

Introduction

Imperialism still casts a considerable shadow over our own times.

—Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*

BEGINNING IN THE LATE 1940S and throughout the Algerian War for Independence (1954–1962), France offered a growing number of services to over 300,000 Algerian migrants living in the metropole. For about fifteen years, these services, which supplemented the nation's generous welfare state, exclusively targeted Algerians settled in France as part of the state's larger effort to maintain control over French Algeria. The overarching project brought together government agencies and private charitable associations to construct "an experimental laboratory" that sought to transform Algerian migrants.¹ The administrators and direct service providers built what became a network of services that sought to provide Algerians, families in particular, "a little something extra" to help them "grasp equality."² In doing so, the Algerian welfare network built upon and brought together two of the Republic's long-standing social engineering projects—the civilizing mission and the welfare state.

The central goal of this book is to show how the Algerian welfare network, by recasting and fusing these two projects, implemented a transformed civilizing mission, sometimes referred to as a modernization mission,³ in the metropole. I explore the complex and often uneven ways social policy for Algerian migrants braided together compassion and coercion, service and surveillance, moralizing paternalism and generous material benefits. Why did the French government construct a well-developed network of social programs for this particular minority community during the tumultuous period of decolonization? Why, in the midst of a bloody anticolonial war that culminated in the loss of France's most prized impe-

rial possession, did the state extend to Algerians the benefits associated with membership in the national community? Why did women and families, a small but growing minority of the Algerian population in France, play such an important role in the state's project?

In the unique circumstances of the post–World War II landscape, official policy made the Algerian welfare network a centerpiece of state endeavors to prove to Algerians, to the French, and to the international community that Algerians were part of the nation. France officially embraced Algerian migrants. The state framed Algerian migrants' access to welfare benefits in the principle of universal rights, granting them all of the metropolitan welfare state's services and encouraging families to settle and reproduce. At the same time, the architects of the network accepted and perpetuated the idea that Algerians had not yet "grasped equality"; Algerians would have to remake themselves, become like the French, if they were to succeed in adapting to life in the metropole. According to North African Family Social Service (*Service social familial nord-africain, SSFNA*), one of the most prominent private associations receiving government subsidies, Algerians had particular needs that required "specialized or complementary services." Organizations like North African Family Social Service, which became the network's backbone, insisted they did not replace regular welfare benefits available to all citizens. Rather their programs—from educational courses teaching gender-determined skills to housing assistance—intended "to affirm . . . and to valorize" the work done in regular services.⁴ Furthermore, the welfare network's administrators and its direct service providers hoped to convince Algerians of the benefits of modern society—everything from the joys of consumerism to the advantages of embracing France's supposedly universal culture—while simultaneously weaning them of any attachment to Algerian nationalism.

Politically, establishing and funding specialized welfare programs provided concrete evidence that France—which saw itself as the birthplace of modern human rights—sought to establish equality. Reforms enacted in the 1940s officially afforded Algerians all of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship "without distinction of origin, race, language or religion";⁵ Algerians, thus, had no need to seek independence. The reforms also reiterated Algeria's integral place in the nation; Algeria was not a colony but three French departments administered by the Interior Ministry. In the days after the *Front de libération nationale* (FLN) launched its initial attacks on 1 November 1954, Interior Minister François Mitterrand famously

declared before the National Assembly, “Algeria is France.”⁶ A year later, he reiterated it was “indispensable that Algeria remain an extension of the metropole” and that the Republic remain “one and indivisible.”⁷ To support its soaring rhetoric, the state heralded the civilizing potential of specialized services, which allowed France to claim proudly that it did everything in its power to help Algerians adjust to life in the metropole, to restore harmony between compatriots from different parts of Greater France, and to uplift its charges. In this way, the welfare network was never wholly metropolitan or colonial, but grew out of techniques, institutions, and personnel that moved fluidly across the Mediterranean Sea. French social policy and action for Algerians provide concrete evidence of the interconnectedness of what Gary Wilder has called the French “imperial nation-state.”⁸

