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**Publication Date**

2017

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Nanou Gazing Across the Mediterranean:

A Journey Through Space, Memory, and *Nostalgie*

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Master of Arts

in African Studies

by

Chana Maria Campora

2017

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## ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Nanou Gazing Across the Mediterranean:  
A Journey Through Space, Memory, and *Nostalgie*

by

Chana Maria Campora

Master of Arts in African Studies

University of California, Los Angeles, 2017

Professor Lia N. Brozgal, Chair

This ethnographic thesis analyzes the intimate relationship between social spaces during the mid-1900s in French Algeria and memory retrieval after repatriation to France, through the eyes of my grandmother, Andrée Crouzade, a “Pied-Noir” (European settler of Algeria), whom I refer to as Nanou throughout this thesis. Andrée is a key actor in this project and her oral history is the impetus for the work I present herein. In an effort to give meaning and context to Andrée’s words, I examine the array of memories that exist within her accounts, comparing them to those offered by Pieds-Noirs authors, including Gabriel Conesa, Marie Cardinal, and Albert Camus. In this ethnography, I argue that spaces of memory do in fact ignite sentiments of nostalgia, which explains why the Pied-Noir community continues to live in a cycle of perpetual imaginary return to Algeria whilst residing in their country of exile, without foreseeing an actual return to their homeland. These diverse manifestations of memory represent a mental escape for the Pied-Noir

community who yearn for a return to French Algeria—their *paradis perdu* (lost paradise). It is my scholarly yet personal quest to remain truthful to the collected oral research while bridging the gap between space, memory, and nostalgia.

The thesis of Chana Maria Campora is approved.

Suzanne E. Slyomovics

Dominic R. Thomas

Lia N. Brozgal, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2017

## DEDICATION PAGE

Pour Papou et Nanou; mes grands parents, je vous dédie ceci. Vous m'avez appris à aimer inconditionnellement et pour cela je vous en serai toujours reconnaissante. Indéfiniment, je vous aimerai.

*“Maintenant va falloir se quitter et puis vivre. Et que le temps passe, mais jamais regrets ne s’effacent. Peut-être on se reverra, une autre fois dans une vie, tu me parleras et je te suivrai pour une éternité. Un vent de folie, alors soufflera plus fort qu’aujourd’hui. Tu verras. Tu verras”*

– ‘On s’est connu trop tard’ Guy Narboni

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Abstract</b> .....	ii
<b>Dedication Page</b> .....	v
<b>Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>Chapter One</b> <i>Bab-El-Oued</i> .....	15
<b>Chapter Two</b> <i>El Biar</i> .....	26
<b>Chapter Three</b> <i>The Space of Exile</i> .....	46
<b>Conclusion</b> <i>Unfinished Sentences</i> .....	60
<b>Appendix One</b> <i>Family Tree Explained</i> .....	63
<b>Appendix Two</b> <i>Photographs and Images</i> .....	67
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	73



## Introduction

When I was a little girl, my grandfather Papou would comfort me with his Algerian *berceuse* as he tucked me into bed. It was a lullaby Papou clung to from his past life, which he found impossible to forget. Having left Algeria in 1962 as the war for independence was coming to an end, Papou immigrated to France at the age of nineteen, but never fully assimilated to French culture. The variety of Algerian traditions my grandparents carried with them—Algerian Jewish, Mediterranean Pied-Noir—have been passed down to my mother and now, to her children. Yet, the anecdotes my grandfather recounted were not enough to satisfy my inquisitiveness. Listening to his musical compositions and reading his written work, I could envision my grandfather’s version of Algiers, but my vision still remained incomplete. I was missing my grandmother’s narratives and *her* portrayal of her country of birth. My grandmother had been more discrete about her childhood perhaps because she feared picking at an old but fragile wound that would reopen and transport her back to a time that emotionally broke her. I was intrigued by my grandmother’s inexactness. My grandfather’s narratives already had a space in Pied-Noir music and literature, as he released an album entitled “L’Empreinte;”<sup>1</sup> a separate series of songs he titled “Les Déracinés” to pay tribute to all the Pieds-Noirs; and wrote an unfinished autobiography he called “Bio G.N. par B.H.L.,”<sup>2</sup> in which he recounts the important events of his life all the way through the war of independence. Now it was time to document Andrée Crouzade’s story and hear her version.

Conducting an ethnography of my grandmother Andrée in the context of architecture and social spaces during the mid-1900s in French Algeria raises a series of questions regarding

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<sup>1</sup> “L’Empreinte,” Guy Narboni, accessed June 2, 2017, <http://www.guynarboni.com>.

<sup>2</sup> The unabbreviated title reads: “Biography Guy Narboni par Bernard-Henri Lévy”, because the biography is a dialogue fabricated by Narboni to better narrate his life in Algiers.

memory: Is memory linked to physical space? If so, what are my grandmother's childhood spaces of memory in Algiers? Are those spaces recurrent throughout Pied-Noir literature? Do those spaces of memory provoke a sentiment of nostalgia? Linking grandmother's treasured memories to research done on colonial city transformations by David Prochaska and Serge Santelli; literary autobiographic and ethnographic descriptions written by Gabriel Conesa, Marie Cardinal, Joëlle Bahloul and Albert Camus; virtual spaces like blogs hosted for Pieds-Noirs communities to exchange their stories; and films *Le coup de sirocco* and *La valise ou le cercueil*, thickens the account of ties between space and memory in the Pied-Noir experience. Working in an ethnographic vein, I explore the oral history of memory within a given space by a displaced and dispersed community, as those remembered places "[represent] a symbolic entrenchment into a human and geographical environment that has vanished" (Bahloul, 2). It is my goal to dissect the expression of memory and reveal how its intimate relationship to physical spaces inevitably challenges the experience of a Pied-Noir's current reality. The dissimilar manifestations of memory embody a refusal of migration, separation, and cultural estrangement from French society.

As we enter Andrée's memory bank, we embark on this time-traveling journey, when French colonial power was at its peak and racial systems of hierarchy were deeply entrenched. Unraveling and understanding the history behind French Algeria contextualizes the narratives told by many Pieds-Noirs, including the stories my grandmother has shared with me.

France's presence in Algeria began in 1827 with the blockade of Algiers by the French Navy. By 1830, France had invaded and brutally conquered Algiers, eventually turning Algeria into an integral part of France. Algeria became France's longest-held overseas territory and a

desired destination for thousands of European immigrants, even though indigenous Algerians constituted the majority of the population.<sup>3</sup>

Over the next century, the divide between French-Algerians and native Algerians continued to deepen, setting the stage for the fall of the French empire in Algeria. Soon leading to a full-fledged war, tensions arose on November 1, 1954, when the first violent attack struck orchestrated by an insurgency of native Algerians who were dissatisfied with the French bourgeois who stripped them of their political and economic status.<sup>4</sup> The Algerian war lasted for approximately eight years and gave rise to two major opposing armed groups: the pro-independence *Front de libération nationale* (National Liberation Front) and the anti-independence *Organisation armée secrète* (Secret Army Organisation). The FLN, a socialist political party, primarily dedicated its fight to “the people [native Algerians]—their condition, well-being, and advancement” (Lewis, 163). The political counter-reaction from the FLN uprising was the OAS—“one of the most lethal counterterrorist groups in modern history,” that ultimately lost the war to keep Algeria French (Harrison, 25). The OAS carried on a war of terror in the cities of Oran and Algiers against the FLN, but also against the French police and their fellow Europeans. The OAS continued to challenge the decisions Charles de Gaulle, the president of France at the time, was making in regard to French Algeria.<sup>5</sup> With the independence looming on the horizon, and no possible future for the former colonists in an autonomous

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<sup>3</sup> Benjamin Stora, Jane Marie Todd, and William B. Quandt, “French Minorities and the Muslim Population,” in *Algeria 1830-2000: A Short History* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2004), 8-12.

Charles-Robert Ageron, *Modern Algeria a History from 1830 to the Present*, ed. Michael Brett (London: C. Hurst, 1991), 83.

<sup>4</sup> William H. Lewis, “The Decline of Algeria's FlN,” *Middle East Journal* (1966): 163, accessed May 16, 2017, [www.jstor.org/stable/4323985](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4323985).

<sup>5</sup> Alexander Harrison, *Challenging De Gaulle: The O.A.S. and the Counterrevolution in Algeria, 1954-1962* (Praeger, 1989), 25.

Algeria, the French-Algerians fled north across the Mediterranean in 1961, beginning the great European exodus. It was only after the *français-d'Algérie* (French Algerians) left Algeria that these repatriates, a juridical term with legal force given to the immigrants from Algeria, were called *Pieds-Noirs*, a slur used by the French to describe Algerians of European origin, and that would later be recuperated by this community to describe itself.

There exist more than a dozen conflicting origin stories for the term *Pied-Noir*, inevitably indicating an absence of a coherent genesis story for the creation of the Pied-Noir community.<sup>6</sup> The most popular recognized mythological story behind this term is that “[the] native Algerians saw the black boots of the French soldiers during the conquest in 1830 and called the colonists ‘Pieds-Noirs’” (Hubbell, 9). Yet, there is no clear trace in the indigenous Algerian literature of this story, especially since the term *Pied-Noir* is not translated into Arabic within any narratives produced during the years of colonization.<sup>7</sup> The first conceivable and distinguishable mention is in the French dictionary *Petit Robert* written by Pied-Noir Paul Robert in 1979. Robert recounts the possible origin of the term in 1901 to refer to the driver of Algerian boats, “chauffeur de bateau indigène” (Martini, 275).<sup>8</sup> Though the *Robert* definition might not enter into Pied-Noir mythology, it acts as evidence of the first official usage of the term, allowing historians to situate its authenticated origin. The popularization of *Pied-Noir* occurred when the *français-d'Algérie* arrived to France and were discriminated against by the mainland French who named the newcomers *Pied-Noir* as they arrived in waves onto their land. It was only later, after the exodus

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<sup>6</sup> Pieds-Noirs Georges Gomez and Josiane Gomez provide more origin stories of the term *Pied-Noir* listed in their website “Amicale des anciens d’Attatba” under *La Nostalgie*.

<sup>7</sup> Philippe Bouba, “L’arrivée et l’accueil des Pieds-Noirs dans les Pyrénées-Orientales en 1962, Port-Vendres et Perpignan face à l’exil des Rapatriés d’Algérie,” 2.

<sup>8</sup> Lucienne Martini and Jean-Robert Henry, “Annexe,” in *Racines de papier: Essai sur l’expression littéraire de l’identité pieds-noirs* (Paris: Publisud, 1997), 275.

of 1962, that the *français-d'Algérie* identified and began calling themselves *Pied-Noir*. Despite the complexity and ambiguity of the *Pied-Noir* origin, it is the term that has defined the French who were born in Algeria during the colonial period and who left their motherland land in 1962. Officially, the online *Petit Larousse* defines *Pied-Noir* as “Français d’origine européenne installé en Afrique du Nord jusqu’à l’indépendance” (French of European origin living in North Africa until independence). The renowned *Pied-Noir* author Marie Cardinal concurs with this definition as she states in her novel *Les Pieds-Noirs*,

Nous n’avons été Pieds Noirs qu’au moment de partir. On dit que ce sont les Arabes qui nous ont appelés comme ça du temps de la Conquête, parce que les premiers colons débarquaient avec des souliers noirs [ . . . ]. En vérité, ce sont les Français de France qui nous ont donné ce nom. (80)

(We didn’t become Pieds-Noirs until the moment we left. They say it was the Arabs that called us that during the Conquest, because the first colonists landed with black shoes [ . . . ]. The truth is it was the French from France that gave us this name.)<sup>9</sup>

The French attributing the term *Pied-Noir* to this community emphasizes a social separation between the French and the French-Algerians, revealing France’s reluctance to take responsibility for the history of French Algeria. The *français-d'Algérie* or *Pieds-Noirs* forced out of Algeria and into France were not welcomed with particularly open arms, nor were they especially delighted to be “back” in the *métropole*. In *Remembering French Algeria: Pieds-Noirs, Identity, and Exile*, Amy Hubbell proclaims, “turning to France was not easy for the Pieds-Noirs, who were an unwelcome symbol of failed colonial rule, confusion, and violence in an unspeakable war” (139). Their unsettling arrival created a rift between the *français-d'Algérie* community and the French, who ostracized them at all costs. Jean-Jacques Jordi in his book *De l’exode à l’exile: Rapatriés et Pieds-Noirs en France*, delves into this question and further

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<sup>9</sup> Translated by Hubbell in *Remembering French Algeria: Pieds-Noirs, Identity, and Exile* (2015) (p. 10).

exemplifies the tensions that existed between the *Marseillais* (inhabitants of Marseilles) and the “repatriates” upon their arrival in 1962. Jordi expresses,

[Les Marseillais] ont des Pieds-Noirs une image assez négative. Ils les dotent généralement de fortunes considérables avec tous les stéréotypes les accompagnant. Brutal, raciste, de convictions politiques très marquées à droite, inculte, borné, parlant fort...le mythe du ‘colon’ était prégnant jusqu’à la caricature parmi les Marseillais. (Jordi, 188)

([The people of Marseille] view the Pieds-Noirs rather negatively. They generally endow them wealthy with the stereotypical behaviors that characterize them. Brutal, racist, of right-wing political conviction, uneducated, narrow-minded, loud speakers...among the Marseillais, the myth of the ‘colonist’ was pushed to extreme caricature.)

The French classified the Pieds-Noirs as *others* whilst establishing an unwelcoming and exclusionary atmosphere for the thousands of Europeans who had in fact been granted French citizenship by the French state in Algeria. The newspaper *La Marseillaise* only reported on the presence of the Pieds-Noirs in order to underscore

le ‘danger’ qu’ils représentent pour la ville. Le journal communiste se veut être le défenseur des Marseillais face aux ‘envahisseurs’ d’Algérie [...] [Les Marseillais] contribuent surtout à développer un mouvement d’opinion anti-rapatrié qui se manifeste parfois par une hargne virulente. (Jordi, 94)

(the ‘danger’ they represent for the city. The Communist newspaper has become a defender of the people of Marseille against the ‘invaders’ of Algeria ... [The people of Marseille] mainly contribute to the development of an anti-repatriate opinion movement which is sometimes manifested by virulent aggressiveness.)

Referred to as the “invaders of Algeria,” the Pieds-Noirs had little chance of socially integrating into French society. In an interview given to *Paris-Presse*, a *Marseillais* declares, “...*Que [les rapatriés] quittent Marseille en vitesse, qu’ils essaient de se réadapter ailleurs et tout ira pour le mieux*’ (...[the repatriates] should quickly leave Marseilles and try to integrate elsewhere; that would fix everything) (Jordi, 94). Publically, the French people were quick to judge the Pieds-Noirs whereas politically, the French government set up established benefits for the *français-d’Algérie*, which were arranged as they arrived into Marseille. Some advantages included granting the incoming *français-d’Algérie* housing. Jordi elaborates on this compensation in *De*

*l'exode à l'exile:*

Par ordonnance du 18 août 1962 et par décret du 28 novembre de la même année, le gouvernement lance un programme spécial de logement pour les rapatriés d'Algérie. Il s'agit de passer un contrat avec les organismes constructeurs et de leur faire bénéficier de prêts à taux réduit à charge pour eux de construire le plus rapidement possible des logements. (Jordi, 129)

(By order of 18 August 1962 and by decree of 28 November of the same year, the government launched a special housing program for repatriates from Algeria. It is a matter of contracting the construction companies and making them benefit from loans at a reduced rate to build the housing as quickly as possible.)

The immediate lodgings built to house the *français-d'Algérie* were mostly concentrated in the “quartiers nord” (northern neighborhoods) of Marseille where a great measure of land was uninhabited, bordering the Xème et XIème arrondissements” (tenth and eleventh districts) (Jordi, 130). Even so, the urgent measures taken to accommodate the Pieds-Noirs came with their limits and weaknesses. These building structures were certainly not enough to house the masses entering *l'Hexagone*;<sup>10</sup> Jordi explains: “Toutefois, les 2 500 logements réservés aux rapatriés se révèlent très insuffisants et ne sont pas disponibles dans l'immédiat” (However, the 2,500 housing units designated for the repatriates are insufficient and are not immediately available) (130). Parts of the French government's repatriation plan were fallible while other components were found to be successful among the Pied-Noir community. For instance, the French government effectively ensured the *français-d'Algérie*'s recognition of degrees from Algeria and the youth's immediate placement in schools following their arrival:

A la rentrée, fixée au 25 septembre, on dénombrera 15 736 élèves rapatriés dans les établissements publics du département auxquels il convient d'ajouter un peu plus d'un millier d'élèves dans des institutions privées. (Jordi, 133)

(Upon the start of school, on September 25, there will be 15,736 repatriated students admitted into the public establishments of the department, to which will be added just over one thousand students in private institutions.)

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<sup>10</sup> *L'Hexagone* is a phrase that refers to the mainland of metropolitan France. France is given the name *l'Hexagone* to refer to its geographical shape carved into an almost regular hexagon with its three terrestrial sides and three maritime borders.

While many received these state advantages, the insulting remarks the Pieds-Noirs were faced with nevertheless made it exceedingly challenging to assimilate. Many *français de souche* (native-born French) like Robert Boulin were against the integration of the *français-d'Algérie*. In fact, in an article in the journal *Les Echos*, Boulin declared, “*des régions d'accueil sont prévues pour les rapatriés...mais, si possible, je souhaite qu'il n'y ait pas d'immeubles pieds-noirs dans les villes*” (Reception areas are planned for the repatriates...but, if possible, I wish there will be no Pied-Noir buildings in the cities) (Jordi, 128). Boulin's statement clearly announces his discriminatory attitude regarding the Pieds-Noirs; positions such as his ultimately contributed to the already existing pressures felt by both France and Algeria upon the cessation of the war of Independence.

