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Colonial Violence: Horror and Terror in Gillo
Pontecorvo's *The Battle of Algiers*

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Dedication

I dedicate this paper to my parents and to my country, Algeria...

Sarra

Dedication

My humble effort in this work I dedicate it to my angle, sweet and loving

Mother

*Whose encouragement, motivation and prays of day and night make me able to finish and
succeed.*

Cheyma

Dedication

Think not of those who are slain in Allah's way as dead. Nay, they live, finding their sustenance in the presence of their Lord; (169) Al-Imran

To the souls of our martyrs who died to live Algeria.

Abbreviations

ALN: National Liberation Army

CCE: Coordination and Execution Committee

CNRA: National Council of the Algerian Revolution

CRS: Companies of State Police.

FLN: National Front Liberation

MLTD: Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratiques

SFIO: The French Section of the Workers' International

UDMA: Democratic Union of the Algerian Manifesto

UN: United Nation

Glossary

Ammama: A masculine Algerian traditional hat

Barnous: A masculine Algerian costume

Gandoura: A masculine Algerian costume

Harka: Traitors

Haik: A feminine Algerian traditional costume

Imam: A priest

Istiklal: Independence

Mujahid: a revolutionist

Quran: The holy book of Muslims

Shahid: a martyr

Abstract

In 1966, Gillo Pontecorvo directed his Italian-Algerian historical war movie “The Battle of Algiers” in which he portrays horror and terror among both the colonised and the coloniser people. The movie unveils the French colonial violence against the Algerians and particularly the FLN in the Casbah between 1954 and 1962. The aim of this research is to study how Pontecorvo’s “The Battle of Algiers” depicts the different use of violence by both the French paratroopers and the Algerian revolutionists. It tries also to discuss ethical and philosophical issues concerning violence and resistance using the movie as a guide and a focal point. From a postcolonial perspective, the movie examines Pontecorvo’s attempt to show the atmosphere of horror and terror; it attempts also to shed light on the position of Algerian women during the revolution based on real historical events. To achieve this aim, the present study uses a postcolonial approach. The research does not sympathize or empathize with any violent acts in the movie, but its main concern is to broaden our understanding of the atmosphere of horror during the battle of Algiers and how violence was imposed on the wretched colonised. In short, we shall clarify how the history of colonialism instigated indeed a vicious circle of violence in the long run and the liberation process is part of it.

Keywords: Violence; Colonizer; Colonized; Revolution; Terrorism; Women.

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Introduction

The first major European colonization after Napoleon's short-lived invasion of Egypt began when the French navy landed in Algeria in 1830. By the late nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire was in radical decline, allowing France to intervene in Tunisia. Martin Stone argues, "Algeria has been described as one of the most ignominious examples of systematic colonization that the world has ever seen" (31). Postcolonial Algeria confronted several types of colonization from different states. France is the most long-lasting colonial power in Algeria; French successive administration did their best to not surrender, using aggravated types of torture, oppression, and terrorism. Generally, most of the third world countries have exposed to colonialism from Africa to Asia and the Middle East, westerns have used these countries due to many reasons and one of them is the economic one. Colonized people struggled to decolonize their countries and gain their self-respect as well. However, the vibrations of colonialism still profoundly affect people and still existing.

In this regard, the third cinema has emerged during the 1960s to convey to the audience an anti-oppressive worldview. Third cinema is an aesthetic and political cinematic movement that appeared in third world countries. Thus, the movies aspire to be a socially realistic portrayal of life serious issues such as poverty, identity, tyranny, revolution, colonialism, social class, and cultural practices. That is clearly pictured in one of the most outstanding movies in the history of the third cinema *The Battle of Algiers* by Gillo Pontecorvo who depicts the warfare of a group of Algerian people against the violent French rule.

Gillo Pontecorvo, who is an Italian Jewish, is considered as one of the most popular and critically acclaimed during the twentieth century. He has dedicated his movie *The Battle of Algiers* in 1966 to highlight and depict violence in Algeria. He even inserts events from his

own experience into the Algerian movie; his experience of resistance ensures that Marxism has influenced him. Pontecorvo had a strong belief in the significance of the collective action by the people. Thus, he was naturally sympathetic to the Algerian FLN in their battles with France. Therefore, Pontecorvo makes the movie to pay homage to all fighters for liberation and self-determination. "*The Battle of Algiers*" seems to reach far beyond cinema to attain a great resonance over the history.

After the release of the movie in 1966, it won The Golden Lion Award for the best movie at the Venice Film Festival, and it became an icon of anti-colonialism. The movie is well-dramatized episodes in its mastery of cinematic techniques during the Algerian war. The battle was in occupied Algeria during 1954-1962, Algerian struggled for independence from France. The movie is based on Saadi Yacef's memoir, the leader of FLN. The battle began with a series of attacks of irregular fighters in French conventional forces and disappears, as a reaction of the excessive and aggravated use of torture and violence by the French. FLN plays a vital role in the movie in fighting for independence and self-determination as well as state restoration. FLN requests the Algerian people to co-operate with each other to gain both independence and dignity. In sum, the battle cost souls and pools of blood, but it brought the FLN's triumph at the end.

Seminal contributions have been made by many researchers and writers, showing an interest in Pontecorvo's "*The Battle of Algiers*" and other subjects related to colonial violence. One of the writers is Sohail Daulatzai with his book *Fifty Years of the Battle of Algiers*. Dalatzai indicates several issues of slavery, colonialism, racism, capitalism, and oppression that western powers practice in Arab-Islamic countries. He compares the battle with the United State "war on terror"; however, the long-lasting terrorism in Algeria is different in the United States. A more comprehensive description can be found in Mike Wayne in the *Political Film: The Dialectics of Third Cinema* in his article of Pluto Press 20

Jun 2001, He discusses how the Battle of Algiers might support and illustrate Frantz Fanon's claim. In this article, Wayne emphasizes on the psychological impact of the colonial rule against the colonized people; and so its negative influences on their personal and national autonomy. Thus, the movie of Pontecorvo's *The Battle of Algiers* deals with such phenomena, when the causes of the oppression led to warfare. Wayne argues that the movie prevailed by the intensity of human aspects in all scenes. He utilizes a Fanonian motive to analyze the movie. On one hand, he conveys the violent process for decolonizing as well as gaining self-respect of the colonized. On the other hand, he nods to Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* in a way of comparing the dark people with the dense Casbah. Another view of colonial violence is conveyed in the thesis of Rosalie Calvet, department of History in Columbia University. Rosalie demonstrates the degree of violence that practiced in Algeria from sides, the French army, and Algerian political parties. She also shows the Algerian movements to decolonize from the subversive French role. Pontecorvo depicts the same events that Calvet writes.

The other section reviews literature related to the female role in the movie. Annedith M.Schneider in *Building Nation: Narrating women and the Algerian War*. She breaks the stereotype of traditional accounts that mainly focus on the victorious role that men play in wars. However, European literature unveils the truths of women's place in war. Therefore, the Algerian war shows how women were in the middle of combat, sacrificing their souls and their families. Although Algerian history erases and ignores the women's role in the war, Annedith extends her views by mentioning Assia Djebar the Algerian writer who affords a central place to women in the construction of the nation in the wartime, as well as a high rank in the current community. She mentions Assia Djebar's novel *Fantasia* that demonstrates the significant role of women in the Algerian War, and that they deserve recognition after independence. Annedith overestimates the subject of women in the Algerian war, neglecting the negative consequences of their participation. They are indeed heroines but

there are victims too. Women suffered from the French colonization whether to win raping or exploiting.

Several points and critics are reported in the literature to address the issue of violence and women in Pontecorvo's *The Battle of Algiers*. However, they reveal several gaps and shortcomings in the movie and female role in the war. Nevertheless, the researchers and writers' views lack theories to enhance their arguments. However, this dissertation will deal with the legitimate use of violence in the movie, using post-colonial approaches. Those approaches will support to analyze the movie. On the other hand, post-colonial feminism will illustrate the women's role in the Algerian War.

This research will examine and investigate the movie according to postcolonial studies as a subject matter, which mainly focuses on how violence and terrorism are depicted. Added to this, some writers' views will be included to explore the same issue of the movie; Frantz Fanon, the Martinican author, and psychiatrist. According to him violence is a process used between the colonizers and colonized, because generally, he claims that the world cut into two binary oppositions between black and white, good and evil. Fanon justifies the use of violence as a process for independence and gaining the natives' self-respect, calling it the creation of a new man which embodies the creation of a new nation: colonized people's nation with stripping the colonizer identity. In the course of the movie, FLN tries to raise nationality in the Algerian people for seeking independence and requests them to co-operate with each other to save and liberate their country. The first step toward decolonization is terrorism and violence, that what exactly Franz Fanon legitimate violence and act accordingly. His views are strongly applicable and appropriate in analyzing the movie, specifically in the justification of using violence as well as decolonization in the movie. In addition, Jean-Paul, the French philosopher who continues Fanon's views and ideas in his Preface *The Wretched of the Earth*. He refers to colonization as "a dehumanization process"

(53). Therefore, he supports the Algerian revolution and his philosophy emphasizes on individual freedom, human dignity, and social responsibility. Also, Amilcar Cabral, the Guinean theoretician who studies colonization in Africa. He incites liberation for the oppressed people and rejects subjection.

The next section will embody the women's testimony and heroism in the society and the war against the colonizer. Postcolonial feminism comes as a reaction to defend women's rights and shows their significant role. Women in the movie unveil their bodies and overcome their timidity as well as adopting the French culture, in order to professionally plant the bombs in French places. Women's active role could rescue in achieving independence. However, such operations make women double oppressed and victims from both the colonizer and the colonized. Thus, the movie gives women valuable recognition during and after the war.

As mentioned earlier, this paper attempts to pinpoint the theoretical work of postcolonial theories and postcolonial feminism, with reference to Pontecorvo's *The Battle of Algiers*, then highlighting the French colonialism in Algeria between 1954 till 1962. Besides, the illustration of the "Third Cinema" and how it provoked the Third World Countries to show the oppressive colonial rule.

Thus, to achieve the stated objectives, our research is divided into two chapters; the first of which explores the postcolonial approaches in the movie, as well as a socio-historical background of French colonialism in Algeria. While the second chapter examines the dual use of violence between the Algerian guerillas and French paratroopers, highlighting some scenes in the movie.

CHAPTER ONE: THEORETICAL FRAME WORK AND

SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT

“The worst thing that colonialism did was cloud our view of our past. Without the white man, we might be able to make better use of our history.” (Obama 64)

Western colonization sought to practice domination in many countries, aiming to achieve economic profits. France conquered Algeria for several reasons and factors; however, the *Fan Affair* (Fly Whisk Incident 1827) was one of the strangest reasons for occupation in history. It was a pretext to indirectly conquer Algeria and exploit its natural resources and subjugate its people for thirteen decades. *The Battle of Algiers* presents an era from this colonization from 1954 to 1962. Therefore, postcolonial theory is applied in this study to analyze colonialism and its effects on people as well as authors.

