for discussion. Righi's commentaries aid in the comprehension of the French-Algerian War and of bande dessinée conventions employed by Lax and Giroud to communicate a localized history of the war to readers. The goal of this pedagogical text is to teach the war in an unconventional manner, to introduce unsuspecting students to a dark chapter of their national past. One aspect that Righi highlights is the existence of liminal figures or *frontaliers* such as Messonnier and Taklhit, among others: "[a]u-delà de tous les manichéismes, [Lax et Giroud] démontre[nt] que les liens d'amitié et de solidarité s'étaient créés entre les pieds-noirs et les Algériens" (2003, 11). Because most French textbooks cover the war in two to six pages,[4] there is little room to develop the war's complexities including the deconstruction of binary oppositions. If several texts define terms like "*harki*" and "*pied noir*," they rarely enter into the specific circumstances (or the diversity of circumstances) surrounding each memory community. Fictional narratives such as *Azrayen'* and *Carnets d'Orient* contextualize events and communities for students so that they can visualize and better comprehend the stakes of Algerian independence for individuals as well as for the nation. With each successive generation, the war recedes even further into the past. If history textbooks provide an abridged war history, the bande dessinée explores the relationship between national history and local or individual memories of the war. Through a close reading of historical bandes dessinées, students are invited to reconsider

[4] See, for example, textbooks proposed by Hachette, Nathan, Hatier, Belin, and Bréal for students in *première*. These publications are listed in the bibliography.

the de-contextualized historical documents studied in class so that data regarding, for example, the number of casualties and displaced populations become more tangible.

In one instance, Righi describes the unexpected friendship which develops between Cosme Tirard, a *pied noir* raised with Algerians who later enlists in the French army as an intelligence officer, and Taous Yacine, a mujahida (female FLN combatant) (2003, 11). During their search for their lost comrades, the search patrol comes across an FLN-orchestrated massacre of an Algerian village thought to support Hadj's MNA. The villagers who were absent during the massacre captured a mujahida abandoned by her brothers-in-arms. French soldiers rescue the injured woman for questioning. Taous quickly recognizes Cosme from her childhood. "Tu… tu ne te rappelles pas? Les Quais de Bougie! N-nos… nos parties de cache-cache avec Mouloud et Jacquot" she asks (Giroud and Lax [1998, 1999] 2008, 91). During their exchange, Taous explains the antagonism dividing Algerians as well as her personal connection to Cosme. Their conversation serves to illuminate readers about the war's many facets and to remind Cosme of his personal history, of why he joined the French army. In addition to deconstructing binary oppositions, this scene describes the complicated bonds uniting Algerian-born individuals. Instead of assassinating Cosme, her political enemy, during the previous day's ambush, the mujahida chooses to spare his life. Rather than torturing the FLN combatant to obtain information about her organization, Cosme provides physical comfort to his childhood companion. Lax visually transcribes the emotion of this scene as well as Cosme's compassion for Taous through repeated close-ups of their faces and physical proximity. Cosme kneels next to Taous and offers her water from his canteen while supporting her head and shoulders (fig. 5.1). The recent massacre of innocent civilians nevertheless overshadows this touching moment, leaving the reader to question categorical distinctions emphasized in official representations of the war (e.g. in school textbooks and hegemonic discourses).

François Righi's close reading of *Azrayen'* demonstrates that, despite the desire to entertain readers with good fiction, historical bandes dessinées can also serve as pedagogical supplements. If one accepts the assertion that "[i]nstructions ministérielles, programmes, horaires, manuels, tout l'arsenal pédagogique est mis en œuvre pour que les élèves des écoles, des collèges et des lycées en sachent le moins possible" (Maschino 2001, 21), then the addition of popular culture to units on the French-Algerian War can only enhance an already deficient presentation. The overtly didactic tone of certain albums like Gilles Bonotaux and Hélène Lasserre's *Quand ils avaient mon âge…* suggests that they were intended more for instructional purposes than for pleasure. Bonotaux and Lasserre's preface, for example, explains the album's historical context, starting with the 1830 French conquest of Algeria and ending in 1958 with the election of Charles de Gaulle as the first president of the Fifth Republic. Their prefatory remarks situate the narrative (which opens during the summer of 1958) within the confines of French colonial history (Lasserre and Bonotaux 2002b). Album didacticism surfaces through its glossary of terms as well as through the preface's brief chronology of Franco-Algerian history and map of the Mediterranean basin. Before entering into the album's fictional component, readers are aware of its geo-historical specificity. War lexicon and proper nouns marked with an asterisk throughout the narrative are later defined in the glossary. Chosen terms often match those defined in the margins of high school history textbooks (e.g. "harki," "FLN," "OAS"). Even without these markers, education as a dominant theme permeates the album thanks to its frequent classroom scenes where the four chief protagonists meet.

While Bonotaux and Lasserre endeavor to familiarize children ages eight to twelve with the French-Algerian War, their focus on school reproduces colonial propaganda with respect to France's civilizing mission in Algeria. If the majority of panels illustrate childhood innocence and perhaps ignorance of difference, they also emphasize the extent to which adults influence the world view of children. Child

protagonists frequently misunderstand parental debates about politics or repeat parental discourses without comprehending their significance. David's younger brother, for instance, begins drawing the letters "OAS" on walls. When his mother scolds him about what he is writing, and not about defacing public property, the child does not understand how three letters could cause so much distress. "Mais quoi?" he replies. "Je fais un petit rond, une barrière et un petit chemin qui tourne!" (Lasserre and Bonotaux 2002a). Similarly, children whose parents have different political views dramatize adult disputes on the playground, repeating racial slurs ("melon," "sale arabe," "coulo d'espagnol"), stereotypes ("Harki! Lèche-botte des Français"), and trite or hackneyed expressions ("la valise ou le cercueil," "il nous a laissé tomber, ton de Gaulle") (Lasserre and Bonotaux 2002a). Once their "game" loses its appeal, they return to playing ball together. In another scene, Jean-François and Khellil play war. Jean-François, dressed in his father's old army uniform, and Khellil, dressed as a cowboy, pretend to chase after imaginary "fells" visibly unaware of neither the word's pejorative connotation nor the realities of the war they are pretending to wage (Lasserre and Bonotaux 2002a). Although Bonotaux and Lasserre's approach is interesting (they attempt to present this period through the eyes of children who directly experience the war), their representation underscores the malleability of children regardless of their social, ethnic, political, or religious belonging.

