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Jeffrey James Byrne. *Mecca of Revolution: Algeria, Decolonization and the Third World Order.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. ISBN: 9780199899142 (hardcover, \$69.00).

Sung-Eun Choi. *Decolonization and the French of Algeria: Bringing the Settler Colony Home.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. ISBN: 9781137520746 (hardcover, \$109.99).

Michael Goebel. *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. ISBN: 9781107073050 (hardcover, \$130.00); 9781107421356 (paperback, \$32.99).

Jennifer Johnson. *The Battle for Algeria: Sovereignty, Health Care, and Humanitarianism.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015. ISBN: 9780812247718 (cloth, \$75.00).

Amelia H. Lyons. *The Civilizing Mission in the Metropole: Algerian Families and the French Welfare State during Decolonization.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013. ISBN: 9780804784214 (cloth, \$65.00).

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Fine books on Algeria's decolonization are like buses: they tend to appear all at once with long intervals in-between. Such was the case at the start of the twenty-first century when a spate of landmark studies from the likes of Raphaëlle Branche, Sylvie Thénault, and Matthew Connelly set the parameters for subsequent scholarship into, respectively, the Algerian conflict's human rights abuses, the juridical dimensions of French colonialism in the Maghreb, and the *Front de Libération Nationale's* (FLN) international diplomacy and its mobilization of transnational support.¹ The five books that form the subject of this collective review indicate that we have now reached a similar departure point. As before, each of these new studies focuses on distinct and hitherto poorly understood aspects of Algeria's colonial experience. Several cast their nets more

¹ Raphaëlle Branche, *La torture et l'armée pendant la guerre d'Algérie: 1954-1962* (Paris: Gallimard, 2001); Sylvie Thénault, *Une drôle de justice: Les magistrats dans la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Editions la Découverte, 2001); Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

widely, for instance by exploring the initial webs of connection built by first-wave anti-colonial activists in inter-war Paris or by tracing the efforts of independent Algeria's early 1960s regime to lend substance to its radical Third Worldism. Each one is meticulously researched. All have much to say.

Michael Goebel's book is perhaps the most avowedly global of the cluster and is, to a degree, an outlier from the rest. *Anti-imperial metropolis*, while concerned in part with the fate of the French Empire, does not purport to be primarily Algerian in focus. It nonetheless merits inclusion alongside the other works here because its principal concern is with the networks of shared experience and endeavour among anti-colonialists, student radicals, proto-nationalists, and Third Worldist thinkers who would carve out several of the defining political movements of the mid-to-late twentieth century. Inter-war Paris, the remarkable setting in which these anti-imperial relationships developed, is brought vividly to life in Goebel's text. The city features, not as some two-dimensional political landscape, a familiar hub of inter-state diplomacy, but as a more vibrant and subversive terrain: "the capital of the men without a country."² A nexus for lowly petitioners, overseas students, revolutionary idealists, and Comintern operatives from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Europe, the city's favoured *quartiers*, cafes, and meeting rooms offered the social and cultural space necessary for activists to share ideas about national and international futures after empire. Central to Goebel's argument is that Paris became a pole of attraction, exerting a magnetic pull for dissidents. While many at first sought out their compatriots or fellow language speakers, ultimately groups united around common grievances or shared ideological aspirations. Hostility to imperialism in all its forms – colonial, economic, cultural – became a political accelerant, sparking new alignments between trans-regional groups of political actors who were otherwise unable to organise as effectively locally or singly.

Heightened migration and student exchange were essential prerequisites to this process of transnational connection. Paris as intellectual centre, student city, and industrial centre threw together youthful idealists and migrant workers with seasoned political exiles in a capital of empire that, paradoxically, became host to defining anti-imperial movements. Indeed, for several new arrivals from francophone dependencies, the racial discrimination they suffered as immigrant labourers or university students in their adopted Parisian home catalysed their anti-colonialism. At the same time, French political culture played a more positive role. Anti-imperial sentiments became inflected with the language of republican universality and citizen's rights. French revolutionary ideals blended with Marxist thought and other, more authentically local variants of cultural nationalism to produce a uniquely Parisian strain of anti-colonialism.