The overall message underscored Algerians’ place within the nation as special, particular citizens. Classified as *Français musulmans d’Algérie*, or French Muslims from Algeria, Algerians’ status illustrated the tension between “principles of inclusion and practices of exclusion that have informed the republican project” for two centuries.⁹ Although French universalism has long been associated with the principle of *jus soli*,¹⁰ which has allowed anyone born on the nation’s soil to claim legal membership, a number of cases, ranging from Jews, to women, to colonial subjects, have highlighted “the limits of universalism.”¹¹ Extending citizenship, however flawed, to a particular category of citizens underscores this tension and provides a quintessential example of the complex and “fluid meanings of ‘race.’”¹² The French grappled with Algerians’ otherness by insisting that this particular, benighted group of migrants could be made compatible with French universal culture if everyone involved worked hard to help Algerians overcome their “handicaps.”¹³ Services addressed concerns about what to do with Algerian migrants, how to address their presumed backwardness, how to shield good migrants from the influence of Algerian nationalism, how to help them adapt, how to monitor them discreetly, and how to win their loyalty. In short, the civilizing potential of its services propelled the Algerian welfare network.

THIS CIVILIZING POTENTIAL depended on the ability of social services to address families and women in particular, extending the welfare state’s “moralizing mission” to Algerian migrants.¹⁴ The architects of the welfare network encouraged Algerian family settlement in order to en-

sure proper “integration”—a concept the French defined differently for male workers and migrant families. Beginning in 1948, French officials observed a shift in migration patterns. According to Jean-Jacques Rager, a University of Algiers graduate, colonial government official, and expert on emigration, “in recent years, [Algerians] have had a tendency to settle definitively in France with their wives.”¹⁵ In addition to witnessing migration patterns “changing, progressively” from temporary labor toward definitive settlement, experts, high-ranking government officials, and direct service providers afforded family settlement a disproportionate amount of attention and funding.¹⁶ Even though the vast majority (over eighty percent) of Algerian migrants in France were male workers participating in the post-war economic boom, contemporary experts recommended “family immigration” since it was “in keeping with the natural order of things.”¹⁷ Long before most Algerians in France lived as families, the state encouraged Algerian family settlement for a host of reasons: to avoid giving “these French from North Africa the impression they were treated differently than the French from other departments,”¹⁸ to prevent miscegenation, to infiltrate Algerian families through domestic outreach programs, to convert them to French ways, and to fight against Algerian nationalism.

These social policies and the violent dislocation of millions of people during the Algerian War made women and families the fastest growing and most politically significant segment of the Algerian population in France. The state attached great political importance to transforming Algerian migrants and to making them feel “almost at home.”¹⁹ Algerians, however, were not at home. Colonial discourses emphasizing Algerians’ “absolute difference” influenced expert voices.²⁰ By qualifying Algerians’ place in the metropole, these experts exposed their lingering concerns about the risks Algerian settlement posed to the nation’s “vitality.” Metropolitan France officially eschewed the legal discrimination and the highly organized system of surveillance embedded in the colonial regime and interwar policing. As Rager noted in his 1950 doctoral thesis, metropolitan authorities needed to avoid re-creating the “confusion between police work and social” services that had left Algerians in France during the interwar years with “a bad memory.”²¹ Instead, the state fostered a hybrid system, in which its agencies worked with local government offices and dozens of private, publicly funded institutions that became the motor of the specialized welfare network. Ideally, the range of programs and services worked together to reach coordinated goals. Yet, conflicting priorities inhibited the state’s at-

tempt to horizontally and vertically coordinate the welfare network and exposed divergent, often contradictory visions about how best to approach what became known as the “Algerian problem.” Some administrators, especially those focused on ensuring that Algerians remained a flexible and unregulated labor pool, advocated vocational training programs, language courses, and single-sex dormitories for male migrants. Integration had a limited role in these programs, referring only to migrant workers’ relationship to the industrial workplace. A growing number of officials, however, particularly those most concerned with saving French Algeria and with implementing an improved version of the transformative civilizing project (which they believed had been abandoned by the colonial lobby), developed services for women and families.