My grandmother Andrée admits to their unwelcoming arrival as she articulates, “On était des orphelins, bloqués dans un pays qu'on voulait pas, qui nous aimait pas” (We were orphans, stuck in a country we didn't want to live in, and that disliked us). It was only after years of societal humiliation and discrimination that the *français-d'Algérie* decided to appropriate the derogatory term and carry the name with pride. Cardinal, in her novel *Les Pieds-Noirs* admits, “Au début nous avons pris ça pour une insulte ou pour une moquerie, ça nous ‘faisait perdre la figure’ de nous appeler comme ça. Et puis nous nous y sommes faits. Personnellement je suis fière d'être Pied-Noir” (In the beginning we took it as an insult or a joke; it made us ‘lose face’ to call us that. And then we got used to it. Personally, I'm proud to be a Pied-Noir) (80). The Pied-Noir community shares the sentiment of *unbelonging*, as nostalgia shadows their collective history whilst reminiscing about their passed lives.

Memories have a spatial dimension, which in effect can foster a feeling of nostalgia. The online Merriam-Webster definitions of *nostalgia* are “1. The state of being homesick; 2. A



wistful or excessively sentimental yearning for return to or of some period or irrecoverable condition.” This word has been borrowed and altered to establish a more nuanced definition of the sentiment felt by the Pied-Noir community towards leaving their beloved homeland: *nostalgie*. *Nostalgie*, in Hubbell’s words, is a “[l]onging for the eternally absent lost paradise” and “[t]he nostalgic elaboration of Algeria both in imagination and in writing” (139, 155). This term predates the Pied-Noir exodus as its first appearance is in the title of Marcello Fabri’s poem “Nostalgie,” found in *Les chers esclavages*, a collection of poems written in 1938 during his stay in Paris. In 1845, Fabri’s family had moved from Haute-Saône region of France to Algeria, where he was born, in Miliana. During a decade-long stay in Paris, Fabri wrote this nostalgic verse:<sup>11</sup>

—Alger, je t’ai rêvée ainsi qu’une amoureuse  
 toi parfumée, et soleilleuse, et pimentée;  
 tu es plus belle encore d’être si loin, la pluie  
 d’ici, la pluie habille comme une magie  
 le gris du ciel, avec-tout-l’or-de-ton-soleil (104).

(—Algiers, I dreamed you just as a lover  
 you scented, and sunny, and spicy;  
 you are even more beautiful from being so distant, the rain  
 here, the rain dresses like magic  
 the grey sky, with-all-the-gold-of-your-sun.)<sup>12</sup>

Archetypal of what would become an oeuvre of written *nostalgie*, Fabri exalts Algeria over any other place. Fabri expresses his homesickness as he describes Algeria to be a space embellished with exquisite tastes, odors, and the sun’s brightness radiating over the city. His nostalgia lives within the physical space of Algeria, as he writes of this land with melancholy. The Algerian-Jewish philosopher and theorist Jacques Derrida popularized the term *nostalgie*

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<sup>11</sup> With his wife Geneviève Germain, Fabri moves to Paris in 1919, where he founded *La Revue de l’Époque* and *L’Âge Nouveau du Prix de Poésie*, a literary review where philosophical ideas and social preoccupations emerge. In 1939, he returns to Algiers with his family.

<sup>12</sup> Translated by Hubbell in *Remembering French Algeria: Pieds-Noirs, Identity, and Exile* (2015) (p. 155).

with Safaa Fathey in their book, *Tourner les mots, Nostalgie*, which is established on the sites of Derrida's Algerian past. Similarly to Fabri, Derrida romantically recreates his Algeria by heavily relying on the physical attributes of the city and the atmospheric conditions:

Il faut d'abord revenir à des paysages aimés, et ce sont surtout des espaces désertiques, océaniques ou marins, des terres sèches, des côtes et des plages, des lieux connus ou des lieux rêvés (l'Algérie de ce que l'Acteur appelle sa "nostalgie"—El Biar, Alger et la Kabylie—, la maison d'enfance, les lycées, les maisons de culte [. . .]). (23)

(First you must return to the beloved landscapes, and these are especially desert, ocean or marine spaces, dry lands, coasts and beaches, places known or dreamed of (the Algeria that the Actor calls his "nostalgie"—El-Biar, Algiers, and Kabylia—the childhood home, the high schools, the places of worship [. . .])<sup>13</sup>

As Derrida reminisces, he cannot help but mention the importance of his childhood home. In *The Architecture of Memory*, Algerian-Jewish ethnographer Joëlle Bahloul recounts the story of the Senoussi family through the architectural space of their house Dar-Refayil in Sétif. Her ethnography is built around the notion that the union between domestic space and people cannot be torn apart. In Bahloul's words, "The house is like a family, and in its history the family appears as solid as a built structure. As we go through the house, memories not only describe physical space but also tell a social history" (10). The Pied-Noir authors Gabriel Conesa and Cardinal weave nostalgia into their narratives, just like my grandmother does when she shares her oral history accounts with me. The nostalgia the Pied-Noir authors poetically allude to is borne from a specific setting, which paints the Algeria of their memory. Each Pied-Noir carries his or her own version of Algeria; *mon Algérie* they call it. It is *nostalgie* that transports them back to *their Algérie*; "an Algeria that has not changed, not aged, a country rather embellished by memory" (Hogue, 121). Andrée carries *her Algérie* with her every day. These pages reveal my grandmother's *Algérie*, as she saw it and as she lived it in Bab-el-Oued and El Biar. As she sailed away from Algiers, Andrée's *Algérie* instantaneously withdrew from tangible reality and began

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<sup>13</sup> Translated by Hubbell in *Remembering French Algeria: Pieds-Noirs, Identity, and Exile* (2015) (p. 156).

taking root in genealogical memory, three-generations ago.

The Mediterranean has always been a site of migration, a zone of mobility not just south to north, but notably north to south. This is where my story begins. My ancestors came from all over the southern European shores of the Mediterranean before crossing the sea to arrive in Algeria. For many reasons, some of which will forever remain unknown, they left their homeland, travelling across the Mediterranean Sea to reach Algerian soil.<sup>14</sup> Historian Julia Clancy-Smith, in her book *Mediterraneans: North Africa and Europe in an Age of Migration, c. 1800–1900*, gives numerous reasons why this migration may have taken place:

Population movements constitute the bedrock of the world history and assume a wide range of guises: epic wanderings, pilgrimage, pastoral nomadism, transhumance, voluntary relocation, forced expatriation, trade diaspora, travel, tourism, slavery, and labor mobility of many kinds. (12)

Family trees help unpack genealogy and the space of migration by gathering bits of recorded history (Appendix 2: *fig. 7 and fig. 8*). Tracing back a family lineage illustrates where we came from and how we have arrived to where we are now. I set out to collect and transcribe the scraps of paper passed down for five generations, safely guarded for almost a century by my grandmother, in order to understand where her story began. The countless hours of sifting through the stacks of notes with the aim to put an order to the family story was well worth it as my grandmother and I rediscovered marriage and birth certificates, labeled photographs, and scribbled names and dates on tiny bits of ripped paper. These documents were enough to begin connecting the dots between my ancestors. Incorporating the stories my siblings and I were told when we were children and the numerous FaceTime interviews with my grandmother, now living in Juan-les-Pins, France, was sufficient for these fragmented pieces of information to concretize a platform to explain where Andrée's Pied-Noir identity began. For many years she has preserved these inscribed snippets of ancestral history, waiting for one of her grandchildren

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<sup>14</sup> Read entire family tree in Appendix One.

to re-open the box of archives and reveal our family history. In essence, everyone's story is singular; everyone's story is of importance to the greater history of Algeria. To treasure one's personal history, it is critical to engage in oral history regardless of its complications. It is my personal and scholarly quest to unravel and interpret the intricacies of memory through the eyes of my Pied-Noir grandmother Andrée Crouzade, whom I will refer to as Nanou for the remainder of this paper.

Oral history is to be my primary source as I embark on the ethnographic mission to explore my Maghrebian history. In entering Nanou's treasured spaces of memory, I realized my research would contribute to an already complex cultural puzzle. My goal is to place Nanou's story into the Algerian historical fabric, as I interlace a multitude of cultures into one genealogical and spatial history. Transcribing and weaving Nanou's stories into academic discourse is a symbolical crossing over of the Algerian border by means of memory. I conducted interviews on a single front, using FaceTime and a recording device as my primary method of memory collection, and then juxtaposed Nanou's stories to other Pied-Noir remembrances. My intimate relationship with Nanou emotionally engulfed me into her memories and, at times, made the ethnographic process a challenge. Still, I took advantage of my close relationship with Nanou to produce authentic research. I became Nanou's scribe to a fundamentally oral tradition and felt as though I was scripting this oral culture to immortalize and complete it. My goal is to remain truthful to the collected oral research, even if my voice is layered onto Nanou's oral narratives in my ethnographic writing as I attempt to analytically take apart the memories she has entrusted to me.

What I believed would be my greatest challenge in thoroughly conducting this ethnographic research, in truth worked in my favor. I have never physically stepped foot in

Algeria, and I feared this would hinder my research and analysis. As I gathered more oral narratives, however, I came to realize that my aim was not to write a comparison between Nanou's recollections of physical spaces and the actual places found today in Algeria. Rather, my comprehensive goal is to recreate the Algeria of Nanou's memories; it is not to represent Algeria as it is today, but as it was for one particular individual. My perspective of Algeria must essentially be through the eyes of Nanou, in order to produce an accurate analysis of her memories through a historical lens. The physical spaces she illustrates when relating a story materializes the memory itself, depicting the backdrop of her memory. While this thesis concretizes the lost spaces of Nanou's memories by contextualizing her oral history, these pages also act as an all-encompassing space for Nanou's narratives to live on, and continue thriving.

The thesis is divided into three chapters, representing Nanou's three spaces of memory: Bab-el-Oued, El Biar, and what I will call the Space of Exile. The first chapter begins with Nanou's birth in Bab-el-Oued and delves into the architectural changes that had occurred in Algiers as a result of the French colonization. As the stage is set for the first few years of Nanou's existence, Gabriel Conesa, and Marie Cardinal share their personal experiences of the same spaces Nanou recalls during this period of her life. Moreover, Pied-Noir blogs have helped materialize the spaces of longing the authors and Nanou have in common by providing detailed descriptions of Bab-El-Oued. In linking memories to space, I find two sorts of memories embedded within the narratives. The first is a reconstructed memory, which is an attempt to reunite the scattered pieces of memory, with the help of photography to trigger and shape that particular remembrance. The second I identify is uninfluenced memory, which is the mere act of memory retrieval, without the *rememberer* being swayed by external elements.

The second chapter takes place in El Biar, the principal space of Nanou's childhood

memories. This section aims to decipher the various narratives Nanou and the protagonists from the books written by Cardinal and Albert Camus recall through several memory retrieval strategies. As I unpacked each recollection, I discovered that a single memory contained layers of diverse memory recovery tactics, such as collective, repetitive, restorative, reflective, and narration selection. These five diverse ways of remembering have led to a nostalgia-filled present reality for Nanou as she passes down her oral tradition.

Finally, the third chapter sheds light on the literal and symbolical space of exile—a space that strengthens the sentiment of nostalgia for the Pieds-Noirs that live in France. This part contains four sections that take the reader through the French-Algerian exodus. The port, the boat, the Mediterranean Sea, and France are physical spaces the Pieds-Noirs associate to their exile, as these spaces speak to their damaged past. Literature, film, and Nanou’s oral history are the three genres that tell the Pied-Noir story of the exodus.

While collecting Nanou’s memories for these chapters, I was never a mere listener. Nanou’s story represents a piece of my life narrative, and so it was critical to respect the words and the tone in which Nanou recounts her remembrances, because my job was to transcribe and analyze, not rewrite our history.

## Chapter One: *Bab-El-Oued*

This journey begins on March 29, 1943 at 6:35 am, the moment of Nanou’s homebirth on Rue De Dauphine in Bab-El-Oued. Dedicating the first chapter to this neighborhood of Algiers identifies the exact location where Nanou’s life began and simultaneously sets up the geographical and economical shifts that take place between the two defining spaces of Nanou’s life in Algeria—Bab-El-Oued and El Biar. Bab-El-Oued embodies the space of European descendants, whilst the space of El Biar is exclusive to the rising aspirations of the urban settler. Nanou and her family’s experiences bridged the economic gap between these two geographical spaces, as her family moved up the social ladder. As reconstructed and uninfluenced memory guides us through the space of Bab-El-Oued before Algerian Independence on July 5, 1962, Nanou, along with the novelists Gabriel Conesa and Marie Cardinal, begins to unravel the powerful foundation of Pied-Noir nostalgia—the memory of physical spaces. Houses, streets, and monuments permit specific memories of former inhabitants to live on in their lost spaces and nourish the seed of nostalgia. Yet, before recounting Nanou’s story in Bab-El-Oued, it is imperative to contextualize the urban quarters known as the European “new cities” (*villes nouvelles*) that arose in Algiers. Doing so allows us to unpack the nostalgia felt by the Pied-Noir diaspora after their exodus and dispersion among European countries in 1962, the year of Algeria’s independence from France. Describing the city that harbors Pied-Noir memories in all of its architectural intricacies, enables a greater understanding of the grander city-space that held the smaller, more intimate spaces to which the Pied-Noir, including my grandmother, refer in their memories and literature.

The French colonization of Algeria in 1830 completely transformed the traditional urban landscape in North Africa. As the French demolished and redesigned the walled Arab-Islamic

cities, with a particular emphasis on Algiers, they reconfigured traditional private sector of domestic interiors to intermingle with the public sphere. David Prochaska, in *Making Algeria French: Colonialism in Bône, 1870-1920*, mentions France's desire to improve the esthetic and infrastructural value of the Algerian city:

French apologists and colonialist historians have been concerned primarily with French colonization rather than French colonialism, that is, with tracing the stages of French settlement, the creation of an infrastructure (roads, railroads, schools, ports, hospitals, sanitary facilities, public utilities and the life), in short, with what the French so aptly term the *mise en valeur* of Algeria. (3)

New port districts such as Bab-el-Oued and suburban areas like El Biar were built with new architectural typologies introduced by European settlers. Serge Santelli, in his article “The Central Space in North African Architecture: From the Medina to the Suburban Settlement,” observes that “[t]he architectural conventions were diametrically opposite to the traditional ones” (118). For instance, the greatest aesthetic difference was that the exteriors of buildings no longer resembled blank endless walls that divided the private space from the public; instead, building façades included balconies and arches along large boulevards (Santelli, 118). The traditional Casbah width of seven-cubit streets remained in place for the walled Arab cities, but the Casbah was surrounded by great, extended avenues that cut through the entire city; this included the lower section of the Casbah which was razed to create the port district of Bab El-Oued (Santelli, 118). In addition, these new buildings were designed to include traditional Arabic ornamentation on their façades. Santelli emphasizes that, “After years of classical dominance, a few architects, influenced by an exotic or oriental attitude, began to introduce Islamic ornament on the facades of their building,” which explains why “in Rabat, Casablanca and Algiers, the facades of the main public buildings mix both modern and traditional motifs” (120). This architectural transformation “depicted the East as a place of backwardness, lawlessness, or barbarism enlightened and tamed by French rule” (*metmuseum.org*). In practice, imperial Western



enterprises Europeanized the Arab countries and internalized the illusory, romanticized depictions of Eastern cultures. The European *orientalists* created perceptions of the East to assert their control. Algiers' city renovations involved French city planners integrating these *villes nouvelles* into the fabric of local culture. This *mélange* masks innovative architectural designs with a traditional non-functional overlay. The dramatic alteration of the physical appearances of buildings, which began with the arrival of the French, brought about a disruption in the traditional distinction between public space and domestic, private sectors. It was “the design of the public space, the street, the square, or the boulevard [that] determined public or private buildings” within this “colonial grid pattern” of a city (Santelli, 118). As a result of this new architectural structure, not only was the “new European city and its buildings [...] in complete opposition to the traditional Islamic medina,” but it led to the emergence of a new lifestyle and added to the socio-cultural dissimilarities between the autochthon community and the French settlers (Santelli, 118).

Having Italian and Spanish ancestry set Nanou's family apart from other expatriates, many of whom were French-born. Yet, much like the French settlers, the Festino and Crouzade families nevertheless thrived in a cross-cultural space—a true novelty of a city for the bourgeois European inhabitants of Algiers. Emphasizing the architectural redesign of colonized Algiers sets the stage for the sorts of spaces in Bab-El-Oued in which Nanou and the Pied-Noir authors like Conesa and Cardinal began establishing their memories.

Nanou spent just a few years of her childhood in Bab-El-Oued—a memory-filled, preeminent space for nostalgia for the lower and aspiring middle-class inhabitants of Algiers. In his memoir, *Bab-El-Oued, notre paradis perdu*, Conesa, a proud Bab-El-Ouedian of Spanish descent, describes the neighborhood as the greatest multicultural European melting pot of

Algiers because of the influx of Spanish, Italian, Maltese, and French immigrants. To Conesa, it was the pumping heart of the city:

Mon panorama, c'était Bab-El-Oued qui n'était pas encore une cité mais n'avait jamais cessé d'être le cœur de la ville et que, d'une certaine manière, ceux qui m'avaient précédé me confiaient. (125)

(My panorama was Bab-El-Oued, which was not yet a city but had never ceased to be the heart of the city and that, in a way, those who preceded me had entrusted to me.)