The melange of ideas was, of course, contingent upon the level of contacts between the differing individuals and groups animated by colonial injustice, and it here that Goebel's insights shine through most clearly. Retracing the routes, the interactions, and the exchanges between Chinese, Latin American, North African, Vietnamese and other anti-imperial activists, he teases out the resultant cross-fertilisation of ideas between them. It is unusual to be shown in the most concrete terms – in some cases, building-by-building and, almost, room-by-room - how transnational networks took shape. If Paris provided the necessary spatial and cultural environment for these networks to thrive, Communist supporters offered the organisational model for this emergent anti-imperial internationalism to emulate. Locally, the strongly pro-Communist political culture of

² The quotation as Goebel notes, is from U.S. civil rights activist, Roger Nash Baldwin. Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis*, 2.

the Paris 'Red Belt' created a sympathetic environment. *Parti Communiste Français* (CPF) organisers meanwhile lent subsidy and support, albeit often reluctantly, and at the insistence of their Comintern guides.

Moving from the tenements of northern Paris to the more global implications of his findings, Goebel makes several key observations. Three are perhaps of particular relevance to regular readers of H-Diplo. First, by extending Erez Manela's vision of a Wilsonian moment of anti-colonial activism crystallized by the Paris Peace Conference, Goebel points to other, defining 'moments' that served a similar purpose in unifying otherwise disparate anti-colonialist ventures³ Not surprisingly, given his geographical focus on the metropolitan centre of the French Empire, he identifies the outbreak of large-scale rebellions in Morocco and Mandate Syria over the spring and summer of 1925 as triggers for heightened protests and organisational activity among students and Maghrebi workers in particular. But China's May Thirtieth Movement, whose European reverberations were felt at the 1927 Brussels Conference of the League against Imperialism, evidenced a further 'moment' in which an individual anti-imperial struggle achieved a global resonance. Arguably, Ethiopia's dogged response to Italy's 1935 invasion was another such defining case.

A second key observation is to challenge the prevailing view among imperial historians that anti-colonialism is too rigid a concept, one that presupposes an uncompromising opposition to foreign imperial rule, thereby masking the diversity of opinions among colonial communities. A more capacious view of the broad spectrum of political claims-making in which an end to empire was not conceived as a necessary endpoint is essential.⁴ Goebel reminds us that the inter-war years were distinctive even so in forging a new-style opposition to imperialism in all its forms. A precursor to the Third Worldism of the Cold War era, the integral nationalisms and anti-imperialisms whose Parisian coalescence Goebel examines were avowedly anti-colonialist in inspiration and objective.

In its recovery of anti-colonialism as a rallying cry and a credo, Goebel's extensive analysis of Chinese, Latin American, Antillean, Malagasy, Vietnamese, and North African anti-imperialists offers a third insight. The intellectual and organizational roots of decolonization, he contends, are to be found in the ideas and practices of the activist networks he investigates. Yet, if Paris was distinctive in bringing together so many such groups, it was not entirely unique. From Cairo to Harlem, Geneva to Mexico City, other cities would serve similar functions as foci for trans-regional cooperation in the fight against imperialistic rule. A global phenomenon, this was also an inter-war one. Understanding decolonization, then, requires both bigger geographies and a longer historical lens than is sometimes assumed.

Moving now to the works more squarely focused on North Africa, Jennifer Johnson's *The Battle for Algeria* shifts the frontline in the conflict between France and Algeria's anti-colonial nationalists away from armed clashes and towards different forms of confrontation: over the provision of medical services, over diplomatic representation at the UN and elsewhere, and over adhesion to precepts of international law and humanitarian standards in the treatment of military prisoners and displaced populations. The results are very effective indeed. Johnson demonstrates that the FLN successfully 'widened' the war of 1954-62 through these various

³ Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

⁴ A case made most convincingly in Frederick Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nation: Remaking France and French Africa, 1945-1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).