The following chapter, in multiple sections, dissects the different purviews of the paper’s theory in question. This will be done by highlighting mentions of this very important concept in multiple bodies of postcolonial theorists and postcolonial feminist perspectives with a reference to the movie. Also, the section is deduced with historical events during 1954 and 1962 to depict the ferocious colonization that occurred in Algeria.

1. Postcolonial Approach in Gillo Pontecorvo’s *The Battle of Algiers*

As aforementioned earlier, Pontecorvo’s movie calls for a postcolonial approach, which typifies the violent reality of colonialism. Additionally, several postcolonial authors and theorists deal with same issue; Fanon and Sartre illustrate the brutality of colonisation and its effects on the wretched people in colonized countries. Consequently, they vindicate violence as the only instrument to gain freedom, decolonization is inevitably a violent act,

violence for them was imposed on the colonized from the very beginning of colonisation. The FLN expresses its indignant reaction in various attacks to take revenge from the French subversive rule. Likewise, Cabral incites people to revolt against the colonizer to get rid of subjugation. Many other theorists are concerned with the issue of the colonisation.

The following section will highlight postcolonial approaches that illustrate the movie. This will be done by referencing featured instances and sections in the film that stressed this ideology. Besides, postcolonial feminism is required to investigate the female role during the war. Consequently, the movie is analyzed according to postcolonial approaches and postcolonial feminism to show the colonial violence.

1.1. Postcolonial Glance in a Reference to Pontecorvo's "*The Battle of Algiers*"

Post-colonialism can be loosely identified as an academic concept of understanding the social, cultural, political, economic, moral, religious, literary, and linguistic effects of colonialism on colonized people during their struggles in combating western hegemony. Most of these effects can be argued as detrimental to the indigenous or occupied people and consequently, their understanding of society.

The concept is not tied to a specific time in history; in fact, it has a lasting impact on postcolonial countries and societies. Though the prefix "post" means "after", the term includes both "after colonialism" and "beyond colonialism", it is thus associated with each other to give a glimpse about battling against colonialism and dealing with beyond colonialism.

Colonialism started with third world societies from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Its main purpose is achieving economic interests that only colonial states can exploit them. Colonial states conceptualize the term western to distinguish their geographical

position, culture, values, and tradition, believing that they have a privilege to take control over colonised societies.

Indeed, the colonial situation in the movie between the colonizer and the colonized is very unequal and undemocratic when the French people live in proper houses but the Algerians live in very poor houses in Casbah: the French are free and the Algerians are oppressed. This leads to draw the social classes' line, where the natives of the land could never aspire to the conditions of western. In addition to treating them as inhuman, slaves, and expose them to all sorts of psychological and physical torture. The Indian theorist and feminist critic Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and The Palestinian American professor Edward Said explain the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized in several writings.

Spivak argues that being natives makes them the other, that what she writes in her essay "Can the subaltern speak?" which identifies postcolonial theory with the association of some postcolonial writers and views. Spivak criticizes the western as being always in the center of the world in any subject, whereas the other is always silent and has no right to speak. In the same vein, Said is concerned with the same issue regarding the western mistreatment against the Orient as "other"; inferior, and alien. Moreover, Said argues that the western has divided the world into two parts: the "East" and the "West", "Occident" and "Orient" or the "Civilized" and the "Uncivilized". He also discusses the false image of the Orient that the Occident gives as a savage, a raper, and a sloth so that he uses his writings to defend and show to the world that the Orientals are good people.

Additionally, the British academic and renowned geographer Derek Gregory distinguishes a persistent 'colonial present' in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Palestinian regions. As he contends, bringing Said's notable investigation of "Orientalism" into the twenty-first century, authority is legitimized through the power and social structure that makes the

westerns as superior and easterners as inferior. Gregory assembles a postcolonial basic system to think about the continuing consequences of colonial history in its exemplary just as contemporary structures.

These nations and other nations in the regions that have been mentioned earlier have a similar rise of cinematic expression, where Post-colonialism and its effects have been highlighted as detrimental to colonized society. As the Egyptian historical movie “Jamila”, by Youssef Chahine.

“*The Battle of Algiers*” presents a postcolonial thought and embodies the same previous views about the struggle against colonialism. The movie is based on Yacef’s memoir about real events from the Algerian war of independence. It was between 1954 and 1957 when the founding FLN (National Liberation Front) fights against the French oppressor rule, using violent attacks as a reaction to the brutality of the French civilians. The movie ends up with the defeat of the FLN. However, two years later the Algerian people spill in manifestation asking for “Istiqlal” (independence). The movie reveals a clear understanding of the director’s narrative choices.

The analysis of the Italian writer Franco Solinas, who helps Pontecorvo in the writing of the movie, he says, “I was intrigued by the mechanism of the struggle against colonialism and, in particular, by its manifestation in Algeria through tactics of urban guerrilla warfare (193). He glimpses that the movie, at least in his vision, is about exposing the conflict that colonialism had fueled rather than celebrating Algeria’s independence or totally identifying with the Algerian people as it might do, had it embraced the typical third cinema.

The movie dissects the mise-en-scene and makes the audience more aware that the portrayal of violence, torture, disguise, and war tactics in the film as it is significant and part

of the struggle against colonialism. Additionally, it shows how people try to decolonize in harsh and violent process for liberation. Pontecorvo depicts the dual use of violence from both the French and Algerians in achieving their interests; however, using violence to live freely in the motherland is different from using violence to maintain power and exploitation. This is clearly highlighted in a scene in the movie, where the French army bomb some Algerian places to eradicate the FLN and weaken the Algerian people, then they bomb them back to revenge. Algerians use violence to gain their dignity and get rid of the complex of inferiority, Ali La Pointe in other scenes uses fight over plight and chooses violence to gain his dignity from the French civilians. While the French army was physically and mentally in a better state of mind due to the developed weapons and organizations. In the case of Algerians, resistance and patriotism are the strongest weapons for them. It is an irony that the French were colonised and had a resistance themselves against the Germans and Vichy France just a decade prior to the events in the movie.

1.2. Frantz Fanon and Jean-Paul Sartre: Dual Vision of Violence in “*The Wretched of the Earth*”

One of the most important postcolonial theorists, who empathize with the methods and the plights of the colonized, is Fanon the front-line in the French Army. He was a well-known psychiatrist and philosopher, who receives his medical and psychiatric education at the University of Lyon and was the head of the psychiatry department at the Blida-Joinville Hospital in French-occupied Algeria. In 1954, he joined the Algerian liberation movement and edited the revolutionary newspaper “El Moudjahid”. In 1961, Fanon published his work of art, “The Wretched of the Earth.”

“*The Wretched of the Earth*” is based on the national liberation movement of Algeria, supporting the engagement of violence, self-cleansing, and fighting against

colonization. Fanon is among those, who devoted their lives to helping the oppressed communities. He believes that violence is an inevitable choice for the colonized in order to get rid of the exploitation by the colonizer and gaining the natives' self-respect, calling it the creation of a new man, which embodies the creation of a new nation: colonized people's nation with stripping the colonizer identity. His perception legitimates violence as the only cure to recover the colonized from the oppression of the colonizer.

Fanon argues that decolonization is a violent process to break the chains of oppression; once colonized uses violence against colonists that would create commonness for violent revolts and unites people across regions and tribes. For him, this process supports the colonized to get rid of his complex of inferiority, the subjectivity of submission, and passivity.

Sartre continues Fanon's views and ideas in his Preface in "the Wretched of the Earth", he associates himself with Fanon's revolutionary ideology in a way to achieve independence and put an end to the oppression. Sartre fought in the French Army in World War II and was held for several years by the Nazis as a prisoner of war. Upon his return to France, he was an active leader of the French resistance. Sartre supports the Algerian revolution and his philosophy emphasizes on individual freedom, human dignity, and social responsibility. He argues that freedom is the tool for human struggle and so every individual has the responsibility to fight against oppression and injustice.

Despite the French justification of their violence claiming that they purify Algeria from ignorance and terrorism. In fact, they are considered terrorist because of the brutal torture they expose to the Algerian people, that is particularly shown in the scene when they behead an Algerian prisoner while his fellows watching. This awful scene shows the

merciless practices against the Algerians. That is the reason why people revolt to eliminate French colonization.

Sartre's endorsement of Fanon's point of view calls for the responsibility that every individual should take to fight against this torture and injustice. For Sartre, anyone fails to do so he is stripping himself from humanity and freedom and makes him nothing more than another oppressor. Therefore, he puts a heavy emphasis on ignorance as a fatal consequence that leads to the acceptance of oppression and helps the colonizer to maintain his control. It is shown in the film when the FLN raises awareness among people through the radio in order to cooperate with each other to eliminate the French rule.

1.3. Amilcar Cabral: The Revolutionary Icon

Amilcar Cabral puts a heavy emphasis on the cultural consciousness as a core element of cultural resistance, which progressively crystallizes into an attempt to assert the cultural personality of the oppressed people in an act of rejection of that of the colonized and its tyranny. Thus, he believes that the colonized is responsible for working for freeing their country and rejecting colonialism and its exploitation. Cabral argues that human development takes a place within the national liberation struggle in order to build a new nation and provide good living conditions far from mistreatment and destruction.

Cabral is one of the famous figures, founder, and secretary-general of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde (PAIGC). He is a political thinker, anti-imperialist and pan-Africanist until his treacherous assassination in January, he was one of the foremost leaders of the African liberation struggle against Portuguese colonialization. He was one of the most admitted authors, who studied colonization, particularly in Guinea, Ghana Tanzania, Libya, and Algeria.

Cabral shows in his writings the long and difficult struggle to free Africa from foreign domination. He worked hard to find many ways for revolutionary movements that are based on the political parties to defeat the colonizer. That is what exactly the movie shows, FLN plans for tactics to organize and fight. Cabral focuses on the political movements by taking into consideration the violent process that the colonized should take.

Cabral is like Fanon, who strongly believes in the need for violence to free a nation from oppression and submission. For him, there is no national liberation without liberating forces of violence. Cabral and Fanon justify violence as a reaction of the colonizer's brutal, inhuman, and devastating rule, there are differences between them, Fanon believes that violence is the only process for liberation; he also focuses on peasant as the lowest class but the strongest. Whereas, Cabral did not believe that violence was positive for personal transformation, although instrumental in forging revolutionary consciousness among the bourgeoisie. Thus, he seems to have less intention for this subject comparing to Fanon. Cabral deals with the major themes of revolutionary struggle such as the importance of theory, the role of classes and violence, the relationship of consciousness to the organization, of mass to elite, of the party to the military, and of national liberation to social change. Cabral highlights the destruction of the old regime and rebuilds a new nation after independence; his writings, therefore, was about the African nation and their violent struggles such as State and Revolution.

Cabral had given his life for the liberation of the colonized people from the colonialism, Algerians render homage of this defender by naming a place "Amilcar Cabral" in the center of Algiers.

1.4. Post-colonial Feminism: A Literary Insight

Post-colonialism or postcolonial era is a period from history that means after colonization or beyond colonization, when Third World Countries were under the European colonialization. It has extended to various defend arenas among them feminism.