Because children constitute their target audience, Bonotaux and Lasserre's allusions to France's civilizing mission and republican ideals contribute to the solidification of a typically French perspective on the war and its deeper meaning. On the plate adjacent to the playground scene, parents are drawn collecting their children from school. Partially visible at the top of the plate are the words: *liberté, égalité, fraternité*. Even though Bonotaux and Lasserre's narrative attempts to prove the fraternity of Algerian-born children, it explains neither the inequality of colonized peoples nor the symbolic value of liberty for certain sectors of the Algerian population. At one point in the narrative, however, Jean-François's parents invite Khellil and his family over for

dinner. Jean-François's mother shows off her new Moulinex mixer to Khellil's mother, an Arab woman. According to Jean-François's mother, the mixer "était d'autant plus indispensable que Mina, sa bonne ne venait plus (il était maintenant très mal vu pour une femme arabe de venir travailler chez les roumis)" (Lasserre and Bonotaux 2002a). The bédéistes uncritically depict native women as *bonnes à tout faire* easily replaced by kitchen appliances. One could argue that Bonotaux and Lasserre limit their representation to a child's interpretation of events. Children would naturally be less focused on politics and the hidden meaning of exchanges such as that between the two mothers than on games and personal relationships established with other children, teachers, and parents. In addition, the children's schoolteacher speaks in favor of a French Algeria where "tous, Arabes ou Européens, auraient les mêmes droits" (Lasserre and Bonotaux 2002a). The use of the conditional indicates that, in the late 1950s, Arabs and Europeans did not enjoy the same rights.

The identity of the four child protagonists, the inclusion of several school scenes, and the explanation of key terms remind readers that Bonotaux and Lasserre's album has an educational objective. Despite allusions to racial inequality in French Algeria, their narrative objective remains anchored in representations of the colonies and of decolonization in secondary school textbooks and hegemonic discourses. Classroom scenes in which the bédéistes illustrate the cultural assimilation of "indigenous" students are particularly telling.[5] Youssef, who lives in the Casbah and is the only character from a pro-independence family, excels in school. In the first classroom scene, he is drawn reciting a poem by Théophile Gautier (a French Orientalist poet and novelist) in front of his peers (fig. 5.2). Although the accompanying *récitatif* explains that neither Youssef nor his classmates could visualize the winter landscapes described in Gautier's "Les

[5] In their prefatory remarks, Bonotaux and Lasserre distinguish between "des colons originaires d'Europe" and "les indigènes, originaires du pays" (Lasserre and Bonotaux 2002b).

Fantaisies d'hiver," the fact that he (and not European children) is reciting a poem from the French canon demonstrates the "successes" of France's civilizing mission whose purpose was to illuminate colonial subjects. In the next panel, the teacher explains this mission to his students: "[i]l est du devoir de la République d'apporter aux autres peuples l'instruction pour tous, le développement économique et l'idéal de liberté et d'égalité qui font les grandes nations" (Lasserre and Bonotaux 2002a). Youssef's perfect recitation of Gautier coupled with his proficiency in arithmetic reiterate the idea that France contributed to the development of the native Algerian population, that colonization was not entirely negative. Yet as parts of the above discussion demonstrate, Bonotaux and Lasserre's representation hesitates between a colonialist and anti-colonialist perspective. After touting the successful implementation of an educational system in Algeria, the bédéistes underline the hypocrisy of such a system that taught Arab and Kabyle students about their "ancêtres les Gaulois." Still the bédéistes fail to mention that only a small percentage of the native population had access to institutionalized education in French Algeria.

Concerning Arab girls, Bonotaux and Lasserre raise important questions regarding the condition of women in Algeria. Similar to her brother Youssef, Yasmina is an exceptional student. And contrary to some of her Arab girlfriends, Yasmina will be allowed to continue on to *collège*. Yasmina's father believes that the Algeria of tomorrow will need nurses, teachers, and doctors and that his daughter could potentially contribute to Algeria's growth and development in that capacity. Other little girls like Zorha, Leïla, and Aïcha, however, will terminate their education at the end of primary school where they learned to read, write, and count. According to the narrator, these girls must now concentrate on becoming good wives and mothers. Even though Bonotaux and Lasserre do not openly criticize the oppression of Algerian women, they emphasize the stakes of their independence. For Yasmina to continue her academic successes and become a doctor, she must overcome two major obstacles: male domination in traditional Algerian

society and the ambient racism of colonial society (Lasserre and Bonotaux 2002a). Despite the album's apparent contradictions, it introduces younger children to the study of national history and broaches, albeit minimally, divisive topics like colonial racism, the role of women in Algerian society, OAS violence, and the *pied noir* exodus. The target audience of *Quand ils avaient mon âge…* are eight to twelve year olds. Bonotaux and Lasserre's album therefore presents the war to children before they learn about it in school. Students first study the French-Algerian War during the final year of *collège* (in *troisième*).

This is not to say that Bonotaux and Lasserre's album is unique. Farid Boudjellal, for example, narrates the war and Algerian immigration through the eyes of his child protagonist in *Petit Polio.* In 2007, Jean-Pierre Tusseau published a brief survey of twenty children's books about the war accessible to children in *collège*. His survey includes several bandes dessinées studied here such as Jacques Ferrandez's *La Guerre fantôme* and *Rue de la Bombe*, Guy Vidal and Alain Bignon's *Une Éducation algérienne*, and Christian Lax and Frank Giroud's *Azrayen'*. While the inclusion of bandes dessinées in a study of children's literature is problematic (Tusseau does not distinguish between the bande dessinée *pour adultes* and the bande dessinée *pour enfants*), it suggests that these texts are being read by children or are being used in classrooms with children and adolescents. For historical taboos like the French-Algerian War, these books offer a point of entry. The reductive nature of the bande dessinée (reductive because the medium contains a limited number of pages when compared to the novel) invites students to research and discuss historical allusions at home and in school. In addition, the general aesthetics of bandes dessinées with their colorful plates is attractive to younger students who have yet to fully assimilate the importance of France's written culture. Although the war is taught in both *collège* and *lycée,* textbooks scarcely scratch the surface of Franco-Algerian history. And how can they given the amount of material covered at these levels? Moreover, the superficial presentation of French colonial history in middle school

textbooks does not encourage students to examine this period critically once they reach high school, unless their teachers adopt a more proactive approach:

> [m]is en condition par leurs années d'école et de collège, les élèves sont prêts, au lycée, à accepter sans le moindre esprit critique […] la version tronquée, expurgée et globalement propre de la guerre d'Algérie. À condition, naturellement, que l'enseignant la prenne comme objet d'étude. (Maschino 2001, 21)

Decolonizing Colonial History: "Une histoire commune?"

