

Military ‘pacification’ and the women of Bordj Okhriss

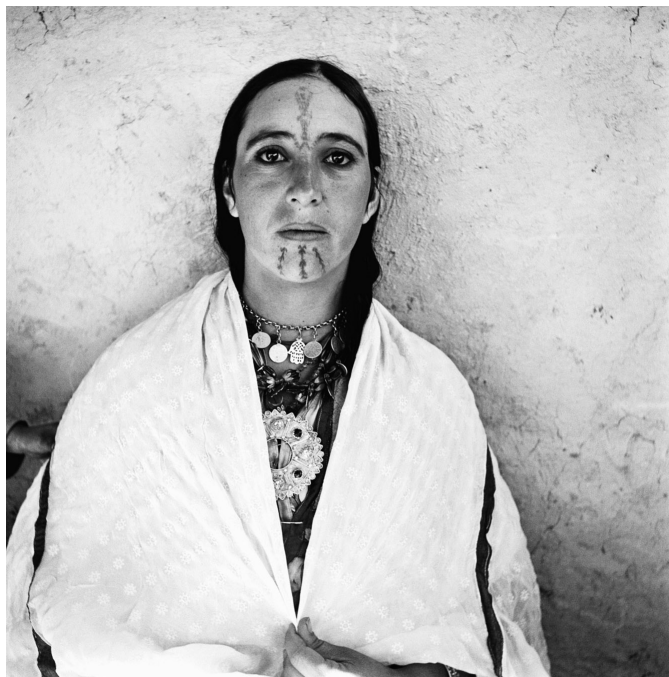
So far the study of the MSF has centred mainly on grass-roots emancipation processes in *urban* society, but in many ways the French attempt to elaborate a strategy of contact was even more important in the isolated high plains and mountains of the interior since this is where 80 per cent of the population lived and in which the ALN maquis found its local support. This terrain provided an excellent base for the insurgents, zones that were almost impenetrable to modern armed forces, and in which the guerrilla fighters, knowledgeable of every sheep-track, cave and gully, could move with ease and quickly melt away to avoid any pursuing commandos. A fundamental problem for the army in the zones of pacification was how to engage in actions that would destroy guerrilla bands, their bases and logistical support within the local peasant community, with all its attendant violence, and simultaneously win the population over to supporting the French political order through providing them with security, schools, medical centres, roads and a ‘higher order’ of progress and civilisation than the ‘bandits’ could ever offer. Algerian peasant women found themselves, as have women universally in so many theatres of war from Palestine to Vietnam, caught in the eye of the storm and in order to understand the difficulties facing the EMSI teams, their success or failure in winning over the inhabitants (see chapter 7), it is necessary first to take into account the context of insecurity, the accompanying and contradictory violence of the armed forces, with which they were inevitably associated.

The historian faces little shortage of evidence, from participant memoirs of combatants to extensive archive sources, to establish the general features of military operations and their impact on local Algerian civil populations. What is singularly lacking, and difficult to research, are first-hand accounts by Algerian peasant women of their experiences of the war and how they related, if at all, to the attempts by the French to extend an emancipation agenda to them.¹ Did Muslim women welcome or oppose the French initiative and how did this vary across

class, between for example those from an educated bourgeoisie and illiterate peasantry; across the complex map of Algerian space by urban and rural or regional affiliation; and through time, as the fortunes of each side ebbed and flowed?² Amrane, using the official data of registered women militants, has been able to provide important statistical insights, but what is needed here is more in-depth, qualitative information on the mental universe of female combatants and 'sympathisers'. Of the few interviews that have been carried out with Algerian women about their experience of the war, the majority have been with educated women of urban origin, and very few indeed have been with rural women, most of whom were illiterate and have left little if any record.³ In the absence of a detailed ethnography or oral history of the war,⁴ one of the most potent, alternative sources of information lies in the evidence of the many thousands of photographs that were taken of peasant women in the *bled* that recorded their contact with, and reactions to, the French army and administration and the various agencies, like the EMSI, that were designed to assist in their emancipation.

The most famous war photographs that relate specifically to Algerian women in the *bled* were taken by the young conscript Marc Garanger in 1960–61. Garanger, an unofficial regimental photographer, based with his army unit in the isolated village of Bordj Okhriss 120 kilometres to the south-east of Algiers, was ordered by his commander to take identity-card photographs of some 2,000 men and women located in the villages and resettlement camps of Aïn Terzine, Bordj Okhriss, le Mesdour, le Meghnine, S'Bara and Souk el Khrémis.⁵ While on home-leave in 1961 Garanger, with the aid of FLN sympathiser Robert Barrat, was able to go clandestinely into Switzerland with his photographs and six portraits of women appeared in the *Illustré Suisse* with a text by Charles-Henri Favrod with the basic message, 'here is what France is doing in Algeria'.⁶ From the very beginning the photographs, like several other iconic images of Garanger such as that of the captured FLN commander Ahmed Bencherif, were associated with a pro-FLN and anti-war position. In 1966 the images of women, reformatted from cropped 'passport' size to more aesthetic waist-length portraits, gained the prestigious Niepce Prize, and in the following years were exhibited world-wide and finally published in 1982 as *Femmes Algériennes 1960*.⁷

The women of Bordj Okhriss were coerced by the army to remove their veils in order to have their photographs taken and the images have been widely interpreted, including by Garanger himself, as a symbol of the inherent violence of colonial domination and war, and capturing the moment when the women expressed their angry defiance and proud dignity before the eye of the invasive camera.



8 Woman unveiled for identity photograph, Bordj Okhriss 1960. The tattoos indicate that the local Arabophone people still carried the trace of their original Berber culture

In each village the population was summoned by the officer of the army post. It was the faces of the women which impressed me so much. They had no choice in the matter. They were under the obligation to unveil and to let themselves be photographed. They had to sit outside on a stool in front of the white wall of a *mechta*. I was on the receiving end of their point-blank stares, first witness to their silent and smouldering protest. I wish [in these photographs] to bear witness to them.⁸

Some of the women resisted having their photograph taken and one of them, Yamina Boukaf, told Garanger in 2004, 'I remember very well the day the photos were taken. If I am not among them, it's because I didn't want to do it. When we had to go, I pretended to be ill'.⁹ In later years Garanger elaborated further on the conditions under which the photographs were taken: 'I was circled by armed soldiers to take the shots. The response of the women to the act of aggression against them is visible in each of their expressions'.¹⁰ In the light of such comment, the dynamics of the situation begins to shift: as with numerous French accounts of contact with Algerian women, as with the EMSI and MSF in general in



9 Zohra Gacem, Bordj Okhriss, holding the identity photograph taken forty-four years earlier by Marc Garanger

which the presence of the military is occluded, we are suddenly made aware of the fact that each Algerian women is seated facing not only a lens, but also a line of armed soldiers. Similarly, no matter how peaceful and caring may seem the myriad depictions of EMSI nurses tending to Algerian babies and their mothers, French welfare intervention was always under the immediate or imminent sign of the gun, and no matter how much the Europeans protested it, the relationship could never be one of equality.

In 2004 Garanger was able to return to Bordj Okhriss for the first time in over forty years and to locate and meet several of the surviving women, including Cherid Barkaoun, one of the two wives of the silversmith of Bordj Okhriss. Here another detail emerges: the women of Bordj Okhriss, like most of those in rural Algeria, did not wear a face-veil but, if they wished to protect themselves from the gaze of a stranger, they could draw the loose *haïk* together with their hand. The conditions under which the *haïk* was removed were not determined by Garanger with the soldiers as a silent guard, but by the direct intervention of an officer:

In the beginning the women lowered their veil [*haïk*] which they draped over their shoulders, but kept their head-scarf. Immediately the officer demanded that they take this off too. This was a terrible humiliation for these women, to appear with uncovered hair in front of the French



10 Cherid Barkaoun, one of the two wives of the silversmith of Bordj Okhriss, expressing her distress

soldiers. Some literally looked at me to kill. Above all most of them expressed an incredible distress. This is the case here, as with Cherid Barkaoun. Her look tells us all about the drama she was experiencing at this moment.¹¹

The identity photographs were ordered by the army command in a climate that was suffused with sneering contempt and racism for Algerian women: when Garanger placed the prints on the desk of a captain in the Aumale HQ, he called out to other officers, 'Come and see, come and see how ugly they are! Come and see these baboons, just like monkeys!'¹²

The *Femmes algériennes* sequence provides powerful visual evidence of the nature of the interrelationship between the occupying French forces and peasant women. Here, what may appear to be a relatively low-key and mundane event encapsulates the climate of coercion and fear under which Algerian women lived constantly. Disempowered and voiceless, they were still able to express an inner resistance, or to use Marnia Lazreg's phrase, 'the eloquence of silence', a defiance and sense of integrity and honour that no humiliations could breach.