forms of non-military competition just as the French security forces effectively shut down much of the guerrilla insurgency within the Algerian interior. In other words, the war went global at much the same time as the rebellion was, to some degree at least, locally stifled. Johnson builds her argument by investigating various French and Algerian competitor groups. First under her spotlight are the rural development specialists and auxiliary medical teams of the French Army's special administrative service versus the student-staffers of the FLN's medical services division. Grandly named but hastily created, this shadow administrative service drew on eastern bloc and Arab state aid in its efforts to provide basic remedial care to Algerian families. As this example indicates, Johnson uses the provision of primary healthcare as a prism through which to view the race between colonial France and its FLN antagonists to mobilize basic welfare as a weapon in their quest for effective social control in rural Algeria.

The same logic of welfare competition applied to humanitarian intervention, whether in the guise of the externally regulated relief work of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) or the more locally mediated operations of the Algerian Red Crescent. Here again, Johnson exposes the underlying contest for legitimacy. In this instance a western model of expeditionary aid struggled to maintain its neutrality within a colonial sphere of action. The ICRC's difficulties multiplied when confronted with a more culturally authentic, but administratively rudimentary Red Crescent that was at odds with its French Red Cross equivalent in seeking to expose rights abuses and other maltreatment of Algeria's subject population. The issue of sovereignty provides the common thread linking these spheres of colonial state and insurgent action. If, as they claimed, the FLN was able to provide meaningful social services to a population reeling from the effects of war, then French insistence upon the marginality and illegitimacy of the nationalist movement would collapse. Equally, the more the FLN assumed the institutional forms, the bureaucratic structures, and the symbolic accoutrements of government, the greater its putative claim to lead Algeria to statehood as an independent nation.

As Johnson argues persuasively, creating the sinews of governance, whether internally in the form of local medical services and aid groups or internationally by means of an FLN 'diplomatic corps,' was politically transformative. For these alternative state structures undermined three French claims. The first of these cast the FLN as unrepresentative and ruthless, a movement only capable of controlling communities through coercion. The second maintained that Algerians' surest path to improved living standards and an ersatz European 'modernity' lay in France's continuing imperial presence. The third asserted that France alone remained the sovereign power in Algeria. The FLN challenged all three arguments at the most fundamental level by building a new fabric of governance, one that was measured in the tangible provision of services. The movement's cultural capital and, with it, the legitimacy of its integral nationalism increased as a result. This returns us to the matter of timing. The FLN was winning this war of social provision at precisely the same time that the French Army was pushing back the nationalists' guerrilla bands in one military encounter after another.

Symbolic acts and rhetorical claims figured especially large in the non-military contests on which Johnson focuses. Here again, an inexorable logic was in play: each time the French authorities tried to prove their unique administrative competence, their reformist zeal, or their receptiveness to humanitarian impulse, the FLN exposed the underlying colonialist presumptions at work. Where, for instance, FLN fighters were denied the status of legal combatants and thus, after capture, of prisoners of war, French soldiers in FLN hands became pawns in an elaborate, if misleading, show of the FLN's scrupulous adherence to international law. Where abortive French judicial inquiries into human rights abuses ran into the sands of domestic political

opposition, stultifying bureaucracy, and deafening administrative silence, FLN representatives overseas did their utmost to publicize the extent of torture, summary execution, and other security force misdeeds.

Specialist readers might conclude that some of these findings are broadly familiar. Certainly, there are resonances with the path-breaking work of Matthew Connelly, Raphaëlle Branche, and Fabian Klose, among others.⁵ But Johnson breaks significant new ground, not just in the extent of her primary research into numerous grassroots FLN and FLN-supporting organisations, but also in the breadth of vision with which she brings the strands of her work together. The net result is important for any serious scholar of anti-colonial movements and the conflicts that so often defined them. Pause for a moment to juxtapose the short title of Johnson's book, *The Battle for Algeria*, with its longer suffix: *Sovereignty, Health Care and Humanitarianism*, because herein lies the key to unlocking her findings. Simply put, the critical contest between the FLN and France cannot be confined to the insurgent - counter-insurgent confrontation but needs to be framed within a broader political landscape of social control, international publicity, and sovereign legitimacy.⁶ Thanks to waves of earlier scholarship we may know a good deal about each of these arenas, but no one has brought them together so holistically.