Postcolonial feminism is a movement that defends women's rights and investigates their significant role by taking into consideration the female position politically, socially, and culturally in postcolonial countries. Women confronted almost all types of oppression and exploitation during and after colonization, being in third world countries allow the colonizer to put women in very hard situations. Not only this, women in the colonized countries are double oppressed from both the colonizer and the colonized.

Despite the devastating situations that women were put, they reached to defend themselves as an independent being, far from the attachment of men. Numerous women used writing to demonstrate their feminine writings in order to convey a woman in her authentic image and sublime characterizations. As the Lebanese novelist, Hoda Barakat shows the women's worth.

We write, I write, from a dual perspective, because I am a woman and want to resemble a man, to cut short the time for training and amateurism, and prove my intellectual ability to construct and to invent. (44–45)

In her quote, Barakat describes herself and other women as free beings that they have the ability to be separated from men and stand independent. Thus, she writes to not be read as woman; rather she writes to show her mental skills and physical power. That is reflected during the Algerian war, when women needed to be heard and to be acknowledged as an effective element in society as well as a warrior during the war. Barkat's writings simplify the women's embodied experiences as only women (the difference characterizations in feminist theory). She also argues the identity, image in gendered identity, subjectivity

expressing feminist objectives, and performing feminist practices, but on its own shifting terms.

Postcolonial feminist theory has seen that the postcolonial theories neglect women and their testimony in society and heroism in wars against the colonizers. Hence, Postcolonialism and feminism have come to share a tense relationship as some feminist critics point out that postcolonial theory is a male-centered field that has not only excluded the concerns of women but also exploited them and made them “double oppressed” or “oppressed of the oppressed” from both the colonizer and the colonized. For an instant, Said’s “Orientalism” granted a little attention to women's agency and excluding some female writers. Added to this, HomiBhabha’s work on the ambivalence of colonial discourses explores the relationship between a “colonizing” subject and a “colonized” object without reference to how the specifics of gender might complicate his model. However, many authors and writers render homage of women, especially Arab Muslim women, who were under the rule of patriarchy and colonialism.

The term feminism thus, is so challenging in the Arab Islamic World due to its association with foreign intervention and ambivalent connotations of individualism. Women in the Islamic world suffered from patriarchy due to the misinterpretation of the Islamic rules, they were also the victims of colonialism. During the Algerian war, men were superior and women worked as housewives only. Algerian society at that time gave women a sacred place at the same time they were passive; they were veiled and silent. Pontecorvo’s *The Battle of Algiers* shows a scene of how women are sacred and precious to the Algerian men when the French soldier tells his friend that he should never touch their women (Algerian women). However, Algerian women were unable to express themselves, even their participation in the war was not well recognized.

One of the most famous authors that provided a formal recognition for the Algerian female in their contributions during and after the war is Assia Djebar in her novel *Fantasia*. Djebar's novel *Fantasia, An Algerian Cavalcade* represents an investigation of the modern Algerian women's struggle to create a space for themselves, in which they sought to define themselves without being bound to men. In addition to, it reflects a quest of understanding women's role within the Algerian history. Added to this, Djebar depicts a guerrilla attack against the French, she notices: "[O]ur men run away: they didn't want to wait for the enemy's reprisals. We women were left to bear the brunt!" (206). This quote portrays the female unavoidable involvement and courage in confronting the French and resisting them as much as they could. Djebar seeks to give voice to the voiceless women through her writings.

Moreover, postcolonial feminism shows the women courageous participation that occurred in military arm resistance, when a group of women left their families risking and sacrificing their lives to join the mujahedeen. Women had hard tasks such as providing shelter, food, and medicine, or working nurses. Thus, women deserve special recognition throughout the war:

If a man carried food to the armed fighters at great personal risk, he was called a 'fighter'. A woman doing the same was called a 'helper'. If man risked his life to hide armed fighters or wanted political leaders, he was called a 'fighter'. A woman doing the same was simply performing the female task of 'nurturing'. Nor was she considered a fighter when she collected fuel or food for the fighters, or carried their guns, or guided the through the mountains. She was merely helping the men. (Helie-Lucas 106)

Women's notable role during the Algerian war will remain in history. Algeria suffered from the French brutal role and so women; several operations, several tactics, long struggle but they succeeded at the end.

2. **Algeria between 1954-1962: A Historical Journey**

The French invasion of Algiers in 1830 was under several conditions that facilitated this invasion by the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the fall of the French Second Empire under Napoleon III in 1870.

Before the French colonization, Algeria was under the control of Ottoman Empire and after the spread of Islam in Algeria, the majority of the population became connected to Islam and the Arabic language. Algeria was a prospering cultural land due to its different consisting of the Berbers and it was the lady of the Mediterranean Sea as it had a huge fleet that used to scare its enemies, and this fleet was destroyed in the wars of the Barbarian coast and some was destroyed in the Battle of Navarin in 1827.

France used the fan incident in April 30, 1827 to be a main reason for its occupation of Algeria, but it had intended to occupy Algeria since the era of Napoleon Bonaparte. France decided to launch a military campaign against Algeria, when Polinac became the Prime Minister on June 18, 1929. It started to create reasons in order to justify its colonization, and it took the fan incident as a direct reason to occupy Algeria, which was considered as an affront to France honor. In addition to the unpunishment to the people of Annaba by Day Hussein for those, who attacked the French ship “La Province” on August 03, 1829.

The French colonization of Algeria shaped an exceptional incident in the history of the European colonial violence, in which the French government wanted to establish a French Algeria “L’Algérie Française” and making the Muslim Algerians servants for its economy. It faced many battles between 1830 and 1847, including “Tafna” treaties in 1834 that pushed France to confront Ahmed Bey in Constantinois, in which France occupied Constantine in 1837 after many attempts since 1836. During this period of time, France passed a law, in which Algeria became attached to France officially in 1834, and it committed genocide, arson

and displacement of the Algerians mainly in the period of General Bujeaud and PélissierRondon such as the massacres of “Farachich” in “El-Aoufia” tribe in El-Harrach in 1832, and the massacres of “Zaatcha” in Biskra against their leaders in 1849. As it displaced the Algerian population, who stood next to this resistances, which had been repeated in many regions such as “Boubaghla” resistance and “FatmaLallaNsoumer” resistance in Kbilya in 1858.

After a relative calm between 1858 and 1870, the Algerian population of central and oriental Algeria revolted next to “Jihad” that El-Mokrani called for in 1871 that expanded in Medjana, Setif, Hodna, Bouira and North Constantinois, which left extremely dangerous traces on Algerians in terms of the number of dead and the denial of thousands to the New Caledonia. Also, displacing the others from their towns so as the displacement of “El-Hachm” tribes from Medjana to Hodna territory. France started land confiscation without exception, either who supported resistance or choose to be neutral.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, the Algerian national awareness had formed through the affection of people by the revival that took place in the western East, the call of Islamic University and the propaganda for the First World War. Therefore, an Algerian elite was formed, and divided into two groups, an elite influenced by the French culture with an ideological orientation of Francophonie, which includes: Teachers, Doctors, Workers..., and a traditional elite that includes the “Sheikh” (literally means elders) of “Zawia” and it is a conservative elite.

However, after the First World War, a political activity appeared following the colonial policy that tried to return Algeria within the framework of France through the 1919 law. The period between the First World War and the Second World War was marked by the emergence of a variety of political activities, ideas a trends such as the reformist stream of

Muslims Ulama, the communist stream, the independence stream and the activity of the Algerian elected stream:

New demonstrations planned for May 8, the day of the armistice, turned into an armed riot in Sétif and Guelma. After the bloody clashes in these cities, the neighboring small settlement centers were attacked in the following days. Some 50 000 rioters massacred indifferently. (Ageron 92)

Although, the appearances of criminality and colonial genocide against the Algerians was represented in the massacres of May 08, 1945 that followed the peaceful manifestations of the Algerian people on May 1st, 1945 to celebrate the end of the Second World War.

2.1. The Outbreak of the War “La Drôlede La Geurre” (1954-1956)

Revolution was triggered first on November 1, 1954, between midnight and two o'clock a.m., in which Algeria was awakened by explosions. Almost thirty simultaneous attacks on public utilities military installations, police posts, and warehouses, were perpetrated in Algiers, Boufarik, Bouira, Batna, Khenchela, and on and on by Algerian revolutionists led by the FLN. Their weapons were hunting rifles, shotguns, some remains of World War II weapons that were brought in by the Special Organization (OS) via Oued-Souf, and homemade bombs.

As a very quick reaction, the minister of the interior, François Mitterrand, placed three companies of state police (CRS) at the disposal of the general government of Algeria, that is to say, six hundred men, who left Paris in the early afternoon. Colonel Ducourneau led the first battalion of paratroopers: SFIO daily, *Le Populaire*, was upset: The attacks came precisely at a time when France has a government whose comprehensive policy in North Africa is likely to bring calm everywhere there has been tension. (Stora 35)

Seven people died during this insurrection and the promoters of November 1 attacks against military and police targets, and industrial plants were disappointed because it did not reach the extent and the scope they had hoped.

The police defeated the network set in place in Algiers in less than two weeks while they faced a real military problem in Aurès, where the cooperation of “Bandits of Honor” has been secured by the “rebels”, especially the well-known GrineBelkacem, who had been in the subterranean for years. “On November 1, no one seriously thought that France had just entered a new war” (Stora 36).

In November 1954, an organization, which was unknown at the time, was created by the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) and it was conducted by six men: Larbi Ben M’Hidi, Mohamed Boudiaf, Didouche Mourad, Krim Belkacem, Rabah Bitat, and Mostefa Ben Boulaid. It was created to legitimate the demand for independence by resisting French colonization through violence.

At the beginning, the strategy of the revolution was based on the speed of movement, and by relying on small groups that operate in multiple and faraway places, to work on striking colonial interests, and to recruit and mobilize all people to join the FLN. This strategy was governed by making the conditions that prevailed at the time, which are characterized by the intensification of the conflict within the ranks of the victory movement for democratic freedom, the failure of the political action, which was aborted by the colonial circles and failed by penetrating and rig the elections, and due to the French propaganda alleging that those calling for independence are criminals and “Felaguas”.

After the outbreak of the war, Premier Pierre Mendès-France asserted that Algeria has been French for a long time. Therefore, secession is inconceivable on November 13, 1954. “... This was a mere flare-up of violent crime, of isolated individual acts ...” (Stora, 38)

Nevertheless, both Roger Léonard, who was the governor in Algiers and Jean Vaujour, the director of Sureté (criminal investigation bureau) had warned from the rise of the Algerian revolution against French government especially under the international conditions that would support the rise of the revolution like Tunisia that took the right of the internal autonomy on November 20, 1954. The return of the Sultan of Morocco to his throne; in addition to the Nasserian revolution in Egypt and its wide impact on the Arab world especially in calling Muslims in Algeria to join in a national revolution to restore the Algerian state, sovereign, democratic, and social within the framework of the principles of Islam.

As a reaction, the French government tried to prove its solid regime by dissolving the pro-independence organization the MLTD (Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratiques) led by Messali Hadj, who had been arrested later on November 5, 1954.