Algerian women played a vital role in this project to remake the entire migrant population. Welfare administrators and providers regarded women as the conduits of change. They built upon a tradition that had long constructed women as natural educators, vessels of social and cultural knowledge, who, nevertheless, had to be taught how to care for their families properly. Since the nineteenth century, male experts and middle-class female volunteers worked to instill values in women that embraced consumer society and allegiance to the nation.²² These ideas migrated to Algeria (and other parts of the empire), where a wide range of colonial actors insisted “it is through the women that we can get hold of the soul of a people” and “bring frenchification to their hearth.”²³ Frantz Fanon echoed these arguments in his well-known critique of French colonialism, written while he worked as a psychiatrist in Algeria at the height of the war. Fanon recognized Algerian women played *the* central role; the colonizer believed that if he could “win over the women . . . the rest will follow.”²⁴

French officials also encouraged Algerian family settlement in France because, as Ann Stoler reminds us, “the intimate” is an “embattled space.”²⁵ The domestic realm, made a site of public intervention by the modern state in both the metropolitan and colonial settings, offered the promise of total transformation. For the administrators and social workers of the Algerian welfare network, its programs promised the kind of access to the household the colonizer had dreamed of but never attained. Using the gendered language that typified the hierarchical nature of conquest, metropolitan welfare network practitioners framed their mission as the need “to penetrate” the intimate family space.²⁶ If social workers could imbue Algerian women with a desire for the benefits of French society, they could influence

men and the next generation. If Algerian women became proper, modern French housewives they could satisfy their husbands. By targeting women and families differently from male workers, welfare providers imagined their burdensome task would defeat Algerian nationalism and realize the elusive imperial dream of uplifting Algerian migrants.

During the Third Republic, the relationship between racial hygiene, eugenics, pronatalism, and social welfare kept Algerians and other perceived undesirables from the colonial empire on the edge of France's burgeoning welfare state.²⁷ France's demographic decline intensified French pronatalism, which fixed social policies on the control of women's reproductive function to ensure the nation's future.²⁸ To reinvigorate France, welfare programs promoted fecundity, immigration policies sought out "assimilable races," and the police closely monitored male colonial workers.²⁹ Colonial migrants received some segregated services, but the government limited the range of benefits, including family allowances, to those deemed capable of contributing to national reproductive growth.

After World War II, however, the threat of decolonization, coupled with the loss of status and the shame associated with Vichy collaboration, made it possible for Algerian women to become part of what Kristen Ross has called France's Cold War project of "hygiene and modernization."³⁰ Algerian women became a part of the solution in the 1950s because the future of French Algeria hung in the balance. In the new context, experts working in the Algerian welfare network advocated family settlement because it "humanized and normalized" this population and was preferable to "a mass of isolated, uprooted, and poorly adapted individuals," i.e., single men.³¹

Before the violence of the colonial war erupted in metropolitan France in the latter part of the 1950s, monitoring the Algerian migrant population remained a delicate operation. Since the rhetoric of keeping Algeria French centered on the idea of inclusion, most early monitoring happened discreetly, often behind the scenes. As part of the larger project to win hearts and minds, the state monitored Algerians through services, which played an important role in their "adaptation to our European life" while at the same time "separating them from any subversive propaganda."³² The state also carefully framed Algerians' supplemental services as indispensable, partly to assuage concerns among local officials and the general population that these services amounted to special privileges only Algerians' received.

At the height of the Algerian conflict that ushered in the Fifth Republic in 1958, the state transferred policing techniques and personnel trained in Algeria to France to rout the FLN. Throughout the final years of the war, the welfare network's relationship to the fight against Algerian nationalism remained strong if complex. Some providers condoned state-sponsored violence, but most resisted police infiltration and became eloquent critics of repressive tactics. Nevertheless, the most knowledgeable experts and devoted service providers depicted "these poor people" as victims of the FLN and of their own deficiencies; they deserved pity not hatred.³³

The welfare network relied on experiences and ideas drawn from both the colonial and metropolitan "laboratories of social modernity."³⁴ In both contexts, France predicated its mission on the need to modernize and transform society and on an unfaltering belief in the superiority of France's supposedly universal culture and its duties. Beginning in the nineteenth century, the civilizing mission rested on the notion of *mise en valeur*,³⁵ which evoked the need to bring out the best, to extract the colony's full potential using every tool that modern society and technology had to offer. And while it is most often associated with the development and exploitation of economic resources, as Alice Conklin has pointed out, colonizers also applied *mise en valeur* to the "social milieu." In both contexts, social reformers advocated "state intervention" in order to ensure "a healthy, efficient, and productive social order."³⁶ In the metropole, the regulation, strengthening, and improvement of society centered on what Jacques Donzelot, building on Michel Foucault's notion of biopower,³⁷ has called "the policing of families." Developing "the quality of a population and the strength of the nation" became the central goal, the *mise en valeur*, of the welfare state's protectionist family policies.³⁸