One such teacher is Étienne Augris at *Lycée* Claude Gellée in Epinal, France. Augris contacted me in November 2009 about contributing to his class blog. Entitled "Une histoire commune?," his project aims to initiate dialogue between French and Tunisian high school students. *Lycée* Claude Gellée's sister school is the *Lycée français* in Tunis.[6] Students are required to post and comment on each other's assignments which examine the shared histories of France and North Africa. Among discussed topics are representations of the Maghreb in nineteenth-century French painting, Algerian immigration in France, the FLN's soccer team, and Arab-Andalusian music. Students are evaluated on their postings. Augris states that "[l]es élèves restituent sur ce blog leurs réflexions, y échangent des idées, etc. Le thème est plus précisément l'histoire commune de la France et du Maghreb. C'est aussi un bon moyen de leur faire travailler l'outil informatique" (qtd. in F. 2009). Augris's personal interest in the bande dessinée motivated him to incorporate representations of the war in popular culture into his lessons. Remembering how much he enjoyed reading bandes dessinées in his youth, the

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[6] Initially, Augris launched this project with two Algerian high school classes: one taught by an Algerian teacher who later had to withdraw his participation due to time constraints and inadequate computer resources, and one taught by a French woman living in Algeria (Stéphanie Carrier). Carrier later moved to Tunisia, where she currently resides and teaches history and geography at the *Lycée français*. Her contribution to the blog centers on the role of women (in particular, marriage customs and the Islamic veil) in the Mediterranean basin. She does not incorporate bandes dessinées into her lessons due to their unavailability in Tunisian bookstores (Carrier 2010).

teacher thought that his teenaged students would enjoy an unconventional approach to history, one grounded in non-academic material. In addition to workshops on the bande dessinée, his students also study rap music, film, and novels. While the primary objective of this project is to teach students about the decolonization of North Africa, Augris and his French colleague in Tunisia also hope to show students how governments on both sides of the Mediterranean have re-appropriated colonial history and decolonization for political gain as well as how freely colonial and postcolonial discourses have entered into various forms of culture. Rather than simply prepare students for the baccalaureate exam, Augris strives to sharpen their ability to think critically about history so that they may challenge founding mythologies such as French republicanism and France's civilizing mission abroad.

When questioned about teacher and student perspectives regarding the bande dessinée's pedagogical potential, Augris stated that it is frowned upon because the medium continues to suffer from its paraliterary status. School librarians remain open, however, to the acquisition of bandes dessinées and mangas for their collections and ask teachers for recommendations. Augris and his colleagues nevertheless persist in their attempts to incorporate the medium into lessons without limiting usage to units on the French-Algerian War. For example, Hergé's *Tintin au Congo* is widely used to demonstrate how colonial racism has permeated diverse aspects of cultural production. Although Augris does not associate his reliance on visual media with Blanchard, Bancel, and Lemaire's notion of colonial culture which criticizes the use of colonial iconography to teach French students about the colonies, some of his classroom discussions center on the recycling of Orientalist tropes in contemporary modes of representation. Besides interviewing Pascal Blanchard and me for his blog, Augris interviewed Jacques Ferrandez about his *Carnets d'Orient*. And in 2008, several of his students authored a blog project which explored the representation of French Algeria in Ferrandez's series.

Teachers are faced with challenges concerning the use of bandes dessinées to teach history. Choosing bandes dessinées which are appropriate for the classroom can be quite difficult. Augris emphasizes that bandes dessinées must not be overly serious or didactic in their approach to national history. The point of using the medium is to provide a relatively entertaining alternative to school textbooks, one which allows students to grasp historical abstractions with greater ease. Yet by selecting albums which match these criteria, teachers paradoxically risk abating student interest in the contribution of popular culture to historical debates. According to Augris, his students do not always welcome bande dessinée based activities because they appear frivolous and do not serve in exam preparation. He states: "[i]n their mind, [the] BD is associated with humor and frivolity. Paradoxically, I know that I have to find those ingredients in BD to arouse their interest […]" (Augris 2010).[7] If students are not tested on the representation of history in the bande dessinée (e.g. on the baccalaureate), then why should they waste class time exploring this seemingly irrelevant subject?

Despite their objections to studying extra-exam material, Augris asks students to develop a project on the French-Algerian War over the course of several months. He does not currently require the completion of similar projects on other historical events or periods. For Augris, the war retains its strongly polemical character in French society and therefore necessitates further exploration beyond the parameters of the present history curriculum. Moreover, special emphasis on the French-Algerian War and Franco-Maghrebi relations are the focus of his current history blog based almost entirely on independent student projects that participants from both high schools can discuss via the Internet. This is not Augris's first attempt at generating transnational or cross-cultural dialogue. In 2007, he created a similar blog about France and Germany to help students

[7] Augris noticed that when he described an album as "pretty funny," his students were more likely to read it regardless of the album's graphic and narrative qualities (2010).

see beyond the scope of national history. Augris maintains that incorporating the bande dessinée into any lesson is challenging due to time constraints. As a result, he relegates discussions of bandes dessinées to his blog and special activities.

Last May, for example, Augris invited Laurent Galandon and A. Dan, the author and illustrator, respectively, of *Tahya El-Djazaïr*, to his class. Prior to their visit, Galandon and Dan submitted several plates from their album to be published in June 2009. Students were required to read the plates and prepare questions for discussion. During the first part of their visit, the bédéistes presented their project and answered student questions about the creative process. Later that same morning, Galandon and Dan organized a hands-on workshop where students were asked to create a storyboard not to exceed one bande dessinée plate. Augris posted several videos on his blog in which Galandon and Dan propose bande dessinée panels based on student ideas. One group, for instance, adapted a scene from Yasmina Khadra's novel, *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*. Although the workshop was interesting and highly interactive, its preparation was quite costly and complicated from an administrative standpoint. The class blog, however, resolves these issues by allowing students and teachers to interact outside of class and to interview bédéistes and other specialists without disrupting class time or draining financial resources available to school districts.