Moreover, Didouche Mourad, who is the main leader of FLN in Constantinois zone, was killed by the French army on January 15, 1955. One month later, Mostefa Ben Boulaid, the main leader of FLN in Aurès zone, was arrested. On the other hand, the French government proposed a program for Algeria, in which there have been created in deep reforms in Algiers to give Muslim Algerians access to public sectors as employees and Muslim children attendance in schools, to reduce the gap of salaries between Algerians and French, and to rate economic poverty in Algeria.

On February 5, 1955, the government of Pierre Mendès-France was overthrown after a whispering campaign that claimed Mendes-France was a communist and a Soviet agent and after the discussion of the program. Jacques Soustelle replaced the French government the day after.

In April 1955, the FLN participated in Bandung conference, which has seen as the entry of the decolonized countries era against European colonization. In order to understand the disaffection of the Muslim Algerian population, Soustelle met with the leaders of Ulema and with Farhat Abbas, the founder of UDMA, until mid-1955.

In March 1955, Soustelle asked for war legitimacy in the Aurès region after his trips to Aurès and Kabylia that helped him to realize the under-administration of the Algerian nationalists. On March 31, 1955, the government legitimated overpowering the army in Aurèsemergently and confined one hundred and sixty people in Khenchela and initiated many operations in the second half of 1955, but this could not make the FLN weak.

On August 20, 1955, the FLN planned to trace the second anniversary of Sultan Mohammed the fifth of Morocco, who was deposed by the French. On that day, a revolution performed quickly to attack cities in North Constantinois led by ZighoudYoucef by thousands of Algerian peasants in order to break the blockade of the revolution everywhere and prove the unity of the people and the National Liberation Army. The mask of “peacekeeping” in Algeria revealed and the war showed its true face especially in Constantinois, where the community had been tenser than the rest of Algeria. At the noon, the movement of thousands of peasants was weakly organized by few soldiers of the Armée de LibérationNationale ALN, which is a military branch of the FLN, and this movement tended to attack police stations, the gendarmeries, and public buildings. Soustelle gave the army the authority to start the war and the operation of “peacekeeping” in Algeria ended. The operation of August 20, 1955, showed a first real docking between the Liberation Army and the people.

During August 1955, the FLN prepared an operation of several attacks that targeted civilians, provoking a commonplace that is crowded with people, in which more than 120 people in Philippeville were killed, but thousands of Algerian Muslims were killed by French

troops and by “pied-noir”. This operation was successful in taking worldwide attention and the case of the pro-independence of Algeria was questioned on the agenda of the UN on September 30, 1955.

In order to face this developed nationalist violent revolution in Algeria, France accelerated to make pressure on both Tunisia and Morocco, in which the French government began to seal off the Tunisian and Moroccan borders so as to prevent such massive infiltrations and negotiated with the Tunisian nationalist leader Habib Bourgiba by granting internal sovereignty to Tunisia. The independence would be in March 1956 and with the Sultan Mohamed the fifth by giving independence to Morocco in November 1955.

2.2. Organization and Supply (1956-1958)

On late 1955, Soustelle continued the state of emergency while the Chamber had been dissolute, in which the elections in Algiers were postponed due to several reasons such as the disagreement of the elected officials with Farhat Abbas to integrate with Soustelle and the taken photographs by l’Express production of an execution of an Algerian revolutionary by the French gendarme.

On January 2, 1956, the Socialists won the election then Guy Mollet became the prime minister of France in Algeria in February and Soustelle left Algeria. Moreover, the army and Pied-noirs asked for the increase of the soldiers’ number and additional helicopters under the mask of economic and social progress, the protection of persons and property, and safeguarding the territory according to Robert Lacoste, a member of the SFIO, in his introduction of a legislative bill in the National Assembly.

In March, Mollet had the authority to act against Algerian revolutionaries from the Special Powers Law of the parliament by which Algeria was divided into three zones: the zone of operation, the pacification zone, and the forbidden zone. In the zone of operation, the

aim was to defeat and destroy the revolutionaries. In the pacification zone, they assumed the protection of European populations the same as Algerian Muslims to show the world that the French government is controlling the state and that is an internal issue, where there is no need for this revolution to take worldwide attention. In the forbidden zone, which was under the control of the French army, the population was gathered in settlement camps.

After six months of the declaration of the revolution, the FLN leaders met on August 20, 1956, in Oued-Soumam, Ifri, Bejaia. Among those attending the conference: Zighoud Youcef, Abban Ramdan, Krim Belkacem, Amr OuOmran, Amirouch, El Arbi Ben Mhidi, Lakhdar Ben Toubal, Mostfa Ben Aouda. The meeting was set in order to organize and evaluate the revolution. they narrowed its organization and started emphasizing on violence in the cities, mainly and chiefly Algiers, and they started to rethink about the revolution and its measures to plan for a new distance of the revolution using violence to justify freedom and independence, in which the National Liberation Army (ALN) was guided by Belkassem Krim and the political direction of the FLN was confined by 34 elected members to the National Council of the Algerian Revolution (CNRA) and by 5 members to the Coordination and Execution Committee (CCE). Despite the costly French investment in men, money, and materials, the insurgents could not improve an efficient military system, which was contained increasingly, but the revolutionaries were realizing the disillusionment of the French.

The conference makes a set of important decisions in several aspects. In the structural aspect, in which the conference established the National Council for the Algerian Revolution (CNRA) that is the highest political aspect that took over the functions of the legislature, which had the authority of choosing either peace or war. It consisted of 34 members, 17 of them were permanent and 17 were additional members. In addition, the Coordination and Execution Committee (CCE) that consisted of 5 to 14 members and it is the executive branch of the revolution. In the administrative aspect, Algeria was separated into

six cities and each city into regions and each region into sectors; the first city: Aurès, the second city: North Constantinois, the third city: Kabylia, the fourth city: Algiers, the fifth city: the west of Algeria and the sixth city: Sahara. In the political aspect, the conference identified the following main tasks: organization and directing the people, propaganda, and media, the psychological war through connecting the people and the European minorities, financing, and supply, create elected popular councils made up of 5 members that provide civil status, judicial, religious, financial, economic and security affairs. In the military organization field, the conference decided that each group should consist of 11 soldiers among them corporal and two first soldiers, a brigade that consists of 35 soldiers, a section that consists of 110 soldiers and a battalion, which consists of 350 soldiers.

2.3. Inclusion and Genocide War (1958-1960)

This phase is considered as the hardest phases that the Algerian revolution passed through as the French military operations continued and expanded enormously. After that, the command of the French army was assigned to General Charles De-Gaul, who began applying the military project bearing his name to destroy the revolution through closing eastern and western borders with mines and barbed wire electrified, working to annihilate the National Liberation Army in the mountains and countryside, carrying out intense naval air and ground military operations to comb the country and eliminate the Mujahedeen and to recruit more agents and “Harka”, and the most prominent operations were: the Fog operations in Kabilia, Crown operations in Ouancharisse mountains, Microscopic operations in North Constantinois mountains, Precious Stones operations in North Constantinois and the Spark operations in Hodna mountains led by Charles personally. In addition, the asylum of the colonizer to many camps and the displacement of the people to separate them from the National Liberation Army. De-Gaul declared the economic Constantinois project in order to destroy the revolution through the distribution of arable lands to the Algerians, establishing industrial,

residential and educational projects, as well bringing up the idea of “La Paix Des Heros” or “Heroes Peace”, which is simply to go back home and throwing the weapons.

Nevertheless, the attempts of De-Gaul, the Algerian revolution continued with full force and the popular cohesion increased and the evidence most prominent for this is what happened in the mass demonstrations of December 11, 1960. Algerians announced their rejection of the project when the FLN asked for, and in order to confront De-Gaul’s project, the FLN relied on new military strategies such as multiple commando operations inside the cities especially Algiers and relying on ambushes war.

In 1961, the commando operations have been transferred to the heart of France through hitting the economic and military establishments, which supported the Algerian migrants to stand by the revolution in France and the most prominent example of what happened on October 17, 1961.

The revolution had completed its organization and built its structures on September 19, 1958, the FLN officially declared the formation of the interim government of the Algerian Republic led by Farhat Abbas at first, then Youcef Ben Khada in 1961. The leadership of the revolution has been convinced that representation has become necessary at this level towards independence.

On February 8, 1958, the French aviation bombed the village of SidiYoucef and on May 13, 1958, a military coup has occurred in Algiers after the rebel of the extremists’ French officers on the authority of the French government, which was completely unable to destroy the Algerian revolution. De-Gaul called those officers to save the situation since he was primarily a military man, he believed in a military victory and here begins a new phase of the great Algerian revolution.

2. 4. Negotiation and Independence (1960-1962)

General De-Gaulle surrendered after using all means to eliminate the revolution, he was compelled for opening negotiations with the Algerian revolution on the basis of the principle of self-determination, and then he brought the issue up to the French people, who approved it in the referendum on February 8, 1961.

As a quick reaction by the French army leaders, four retired officers declared a rebellion against their government on April 22, 1961. The coup failed in a few days. But before General De-Gaul seriously entered the negotiation process, he had called for talks in Mulan on June 25/29, 1960, as the Algerian government sent two envoys, who are Mr. BenYahia Mohammed El-Seddik and Mr. Boumendjel Ahmed, while the meeting did not succeed because of the inappropriate treatment that the Algerian had in Paris.

The French people delegated to their president the issue of achieving self-determination, the first contacts started between two French envoys one of them is George Pompidou, who became a president instead of General De-Gaul, and two Algerian envoys, who are Ahmed Boumendjel and TayebBoulahrouf.

On April 11, 1961, De Gaul declared that the Algerian Republic will have sovereignty inside and abroad as an attempt for the approximation of views and as a maneuver to impose French conditions on fundamental issues such as the unity of the national territory, in which De Gaul saw the Sahara as a French territory. As a result of those French conditions, the Algerian delegation withdrew considering the Sahara an Algerian territory.

Two months later, the meeting has been renewed on May 20, 1961, the French Evian and Lugin changed the conditions as they replaced the concept of partnership with cooperation while the disagreement remained about the unity of the territory. In September 1961, the negotiations were back, the French government finally declared recognition of the unity of the national territory and the unity of the Algerian people, and that was during the

final stages of negotiation on March 1962. However, the French government did its last efforts to divide the Algerians in order to support the Sahara separation project, but the project has been refused by the people through mass demonstrations in Ouergla.

On March 18, 1962, at 05.30 p.m., the French colonization ended in Algeria through what is called “Evian Agreements”. However, men were assassinated, schools and universities were burned, then it was announced the arrest of the fighting, which came into effect in March 19, 1961, at 12 a.m.

The Interim Government of the Algerian Republic has begun to arrange for the self-determination referendum and the declaration of independence on July 05, 1962.

3. Filmography “The Rebirth from Ashes”

During the era of French colonization, cinema and movies did not exist in Algeria. Most of the Algerian movies were created by Europeans, performing propagandas and stereotypes as they only sought to spread in the world. However, the European cinematic domination ended in the commencement of the Algerian war, when the FLN attain production equipment to make movies. The content of the movies were mainly focused on the colonial era, *The Battle of Algiers* is the most famous movie in this era, and another movie was produced after it in 1967, *The Winds of Aures* by Mohammed Lakhder Hamina.