By the 1950s, the work in the Algerian welfare network exemplified a melding of the metropolitan and colonial projects through a national mandate to integrate and monitor Algerians. The most dedicated advocates, many of whom came out of France's social Catholic tradition, vigorously worked to ensure the "adaptation and integration of these families in the French community."³⁹ Elisabeth Malet, for example, who first worked for a prominent social Catholic association and then became liaison for North African affairs with the Social Security office in Paris, argued that "French Muslims from Algeria" had particular needs and cultural preconceptions. Teams of nurses and social workers within the system needed special training to assist Algerians—and Algerian women in particular—and to pre-

vent them from being left “on the margins of French society.”⁴⁰ Experts, including social scientists, government bureaucrats, administrators, and direct services providers, agreed that Algerian migrants posed many problems and needed to be transformed to fit into modern, Western society.

At the same time, elements within the network perceived and responded to the Algerian problem in a variety of ways. The range of responses—from direct service providers, who spoke out against the war, to housing managers, who refused to accept Algerian residents in their apartment complexes—highlight the agency of groups and individual actors. The state’s goals and political agenda, replete with internal contradictions, did not have absolute power or proceed as a monolith over Algerian migrants. The way agencies, experts, and direct service providers interpreted problems and possible solutions reveals when and why “discretionary power” made it possible for competing national, local, and colonial interests to pursue very different solutions.⁴¹ The rivalries and distinctly different approaches to the Algerian problem allowed bureaucrats, police officers, social workers, and Algerians to navigate the system in ways that conflicted with one another and sometimes contradicted official policy.

Leading advocates spoke out against racial discrimination and residential segregation and made impassioned pleas about the need for solidarity between French citizens on both sides of the Mediterranean. Yet, the expert knowledge they disseminated perpetuated contradictory colonial notions. It reimaged elements of French racial thought by depicting Algerians as “pliant, as Orientals” while upholding France’s commitment to “the fundamental unity of the human family.”⁴² The didactic literature, constructed to help service providers in their work, began with the presumption that Algerians came from a backward, premodern society governed by a collective mentality. Algerians had to be remade, had to become part of modern French society if an altered version of the civilizing mission might finally be achieved in the metropole. Advocates proposed services geared toward helping Algerians’ to overcome a presumed natural inferiority, to turn away from Algerian nationalism, and to embrace modern life in the metropole.

To achieve Algerian integration, the network’s architects hired housing managers and social workers with experience in the colonial setting. These reformers simultaneously endowed former colonists with the status of expert on Algerians’ level of integration, criticized their predecessors for having abandoned the truly selfless mission to help their lesser brothers

and sisters, and insisted that the lost endeavor would finally reach fruition in the metropole. In other words, the most dedicated advocates perpetuated colonial discourses about Algerians' presumed inferiority even as they *fought against* the numerous forms of discrimination Algerian migrants faced. In this way, service providers participated in a kind of soft racism that insists "on conformity to metropolitan norms [and] carries with it humiliations and the annihilation of cultural heritages" that Sue Peabody and Tyler Stovall have argued often has the same effects as "'harder' racism."⁴³

A nation that has long claimed a tradition of color-blindness in law and social policy,⁴⁴ France also has a tradition of singling groups out for special treatment and for mixing police surveillance with welfare support. In this case, France afforded Algerians' services because the goals of routing the nationalist threat and patiently teaching Algerians how to become like the French interlocked. The seeming contradictions in the welfare network exemplify Etienne Balibar's contention that we must envision "racism as universalism."⁴⁵ When the welfare network fused with what Pierre Bourdieu and Abdelmalek Sayad called the "interventionalism" of colonialism, it attempted "to introduce a new political and social life."⁴⁶ In doing so it exposed the inherent and problematic place of the particular in the universalist framework. The two are at once incompatible and inextricably linked. Universalism makes it impossible to acknowledge difference and claim equality while at the same time defining the universal requires its opposite, the particular. Following the impulse to be inclusive, the French sought to convert the supposedly less fortunate to what was necessarily a better way. Like other state-led social engineering projects inspired by what James Scott has called "high-modernist ideology," the goals of the Algerian welfare network rested on Algerian advocates' hubris—on an "unshakable faith" in their ability to bring sweeping change to "all aspects of social life in order to improve the human condition."⁴⁷