Bab-El-Oued's panorama was built according to a French colonial structure, comprised of large boulevards, edifices with Arabic-inspired arches, many balconies thrusting onto the streetscape, and trams circulating through the neighborhood for public transportation. The narrow and densely populated winding roads accompanied the large boulevards. Cardinal recalls the streets of Bab-El-Oued in 1977 as being "étroites, très en pente, avec des magasins partout, des lumières partout, des gens partout" (narrow, hilly, with shops everywhere, lights everywhere, people everywhere) (*Autrement dit*, 35). Santelli notes that in the beginning of the colonial period, "although [the buildings'] spatial structure remains primarily Western, their front elevations were covered with traditional Arabic elements," creating a suggestive contrast between 'Western' and 'traditional' (120). Additional features that constituted this quarter as architecturally European were the hospital Maillot, the European cemetery, the stadium, squares like Place du Tertre, cinemas, schools, and the Church of Saint Thérèse. These typological institutions of European cities created a rhythm for the immigrants of various European nationalities living in Algiers before the Algerian War of Independence began in 1954. The dramatic transformation that had taken place nearly a century before Nanou's birth acts as the backdrop to Nanou's memories.

During my interview with Nanou about Bab-El-Oued, she began the session by confessing to the blurriness of her memories during this short period of her life. After a thirty-five minute discussion, her few memories fleshed out the importance of balconies as liminal

spaces. She began with recounting the basics: until the age of two, Nanou lived with her parents at her paternal grandparent's apartment on Rue de Dauphine: "Au départ il y avait les parents de mon père qui habitaient à Bab-El-Oued, alors ma mère et moi habitons chez ma grand-mère puisque [mes parents] n'avaient pas d'appartement" (In the beginning, my father's parents lived in Bab-El-Oued so, my mother and I lived at my grandmother's since [my parents] did not have an apartment). In this apartment lived Nanou, Jeanne (Nanou's mother), André (Nanou's father) and her father's parents, Incarnation and Jean-André, who were of Spanish and Italian descent. Her memories from this period of her life are faint, although she recalls spending an abundant amount of time on her family's balcony: "Il y avait un balcon. Je me rappelle on passait beaucoup de temps sur le balcon, j'ai même des photos de moi sur ce balcon" (There was a balcony. I remember we spent a lot of time on the balcony, I even have photos of me on this balcony) (Appendix 2: *fig. 9*).

As Nanou recounts what she remembers about Bab-El-Oued, it comes to my attention that she might have been too young to remember details about the first few years of her life. Memory retrieval is complex and unstable, especially when the events in question took place almost seventy-two years ago. Poignant images might stand in for or mirror childhood memories that are difficult to flesh out through full recollection and narration. Though vague and possibly blurred, the 'recollections' Nanou shares with me are part of a reconstructed memory perhaps sculpted by a photograph—even if she believes these anecdotes originated from within. Reconstructed memory is a trope seen across Pied-Noir literature; it is an attempt to reassemble

and patch the lost pieces together.<sup>15</sup> The memories Nanou narrates of Bab-El-Oued may be borrowed, appropriated, and reconstructed in her mind, emphasizing her nostalgia towards Algiers. The conscious act of narrating a partial memory that is perhaps not originally her own emphasizes Nanou's desire to be transported back to her childhood and the Algeria she once knew.

Conversely, Conesa, having lived in Bab-El-Oued for 35 years, recalls the quarter in intricate detail. He reveals his first-hand account of what life was like in Bab-El-Oued before and during Algeria's War of Independence (1954-62). Conesa's critical experiences pick up on Nanou's balcony, but provide a more nuanced insight of the spatial roles they played in the city:

En sortant sur mon balcon, j'avais mon héritage à mes pieds. Le balcon tenait une grande place dans le style de vie des Bab-El-Ouediens puisque certains d'entre eux, sous l'écran d'un rideau de couleurs, y dinaient pour attraper la fraîcheur du soir. On s'y reposait sur une chaise longue, on s'y asseyait sur le carrelage et surtout on y étendait son linge sans façon [...] Au coup d'œil sur le linge qui séchait, ma mère reconnaissait ses propriétaires pour des Espagnols, des Musulmans, des Juifs, des Maltais ou des Italiens. Le balcon, c'était la rue à domicile, un poste d'observation et encore un moyen de ne pas se séparer des copains, des voisins et de ceux qui allaient et venaient sur les trottoirs. Dès le lever, avant le travail ou l'école, on sortait sur le balcon, un bol de café à la main, le regard perdu dans le vague, comme pour s'assurer de manière routinière que le cher paysage était toujours là. (125-126)

(As I went out on my balcony, I had my legacy at my feet. The balcony held a great place in the lifestyle of the Bab-El-Ouediens since some of them, under the screen of colored curtains, dined there to catch the evening's fresh air. They were resting on a lounge-chair, sitting on the tiled floor and, above all, stretching out their linen in no orderly fashion [...] At the glance of the drying linen, my mother recognized her owners for Spaniards, Muslims, Jews, Maltese or Italians. The balcony was the street at home, a place to observe and yet a way to remain close to friends, neighbors and those who came and walked on the sidewalks. As soon as we got up, before work or school, we went out on the balcony, a bowl of coffee in one hand, eyes lost on the horizon, as if to routinely ensure that the dear landscape was still there.)

This wistful excerpt demonstrates how memories may be created and anchored around architectural spaces. Balconies were an integral part of the European settler's architectural design because they converted private spaces into public spaces, thereby changing the social dynamics

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<sup>15</sup> The film *Le coup de sirocco* (1979), directed by Alexandre Arcady, opens with a collection of photographs coming to life, representing the narrator Paolo Narboni's (Patrick Bruel) reconstructed memory of his experiences in Algeria.

of the city. Balconies became a place from which people exchanged ideas, women chatted while doing household chores, and neighbors could meet without an official visit. They provided an escape from the household and, simultaneously, an entrance into the chaotic outside world. Crossing the threshold between inside and out, men, women, and children all played individual roles in blurring the lines between this public yet private space. As Conesa briefly mentions, women kept up with their social lives as they maintained their households. My great-grandmother Incarnation also passed ingredients from balcony to balcony, cooked, and hung clothing as she gossiped with her neighbors. Balconies united Mediterranean women domestically and socially by making their duties at home less monotonous and lonely. As Incarnation kept up with the daily domestic chores, popping her head out to gossip with her neighbors, that same balcony space shifted substantially for Nanou. Bearing in mind Nanou was only a child when she lived in Bab-El-Oued, her most salient memory was that the balcony was converted into a play-space. It was a child's miniature park whenever he or she wanted to catch a breath of fresh air. Every individual, regardless of age, changed this small outdoor space to adapt it to his or her role in society. As independence and their departure from Algiers approached, many – including Conesa – let the memories fill their balcony's space, for that was the closest way of bringing back their treasured life in Bab-El-Oued. The last sentence of Conesa's quote suggests his fondness for his *Algerois* horizon while simultaneously foreshadowing the end of his days in Bab-El-Oued.

Much like Conesa, Cardinal anchors her memories of Algiers to a physical space—a courtyard in Paris. She envisions the quarter in which Annie Leclerc, a woman who interviews Cardinal in hopes of helping her write *Autrement dit*, resides, as resembling the courtyards and terraces in Algiers. As Cardinal describes Paris' XIIIe arrondissement, she recognizes the

similarities between Annie's quarter and neighborhoods in Algiers as both create an "ensemble [...] extrêmement méditerranéen" (an extremely Mediterranean collection of buildings) (*Autrement dit*, 11). Cardinal nostalgically details the characteristics of Annie's terrace in Paris, as she mentally transports herself back to her motherland, creating a parallel between what she sees and what she remembers:

Un figuier pourrait pousser dans la cour, il pourrait y avoir des pots de citronnelle aux fenêtres, du linge pourrait sécher sur les terrasses. Et peut-être qu'en réalité il y a un figuier, de la citronnelle et des terrasses... (11-12)

(A fig tree *could* grow in the yard, there *could* be pots of lemongrass at the windows, linen *could* dry on the terraces. And maybe in reality there is a fig tree, lemongrass and terraces...)

In this excerpt, Cardinal utilizes the conditional to hypothesize a space in order to adapt it to personal memories. She envisions a fig tree in the courtyard, pots of lemongrass on the windowsill, and laundry drying on the terraces, just like in Algiers. Despite her physical presence in Paris, Cardinal's mind wanders in an attempt to bridge the geographical gap between France and Algeria. Cardinal longs to find commonalities between her motherland and her country of exile by suggesting that the images she paints in her mind about the terraces in Algeria could realistically exist in Annie's house. She transposes a memory onto a courtyard in a different time and place. If we understand *projection* to be a conceptual illustration perceived as reality, Cardinal's excerpt illustrates *nostalgérie's* power to overlay a memory onto an existing space and in turn make it incomplete without fig trees, lemongrass, and terraces. These projections come from a place of longing for a lost paradise that is only retrievable through memory. The spatial recollections of a place, whether reconstructed (as in Nanou's mind with a prompted photograph), or uninfluenced (without being predisposed to a physical memory trigger, like for Conesa and Cardinal), hold the power to emotionally distress individuals from the Pied-Noir community who still grieve the loss of their homeland.

Another architectural-social structure that characterized Bab-El-Oued's rhythm of leisurely sociability was the café, as represented in oral histories, blogs and memories. When I asked Nanou about the spatial role of cafés in Bab-El-Oued she replied: "Je ne me souviens pas d'aller au café à Bab-El-Oued parce que j'étais toute petite. Mais je sais que mon père et mon grand-père allaient tous les dimanches aux cafés près de La Place des Trois Horloges" (I do not remember going to cafés in Bab-El-Oued because I was so young. But I do know that my father and grandfather went every Sunday to cafés near La Place des Trois Horloges). Numerous cafés surrounded the geographical heart of Bab-El-Oued. "La Place des Trois Horloges" owes its name to the installation of an iron lamppost topped with a clock with three dials, which has long paced the life of the neighborhood. It was a populated square where trams, cars, and trolleys passed through the roundabout. The blog *Algéroisement...votre* mentions that this square is "à l'intersection des rues Fourchault et de Châteaudun avec le boulevard de Provence, avant de continuer sa route vers les hauteurs de Bab-El-Oued" (at the intersection of Fourchault and Châteaudun streets with the Boulevard de Provence, before continuing on towards the heights of Bab-El-Oued). In providing clear directions to La Place des Trois Horloges and many other landmarks in Algiers, the blog speaks to the Pied-Noir repatriate's impulse to return to the concrete spaces in his or her "Alger la blanche" (the white Algiers) (*Algéroisement...votre*).<sup>16</sup> The website provides them with a categorized encyclopedia separated into neighborhoods, with photographs from the colonial era and directions that connect each site to the next. Instructions on finding specific streets and important landmarks are also detailed, along with a brief history of each area. Blogs such as this one exemplify the desire to spatially concretize memories that the Pied-Noir community fears will fade away with time if they do not have physical spaces to

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<sup>16</sup> "Alger la blanche" is one of the Pied-Noir appellations for their long-lost Algiers, originating from the whitewashed buildings that dominate the *baie d'Alger* (bay of Algiers).

which they can link their memories. Consequently, the space of memory either resides in one's mind or is virtually transposed onto a blog of collective memory. Communally contributing to a pool of recollections nourishes each and every Pied-Noir's nostalgia, as they share their life stories occurring in the same spaces.

Delving deeper into this space, Conesa names countless cafés in his memoir, remembering anecdotes for each. He defines cafés as spaces for men to manifest their interests communally:

Quand, le dimanche ou les jours de fête, ils n'étaient pas à la plage, les Bab-El-Ouediens étaient au café. Le café, c'était le club au sens espagnol du terme: un lieu de rencontre pour hommes. Chacun avait le sien, choisi selon sa forme d'esprit, son âge, sa couleur politique ou sportive. Les clients se tenaient de préférence dehors, adossés à la devanture un pied parfois appuyé au mur, ou sur le bord de trottoir pour regarder plus à leur aise la jeunesse monter et redescendre. (153)

(When, on Sundays or holidays, they were not at the beach, the Bab-El-Ouedians were at the café. The café was the club, in the Spanish sense of the term: a meeting place for men. Each had his own, chosen according to his particular spirit, his age, his political or sporting preferences. Clients preferably stood outside, leaning with a foot sometimes pressed to the wall, or on the sidewalk to look more at their ease as the youth go up and down [the streets].)

When asked about the importance of cafés, Nanou, like Conesa, insisted it was primarily an intricate part of a man's life. She has no sense of nostalgia surrounding this space, whilst Conesa conveys a significant amount of longing. This contrast is evidence of gender and age specific nostalgia within the Pied-Noir community. Though balconies proved to be nostalgic for both genders in contrasting ways, cafés, a space found all across Algiers, did not resonate with the women. In *The Architecture of Memory*, Bahloul not only presents gender and age division, but also a religious divide found in the cafés in Algiers. She states,

A similar type of ethnic separation existed between Jews and Christians in bars. The universe of bars was highly segregated along ethnic and religious lines. Jews would gather in Jewish-owned bars, avoiding Christian-owned ones, which they saw as dens of racism and anti-Semitism. Muslims were practically absent from this network's 'European' sector because alcohol consumption was prohibited by their religion and they socialized within their own networks of Arab cafés. (Bahloul, 98-99)



Cafés were symbolic manifestations of the religious and gender dynamics of Algiers. Bahloul remarks that even within the Jewish cafés, only people of specific ages were permitted. For instance, Jewish male teenagers would ritually go to Jewish bars after their bar mitzvah “as a sign of their accession to male adulthood” (Bahloul, 99). The physical presence of cafés emphasized the gender and religious diversity within the city. In short, cafés are a synecdoche for the greater city of Algiers.

The following chapter takes place in El Biar and expands on the varying types of memories exemplified by Nanou’s oral history accounts and in novels by Cardinal and Camus, who narrate similar spaces of longing in their literature. This chapter transition is symbolically tied to Nanou’s rite of passage, as she moved upwards to the second most densely populated quarter for European settlers, El Biar. This move signaled both a geographic and social ascent from a crowded apartment to a garden villa, the principal home of her memories.

## Chapter Two: *El Biar*

Nanou's collection of El Biar memories shines light upon the varying sorts of recollections: collective, repetitive, restorative, reflective, and narration selection. These classifications are gathered in four physical spaces: The Saint Raphael Terrace, the villa, the church, and the great outdoors. Nanou's oral history reports, Pied-Noir blogs, and narratives from authors Marie Cardinal and Albert Camus paint these four spaces masterfully in their varying ways of remembering.

El Biar was to be Nanou's "forever" home; the one she recalls most fondly in her memories. El Biar, which she translates from Arabic as "les puits" (or "the wells") was a verdant suburb, populated by Moorish-style luxurious villas nestled in gardens full of roses and jasmines, surrounded by century old olive trees (*Algéroisement...votre*). The Neo-Moorish village was built by the Europeans in such a way that many villas' facades were inspired by Islamic ornamentation while maintaining European interiors—a pattern seen across the city's architecture in the colonial built districts. As remarked in the Pied-Noir nostalgia blog *Algéroisement...votre*, most of the villas were,

construites par des architectes qui connaissaient très bien le pays et ses antiquités, qui l'aimaient, qui s'y étaient établis, étaient de très heureuses adaptations de l'art et des styles mauresques aux exigences des habitudes et du confort européen.

(built by architects who knew the country and its antiquities very well, who loved her [Algeria], who had settled there, created adaptations of art and from the Moorish styles to the standards of European comfort.)

El Biar was in the seventh district of Algiers, inhabited by wealthy European settlers, perhaps, as my grandmother suggested, because it resembled a smaller Côte d'Azur. Santelli contrasts the rest of Algiers' architecture to El Biar's luxurious setting: "the apartment buildings in the center of the city were contiguous, but the favorite residential types—detached villas—were isolated and disconnected elements built in the middle of private suburban gardens" (118). Before being

esthetically and functionally transformed by Europeans, El Biar was an Algerian village. After the French takeover, windows oriented towards the outside were added to the traditional Moorish houses as a result of the “faute d'ouvertures extérieures [qui faisait que] l'air circulait mal dans les appartements” (lack of external openings which did not circulate air well in the apartments) (*Algéroisement...votre*). This was a simple architectural change for the Europeans who upgraded the original houses of El Biar for European comfort and made them convenient classical dwellings.