These anti-colonial cinematic productions was widespread not only in Algeria, it was in almost in all the Third World Countries, in which became so-called “Third Cinema”.

3.1 Third Cinema as a Novice Art

Third Cinema started and appeared during the 1960s and the 1970s, Third Cinema or Third World Cinema is an aesthetic cinematic movement in third world countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia that mainly focuses to evolve political and social issues. It was

invented to portray a revolutionary atmosphere and to deliver the message of violence and terrorism in fact. Also, it can depict class, racial, and gender oppression under European colonialism. Third Cinema influences filmmakers in delivering the reality of the third world in order to show the ugliness of colonial violence and to bring the power of change towards freedom to the oppressed countries.

3.2. Beautiful Enemies: “Third Cinema” and Violence

Third Cinema came as a reaction to First Cinema that reflects its origins to first world nations, in which they deliver the bourgeois values and Hollywood films to the viewers and to the Second Cinema, which refers to European countries, in which they do not tackle political issues. This led to the appearance of a new and a different level of filmography by embracing revolutions against European imperial powers and supporting active-real cinema through fighting First and Second cinema.

According to Sohail Daulatzai in his book of “Black Star, Crescent Moon”, Fanon said: “we must discuss, we must invent” (58), that seeks to discuss decolonization and how Third Cinema was influenced by Fanon’s “The Wretched of The Earth” and started with this quote, in which it provokes to discuss revolutionary obstacles and struggles through inventing the production of films and proposing alternative visions of the past, present, and future. It aims to address the problems that building-nations and the Third World face and to challenge the reaction of the viewers to reflect on by the experience of poverty, torture and different unhuman ways that the imperial powers stated on through the recovery of true experiences of the oppressed to justify their violent actions towards liberation, in which filmmakers try to select a mixture of different genres and styles that suit the message they want to address which explains the diversity.

Chapter Two: A REVOLUTION OR TERRORISM?

France deliberately denied the crimes committed in Algeria, but Algeria has never forgotten the wounds that it claims to seek recognition till now. France not only killed and burned people, but rather committed numerous crimes in horrific ways from assassination, to looting, pillaging, and the destruction of sacred places. Therefore, many historians and writers tackled and they are still tackling the issue of violence in Algeria; Pontecorvo's *The Battle of Algiers* unveils the facts of the violence and terror that France instilled among Algerian's souls and soil. The movie can serve as one of the best examples in which can anyone has an idea about the aggravated use of violence by French colonialism.

This chapter will be thus devoted to a thorough examination that seeks to reveal the hidden proposes of using violence in the movie. Additionally, this study provides a critical analysis of the colonial violence in Algeria, using critics' views and methods. It concludes by showing the revolutionary triumph by the colonized despite the terror and horror they sowed among people.

1. Violence of the Colonizer

Colonialism is tied to control, and France sought to take control in Algeria by using different means. The sections below show two types of these means. First, France attempts to compress the Algerian people through spreading horror. In the same way, it exercises aggravated arms and weapons to eliminate the Algerian resistance.

1.1.The French Illegal Lobbying

“All that the native has seen in his country is that they can freely arrest him, beat him, starve him: and no professor of ethics, no priest has ever come to be beaten in his place, nor to share their bread with him.” (Fanon 44)

This quote shows that Algerians grow up to an atmosphere where shot and fire is the only voice, arresting people at any time, torturing them, killing them, and strangles them in public in front of all of his family and children. Fanon thus, incites people to change and advance to get rid of this tyranny.

Ali's flashbacks in the movie show deprivation, pain, and suffering that he lived during his childhood due to the French villain policy. In the European city, Ali is playing with cards then he runs away from Policeman when the European woman complains about him. Then, Ali runs quickly from police, and a French youth who laughs and pushes Ali on the ground in order the Policeman would catch him, then Ali falls in the street.

“Young Europeans leaning against a shop window stop chattering and look. Ali reaches the corner, crosses the street, passes by the bar. There is a blond youth, about eighteen, who seems to be a student who stretches out his foot and pushes a chair in front of him. Ali stumbles and falls. The youth attempts a laugh, and at the same time moves backward.” (*The Battle of Algiers*12)

This scene shows how the French and "Les Pieds-noires" colonized Algeria with their hatred and treats the Algerians as the "others".

“Many of French individuals bounce on Ali, kicking him with their clenched hands."A mass of people jump on Ali, kicking him and striking him with their fists as long as they please." (*The Battle of Algiers* 13)

The director crosses directly at the beginning of the film on the offense and brutality of French colonialism. When Mujahid shows his weakness, leanness form, and fear that appear on his face while he trembles with severity fear and pain, and that is an implicit expression and a semiological indication of one of France's crimes:

“The Algerian shivers from the cold. He is completely naked. He laboriously puts on the fatigues which are too big for him.” (*The Battle of Algiers* 3)

The torture and abuse that it was practicing against the Algerian people, especially those who have a relationship with the FLN. In addition to the film's expression of the methods of physical torture and brutality that made this Mujahid give up after his impatience with the pain. On the other hand, forcing him to confess, stripping him of his clothes, and forcing him to wear to strip him of all his values and principles in front of his Algerian brothers, distort his silence, and present him as a traitor. This is only to know the hidden place of Ali La Pointe.

Pontecorvo wants to show not only the bad treatment of the French soldiers, policemen, and paratroopers, but also by the French colonizer and "Les Pieds-noirs", and their ways of sowing terror and mockery in the Algerians, using violence and abuse against Algerians. What adds insult to the injury is the arrival of Captain Philip Matteo and his severe methods of torture and abuse, and the practice of all kinds of repression for the sake of elimination of the revolution and this is the goal of the French government to send him to the capital after the success of the revolution. He has a very malicious way to press the civilians, as he plans for every step he takes, that's what the movie shows:

“Mathieu:

... There are 80,000 Arabs in the Casbah. Are they all against us? We know they are not. In reality, it is only a small minority that dominates with terror and violence. This minority is our adversary and we must isolate and destroy it ...” (*The Battle of Algiers*85)

In a villa in the military headquarters, the French colonel, Mathieu, is speaking in front of many officers in which he explains the structure of destroying the FLN and showing a

big map pyramid and graphs that explain his plan. Mathieu's violent and lobbied strategy to find FLN is to hold and obtain the Casbah through strengthen the security forces then interrogating everyone to legitimize their operations and finding an excuse for their oppression while it is, in other words, forcing the Algerians to speak using deadly weapons. Mathieu says:

“We need to have the Casbah at our disposal. We must sift through it ... and interrogate everyone. And here is where we find ourselves hindered by a conspiracy of laws and regulations that continue to be operative as if Algiers were a holiday resort and not a battleground. We have requested a *carte blanche*. But it is very difficult to obtain. Therefore, it is necessary to find an excuse to legitimize our intervention and make it possible. It is necessary to create it ourselves -- this excuse. Unless our adversaries will think of it themselves, which seems to be what they are doing." (*The Battle of Algiers*88)

Among the ugliest images of Mathieu's plans is the infiltration of the police chief into the Casbah neighborhood at night and planting bombs to revenge from the FLN. Hence, Casba's bombs leave many victims and martyrs.

“SPEAKER:

The Prefecture of Algiers states: In the course of these last few days, dozens of assaults have been committed in this city. We have reason to believe that the assailants originate in the Casbah and that they have always found a speedy and easy refuge in the alleys of the Arab quarters. As a result, and to alleviate without delay the insecurity that now reigns in the city, and The Prefecture of Algiers has decided that entrance to the Casbah can only be permitted at those points in the blockade

under military control, where citizens in transit must exhibit their documents at request, and submit to eventual searches."(*The Battle of Algiers*48)

The manifestation of violence also embodies when the colonial authorities tend to impose control over people, especially the residents of the Casbah and the neighborhoods. The director examines one of the scenes to highlight this aspect in a brutal picture of a soldier searches a resident, and he finds out that, he has forgotten his identity papers at home, so the resident starts begging to allow him to return to the house to bring them. However, the soldier refused and insisted that he must transfer to prison with the rest of the suspects.

“The Casbah is being closed off. Every point of entrance, every alley, every street that joins the Casbah and the European quarters has been blocked off with wooden horses and with barbed wire nine feet high. There are also workers, policemen, and soldiers who are working at the barricades. Beyond them, on the other side of the barbed wire, the Algerians seem to be engaged." (*The Battle of Algiers*47-48)

The blockage of the Casbah is not only for Algerians. However, the act of racism can be found here, when the French army search and suspect any Algerian, while the French can pass easily in a very respectful way. Algerians could see the different treatments, which they are treated as criminals.

“At each blockade, there are two ramps, an entrance and an exit to the Casbah. The Algerians and some Europeans crowd around in both directions. The soldiers are wearing fatigues with helmets and machine guns. The Europeans are not requested to show identity papers.” (*The Battle of Algiers*48)

The French paratroopers believe that the Algerian revolutionists are in Casbah. So, they block all the entrances of Casbah with massive security and arms, to facilitate their operations.

Furthermore, France not only pressed Algerian or sowed fear and terror but also tried to sow wrong belief about their culture, making the Algerian suspect their identity. As Fanon argues the ideas and the beliefs that, the colonizer spread among the colonized. He symbolizes the colonizer as the poison that intoxicates the colonized body and culture to eradicate his humanization by turning them into dumb. That reveals in the speeches of General De Gaulle about the "yellow multitude" that unleashes the natives to control them.

On January 28, 1957, the first day of the strike by the Algerian merchants, then the French paratroopers strung in every alley and all Casbah. Then, the attack begins after a signal. The paratroopers started to break down most of the doors, shooting innocent people with their machine guns those who run away and try to protect themselves; a horrible scene, the sound of screams of women and children and machine guns pervades all over the Casbah.

“A signal releases the still forms: the attack begins. Doors are beaten down, shots, screams, rifle fire, machine-gun fire; the doors opened or broken down; the courtyards, the houses, the rooms, invaded; the men who are trying to escape and who protest and try to save themselves.”(*The Battle of Algiers*102)

At the Place of Government, a loudspeaker in a car radio was warning the Algerian people of Casbah that the FLN is trying to prevent them from working through this striking and claiming that the revolutionists are rebellions and terrorists and that France is the mother country that brought them civilization. The loudspeaker said that the people of Casbah should stop the strike and they should not follow the orders of the FLN. The ironic policy that France used, attacking, killing, and looting then trying to persuade people that France is their real country:

“Attention, people of the Casbah! The NLF wants to stop you from working. The NLF forces you to close your shops. Inhabitants of the Casbah, rebel against their

orders. France is your country. France has given you civilization and prosperity: schools, streets, hospitals. People of the Casbah, show your love for your mother country, by disobeying the terrorists' orders. Algerians, return to work!" (*The Battle of Algiers 104*)

Despite the French justification of their violence or persuasion of their policy claiming that they purify Algeria from ignorance and terrorism. They considered terrorists, which is the reason why people revolt to eliminate the French colonization.