WHEN I BEGAN RESEARCH FOR THIS BOOK more than ten years ago, I planned to focus most of my attention on the period following Algerian independence in 1962. Scholarly literature pointed to the advent of family settlement, particularly in the 1970s, after Algeria (1973) and France (1974) closed their borders to immigration.⁴⁸ Despite popular support for these measures, public outcry that a total ban would permanently separate families prompted the French government to implement family reunification programs for male workers and their families. In the wake

of these programs, immigration was said to have shifted from “the single man to the family”—from temporary worker migration to permanent settlement.⁴⁹ Professors, colleagues, and archivists reinforced this message, discouraging me from searching for evidence relating to Algerian families in the 1950s because the migration flow followed the *Gastarbeiter* model: male workers came to France temporarily to work in the massive post-war economic boom that became known as the “thirty glorious years.”⁵⁰ I persisted; if there were no families, why had North African Family Social Service opened its doors and started providing services in 1951? I began working in archival collections from the period of the Algerian War to understand the origins of these services for an eventual first chapter.

What I discovered utterly transformed the project, making it possible for me to write a history of the Algerian welfare network from the immediate post–World War II era until Algeria gained independence in 1962. More than simply allowing me to analyze the importance of Algerian family settlement in metropolitan France during decolonization, my research demonstrates that gender played a more central role than scholars had realized. As Nancy Green has argued, the normalized image of the immigrant is “single, male . . . lonely” and mobile. In traditional immigration history, it is the men who move and the women who stay and care for the home.⁵¹ Rethinking these assumptions did more than add women to the existing narrative; it allowed me to bring “metropole and colony, colonizer and colonized . . . into one analytic field” in order to explore social organization and relationships of power.⁵²

In recent years, scholars inspired partly by Gerard Noiriel’s call to end French “amnesia” about the importance of immigration in French history and by the need to examine how “modern colonialism was a republican project,” have begun to investigate the effects of colonialism and migration in metropolitan France by studying, for the most part, the interwar era.⁵³ Popular memory and much of the scholarship on the post-1945 period and on Algerian migration in particular, however, have downplayed the uniqueness of Algerians’ relationship to France in what Benjamin Stora has characterized as a yet another case of purposeful “French amnesia”—this time about the Algerian War and the history and legacy of colonialism. For Stora, the war without a name was (and is) at once omnipresent and France’s great “shame.”⁵⁴ Focusing on economic factors, scholarship emphasized both the masculine and the temporary nature of Algerian migratory patterns and downplayed the history of decolonization.⁵⁵ Yet, care-

ful examination of the national obsession over the so-called immigration problem makes it patently clear the forgotten war “never disappeared.”⁵⁶

The recession of the 1970s exacerbated French antipathy against North Africans, other Muslims, and people of color in France. North Africans in particular became the targets of increasing scrutiny, hatred, violence, discrimination, and scapegoating at the hands of far-right leaders like Jean-Marie Le Pen.⁵⁷ The memory of French Algeria reared its head in national debates over immigration and nationality reform. In the 1980s and 1990s, public debate increasingly slipped back into the vocabulary of colonization, interchanging the word “immigrant” for “Muslim.” Those from the “Maghreb (and particularly Algeria)” became synonymous with the problem.⁵⁸ As the Franco-Moroccan writer Tahar Ben Jelloun put it, “France doesn’t have a problem with immigration as a whole. It does have a problem with its own colonial past in general, and with the Algerian past in particular.”⁵⁹

The work of Franco-Algerian sociologist Abdelmalek Sayad, the father of Algerian migration studies, has proved most useful to me in rethinking Algerian migration in the decade before Algerian independence. Sayad’s influential model, which envisioned successive “generations” of migrants driven by economic push-pull factors,⁶⁰ came to dominate the field. Scholars who subsequently interpreted his work emphasized the economic factors and ignored the colonial context. Sayad, however, never lost sight of the colonial legacy.⁶¹ He stressed the uniqueness of Algerian migration—he referred to it as “exemplary”—both because it created France’s first, significant non-European population and because it resulted from the “most unequal balance of power.” For Sayad, “the colonization of Algeria” gave rise to the economic push-pull factors that perpetuated what has been more than a century of Algerian migration to France.⁶² Moreover, Sayad argued the treatment of an immigrant group derives more from whether a particular minority community is perceived as acceptable, as capable of integrating into the general population, than from the demographic composition of that population. As a result, certain groups are recognized as part of a permanent, “settler immigration,” while others are imagined as temporary, “labor” migrants. For Sayad, the way these constructions have been used—to embrace certain groups and reject others—“borders on the nonsensical.”⁶³

In other words, discourses about Algerian migrants during the final decade of French control of Algeria influenced the perception of this mi-

nority. Since Algerians had to be treated as the equals of all other French citizens, they had to be depicted as possible settlers and to receive special services that facilitated their integration into French society and culture. Families played a central role in this process. Only the end of French rule in Algeria, not the demographic composition of the population, caused a major shift in representation. After 1962, the dominant discourse reinvented the Algerian population as a temporary male worker population whose right to be in France was tenuous at best.