In the midst of the villas, green spaces enhanced El Biar's rich attributes; one such space was the Saint Raphael Terrace—a site that provided a panoramic view of the Algiers coastline. Whereas cafés in Bab-el-Oued were social places visited predominantly by men, the Saint Raphael Terrace in El Biar was a space where elite, well-dressed European families congregated on weekends. *Algerimages*, another site of cultural exchange, memories, and photographs on French Algeria, illustrates the sorts of people accepted into this elitist setting. Saint Raphael Terrace, also known as the Balcon St. Raphael, was a bourgeois space exclusive to the European settlers who ‘welcomed’ few Arabs into their milieu:

[Le Balcon de St. Raphael] était pratiquement non fréquenté par les ‘arabes’ ou les ‘musulmans’, [...] chaque après-midi des samedis et dimanches, par de belles journées ensoleillées, voyait défilier des ‘gentlemen’ au chapeau à la Maurice Chevalier, avec accrochées à leur bras, de belles dames aux toilettes somptueuses, têtes coiffées par des beaux chapeaux de saison, souvent avec une ‘ombrelle’ pour se donner des contenance, les voitures biens propres garées pas loin, car les rues étaient pratiquement vides, non fréquentées ni habitées par la populace ‘arabe’, mais il arrivait qu'un notable arabe pas comme les autres était présent parmi eux, car il faisait partie de ce cercle fermé, prenant l'apéritif avec eux, défilant comme un ‘pantin’ avec des ‘breloques’ qu'il appelait médailles accrochées à son veston du dimanche, et sur la tête son ‘turban’ [...]. (“La baie d'alger vue d'el Biar”, *Algerimages*)

([Saint Raphael Terrace] was practically not visited by the ‘Arabs’ or ‘Muslims’, [...] every Saturday and Sunday afternoon, on beautiful sunny days, ‘gentlemen’ in their Maurice Chevalier style hats, had beautiful ladies hung on their arms, with sumptuous perfumes, hair brushed by beautiful seasonal hats, often with a ‘parasol’ to shade themselves, the clean cars parked far away, because the streets were practically empty, not frequented or inhabited by the ‘Arab’ populace, but there was sometimes a notable Arab deemed “unlike the others” present among them, because he

belonged to this closed circle, taking the aperitif with them, parading like a ‘puppet’ with ‘charms’ that he called medals hanging on his Sunday jacket, and on his head his ‘turban’ [...])

This passage exemplifies the colonial desire to undermine the natives and establish a hierarchical relationship between the European and the *other*. A clear divide is created between the colonizer and the colonized, emphasizing this notion of *us*—the Europeans, and *them*—the ‘Arabs.’ As described in the excerpt, the native or *the other* is physically stereotyped and mocked while participating in these elite gatherings, highlighting Western superiority. Edward W. Said elaborates on *the other* in his book *Orientalism*, drawing attention to the binary relationship of the powerful West and the putatively weak East. Said discusses Europe’s psychological desire to create a difference between cultures by giving rise to an ‘irrational and unintelligent’ non-European *other* (also known as the Orient), that contrasts the ‘rational and intelligent’ West. This divide affirms the ‘European Identity’ and fences off any individual that embodies the stereotypical traits of *the other*. In the process of delineating the European identity, the term ‘Orientalism’, according to Said, never directly refers to an individual, but instead reveals a particular mindset fabricated by the West. As a result, this label is intimately linked to the imperialist societies who created this classification to culturally discriminate and establish European colonial domination.

When questioned about the relationship between the Europeans and the native Algerians, Nanou did not deny this separation, yet would not delve deeper into the reality of the cultural inequality in Algiers. It seems like she consciously left these memories out of her narrative during our interview, perhaps because she did not want me to uncover the truth about how separated the people were in an already spatially partitioned city. Instead, when asked about the Saint Raphael Terrace, Nanou remembers the view: “Sur le balcon de Saint Raphael on voyait toute Alger. À l’époque c’était le palais des turques mais après ça a été coupé pour que les gens

y aillent” (On the balcony of Saint-Raphaël you could see all of Algiers. At the time, it was the Turkish summer palace but after it was cut so that people could go). Nanou uses the word *cut* to refer to the demolition of what the Pieds-Noirs call “Turkish” palaces that were historically Ottoman palaces. The view seen from the Saint Raphael Terrace also symbolizes the panorama of a successfully colonized land. I believe Nanou is too invested in protecting her cherished memories to see the geographical elevation of El Biar as a symbol for European superiority. Whether Nanou consciously chooses to reside in her bubble, or whether she truly is blinded by her nostalgia, she does not see the true representation of the terrace when queried.

Continuing with her memories in this space, the Saint Raphael Terrace was just a walk away from Nanou’s grandmother’s villa. She recalls, in one of my interviews, that her cat would sometimes wander around the Terrace and as a consequence, Nanou would go looking for her beloved Grizous there:

Des fois quand je le voyais pas quand je revenais de l’école, j’achetais de mou et je descendais au balcon de Saint Raphael et je l’appelais ‘Grizous ! Gizous !’ Et mon petit Grizous revenait quand il entendait ma voix.

(Sometimes when I did not see him when I came home from school, I would buy some cat food and would go down to the Saint Raphael Terrace and would call him ‘Grizous! Gizous!’ And my little Grizous would come back when he heard my voice.)

Another memory she has of being on the terrace was when the wind blew her shoe off her foot while she was on a date with Papou, the man who would become my grandfather:

Quand il y avait du vent à Alger, le balcon de Saint Raphael tremblait tellement le vent était fort. Une fois j’étais sur le balcon, et il y a eu tout d’un coup une rafale de vent. Ça m’a plaqué contre une voiture et j’ai perdu une chaussure ! J’ai une chaussure qui c’est arraché de mon pied ! Je t’assure c’était incroyable.

(When it was windy in Algiers, the balcony of Saint Raphael trembled so much because the wind was so strong. Once I was on the balcony, and suddenly there was a gust of wind. It pushed me against a car and I lost a shoe! I had a shoe torn off my foot! I assure you it was incredible.)

During my interview with Nanou, I named a few landmarks I had previously read about to see if

the names of these sites would trigger any memories. When I asked her if she had ever been to the Saint Raphael Balcony, she immediately gave me a short historical summary of the space being “Turkish” first and then jumped into retelling the stories of Grizous her cat and the windy afternoons on the balcony. Immediately, I had realized physical spaces awakened her fifty-five-year-old memories and released them into a full-fledged monologue about her life in El Biar. Towards the beginning of her interview about the Saint Raphael Terrace, she smiled throughout her stories, but then I noticed her face shifting and her smile fading. It appeared as though the more she remembered, the less radiant she was and the more nostalgic she became. I paused the interview as I witnessed the sudden change of energy, as the FaceTime chat grew quieter and gloomier. After a lengthy few moments of stillness, Nanou seemed to regain her composure, saying: “avant que je te parle plus de El Biar, je dois commencer par le début” (before I tell you more about El Biar, I need to start from the beginning). As it turns out, the move to such a high-class verdant neighborhood came as a surprise to Nanou’s family. Jeanne Niglio, my maternal great-grandmother, had started her family in the more working class neighborhood of Bab-El-Oued; the sudden death of Nanou’s grandfather, however, prompted the move to El Biar.

### *Space Two: The Villa / La Villa*

At the age of ten, Nanou and Jeanne moved to their grandmother Philomène’s villa on Rue Gaston Thompson, El Biar, with their step-grandfather Jules Quinemant after the tragic loss of Philomène’s first husband, Jean-Ferdinand Niglio. Nanou narrates her version of this traumatic event as Philomène had described it to her. Though Nanou believes this memory belongs to her, it is actually her grandmother’s; she has appropriated into her own collection:

Un soir, tous les homes sont sortis et ils ont couché avec une prostitué ; ils ont fait la java avec une prostitué, et à cause de ça ils ont tous eu la syphilis. Et il y a eut que lui [Jean-Ferdinand Niglio] qui a transmis la syphilis à ma grand-mère [Philomène]. Et donc elle était plâtrée parce qu’elle ne pouvait plus marcher sur sa jambe à cause d’avoir été infecté par la syphilis. Elle avait des douleurs atroces. Elle disait à ma mère de lui mettre la main dans le plâtre pour lui gratter la

jambe. Et les médecins ont dit ‘il va falloir lui couper la jambe.’ Alors il [Jean-Ferdinand Niglio] s’est senti coupable, et il a pris la poudre de balle, pour tuer, des fusils quoi, et il a avalé cette poudre pour se suicider. On a cru que c’était ma grand-mère qui l’avait assassiné, et donc elle a été accusé pour quelque temps. Mais après ils ont trouvé une lettre qui disait qu’il ne pouvait pas supporter que les médecins coupent la jambe à Philomène à cause de lui, alors il s’est suicidé. Après elle a vu un médecin qui a dit qu’il y avait un grand médecin à Alger, parce qu’ils étaient à Bougie, et à Alger ils lui ont sauvé la jambe. Il s’est tué pour rien. De toute façon, Philomène s’est remariée avec Jules Quinemant, un monsieur riche, pas longtemps après et ils ont déménagé à El Biar.

(One evening all the men went out and slept with a prostitute; they partied with a prostitute, and because of that they all contracted syphilis. And only him [Jean-Ferdinand Niglio] transmitted syphilis to my grandmother [Philomène]. And so they put a cast on her leg because as a consequence of contracting syphilis she could no longer walk. She had atrocious pains. She would tell my mother to put her hand in the plaster and scratch her leg. And the doctors said ‘we might have to amputate your leg.’ As a consequence, he [Jean-Ferdinand Niglio] felt guilty, and he took the gunpowder, from the gun that is, and swallowed it to commit suicide. For some time, we believed it was my grandmother who had killed him. But later, they found a letter that said he could not stand the idea of her having her leg amputated because of him, so he committed suicide. Later, she saw a doctor who told her there was a great doctor in Algiers, because they were in Bougie, and it was in Algiers that her leg was saved. He had killed himself for nothing. Anyway, Philomène remarried Jules Quinemant, a rich man not long after and they moved to El Biar.)

The outcome of this tragedy was Nanou’s relocation to the beautiful heights of El Biar after ten years of moving from place to place following her father’s job:

J’ai dû rester deux-trois ans à Bab-El-Oued. Quand mon père est parti pour faire son service militaire en tant que pilote aux Etats Unis en 1945 [Appendix 2: l’image montre André Crouzade dans “les centres de formation du personnel Navigant en Amérique”, *fig. 10*], je suis partie vivre avec mes grands parents à Belcourt, pour vivre avec ma grand-mère maternelle, Philomène. J’ai même été à l’école à Belcourt. Mais quand mon père est revenu en Alger, on est parti à Avignon parce qu’il avait un poste dans les bureaux. Ma mère, elle a suivi. Mais on faisait des aller-retour, d’Alger à Avignon. A 10 ans, mes grand parents maternels ont déménagé à El Biar, et donc je suis partie avec eux, jusqu’en Novembre 1961. Ils ont déménagé parce qu’ils étaient en appartement et ils voulaient vivre dans une villa. Ma grand-mère, entre-temps s’était remariée avec Jules Quinemant, qui était chef comptable. C’était son travail de payer les employés dans toutes les régions d’Algérie. Il travaillait dans l’agent de Bureau des Ponts et Chaussées. Ils sont probablement partis de Bab-El-Oued pour se transférer à El Biar parce que le nouveau mari de ma grand-mère pouvait se le permettre.

(I must have stayed in Bab-El-Oued two-three years. When my father left for the army in 1945 to be a pilot in the United States [Appendix 2: the image shows André Crouzade in the personnel training centers in America, *fig. 10*], I left to live with my grandparents in Belcourt, to live with my maternal grandmother, Philomène. I even went to school in Belcourt. But when my father returned to Algiers, we went to Avignon because he had gotten a job in one of their offices. My mother followed. But we went back and forth from Algiers to Avignon. At 10, my maternal grandparents moved to El Biar, and so I left and lived with them until November 1961. They

moved because they lived in an apartment and wanted to live in a villa. My grandmother, in the meantime, remarried Jules Quinemant, who was a chief accountant. It was his job to pay the employees in all regions of Algeria. He worked in the offices of Pont et Chaussées. They probably moved from Bab-El-Oued to El Biar because my grandmother's new husband could afford it.)

In this account, my grandmother traces the movement of her family by remembering the places in her life during this transitional period. Recalling a life in Belcourt as a result of her father's position in the army, traveling back and forth from Avignon to Algiers, and moving to the villa in El Biar are critical events that have developed a mental-spatial timeline, which has permitted my grandmother to re-enter the pockets of memory she had safely guarded in each of her childhood spaces. As Nanou adds more significant details to the stories of her family's movement, she is reminded of her mother's (my great-grandmother) unjust favoritism toward Nanou's younger sister, Jeanne. The more Nanou released the memories harbored in each space she engaged with as a child, the more saddened she was when she "confessed" (even if she had confessed multiple times prior to this moment) her mother's insignificant role in her life.

When Philomène and Jules moved into the villa in El Biar, Jeanne and Guy-Henri moved into the basement. Jeanne carried on with her life as a newlywed, while her mother Philomène raised Jeanne's children, Nanou and Jeanne. Nanou describes the house where her grandmother raised her as beautiful and unforgettable:

La villa à El Biar; maison toute en pierre; elle était belle. Devant il y avait des oranges, des mandarines, tous les produits qu'il y a dans le sud [de la France]. Il y avait deux chambres à coucher, un salon, une salle à manger, une salle de bains, une cuisine, et une grande véranda vitrée; il y avait beaucoup de lumière.

(The villa in El Biar was made of stone; it was beautiful. In the front, there were oranges and mandarins, all the fruits you find in the south of France. There were two bedrooms, a living room, a bathroom, a kitchen and a big, glass-paneled verandah; there was a lot of light.)

Nanou's grandparents had bought the land and built the house, which was approximately thirty minutes away from Bab-El-Oued, the port, and Notre Dame of Africa. As she speaks of her childhood home, Nanou seals her eyes shut and travels back in time to the great heights of



Algiers: “On était sur les hauteurs d’Alger, sur une montagne” (We were in the heights of Algiers, on a mountain). On this splendid mountain, I vividly witnessed Nanou paint her family home and see it for the last time before opening her eyes and realizing we were still on a FaceTime call. I could not fathom why a space so distant geographically and temporally continued to lure her back. After some thought, it came to my attention that nostalgia is the magnet of Nanou’s melancholy, incessantly pulling her back there and taunting her through childhood memories. Remembering the physical elements in her villa acted as a point of reference for the remaining memories of El Biar. The fact she described her childhood home to me before filling the space with her recollections suggests Nanou could not continue sharing memories without revisiting the space in which they were lived.

Similarly, Cardinal, in her autobiography *Autrement dit*, reproduces this phenomenon by also situating her house: “Ma famille habitait une grande maison à deux étages, entourée de jardins” (my family lived in a big two-floor house, surrounded by gardens), and located it “[...] tout près du terminus des tramways, à Mustapha Supérieur, sur les hauteurs d’Alger” (very close to the tramway terminals, in Mustapha Supérieur, in the heights of Algiers) (47). *Autrement dit* expresses Cardinal’s eternal homesickness for Algiers spatially. She yearns to return, but not to present-day Algiers. Instead, Cardinal slips into reverie, going back to the city she first opened her eyes to:

Aujourd’hui je rêve souvent de retourner à Alger et j’imagine que ça se passera comme ça se passait quand j’étais petite. J’ai beau me dire que plus rien n’est pareil, qu’il n’y a plus ma maison dans la ville, cela ne fait pas changer le défilé des images que projette mon esprit. (Cardinal, 17)

(Today, I often dream of returning to Algiers, and I imagine that it will be as it was when I was little. It is no use telling myself that nothing is the same, that my house is no longer in the village—that doesn’t change the procession of images my soul projects.)<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Translated by Amy Cooper in *In Other Words* (1995) (p. 9-10).

Cardinal's sincerity in this passage transmits a deeply rooted sentiment of displacement and sudden abandonment. She has come to terms with the transformation of *her* Algiers, but asks that her memories be kept sacred and untouched. Both Nanou and Cardinal hold onto the visions of their houses because without them, all other memories would vanish. The emblem of a house has materially grounded many Pieds-Noirs and provided a symbolic gateway for memories to be safely collected.

Bahloul's ethnography is written around the idea of houses as social and symbolic structures. Anthropologist Bahloul suggests that "remembering the house in which an uprooted culture originated and developed involves reversing history and sinking symbolic roots into a vanished human and geographical world" (Bahloul, 28). She compares the 'recollected' house to "a small scale cosmology symbolically restoring the integrity of a shattered geography" (Bahloul, 28). There is a gendered aspect to the home as a domain of women and children considering Nanou, Cardinal, and Bahloul's most vivid recollections are around these domestic interiors. Like Cardinal and Bahloul, as Nanou redefines the physical attributes of the villa she grew up in, the house doors metaphorically jolt open, and a rush of memories flow in. I observe the overwhelming surge of memories that take Nanou by surprise as she slowly attempts to narrate them. Her face brightens, as if she is startled by some of the stories she recounts so joyfully. *The Collective Memory*, a posthumous publication written by Maurice Halbwachs, a French sociologist and philosopher known for developing the concept of collective memory, tackles the complex relationship between architectural structures and people. He concludes,

The reason members of a group remain united, even after scattering and finding nothing in their new physical surroundings to recall the home they have left, is that they think of the old home and its layout... Thus we understand why spatial images play so important a role in the collective memory. (Halbwachs, 130)

His interpretation of collective memory is centered on a group of people sharing memories within a specific framework that situates them in society. It is only then that memories detach themselves from people's minds and exist outside of and live beyond the individual. Many times when Nanou shares memories, she first situates the physical space as the first part of the memory—she is setting the stage for the drama featured within the walls of that space. Imagining the layout of her El Biar villa gives Nanou hope that her memories continue to be a reality, even if she no longer plays the protagonist in her drama.