Augris's blog project and use of the bande dessinée in his history classroom are notable exceptions. While Augris bemoans his student's utilitarian mentality dictating their disinterest in extra-exam material, most teachers cater to student demands regarding course curriculum so that their students are better prepared for national exams like the baccalaureate. The bande dessinée, which can be read as both a document of history and a historical document, is therefore ignored in favor of school textbooks which focus specifically on potential exam material. By discarding unconventional sources such as the bande dessinée, literature, and film, teachers fail to communicate to their students how instrumental these works have been in determining public opinion, in re-contextualizing

iconic images, in questioning founding mythologies, and in reflecting trends in national historiography. Should history teachers be held accountable? Sandrine Lemaire believes that while teachers are not obligated to teach directly from their schoolbooks, they must first be conditioned to accept new (postcolonial) approaches to history. She writes:

> […] même si, depuis 2004, certains manuels n'hésitent plus à rendre compte des avancées de la recherche historique […], les enseignants manquent d'éléments pour sortir des discours qui les ont eux-mêmes formés. Il ne s'agit pas là d'élaborer une théorie du complot ou de l'instrumentalisation, mais bien de comprendre qu'il s'agit du produit d'une culture. (Lemaire 2005, 100)

Lemaire's commentary implies that the postcolonial paradox affects national education and the transmission of historical knowledge in addition to cultural production about specific historical events and the relationship between Self and Other. While the bande dessinée does not propose an immediate solution to these problems, its representation(s) of the French-Algerian War and choice of source material allow this paradox to be clearly identified and defined, thereby inviting interesting new perspectives on both the war and Franco-Algerian history.

Figure 5.1. Taous and Cosme's reunion and final conversation.

Source: Giroud, Frank, and Lax. [1998, 1999] 2008. *Azrayen'*. Paris: Dupuis Aire Libre. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

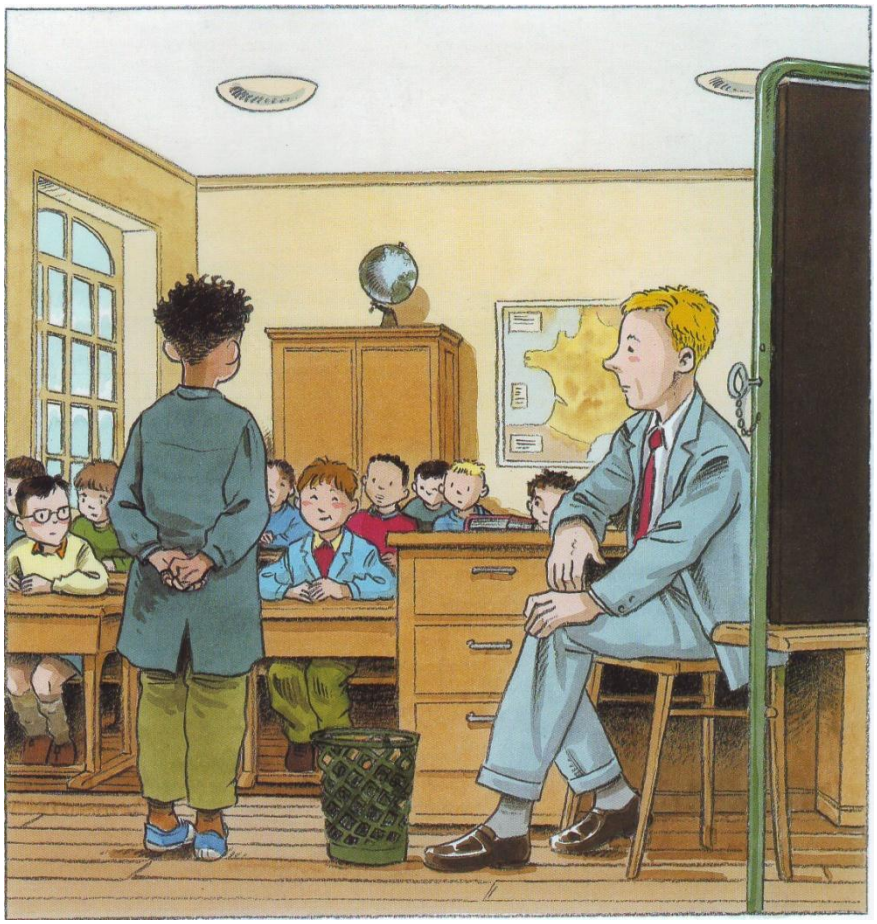

Figure 5.2. Youssef recites Théophile Gautier's "Les Fantaisies d'hiver" to his classmates.

Source: Lasserre, Hélène, and Gilles Bonotaux. 2002. *Quand ils avaient mon âge: Alger 1954-1962*. Paris: Autrement Jeunesse. This image is copyrighted and used with permission.

CONCLUSION

As one of Althusser's Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA), education plays a central role in the transmission of a nation's historical knowledge and cultural traditions. Yet, as discussed in Chapter 5, teachers are limited by state-mandated curricula and their own cultural biases. While teachers are free to choose their methodology and pedagogical materials, most restrict their presentation to that of school textbooks which fail to acknowledge the most recent tendencies in historiography. Schoolchildren in France and Algeria subsequently inherit different and often conflicting views of the French-Algerian War and of their shared histories. If, as Jo McCormack argues, "[w]hat is taught in schools is perhaps one of the last widely shared cultures in what is an increasingly fragmented society" (2007, 172),[1] then the bande dessinée as an example of popular culture which is intimately linked to mass culture, canonical literature, and scholarship provides the opportunity for French and Algerian readers to explore questions of representation as well as the limitations and possibilities of their postcolonial relationship. As popular culture, the bande dessinée has the potential to reach and affect sectors of the population excluded by other genres regardless of how fragmented that population has become. One notable example is the international appeal of Jacques Ferrandez's *Carnets d'Orient* which have enjoyed considerable commercial success on both sides of the Mediterranean. This is not to suggest that Ferrandez's series and others like it should supplant critical histories and school textbooks to teach the history of the French-Algerian War. All texts serve a purpose in the transmission of history and memory. However, the bande dessinée as a self-reflexive genre invites readers to challenge its representation of history as well as "official" representations exploited by bédéistes throughout the creative process.

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[1] McCormack is referring here to the fragmentation of French society.