Continuing our journey of the books under review and, figuratively, crossing the Mediterranean northward from Algeria, the social housing apartment blocks of France's city suburbs provide the backdrop to Amelia Lyons's *The Civilizing Mission in the Metropole*. Starting from an analytical position complementary to Johnson's, Lyons highlights the tension between the efforts made by administrators and social workers to ameliorate the lives of Algerian immigrants and the abiding ethnocentrism prevalent among the officials and local government employees involved. The survival of imperialist ways of thinking should not, though, be confused with any lack of concern for the plight of France's fast-growing immigrant community. Animated by the high levels of social deprivation among North African immigrant families, French welfare specialists nonetheless leapt to some alarmingly colonialist diagnoses. Most attributed the poorer life chances of immigrant families to Algerian cultural backwardness rather than to the structural discrimination of postwar French society. In a striking turn of phrase Lyons gets to the heart of the matter at the outset of her story, noting that "social policy for Algerian migrants braided together compassion and coercion, service and surveillance, moralizing paternalism and generous material benefits." (1)

Another unifying theme in Lyons' work is the co-option of immigrant welfare policy to French state efforts to resist Algerian decolonization. Immigrant welfare and, most especially, urban housing policy, are thus located, not just as adjuncts to the French war in Algeria, but as essential components of France's counter-insurgency strategy. The core connection here is between access to citizenship and the consequent prospects of securing welfare entitlements. The critical link in this chain was the requirement to offer sustained evidence of 'loyalty' to France. Such loyalty was to be performed through regular employment and the adoption of French norms of familial domesticity. Everything from a regular wage to wearing an apron in the kitchen was thereby politicized. For North African immigrant families, acquiring citizenship status in France was but the first step in an uphill struggle to be treated with dignity, a process too often stunted by French expectations – and

⁵ Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*; Branche, *La torture*; Fabian Klose, *Human Rights in the Shadow of Colonial Violence: The Wars of Independence in Kenya and Algeria* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

⁶ This conclusion resonates strongly with Patricia Owens' insights in *Economy of Force: Counterinsurgency and the Historical Rise of the Social* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

indeed formal requirements – that heads of household, children and most especially Algerian women conform to prescribed standards of behaviour.

With a keen eye for detail, Lyons demonstrates that on the eve of the Algerian conflict, as well as during it, supposedly ‘expert’ colonial administrators and welfare workers claimed that Algerian family structure, which was strongly patriarchal and based on extended family ‘clan’ obligations, reinforced traditionalism and backwardness. Encouraging Algerians to conform to the cultural practices of an idealized French nuclear family – which, incidentally, also remained strongly patriarchal and presumed a domestic, motherhood role for women – became pivotal in ensuring that Algerians ‘evolved’ into French citizens. Nor was this merely a matter of cultural conformity. For immigrant families, access to housing and the receipt of benefit entitlements were tied to an intrusive French inspection system. The public officials at the sharp edge of this process wielded real power, monitoring domestic space and prescribing acceptable behaviours within and beyond it. No matter how well intentioned, welfare workers’ ‘home visits’ served multiple ulterior purposes. Social workers’ reports on family lives were arrogated to a state surveillance system that treated Algerian immigrant families as intrinsically suspect. Adhesion to French cultural conventions, such as sending children to school in western dress, was not just the surest route but, in many cases, the sole route to all-important social housing.

