Ici on noie les algériens: France's Repression of the 1961 Algerian Massacre

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“Ici on noie les algériens:” France’s Repression of the
1961 Algerian Massacre

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By Brianna Starnes

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for completion
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Abstract

“Ici on noie les algériens:” France’s Repression of the 1961 Algerian Massacre

On the 17th of October 1961, 30,000 Muslims gathered throughout the streets of Paris in the peaceful protest of a curfew, which had been imposed in 1961 on all French Muslims from Algeria as an attempt to prevent any further FLN movement. Orders were given to arrest and suppress the protesters by any means. At the end of the night, bodies were found in the Seine. The victims were Algerian. The police announced that 14,000 men had been arrested, 200 men injured, and only 2 killed. Around 200 Algerian men were never heard from and corpses began appearing in the Seine. Yet the police never addressed the bodies. The truth was hidden. The police covered up the extent of the violence, and the French public overlooked the state discrimination that passed through their streets. In the past 60 years, information and documents have slowly resurfaced concerning the “forgotten” event. Why did members of the French state and the French police react callously to a call for peace? What led France to repress such injustices? How did information from the event resurface? I will investigate the methods of how France’s state repressed a moment in history that affected thousands of lives. This thesis will pursue the issue of how a nation could ignore the injustices inflicted upon their people by their leaders. The research will be based on qualitative primary and secondary sources that present accurate information on the events and range from days after the event to 50 years after. The events will be examined to understand why they were a taboo and why they were given such an extent of power as to be hidden from the nation and the world. The issue of state violence shows up in different points throughout French history and the Algerian massacre is not a stand-alone event of repression. While moments of October 17th, 1961 will forever remain lost due to repressive acts by the French state, a collective narrative has developed from the anarchives (unofficial archives) and official archives built by a process of recovery.
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<tr>
<td>FLN</td>
<td>Front de Libération nationale</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAS</td>
<td>Organisation armée secrète</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGP</td>
<td>Syndicat général de la police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPRA</td>
<td>Gouvernement provisoire de la République</td>
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<td>algérienne</td>
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INTRODUCTION

Decades have passed and memories have faded, but the forgotten Algerian massacre in Paris grows ever more relevant. Years of colonial rule indoctrinated the French military with harsh tactics of governing, following them to the streets of Paris. The progression of the Algerian war only increased tensions between the two nations and provoked outbreaks of violence. On October 17, 1961, FLN demonstrators marched in peaceful solidarity against the discrimination of the Parisian police in boycott of a night curfew that had been imposed upon Algerians. The intention of peace quickly dissolved as violent tactics by the police wreaked havoc upon the demonstrators. Arrests and deaths irrevocably changed the lives of thousands of Algerians; yet the state quickly overlooked the displacement and massacre of a people, moving on to focus more on growing France’s political and economic position in the world. Instead of the demonstrations bringing political change, the police only further stifled the voice of the Algerian people in France.

This thesis seeks to examine the events of October 17th, 1961 through a narrative on the historical events leading up to 1961, the planning of the FLN demonstrations, the days of the FLN demonstrations, and the decades following the event. I will discuss the reaction of the police and the public to understand their role in the repression of memory that has prevented the story of October 17, 1961 from being openly shared and acknowledged. Furthermore, the release of stories and documents will be examined to determine the extent of the state’s complicity in the event and why the revealing of events
happened when they did. The Algerian massacre impacted thousands of people, yet the event became a taboo topic by the very people involved in its undertaking.

This thesis is composed of four chapters. The chapters present the story of the events of October 17, 1961, leading chronologically to the present. Chapter one approaches the relationship of France and Algeria from the beginning of their colonial relationship. This provides valuable information for understanding the foundation of superiority vs. inferiority instituted by France upon the Algerian people. Early on, the French state demonstrated the approach of repressing memory, neglecting to address incidents of violence that took place under their rule during colonialism. This is where the repression of memory is seen to originate. Chapter one brings us to the beginning of the Algerian war and the outbreak of political violence in France perpetrated by the FLN and the OAS. Chapter two is the narrative of the weeks leading up to the days of, and the days after the FLN demonstrations. This chapter seeks to provide thorough information on the event, presenting the depth of the state’s role in the violence, which unfolded the days and weeks after the massacre. This chapter looks at the reactions of the police, the public, and the press to understand where the repression of memory develops. In chapter three, three primary sources will be analyzed to provide examples of the different ways in which “memory” of the event arose. These primary sources are a satirical newspaper, a fictional book, and a documentary. These sources come to surface at different moments in the decades following 1961. The Conclusion will look back over the resurfacing of stories and documents since 1961 specifically what makes these years significant and what has been recovered of the memory repressed by the French state.
CHAPTER ONE: Remembering the Ties between Colonial France and Algeria