This dissertation has argued that by recycling textual and iconographic source material, bédéistes confer a measure of historical, biographical, and representational accuracy on their albums. This strategy inserts their work into existent professional and reputational structures, elevating their status in the cultural hierarchy. While the bande dessinée's paraliterary status still stigmatizes the medium (e.g. students fail to take its representation of history seriously), war bandes dessinées use their marginal status to broach taboo topics such as torture and the condition of *harkis* and *pieds noirs*. Despite the bande dessinée's increased visibility in literary and academic circles to which this dissertation contributes, it continues to fly below censorship radars. Indeed the bande dessinée is a medium in which anything goes. As a result, the medium is well positioned to discuss difficult issues and to popularize historical taboos while offering commentaries (either directly or indirectly) on how the war and Franco-Algerian history has been (and is) remembered, historicized, and transmitted. Moreover, the recycling of problematic modes of representation (e.g. Orientalist tropes, iconic images of war) in French and Algerian albums implicates readers who would recognize these images and would question why their re-contextualization in the bande dessinée challenges dominant discourses and the topoï they inspire in the visual and verbal arts.

The recycling of various sources also implicates bédéistes who create an irreconcilable tension between colonialist/Orientalist motifs and astutely anti-colonialist narratives. I have argued that this tension, often existing between the bande dessinée's visual and verbal components, is symptomatic of a postcolonial paradox. Regardless of their cultural background, postcolonial artists are simultaneously drawn to and repulsed by colonial iconography which has, for the most part, negatively influenced the depiction of Franco-Algerian relations in literature and art since the nineteenth century. Rather than ease this dialectical tension and resolve the postcolonial paradox, bédéistes have used

their art to understand the relationship between Self and Other and between their colonial heritage and present postcolonial discourses.[2] Although bande dessinée representations of the French-Algerian War raise more questions about postcolonial relationships than they answer, their contribution to current debates on this historical period and the stain it has left on French and Algerian collective memory is undeniable. If bédéistes appear to perpetuate symbolic violence and disseminate hegemonic discourses, the desired effect is to challenge such notions and to propose alternatives to how readers view national history and trans-Mediterranean relations. Jacques Ferrandez, for example, recycles erotic images to give voice to the silenced and objectified Algerian women of colonial postcards; and the Algerian artist Sid Ali Melouah illustrates post-war Algeria as seen through the eyes of a *pied noir*. This desire to walk a mile in another's shoes is congruent with the fact that several corpus bédéistes are *frontaliers* or cultural mediators who navigate an ambiguous third space located in between French and Algerian culture.

Because *frontaliers* like Ferrandez, Morvandiau, Anne Sibran, Denis Merezette (*pieds noirs*), Farid Boudjellal (*beur*), and Sid Ali Melouah (Algerian living in France) identify with more than one memory community, they can claim insider and outsider status with respect to certain sectors of French and Algerian society. Their narratives grieve the failure to create a utopian (French) Algeria in which all memory groups peacefully coexist. This proposed utopian space would end their constant fluctuation between French and Algerian cultural spaces and would resolve their feelings of not quite belonging in either France or Algeria. Yet as liminal personalities, these bédéistes contribute to the creation of a productive postcolonial cultural space in increasingly globalized societies marked by diasporas, mass exoduses, and ethno-cultural blending. And if not all the bédéistes studied here are *frontaliers*, most incorporate *frontalier*

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[2] This tension may also take the form of which language Algerian bédéistes chose for their albums.

characters into their narratives. The omnipresence of *frontalier* figures (whether as real or fictional individuals) in war bandes dessinées suggests that, despite the trauma of decolonization, the French-Algerian War did not efface colonial contact. Instead, the violent separation of France and Algeria resulted in the displacement of several memory communities who are trying to make sense of their situation while inserting themselves into societies which selectively deny the realities of this separation.

The *frontalier* perspective of war bandes dessinées counteracts the discourse inherent in secondary school textbooks in which personal narratives are discarded in favor of a unified approach to national history. In France and Algeria (and, arguably, elsewhere), the existence of communal memories is dangerous for national unity. According to Nicolas Bancel and Pascal Blanchard, "la France étant une République, il ne saurait être question d'envisager le corps social sous l'angle des communautés, quoiqu'elles existent et se pensent, de plus en plus, comme telles" (n.d., 7). Rather than encourage disunity, war bandes dessinées encourage unity through the exploration of difference and cultural hybridism. Bande dessinée conventions allow the reader to experience narrative through the eyes of select (usually *frontalier*) protagonists: panels are often drawn so that reader and protagonist share the same visual perspective. It follows that the personal perspectives of *frontalier* characters such as Octave and Samia in *Carnets d'Orient*, Taklhit and Cosme in *Azrayen'*, Pierrot and Ali in *Pierrot de Bab el Oued*, Alain Mercadal in *Là-bas*, and Mahmoud in *Petit Polio* take precedence, encouraging reader identification with *frontalier* personalities. In this way, bédéistes promote transcultural interpretations of Franco-Algerian history and suggest that viewing this history from a distinctly French or Algerian perspective is unrealistic and will only deepen the rift between these nations and between various communities.

In addition to offering personal perspectives on the French-Algerian War through fictional *frontalier* characters, several corpus bédéistes have used their work to explore a personal connection to French Algeria and its decolonization. Because these bédéistes

have a deeply personal relationship to this space and historical period (e.g. the war directly affected members of their family), their narratives represent instances of postmemory which examine parental memories through the lens of history, collective memory, and personal experience. As reparative narratives, war bandes dessinées initiate dialogue between parent and child in order to resolve conflict stemming from political trauma. Frank Giroud, for instance, was able to discuss the war with his father, a French soldier in Algeria, thanks to his work on *Azrayen'*. The notion of postmemory bridges the gap between memory and history. Guardians of postmemory (often *frontaliers* or liminal personalities) endeavor to reconcile official history/collective memory and family history/memory. More so than any other medium, the bande dessinée incorporates material traces of the past into narrative, allowing artists to engage with various modes of representation and historical discourses. The result is a unique narrative mosaic which underscores the relationship between history and memory, between the individual and the collective, and between first and subsequent generations.

Reading war bandes dessinées as instances of postmemory allows readers to understand how this medium transmits history and memory. By re-contextualizing historical facts and images in personalized narratives, albums offer a humanized approach to historical abstractions. Readers identify with characters whose lives have been disrupted by war. Fictional and semi-fictional narratives visualize for readers the anonymous victims of political trauma. The visual component of the bande dessinée serves an important purpose in the humanization process. For children and students, the bande dessinée also offers a non-academic point of entry into Franco-Algerian history and encourages further inquiry through frequent allusions to more scholarly publications. Since the French-Algerian War remains part of France and Algeria's recent past, most know someone who was directly affected by the war (as participants or victims). Children and adults thus have the opportunity to discuss this difficult memory and moment of national history with a family member, teacher, colleague, or friend. As it has been

demonstrated throughout this dissertation, the bande dessinée provides fodder for conversations about history, national identity, and the impact of political trauma.