Lyons does much more than document the procedural techniques by which socio-cultural discrimination was practiced and enforced. For one thing, she is careful to stress the agency of Algerian immigrant families. Some exploited the egalitarian precepts of French integrationism and its accompanying rhetoric of colour-blind citizenship to demand that local government bureaucracies meet their obligations to new immigrant arrivals. Others were quick to subvert the inspection system, putting on the required show of domesticity to secure material benefits as and when required. The ‘performance’ in other words became just that – an occasional display for an instrumental purpose. For another thing, *The Civilizing Mission in the Metropole* documents the backroom rivalries between the senior architects of France’s social policies towards Algerian immigrants. In this account, it is the former colonial administrators, in particular, the *Inspecteurs généraux de l’administration en mission extraordinaire* (IGAME), as well as multiple advocates of large-scale social spending in Algeria and France, who figure largest. The result is a genuine *histoire croisée*, an entangled history, which reveals the complex ways in which the Algerian War blew back, reverberating through French society not just before independence in 1962 but for years afterwards as well.

As is the case with Lyons’s approach, Jeffrey Byrne’s *Mecca of Revolution* moves with ease across the supposedly clear-cut boundary of Algerian independence in 1962. In a book brimming with insight, this is, in itself, significant. For one of Byrne’s achievements is to demonstrate the extent to which Algerian statehood, understood in the sense of functioning institutions, working administrative and security services, and active foreign policy advocates, antedated France’s departure from its North African colony. Drawing on a wealth of Algerian archival materials, including those of the FLN as a political movement and the governments of the Algerian Republic that arose from it, Byrne folds together two interlocking narratives. One seeks to explain the stages by which Ahmed Ben Bella’s revolutionary government was steadily undermined and eventually overthrown by Defence Minister and former FLN commander Houari Boumedienne and his followers. In part, an exemplar of ‘state capture’ by loyalist security chiefs; in part, a product of the deeper and more longstanding divisions within the FLN, Ben Bella’s downfall had another, more internationalist dimension. For Boumedienne’s June 1965 coup also heralded a retreat from the ardently socialistic and Third Worldist anti-colonialism that had cemented independent Algeria’s place at the forefront of a radical global South. Governmental efforts, first to define Algeria’s Third Worldist agenda, and then to translate it into meaningful

international action, provide the second, and perhaps most eye-opening narrative in Byrne's work. Working principally from Algerian sources, Byrne's objective here is to provide an 'insider's perspective' on the international politics of African, Middle Eastern and other sympathetic states, which, having snapped the shackles of colonialism, sought to break free of rigid Cold War alignments as well. *Mecca of Revolution* does a remarkable job in demystifying Third Worldism, not as a series of rallying crises and complaints but as a positive strategy of diplomatic and political-economic realignment.⁷

Quite apart from Boumedienne's creeping arrogation of power, Ben Bella's Algerian regime also faced violent internal dissent. Byrne picks his way through these contests expertly, tracking the bitter rivalries between competing elements of the ruling FLN and explaining the growing disaffection among the Kabyle Berber communities loyal to Hocine Aït Ahmed's Socialist Forces Front.⁸ Moving downwards from its executive tier, factionalism was endemic within and between the FLN's political and military wings.⁹ Ironically perhaps, in facing down these challenges, Ben Bella sealed his government's fate. Suppression of regime opponents during 1963-4 nourished the growth of an Algerian security establishment configured around a new *Armée Nationale Populaire* (ANP) and a paramilitary gendarmerie equipped and advised by France.¹⁰ Algeria's new army and its emergent secret police were methodically crafted by Boumedienne. Each would become bedrocks of his power. Boumedienne was no novice in this regard. A former chief of staff of the FLN's army, or ALN (*Armée de Libération Nationale*), and the leader of the movement's military forces that had been based across Algeria's land frontier in Morocco's eastern border region, Boumedienne based his influence on the security networks he built around him. This was a powerful platform from which to launch a bid for power. It was represented a veritable insurgent intelligence culture, one that would set the tone for regime politics from 1965 onwards. Redolent of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, these Algerian security forces were set to expand dramatically in political influence and repressive capability in the years after independence.