1.2. The French Ghosts: The Deadly Weapons

The Algerian war was a conflict the French call it "series of events", claiming through press and radio that they redeem the country from ignorance and terrorists, but in fact, they exercised the real terrorism, using merciless ways and means to destroy Algeria. TallalAsad gives an exemplary of western terrorism. He argues in his book *On Suicide Bombing* concern of terrorism which is called "war" in powerful states, but when it comes to other states it is nothing but flourishing the economy and the culture of the colonized country. In the case of the French colonialism, France claimed to develop Algeria and save it from the uncivilized life that the Ottomans left, covering the exploitation of its natural resources and violating its people. Asad mentions the eminent political and philosopher MichealWalzer's views in his book *Arguing About War* in defining terrorism. For him this definition serves Israel, claiming that the terroristic operations in Israel are a product of evil, only because they are Palestinian. He denied the army and air forces in Gaza, considering them as preemptive self-defense, as he also defends settlers as innocents even if there are several murders among them. That is what France did and still doing, denying the ruthless crimes it did in Algeria. Along with the era of the French colonialism, the French military exercised an excessive use of violence and torture:

“This is how, my dear friend, we must make war against Arabs: kill all men over the age of 15, take all their women and children, load them onto naval vessels, send them to the Marquesas Islands, or elsewhere. In one word, annihilate all who will not crawl beneath our feet like dogs.” (Catalinotto)

This is an excerpt from a letter written to a friend in 15, 1843 by the French Lieutenant-colonel Lucien de Montagnac, an officer in the French expeditionary force in Algeria, giving a glimpse to the "French civilization" they denied. France committed these ethnicities against the Algerians during the war of independence and throughout the colonial period. The first major technique of colonization was through a mass amount of terror and violence. France used the tactic of *razzia* to take control of Algeria. As Jennifer Sessions states "the primary tactical weapons to fight off in Bugeaud's 'total war' was *razzia*, a scorched-earth raid designed to simultaneously destroy the enemy's economic resources and feed the French army". (D. Steel, 9). The French military used this tactic to paralyze the Algerian economy, through setting fire on fields to not buy foods and weapons to fight the French. In William Gallois' book *A History of Violence in the Early Algerian Colony*, he describes the term *razzia*:

“That the French were obsessed with violence- in their thoughts, acts, and record- in the first two decades of the life of the colony is quite apparent not only across the documentary archives but also in the mutation of the French language, where the term '*razzia*' included a level of brutality.” (9)

This shows the excessive brutality and terror that the French practiced, the term *razzia* was found in the region of Algeria, yet French took the term and involved it to more violence and destruction on the Algerian people. Add to this, the French military gave rewards and encouragements to any soldier who launched *razzia* operations against Algeria.

The second technique, France relied on deadly weapons against the Algerian people, to eliminate the Algerian revolution. The French army used all kinds of internationally prohibited weapons without being concerned about the negative effects they would have on the Algerian people, and among the most important of these weapons was the chemical weapon, which was mostly formed from deadly poisonous gases and incendiary explosives. The deadly napalm is the other deadly weapon, which the Algerian villages and towns suffered, and even the mountains did not spare from it because they were a fortified shelter for the Mujahideen who did not in turn spared its incendiary bombs. Besides, another more dangerous weapon, which is the nuclear weapon, and the most powerful weapon at that time known to humankind.

In *My Battle of Algiers*, an eminent historian and biographer recount his own experiences in the brutal Algerian War. His memoir, Morgan relives the harrowing conflict in which accuses Arabs as terrorists, neglecting his vicious crime he commits in Algeria. He kills any prisoner who does not talk, even his articles as a journalist reports his struggle to pull the Arab rebellions, while he commits several bombings, assassinations, torture, show trials, executions, and the deliberate humiliation of prisoners. The movie depicts the brutal torture they expose to the Algerian people, using devastating tools as they mentioned earlier. That is particularly shown in the scene when they behead an Algerian prisoner while his fellows watching:

“The condemned man bends. The executioner places his neck in the right position, adjusts it, turns his head a bit, then pushes his body forward. He releases the mechanism. The blade falls, the head rolls. There is no longer a chorus. No one is chanting.” (*The Battle of Algiers* 18)

Zabana, the condemned man, strolls toward the French machine of torture, the guillotine, and the French colonization was the first to use the guillotine against Algerians, which is absolutely against humanity. At the same time, there is an Imam who reads Quran for Zabana. Here, Pontecorvo wants to depict and to show how French colonization is terroristic and uses horrible ways of torture, and at the same time, it tries to hide these acts of violence through mercy, as they believe, by bringing an Imam to innocent Algerian revolutionist. Another scene In Rue Marengo, the French Policemen shoot an Algerian revolutionist by a machine-gun and kill him after an attack in the police station at 9.45 a.m.

“A military jeep arrives from the opposite direction, crashes into the car, and blocks its escape. An Algerian flees and is pursued. Another descends from the auto with his hands raised. The soldiers shoot and kill him.” (*The Battle of Algiers* 44)

Moreover, Larbi Ben Mhidi explains this immensity use of violence in a scene. During his interrogation with the press in Prefect's office, a press hall, there are many journalists and two paratroopers behind Ben Mhidi with their machine guns while he is tied with handcuffs on his wrists and ankles, but a smile of dignity in his face. The French journalist starts to ask him and wondering how the FLN uses women in the revolution by putting bombs in baskets. Ben Mhidi's response catches everyone's attention and says that France is using an ugly dirty war with their deadly weapons and kills thousands of innocent people through dropping napalm bombs on unarmed villages; he adds that it would be easier for the Algerian revolutionists to use French weapons rather than small baskets:

“And doesn't it seem to you even more cowardly to drop napalm bombs on unarmed villages, so that there are thousand times more innocent victims? Of course, if we had your airplanes it would be a lot easier for us. Give us your bombers, and you can have our baskets.” (*The Battle of Algiers*122)

From this perspective, there are other secondary tools France used during the interrogation of the prisoners as electro torture, nippers to cut their fingers, water-based torture which is head boarding, and so many other tools. In Henri Alleg's *The Question*, he recalls his imprisonment within the French paratrooper's prison. Alleg discusses the French troop's use of electrotherapy on him by stating that:

“He attached one of them to the lobe of my right ear and the other to a finger on the same side. Suddenly, I leaped in my bonds and shouted with all my might. C- Had just sent the first electric charge through my body. A flash of lightning exploded next to my ear and I felt my heart racing. I struggled, screaming, and stiffened myself until the straps cut into my flesh. All the while the shocks controlled by C-, magneto in hand, followed each other without interruption.” (*The Battle of Algiers* 200)

This draws a picture of how the French paratroopers used electro torture, putting electric cables in different parts of the body. As the movie shows:

“An Algerian is lying down on the table, his arms and ankles bound with belts. In the form of a wheel, an iron bar in the curvature of his knees, his ankles tied to his wrists. Electrical wires wrenched from their outlets, a generator with a crank, extended pliers with their prongs open wide, the tops of the wires held between two prongs, the pliers applied to a naked body, the most sensitive parts: lips, tongue, ears, nipples, heart, sexual organs.....Faucets, tubing, buckets, funnels, a mouth forced open, held open, with a wooden wedge, tubing in the mouth, rags scattered around, water, a belly that is swelling ... ” (*The Battle of Algiers* 127)

This scene, torture scene, is a great example that Pontecorvo wants to address the Western colonialism through the movie of "The Battle of Algiers". Words are insufficient

according to Pontecorvo so that he believes that the art of filmography can portray violence and oppression more than any other written work.

2. Violence of the Colonized

[To] shoot down a European is to kill two birds with one stone, to destroy an oppressor and the man he oppresses at the same time: there remain a dead man, and a free man; the survivor, for the first time, feels a national soil under his foot." (Sartre 22).

Violence is not limited to the French paratroopers; Algerians used violence against the French to free their country and to gain their dignity. They realized that colonial oppression can only be confronted by the same oppression. The movie shows the Algerians and the FLN reactions to the French brutal rule when eventually broke the shell and practice several types of violence to decolonize.

2.1- Rehabilitation: Decolonization as Violent Phenomenon

“The naked truth of decolonization evokes for us the searing bullets and bloodstained knives which emanate from it. For if the last shall be first, this will only come to pass after a murderous and decisive struggle between the two protagonists. That affirmed intention to place the last at the head of things, and to make them climb at a pace (too quickly, some say) the well-known steps which characterize an organized society, can only triumph if we use all means to turn the scale, including, of course, that of violence.” (Fanon37)

People must unit and confront violence vis violence to gain their dignity and freedom. Fanon evokes the necessity of violence to decolonize, as the only process to free the mind and create a new man as well as a new country. Once one uses violence against the

colonizer, people would revolt and break the chains of oppression. He thus, legitimates violence in self-defense, arguing that the only way to get freedom is through using violence.

The Battle of Algiers shows the Algerian decolonization, when the FLN awakens the population, spreading awareness through radio and letters. People respond to the appeal and start small skirmishes, killing and stealing guns from the French soldiers who walk in the streets. It is shown in a police station in the Casbah, in Chemin Ain-Zeboudja, at 11.10 a.m., a group of five Algerian men talks together loudly, then they enter to the police officers, four of them enter to a room with the soldier and the other, who wears an Arabic cloth "Gandoura" with "Amama" on his head, stay with the second French soldier in the hole. Then, a voice of shoot guns is heard from the room, the old man with an Arabic outfit shoot the other policeman. The five Algerians run away from the police officer after taking their guns:

“The policeman calls a colleague and tells him to accompany the Algerians. Four of them go with the policeman, while another remains in the waiting room, saying that it is better because he is afraid of losing his control.

Then he begins to explain the reasons for the quarrel: it concerns a will. The old man is his grandfather, but he has recently remarried. Then from inside is heard...

MACHINE-GUN FIRE.

The policeman reacts quickly and tries to draw his gun. But the Algerian is faster and fires point-blank. The four reappear. One of them is wounded. All of them are armed with revolvers, and carry at their sides a machine gun and two sub-machine guns that they have taken from the armory. Other cries and shots are heard behind them.

All five of them run out in haste.” (*The Battle of Algiers*43)

The next quote portrays an Algerian youth who attacked a policeman using a knife in which he plunges it in policeman's neck, in Rue D'Isly, on June 20, 1956, at 10.32 a.m.

“The guard pretends to be interested in the photographic equipment which is on display, then moves on. The guard opens his mouth wide to shout, but he cannot. The Algerian hurls himself on top of the soldier, opens his holster, and takes his pistol, then gets up pulling the gun with him. The gun is fastened by a leather cord. The cord gets tangled in the gashed neck of the guard. The Algerian pulls the cord a second time, desperately. He regains his control, picks up the knife which is lying on the ground, and cuts the leather cord, thus freeing the pistol.” (*The Battle of Algiers* 40-41)

Another attack in Rue Philippe, near a bar, there is an Algerian man who meets an Algerian elder woman that wears a traditional custom, Haik; and not far away, there is a French policeman, who has his breakfast while he reads the newspaper. The two Algerians meet each other, they grasp, and the man looks at her breast among the folds of her veil. He finds a gun that is hung by a line and snatches it. He points from over her shoulders, then he shoots the soldier, he tried to resist but he could not and the blood-covered all his body, then he falls. The Algerian man covers up the gun within the woman's "Haik" and separate from each other:

“They are at ten or twelve feet distance from the bar. At a table, there is a French soldier having coffee with cream, croissant, and an open newspaper. The Algerian continues to embrace the old woman and aims from above her shoulders. Only one shot; the newspaper rips, the soldier tries to get up again, his face full of blood. Then he collapses on the table. The Algerian has hidden the revolver in the woman's veil. The two separate from their embrace. They seem terrified and surprised and move

away from each other in different directions while the people are rushing about and SHOUTING.” (*The Battle of Algiers*49-50)

In another police officer, in Rue Marengo, at 15.30 a.m., two French soldiers are talking to each other, then a black car gets attached to the police station and an Algerian young man shoots the soldiers.