(Historical Context)

In 1830, France began its colonial take-over of Algeria, leading to the restricting domination that France would seek to enforce upon the people and country of Algeria for the next 150 years. The authority of the French government infiltrated every aspect of the Algerian life, denying the social, political, and economic spheres. Algeria and France founded their relationship on superiority versus inferiority with France as the dominating nation, who sought to control the lives of Algerians. After the 1830s, France claimed the Algerian territory as an extension of France in which Algerians were regulated as French subjects. Labeled as “French subjects,” Algerians were not included in the full French membership, essentially remaining without citizenship for decades. The French sought assimilation, asking Algerians to forget their ethnicity and for males to eventually become French citizens. Yet such citizenship was not granted to Algerian males. The French officials rationed that this decision was a “temporary” act of exclusion that would be resolved as time passed, eventually providing Algerian males citizenship. In the hopes of assimilation, French guidance established French law and rulings over local Algerian ruling by decrees in 1854 and in 1866. The French colonial occupation lasted

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2 Shepard, Todd, 21-22.
3 Shepard, Todd, 26.
until 1962 when Algeria attained its independence after eight years of brutal fighting against imperial France. Yet, the repercussions of the 150 years of French colonial influence imposed an unforgettable era of submission and lack of sovereignty in Algeria’s history. “Freed from the yoke of foreign domination, they are free neither from its continued pressure on economic, political, and military levels, nor from the pressure applied by the parasitic strata of their compatriots who enrich themselves by serving as go-betweens.” The lands and resources of Algeria profited the French pocket, taking the livelihood and pride of Algeria. A continuation of such enforced, humiliating policies represents the stronghold and dominance France claimed in colonial Algeria. The restrictions reached further than the economic realm, largely influencing the political sphere. Upon entering and declaring the lands of Algeria as its own, France announced its complete sovereignty. The extension of France influenced the decisions, expectations, and dreams of the Algerian people. As a consequence of such colonialism, the politics of inclusion and exclusion resulted in upheaval.

Following the French Revolution, the French nation declared the motto, “Liberté, égalité, fraternité”, to encapsulate its ideals. This motto was to ensure the implementation that all men deserved the right at birth to be treated with liberty, equality, and fraternity. At the time, the principles applied only to men of white French birthright, excluding already the women of the French nation. Soon France extended this principle to limit the domestic rights of Algerians in their occupied home. While colonizing Algeria, the idealized motto of the French became just that, a romanticized, unattainable aspiration for anyone, even the French, to meet. French sovereignty categorized the people of Algeria

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as “subjects,” and in 1834 an annexation ordered the inclusion of Algeria’s four million Muslim majority to be ushered into the family as French “subjects” as discussed at the beginning of the chapter.  

This change in politics finally granted the people of Algeria a legal position, no longer foreigners in their own home. The categorization placed them under the subjugation of French sovereignty but due to the Koranic law, further restricting them to be governed under a “régime d’exception—this still excluded them from full citizenship and political equality.” France continued to hold its “subjects” at an arm’s length. A decade later, the category of “French national noncitizen” replaced the term “subject”. This term merely provided a stronger “association” between the French and Algerians without specifically giving any additional political liberties to Algerians.

Keeping with its custom, France made an exception in 1865, extending French nationality to some and offering French citizenship to a few “‘indigenous’ men and their descendants.” Those who revoked their local law or civil status (such as Koranic—Islam, mosaic—Jewish) could “benefit from the rights open to a French citizen.” bringing reform and according French nationality to a small number of Algerians. It declared, “The Muslim native is French” if regulated under French law. Yet this did not signify citizenship for all. And most, who were able to gain full citizenship, rejected the offer as it meant giving up their own local law and thus their religion and ethnic group. The connotation of nationality brought about assumptions that the decree gave Algerians