Before dwelling on these early post-independence years that are the subject of Byrne's study, it is worth casting an eye back to what went before. As Jennifer Johnson points out, the FLN's political programme had fluctuated between a secular and broadly pan-Arabist socialism and strains of Algerian nationalism that wedded moderate Islamism to the modernizing ideals of liberationist anti-colonialism.¹¹ Foreign analysts and potential donor governments discerned these conflicting tendencies; indeed, in America's case they stunted the development of relations with the FLN in the years and months preceding independence.¹² Far from

⁷ Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, 8.

⁸ Mohamed Sifaoui, *Histoire secrète de l'Algérie indépendante: L'État-DRS* (Paris: Nouveau Monde, 2012), 65-82; Jeffrey Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, 129-137.

⁹ Sifaoui, *Histoire secrète de l'Algérie indépendante*, 23-24, 54-59; Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, 118-122, 125-128.

¹⁰ The ANP's continuing centrality to the current Algerian regime is analysed by Abdennour Benantar, 'The State and the Dilemma of Security Policy,' in Luis Martinez and Ramus Alenius Boserup (eds.), *Algeria Modern: From Opacity to Complexity* (London: Hurst, 2016), 93-110.

¹¹ Johnson, *The Battle for Algeria*, 13-15, 65-66.

¹² Jeffrey A. Lefebvre, 'Kennedy's Algerian dilemma: containment, alliance politics, and the "rebel dialogue",' *Middle Eastern Studies* 35:2 (2000): 61-82.

diminishing as the FLN took power, the tensions intrinsic to these alternate visions of how to govern and for what purpose acquired greater material consequence. Differing constructions of Algeria's societal future first intersected and then divided along lines of ideology, cultural orientation, ethnic attachment, and gender inclusion. Argument over these issues mirrored the cleavages within a composite nationalist movement whose internal fissures had widened the closer it came to achieving victory.¹³

Byrne, like Johnson, makes plain that the FLN fractured along numerous, overlapping fault-lines. At the high political level, the most obvious was between competitor groups inside the provisional government. But this executive-level split had other, wider permutations. Some were grounded in regional connection, others in war experience, still others in disputes over strategy and international affiliation.¹⁴ Thus, while decision-making within Ben Bella's governing Revolutionary Council was, in theory, collegiate, in practice, it was acutely factionalized. Byrne's principal interest here is with Ben Bella's Third Worldist diplomacy. He exposes the depth of disagreement over Algeria's international alignments and the regime's avowedly anti-colonial and ostensibly revolutionary foreign policy. Some of these arguments were tactical, reflecting long-running competition between those fighting inside Algeria and those working from exile outside it.¹⁵ Some were ideological, differences emerging not just over whom to fight and how to win, but more fundamentally, over the goals of Algeria's struggle for independence.¹⁶ Was Algerian society to be remade through revolutionary violence as Frantz Fanon had suggested, most notably in his final Algerian-written works.¹⁷ Or was the fight against the colonial occupiers more functional: a means to replace a foreign regime with an authentically Algerian system of rule?

The question of to whom Algeria should turn to for help in its state-building efforts brought these alternatives into sharper relief. Byrne excels here. He digs deeply into the archival record to expose the new regime's quests for diplomatic engagement and economic assistance while remaining true to its ideals of socialist non-alignment. For its part, General Charles de Gaulle's Paris government, although alarmed by increasing Soviet influence in the development of Algeria's oil industry, was, Byrne argues, broadly happy to play along with Algeria's balancing efforts between its former colonial ruler on the one hand and its Arab and eastern bloc suitors on the other. After all, the net effect of this international competition was to freeze out the Americans while allowing the French to sustain a major Algerian strategic and commercial presence. Fear of overbearing Soviet influence was even more strongly felt by the Algerian leaders themselves. Anxious to avoid economic dependency, but conscious that Algeria's most lucrative exports – hydrocarbons and wine – rendered the country acutely prone to foreign influence, Ben Bella and Foreign Minister Abdelaziz Bouteflika (Algeria's

¹³ Martin Evans, *Algeria: France's Undeclared War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 301-303.

¹⁴ Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, 94-96.