Without dismissing the importance of economic factors, my book's examination of the Algerian welfare network contributes to scholarship exploring social policy for immigrants in the second half of the twentieth century.⁶⁴ In particular, it demonstrates, in concrete terms, how the politics of saving French Algeria dominated French policies and practices in regard to Algerian migration in the final years of colonial rule. It also highlights the links between colonial-era discourses and those of the contemporary period. Discussions of and responses to the urban unrest of 2005 and the on-going Veil Affair are framed in public perceptions of Muslims. As Joan Scott's work has aptly demonstrated, the national debate about the veil has not been about Muslim women as much as "*it is about the dominant French view of them.*"⁶⁵ Contemporary debates draw on assumptions analyzed in this book: the need to uplift and rescue women from a patriarchal culture and Muslims' incompatibility with modern, secular culture. The dominant discourse, now as in the 1950s, frames the discussion in universalism and exposes the "paradox of a civilizing mission aimed at the uncivilizable."⁶⁶

TAKEN TOGETHER, these six chapters demonstrate how from about 1947 to 1962, when saving French Algeria dominated political life, France sought to teach Algerians how to become like the French even as Algerians' status as citizens remained problematic and the state employed surveillance and violent repression to destroy the FLN. Chapter 1 begins with a sketch of the history of the conquest to highlight Algeria's unique place in the French empire and to examine key colonial themes that influenced the architects of the metropolitan welfare network. Subsequently, it introduces the institutions that made up the social welfare network for Algerians in France during decolonization. It examines how the state and institutions that provided social services on both sides of the Mediterranean forged a new plan to remake the Algerian population. Through an exploration of the legal status and perceptions of the Algerian population in France after

World War II, Chapter 1 analyzes how contemporaries tried to control migration. When Algerian migrants were considered as candidates for family farm resettlement or seen by doctors to determine their fitness, French responses revealed both latent eugenic attitudes and conflicting priorities at various levels of the French bureaucracy.

To understand how France pursued its “conquest of hearts,” Chapter 2 examines self-described experts’ proposition for a more benign version of the imperial mission. It analyzes the knowledge produced by social scientists, government bureaucrats, and social reformers, some of whom had lived in the empire and many of whom had come out of France’s social Catholic tradition. Through their research and direct contact with Algerian migrants, these experts believed they could unravel what they called the Algerian enigma.⁶⁷ They bolstered the notion of France’s generosity, reinforced assumptions about Algerians’ backwardness, and insisted the latter not the former was culpable for Algerians’ predicament. These authoritative voices sought quantitative and qualitative data in order to serve openly and monitor quietly. Starting in about 1950, a growing number of influential experts began calling for Algerian family settlement in France. As an anchor of permanent settlement, the presence of women and children would prevent miscegenation and stabilize and depoliticize male workers. Particularly as concern about Algerian nationalism grew, family settlement became an avenue for welfare providers to redirect Algerians’ supposedly collective mentality away from nationalism and toward loyalty to France.

Chapter 3 traces how social service providers depicted their vocation to overcome Algerians’ apparently natural handicaps. All programs used the language of adaptation, but the ultimate goals service providers had for men and women diverged significantly. Male workers, considered temporary and flexible, required services to adjust to the labor market. This narrow view of integration translated into French language courses and vocational skills programs that sought to create disciplined, apolitical laborers who sent money home to their families. None of these services prepared male workers for permanent settlement. The small but growing family population, however, received disproportionate attention. The decision to allocate resources to Algerian families testifies to welfare providers’ confidence in women’s ability to help their families adapt to life in France. Yet, the confidence developed out of assumptions about Algerian women as apolitical and ready to embrace the supposed emancipation social workers

offered. By analyzing home economics instruction, Chapter 3 assesses the social programs' goal to create modern, Western housewives who cooked French food, sent their children to school, and abandoned the veil.