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6 Dunwoodie, Peter, 68.
7 Shepard, Todd, 26.
8 Dunwoodie, Peter, 68. And Shepard, Todd, 26.
9 Shepard, Todd, 27.
more liberties. But the French did not desire to associate with the “backwardness” of “Muslim” Algerians. Through this demand, France was asking Algerians to deny their religion and lifestyle, continually implementing exclusionary tactics. In 1881, only 144 Algerians of Mosaic civil status had rejected their local law to become French citizens. Between 1865-1899 of four million “Muslim” population, only 1,309 men completed the citizenship application.\textsuperscript{10} France saw Islam and Judaism as the obstacle between the possible complete solidarity of the two nations, and they were not willing to compromise their plan for assimilation. First introduced in 1874 then added to in 1881, the French began the employment of \textit{Le Code de l’indigénat} (the indigenous code, or the native code) reemphasizing the French military’s control on “natives” or “indigène”. While there was already a penal code in place, this native code further marginalized Algerians by instituting 33 infractions upon “natives.”\textsuperscript{11} This law allowed French officials the power to fine or imprison “Muslim” Algerians if they were accused of disrupting law and order.\textsuperscript{12} Despite Algerian “Muslims” claim to French nationality after 1865, they possessed little political right, and the small amount they had was further diminished as a result to the native code. In 1881, this open “French national noncitizen” category was permanently instituted as the key to association and not assimilation, allowing for the appearance of inclusion while still obviously excluding Algerians from belonging. Despite French nationals being the minority, “Muslim” Algerians—the majority, were the people being persecuted.

\textsuperscript{10} Shepard, Todd, 29 and 27.
\textsuperscript{11} Shepard, Todd, 31.
The history of France is dotted with its incapacity to accommodate difference. Before the colonization of Algeria, the French Revolution was fought to end the division of these differences and promote human universalism. “Liberté, égalité, fraternité” was at the forefront of the French ideal and intended to benefit all; under the guise of a civilizing mission, France pushed these values upon the Algerian people, believing them beneficial to the betterment of Algeria. Instead of encouraging equality, the Declaration of the Rights of Man enhanced those with already registered status and further neglected those who were seen as inferior, prompting, “violent rejection of all privileges based on origin.”

The continued exceptions and “temporary deferral” to the law encouraged the same outrage that sparked the French Revolution. Thus people without the deserved rights of life sought out that liberty, resulting in clashes. “Moments of counter discourse” echo throughout French history books as a result of “the dogma of French equality” that is never fully implemented and often rather exclusionary. Algerians did not identify or fully accept the ideals and ideas of the French, as they were not reaping the benefits of them.

In spite of the French Republic promoting its universalism and “civilizing mission,” the persistent discrimination that was proving to be more than temporary created lack of solidarity between the two nations. France did not feel Algeria was civilized or deserving of the responsibility of being a “French citizen”, and Algerians felt repressed by the French disregard of their intelligence, beliefs, and personal values that

imperial France trampled over.\textsuperscript{15} But this animosity did not stop the promotion of tourism in Algeria during colonialism; the French majority merely overlooked the truth of the situation. People from all over the world came to Algeria to see the sights the French described, to get a feel for the “foreign” life that the French stressed was so idyllic. The information and guidebooks of the time contained knowledge on the geographical sites important to Algeria, and these books built on the words recited by previous travel narratives, believing that “tout a été dit sur Alger” (Everything has been said about Algeria). Over a period of 30 years (1830-1860), 600 hundred books were written that reiterated the same several arguments: where to visit, what to see. Nothing new was written or known. While these narratives thoroughly described what a visit to the city should include, they lacked an accurate comprehension of colonial life. Instead of emphasizing the culture of Algerians (Muslim or Jewish) and the lack of control they possessed in their homes, the focus was on the control the French had in the foreign atmosphere. The guidebooks lumped Algerians as “foreign”, which meant orientalism to all French. The Algerian lifestyle illustrated an atmosphere of tranquility and celebrated ethnic customs to tourists, when in reality the French attempted to repress such ethnic ties by prompting Algerians to revoke local laws in lieu of French citizenship. The French writers of these guidebooks perceived the relationship between the ruler and the subjects as they saw fit, remembering the good and forgetting the bad. But such innate repression was embedded in the foundation of the relationship, preventing a genuine understanding between the two nations that the guides had no idea the vast amounts of vital information

that they were not incorporating. Even the most knowledgeable about Algeria’s history and culture were ignorant to Algerians as a people capable of intelligence, seeing them solely as foreigners to amuse and obey the interests of the French. Seth Graebner discusses France’s ignorance of the Algerian people, labeling the Algerians as “the Unknown and Unloved” during colonialism. While France had invaded the nation of Algeria and was profiting from its goods, there was no desire to understand Algerians. Thus, Algerians remained “the Unknown and Unloved.” Graebner presents text that “argues that the problem was a gap between French perceptions and reality.”

France dominated the social, political, and economic spheres of Algeria at this time. The ideals of France were imposed upon all life of Algeria, and propaganda infiltrated the international perspective. People assumed the French knew the people and nation, yet the French created their own identity for Algeria, placing this vibrant nation into a banal summary of touristic places and generalized “indigenous foreign people” lumping Algerians with the Orientals. The French assumed that the exclusion of Algerians would be temporary, as the French government cited all Algerians as able to become a French citizen since the 1870s. Yet Algeria and its people remained “unknown and unloved” and ignored, not gaining the liberties promised to them and living excluded in their own land for decades. The lack of knowledge presented a barrier to the advancement of Algeria and its people, repressing and “sabotaging” their future.