Although I have found nearly forty albums in which the French-Algerian War is represented, I have not found evidence that bédéistes working in France are as interested in other wars of decolonization/independence.[3] Sandrine Lemaire notes a similar trend in French secondary school textbooks:

> […] l'accent mis sur la guerre d'Algérie, abordée comme exemple de la décolonisation violente dont la torture serait la manifestation la plus significative, tend à la fois à réduire le fait colonial à cette seule dimension traumatique et à occulter toute la période précédente. (2005, 99)

Because schools emphasize the violence of the French-Algerian War and the army's use of torture, schoolchildren (who later become adult citizens) are largely ignorant of French colonial history, decolonization in general, and the French-Algerian War in particular (Lemaire, 2005, 100). Yet the frequency with which the war is depicted in popular culture (the bande dessinée and detective fiction[4]), literature, and film suggests that the war has played a major role in the construction of French and Algerian national identity. More so than other genres, we have seen that the bande dessinée engages with seminal texts and images related to the war in order to challenge founding mythologies and to transmit a postmemory grounded in historical fact, family history/memories, and the war's misrepresentation in collective memory. The bande dessinée thereby provides a (fictional) context within which readers can study the French-Algerian War and how it has been documented and de-contextualized in French and Algerian metanarratives.

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[3] It should be noted, however, that Algerian bédéistes demonstrate a keen interest in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well as in Algeria's recent civil war. A perceptible shift has occurred in Algerian cultural production from the revolution to more contemporary issues.

[4] See, for example, Didier Daeninckx's *Meurtres pour mémoire*.

But why do French bédéistes assign greater importance to the French-Algerian War than to other moments in their presentation of French colonial history and decolonization?[5] Instead of depicting the colonial period or even the origins of the French-Algerian War, the majority of corpus artists present a limited view of events. While this tendency echoes textbook presentations of French and Algerian national history, the fact that several bédéistes have a personal connection to French Algeria and the war suggests that they depict moments and places which are part of their personal heritage. For instance, Frank Giroud's decision to set his narrative in Kabylia during the winter of 1957 stems from the discovery of his father's war diary. The writing of postmemorial narratives (as opposed to historical fiction) requires that bédéistes select narrative parameters (time, place, events, and characters) which illustrate their deep personal connection to history and which reflect parental memory. If the French-Algerian War frequently appears in popular culture, it is perhaps because this war has caused more family rifts than other wars of decolonization. Indeed several bédéistes focus on difficult family relationships and the shutdown of communication between parent and child. Because France and Algeria have taken several decades to broach certain topics related to the war (e.g. torture, the *harkis*), these "forgotten" or, rather, forbidden subjects now constitute a central focus for writers, artists, and historians. It is therefore logical that bédéistes, as producers of culture, would also devote attention to this historical taboo. The recent publication of Ferrandez's *L'Hôte* and Laurent Galandon and A. Dan's *Tahya El-Djazaïr* attest to the growing "popularity" of this traumatic event as a cultural topos.

[5] This is not to say that the French-Algerian War is the only war portrayed in the bande dessinée. Bédéistes are publishing on other wars of decolonization, albeit less frequently. Albums depicting the French Indochina War (1946-54), for example, include Romain Slocombe's *La Nuit de Saïgon*, Denis Lapière's *Mono Jim: Le Carrefour de Nâm-Pha*, Frank Giroud and Christian Lax's *Les Oubliés d'Annam*, and select volumes from Daniel Pecqueur and Franz's series *Thomas Noland*.

Such publications can only further current discussions and ensure that a critical postmemory of the French-Algerian War is transmitted to future generations.

APPENDIX

LA GUERRE D'ALGÉRIE EN BD: ENTRETIEN AVEC J. HOWELL[1]

Ophélie et Monia: L'humour est-elle présente dans les BD sur la guerre d'Algérie?

J. Howell (JH): La BD n'a pas pour objectif de faire rire. La preuve en est que certains sujets tabous ou "sérieux" y sont abordés (la guerre d'Algérie (*Carnets d'Orient, Azrayen'*), la colonisation (*Carnets d'Orient*), la guerre d'Indochine (*Les oubliés d'Annam*), la Shoah (*Maus*), etc.). Toutefois, il peut y avoir de l'humour (l'humour noir, l'ironie, le cynisme ou bien l'humour léger lorsqu'il s'agit d'un album dont le contenu n'est pas strictement historique—je pense notamment au *Combat ordinaire* de Manu Larcenet dans lequel le protagoniste et son frère font souvent des blagues, générant des moments de détente dans la série). L'humour s'articule également lorsqu'un bédéiste souhaite plonger le lecteur dans une certaine ambiance. Citons en exemple *Une éducation algérienne* de Guy Vidal et Alain Bignon. Le scénariste (Vidal) a voulu représenter la vie en caserne où les personnages prononcent parfois des répliques vulgaires, ce qui crée un effet de réel et qui tente d'insérer le lecteur dans la "réalité" de la vie d'un appelé en Algérie. Le degré d'humour dépend donc de l'œuvre en question.

Maryse et Mathilde: Qu'est-ce que la BD apporte de plus que le roman ou le cinéma?

JH: Le roman articule un discours grâce à la parole (qui peut être certes très imagée). C'est un genre qui privilégie l'écriture. La BD, en revanche, s'appuie à la fois sur l'image et le texte, ou encore sur la relation image/texte. Dans la BD sur la guerre d'Algérie, cette représentation double crée une tension entre des images-icônes, orientalistes, colonialistes, d'une part, et des récits post-coloniaux ou anticolonialistes d'autre part. L'exemple phare est *Carnets d'Orient*. Jacques Ferrandez a puisé son inspiration dans la

[1] Interview conducted via e-mail and posted on Étienne Augris's blog, *Une histoire commune?*, on December 3, 2009.