The images of *Femmes algériennes* have been widely discussed and analysed, but mainly from a literary and deconstructionist angle that deploys critical theory to interpret the structure and meaning of the 'gaze'.¹³ However, there exists a danger in failing to provide a careful reading of these images that places them in a historical, sociological or anthropological context. The failure to examine the background encourages a largely subjective approach in which the author is able, in some magical way, to tell us what the silent women looking at the camera are thinking and feeling.¹⁴ Subjectivity is here often grounded in the assumption that Algerian women and French forces were locked into a self-evident conflictual opposition, a Manichean relationship between two homogeneous blocks, the oppressor and the oppressed. Algerian women universally hate and resist all things French, while all Europeans are part of the same, undifferentiated block of colonial oppressors. The problem with this, apart from the tendency to caricature, is to engage in an over-simplifying and reductionist approach that fails to note what is most interesting about the situation, the extraordinary complexity and internal divisions of the local society in which these women lived, and the often ambiguous relationship of Algerian peasants to the occupier. For example, Garanger took a number of photographs of the local *barkis* who fought with the French army, including intimate domestic scenes with their wives and children, and these women would also have been among those who had their identity photographs taken.¹⁵ They also may have objected to having their photographs taken, in breach of the code of female honour, but their attitude to the armed forces is likely to have been quite different since their safety from FLN assassination depended on the protection of the French. That the relationship between peasant women and the French was not always one of unmitigated hostility is captured in another sequence of photographs that Garanger was able to take of women inside their homes, usually a forbidden (*haram*) space, since he was able to accompany a team of female welfare assistants who had already established a basis of trust.¹⁶ Among these domestic scenes are intimate portraits of women, smiling and relaxed as they breast-fed their babies, wove or prepared food.¹⁷

A further level of complication in the taking of these identity photographs is that, although described vaguely as intended for policing purposes, and therefore as part of the apparatus of control and repression, they had also a more benign function. As will be seen in chapter 8, the French administration faced considerable difficulty in implementing its emancipation agenda because of the failure, especially in isolated rural areas, to register births, marriages and deaths, and to constitute a civil register (*état civil*). The difficulty in identifying women then carried a



11 Smiling woman breast-feeding her baby, Bordj Okhriss 1960

number of negative consequences when it came to the implementation of various rights, including from September 1958 onwards the right to vote, the granting of family allowances, and the application of the 1959 marriage law which included checks by officials to ensure brides were above the new minimum age of fifteen years. The senior civil servant André Jacomet in December 1959 ordered a crash programme of registration, especially of women, and in September 1960 the Sub-Prefect of Aumale was co-ordinating major census operations in Bordj Okhriss and the surrounding resettlement camps.¹⁸ While identity cards were used to control movements of people they were also, and this is a typical contradiction of the war, a necessary part of trying to extend reforms and to create a functioning civil society.

The remaining part of this chapter sets out to move beyond the identity-card sequence, which has often been treated in isolation from the context in which the photographs were taken, by looking at the larger oeuvre of Marc Garanger, which consists of over 10,000 photographs that provide an outstanding and sympathetic record of both the daily life of the conscripts, as well as of the local Algerian community.¹⁹ This record is unusual since not only was Garanger a professional

photographer who was left free to wander through the villages, but unlike most army photographers who were dispatched daily to cover specific military operations and events right across Algeria, the corpus provides an in-depth view into the life of *one* locale, a rural war zone that experienced the full brunt of conflict as well as welfare reformism and emancipation. A second source of information about Bordj Okhriss can be found in the extensive army and civil archives for this area.²⁰ The overall aim here is not so much to engage in a close critical examination of Garanger's oeuvre but to use the region in which he was located as a case-study, a starting point, from which to illustrate the difficult and often violent conditions faced by Algerian rural populations during the so-called 'pacification'. It is with these conditions in mind that we then move on in chapter 7 to look more closely at the difficulties faced by the strategy of contact, and in particular the EMSI teams that were operating in zones of continuous violence, destruction and uprooting.

The military sector of Aumale²¹ to which Garanger was posted in early March 1960 covered a huge area of high and impenetrable mountainous terrain, which towards Aumale sloped into the grain-farming region of the High Plains, and further south, the arid and treeless wastes of the Saharan fringe. Away from the main highways, much of the settled or semi-nomadic peasantry lived in dispersed farms (*mechtas*) or *douars* that could only be reached by mule along small dirt tracks, until the army, using bulldozers and *corvée* labour, began to blast strategic routes to supply military posts and control the interior.²² This huge zone, larger than the county of Norfolk, was, apart from the small towns of Aumale and Aïn Bessem, almost completely devoid of settlers, and in the quartier of Aïn Terzine in which Garanger was located, there were only ten civilian Europeans for an Algerian population of 14,000. Historically, through the early twentieth century, the *pieds-noirs* farmers had deserted the *bled* for the towns and, after 1954, because of FLN raids on isolated farms,²³ this evacuation had accelerated further, so that by 1961 the tiny colonial population of the Aumale sector (2,328) was cooped up in the townships, outnumbered by a largely hostile Algerian population of 210,978. In this situation, redolent of a fragile American frontier society constantly endangered by turbulent Indian tribes, by far the biggest European presence (4,400 men) was that of the army.²⁴

In this zone of low and unreliable rainfall and poor soils the great mass of the peasantry scratched a bare living from cereal and livestock, using primitive farming techniques, and the army reported that 'eighty-five per cent of the population live in poverty on an average annual income of 200 new francs'.²⁵ The men at Aïn Terzine faced seasonal unemployment for most of the year and, after the intensive labour of

the harvest, in which many worked as day-labourers or share-croppers (*khammès*) for bigger Algerian landowners, many were either hired by the SAS for relief work on road and housing construction or migrated towards Algiers and France.²⁶ After a century of neglect by the colonial government the rural population of Aumale was almost devoid of any supportive investment or infrastructure, including basic medical provision and schools. For the whole sector of 200,000 people there were only five civilian doctors in 1960, and before 1954 in the vast arid tracts of the south and mountain zones some inhabitants had never seen a European.²⁷ One SAS officer reported, 'No health centre, no civilian doctor, no technical assistant, no nurses, no welfare assistants, and isolation because of the insecure roads (Masqueray) or distance (Maginot)', areas in which neither civilian nor military doctors were prepared to go and work.²⁸

The endemic poverty and underdevelopment of the peasant and pastoral societies of the Aumale sector was in most respects quite typical of the deep rural crisis to be found across the mountainous zones of northern Algeria.²⁹ Such colonial exploitation and grinding poverty provided good conditions for the spread of the nationalist movement after 1945,³⁰ but Aïn Terzine was to play a particularly important strategic role throughout the War of Independence since the impenetrable mountain zone immediately to the north, the Forest of Bordj Okhriss, and to the south, the hilly Bougadouen, provided a refuge for the maquis of both the ALN and the opposing MNA. ALN units, in particular the hundred-man Katiba 611, carried out constant attacks into the plains, cutting telegraph posts, laying siege to army posts, and ambushing patrols and road convoys, but their most important function was to provide secure resting places, food and local guides for long-distance columns bringing weapons and equipment from Tunisia via the Saharan fringes to supply the important Wilaya IV (Algiers) and Wilaya III (Great Kabylia) to the north. An army report noted: 'A cross-roads too for the rebels who profit from the strips of wooded and mountainous terrain to maintain their communications between the Ouarsensis and the Bibans chain, and to supply Wilaya III with livestock from the high plateaux'.³¹ During early May 1958 army intelligence tracked a convoy of 160 porters carrying arms supplies (a mortar, machine guns, rifles, ammunition) as it moved from the south through the Bordj Okhriss Forest towards Haizer in the Kabyle mountains to the north: by the 4 June the French army had attacked this unit and killed ninety-eight men.³²

By late 1957 the ALN maquis, having won a long and bloody civil war to defeat the MNA in this region,³³ was at the height of its military power and it was at this stage that General de Maison Rouge, who had gained a

reputation for the successful pacification of the Aïn-Témouchent region in Oranie, was appointed commander of Aumale. The crucial strategic importance of the sector was fully recognised by him as a cross-roads, 'a veritable nerve-centre between the Mitidja, Kabylia and the Constantine region', and General Allard on appointing Maison Rouge in January 1958 instructed him, 'Your mission is to cut Algeria in two between the Blida Atlas and the High Plateaux. If you succeed the rebellion will not be able to survive in the Algiers region'.³⁴ This explains why Bordj Okhriss, sitting astride the FLN transit corridor and with a powerful maquis in the hills above, was the centre of intense military operations that impacted constantly on the lives of the local people.

Women and the maquis³⁵

During 1955–56 the FLN began to recruit both qualified and trainee nurses from the towns to go into the maquis to provide crucial medical care for wounded men in make-shift hospitals concealed in forest huts and caves. This professional core was expanded during 1957 through the arrival of lycée and university students, many of them fleeing the towns to escape arrest by the army after the student strike of May 1956 and the Battle of Algiers. These young women, the *moudjahidates*, led an extremely harsh and dangerous life,³⁶ and as army operations penetrated deeper into the mountains after 1958 they were, along with their ALN units, forced into interminable marches at night to avoid detection or encirclement. Often hungry, living in caves, lean-to shelters and holes in the ground, infested with lice, facing extremes of hot and freezing or rainy weather, the maquisards showed extraordinary resilience in tending severely wounded soldiers and, often short of medicine and equipment, improvising splints, herbal remedies, treatment of gangrene and amputations without anaesthetics or penicillin.

Equal, if not more important, to the ability of the ALN forces to survive in the *bled* was the day-to-day support provided by local peasant or nomadic women. When ALN units, which were almost constantly on the move, arrived in an isolated mountain village or desert encampment, the local women would volunteer (or be coerced) to improvise and cook for dozens of men in a situation where they and their children faced desperate poverty and food shortages.³⁷ In addition the peasantry washed clothes, kept guard, provided shelter, carried messages and arms, and transported supplies into the mountains from the markets, shops and FLN depots of the towns in the plains. As one interviewee told Amrane, with typical brevity and self-effacement: 'I was a *moussebila*: I carried weapons, I washed the clothes, did the cooking, collected money, and

reported any intelligence'.³⁸ A maquisarde recalled, 'The women of the hamlets helped us. All the hard work, it was them that did it: they milled the wheat, rolled the couscous, and made the bread. When we arrived exhausted, they had prepared the meal . . . They suffered . . . We, we could escape when the soldiers came and we were armed, we could defend ourselves'.³⁹

The 'domestic' and invisible gendered work of the local civilian *moussebilate* and 'sympathisers', which was vital to the ALN maquis, went largely unreported in post-war Algerian histories and autobiographies by men who recorded their own heroic fighting deeds, and yet the peasant women and their children were far more exposed to the punitive violence of the French army, including burning of houses and rape, than the younger, celibate and mobile men and women of the ALN. In areas like Bordj Okhriss in which the conflict between French army and nationalist forces was most intense and long-lasting a high percentage of the able-bodied, married men deserted the villages in order to join the maquis, to escape forced recruitment into MNA bands, to avoid constant army and FLN harassment, or to find work in the cities of Algeria and France. The ALN, cut-off in the mountains by the army, became increasingly dependent on the liaison and support of communities of women: as a Kabyle peasant noted, 'There are only women left in the village . . . The women have stayed behind; if the women had gone there would be no-one left to feed the fighters (*fellaghas*)'.⁴⁰