¹⁵ Charles-Robert Ageron, 'L'insurrection du 20 août 1955 dans le Nord-Constantinois: De la résistance armée à la guerre du peuple,' in Charles-Robert Ageron (ed.), *La guerre d'Algérie et les Algériens, 1954-1962* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1997), 31-34, 44-47.

¹⁶ Sifaoui, *Histoire secrète de l'Algérie indépendante*, 28-30, 59-62.

¹⁷ Frantz Fanon, *L'an V de la révolution algérienne* (Paris: Editions la Découverte, 2011, originally published, 1959); idem, *The Wretched of the Earth (Les damnés de la terre)*, originally published, 1961 (London: Penguin reprint, 2001).

infirm, but current president) worked hard to sustain the delicate balancing act between western European and eastern bloc partners. Typical in this regard was Ben Bella's previously unannounced trip to de Gaulle's French residence in March 1964. Apparently impromptu, the outcome of this presidential face-to-face was a more softly-softly French approach in matters of property restitution and financial compensation for displaced colonists in the wake of the Algerian regime's nationalization programme.¹⁸ The losers from this Franco-Algerian détente, as Sung-Eun Choi makes plain her book, which is discussed in more detail below, were the settler repatriates whose claims for Algerian or French governmental compensation for confiscated land fell on deaf ears.¹⁹

The range and number of foreign governments courting the Algerian regime after independence was consistent with a global trend among western and Communist bloc governments of the early 1960s: namely, the effort to build bridges – metaphorical and real – in much of the former colonial world, and in Africa especially.²⁰ The multiple layers of foreign intervention that resulted, whether technical and administrative or more overtly political and ideologically driven, inevitably brought not just Algeria's sovereignty, but that of other newly independent states, into question. Part of the messy aftermath of decolonization, this new wave of First and Second World interventionism made the practice of Third Worldism – of a liberationist politics configured around the needs of the world's poorest by the governing elites within their own societies – more difficult. Increasing levels of external support in all sectors of government activity promoted a technocratic turn in Algerian administration. With administrative professionalization and commercial deal making proceeding apace, Third Worldist true believers were increasingly dismissed as idle dreamers. Byrne's verdict, though, is kinder. More than any preceding studies or memoirs, *Mecca of Revolution* not only charts Algeria's rise to pre-eminence among radical Third Worldist nations but, more importantly, clarifies the policy implications and international dilemmas arising from an authentic commitment to put African and other global South interests above those of the established giants of the international system. In some ways an admirable objective, for Ben Bella's regime at least, the task proved impossible.

Sung-Eun Choi's *Decolonization and the French of Algeria* shares with the two preceding studies a preoccupation with the meanings and consequences of decolonization, in this case for the three quarters of a million or so European settlers, Jewish community members, and local military auxiliaries who left Algeria in the wake of independence. The book concerns itself with what the author defines as 'repatriate politics.' The term refers to the amalgam of juridical changes to citizenship status, the differential French treatment of the

¹⁸ Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, 272-279.

¹⁹ Sung-Eun Choi, *Decolonization and the French of Algeria*, 81-84.

²⁰ As evidence of this trend within U.S. presidential administrations, see: Philip E. Muehlenbeck, *Betting on the Africans: John F. Kennedy's Courting of African Nationalist Leaders* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Patrick O. Cohrs, 'Towards a New Deal for the World? Lyndon Johnson's Aspirations to Renew the Twentieth Century's Pax Americana,' in Francis J. Gavin and Mark Atwood Lawrence (eds.), *Beyond the Cold War: Lyndon Johnson and the New Global Challenges of the 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 44-59. For the trend's 1950s antecedents, see Jason C. Parker, *Hearts, Minds, Voices: US Cold War Public Diplomacy and the Formation of the Third World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016). For eastern bloc initiatives, see the 2015 special issue of *The Journal of Contemporary History*, edited by Maud Bracke and James Mark 'Between Decolonisation and the Cold War: Transnational Activism and Its Limits in Europe 1950s-1990s.' And for the potentially devastating impact of such interventionism, see David Engerman, *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018).