peinture orientaliste du XIXème siècle et les cartes postales érotiques (voir *Le harem colonial* de Malek Alloula). Mais ce n'est pas pour autant qu'il reproduit un discours orientaliste dans son ouvrage. Son texte illustre son désir de regarder l'Histoire autrement, de revoir l'Autre. D'autres exemples sont les BD "beurs" (*Jambon-Beur*) dont les thèmes (l'hybridité culturelle et linguistique, l'identité) sont basés sur les stéréotypes parfois visuels et qui ont pour but de décrire le caractère unique des individus issus de l'immigration maghrébine en France. Dans tous les cas, le roman raconte une histoire tandis que la BD l'illustre au sein d'un cadre narratif. En outre, il faut citer un exemple intéressant: celui de l'adaptation de "L'hôte" (une nouvelle de Camus) proposée par Ferrandez dans sa BD du même titre. La quasi-absence de dialogue dans la nouvelle de Camus se traduit chez Ferrandez par ses aquarelles, ses paysages et le regard de ses personnages en gros plan. Tout ce qui est dit par le narrateur de Camus se retrouve dans le non-dit du bédéiste. Quant au cinéma, il subit des pressions financières considérables liées à la production et à la distribution. Il s'ensuit que le cinéma est plus sensible à la censure pour garantir la rentabilité des productions à gros budget (gros par rapport aux coûts de l'impression et de l'édition d'une BD). Il existe certes des lois qui régissent la publication des livres destinés à la jeunesse (la loi du 16 juillet 1949). Mais, d'après un éditeur qui travaille dans ce secteur, la BD est relativement libre de traiter n'importe quel sujet. C'est à l'éditeur de faire le tri. Or il faut éviter d'établir une hiérarchie générique lorsqu'il s'agit du roman, de la BD et du cinéma. Je ne dirais pas que la BD est meilleure que le roman ou le cinéma, mais que la BD offre une représentation qui se distingue de celles du roman et du cinéma. La BD fait partie intégrante d'une production culturelle nationale.

Claire et Romane: Quels styles de dessin sont les plus utilisés dans les BD sur la guerre d'Algérie?

JH: Le style de dessin diffère de dessinateur à dessinateur. Si l'on doit généraliser, le style qui semble dominer la BD sur la guerre d'Algérie est le réalisme (disons des dessins

dont l'iconicité est forte). Or il en existe d'autres dont les dessins sont plus stylisés comme *D'Algérie* de Morvandiau, *Le combat ordinaire* de Manu Larcenet ou *Babel 2* de David B. De plus, chez Morvandiau, il existe une différence entre la représentation visuelle de l'histoire de sa famille (des dessins stylisés) et de l'Histoire (des reproductions relativement fidèles des photos de presse et des cartes postales)—comme si l'Histoire était plus claire, voire plus tangible, que l'histoire de la famille du bédéiste. Il me semble que le style des BD "historiques" (*Carnets d'Orient*, *Azrayen'*) est souvent plus réaliste que celui des BD dans lesquelles l'Histoire joue un rôle moins prononcé.

Kassandra et Grâce: Est-ce que, pendant la guerre elle-même, les "événements" étaient abordés dans la BD?

JH: D'après mes recherches, la première BD française sur la guerre est *Une éducation algérienne* (parue en 1982). La BD joue le rôle d'un miroir qui reflète les préoccupations de la société dont elle émane. En conséquence, il fallait que le silence soit brisé avant que la guerre d'Algérie ne puisse être abordée dans la BD en France. Une des premières histoires critiques écrites sur la guerre et publiées en métropole date de 1982 (*Histoire de la guerre d'Algérie* de Bernard Droz et Evelyne Lever). Ceci pourrait expliquer pourquoi la guerre est apparue si tardivement dans la BD française. En Algérie, où la guerre est devenue mythe national (le début de l'Histoire contemporaine du pays), la situation est bien différente. Malheureusement je n'ai pas réussi à trouver tous les albums dans lesquels la guerre est représentée (faute de distribution à l'étranger). Bien que la plupart soit publiée dans les années 1980 avant la "fin" du parti unique, il y en a d'autres qui ont été publiés à la fin des années 1960 (*Commando en mission* de Noureddine Hiahemzizou (1968), *Moustache et les Belgacem* de Slim (1969)). Cependant, les "événements" ont été souvent abordés dans les dessins de presse pendant la guerre en Algérie et en France (voir, par exemple, *Le déshonneur est sauf!*, une anthologie des dessins de presse publiés par Siné dans *L'Express* entre 1958 et 1962). Contrairement à la BD, les dessins de presse dépendent presque exclusivement de l'actualité.

Kévin: Comment la BD parvient-elle à retranscrire la violence de la guerre et des sentiments?

JH: Comme pour la question du style, je dirais que chaque dessinateur a sa façon de retranscrire la violence et l'émotion. La violence peut être représentée directement dans des cases lorsqu'un personnage subit la torture ou est tué comme dans *Carnets d'Orient* et *Azrayen'*. Ou bien la violence peut être représentée indirectement. Le protagoniste (et le lecteur) d'*Une éducation algérienne* entend (lit) les cris d'un prisonnier au lieu de voir l'interrogatoire "musclé". Mais je pense notamment à la reproduction des photos d'Elie Kagan (photographe-témoin du massacre du 17 octobre 1961 à Paris) dans *D'Algérie*. En tant que lecteur, on reconnaît le contexte dans lequel certaines photos ont été prises sans voir la violence de l'événement "en direct » dans la BD. D'autres bédéistes préfèrent illustrer la violence et les sentiments par le biais du coloriage. Par exemple, le rouge signifie la colère (Boudjellal l'utilise dans *Petit Polio* lorsqu'un Arabe est agressé par la police en pleine rue) ou la passion (les scènes d'amour et de violence dans *Azrayen'*). Tronchet, le dessinateur de *Là-bas*, exploite bien les couleurs pour dévoiler les émotions des personnages: le rouge, le bleu, le vert, le jaune. Chaque couleur prend une signification particulière par rapport à la narration (le vert domine les cases dans lesquelles la maladie d'un des personnages se manifeste; le rouge colore la scène dans laquelle les membres de l'OAS tirent sur des gens faisant leurs courses au marché). En plus de ces deux techniques, il y a aussi celle du gros plan. Le rapprochement (comme au cinéma) exagère l'angoisse des personnages (les gros plans sur les visages) et l'agitation d'une foule (lorsque les protagonistes se trouvent "coincés" dans une foule à l'intérieur d'une case). Le gros plan des foules permet aussi au dessinateur de faire une représentation métonymique de la foule (il n'est pas obligé de dessiner beaucoup de personnes). La métonymie est d'ailleurs importante: les bédéistes ne peuvent pas tout montrer. En faisant le tri des événements, des horreurs de la guerre, ils doivent décider ce qu'il faut montrer pour réussir l'effet désiré.