Small numbers of *moudjahidate* operated in the ALN maquis in the Aumale sector, and in the mountains between Bordj Okhriss and Bouira.⁴¹ For example, army intelligence which constantly monitored the movements of ALN Commando 322-1 through the Forest of Bordj Okhriss during 1960 reported the creation of a new HQ camp for twenty men and one woman nurse, along with various food and clothing caches.⁴² The special French Commando units (*Commando de chasse*), like the 'Kimono 11', sometimes found women in ALN fighting units in the area,⁴³ but far more important was the extensive supply role played by women living within the villages like Aïn Terzine and Bordj Okhriss. The OPA, the FLN clandestine political network, penetrated deep and silently into the social fabric of the townships of Bordj Okhriss and Mesdour⁴⁴ and was able to infiltrate militants into the main French civilian and military institutions: for example, three town councillors were reported to be acting as FLN collectors in early 1960 and Gestraoui, a sergeant in the Mesdour *harka*, was arrested for FLN collaboration and was photographed by Garanger along with his family at the moment of their deportation.⁴⁵ The battalion at Aïn Terzine deployed exceptional, but standardised, forms of violence to extract information from captured

ALN fighters or arrested militants. When men were intercepted during operations in the mountains or *zones interdites* they were often beaten on the spot,⁴⁶ and while key suspects were whisked away for interrogation, other less 'valuable' fighters were killed under the guise of the infamous wood collection fatigues (*corvée de bois*) or 'shot in escape'.⁴⁷ Despite constant surveillance, numerous arrests and torture by intelligence officers (OR), army reports reveal deep frustration at the ability of the FLN cells to recover and reorganise no matter how harsh the repression.

As the peasant population was uprooted and moved from the isolated mountain zones into camps, so the maquis became increasingly dependent on food supplies that filtered in from the *douars* and markets in the valleys below. The important weekly market at Bordj Okhriss, attended by up to 2,000 traders who came in from miles around on foot or by mule and horse, was closely policed by the SAS soldiers (*maghzen*) to prevent foodstuffs reaching the ALN. A report noted the need to suppress, 'the small-scale and un-monitored dealing in the *douars*. The population must be brought to make its acquisitions only with the retailers established in the markets and village centres, surveillance allowing us to detect if the purchases exceed the needs of the family'.⁴⁸ But an army map showed that Bordj Okhriss continued in late 1959 to be the main supply centre for three maquis bases in the mountains to the north, north-west and south.⁴⁹ Much of the provision supply into the mountains was effected by local women, and the sector commander laid down plans in November 1960 to intercept aid reaching the ALN from the re-settlement camps: 'control of the night-time isolation of these New Villages, control over food supplies being taken by inhabitants of the village, especially women', into the interior (*bled*).⁵⁰ Commando units in the Aumale sector were constantly intercepting mule trains moving into the mountains, often accompanied by women, some of whom were married or related to ALN fighters, who fled on sight or were arrested.⁵¹ ALN units operated by establishing carefully hidden supply caches of arms and food scattered over several square miles between which they constantly moved, and as French commandos led by Algerian trackers located and destroyed the depots they found evidence of the sophistication of the support network, tons of potatoes, flour, tinned goods (sardines, peas), coffee, oil, condensed milk, type-writers, transistor radios, medicines and clothing, some of which had been made by local women.⁵²

Women, 'pacification' and military violence

The women of the Aumale sector, as in so many other parts of Algeria, were closely implicated in the activities of the FLN and as the level of

army repression deepened after 1957 many of them, in the absence of males, began to exercise a degree of initiative and independence of action through 'man's work' that had traditionally been denied to them by a conservative, patriarchal society.⁵³ Algerian peasant women, playing such a key (but often 'invisible') role, became victims of army repression on a vast scale. It is necessary to grasp the nature and scale of such violence in order to begin to understand the difficulties that welfare and medical teams, and particularly the EMSI, faced in trying to elaborate programmes that would reach out to a constituency traumatised by war. The following section examines two kinds of violence, first the direct impact of the French army on civilian populations in the zones of combat, and second the more insidious but destructive process of resettlement (*regroupement*) that uprooted and dismantled peasant society.

Violence impinged deeply on the lives of women in the *bled* in many forms, including through the enormous mortality rate of husbands, sons and brothers. During 1958 some 70 per cent of all major operations in the Aumale sector were concentrated in Bordj Okhriss and the area to the south (Bougauouden) and here, between 1 January 1958 and 1 October 1959, the army killed 1,870 'rebels' and captured or wounded 1,847.⁵⁴ Certainly a good number of those killed in the ALN would have originated from outside the area,⁵⁵ but the official figures fail to include many of those men, including locals, who were summarily executed in large numbers. Some army commanders in the area regularly displayed dead fighters on the bonnets of army vehicles and forced terrorised villagers to file past the corpses as an 'exemplary lesson'.⁵⁶ The Kabyle writer Mouloud Feraoun describes scenes where, after mass killings by the army, distraught women, 'are wandering on the national highway, crying with despair and anger. There is not one single man alive in the village . . . In Azouza, there are no longer enough men for the funerals: the local women have to perform that chore'.⁵⁷ The ethnologist Camille Lacoste-Dujardin has recorded through the songs and oral traditions of women in the Iflissen tribe of Kabylia the trace of the long-term trauma following massive destruction and death, the suffering, 'of a depth that was until now unrecognised and which will leave them profoundly marked for ever'.⁵⁸ The scale of the military repression in the Iflissen was reflected, a decade later, in a demographic catastrophe: of the young men aged twenty to thirty-five in 1956, 41 per cent had been killed, adult women outnumbered men by over two to one, and traditional patriarchal families were radically dislocated, many households being now headed by single widows.

From 1956 onwards, as the army became increasingly aware of the direct involvement of Algerian women in the guerrilla, so attitudes

changed from ‘gentlemanly’ respect for the ‘weaker sex’ towards treating women with the same brutal violence as men, including summary execution, systematic torture and rape. The most frequent occasion for brutal treatment of entire civilian populations arose during major army operations in the more isolated mountainous areas, the *zones interdites*, in which the maquis forces were based. In May 1955 General Parlange, the commander of the Aurès region, issued a directive by which any rebel act of sabotage or attack would have, ‘as a consequence the collective responsibility of the nearest *douar*’, a policy that was extended to all Algeria in July.⁵⁹ During operations that involved major clashes with the ALN the army regularly destroyed mountain villages by fire, explosives and bulldozer, both as a reprisal and to force inhabitants, suspected of supporting ALN forces, to flee into the plains. There are endless accounts, like the following, which is typical of reprisal operation:

On the hillside I saw the advance of army sections into eleven villages indicated by columns of smoke rising from the farm-houses, mills and shacks as they caught fire. The next day the villages were positively plundered: not only did the units live off the land, but the shops were systematically raided, money stolen, the goods smashed, etc. The women were all herded together in order to place pressure on the men; they could not even go out to relieve themselves. While this was going on the men from whom one wished to extract denunciations were put to the ‘question’ [tortured].⁶⁰

The reference here to using women as an instrument to place pressure on Algerian males leads to the issue of rape, a widespread practice by the French army that was long concealed on both sides, by ex-soldiers, the army authorities, women victims and the FLN. The occultation in French society of sexual violence during the war, a practice that most radically contradicted the self-proclaimed ‘civilising mission’ of the army, changed dramatically after 2000 following the revelations by Louisette Ighilahriz of the implication of senior commanders, including General Massu, in her rape,⁶¹ the extraordinary Mohamed Garne affair,⁶² and the publication of Raphaëlle Branche’s *La Torture et l’armée* (2001).⁶³ Branche has established the widespread nature of rape, usually a collective act, used as an expression of power, humiliation and revenge against Muslim Algerian society in its most essential values based on female honour and purity of descent: ‘through the woman, assaulted, sexually abused, raped, the soldiers got to her family, her village, and all the circles to which she belonged, right down to the last of them, the Algerian people’.⁶⁴ Algerian men, often forced to look on, were humiliated in their most sacred role as protectors of women.⁶⁵ On occasions French soldiers took trophy photographs of



12 An old woman protests to Commander de Mollans at the rape of her daughter by French soldiers

their exploits in a standard pose that consisted of two mates 'sharing' a naked woman who stands like a prisoner between the two men.⁶⁶ While the extent of rape varied from one locale to another (some officers would not tolerate such criminal abuse, while others were permissive or turned a blind eye), it was generalised and certainly existed at Bordj Okhriss as elsewhere. Jean-Louis Gérard, who was attached to the intelligence unit at Aïn Terzine notes that in January 1960 the OR organised a 'routine patrol . . . so that the lads could unwind', and although he was opposed to what was going on, admitted that on one occasion, 'I mounted guard outside while the others carried on their dirty work!'⁶⁷ Jean-Paul Meurisse, a friend of Garanger's at Bordj Okhriss, recounts how he arrived one day at Meghnine, 'The boss was waiting . . . with a dozen women next to him. "My lieutenant, you choose", he said. I was staggered. My predecessor had assumed a *droit de seigneur*'.⁶⁸ A photograph of Marc Garanger shows an old woman wiping tears from her face at the door of the army post of Le Taguedine where she had come to complain to the commander de Mollans about the rape of her daughter.⁶⁹

'Bernard X' who operated with the *Commando de chasse* K11 just to the south of Bordj Okhriss notes that although their captain strictly banned such violence, on occasions a gendarme and SAS officer accompanied the unit because of complaints of 'exactions', and during an operation the commandos were astonished to see a terrified woman and her two daughters appear, 'their faces were covered with mud and blood, which gave them the appearance of spectres . . . it was to protect her daughters from eventual violence by the soldiers'.⁷⁰ This was undoubtedly a form of magical protection and mothers' traditionally left their new-born babies dirty in order to ward off the evil eye.⁷¹