Just as the general housing crisis affected more than a third of the metropolitan population after World War II, finding adequate housing characterized the most common and urgent problem facing Algerian migrants. Chapter 4 examines efforts to solve the Algerian housing crisis by using programs available to all citizens as well as specialized services addressing Algerians' particular needs. Given experts' belief that housing represented the ultimate destination of a long journey toward integration, Chapter 4 juxtaposes housing services for men and for families. Employers, the state, and charitable associations constructed single-sex dormitories, facilitated surveillance, and segregated Algerian men from the general population. The residential segregation of male workers, who sometimes lived with European immigrants, never raised concerns. Only when experts began to encourage family migration did integration begin to refer to permanent settlement.⁶⁸ Insistent that families could not be segregated from the general population, advocates resisted a national agency or system that might unwittingly create Algerian enclaves. Instead, charitable associations began to offer specialized help navigating the complex system of housing aid. Nevertheless, only a few Algerian families moved into rent-controlled apartments or into single-family homes.

When the Fourth Republic collapsed in 1958 and Charles de Gaulle took the reins of government, an expanded welfare network became part of the larger two-pronged solution to the Algerian quagmire. Alongside the expansion of military and police operations, which resulted in much bloodshed, the Fifth Republic emphasized its benevolent development project to save Algerians from "stagnation."⁶⁹ By examining the Constantine Plan in Algeria and the Social Action Fund in the metropole, Chapter 5 assesses the politics of expanding social services on both sides of the Mediterranean during the final years of the war. Welfare providers' actions defy simple characterization; some service providers participated directly and others tacitly in the system of state-sponsored violence and repression that peaked (at least in the metropole) with the police massacre of Algerian protesters in October 1961. Still others became among the most eloquent and persistent critics of violence and repression; they insisted their work was based in mutual respect and brotherhood. Yet, even ardent critics continued to fashion themselves as Algerians' guardians, believing nationalism

represented the most egregious impediment to inclusion in French society. Right until the end of the war, some experts continued to insist only their hospitality and educational programs could help Algerians “overcome their difficulties.”⁷⁰

Since housing remained the most pressing problem—in terms of both Algerians’ living conditions and the fight against nationalism—Chapter 6 opens with a critical analysis of the 1959 decision to liquidate the *bidonvilles*. This policy, which justified the violent destruction of Algerian shantytowns, rested on claims that the FLN victimized residents and that new housing would be built on the sites. Ending the bidonville problem required significant investment in family housing. Between 1959 and 1962 the Social Action Fund allocated as much as half of its metropolitan resources for this purpose. Even though worker-housing construction continued, family housing provided a more visible demonstration of the state’s commitment to helping Algerians and to shaping and monitoring their behavior. To ensure families did not move into general housing prematurely, housing followed a two-step process. First, “un-evolved” families received training in transitional housing projects—mobile-home parks where they received gender-appropriate educational preparation for life in France. If women responded well to the transformation, social workers decided families could live in government subsidized rent-controlled apartments. A limited number of families moved into dozens of complexes built with money deducted from Algerian migrants’ salaries. In the end, widespread discrimination allowed metropolitans and escaping French colonists to move into apartments earmarked for Algerians.

After independence in 1962, a radical shift took place in French policies targeting Algerians. The Conclusion briefly examines how concerns about Algerian settlement and an inability to come to terms with the colonial past translated into a reconfiguration of the specialized welfare network. Rather than dismantling it, leading administrators remade the network for multiple reasons—including safeguarding their own relevance and finding employment for former colonial bureaucrats. In a few short years, Algerians became invisible even as they remained eligible for many services. They became part of an undifferentiated sea of immigrants, disappearing from statistical analyses, annual reports, and mission statements. Even the names of both governmental agencies and charitable associations changed. Most organizations removed the word “Algerians” from their titles, replacing it with “migrant workers.” Unable to come to terms with the Algerian

crisis, France folded the origins and integrationist agenda of the era of decolonization into a larger, purposeful amnesia about Algerians' relationship to the nation. By 1966, the system created exclusively for Algerian migrants had become the foundation for all immigrant services in France—a system that has remained in place despite superficial changes into the twenty-first century. In recovering the complex history of the Algerian welfare network, we understand better the legacies of decolonization.