“Two policemen are chatting in front of the entrance. A black Renault is passing by at a walking speed, then slows down almost to the point of halting completely. The right door opens and there is a burst of machine-gun fire. One of the policemen has been, hit, and grabs the other so as not to fall.

Another burst of...

MACHINE-GUN FIRE.

The two policemen fall together.” (*The Battle of Algiers*43)

Sartre strongly defends the Algerian revolution by emphasizing individual freedom and inciting people to decolonize themselves and their country; creating free men from fighting against the colonizer. For him, every colonized in the war should take the responsibility to free his country and get his dignity by force, to get rid of the colonizer's torture and injustice. Guerillas launch military tactics to revenge, following the hit and run policy, also the FLN supports the “Guerillas war” in the revolution, using different methods and techniques such as a hit and run violent policy: Breaking into enemy centers, barracks and economic institutions; urban warfare and using ambushes. The guerrillas drive a car and attack the French conventional forces shoot then they run away or hide.

Algerians use violence as a reaction to the tyranny and destruction that French left in Algerian's soul and soil. Violence is the only way to gain freedom and to eradicate French

colonialism and its villain policy. That is what Ben M'Hidi tells Ali when Jafar arrives at Ali's apartment and Ali shows him a hole he made inside the wall of his place to hide if the apartment is searched by French police. Jafar orders Ali to take Si Ben M'Hidi a respected FLN leader to the mosque. When alone M'Hidi asks Ali what he thinks of the strike. Ali believes it will work but the French will try everything to break it. M'Hidi says:

“They will do more than that because we've given them an opportunity. Every strike will be a recognizable enemy. The French will take the offensive. Jafar says you weren't in favor of the strike.

Ali says, "No, I wasn't. Because we were ordered not to use arms."

M'Hidi says, "Acts of violence don't win wars. Neither wars nor revolutions. Terrorism is useful as a start. But then, the people themselves must act. That's the rationale behind the strike. To mobilize all Algerians to gather our strength. It's hard enough to start a revolution...even harder to sustain it...and hardest of all to win it. But it's only afterward once we've won, that the real difficulties begin.” (*The Battle of Algiers* 100-101)

The conversation depicts the plan that the FLN does to gain the revolution. Fanon highlights the importance of political parties in admonishing people and the way of negotiation with the colonizer, "The dialogue between these political parties and colonialism is never broken down"(52). He points out to different negotiations about the Algerian matter; for an instant after a long negotiation General De Gaulle promises the Algerian people to give them freedom and it ends up with illusion. Also, after the capitulation of Monsieur Guy Mollet in 1956, FLN declared in a leaflet that "colonialism only loosens its hold when the knife at its throat". This declaration profoundly touched Algerians' hearts, realizing that colonialism is a violent state that can only be confronted with greater violence to overthrow it.

2.2. FLN as a Symbol of Revolution

FLN broke out on October 31 and November 1954 due to the severe oppression that the Algerians confronted. Countless prisoners and martyrs, and excruciate situations. Therefore, the FLN's resistance turned to indignant political and armed resistance against the French rule and its military forces. Resistance movements were a major part of constant violence within colonization. The FLN considers themselves to be the representatives of the Algerians and they seek to deliver their voices to the UN to gain international opinion, and every Algerian by their side, believing that anyone stands with them, is willing to fight for them and the independence of the country. If any Algerian is against them is considered Harki who follows the people that killed and tortured his family, so that any Harki must be punished for his actions. That is shown in the movie when Ali looks for Hassan El-Blidi, a traitor, when finally confronting him he tells:

“The Front is sentenced to death

And shoots him down.

He tells El-Blidi's body-guards, "Don't try it! Take a good look. Things will change in the Casbah! We'll clean this place up." (*The Battle of Algiers*35-36)

On the other hand, FLN makes many plans to defeat the French army. Several tactics end up with succession, others fail. The Chinese author Sun Tzu in her essay *Art of War*, incites people to not only know themselves but rather to know the enemy, how to deal with it, and most importantly recognize the enemy capabilities. As she adds: "If you want to overcome your enemy you must your effort against his power resistance, which can be expressed as the product of two inseparable factors, viz. The total means at his disposal and strength of his will. The extent of his disposal through not exclusively—of figures and should be measurable. (Panet77).Pontecorvo shoots the tension of the FLN café wars as a

revenge of the French bombs. FLN trains women to plant bombs, the operation is very successful. However, that might capture innocent people, from different ages; for the FLN it is the only means to take revenge from the French.

The FLN's resistance reaches to have a great resonance despite the deaths and the horrific terrorist attacks that French launches. The movie shows the FLN reaction as they face violence through violence to plea the French role. Fanon argues that any revolution requires violence, even if it costs a life, at least it breaks the chains of oppression and gain a free country. He states, "National liberation, national renaissance, the restoration of national-hood to the people, commonwealth: whatever may be the headings used or the new formulas introduced, decolonization is always a violent phenomena". In this case, FLN continues attacking, in the Municipal Stadium, on February 10, 1957:

“The municipal stadium is crowded with people. There is a football game between two European teams. It is almost the end of the first half. From above to the right of the guest box, there is a very loud explosion. Strips of the flesh are hurled into the air. Thick, white smoke ... There are screams of terror. The people try to move away in haste. They are shoving, pushing, bumping into one another ... Then, calm returns. The sirens of the ambulances are heard. The stretcher, the dead carried away, scores of wounded.” (*The Battle of Algiers*102)

After the operation of café wars, FLN support people to strike and close all shops. Yet, France presses and oppresses people to find FLN members. Colonel Mathieu set up a violent series of actions. Consequently, FLN starts to reach its decline when Mathieu catches Ben M'Hidi, and others run away. After the suicide of ben M'Hidi, another suicide attack trigger the European city, two boys drive the French ambulance, collide it to a crowded place.

“In the driver's cab, there are two Algerian boys. Their hair is curly, their shirts old and torn. They are sweating; their eyes wide open, staring. The one who is driving barely reaches the height of the steering wheel. He clutches it desperately. The other has a machine gun. He makes a remark in Arabic shouting to be heard above the siren. The driver takes a hand off the steering wheel, places it on the dashboard, and tries all the switches until he finds the one for the headlights. The high beams. The other, meanwhile, is now on his knees on the seat. He is leaning out the open window to his waist, and he begins to shoot. The pictures succeed one another in a dizzy rhythm; surprise, terror, someone falls.

SHOTS.SIREN." (*The Battle of Algiers*133)

Another scene that shows the violent process, in Impasse St. Vincent-de-Paul, in Ramel's house, on August, 26, when Mathieu catches Ramel and Mourad, asks them to surrender and promises them to have a fair trial. They ask him to write this promise, while they prepare a hand- made bomb:

“Mourad shows his companion the two large time-bombs that are on the floor in front of him. He takes one, begins to prepare it, and regulates the mechanism. At the same time, he tells Ramel in Arabic to go find the basket. Ramel crawls past the doors which are all closed and asks for a basket. A door opens and an old woman appears. She hands him a basket with its cord rolled up.

Mourad:

A newspaper too, or a piece of paper ... Ramel brings him the basket and newspaper. Mourad has loaded the time-bomb mechanism, and the tic-tac sound is sharp and clear. Now he has to move the second hand. Mourad's hands do not tremble; his glance is attentive, concentrating. Ramel watches him without saying a word; his fear

is obvious.[...] Mourad smiles at him and mumbles something in Arabic, a phrase that he doesn't manage to finish, for now, is heard -- the explosion." (*The Battle of Algiers* 136-137)

All these attacks awaken the Algerian population to launch several tactics as they are mentioned earlier. The FLN draws a picture of how the colonizer's heinous and violent cycle comes to an end. Years later, the struggle for independence had to be fought. Algerians come out of their silence, protesting and asking for their freedom.

3- Brides of Death

The movie shows the horrible violence, an immense amount of people die, and among them women who play an important role in achieving independence. Women could handle dangerous missions during the war, breaking the traditions of patriarchy, pulling the dress of passive victims, and holding the flame of resistance for the sake of their national freedom. Despite their chief role they played in the revolution; their contribution was ignored regarding to women.

3.1- Women Position during War

“If a man carried food to the armed fighters at great personal risk, he was called a 'fighter'. A woman doing the same was called a 'helper'. If a man risked his life to hide armed fighters or wanted political leaders, he was called a 'fighter'. A woman doing the same was simply performing the female task of 'nurturing'. Nor was she considered a fighter when she collected fuel or food for the fighters, or carried their guns, or guided them through the mountains. She was merely helping the men.” (Helie-Lucas 106)

Algerian revolution was not limited to men only as some claimed; women were included in sacrificing their souls for the sake of independence and breathing the air of freedom. Algerian women played a significant and active role in the war. They could rescue the revolutionists in providing food, shelter, medicine or working nurses, and even struggling as a soldier. Regardless of the entire violent and cruel struggle, they confronted and they continued fighting:

“The woman does not merely knit for or mourn the soldier. The Algerian woman is at the heart of the combat. Arrested, tortured, raped, shot down, she testifies to the violence of the occupier and his inhumanity.” (Fanon 66).

Women in the movie go to terrifying missions. They stand shoulder to shoulder with men, hiding from place to place to deliver guns and letters to the revolutionists. In Rue Philippe. 8:35 a.m.:

“An Algerian woman walks along the sidewalk. She is elderly, fat, and she wears a traditional costume with her face veiled. She walks slowly toward a bar, which has its tables outside, and already some customers. Near the bar, leaning against a wall, there is an Algerian who now begins to move and goes to meet the old woman. They greet one another with much warmth, like a mother and son who have not seen each other for a long time. They embrace, and the man searches at her breast among the folds of her veil. He finds a revolver which is hung by a cord, and grabs it.” (*The Battle of Algiers* 49)

Pontecorvo renders homage of three women: Halima, Hasiba, and Djamila. These women take the responsibility for fighting against French colonization. The three women are genuine activists in the movie, leaving their homes and families to join the military forces of the FLN. They launch bombs in French conventional occupations to take revenge from them.

Pontecorvo depicts the scenes of women struggle expressively, though they are silent. Their triumphant scene is when they dress like the French to disguise bombs in the French occupations, as revenge for the Algerian martyrs that France kills through bombs. The trio could act professionally to hide the bombs and to adopt the French culture and language, ending up with successful revenge and bomb the French coffees and bars.