Rape, although not constituting a system of ethnic 'pollution' and genocide as during the Balkan war, led to many unwanted pregnancies. Feraoun reported how during major operations the army behaved as if they were in a 'free brothel': at Ait Idir, 'only twelve women are willing to admit that they were raped', while people have 'counted fifty-six bastards in a village of the Béni-Ouacifs'.⁷² In some instances abortions were carried out, but some women were able to stand strong against the enormous weight of male values of lineage and honour and insisted on keeping and raising the children. Mimi Ben Mohamed, a senior nurse who worked in a maquis near Palestro, to the north-west of Ain Terzine, remarks that when they raised the issue of rape and pregnancies with the Commander Si Lakhdar, his suggestion was to kill the babies. "No, that's impossible", objected the nurses, "we cannot kill the innocent. The kids have nothing to do with it, neither do the women since they were taken by force" . . . and in effect the women did not do it, but kept all these children. The fathers did not want to have these children, but eventually they kept them'.⁷³

While army brutality against women assumed direct and overt forms, such as bombing of villages with napalm, rape and killings, a less direct but more generalised form of violence arose from the policy of population *regroupement*. This highly destructive uprooting of the peasantry needs to be understood within the wider context of the process of 'pacification'. As was seen in chapter 2 the Operation Pilot experiment in the Dahra tested the pacification of isolated rural zones controlled by the ALN in a series of stages and proved so successful that from late 1957 it was extended into other areas of Algeria. Under the impulse of General Challe, army strategists further refined the Pilot model into a standard four-stage process for the 'reconquest' of 'rotten' zones.⁷⁴ This involved a first phase of intense military action against the ALN maquis using huge sweep operations and newly formed *Commandos de chasses*, mobile units that included *harki* trackers that pursued the enemy night-and-day inside the *zone interdite* or free-fire areas. In a second phase, the inhabitants of the mountainous interior were to be evacuated by force, their

villages destroyed, and resettled in militarised camps protected by army posts. Third, once removed from FLN pressure and terror, the population in the camps would find the confidence to establish their own armed auto-defence units and to provide an increasing flow of intelligence about ALN networks and collaborators. When security had reached a safe level in a particular area, now designated a 'quartier de pacification', the army could reduce its presence and move on to repeat the process in an adjacent rebel zone. Finally, the ALN would have been virtually destroyed and the army could hand over security to the SAS and their *maghzen* guards, and simultaneously engage in economic and social welfare programmes, including the EMSI, women's circles and female emancipation.⁷⁵ At the core of the pacification programme was the mass resettlement of the rural population into camps, a process aimed to achieve, according to the Maoist dictum, the 'draining of the swamp' so that the guerrillas would no longer move around like fish in water, but be left stranded from their support base. By the end of the war three million people, up to half of the rural Algerian population, had been uprooted and had either fled to urban shantytowns or been confined in vast, soulless camps surrounded by barbed-wire and look-out towers, where many starved.⁷⁶

This standard strategy was implemented by General de Maison Rouge in the Aumale sector after January 1958. In a key briefing to the Prime Minister during his official tour to Aumale in February 1959, Maison Rouge noted that the rich agricultural valley near Bouira had been chosen as a 'pilot priority zone', and this was now well advanced through resettlement. Having procured this area, pacification was now being extended southwards into the Aumale sector, first to the quartier of La Baraque, and then on towards Aïn Terzine where 'the forest of the Oued Okhriss to the East [of Aumale], classified as a *zone interdite*, and the termination of the mountain chain of the Bibans and Monts du Hodna, constitutes a zone of communication with Tunisia that is crucial to the rebels . . . Search and destroy operations are necessary here in 1959, but also the total *regroupement* of the population which is the only means to deny the rebels' food supply and shelter'.⁷⁷

The 'rolling' programme of the Challe juggernaut that marched through Algeria from west to east through 1959 to 1961 came to focus its attention specifically on the quartier of Aïn Terzine during 1959: a new *Commando de chasse* 'Kimono 13' was formed and based here in March to destroy the last remnants of the ALN in the hills above⁷⁸ and a programme of resettlement was accelerated. During the year between June 1959 and June 1960 a sequence of camps was planned by the Algiers architect Bouvet in the Aïn Terzine quartier at Mesdour, Guetrini, Souk el Khémis, de Mettane, Tagdid, Bordj Okhriss, Tarfa,

S'Bara and Meghnine.⁷⁹ The number of camps in the Aumale sector, or what were now called 'New Villages', increased rapidly from twenty-five centres in March 1959, housing 931 families, to sixty-seven centres in November 1960, and the objective was to finally house 60 per cent of the population in this way.⁸⁰

As early as May 1957 the SAS of Bordj Okhriss had reported that the inhabitants, living in dispersed settlements, were so exhausted by the constant raiding by opposed nationalist forces (MNA, ALN) seizing men, livestock, money and food supplies, that they were demanding return of their confiscated guns to mount an auto-defence against men from the north, the 'Kabyles'. The SAS expressed the ambiguity of the position in June 1957, 'the peasants wish to be protected by the army, but do not seem to want to openly take sides against the HLL [*hors-la-lois* or bandits]'.⁸¹ By 1959 senior officers in Aumale were reading in a far more doctrinaire way the confusion and desperation of the peasantry as a sign of their moving to the French side and actively supporting *regroupement*: thus in November 1959, the Aumale commander noted, 'the population hopes more and more for peace and is very favourable to the *regroupements* in the New Villages. They are working hard and courageously to build them and one can assert that where a good preparation has been undertaken on the material and psychological plane, a real social transformation is under way'.⁸² The thinking of the military was that camps would not only isolate the FLN from its support base in the local population, but also by concentrating the peasantry in quasi-urban centres with shops, schools, dispensaries and electricity would have a transformative function in modernising the culture and mentality of Algerian women and their families, a pre-requisite of emancipation.

Nowhere in the extensive army documentation for Aumale and Bordj Okhriss is there any mention of local Algerian opposition to *regroupements*. For one significant incident on 20 May 1960 the battalion log states laconically, 'CCAS: removal work ROUABAS',⁸³ and if it was not for Garanger's photographs this moment of resistance would have remained meaningless or passed into oblivion. The inhabitants of the *douar* of Rouabas at Aïn Terzine had just been informed of a decision to resettle them in the camp of Meghnine or Bordj Okhriss, and all the men, including village elders, marched in a file to complain to the Commander de Mollans, who ordered a 'half-track' machine-gun (CCAS) to halt their advance.⁸⁴

The photographs show that the protest was an all-male affair, entirely in keeping with this patriarchal society in which men were the sole political actors, yet for the 'invisible' women of Aïn Terzine *regroupement*



13 A machine-gun 'half-track' blocking the advance of a column of men come to protest against the imminent resettlement of the *douar* of Rouabas

would have carried particularly tragic consequences, not only in the direct form of deepening hunger and illness, infant mortality and material poverty, but through the destruction of the home, a deeply religious and magical space that in Algerian tradition 'belonged' to women, and its replacement by a sterile western form that disrupted customary practices and symbols.⁸⁵ The elders negotiated with de Mollans: 'What you are doing is inhuman. You are deporting us. We cannot cultivate our land. What are we going to live on?', who replied, 'I understand your situation and I am sorry. But I can't do anything: it's an order from the colonel'. But Garanger knew this was completely untrue, de Mollans personally made this decision because he felt insulted by the night-time movement of the FLN among the Rouabas fraction, 'under his very windows'.⁸⁶ From the beginning forces in the maquis had recognised the danger of such *regroupments* to its own support base, and in September 1957 the MNA was trying to force families that had fled to Bordj Okhriss for safety to return to their farms.⁸⁷

There is a considerable body of evidence which shows that the uprooting of the peasantry and the 'fixing' down of pastoral nomads carried particularly devastating implications for women and children throughout Algeria. The inhabitants of entire *douars* were forcibly



14 Aerial view of peasant houses destroyed by the French army during resettlement in the region of Bordj Okhriss

removed from their ancestral lands by the army and their houses were burned down or demolished.⁸⁸

Often this was carried out by the military without any prior planning and construction of reception centres, so that the refugees were dumped in virtual prison camps. Commander Florentin of the *Inspection générale des regroupements*, in a devastating critique of resettlement, noted: 'The population flees empty-handed and a human avalanche streams towards the valleys that are under the control of the army but where nothing has been prepared to receive them . . . The people are penned behind barbed-wire around a small, neo-burgrave style fortress'.⁸⁹

In the 'temporary centres' the inhabitants, often parked behind barbed-wire entanglements, lived in tents or bivouacs until the army could find the materials and deploy refugee labour to build more permanent houses.⁹⁰ The new locations, often far removed from the village of origin now in *zones interdites*, meant that the peasants were unable to work their fields or herd livestock, and the population began to suffer from serious malnutrition, disease and catastrophic infant mortality. On average in camps with over 1,000 people one infant died every two days,



15 Aerial view of the military resettlement camp of Mesdour, north-east of Bordj Okhriss

mainly from malnutrition, and on a visit to one centre Michel Rocard, the future Prime Minister, remarked to an officer that he seemed not too upset when a baby died in his arms, 'He replied, "Monsieur, this is the fourth in three days"'.⁹¹ The SAS officer of Bordj Okhriss reported on 'the deplorable health conditions in the *regroupement* of Mesdour' and other centres, and the high incidence of typhoid, tuberculosis and other diseases.⁹² The standard houses designed for the settlements were too small and lacked in insulation, boiling in summer and freezing at night or in winter, and they were placed in geometrical grids that reproduced the soulless layout of military barracks.⁹³

Deprived of their traditional economic base as farmers and herders the inhabitants of the camps were reduced to desperate poverty, and a demoralising dependency on army handouts of food, clothing and blankets. General Parlange, who headed the camp inspectorate, spoke of a veritable 'burned-earth' policy, and of a radical dislocation of traditional family structures and a process of turning people into tramps (*clochardisation*): the traditional social hierarchies are over-turned, and the taste for work, when it existed, disappears since it is easy to become a client of the Public Assistance. In brief, moral degradation, encouraged by over-crowding, accelerates and threatens to become generalised . . . the means to engage in farming are abandoned, with fields too distant,

pack animals lost or sold; it's total ruin and the uprooted settle down with fatalism into a life of poverty.⁹⁴