Whilst conducting interviews with Nanou, I realized that no matter what memory she narrated, Nanou consistently linked an aspect back to her house. Consequently, she relentlessly repeated the physical characteristics of her villa to set the stage of every memory—even if she had already shared that specific thought with me. Hubbell in *Remembering French Algeria* discerns that repetition is a key characteristic of *nostalgérie* in Pied-Noir literature. Once the memory reaches its' end, it plays again, in a cyclical manner to keep itself alive in the quotidian. It is “commonly regarded as repeating to remember” (Hubbell, 48). For all of my life, Nanou and Papou, my grandfather, made all of my bedtime stories about Algeria. The weight they carried for their *pays perdu* (lost country) engulfed them with sadness. The only remnants of their country were the memories they breathed in and exhaled out every day they lived in France. My grandfather's death eight years ago signified the demolition of yet another bridge to Nanou's homeland. Without him to remember with, she would now have to remember alone. She had experienced a double loss—losing her husband and losing her country. After this tragic event, her fear of disconnection grew. Just as Halbwachs expresses in *The Collective Memory*, an individual's understanding of the past is strongly connected to a group cognizance. Reminiscing as a group is more powerful than reminiscing individually because nostalgia grows as common

memories are shared.

The terror of remembering alone forced Nanou to recall more frequently about the same events. A few of the stories I have written about in the previous pages I had heard before, whilst a few others I had not. When narrating the new stories, it seemed like she was experiencing the memory for the very first time. I could tell by her awestruck expression and the pause she stole in the midst of our enthralling conversation that Nanou was indeed replaying the lost memory in her head before recounting it to me. As a consequence, I deduced that there were many critical memories Nanou concretized in the act of repeating them, in fear of those memories vanishing. Nevertheless, repeating these occasionally triggered new remembrances contributed to an even heavier nostalgia. These untold memories were enchanting to hear, although I largely focused on understanding why she felt the need to repeat specific memories.

I pondered the question of Nanou's inclination to re-recount stories. It occurred to me as I read Albert Camus' *Le myth de Sisyphe*, a story that evokes a fusion of two times—that of the *past-present*, through the story of Sisyphus, a repetitive character by nature. This liminal temporality is constructed by perpetually remembering the past time of memories, just as the Pieds-Noirs who continue living in their pasts whilst living in the present time. Camus illustrates repetition through the embodied representation of his protagonist Sisyphus, which is comparable to the recurrent nature of Pied-Noir memories, as seen in Nanou's oral histories.

Camus, born November 1913 in Dréan, Algeria, (known as Mondovi during French colonial era) was a philosopher, author, and journalist whose works transcend the ephemerality of *nostalgérie*. *Le myth de Sisyphe* has produced many interpretations over the years including Hubbell's understanding that Sisyphus's punishment parallels the Pied-Noir memory in its repetitive nature. According to Hubbell, Camus' oeuvre implicitly explores the tragic Pied-Noir

identity through Sisyphus, the protagonist of the absurd.<sup>18</sup> Sisyphus was to be punished with futile and hopeless labor so he was sentenced to perpetually push a rock up a hill. Once getting to the top, his burden would tumble from him again and his fate would force him to start the task once more:

J'imagine encore Sisyphé revenant vers son rocher, et la douleur était au début. Quand les images de la terre tiennent trop fort au souvenir, quand l'appel du bonheur se fait trop pesant, il arrive que la tristesse se lève au cœur de l'homme: c'est la victoire du rocher, c'est le rocher lui-même. L'immense détresse est trop lourde à porter. (Camus, 164)

(Again I fancy Sisyphus returning toward his rock, and the sorrow was in the beginning. When the images of earth cling too tightly to memory, when the call of happiness becomes too insistent, it happens that melancholy rises in man's heart: this is the rock's victory, this is the rock itself. The boundless grief is too heavy to bear.)<sup>19</sup>

Hubbell reads Sisyphus's misfortune in his moments of nostalgia. When almost alleviating the symbolic burden he carries with him from his past, the euphoria becomes too great so the rock falls once again. The rock he must incessantly push symbolizes the weight of his memories that he unceasingly is forced to assume. This task "can be read as the *devoir de mémoire*, or the mission of preserving the past that many Pieds-Noirs endlessly pursue in their works," as Hubbell discerns (40-41). The *thing* he is constrained to live with happens to also be the *thing* that makes him resilient and gives him joy. The rock is his enemy but it is also his greatest companion. Sisyphus is the master of his own destiny because "all Sisyphus' silent joy is contained therein. His fate belongs to him. His rock is his thing" (Hubbell, 40). The strenuous fight to reach the summit is enough to give Sisyphus fleeting hope and eternal freedom.

The oeuvre *Le myth de Sisyphe* can be read as an illustration of *nostalgérie* when compared with the Pied-Noir tragedy of recycling memories. Just as Sisyphus's work comes to

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<sup>18</sup> Amy L. Hubbell, introduction to *Remembering French Algeria Pieds-Noirs, Identity, and Exile* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska, 2015), 39-41.

<sup>19</sup> Translated by Justin O'Brien in *The Myth of Sisyphus, and Other Essays* (1983) (p. 122).

an end when he reaches the top and the rock slips away, memory comes to an end when the Pieds-Noirs find themselves at the proverbial “bottom” again, “[...] empty-handed, only to recommence the heavy and impossible task” (Hubbell, 41). The “opportunity for freedom”, as Hubbell expresses, is found with the perpetual mental return, because “it is the process of return that matters most” (39). In repeatedly remembering, a Pied-Noir finds release in his or her own imprisonment. This freedom cannot fully be attained, as it is merely a memory that begins once more at its end. This almost-freedom is how the Pied-Noir community copes with repatriation. Hubbell understands Camus’ story as an allegory for Pied-Noir memories and experiences, which reflects Nanou’s trajectory as she re-recounts a memory.

Just as Sisyphus regains hope at the bottom of the hill, Nanou brightens up as she begins retelling her stories. Going uphill also mimics her family’s geographical ascent from the flat port district of Bab-El-Oued to the heights of El Biar. Though, as Nanou reaches the end of the memory, she woefully ends by saying “eh bah oui, c’est comme ça; c’est la vie” (Ah well yes, that’s the way things go; that is life), until there comes another moment when she can tell the story from the beginning once again. Nanou’s mental return is analogous to Sisyphus’ upward journey with his rock as she begins narrating her memory even if towards the end of her story, she is overcome with a sense of nostalgia. It is in a memory’s nature to be ephemeral. Even so, the fleeting pieces of time are part of a Pied-Noir’s journey to re-create his/her vision of Algeria; it is this journey that brings them joy again.

The stories told by Camus and Nanou raise complicated questions about repeating memories: does repetition help or hinder memories? Jacques Mauger analyzes reiteration in his article *Pratiques de mémoire, pratiques de répétition*, and argues that although repetition is a tool used to remember, there is a chance of it replacing memory rather than protecting it. Literary

scholar and cultural critic Svetlana Boym, in *The Future of Nostalgia*, suggests that there are two major types of nostalgia: restorative and reflective. She explains,

If restorative nostalgia ends up reconstructing emblems and rituals of home and homeland in an attempt to conquer and spatialize time, reflective nostalgia cherishes shattered fragments of memory and temporalities space. (Boym, 49)

That is to say, restorative nostalgia “rebuild[s] the lost home and patch[es] up the memory gaps” whilst reflective nostalgia does not recreate memories, but instead treasures what remains of them (Boym, 41). Boym explains these two characterizations of nostalgia further by applying them to a past time and space:

Restorative nostalgia manifests itself in total reconstructions of monuments of the past, while reflective nostalgia lingers on ruins, the patina of time and history, in the dreams of another place and another time. (41)

Whether an individual restores and/or reflects a memory, the act of remembering is nonetheless fundamentally ambivalent as a result of repeating the unrepeatable and materializing the immaterial in a new time and space. If Nanou restores and then reflects a single memory, this act is deliberate because she wants to recount the story from beginning to end—without leaving parts open ended. In fact, I have noticed throughout the interview process, that when Nanou’s memory falters, she panics as she tries to make her way back to the moment the memory took place. In those instances, I can tell, she restores the lost memory by quickly ending her story or making general statements. There are levels of memory restoration: Boym expresses a ‘total’ reconstruction whilst Nanou reconstructs enough to cover the gap in memory. This nonetheless resembles restorative nostalgia because the less detailed parts of the story do not compare to the level of precision she gave me when recounting the reflected parts of the memory. I especially notice these moments of memory lapses when I have heard the story many times before. It turns out, in reiterating a single memory, Nanou would narrate it differently, ultimately suggesting that memory repetition is in fact obstructing the root of the recollection. In essence, we will never

know what part of a memory is reconstructed and/or reflected or whether repetition helps retain or tamper with memories. Of course, a memory's ambiguous and tantalizing nature carries many secrets, some capable of exposure and others permanently remaining a mystery. More equivocal memoirs lie ahead in this paper, as Nanou unfolds her recollections of religion in the space of the church.

*Space Three: The Church / L'Église*

My whole life, I believed that religion made up the social cement of Nanou's family's domestic world. Yet, the memories Nanou shared with me indicate a varying sort of memory, that of fragmentation, erasure, and selection. It is important to contextualize Nanou's religious background and recognize just how great a role religion played in the social fabric of her family's day-to-day life. To reiterate, Nanou's grandmother Philomène raised her as her own and hence, paid for her Catholic school education. Nanou remembers,

J'étais dans une école qui s'appelait la Sainte Famille; c'était une école privée. J'étais demi-pensionnaire alors je mangeais là-bas et je terminais l'école le samedi à midi. Et qui est-ce qui payait ? Ma grand-mère, bien sûr.

(I went to a school called Sainte Famille; it was a private school. I 'half' boarded so I ate there and I finished school on Saturday at noon. And who was paying? My grandmother, of course).

Moreover, Nanou grew up in a Catholic home, was baptized, made her communion, and went to church every Sunday. It appeared that Nanou was following the path of a good Catholic, yet her preceding interview response hints at the contrary:

J'aillais à la messe tous les dimanches. Quand je sortais de l'église, j'étais toujours affamée et donc avec mes amis on allait manger les beignets arabes. Qu'est-ce que c'était bon! On arrivait avec nos sous pour acheter un beignet à cinq centimes. C'étaient les mozabites qui tenaient les épiceries, et donc ils parlaient l'arabe mais avec un dialecte.

(I went to Mass every Sunday. When the ceremony was over, I was always so hungry and so my friends and I would buy Arab donuts. Oh it was so good! We would come with our coins to buy a donut for five cents. It was the Mozabites who held the shops, so they spoke Arabic with a dialect.)



As I inquired about Nanou’s religious upbringing, I remarked she mentioned less about the actual moments spent within the church walls, and more about how much she craved the mouthwatering *beignets arabes* she so proudly bought with her own money. I was intrigued by Nanou’s subtle dismissal of her Catholic upbringing especially being cognizant of the sacred role religion played in the Nanou’s family. I proceeded to be blunt—I inquired, “what do you remember about going to church in El Biar?” but her imprecision confused me further. Her complex religious identity piqued my curiosity, so I conducted an interview specific to the impact of religion on her life in Algeria and France. Nanou explained,

J’ai quitté les catholiques pour devenir adventiste du 7ème jour, c’est-à-dire que je fais le shabbat, je mange pas de porc—c’est comme les juifs. On croit au retour de Jésus, alors que les juifs ne croient pas en Jésus. On fait l’ancien testament et le nouveau testament.

(I left the Catholics to become a Seventh-day Adventist, that is, I do Shabbat, I do not eat pork—it’s like the Jews. We believe in the return of Jesus, while the Jews do not believe in Jesus. We do the Old Testament and the New Testament).

The conversion from Catholicism to Seventh-Day Adventist clarified the reason behind Nanou’s indifference towards her Catholic upbringing when inquired. She would have rather reminisced about the delicious beignets after church than share the specifics of attending church in El Biar since she had never fully identified with Catholicism, even as a child. Nanou’s disconnection to Catholicism also allowed her to marry a Jew a year after the Algerian exodus.

Moreover, this interview clarified why she did not begin her narration detailing the particulars of the church or its physical appearance—as she does per usual when recounting a memory. It took a follow up question to solicit the description of the church in El Biar; otherwise, I believe she would have consciously left that segment out of her narration. Deliberately, Nanou was selecting appropriate narrative segments from her memories, to purposefully avoid the real question at hand—that is, the significance of the space of church in her daily life. Practicing narrative selection is a way of pushing to the side particular past

moments an individual does not positively regard because it interferes with the story he/she wants to portray. This trope is frequently performed in Pied-Noir literature. Cardinal's novel *La mule de corbillard*, features Madeleine, the protagonist who takes complete control over her past by reproducing memories as she sees fit. Madeleine recollects what she wishes, modifies sections to her story, whilst neglecting memory outliers. Hubbell, in *Remembering French Algeria*, analyzes Madeleine's practice, suggesting,

Her selective memories, like her cathedral, are at all times submitted to her present needs. Madeleine alone can control their presence and absence. She is the one who creates, destroys, and will rebuild her reproduction(s) in the end. (92)

In this way Madeleine has full control over her memories by selecting them then reconstructing them. Nanou's hazy church memories caught me off guard, as I was used to Nanou diligently detailing as much of a memory as she could. I knew Nanou's responses were sincere by her facial expressions, as she went deeper into thought, scavenging for any lost memory she could bring to light. When questioned about her Catholic youth, the twinkle in her eye disappeared, as she shared fragmented memories, in hopes I would not inquire further. I considered this narrative strategy to be *narrative selection* because Nanou consciously chooses to recount specific recollections to either bolster or delegitimize their construct. In *The Collective Memory Reader*, edited by Jeffrey K. Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Daniel Levy, Yael Zerubavel elaborates on narrative selection by connecting it to collective memory. He believes that each act of memory commemoration "reproduces a *commemorative narrative*, a story about a particular past that accounts for this ritualized remembrance and provides a moral message for the group members" (Zerubavel, 237). In commemorating a selective remembrance, it is narrated by "reconstruct[ing] a specific segment of the past [which] is therefore fragmentary in nature" (Zerubavel, 237). Nanou may have chosen to overlook the memories of religion because they

obstructed her idealized picture of Algiers, which automatically categorizes this sort of narration as fragmented.

*Space four: The Great Outdoors / En Plein Air*

The final significant spaces Nanou recalls are the streets and backyards of her youth in El Biar. Pied-Noir authors (including Cardinal) contribute *paradisiac memories*, a projection of *nostalgérie* memories, to Pied-Noir literature. Whilst this section delves deeper into Nanou's quotidian life, the picturesque description of her *pays perdu* (lost country) is woven into her account. As Nanou delineates, El Biar's residents were an amalgamation of European descendants. The familial walls Nanou's villa tangibly marked were symbolically broken and expanded outwards to once again fuse the private and public spheres. Nanou's family believed in an inclusive lifestyle, and therefore regarded their neighbors as extended family members. This neighboring philosophy explains Nanou's sisterly friendships with the two little Italian girls living next door. They shared many memorable moments together, in their houses, on the streets of El Biar and climbing fig trees in their backyards on warm summer days:

On montait sur un figuier qui se cassait la figure chaque fois qu'on grimait. Et puis on faisait des spectacles dans le garage avec les Galano. Les filles venaient manger chez moi le couscous dont l'odeur s'étendait dans la rue Gaston Thompson, moi chez elles, et après on jouait à la poupée. Je me rappelle qu'on fabriquait des carrioles. Elles étaient des planches de bois qu'on utilisait pour dévaler les pentes des rues le soir à El Biar. On utilisait des roulettes en métal donc ça faisait un bruit! Nos voisins se plaignaient, mais on s'amusait comme des enfants! Ah, le vent, le soleil, la chaleur, la vue sur la mer...quelle belle ville. Le soir quand on rentrait, ma grand-mère mettait de l'alcool dans des boîtes en métal en hauteur sur une étagère pour réchauffer l'air pendant qu'on se déshabillait. De temps en temps il faisait froid la nuit, et puisqu'il y avait qu'un chauffage dans l'entrée, ce n'était pas assez pour réchauffer toute la maison.

(We climbed up a fig tree that would break every time we climbed up it. And then we put on shows in the garage with the Galano family. The girls came to my house to eat a delicious couscous meal whose smell spread over Gaston Thompson street, and I would eat at theirs, and then we played with our dolls. I remember that we would make skateboards. They were made of wooden boards that we used to go downhill on the streets at night in El Biar. We used metal wheels so it would make a lot of noise! Our neighbors complained, but we would have the best time! Oh, the wind, the sun, the heat, the view of the sea...what a beautiful city. In the evening when I came home, my grandmother would put alcohol in metal cans on a shelf to warm up the air

while we undressed. From time to time it got cold at night, and since there was only one heater in the entrance, it was not enough to warm the whole house.)

In this passage, Nanou paints the winds, the sea, the sun, the heat and the smell of her home—reoccurring motifs seen across Pied-Noir literature. Depicting these themes are time-traveling triggers for the Pied-Noir community, feeding their continuous cycle of nostalgia. “They seek a paradise in the midst of a perceived hell” because they believe their homeland was taken from them abruptly (Hubbell, 39). To compensate for the sudden loss, narratives and films are romanticized to a point of associating Algeria with a paradise by describing its natural elements like the sea, the wind and the heat. Cardinal’s autobiography *Au pays de mes racines* eloquently depicts Algiers’ sublime energy in illustrating her missed garden:

Il y a cinquante ans que je suis née dans ce jardin clos des mystères et de la clarté. Longtemps que vivre ailleurs, pour moi, est une aventure devenant insensée chaque fois que je perds la certitude de pouvoir retourner là-bas. Vertige. Mes racines flottent, elles manquent de terre, elles ne pourront longtemps encore rester branches ou rameaux. Besoin de mottes, besoin du sol, besoin de ce compact, pour que des ailes repoussent à mes désirs. (22)

(Fifty years ago, I was born in this enclosed garden of mysteries and clarity. For a long time, to live elsewhere, for me, is an insane adventure and I lose the certainty of being able to go back there. Vertigo. My roots float; they lack ground; they cannot remain branches or twigs for long. Need clods, need soil, need this compact, so that wings grow back to my desires.)