various returnee or exile groups, and the long-running culture wars in metropolitan France over the claims and status of the minority groups variously expelled, ousted, or otherwise forced to flee Algeria following French withdrawal. The goal for successive governments of France, as Sung-Eun Choi sees it, was to incorporate the former settlers of French Algeria while carefully eliding their colonial past and, more specifically, its traumatic, divisive climax. The resultant policy initiatives and reparations proposals came loaded with the familiar tenets of integrationist thinking and the values of a supposedly colour-blind French Fifth Republic. Yet all were racially discriminatory in practice. Former settlers of European origin would be designated as repatriates, a legal status that effectively recognised them as returning French citizens. This despite the fact that a large proportion were of Spanish, Italian, or Maltese background and had never set foot in mainland France before 1962. But Algerian Muslims in France would remain culturally and legally marginalised, judged less suitable for assimilation even as efforts continued to recognise that erstwhile army auxiliaries and their families had sacrificed their chances of remaining in Algeria on the altar of French colonialism.

The echoes of Amelia Lyons's findings become stronger still as Sung-Eun Choi ventures further into the various communities of leavers from Algeria. Differential treatment was apparent, not just between ethnic communities but within them as well. Among those Algerian Muslims looking to migrate to France after final confirmation of Algeria's independence in July 1962, those judged to be 'high standing,' largely by virtue of white-collar employment in the colonial administration, enjoyed greater freedom to seek housing and employment anywhere in France. Former army auxiliaries, or *harkis* as they were known, faced *de facto* internment in the notorious Larzac resettlement camp in the Aveyron. Others scratched a living in France's informal economy. Former settlers, by contrast, were presumptively placed at the head of departmental housing quotas, although they, too, were denied statutory entitlement to French government compensation for their displacement from Algeria. This might seem unsurprising were it not for the legal fiction that colonial Algeria was constitutionally an extension of mainland France. Put differently, the legal designation of settlers, whether as a European 'minority' or, subsequent to their departure from the Maghreb, as 'repatriates,' implicitly acknowledged their status, first as components of a colonial population and, secondly, as something apart from the citizenry of mainland France. Sung-Eun Choi has a forensic eye for the contradictions involved. Examples such as these, which connect the matter of legal status with access to services and benefits, pepper the book, thereby weaving together the legal history of post-independence repatriation with the lived experience of marginalization. The consequent tension between state 'forgetting' and the countervailing efforts by pied noir groups, *harki* families, and Algerian immigrant communities to get their voices heard feature more prominently in the book's second half.

After the end of de Gaulle's second presidential term in 1969, French administrations of the 1970s and 1980s grew more responsive to repatriates' demands for indemnification of their Algerian losses. Presidents Francois Mitterrand and Jacques Chirac, each with Algerian War pasts of their own, made sustained efforts to woo *pied noir* groups. It remains a moot point, though, whether official willingness to contemplate some sort of compensation scheme reflected a genuine change of political mood or a more calculated effort to curry favour with a significant bloc of voters. Much as in the 1960s, tilting too far towards repatriate grievances risked harming Franco-Algerian diplomatic relations and the powerful mutual economic interests (most notably in the energy sector) that underpinned them. Meanwhile, as Sung-Eun argues, greater French cultural sensitivity to the shocking neglect of *harki* families also required a powerful emotional nudge, impelled as it was by the activism of second-generation *harki* community members who refused to tolerate the wretched living conditions and social discrimination endured by their parents. Viewed as a whole, the lasting social and cultural fallout from the displacement of over a million people in the aftermath of Algerian independence

underlines a deceptively simple conclusion. Even supposedly definitive decolonizations were messy and incomplete. The consequences of Algeria's contested independence remained imminently present for those caught up in their human tragedies. It is a comment that perhaps serves as an epitaph for this review as a whole since each of the five books reviewed excels in making connections: globally and trans-regionally in Goebel's case; internationally and transnationally and in case of Johnson and Byrne, and across the divide of formal decolonization for Lyons and Sung-Eun Choi. It may be some time before such a valuable group of Algerian history buses rolls up again.

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