Garanger's identity photographs were taken in the newly founded settlement camps, and the subjects constituted a virtual refugee population that had been dramatically uprooted. The attitude of each individual can only be guessed at, but the overall context was one of ambiguity towards an occupying force that offered on the one hand some degree of protection, medical aid and food, and on the other was destroying their homes and an existing way of life, and complicit in extreme brutality, rape and murder. On rare occasions even the command acknowledged the impossible contradictions of such a war: as General de Maison Rouge told the Prime Minister in February 1959, to crush the FLN networks (OPA) would require a long process, 'and requires a hardening of methods towards the population which is in contradiction with the policy of détente undertaken since the month of May [1958]'.⁹⁵

Civil war, insecurity and *attentisme*

This final section aims to show that peasant women were not faced with a simple choice of allegiance to one of two sides, the ALN or the French army, but by the extraordinary ambiguities and contradictory pressures of civil war. The apparent 'silence' of women was not only an expression of ignorance, illiteracy and seclusion, but also of a family or clan-based *omerta*. The French attempts to emancipate women, to extend a strategy of contact to the *bled*, was faced not only with problems of language and communication, but also with impenetrable forms of defensive silence behind which lay concealed the 'hidden transcript' of peasants skilled in the arts of verbal resistance.⁹⁶

That the conflict in Algeria was as much a civil war as a war of decolonisation is highlighted by the fact that the 200,000 Algerian soldiers and auxiliaries (*supplétifs*) fighting on the French side greatly outnumbered the 50,000 men in the ALN.⁹⁷ As Mohand Hamoumou notes, the reason why some Algerians joined the French forces and others the FLN cannot in many instances be understood through the ideological decisions of these individuals, by 'a "political" grid', but rather by 'local contingencies', such as blood-feuds between local families, tribal allegiances and disputes over property.⁹⁸ Stathis Kalyvas has analysed the *intimacy* of civil war violence, how in small-scale, face-to-face social settings the tensions and conflicts of peacetime (disputes over land, livestock, marriage alliances, insults and honour) that were normally mediated and

settled, now became the basis of denunciation that unleashed deadly force, and pitted neighbour against neighbour.⁹⁹

At the outbreak of the Algerian War on 1 November 1954, the major nationalist movement was the MNA led by Messali Hadj. It took the FLN until late 1957, after a long and bloody internecine battle for power, to assert its dominance. However, the situation was unusually complex in the region of Bordj Okhriss since, until the end of the war in 1962 this continued to lie on the frontier between the MNA, a predominantly 'Arab' movement that continued to survive as a powerful force entrenched within Wilaya VI to the south of Aumale, and the ALN that filtered southwards from its Kabyle stronghold to the north. The French secret services provided funding, arms and equipment to a number of MNA groups in the south led by Bellounis,¹⁰⁰ Si Cherif and Rabah Benaïssi who, acting more like freebooting war lords than regular soldiers, engaged in cattle raiding, forced recruitment and other depredations. For example, a Bellounis force of fifty to sixty men surrounded the *mechta* of Sidi-Abdelkader on 25 January 1958 and seized ten men as recruits, along with a large stock of cows, goats, sheep and mules; 'They then rounded on the women whom they thrashed, in the absence of their husbands'.¹⁰¹ The Bellounist force, secretly funded by the French from May 1957 until July 1958, placed constant pressure on the population of the Bordj Okhriss area for money, supplies and recruits.¹⁰² Although Bellounis, who proved recalcitrant to French control, was finally tracked down and killed by the army on 14 July 1958, the bands of Si Cherif and the ex-Bellounist Benaïssi continued to operate until at least 1961. General de Maison Rouge, who had turned against Bellounis in May 1958,¹⁰³ was by early 1959 facing the same problems with Si Cherif: as he informed Michel Debré during his tour of inspection, 'But with 800 men in arms, living like rebel bands whose exactions are very difficult and never entirely preventable, he is the cause of incessant problems. In fact he operates more often for himself than for France and often acts outside the bounds of legality'.¹⁰⁴ Ex-MNA guerrillas were constantly disbanding or rallying to join the French army as *harkis*, or crossing over to the ALN side. So anarchic and confused was the situation in the Aumale sector, with an incessant ebb-and-flow of MNA and ALN units, that it became increasingly difficult for both the French and local populations to distinguish one side from the other. By the summer and autumn of 1959 the SAS of Maginot reported that the French-backed forces of Si Cherif was running amok, engaging in rape, kidnapping and drunken violence: 'it is certain that the FLN benefits from the support of the population which has suffered too much from the violence of the *Djich* without the latter ever being brought to account'.¹⁰⁵

The peasants of Bordj Okhriss were caught in a complex and paralyzing web of conflicting interests: they faced not simply a split between the French occupier and Algerian nationalists, but a triangle of MNA, ALN and French-*barkis* forces. Both the MNA and the FLN demanded, on pain of death, monthly payments, food supplies and male fighters, a burden that impoverished peasants could barely sustain, while the French threatened to arrest, torture and even liquidate anybody who did so. The state of confusion and paralysis affecting the peasants was described by the SAS officer for Bordj Okhriss when on 11 May 1957 1,200 people crowded onto the market place to express their predicament to the French authorities: 'The population, without protection, abandoned to the violence of the rebels, no longer know what to think and the differences of opinion and action that daily are becoming more intense inside the ranks of the nationalist movements leaves them facing a situation that they no longer understand'.¹⁰⁶ The officer saw the opportunity here for the villagers to move over to the French side and to set up an auto-defence force that would enable them to stand up against both MNA and ALN, but this hope was constantly frustrated by a deep 'mutual mistrust' and what was generally referred to as a psychology of *attentisme*. By 1960 the situation had barely improved, and the SAS reported that the FLN was locked into major conflict with the MNA infiltrating into Bordj Okhriss from the south, 'but the different organisations are so closely intermingled that it is often difficult to identify them. Overall the population of these regions is disconcerted and pulls back further into itself'.¹⁰⁷

The term *attentisme* is not easily translated: for the French authorities this was often used in a conventional sense of a 'wait and see policy', that during a long war in which it was unclear which side would be the ultimate victor, it was wise to hedge one's bets by retaining a certain neutrality and by not becoming too closely associated with one side or the other.¹⁰⁸ But *attentisme*, a refusal to declare one's hand, had a far more potent logic: in small and isolated communities like Aïn Terzine and Bordj Okhriss in which everybody knew everyone else, the total networks of family, fraction and other kin alliances, and in which it was impossible to move or carry out the smallest transaction without being observed, the best chances of survival from MNA or FLN gunmen or *barkis* violence was to remain silent. The climate of distrust and fear was accentuated by the fact that each side cultivated informers, among them the grocer of Rouabah, Saadi Riah, who tried to survive ALN and French pressures by supplying both with information. Garanger describes him less as a collaborator than a poor victim: 'He was quite simply trapped by this war. His behaviour was typical of local notables,

carried away on a storm that was beyond them, on which they had no grip, and who desperately tried to protect their interests, those of their relatives and of their village or hamlet'.¹⁰⁹

The journal of Mouloud Feraoun provides a rare insight into the mechanisms of *attentisme* in Kabyle village society: the writer, able only to confide to his diary, expresses a Kafkaesque climate of paranoia in which neighbours were unsure of who might be acting as informer for FLN or army, and who may be falsely denouncing another to settle scores for old quarrels over land and honour. In April 1957 Feraoun was told by an old man how he was travelling on a bus which was stopped by the army: everyone was ordered out and a local informer pointed men out. 'My God, I was afraid. He could have pointed his finger towards me. He had reasons to. Last year, his father sold me a mortgaged field. I sued him and won. And last year I beat up their shepherd when he let his herd damage my young fig trees. Yes, I beat him up. And I won my suit. That young recruit could have avenged himself using the army, and I was afraid'.¹¹⁰ The people, noted Feraoun, 'have nothing to say to one another' but pass by and 'hastily exchange a weary and meaningless greeting . . . It is as if each person feels trapped and sealed in an airtight bell jar'. The streets are empty, but 'there are shadows moving about . . . Given this situation, you must trust no one, because words misunderstood are often misinterpreted', like the old woman fined for a hasty comment, or Hocine's sister-in-law executed because she spoke 'ill of them'.¹¹¹

In the Aïn Terzine quartier the same forces were at work: the SAS and intelligence officers continually expressed their frustration with the *attentisme* of the population, estimated at 70 per cent in 1959,¹¹² and their inability to uncover what was going on under the surface of local society. The better-off avoid talking, 'they sit on the fence and continue to give promises to both sides', or the people are 'thrown off balance and fall back even more on themselves', and Algerians told SAS officers what they want to hear so they produced radically different versions of 'the deepest thoughts of the population'.¹¹³ In places the archive provides a hint of the internal splintering at work. In November 1956 three men of the Ouadi family of Bordj Okhriss were assassinated by either the MNA or FLN, and the following year another member was threatened by a money collector in the market who said, 'You are crazy. I saw the rebels yesterday evening and I spoke to them about you (the Ouadi) – You can be allowed to go back home by paying 100 or 150,000 Frs. This is nothing compared to what you own (your farm is worth nearly two millions). – Anyway France is the loser and will abandon you – You will then see what position you find yourself in'. Not surprisingly the

Ouadi appear to have sought safety by joining the SAS *maghzen* and in July 1960 this included two soldiers from the family.¹¹⁴ It was not uncommon for extended families to have men fighting on both sides, and in some instances having a foot in both camps was a deliberate group insurance policy against the unpredictable outcome of the war.¹¹⁵

To conclude, with the background knowledge of the situation in Bordj Okhriss, it can be seen why the response of Muslim women to the French presence was so complex and difficult to decode. Some of the women who faced Garanger's lens had husbands, brothers or sons who were in the maquis, or who had been arrested, imprisoned or killed by the army. Others, like the young woman from Mesdour on the cover of *Femmes algériennes*, had had their villages destroyed and been moved behind the barbed wire entanglements of the resettlement camps. Others again were members of families or clan groups that had tried to find protection with the army, and the men had joined the *harkis* or formed self-defence groups.¹¹⁶ At least one woman physically resisted being photographed and some are glaring defiantly at the camera, while other young women have dressed up elaborately in their most precious possessions, huge silver broaches and gold-coin necklaces. But for all the nuances of position, for the women of Bordj Okhriss, as throughout Algeria, the French army represented a dangerous and powerful force associated with mass destruction, brutality and rape. As will be seen in the next chapter, the central contradiction facing the EMSI teams was how to gain the trust of Algerian women and to bring them social progress and emancipation when they themselves were part of an army that had destroyed their villages and driven them into refugee camps. In a situation in which being seen to converse or associate with the armed forces risked attracting the counter-violence of the FLN, most women sought to maintain a safe distance from the welfare teams. Also since the outcome of the war remained uncertain or, from early 1960 onwards, a French retreat became more likely, then it was rational to remain disengaged from either side or to maintain an *attentiste* position so as to be able to opt eventually as the winning side became evident.