Cardinal utilizes the botanical traits of trees to symbolically express her identity crisis. She poetically romanticizes the tragedy of residing far from her motherland in order to illustrate an unattainable utopia, as her “roots” are unable to find their soil. For Nanou and Cardinal, Algiers is utopic—but in both senses of the word—a paradise but also a ‘u-topia’, from the Greek etymology ‘no-place.’ Both women are in search of a place that no longer exists. This explains Cardinal’s metaphor of existing as a displaced tree, without a home, distant geographically and temporally from its place in Algiers. This potent statement embodies nostalgia for what was and her perpetual life in the *in-between* world, floating aimlessly from one place to the next. In

essence, outdoor spaces bring out blissful memories, which trigger nostalgia for a lost, yet unforgettable paradise.

El Biar, in all of its memorable spaces, was a fundamental part of Nanou's life in Algeria. The last few years spent in her stone house were during a time of war and thus, her final memories were not as pleasant as the few she recalls in these previous pages. Though, paradoxically enough, those unsettling memories are what made her home significant, remarkable and treasurable.

### Chapter Three: *The Space of Exile*

By 1961, Jeanne (Nanou's mother), Guy-Henri (Nanou's stepfather), Michel (Nanou's stepbrother) and Nanou had left for France to find housing, while little Jeanne (Nanou's sister) remained with her grandparents (even though life in Algeria was dangerous for both Europeans and Algerians as the Algerian War intensified).<sup>20</sup> The spaces Nanou linked to the exodus were the port, the boat, the Mediterranean Sea, and France. The four physical spaces Nanou associates with her departure find their echo in the novel *Autrement dit* written by Cardinal, the accounts related in the documentary *La valise ou le cercueil*, and the fictitious family created to represent a typical Pied-Noir family in the film *Le coup de sirocco*, as they all recount their precipitous departures from Algeria.

#### *I. The Port / Le Port*

This portion of the interview took an emotional turn as Nanou was no longer daydreaming and joyfully reliving her youth. I knew this conversation would be the most challenging and heartrending, as Nanou took me through every moment before, during, and after her departure. I asked her, "Il était comment le port?" (What was the port like?), and she began by narrating her family's experience with this space upon their unforeseen departure:

Quand on est parti, ma mère ne voulait pas laisser sa voiture à Alger. Elle insistait de l'emmener en France. Donc, c'était beaucoup plus difficile d'avoir une place sur le bateau. Alors, on a été sur le port, deux, trois fois comme ça le matin. Pendant trois jours on avait nos bagages, et ils nous disaient 'il y a plus de place pour votre voiture.' Donc on repartait, on allait chez ma grand-mère, et on attendait. Papou à chaque fois m'accompagnait au port, mais à chaque fois on repartait ensemble [en rigolant]. Ma grand-mère [était] à chaque fois en pleurs.

When we left, my mother did not want to leave her car in Algiers. She insisted on taking it to France. So, it was much harder to get a seat on the boat. So, we went to the port two, three times in the morning. For three days, we brought our suitcases, but they would tell us 'There is no more

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<sup>20</sup> Jeanne (Nanou's mother) only brought Nanou to France in 1961 because her intentions were to separate my grandfather Papou from Nanou, since Papou was of a different religious background. It was forbidden for a raised Catholic like Nanou to be with a Jewish man. With this knowledge in mind, I believe that if Nanou had not been with Papou, Jeanne would have left Nanou with her little sister in Algiers while they found a place to move to in France. This is a plausible explanation as to why little Jeanne was left behind with her grandparents in Algiers.

room for your car.’ So, we would leave again, go to my grandmother’s and wait. Every time Papou would bring me to the port, but each time we would leave together [laughing]. My grandmother cried every time.

The spatial representation of the port of Algiers was intrinsically linked to the Pied-Noir’s heart-wrenching wait for an undesired departure. Nanou describes that,

Il y avait énormément de gens sur le port parce qu’ils voyaient que [la guerre] commençait à devenir grave et donc pleins de Pieds-Noirs partaient. Nous, on est parti quelques mois avant que [l’exode] finisse.

(There were a lot of people on the docks because they saw it [the war] was starting to get serious and so many Pieds-Noirs were leaving. We left a few months before [the exodus] ended.)

The exodus took place before, during, and immediately after Algeria’s independence in 1962.

The approximate number of Pieds-Noirs fleeing Algeria between 1961 and 1964 totaled 1.5 million people.<sup>21</sup> Many felt obliged to choose between “la valise ou le cercueil” (the suitcase or the coffin)—a chilling phrase Nanou repeatedly mentioned and that circulated within the European community to push for their evacuation.<sup>22</sup> In fact, this expression became the Pied-Noir’s proverb describing the community’s unbearable choice. The documentary *La valise ou le cercueil*, directed by Charly Cassan and Marie Havenel, shares palpable accounts about the Pied-Noir’s experience waiting on the docks for available spots on the boat. Marie Ghislaine Lopez relates, “On passé des jours et des jours devant les bateaux pour pouvoir avoir une place...et en la payant, la place, parce qu’elle n’était pas gratuite” (We spent many days in front of the boats, awaiting a spot...and by paying for the spot, since it was not free) (*La valise ou le cercueil*, 1:15:20). A note was posted at the port Centre d’accueil (Welcome Center) reading, “Aucune inscription nouvelle et aucun embarquement possible avant plusieurs jours” (No new registration

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<sup>21</sup> William B. Cohen, “Legacy of Empire: The Algerian Connection,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 15 (1980): 97-123, accessed April, 24, 2017, [www.jstor.org/stable/260461](http://www.jstor.org/stable/260461).

<sup>22</sup> Amy L. Hubbell, “La valise ou le cercueil: un aller-retour dans la memoire des Pieds-Noirs,” *Revue Diasporas: Histoire Et Sociétés* (2008): 199-207.

and no boarding possible before several days) (*La valise ou le cercueil*, 1:15 :14).<sup>23</sup> ‘The port’ is analogous to ‘the wait.’ Nanou, like thousands of other Pieds-Noirs, wiped her tears as she awaited their undesirable departure with one suitcase in hand. Some say the Pieds-Noirs left like thieves, “une main devant, une main derrière,” or as Nanou interprets this recurrent idiom dating back to the 1960s as signifying, “Complètement ruiné; complètement nu de nos affaires; partir comme des voleurs” (Completely ruined; without our belongings; leaving like thieves).<sup>24</sup> Nanou describes a chaotic setting as everyone awaited in disbelief:

On était tous sur les quais avec ce qu’on pouvait emmener. Il y avait des gens avec des cages pour leurs oiseaux; il y en avait qui apportait leurs chiens, leurs chats. C’était les années soixante donc on avait les robes larges, les foulards sur la tête, tu sais comme Brigitte Bardot! C’était cette époque là, tu vois?

(We were all on the docks, carrying what we could hold. There were people with birdcages; there were some who brought their dogs, their cats. It was the sixties so we had big dresses, scarves on our heads, you know like Brigitte Bardot! It was during that era, you see?)

I was amused by Nanou’s comparison to Brigitte Bardot, a 1950s French sex symbol that Nanou believed should help complete my image of le port d’Alger (the port of Algiers) by imagining the women’s fashion during this epoch. I recognized that the physical space of the port was also where bodies, objects, and clothing coexisted. Furthermore, Nanou remembers,

On est parti avec aucun meuble et juste quelques valises. C’est tout. J’ai laissé tous mes jouets, mes vêtements ; j’ai tout laissé. On avait emmené une boîte métallique, un container, mais c’était surtout pour transporter les choses de ma mère. J’ai tout laissé. J’ai laissé tous mes souvenirs d’enfance. Et après, ma grand-mère n’a pas pu tout récupérer parce que la villa a explosé. Donc il y a eu plein de choses qui ont été cassé ou complètement détruits.

(We left with no furniture and just a few suitcases. That’s all. I left all my toys, my clothes; I left everything. We had brought a box, a container, but it was mainly to carry my mother’s things. I left everything. I left all my childhood memories. And after, my grandmother could not retrieve everything because the villa had exploded. So there were a lot of things that were broken or

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<sup>23</sup> To read more Pied-Noir stories about the port see:

Amy L. Hubbell, “(Re)turning to Algeria: Nostalgia, Imagination and Writing – ‘Beginnings of Nostalgia’,” in *Remembering French Algeria Pieds-Noirs, Identity, and Exile* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska, 2015), 139-140.

<sup>24</sup> “Se retrouver une main devant, une main derrière,” Notre Famille, accessed May 18, 2017, [http://www.notrefamille.com/dictionnaire/expressions/se\\_retrouver\\_une\\_main\\_devant\\_une\\_main\\_derriere](http://www.notrefamille.com/dictionnaire/expressions/se_retrouver_une_main_devant_une_main_derriere)



completely destroyed.)

Nanou repeats, “I left” in variations as she describes abandoning the tangible objects of her home and the intangible memories of her childhood. The sudden abandonment of her cherished *things* explains her compulsive behavior to hoard already owned objects. I had never quite understood why Nanou insisted on keeping plastic utensils when she has silverware and why she collected objects found on the street. Perhaps, this comportment is a way of overcompensating for what Nanou had lost in the traumatic event of leaving her country of birth. In effect, her repetitive behavior is mirrored by her natural tendency to reiterate memories and sentences within a single memory.

Eventually, the wait came to an end, and Nanou’s family was granted a spot on the boat with her mother’s car: “Et puis un jour ils nous on dit ‘On vous prend la voiture’, et donc on est parti. On a dormi sur le bateau une nuit et on est arrivé le lendemain à Marseille” (And then one day they told us ‘We can take your car’ and so we left. We slept on the boat one night and arrived in Marseille the next day).

## *II. The Boat / Le Bateau*

The boat between Algeria and France is another symbol of the Pied-Noir exodus, as it represented the end of one era and the beginning of another. Embarking on this vessel would paradoxically bring the Pied-Noir to safety while moving them away from their beloved homeland. There are three distinct experiences that occurred in and around this space: embarking, waving goodbye, and sailing. Whilst responding to the questions about the boarding, Nanou began her narration with the particular names of these ships:

On est parti avec le bateau qui s’appelait ‘Ville d’Alger.’ Il y avait aussi le ‘Ville d’Oran’ et l’autre c’était...je ne sais plus comment il s’appelait ; je ne sais plus. Bon il y avait trois bateaux... le troisième c’était...ah! Le ‘Kairouan’!

(We had left with the boat that was named ‘City of Algiers.’ There also was the ‘City of Oran’ and

the other one was...I don't remember what it was called; I just don't remember. Anyways, there were three boats...the third was...oh! The 'Kairouan'.)

I was astonished that Nanou remembered the name of the vessel that displaced her from her home, separated her from Papou, and exiled her to France for the rest of her life. In the midst of traumatic experiences, it is common to forget or silence certain memories that trigger intolerable remembrances, yet Nanou preserved that particular memory perhaps as a constant reminder of her agony the day of her departure.<sup>25</sup> Even if she had 'un trou de mémoire' (literally 'a memory hole'), Nanou searched for the lost piece of this historical memory in order to recount a complete version of the exodus.

Nanou embarked on the *Ville d'Alger* with her mother, stepfather, and stepbrother Michele. I asked her if she remembered what this boat resembled and she exclaimed,

Ce n'était pas le Titanic! C'était un bateau qui traversait les mers; un bateau normal de taille. Mais le bateau était bourré, comblé de gens. Il y avait des personnes qui dormaient sur le pont, mais nous on a réussi (à) avoir une couchette, une cabine quoi.

(It certainly was not the Titanic! It was a boat crossing the seas; a normal sized boat. But the ship was packed with people. There were people sleeping on the deck, but we are able to get a bunk, which was basically a room.)

At first, I chuckled at the Titanic reference. Yet, the more I pondered the comparison to this great ship, the more I realized this incident could have terrorized Nanou and others embarking upon the *Ville d'Alger*. It occurred to me that the RMS Titanic had sunk in April of 1912, almost thirty years before Nanou's birth and therefore, could have potentially acted as an unsettling myth for those who had not experienced the catastrophic event in their lifetime. Boarding the ship instilled two sorts of fear: the fear of never returning and the fear of dying. Even though the *Ville d'Alger*

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<sup>25</sup> Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub's interpretation of "silenced memory" during moments of trauma.

Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, "The Black Hole," in *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History* (Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2013), 65.

did not compare to the RMS Titanic in size, Nanou describes masses crowding every part of the boat, as bodies and objects occupied the ship's entire surface.

As the anchor was lifted and the ship began the Mediterranean passage to France, hundreds of hands waved goodbye to their loved ones left on the docks of Algiers and to their motherland. Nanou vividly recalls these few heavy moments of grief, as she sailed further away from her family and her beloved Papou. She describes, "Tout le monde autour de moi pleurait; c'était terrible. Tout le monde quittait son pays; t'imagines des milliers de gens sur un bateau? Tu imagines ça? (Everyone around me was crying; it was terrible. Everyone was leaving their country; can you imagine thousands of people on a boat? Can you imagine that?). Nanou proceeds with narrating her last memory of Algiers:

Quand on est monté sur le bateau, on est tous allé sur le pont pour dire au revoir à notre pays. Donc il y avait des gens [sur les quais] qui faisait comme ça [elle fait un un signe de la main] et nous aussi faisons comme ça [elle refait un signe de la main]. Après, on ne les voyait plus les gens ; ils étaient plus rien...et on pleurait...tout le monde pleurait.

(When we got on the boat, we all went on deck to say goodbye to our country. So there were people who did this [she waves] and we did it back [she waves again]. Afterwards, we couldn't see the people anymore; they were nothing...and we wept...everyone was crying.)

As the boat sails away from Algeria, hundreds of goodbyes were exchanged while people paid their respects to the land that had given them a life. Nanou makes reference to the people she could no longer see on the docks as "plus rien"—no longer anything, which hints at the moment she lost her motherland and thus, the instant her nostalgia began. Before the ship had gone too far, Nanou had surprisingly captured the departure on camera, as a way of never forgetting her last few moments in Algiers, even if she can no longer find her photo album:

J'ai des photos de notre partance sur le bateau mais je ne retrouve plus mon album photo. J'espère qu'on ne me les a pas volées parce qu'il y avait tous mes souvenirs de Papou, de ta mère et de Sammy [son fils]. J'espère bien que c'est pas perdu parce que ça c'est embêtant. J'ai aussi toutes les photos de mon père. Alors s'ils les ont volées c'est une catastrophe. J'ai tous mes souvenirs de l'Algérie...de quand j'étais petite, les souvenirs de Papou quand il était jeune...J'ai aussi des photos de quand je suis partie sur le bateau. Je vois ma grand-mère, mon grand-père; je vois Papou

sur le port pendant que je leur dis au revoir. Le bateau s'éloigne. Je vois Alger disparaître.

(I have pictures of our departure on the boat but I cannot find my photo album. I hope they did not steal it because there were all my memories of Papou, your mother and Sammy [her son]. I hope it's not lost because that would be frustrating. I also have all of my father's photos. So if they stole it, it would be a disaster. I have all my memories of Algeria...of when I was little, the memories of Papou when he was young...I also have pictures of when I left on the boat. I see my grandmother, my grandfather; I see Papou on the dock while I waved goodbye. The boat sails further away. I see Algiers disappear.)

To contextualize this quote, after the death of my grandfather, Nanou could no longer stand the perpetual isolation in her cluttered three-story house in the *banlieue* (suburb) of Paris. After all, moving to Paris following their repatriation was my grandfather's idea, and without him around, Nanou was free to move closer to the Mediterranean, where she knew she would be nearer to Algeria. Upon Nanou's arrival in Nice, many of her valued objects had vanished. She is convinced that the movers stole the box with her photo albums during her relocation. This box holds more of Nanou's narratives than she is capable of recalling for herself. In effect, Nanou relies heavily on her photographs as time traveling triggers that transport her back to her youthful moments. Hopelessly, Nanou reveals the significance of photographs as tangible pieces of moments she cannot relinquish. She refers to her photographs as memories, as if memories and photographs were synonymous. The last few sentences about Nanou's departure are a narration perhaps partially originating from her mind but possibly based on the lost photographs she distinctly recalls in her memory. In addition, this last portion is related in the present, as if Nanou were reliving the departure again, but in a different time and space. If read figuratively, concluding with the word "disappear," proposes French Algeria ceases to exist and is transformed into a *lost paradise* in the minds of the Pieds-Noirs. In essence, the port and the boat are tangible spaces that contribute to an intangible, heavy Pied-Noir nostalgia. The *Ville d'Alger*, the *Ville d'Oran*, and the *Kairouan* were not ordinary ships transporting people from Africa to Europe; on the contrary, these vessels were a symbol of heartache that marked the start of a

nostalgic-filled future for the Pied-Noir repatriates.