In Amy L.Hubbell's article "Scandalous Memory: Terrorism Testimonial from the Algerian War" (from the University of Queensland). Amy centralizes her views on Zohra Drif, one of the three women, who planted bombs in French conventional places in Pontecorvo's *The Battle of Algiers*. Amy describes Drif as a national symbol of resistance in Algeria, the heroine of the FLN movement during the war. However, Amy advocates the victims of Drif's bomb in the Milk Bar. She argues that the victims were highly affected and traumatized by the event; there were three dead people and others injured. The article is a recount of the two victims, who lost part of their bodies. Amy's article examines the traumatic memory of those victims, and how it became arguable in France at that time. Nevertheless, this article is limited to only one woman among the three women, who have participated in *The Battle of Algiers*; this can undervalue the other women. On the other hand, Amy discusses the French victims of the Drif's bomb, neglecting to consider the uncountable Algerian victims during the war. Her bomb in the milk bar is a reaction to the first French bombs, taking revenge on the Algerian victims and confronting violence vis-a-vis violence.

“Simultaneously, all of them move toward the hiding place. Mahmoud's wife appears at the door. Her face is despairing, but she moves carefully, quickly, precisely. She closes the door. She puts the coffee cups back on the tray and hides everything in the sink. She goes to the other side of the curtain. Ali is entering the hiding place. The other three are already inside. Ali pushes the movable piece of the wall toward him, and the woman helps him. Then, she takes a can from the night table; it is full of

plaster mixed with coal dust. The woman spreads the paste in the joints between the bricks of the wall and the closure of the hiding place.” (*The Battle of Algiers* 147-148)

After the operation of the bomb, the French army launches quests for the FLN members and the three women. They press a resident Sadek to confess about the revolutionists' place. When Mahmoud's wife sees the police, she hides anything that can reveal the revolutionists. She indeed sacrifices her life for the sake of hiding them. In the movie, it is apparent that women are excellent in hiding.

3.2- Haik as Symbol of Resistance

[Djamila] removes the veil from her face. Her glance is hard and intense; her face is expressionless. The mirror reflects a large part of the room: it is a bedroom. She undresses, removing her traditional costume, and is wearing a slip ... There is Hasiba who is pouring a bottle of peroxide into a basin. However, there is no gaiety; no one is speaking. Only silence emphasizes the detailed rhythm of their transformation... Djamila's lightweight European dress of printed silk...

Hasiba has wrapped her hair in a towel to dry it ... a pair of blue jeans, a striped clinging tee-shirt” (*The Battle of Algiers*66-67)

The veil is a symbol of resistance and culture preservation. They concealed the guns beneath the Haik and removed it to resemble the French, and resumed wearing it once the latter ruse became apparent. For Fanon, the removal of the veil's previous act is a "technique of camouflage" when women disguise professionally and over their timidity without over-do. Subsequently, they unveil their bodies and cut their braids to adopt the French culture to launch military operations. Fanon conceptualizes this as a symbol of patriotism, and the removal of the veil is an act of mimicry when women imitate the French and adopting their

cultural habits and values to succeed in carrying guns and bombs putting them in the French occupation:

“Soldier: I would like to search for you, Miss...

For an instant, Hasiba is dismayed; then, she glances down at her clinging shirt and pants.

Soldier: Not here. There are too many people.

Hasiba: But you don't understand. I was saying that there is nothing to search for.

Second Soldier: Are you going for a swim, Miss ... all by yourself?

Hasiba: No, with some friends.

She could foxily disguise and passes the crowd”. (*The Battle of Algiers*70-71)

The scene shows an outstanding actress with careful imitation. However, the film does not present unveiled women as being in a more 'authentic' state, as does 'Algeria Unveiled' by Fanon; rather, the captivation of the women by their mirrored images and their stilted movements outside suggest that the unveiled body is in a strategically inauthentic state: as war machines. France takes advantage of this, persuading Algerian women to be dependent and unveiled: implicitly exploit them and tempting them to rebel against the Algerian rule. France failed due to women's consciousness and patriotism. The Algerian poet Malek Alloula argues that France sought to unveil l'Algérienne when they hired Algerian poor women and forced them by land resettlement to migrate to the urban centers, where they treat them as "other" or often they become prostitutes (Alloula and Woodhull 17-38). This Algérienne, in Alloula's interpretation, is a domesticated other, "an impoverished version of the original" that stands in for a radical and unverifiable Other (Algérienne) (Alloula 18).

Even though France attempts to westernize Algerian women, they resist and continue wearing Haik, protesting, combating, and sacrificing to gain independence. That is

particularly shown in the two last scenes of Pontecorvo's *The Battle of Algiers* when Hassiba sacrifices her life by refusing to surrender to the French army. Other scene when women emerge from a crowd calling for *istiqlal* (independence) and "*l'Algérie pour les Algériens*" (Algeria for Algerians), brandishing the national flag and wearing a Haik.

Conclusion

This dissertation has demonstrated the issue of violence in postcolonial Algeria. During colonization, French authorities and military forces had practiced an excessive use of violence to destroy and dehumanize the Algerians, as well as to exterminate their revolution. The way France colonized Algeria only made the indigenous Algerian people build up anger. Consequently, Algerian people revolted against the French vicious role, using violence, political groups, and the FLN military defense. The only way to accurately decolonize from a violent colonizer was to violently decolonize from the French. There is no alternative way, colonization and decolonization are violent processes, the colonized whom violence is imposed on him cannot turn the other cheek, he is the child of terror. This ferocious war is reflected in several works of post-colonialism, particularly through media, which could depict colonialism in its real image.

Pontecorvo's *The Battle of Algiers* is the most influential movie in history, which Pontecorvo called it "people's war". Pontecorvo unveils the realities of French colonialism, presenting the different use of violence between FLN and the French army, different means, different arms, and different strategies. Pontecorvo succeeds in portraying the movie, accessing the minds of both audience and authors, in which they have an idea about the terror and the horror that was instilled in postcolonial Algeria.

The first chapter of this research provided a socio-historical base for the analysis of the selected movie. It summarized the socio-historical background of French colonialism in Algeria as well as the theoretical glance of the postcolonial approach. Likewise, we consolidate the paper with the authors' views and theories, which analyzed the Algerian revolution and took apart the dual use of violence at that time.

Fanon and Sartre urge the importance of violence as the only way to decolonize and to get rid of the subjugation the colonizer. Apparently, the colonizer exercised an immense amount of torture, so both authors encourage the colonized to revolt in the same way the colonizer conquered the land; besides, following the policy of what is taken by force can only be restored by force. Additionally, Cabral evokes the African struggle with the Western colonialism. Thus, he incites colonized people to resist and fight against them. He also justifies violence to gain national liberation.

Moreover, postcolonial feminism is included to give high regard to women, which postcolonial authors did not give. Although women were oppressed and subjugated, several writers gave voice to women and showed their position within various aspects. Most importantly, women provided tremendous help during the war, whether in Algeria or other colonized countries. Thus, Neither history nor people can neglect the women's sacrifice as well as their stand by men all along the colonialism era.

The second part of this chapter tried to depict the History of the revolution in Algeria between 1954 and 1962. This period has seen a very important changing point in Algerian history, in which the stream of the revolution has changed from a pacific to the use of violence. The mission of violence started on November 1, 1954. It also has seen four phases:

The Outbreak of the War (1954-1956)

Organization and Supply (1956-1958)

Inclusion and Genocide War (1958-1960)

Negotiation and Independence (1960-1962).

The third section of chapter one discussed the importance of "Third Cinema" during the twentieth century in third world countries that were mainly influenced by Fanon's "The

Wretched of the Earth", and it appeared as a reaction to first and second cinema that portray only the first-class lifestyle and values. It was invented in order to show violence and popular revolution, horror, and terror in the colonized societies made by European colonization.

The second chapter attempted to give a thorough analysis to the movie, in which violence is a common phenomenon between the Algerian and the French. The selected movie shows the French terrible arms that it used to demolish the Algerians and their rebellious movements. The French army practiced various political tactics to keep the colony as part of the French empire, neglecting the harmful effects on the Algerians. However, Algerians did not remain silent, as they tried to get their liberation in a violent way. The movie shows how the FLN raise awareness along with the continuous French repression that worsened by the genocides. Consequently, FLN launch guerillas warfare against the French forces. Their struggle did not exclude women, who fight for them and for independence.

Pontecorvo depicts women's conflict in different fields; they were the mothers, sisters, wives, and soldiers. Despite the oppression they faced and the operations they did, they succeeded in fighting the French. On the other hand, it is apparent that the veil is an important element in the revolution; it covers women as well as their resistance. Female participation in the war etched on the memory of Algerians that is why they deserve a high status in Algerian history.

Pontecorvo's outstanding portrayal of the long conflict fought by the Algerian people for their independence can be a great example of postcolonial struggle by the Western powers. The period was disastrous for the colonized people. Thus, the use of violence in the part of the colonised is justified due to the devastated and vicious life they lived under the coloniser rule. Spivak has rightfully noted that the questions raised by the decolonisation of Algeria would

be impossible for the French to ignore even decades later (Aton 210). Despite the French tyranny in Algeria, its triumph will always be memorable.

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Appendices



- 1- A death in a narrow street of Casbah. French paratroopers block the street and prevent the Algerians from moving to find the revolutionist.



- 2- In October 8, 1957, Ali La Pointe, Hassiba Ben Bouali, Mahmoud Bouhamidi and Omar Le Petit refused to the surrender and chose to be bombed by French paratroopers.



3- In September 30, 1956, Djamila, Hassiba and Zohra meeting in Kader's house before the explosion's operation.



4- A scene of physical torture using electricity practised by French paratroopers.



5- A scene depicting waterboarding.

ملخص

قام جيلوبونتيكورفو بإخراج الفيلم الإيطالي الجزائري "معركة الجزائر" عام 1966. حيث سلط الضوء على العنف المتبادل بين الاستعمار الفرنسي وبين الثوار الجزائريين. صور المخرج وحشية العنف المستعمل من طرف الاستعمار الفرنسي ضد كل الجزائريين وخاصة ضد أعضاء جبهة التحرير الوطني في القصة. كما بين وأبرز دور المرأة الجزائرية في أهمية نجاح الثورة التحريرية خلال الفترة 1954-1962. يهدف هذا البحث الى دراسة طريقة جيلوبونتيكورفو في اظهار اختلاف استعمال العنف عبر فيلمه "معركة الجزائر" بين فرنسا والجزائر معتمدا على احداث حقيقة في منطقة القصة بمساعدة شاهد العيان ياسف سعدي. كما يحاول هذا البحث الى مناقشة القضايا الأخلاقية والفلسفية المتعلقة بالعنف والمقاومة باستخدام الفيلم كدليل ونقطة محورية.

لتحقيق هذا الهدف، تستخدم الدراسة الحالية نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار. لا يتعاطف البحث مع أي أعمال عنف في الفيلم، لكن همه الأساسي هو توسيع فهمنا لجو الرعب خلال معركة الجزائر وكيف تم فرض العنف على المستعمر البائس. باختصار، يجب أن نوضح كيف حرض تاريخ الاستعمار بالفعل على حلقة مفرغة من العنف على المدى الطويل وعملية التحرير هي جزء منها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: العنف، المستعمر، المستعمر، الثورة، الإرهاب، المرأة.