Notes

- 1 This is a wider theoretical issue addressed constantly by historians of colonialism, ethnographers and 'subaltern studies': on Algerian women specifically see 'Decolonizing Feminism' in Lazreg, *Eloquence*, 6–19.
- 2 The only attempt to analyse the geographical variations in female militancy is Djamilia Amrane, 'Répartition géographique des militantes de la guerre de libération nationale (Algérie, 1954–1962)', *AWAL*, 8 (1991), 1–19.

- 3 There is a strong bias in oral history research towards the representation of more educated militants of urban origin; as with the eighty-eight women interviewed by Amrane, *Les Femmes algériennes*; of the twenty-six interviews in Amrane-Minne, *Des femmes*, only four (15 per cent) were with women from a rural or peasant background. There are valuable interviews with working women by Brac de la Perrière, *Derrière les Héros*, but these were confined to urban Algiers. Research has yet to be carried out among the hundreds of thousands of 'ordinary' women in the *bled* and urban shantytowns as to their experience of the war and attitude towards the French presence and emancipation agenda. The best insight we have into the condition and experience of peasant women during the war is provided by the oral history research of the ethnographer Camille Lacoste-Dujardin, particularly 'La Guerre vécue par les Iflissen', in *Opération 'Oiseau Bleu'*.
- 4 In spite of the immense volume of research and publication on the Algerian War, there still exists a noticeable absence of an adequate social history: a lack that reflects a complex of factors, from the past refusal of the Algerian government to allow fieldwork, extreme insecurity during the recent civil war, and the refusal of many to talk about a conflict that left deep scars.
- 5 The army unit of Garanger was based at Ain Terzine a few miles outside the main township and market centre of Bordj Okhriss: I have used the latter to refer in general to the area. Garanger was appointed by the commander at Ain Terzine, de Mollans, as his personal but unofficial photographer and was frequently taken by helicopter during operations into the *zone interdite*, with the aim of increasing the colonels standing with army superiors. De Mollans, who strutted about with a riding crop, was proud of action photographs of ALN captives, which he referred to as, 'my hunting scenes': Marc Garanger, *Marc Garanger: Retour en Algérie* (Paris: Atlantica, 2007), 6.
- 6 Marc Garanger, *Femmes algériennes 1960* [c. 1989] (Anglet: Atlantica, 2002), 122.
- 7 *Femmes algériennes 1960*, first published by Éditions Contrejour in 1982, used a selection of fifty-five portraits of women from the many hundreds that were taken.
- 8 Garanger, *Femmes algériennes*, 1. Marc Garanger, sensitive to the charge of complicity in military force, insists that he was never in the position of the official army photographers like Marc Flamand whose heroic images of Bigeard's parachutists placed him firmly on the side of the occupying forces. Most of the 10,000 to 20,000 images were taken by Garanger in his spare-time in Bordj Okhriss and are a testament to, and an expression of, his personal opposition to the war: 'I had only one idea in mind: to shoot the maximum of pictures to show the reality of life for Algerians and what a colonial war was like', Garanger, *Retour*, 6. Even when photographs had a more 'official' status they expressed a subversive intent, as with his famous image of the captured ALN commander Ahmed Bencherif taken under order of the commander to be printed on an anti-FLN leaflet, but which was rejected because 'he perceived a message that was opposed to the one he

- wanted to make', a striking portrait of a proud and defiant leader, *Retour*, 7; *La Guerre d'Algérie vue par un appelé du contingent* (Paris: Seuil, 1984), 16–17.
- 9 Garanger, *Retour*, 53.
 - 10 Marc Garanger, with text by Leïla Sebbar, *Femmes des Hauts-Plateaux. Algérie 1960* (Paris: La Boîte à Documents, 1990), 7.
 - 11 Garanger, *Retour*, 13. The 2004 images were first published in a special edition of *Le Monde*, 28 October 2004, to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the end of the Algerian War. For Garanger the warm reception that he found in 2004 among the people of Bordj Okhriss, including some of the women he had portrayed in 1960, was an emotional and personal affirmation: one of them, Zohra Gacem, was excited to see her photograph, burst out laughing, and said to Garanger, “‘you are in my heart”. Tears sprang to my eyes . . . she was offering me what was worth more than anything: her gratitude’, see *Retour*, 8–9. But in the case of two other subjects pictured in 1960, a woman from the Saou family and Zohra Laamouri, long negotiations to take photographs had to take place in 2004 with their husband and an elder son, hostile to this ‘brutal intrusion into their privacy’, *Retour*, 54–7.
 - 12 Garanger, *Femmes algériennes*, 121.
 - 13 This is particularly true for Karina Eileraas, ‘Reframing the Colonial Gaze: Photography, Ownership, and Feminist Resistance’, *MLN*, 118: 4 (September 2003), 807–40. Ranjana Khanna, *Algeria Cuts. Women and Representation, 1830 to the Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 21–2, analyses the ‘extraordinary photographs’ not through a reading of Garanger’s books, but by an unnamed secondary source that must be David A. Bailey and Gilane Tawadros (eds), *Veil. Veiling, Representation and Contemporary Art* (London: Institute of International Visual Arts, 2003), 86–7, since she reproduces the dreadful mistranslation of Garanger’s account of inhabitants being called together by the army officer in charge (*chef de poste*) as the ‘postmaster’: ‘Interestingly’, notes Khanna, ‘it was the postmaster who assisted Garanger in his task, calling up the women to lift their veils and be photographed’. Instead of making any attempt to examine the context in which Garanger took the photographs, Khanna races off to impose a reading elaborated through a mass of references to Lacan, Deleuze, Simmel and others. For other comment see, Kaja Silverman, *The Threshold of the Visible World* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 146–61, ‘How to Face a Camera’, which explores the act of violation and ‘the horror of being photographed for the first time’; Winifred Woodhull, *Transfigurations of the Maghreb. Feminism, Decolonization, and Literatures* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 42–5, and ‘Unveiling Algeria’, *Genders*, 10 (Spring 1991), 112–31; Naggar, ‘The Unveiled: Algerian Women’. The literary approach to Garanger has been reinforced by interest in the major Algerian writer Leïla Sebbar: in *Shérazade: 17 ans, brune, frisée, les yeux verts* (Paris: Stock, 1993), 219–21,

- the central character, a young Parisian *beur*, discovers as a revelation a copy of *Femmes algériennes 1960*, 'these faces had the hardness and violence of those who suffered the arbitrary knowing that they will find inside themselves the strength to resist'. But Sebbar in her commentary to Garanger's photographs in *Femmes des Hauts-Plateaux* runs the danger of a subjective 'poetic' text that obscures rather than enhances our understanding: thus on page 51, she describes a group of veiled women sitting in a circle in an arid landscape as if in a cemetery, missing the point that they were waiting to be photographed by Garanger, and are more likely to be sharing their opinions about how to confront the camera.
- 14 Eileraas, 'Reframing', 814–15, notes that the 'women's looks [cannot] be interpreted without reference to the social and historical context of Garanger's images', but then manages to avoid making a single reference to the context.
 - 15 For the *barki* at home, see *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 60–1, *Hauts-Plateaux*, 68–71; for men in the auto-defence group, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 31. SHAT 1H1895/2, fiche 12–15 March 1959, notes in the Aumale sector there were 1,787 Algerians fighting with the French army (*supplétifs*); SHAT 1H4334, État-Major Aumale, 22 January 1958, indicates fifty *barkis* at Bordj Okhriss, and seven at Aïn Terzine.
 - 16 Garanger interview, Paris, 18 October 2005.
 - 17 Garanger, *Hauts-Plateaux*, 13–27.
 - 18 CAOM 2SAS29*, SAS Bordj Okhriss, Journal de Marche, 14 September 1960.
 - 19 Garanger's photographs of Bordj Okhriss, apart from the identity-card portraits, can be found in three books, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, *Hauts-Plateaux* and *Retour*.
 - 20 The highly bureaucratic system of the French civil and military apparatus has left a considerable body of evidence for the sector of Aumale, now located in the archives of Aix-en-Provence (CAOM) and Vincennes (SHAT) (see the bibliography and notes below); in addition I have used soldiers' diary records, and interviewed Marc Garanger (Paris, 18 October 2006) and Jean-Louis Gérard (Paris, 10 June 2007).
 - 21 The sector of Aumale, covering 6,640 square kilometres, was in 1959 under the command of General de Maison Rouge from his HQ in Aumale town, while under him the sector was sub-divided into seven quartiers, of which one was Aïn Terzine, the terrain of action of the 1st Battalion of the 2nd Infantry Regiment, under Colonel Henri Amador de Mollans: SHAT 1H1895/2 and SHAT 1H4334/2.
 - 22 See Garanger, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 25, photograph of an army ceremony to open the piste at Oued Tarfa; see SHAT 7U21*, JMO, 2e Régiment d'Infanterie, 1er Bataillon, 16 May 1960 on this opening.
 - 23 SHAT 1H1895/2, Fiche, 12–15 March 1959, notes that for security reasons local councillors (*délégués spéciaux*) had deserted the *douars* which they were appointed to administer for the safety of towns; CAOM 3SAS18, ELA