### *III. The Mediterranean / La Méditerranée*

The Mediterranean Sea is a vast space that covers the approximate area of 2.5 million km<sup>2</sup>, separating Algeria from France. It is a liminal and transitional space geographically connecting the Pieds-Noirs to France and making the exodus possible. It also made possible the first wave of settlers migrating from Europe to Algeria. The Algerian exodus reverses the settler journey of 1830s, more than a century later. While traversing the dividing sea, it is in these moments of uncertainty that the Pied-Noir question whether they will ever see their motherland again.

The sea surrounds the ship, as the different shades of blue are the only colors in sight while crossing this immense space. The film *Le coup de sirocco* tells the story of the Narboni family who leaves Tadjira during the Algerian exodus. On his way to Marseille, the narrator is captured nostalgically looking out at the sea towards what was and what is to come. Violins play in the background to intensify the melancholy felt by the narrator who is unsure of what the future may hold. Many Pieds-Noirs recognized this to be their final moments in their country, whilst others continued carrying an ounce of hope for a possible return. Cardinal, in *Autrement dit*, only glanced at Algiers, as she sincerely believed she would one day be reunited with her treasured homeland:

L'Algérie je l'ai quittée il y a exactement vingt ans, juste après la naissance de mon deuxième enfant, ma fille Alice. Elle avait un mois et mon fils deux ans quand je suis partie. Je ne savais pas, ce jour-là, que je ne reviendrais plus. Si je l'avais su, j'aurais scruté les détails des détails, j'aurais imprimé en moi l'heure, la chaleur, la lumière, les visages. Alors que je ne sais même plus si j'ai pris l'avion ou le bateau. Je n'ai que les souvenirs d'une jeune femme qui voyage avec des bébés, l'un au bras et l'autre agrippé à sa jupe. Problèmes de valise, de biberons, de couches... C'était l'été, il devait faire très chaud, ça devait sentir la pisse, la poussière et la transpiration, le ciel devait être blanc. Je n'ai même pas regardé ma terre s'éloigner pour la dernière fois. (15)

(Algeria; I left it exactly twenty years ago, just after the birth of my second child, my daughter

Alice. She was a month old and my son was two years old when I left. I did not know on that day that I would not come back. If I had known, I would have studied the details of the details; I would have imprinted the time, the heat, the light, the faces on my body. And I do not even know if I took the plane or the boat. I have only the memories of a young woman traveling with her babies, one on one arm and the other clinging to her skirt. Problems with the suitcases, the bottles, the diapers...It was summer, it was very hot, it had to smell like piss, dust and sweat, the sky had to be white. I did not even see my homeland at a distance for the last time.)

Cardinal who missed the opportunity for a last, lingering glance, wishes she had “imprinted the time, the heat, the light, [and] the faces” on her body, contrary to Nanou who understood the severity of the situation, and thought to capture the final moments of her motherland on film. In that way, when Nanou looks back at the photographs, her memory is triggered to evoke the immaterial specifics. Perhaps photography was a way for Nanou to engrave that moment forever, in case she ever wanted to let her mind travel back in time. I asked Nanou, “Est-ce que tu savais que c’était la dernière fois que tu verrais ton pays?” (Did you know it was to be the last time you were going to see your country?). Her reply stunned me: “Oui, je savais que je la quittais. J’étais en pleurs parce que je quittais mon pays et parce que en plus je quittais Papou. Je me demandais si j’allais le revoir avec tout ça” (Yes, I knew I was leaving her. I was in tears because I was leaving my country and because I was also leaving Papou. I asked myself if I was going to see him again with all of this happening). In her sincerity emerged a greater understanding of her reality.

The previous chapters embody Nanou as an individual who mostly recognizes the glorious life of a European in Algiers. Yet when she said “with all of this happening,” Nanou indirectly refers to the Algerian war. She does not specify what *this* implies, but alludes to understanding the severity of the war in all of its political intricacies. Perhaps, Nanou had begun acknowledging Algeria as a segregated society the colonizers had created and the Europeans had perpetuated. Though, on the one hand, this phrase clearly minimizes the situation, making

Nanou's response appear glib and unsatisfactory; on the other hand, it seems to gesture to just how inconsolable it "all" must have felt.

#### *IV. France: Our New 'Home' / France: Notre Nouvelle 'Maison'*

After discovering that Nanou and her part of the family had left for France, the Organisation armée secrète (OAS), an underground secret organization formed by local European settlers allied with elements of the French soldiers army who supported a French Algeria, bombed their villa in El Biar.<sup>26</sup>

Avec ma mère on est parti en France pour trouver [une] maison. Quand l'OAS l'a su, ils ont mis une bombe à l'entrée de notre maison. L'OAS voulait que les français d'Algérie reste en Algérie ; ils étaient contre de Gaulle, et alors quand ils ont su qu'on était parti ils ont fait sauter la maison. Il y avait les Arabes qui mettaient les bombes et après il y avait l'OAS qui mettaient aussi des bombes. Et nous, au début, on était avec l'OAS ; on disait tous 'Algérie française, Algérie française,' mais après cette situation s'est transformée en bombe plastique. C'était devenu ridicule; l'OAS mettaient des bombes chez les Français pour ne pas qu'ils partent parce qu'ils disaient qu'il fallait qu'on reste en Algérie pour gagner. Mais il y en avait pleins qui partaient parce que c'était la guerre quoi. On sentait que c'était la fin. Bref, mes grands parents et ma sœur étaient dans le salon et regardaient la télé quand ils ont entendu la porte s'ouvrir et puis fermer, et puis boom! Le mûr s'était écroulé, mes grands parents ont été blessés et ma sœur de 15 ans, traumatisée. Les Galano ont hébergé ma famille pour quelques jours avant qu'ils trouvent un logement en Alger même. Mais de toutes façons, on entendait des explosions en permanence.

(My mother and I left for France to find a new house to live in. When the OAS found out, they bombed the entrance of our house. The OAS supported French Algeria; they were against de Gaulle, and so when they knew my mother and I had left, they ordered part of the house to explode. There were the Arabs who would plant bombs and then there was the OAS that would also plant bombs. At the beginning, were with the OAS; we would all say 'French Algeria, French Algeria,' but soon after this situation turned into a plastic bomb. It had become ridiculous; the OAS bombed the French to prevent them from leaving because they would say we had to stay in Algeria to win. But there were plenty who left because it was a war zone. We knew that it was the end. Anyways, my grandparents and my sister were in the living room watching the TV when they heard the door open and then close and then boom! The wall had collapsed; my grandparents were hurt and my 15-year-old sister, traumatized. The Galano lodged my family for a few days before they could find a place to stay in the city center of Algiers. But anyways, we would hear explosions constantly.)

Nanou had summarized the political situation accurately, describing two aspects of the war and even confessing that she had cheered for the French before the situation escalated and the OAS

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<sup>26</sup> Alexander Harrison, *Challenging De Gaulle: The O.A.S. and the Counterrevolution in Algeria, 1954-1962* (Praeger, 1989).

turned to violence. As examined in depth by Harrison in *Challenging De Gaulle*, “The O.A.S. strikes where it wants, when it wants, and who it wants,” a frightening slogan that circulated the streets of Algiers (81). Furthermore, Nanou’s narrative is both a construction of historical memory and memory appropriation. Nanou contextualizes the bombing by explaining her experiences of the political state of Algiers and then appropriating a narrative she possibly heard from her mother, to her own set of remembrances. Furthermore, when Nanou mentions “bombe plastique” (plastic bomb), she is referring to “une bombe artisanale” (an artisanal bomb). ‘Plastiquer’ was the French term used in Algeria for ‘to plant a bomb’ which led to the noun ‘plastique,’ which came to mean ‘bomb.’ In essence, the post departure destruction of what Nanou had left behind established a physical rupture with the past, which intensified the power of her memories, the only remains of Nanou’s villa.

The antagonistic departure and arrival are key contributors to the *nostalgérie* felt by the Pied-Noir community. The horrifying news of Nanou’s family villa having been attacked added to the fear Nanou already felt upon her arrival to France. Month after month, the political climate in France worsened as many French marginalized the Pieds-Noirs, making them feel like lower-class outsiders. Additionally, France’s weather was a difficult reality to acclimate to. Nanou goes into more depth about these challenges faced within the first few months of her family’s relocation:

Je n’étais pas chez moi; j’étais dans un pays étranger; j’étais perdue. Ce n’était pas mon pays pour moi, même si j’avais passé du temps à Avignon. Tout le monde nous insultait quand ils étendaient notre accent. C’était démoralisant. Quand je suis allée à Paris, on était sous la pluie. Quand on était arrivé, il n’avait jamais fait aussi froid à Paris, donc on était glacé. On passait du désert au pôle Nord. Ça a été très dur pour nous, la température...oh lalalala. À Alger il avait toujours le soleil.

I was not at home; I was in a foreign country; I was lost. It was not my country for me, even though I had spent time in Avignon. Everyone insulted us when they heard our accent. It was demoralizing. When I went to Paris, it constantly rained. When we arrived, it had never been so cold in Paris, so we froze. We went from the desert to the North Pole. It was very hard for us, the



temperature...oh lalalala. In Algiers it was always sunny.

Politically, the Pieds-Noirs experienced alienation from the French government, which had shifted its position to favor Algerian independence. After the 1962 independence, many Pieds-Noirs felt that they had been betrayed by the French and thus carried this animosity upon their arrival to Marseille. The French, on the other hand, portrayed the Pieds-Noirs as an embarrassment to their country and responsible for the war, which established a societal barrier between the French and the repatriates.<sup>27</sup> This misunderstood relationship is depicted in various instances throughout the film *Le coup de sirocco*, as the Narboni family struggles to assimilate to French culture. Madame Narboni (played by Marthe Villalonga) fell into a seasonal depression and thus consulted a French doctor to discuss her condition:

Depuis qu'on est parti de l'Algérie, c'est comme si le sirocco soufflait dans la tête. Avant, là-bas jamais j'étais malade, jamais. Il a fallu que je vienne ici pour que je sois toute détraquée. Quand je regarde à la fenêtre, je vois ces voitures, cette pluie, ce froid ; des fois j'ai l'impression d'être morte, si vous saviez...tout fait mal ; comme si j'étais déchirée en deux. (1:02:20)

(Since we left Algeria, it is as if the sirocco still blew in my head. Before, over there, I was never sick, never. I had to come here to lose complete control. When I look out the window, I see these cars, this rain, this cold; sometimes I feel like I'm dead, if only you knew...everything hurts; it is as if I were broken in half.)

Mrs. Narboni is perpetually reminded of her motherland as she hears the *sirocco*, the hot winds moving from North Africa across the Mediterranean, blow in her head. Her nostalgia augments the more time she is away from her country. The only advice the French doctor gives Mrs. Narboni is “Il faut tâcher d'oublier, madame” (You'll have to try to forget), because memory dominates over the weak and transforms itself into an enduring homesickness and physical illness. Once an individual has witnessed and experienced a traumatic event, memories can either

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<sup>27</sup> Amy L. Hubbell, “(Re)turning to Algeria: Nostalgia, Imagination and Writing – ‘Beginnings of Nostalgia’,” in *Remembering French Algeria Pieds-Noirs, Identity, and Exile* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska, 2015), 139-142.

be enhanced or silenced. With respect to Nanou and Mrs. Narboni, their memories are intensified as they incessantly compare their homeland to France—a conscious choice to remember in order to feel closer to home. Inevitably, memory enhancement turns them into victims of *nostalgérie* when they arrive to France. Interestingly enough, the French doctor advises Mrs. Narboni to forcefully forget by silencing her past, which potentially suggests France seeking to overlook, deny, and erase the historical memory of its colonization of Algeria.

Today, Nanou spends the final chapter of her life nostalgically gazing across the Mediterranean, the sea that separates her from her homeland, just like many repatriates residing on la Côte d’Azur. Nanou will spend the rest of her days geographically trapped between two lands, looking fervently towards her motherland but never reaching it again. I wondered what it felt like for Nanou to be just a sea away from her birth country—if the reality of living in Juan-les-Pins helped her feel closer to her Algeria or if it contributed to an even heavier nostalgia. She responded quite calmly,

De toute façon c'est la même mer. Et oui, c'est de l'autre côté. Je sais que de l'autre côté il y a mon pays; il y a l'Afrique... mais à Juan-les-Pins, je revois les palmiers; je revois les bougainvillées; je revois les figues de barbarie, comme dans mon pays.

(Anyways, it is the same sea. And yes, it is on the other side. I know that on the other side there is my country; there is Africa ... but in Juan-les-Pins, I see the palm trees again; I see the bougainvillea again; I see the prickly pears again, just like in my own country.)

Nanou is aware of the geographical split between Juan-les-Pins and Algiers yet finds comfort in the notion that *son Algérie* (her Algeria) is just a sea away even if it is temporally out of reach. French-Algeria no longer exists and thus, as she gazes over the Mediterranean, Nanou does not see the Algiers of today, but mentally time travels back to the city she once knew and loved. The surrounding vegetation in Juan-les-Pins provokes an imaginary return to her beloved *Alger la blanche* (the white Algiers), her lost paradise.

Curiously, I asked Nanou “Pourquoi n’es-tu jamais retournée pour de vrai?” (Why didn’t

you ever go back for real?). Silence filled both my bedroom and Nanou's living room, even if we were thousands of miles apart. I patiently awaited a response on FaceTime, understanding this was a sensitive topic. Finally, Nanou admitted, "On nous a déconseillé d'y aller parce qu'on ne retrouverait plus... Pour moi, si j'y retournerais c'est pour toucher ma terre, être sur le sol, tu vois ce que je veux dire?" (They advised us not to go because we would not find... For me, if I were to return, it would be to touch my land, to be on my own soil, do you know what I mean?). The pronoun *they* Nanou uses refers to the Pieds-Noirs that have indeed gone back and not been satisfied with their 'return.' Nanou is incapable of finishing her sentence, as she understands 'going back' would not signify a *real* return to the Algiers she once knew. Perhaps, she is too afraid to admit to the loss of her country, even after fifty-five years; perhaps she would rather live in her memories, than be faced with the truth.

## Conclusion: *Unfinished Sentences*

*'On nous a déconseillé d'y aller parce qu'on ne retrouverait plus... (They advised us not to go because we would not find...)* Nanou nearly answered all of my preliminary questions, but left a single one lingering in my mind without an answer. I could not help but wonder, *if Nanou could finish her sentence, how would it end? What would she have said?* I assumed the challenge of concluding her fragmented sentence by trying to fill in the ellipsis. A few clauses came to mind:

*They advised us not to go because we would not find [...] 'our houses the way we left them'*  
*They advised us not to go because we would not find [...] 'the city of our memories'*  
*They advised us not to go because we would not find [...] 'the Algeria of our childhoods'*

However, no matter how many sentences I came up with, none felt authentic or *right* by Nanou. In my attempt to flush out and shape her narratives throughout this memory collection, I thought I knew Nanou well enough to speculate about the ending of that sentence. As I came to find, no assumption of mine suited the rest of the phrase. In an effort to conclude her partial sentence, I was forcing words into Nanou's mouth and this felt false and like an invasion or appropriation of her story. I could not finalize her sentence because it was never mine to finish in the first place.

Then I pondered, *why was Nanou incapable of concluding the sentence?* It may be that a certain aspect of her existence remains suspended for it has not completed itself the way she might have dreamed of as a child. Her story would have taken a turn if Algeria had remained French or if the *français-d'Algérie* had taken advantage of the option, made available through provisions of the Evian Accords, to become Algerian citizens in the newly autonomous postcolonial state.<sup>28</sup> The countless *what ifs* shed light on Nanou's uncertainty, which underscores

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<sup>28</sup> The Evian Accords, the treaty between Algeria and France granting independence, also legally granted the Pied-Noir community the choice of Algerian citizenship. Rejecting the Evian guarantees, most Europeans fled the country, as they could not imagine reversals in social segregation and loss of privilege. See Charles-Robert Ageron in *Modern Algeria: A History from 1830 to the Present* (p. 124-126) for a more in depth explanation.

the impossibility of ever truly finishing that sentence. The pause I witnessed over FaceTime after only a part of the sentence had been uttered was produced by the heavy *nostalgérie* Nanou continues to carry. Nostalgia never ceases to haunt Nanou, as she persists in her cyclical life of no return, only to mentally rewind and relive an earlier time. Nanou strives to closely hold on to her memories of Algiers, while she sits on her terrace looking across the Mediterranean Sea. Hubbell ascribes words to this Pied-Noir condition as she elaborates on the unchanging Pied-Noir cycle:

It is against that nothingness that the Pieds-Noirs struggle still today. Caught in a cycle of perpetual return to their lost homeland, they labor to bring the past into the present and to sustain their vision of their childhood home. They cannot let Algeria die, for their identity depends on it; yet Algeria no longer exists in the way they wish to remember it. (*Remembering French Algeria*, Preface: ix)

In an effort to combine a past life with the here and now, Nanou has committed to filling the gaps (*les blancs*, as expressed in French) between the fragments by searching for the missing pieces of her story in journal entries and photographs of Algiers. While the memory retrieval process can be at times inconclusive, Nanou never stops exerting herself in hopes of keeping the Algeria of her childhood alive.