Justine: À quelle époque remarque-t-on le plus d'apparitions de la guerre d'Algérie dans la BD?

JH: En Algérie, la guerre (la révolution) apparaît le plus souvent durant les années 1980 avec les albums publiés chez SNED (Société nationale d'édition et de diffusion) devenue ENAL (Entreprise nationale algérienne du livre). En France, la guerre apparaît pour la première fois dans la BD en 1982 avec *Une éducation algérienne*. Mais c'est vraiment depuis les années 1990 que la guerre commence à faire des apparitions plus ou moins fréquentes grâce à la parution de quelques BD majeures: *Le chemin de l'Amérique* en 1990 (Baru, Jean-Marc Thévenet et Daniel Ledran), *Petit Polio* en 1998/1999 (Farid Boudjellal), et *Azrayen'* en 1998/1999 (Frank Giroud et Christian Lax). Et depuis la publication de *La guerre fantôme* de Ferrandez (qui a gagné le prix France Info à Angoulême en 2003), les bédéistes s'intéressent plus à la guerre ainsi qu'à ses répercussions sur la France d'aujourd'hui (voir par exemple les cinq *Carnets* (deuxième cycle), *Retour au bercail, Le combat ordinaire, Là-bas, Babel 2, D'Algérie, Tahya El-Djazaïr*). Rajoutons à ceci que la France a attendu trente ans avant de revendiquer la reconnaissance de l'état de guerre en Algérie (en 1999). Aussi pourrions-nous établir un parallèle entre ce jalon national et la représentation de la guerre dans la BD dont l'essor initial date de la même époque.

Justine: Comment est représentée la guerre d'Algérie dans la BD suivant le pays dont vient l'auteur?

JH: Les bédéistes sont tous issus d'un certain contexte socioculturel, ce qui veut dire qu'ils sont tous sensibles aux discours dominants de leur société. Ainsi la représentation de la guerre est-elle différente en Algérie (où la guerre égale révolution nationale et la naissance d'une nation) et en France (où la guerre signale la fin de l'empire colonial). Il s'ensuit que les bédéistes algériens (à l'exception de Slim (*Moustache et les Belgacem*) et Sid Ali Melouah (*Pierrot de Bab el Oued*)) mettent en évidence le courage des

moudjahidin dans leur résistance au colonisateur. Cette représentation reflète l'idéologie du parti unique (le FLN) qui a d'ailleurs financé la publication des albums des années 1980 (*Moustache et les Belgacem* a paru dans l'hebdomadaire *Algérie actualité* dans les années 1960 tandis que *Pierrot de Bab el Oued* n'a paru que récemment en 2003). *Pierrot de Bab el Oued* est unique parmi les BD algériennes: le personnage éponyme est un pied-noir qui retourne en Algérie une trentaine d'années après la guerre pour retrouver son pays natal. En France, la représentation de la guerre est plus variée. Il y a des BD qui tentent de montrer la guerre sous plusieurs angles (c'est-à-dire la perspective de plusieurs communautés à la fois comme dans *Carnets d'Orient*), ou bien de retracer l'histoire d'une famille (souvent des pieds-noirs comme dans *Là-bas* et *D'Algérie*). Ce qui frappe également dans certaines BD françaises est le désir d'ouvrir un dialogue avec le passé. Dans *Le combat ordinaire*, par exemple, le père (qui a fait la guerre) n'en parle jamais à son fils. Le manque de communication entre père et fils symbolise l'amnésie de l'Etat qui a longuement refusé de transmettre une mémoire collective de la guerre à ses citoyens. Si la BD algérienne a largement servi à solidifier le discours officiel du FLN par rapport à la guerre, la BD française sert plutôt à briser le silence par les mots et les images. Il faut pourtant noter que chaque pays a ses tabous: les Algériens et les Français ont toujours du mal à aborder la question du harki qui est souvent dénigré dans la BD algérienne et relégué au second plan dans la BD française. Aujourd'hui il me semble que la guerre concerne moins les Algériens (qui en parlent depuis longtemps) que les Français (qui en parlent depuis peu).

Justine: Pourquoi avoir choisi ce thème?

JH: Au début je m'intéressais à la relation entre la photographie et les récits de guerre. Comme le médium photographique est problématique dans la mesure où l'on a tendance à oublier que la photo n'est ni objective ni univoque, la BD, dans son recyclage des photos de presse (voir *Carnets d'Orient*, *D'Algérie*, et *Babel 2*), filtre la "réalité" montrée par la photo pour déconstruire les discours associés à l'évidence photographique de

l'Histoire. Si la photo est souvent utilisée pour prouver l'existence des personnes ou l'occurrence des événements, les cadres narratifs et représentationnels de la BD révèlent que la photo peut être manipulée et dé-contextualisée. Le fait de reproduire des photos et des unes des journaux d'époque en dessin rappelle au lecteur qu'il faut se méfier des récits officiels (et officieux) dont les résonances se trouvent dans la presse, mais aussi dans les photos de famille, par exemple celles des pieds-noirs qui ont figé une certaine mémoire de l'Algérie et que l'on peut trouver sur les sites des associations pieds-noirs sur Internet. Nos photos renforcent nos perceptions au lieu de les remettre en question. En lisant les BD sur la guerre d'Algérie, on voit les mêmes photos (ou du moins le même genre de photos) insérées dans un cadre fictionnel qui pousse le lecteur à reconsidérer certaines images "mythiques" (y compris les photos ethnographiques et les cartes postales érotiques) dans un contexte post-colonial. C'est ainsi que la BD nous permet de revisiter nos perceptions stéréotypées et nos certitudes vis-à-vis de la représentation de l'Histoire. C'est aussi pourquoi j'ai décidé d'étudier la représentation de la guerre d'Algérie dans la BD et non pas dans le récit photographique.

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[1] Bande dessinée authorship can be attributed to more than one individual. When one individual is listed, he or she is responsible for all aspects of production (scenario, illustrations, and coloration). When two individuals are listed, the first is the scenarist, and the second is the illustrator/colorist (the sole exception is Larcenet's series for which Manu Larcenet is the scenarist and illustrator, and Patrice Larcenet is the colorist). When three individuals are listed, the first is the scenarist, the second is the illustrator, and the third is the colorist. While colorists are included in parenthetical references made throughout this dissertation, their names have been excluded from the main text.

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