- Aumale, in the report for February 1959 noted the assassination of two *colons*, and ‘the ditch between the two communities gets deeper’.
- 24 SHAT 1H4334/2, table of population, 2 September 1961; SHAT 1H1895/2 shows in March 1959 the total French armed force in the Aumale sector was 7,245, including various kinds of Algerian auxiliary soldiers. The USA frontier comparison was ever-present among French soldiers, and Garanger, *Femmes algériennes*, 121–2, was inspired in his own work by Edward S. Curtis’s photographs of North American Indians.
 - 25 SHAT 1H1895/2, report, May 1960. Grain production was only 5 quintals per hectare. 200 NF was equivalent to about £20 in 2007 prices.
 - 26 CAOM 3SAS29*, reports of SAS at Bordj Okhriss: in 1957 the SAS issued 280 permissions to go to France.
 - 27 Thus for Aumale there was only one doctor for 36,000 people, compared to one for 5,137 in Algeria as a whole, and one for 1,091 in metropolitan France: see M. Michel Rocard, *Rapport sur les camps de regroupement* (Paris: Fayard, 2003), 126.
 - 28 CAOM 3SAS18, ELA Aumale, report for 15 June to 15 July 1960.
 - 29 There is a large literature on the long-term crisis of the Algerian peasantry under the impact of colonialism: see, for example, D. Sari, *La Dépossession des fellahs (1830–1962)* (Algiers: SNED, 1975) and the classic work of Pierre Bourdieu and Abdelmalek Sayad, *Le Déracinement: la crise de l’agriculture traditionnelle en Algérie* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1964).
 - 30 M. Bennoune, ‘The Introduction of Nationalism into Rural Algeria: 1919–54’, *The Maghreb Review*, 2: 3 (May–June 1977), 1–12.
 - 31 SHAT 1H1895/2, Étude sur la Pacification, Aumale sector, May 1960. From the earliest days of the insurrection Abdelkader Amrane and the student leader Mohammed Rachid Amara organised the clandestine links between the FLN leaders in Algiers and the maquis via Aumale and Bordj Okhriss: see obituary on Amrane in *El Watan*, 24 December 2006.
 - 32 SHAT 1H4706/2*, fiche de renseignements, 5 May and 4 June 1958. An idea of the arduous and dangerous conditions faced by ALN convoys, especially as electrified fences were built along the Tunisian and Moroccan borders, is given by the group of fifty-six men led by Commander Ahmed Bencherif that crossed into Algeria on 2–4 April 1960 and finally reached the Aumale sector in August. Tracked by commandos and decimated, the final surviving group of nine men was surrounded on 23 October, among them Bencherif who was photographed by Garanger: see the maps in Maurice Faivre, *Les Archives inédites de la politique algérienne, 1958–1962* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2000), 409, and Pervillé, *Atlas*, 38; Garanger photograph, *La Guerre d’Algérie*, 16–17.
 - 33 A band of 180 MNA fighters surrendered to the French army at Bordj Okhriss on 24 July 1957: CAOM 3SAS29*.
 - 34 CAOM 81F107, report by General de Maison Rouge to PM, Michel Debré, Aumale, 11 February 1959.
 - 35 The most detailed data on women combatants has been taken from the

- official registers of the Ministry of the Moudjahidine, a significant procedure since 'veteran' certificates bring major honours, as well as material rewards (pensions, early retirement benefits, access to 'reserved' jobs, right to import a car tax free, etc.). Amrane, *Les Femmes algériennes*, 219–32, 273–4, had access to the files for the 1974 census, which listed 10,949 women. Ryne Seferdjeli, in her thesis, "Fight With Us, and We Will Emancipate You": France, the FLN and the Struggle over Women during the Algerian War of National Liberation 1954–1962', PhD, University of London, 2004, 86–7, 145–51, has subjected these data to a close scrutiny, noting a puzzling increase to 26,078 registrations in the 1995 census. The inflation in numbers is almost certainly due to fraud, and casts serious doubts on the statistical reliability of the data. The Soummam congress of August 1956 defined three categories of male combatants: the *fidai* (commando), the *moudjihad* (ALN soldier) and the *moussebel* (partisan), see Harbi and Meynier (eds), *FLN: Documents*, 243–4. The post-independence register adapted these categories to women and, although not always consistent or easy to apply, the following terms are used: the *fidayate*, or urban-based fighters, who were very few in number (sixty-nine); the *moudjahidate* who made up under 10 per cent of combatants, were the nurses attached to the mobile ALN units; the *moussebilate* were the local, civilian women who provided logistic support. Outside these categories were the hundreds of thousands of women 'adhérents' or 'sympathisers', largely unregistered and unrecognised, who paid FLN dues or provided occasional assistance.
- 36 Amrane, *Les Femmes algériennes*, 231–2, of the 10,949 registered militants, 948 (8.6 per cent) were killed and 14.4 per cent imprisoned.
- 37 CAOM 3SAS29* includes numerous reports of women in the Bordj Okhriss area harbouring guerrilla forces; for example Dahmane Bellili housed a group of seven men under the command of Si Yahia during the night of 26–27 January 1957.
- 38 Amrane, *Les Femmes algériennes*, 119.
- 39 *Ibid.*, 121.
- 40 *Ibid.*, 123.
- 41 Amrane, 'Répartition', in mapping the geographical distribution of registered militants, notes large numbers to the north and north-east of Bordj Okhriss: 113 for Palestro (now Lakhdaria), thirty-seven for Bouira, and eight for Aïn Bessem, but dropping away to the south, with eight for Aumale (Sour El Ghozlane).
- 42 SHAT 7U21*, JMO 1st Batallion, 2–3 December 1960.
- 43 See the on-line journals of Jean-Marie Buquet who served in a commando unit in the Aumale area, www.megabaze.com/page_html/142a-Algeria-1956-1959 (accessed 4 December 2007).
- 44 Jean-Louis Gérard, a member of the intelligence gathering team at Aïn Terzine led by the *Officier de renseignement* (OR) from early 1958 to 1959, confirms the solid implantation of the OPA: interview in Paris, 10 June 2007.

- 45 CAOM 3SAS18, monthly report of Aumale ELA (SAS), 15 February to 15 March 1960; SHAT 7U21*, JMO 1st Battalion, arrest of *harki* Sergent-chef Mohamed Ben Labiad (Gasraoui) 15 March 1960; Garanger, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 26–7.
- 46 Garanger, who was frequently taken by de Mollans in his helicopter to record operations, captured such moments of violence: see the violent battering of a shepherd and combatant, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 105, 121.
- 47 Of the eight men captured with FLN commander Bencherif on 23 October 1958 (see note 32 above), seven were shot on the spot; Garanger photographed the corpse of Ouail Mohammed, the body-guard of Saïd Bouakli (*La Guerre d'Algérie*, 129), as well as that of the political commissar wounded on his arrest in March 1960 by a bullet wound in his leg, but subsequently killed by several shots by the OR of Bordj Okhriss, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 122–9, *Retour*, 46–9; Jean-Louis Gérard of the OR has confirmed the case of a suspect forced to dig his grave and then killed by machine-gun fire, interview Paris, 10 June 2007; as well as the fact of torture at Aïn Terzine, often in the shower to make it easier to clean away the blood and excrement, see Branche, *La Torture*, 322–4, 327–8, 333.
- 48 SHAT 1H1895/2, inspection report, 12–15 March 1959.
- 49 SHAT 1H1895/2, report of tour of inspection by Lt.-Colonel Rafa, 13 October 1959, with a map 'Markets supplying the rebels'.
- 50 SHAT 1H4334, Note d'Orientation, commander Aumale sector, November 1960 (underlined as in document).
- 51 Jean-Marie Buquet on-line journal (see note 43); also Jean-Louis Gérard, interview Paris, 10 June 2007.
- 52 SHAT 1H1895/2, the report of Lt.-Colonel Rafa, 13 October 1959, notes that the ALN diet was 'plentiful and varied'.
- 53 See Mouloud Feraoun, *Journal, 1955–1962* [first published in French, 1962] edited and with an introduction by James D. LeSueur (Lincoln, Nebraska University Press, 2000), 242, 257, on how women were beginning to 'wear the trousers' and gain emancipation. A comparable transformation of gender roles in the Moroccan independence struggle is explored in detail by Baker, *Voices of Resistance*.
- 54 CAOM 81F107 and SHAT 1H1895/2.
- 55 SHAT 1H1895/2, report, 13 October 1959, estimates 30 per cent of the ALN in Aumale were local men.
- 56 See the anonymous on-line journals of a soldier who served in the 'Kimono 11' commando in the Aumale area: www.algeriademes20ans.net (accessed 5 December 2007). He reports at Masqueray, 25 March 1958, how the body of an important ALN officer was carried on a donkey and 'was exposed on the bonnet of an army lorry (GMC)'; see Branche, *La Torture*, 283–9 on the symbolism of such degrading 'mises en scène' that were pioneered by Colonel Argoud during 1957 in an area to the east of Aumale; see Antoine Argoud, *La Décadence, l'imposture et la tragédie* (Paris: Fayard, 1974), 138–49 for his justification of such methods, including torture and public 'executions'.