In the process of compiling oral and literary research for this ethnography, my proposal was strengthened as I witnessed the irreversible bond between those who remember and the setting of their remembrance. I imagined a parallel between Nanou's life and a locked treasure chest—a metonym embodying an imagined space where her memories are carefully preserved. The key to unlocking the memory chest is achieved by triggering sentiments of homesickness and nostalgia. Once inside, a multiplicity of memories exists; some repetitive in nature, reflective and/or reconstructed, others simply uninfluenced, floating around within the bounds of their enclosed space. Experiences are born and permanently engraved within their physical spaces, waiting to be replayed by the *rememberer*. Narratives closely entwined with their site of origin

trace Nanou's quotidian trajectory and reveal her friendships, exchanges between neighbors, family relationships, and religious upbringing. Finally, her narratives recount the tragedies of the Algerian war for a Pied-Noir and her family's sudden departure from Algiers. Nanou's story is singular, dwelling on the individualistic details of her past life, yet it also emphasizes the plurality of the greater Pied-Noir collective story in all its diverse cultural, linguistic, and religious intricacies.

## Appendix One: *Family Tree Explained*

At one time, Algeria was a major destination for thousands of European immigrants. Nanou's family tree begins three generations ago with Luigi Pietro Vincenzo Festino, on her maternal grandmother's side of the family. Luigi (Appendix 2: *fig. 1*) was born in Morato, Naples, Italy on June 7, 1860. He was a sailor who transported goods like coral from Algeria back to Naples to contribute to the production of Italian coral jewelry. The reason and date of his definitive departure from Naples is unknown, although Nanou speculates that he had obtained a job in the jewelry industry in Algeria and thus decided to pack his bags and immigrate to the African continent. At the age of twenty-nine, Luigi was naturalized French on May 28, 1889 in Bougie, Algeria. Luigi's naturalization marks the movement towards francization in Algeria. According to Julia Clancy-Smith in *Mediterraneans: North Africa and Europe in an Age of Migration, c. 1800–1900*, a series of decrees were administered

[...] in response to fresh arrivals and changes in the legal status of Algeria and Algerians, particularly the 1848 legislation making the colony an administrative part of France, the 1859 decree, the 1863 *sénatus-consulte*, and the 1870 Crémieux law conferring citizenship upon Algerian Jews [...]. (235)

With the evidence of his naturalization document that Nanou preserved for many years, Luigi is proof of the legal change of identity granted to him by the French colonizers. At some point before or after being naturalized (the date remains unknown), Luigi met his wife Annonciade Alexandrie Cotronéo, born in Bergo de Gaete, Naples, Italy, in Bougie. Annonciade had left Naples at three or four years of age. Though we can approximate Annonciade's age by her family's departure from Naples, the definite reason for her family's move remains unknown; Nanou speculates that Annonciade's parents left Italy for the prospect of a better life financially. What is certain is that Annonciade and Luigi raised a family of ten children, four of which were pairs of twins. One of the female twins was Nanou's grandmother, Philomène Matilde Festino

(Appendix 2: *fig. 2*), born on November 11, 1897. Philomène married Jean Ferdinand Niglio, born in Genoa, Italy on the 24 of October 1897 (Appendix 2: *fig. 3*). Jean and Philomène, my great-great grandparents, were married on February 18, 1919 in Bougie, Algeria, and had ten children, one of which was Jeanne Andrée Annonciade Niglio, Nanou's mother, born on January 10, 1921 in Bougie (Appendix 2: *fig. 4*). Years later, Jean committed suicide, and Philomène remarried Jules Quinemant born in Constantine or Philipeville, Algeria. The parents of Jean Ferdinand Niglio (Nanou's maternal grandfather) were Cristina-Maria Francesca Farinella and André Niglio, born in Italy, yet we do not know their date of birth or the exact region of their birth. As I began to construct the family tree, I realized that Nanou is the third generation of this family to be born in Algeria. I was curious as to how she felt about carrying on the tradition of being born in Algeria and so I asked her "Tu es fière d'être la troisième génération née en Algérie?" (Are you proud of being third generation born in Algeria?), and she replied:

Ah oui oui oui, parce que c'est le continent africain, et donc, je suis d'un pays oriental, avec des coutumes autres que l'Europe. Et j'adore nos coutumes. Donc évidemment c'est un mélange que j'ai. J'étais française parce que c'était français par la France. Mais on vivait sur une autre terre. C'était français mais on a la culture de là-bas [Algérie].

(Ah yes yes yes, because it is the African continent, and therefore, I am from an oriental country, with customs other than Europe. And I adore our customs. So obviously it's a mix that I have. I was French because it was French by France. But we lived on another land. It was French but we have the culture from over there [Algeria].)

Nanou speaks these words with joy as she recounts her genetic *mélange*. She takes pride in coming from such a culturally rich country, even if her Algerian customs are a combination of Italian and Spanish cultures passed down by her maternal and paternal ancestors.

Nanou's paternal genealogy also traces back three generations, yet the dates of her ancestors' birth and arrival to Algeria are unknown. What is in fact recognized is that Dolores Marquez (Nanou's paternal great-great grandmother) was born in Oran, Algeria and her parents left Spain to find employment in Algeria. Dolores married Clement Villa, who might have been



born in Malaga, Spain. They had Incarnation Villa who married Jean André Crouzade, born in Beaumont de L’Omagne, in the Basque region of Spain. Jean’s parents, (first name of mother unknown) Labia and Jean André Crouzade were both born in Spain and the circumstances of their arrival in Algeria are unknown. Incarnation and Jean had André Crouzade (Appendix 2: *fig. 5*), my maternal great-grandfather, who was the first to be born on Algerian soil in Maison Carré, a district of Algiers, on August 26, 1919.

Jeanne and André, Nanou’s parents and my great-grandparents, were married on May 7, 1942 in Algiers. André worked as an engineer at the “Agent de Bureau des Ponts et Chaussées” where he administered building streets in different cities all across Algeria and France. His line of work required him to travel back and forth from Algiers to Avignon, while Jeanne worked in André’s Algerian office as an accountant. Jeanne and André had two daughters, Andrée (my grandmother) (Appendix 2: *fig. 6*) and Jeanne. The couple divorced on April 23, 1952 or July 23, 1953. Both remarried and had children with their new partners—a rare occurrence in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

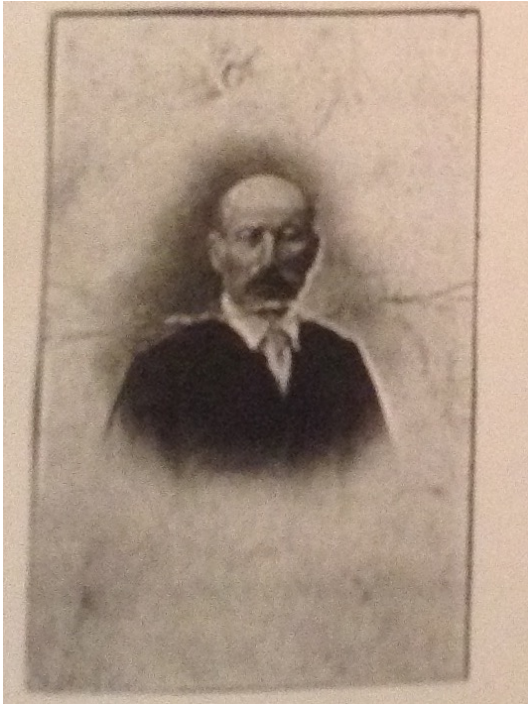
Piecing together my maternal family tree is not just valuable in situating the estimated arrival of my ancestors in Algeria, but it also puts emphasis on the space of migration. My ancestors’ move from their birth country to Algeria links their genealogy to space as it was a crucial part of their multi-cultural identity—one that later became a part of their Pied-Noir identity. Whether their reasoning behind leaving their motherland was in pursuit of a new job or a better life, “tens of thousands of people, many of humble social status, crossed the sea from north to south to settle in North Africa, Egypt, and the Levant” (Clancy-Smith, 11-12). These distinct demonstrations of human mobility through time and space created a new era of people in motion. The spaces European migrants left behind converge with the new immigrant spaces as

they “[...] brought wide-ranging social changes to their host societies [...]” (Clancy-Smith, 13).

Memories traverse generations, mixing old traditions to a family’s new way of life. As my ancestors settled into their new homes, far away from their motherland, they discovered new spaces that would soon become my grandmother Andrée’s spaces of memory.

Appendix Two: *Photographs and Images*

Figure 1:



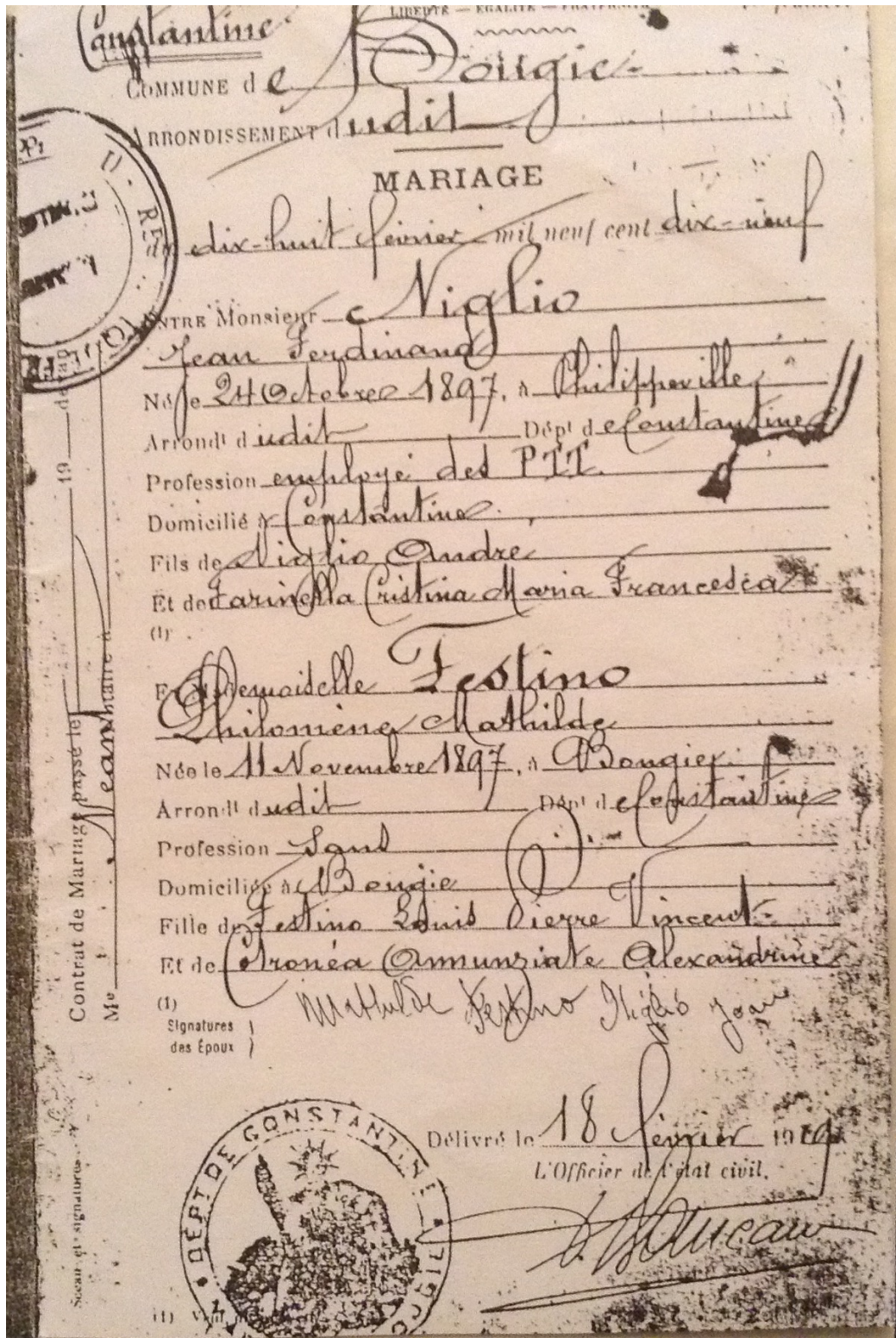
*Nanou's family tree begins three generations ago with Luigi Pietro Vincenzo Festino.*

Figure 2:



*Nanou's grandmother Philomène Matilde Festino.*

Figure 3:



Philomène Matilde Festino and Jean Ferdinand Niglio were married on February 18, 1919 in Bougie according to their marriage certificate.

Figure 4:



*Nanou (left) at eighteen months and Jeanne Andrée Annonciade Niglio, Nanou's mother (right). Photograph taken in Algiers.*

Figure 5:



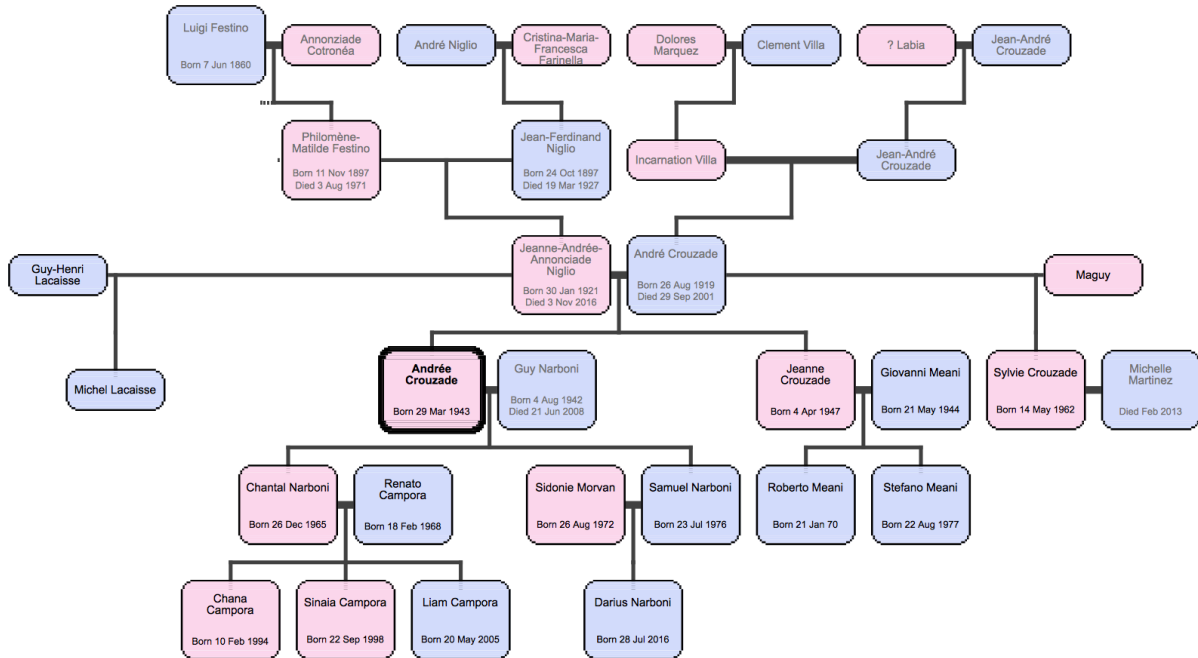
*Nanou's father, André Crouzade.*

Figure 6:



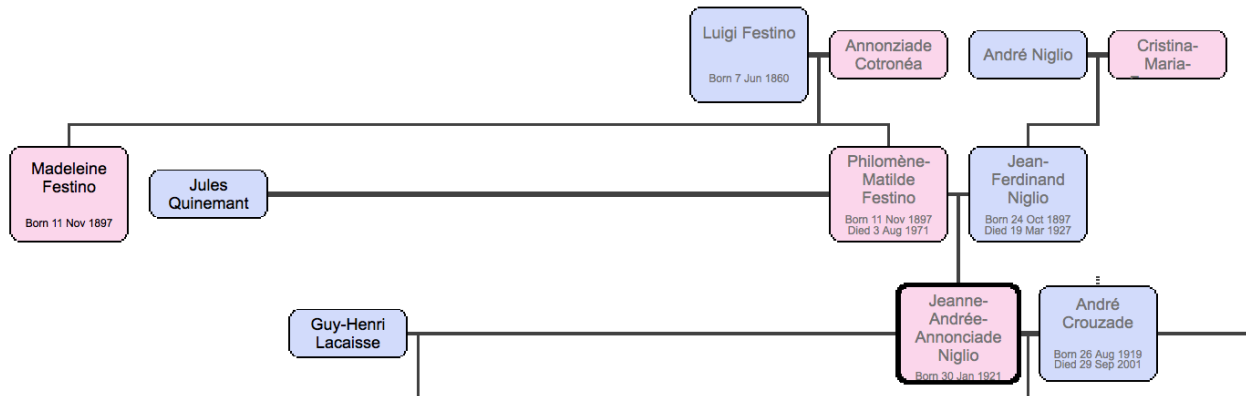
*Nanou at eighteen months. Photograph taken in "Studio Moll" on 37 rue d'Isly, Algiers.*

Figure 7:



Family Tree Part I: The tree begins with *Andrée Crouzade (Nanou)* and shows a total of six generations.

Figure 8:



Family Tree Part II: This figure shows that “*Philomène Matilde Festino*” had a sister named “*Madeleine Festino.*” It also shows that *Philomène* was remarried to *Jules Quinemant* after her first marriage to *Jean-Ferdinand Niglio.*

Figure 9:



*On the balcony sit Jeanne—Nanou's sister (left), Jeanne—Nanou's mother (middle), and Nanou (right).*

Figure 10:



*“Les Centres de formation du personnel navigant en Amérique: 1er février 1943 - 31 mai 1946” (American Training Centers for Flight Personnel: 1 February, 1943 - 31 May, 1946). The arrow indicates André Crouzade (my grandmother Andrée Crouzade's father) in the United States during his time in the army.*



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