- 57 Feraoun, *Journal*, 208.
- 58 Lacoste-Dujardin, 'La Guerre vécue par les Iffissen', in *Opération 'Oiseau Bleu'*, 127–71.
- 59 Jean-Charles Jauffret, *Les Officiers qui ont dit non à la torture: Algérie 1954–1962* (Paris: Éditions Autrement, 2005), 27; Courrière, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, Vol. 2, 126–7.
- 60 *Ibid.*, 84–5, account of François Durteste, private archive. See Feraoun, *Journal*, 150–1, on bombing of three Kabyle villages, the women and children wandering aimless, 'The soldiers have spread death, terror and destruction. Here are three villages that have been emptied, destroyed, and erased from all maps, oh Oradour!'
- 61 *Le Monde*, 20 June 2000; Ighilahriz, *Algérienne*; Neil MacMaster, 'The Torture Controversy (1998–2002): Towards a 'New History' of the Algerian War?', *Modern and Contemporary France*, 10: 4 (2002), 449–59.
- 62 Khéïra Garne, arrested and gang raped by soldiers in the barracks of Theniet al-Had in August 1959, gave birth to Mohamed Garne, who was then adopted. He searched out his unknown mother, then living half-crazed in an Algiers cemetery, in 1988 and eventually won a long court action in November 2001 by which the French state recognised him as a war victim and French: see Florence Beaugé, *Algérie, une guerre sans gloire* (Paris: Calmann/Lévy, 2005), chapter 8; and Mohamed Garne, *Lettre à ce père qui pourrait être vous* (Paris: J. C. Lattès, 2005) and his website at www.garnemohamed.org (accessed 23 October 2006).
- 63 See also Raphaëlle Branche, 'Des viols pendant la guerre d'Algérie', *Vingtième siècle. Revue d'histoire*, 75 (July–September, 2002), 123–32; and 'Être soldat en Algérie face à un ennemi de l'autre sexe', *Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l'Ouest*, 109: 2 (2002), 143–50.
- 64 Branche, 'Des viols', 128.
- 65 Feraoun, *Journal*, 166–7, 189, 262–3, comments on rape as an attack on the key values of honour, 'the living flesh of the Kabyle soul', and how one man committed suicide after being tied up 'and forced to watch some soldiers who were sexually humiliating his wife or his daughter'. On the testimony of rape see also Beaugé, 'Violées', in *Algérie*, 169–83.
- 66 For obvious reasons few such photographs have survived, but see Gervereau and Stora (eds), *Photographier la guerre d'Algérie*, 84; the MNA found an almost identical image on captured French soldiers that was reproduced on a Paris wall poster titled 'Pacification' in June 1956: APP HA31, 'Propagande nord-africaine'.
- 67 Branche, *La Torture*, 292–3.
- 68 Garanger, *Retour*, 79.
- 69 Garanger, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 130–1, and AL469843: this complaint does not appear to have led to any investigation or disciplinary action; in an interview in Paris, 18 October 2005, Garanger noted that rape was not considered a serious crime by the privates (*bidasses*), and was the subject of 'jokes'.

- 70 This practice is also reported in Branche, *La Torture*, 291; Lacoste-Dujardin, *Opération 'Oiseau Bleu'*, 159; Garne, *Lettre*, 133.
- 71 Nefissa Zerdoumi, *Enfants d'hier: l'éducation de l'enfant en milieu traditionnel algérien* (Paris: Maspero, 1982), 151.
- 72 Feraoun, *Journal*, 29 February 1959, 262.
- 73 Amrane, *Les Femmes algériennes*, 84; Commandant Azzedine, *On nous appelait fellaghas*, 294–8, recounts the extraordinary courage of this nurse.
- 74 For the Challe Plan operations between February 1959 and April 1961, see Pervillé, *Atlas*, 36–9.
- 75 See Maurice Challe, *Notre Révolte* (Paris: Presses de la Cité, 1968), 140–1 for a detailed mapping of the pacification model; Keith Sutton, 'Army Administration Tensions over Algeria's Centre de Regroupement, 1954–1962', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 26: 2 (November 1999), 248–51, examines the four-stage model.
- 76 The major study is Cornaton, *Les Regroupements*; Rocard, *Rapport*, which includes Rocard's original inspection report of 17 February 1959 on the camps, along with essays by Gilles Morin, Sylvie Thénault and Claire Andrieu; Bourdieu and Sayad, *Le Déracinement*; Charles-Robert Ageron, 'Une dimension de la guerre d'Algérie: les "regroupements" de la population', in Jauffret and Vaïsse (eds) *Militaires et guérilla*, 327–62; Keith Sutton, 'The Centres de Regroupement: the French Army's Final Legacy to Algeria's Settlement Geography', in Alec G. Hargreaves and Michael J. Heffernan (eds), *French and Algerian Identities from Colonial Times to the Present* (Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 1993), 163–88.
- 77 CAOM 81F107, presentation of de Maison Rouge, 11 February 1959.
- 78 Garanger, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 94–5, 102–5, 108–21, for photographs of Commando 13 and various operations.
- 79 CAOM 3SAS18, ELA, Aumale, monthly reports, August 1959–60; CAOM 3SAS29*, JMO Bordj Okhriss; SHAT 7U21*, JMO, 1st Battalion of 2nd Infantry Regiment.
- 80 SHAT 1H1895/2, Fiche de liaison, 12–15 March 1959; SHA1H4334, Note d'Orientation, November 1960. The map in Cornaton, *Les Regroupements*, 125, shows in December 1960 that the arrondissement of Aumale had 29.3 per cent of its population in centres, compared to the average for Algeria of 24 per cent.
- 81 CAOM 3SAS29*, SAS Bordj Okhriss, report for June 1957.
- 82 SHAT 1H4334, General Briand, Note d'Orientation, November 1960.
- 83 SHAT 7U21*, JMO 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment.
- 84 Garanger, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 42–5. Although the army frequently claimed that movement into camps was voluntary, in many instances populations had to be starved into surrender, see Lacoste-Dujardin, *Opération 'Oiseau Bleu'*, 151; SHAT 1H2460/1, directive Corps d'Armée Constantine, 8 June 1957, ordered that villages refusing to resettle should be 'punished . . . by making life unbearable'; Cornaton, *Les Regroupements*, 196, reports women, 'furious and indomitable', who returned four or five times to their homes after being evacuated.

- 85 On the symbolic form of female space embodied in the traditional Algerian house see Mohand Khellil, *L'Exil Kabyle* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1979), 42–55.
- 86 Garanger, *Retour*, 30–1.
- 87 CAOM 3SAS29*, Bordj Okhriss SAS report, 5 September 1957.
- 88 See Garanger, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 49, aerial photograph of a destroyed *douar*.
- 89 SHAT 1H2574, J. Florentin, report, 11 December 1960. The inspection service was created in November 1959 in response to the mounting scandal of the *regroupements*.
- 90 Garanger, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 56–7, shows the inhabitants at the S'Bara tent camp building houses in June 1960.
- 91 Rocard, *Rapport*, 126, 197; on starvation in the camps see C.-R. Ageron, 'Une dimension', 345–6.
- 92 CAOM 3SAS18, ELA Aumale, November 1959; de Mollans objected to such SAS reports, 'nothing supports this manifestly exaggerated assessment'. As with so many officers, he seemed keen to report to higher command the faultless management of his own quartier.
- 93 Garanger, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 50–5, aerial photographs of three camps, including Mesdour; also *Retour*, 28–9. Garanger in a television programme on the ARTE channel, 12 February 2003, described Mesdour as a, 'concentration camp for the civilian population, surrounded by barbed-wire, and built by their own hands'. His former commanding officer de Mollans was so enraged by this he asked the Ministry of Defence to take legal action, which it refused to do since it would be against press freedom: see www.lecri.net/les_pages/rocard.htm (accessed 5 December 2007).
- 94 SHAT 1H2574, report of General Parlange, 15 February 1960. However, for a far more positive picture of a *regroupement* see Eoche-Duval, *Madame SAS*, on the careful planning of Sidi Naamane to the west of Médéa.
- 95 CAOM 81F107, briefing of General de Maison Rouge to Michel Debré, Aumale, 11 February 1959.
- 96 James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).
- 97 Pervillé, *Atlas*, 50.
- 98 Mohand Hamoumou, *Et ils sont devenus harkis* (Paris: Fayard, 1993), 29.
- 99 Kalyvas, *Logic of Violence*.
- 100 For a detailed investigation of the Bellounis force see Jacques Valette, *La Guerre d'Algérie des Messalistes, 1954–1962* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001), 133–290. The private army became so troublesome to the French that they eventually tracked down and killed Bellounis in July 1958.
- 101 CAOM 3SAS29*, report, 26 January 1958.
- 102 CAOM 3SAS29*, report, 2 July 1957 on Bellounis incursions into the *douars* of Meghaine, Taguedide and Intacen.

- 103 Valette, *La Guerre d'Algérie des Messalistes*, 247.
- 104 CAOM 81F107, presentation of de Maison Rouge, Aumale 11 February 1959.
- 105 SHAT 1H4334/3*, reports SAS Maginot, July–September 1959. Si Cherif was widely known as ‘le Djich’, meaning in this context ‘war lord’.
- 106 CAOM 3SAS29*, SAS Bordj Okhriss, report, 11 May 1957.
- 107 CAOM 3SAS18, ELA Aumale, report for 15 February–15 March 1960.
- 108 I have examined this more closely in a paper to the conference, ‘The French Colonial Mind’, Exeter University, 12–14 April 2007, ‘The “Silent Native”: *Attentisme*, Being Compromised, and Banal Terror during the Algerian War of Independence, 1954–62’, forthcoming in a volume edited by Martin Thomas.
- 109 Garanger, *Retour*, 82–3.
- 110 Feraoun, *Journal*, 204; also p. 139, the maquis is made up of malcontents and ‘old scores are quickly settled in the name of the resistance’, and p. 200, the rich ‘who made people sweat under their hats for a living are now sweating with fear’.
- 111 *Ibid.*, 11, 140–1, 242.
- 112 SHAT 1H1895/2, report, 13 October 1959.
- 113 CAOM 3SAS18, ELA (SAS) Aumale reports, 1959–60.
- 114 CAOM 3SAS29*.
- 115 See Garanger’s photograph of two brothers at S’Bara, one a *harki* and the other a reputed FLN sympathiser: *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 59.
- 116 Garanger, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 60–1, a young *harkis* soldier at home with his family; on his return in 2004, nobody knew the fate of this man, who may well have been killed at independence.