As a consequence of the cultural and political repression, Algerians rose up to fight against sovereign France. For decades, the fear wrought by violence manipulated

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16 Graebner, Seth. 50.
17 Shepard, Todd. 47.
18 Graebner, Seth. 59.
Algerians to adhere to the exclusionary culture and endure the “subject” lifestyle. But the violence and lack of liberty reached a breaking point in 1954 when fighting erupted in Algeria. The FLN: Front de Libération Nationale (National Liberation Party) began a guerrilla war against the French in protest. Algeria had requested that France lessen its rule, and while France had agreed, after WWI, France went back on its promise. By the Battle of Algiers (1956-1957), FLN were in full attack mode, increasing their violent attacks by bombing urban areas in Algeria. In 1959, Charles de Gaulle came to the decision that Algerians had the right to their own future. And so in 1962, the Algerian War of Independence ended and Algeria won its deserved independence.

France would not willingly give up its prized colony. So much had been invested into this “civilizing mission” that turned into a 150-year occupation. France shared, or imposed, its identity through culture, economics, and politics. The assimilation of French ideals appeared to be a success despite the republic’s lack of inclusion. In this sense, France suppressed the idea of losing those French subjects that the French had never really allowed to become French. The Republic was not ready to lose all the wealth and power that the French had built through colonialism only desiring to continue excluding the people and benefitting from the colony. They sought continued marginalization of Algerians rather than lose anything themselves. But the parasitic relationship had to change. Despite the collective history of the colonization, the distinct experiences resulted in differing visions of the future. France wanted to remain sovereign over Algeria. And Algeria wanted independence. Violence, influenced by French colonial behavior, was an integral part of the Franco-Algerian relationship, putting a strain on the
possibility of a peaceful reconciliation from the beginning. When war erupted, the collective upheaval proved to threaten the French identity.

Algerian immigrants began moving to France largely after World War II, as many men were recruited to fight in the war and then remained in France after the war ended. They were additionally recruited to work. Families soon relocated to join the men. In a change of positions, Algerians entered France. Yet the reality did not change. Algerians were now a minority amongst the French, and the exclusionary practices augmented. Algerians were picked out easily in a crowd, and the French rarely associated with the minority. Even amongst the immigrants, the Algerians were regarded poorly and looked down upon. The location of being in another country did not stop Algerians from supporting their brothers’ fight for independence. Manifestations and demonstrations became a regular occurrence in Paris where the largest population of Algerian immigrants lived in France. The FLN (same as the FLN party in Algeria) was the principal nationalist party, and the party that commenced the independence movement in France. Affiliations of the FLN abounded in Paris and struck at any opportunity to show their support abroad. The Algerian Independence war was being fought in Algeria and in the streets of Paris: FLN versus OAS (Organisation armée secrète). The OAS was a right-wing terrorist group led by French military deserters who came together in January 1961, uniting anti-FLN groups in hopes to prevent Algerian independence. The groups attacked through brutal acts of sabotage and assassination. In response to concessions of Algeria becoming independent, the OAS violently demonstrated their disagreement, and the FLN

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20 Lorcin, Patricia E., XXI.
21 Shepard, Todd, 89.
accordingly retaliated. There were many strikes and protests by the FLN and the OAS with intermittent attacks by both groups. As a result of the increasing outbreaks of violence during these demonstrations and fear of monetary support from the FLN being sent back to Algeria, the Prefecture of Police in Paris amplified security and restrictions upon the immigrants.22 The superiority of the French repositioned to Paris as Algerian immigrants grew in number, causing the authority of the French police to come through in restrictive policies. As the French government imposed specific restrictions and excluded political opportunities in Algeria, such dominant behavior persisted in France as groups like the OAS formed and the Algerian war raged. Yet in Paris, Algerians possessed less leverage for political power than in Algeria, still seen as inferiors as they were neither European nor Christian.23 The blatant differences in ethnicity and culture separated the two groups of people and reminded France of the losing “civilizing mission” they had exerted so much time and energy on.

The characteristics of colonial Algeria repositioned to France when the Algerian War began. Instead of accepting the inevitable independence of Algeria, France clung to the past’s precious memory of total domination and control. The once imperial nation struggled to overcome the resentment from the imminent loss of their colony, seeing it as “rightfully French”. Despite the ongoing war, people still feared challenging the colonial dogma that France had promoted for centuries. As the tensions grew, France only added to the friction by increasing restrictions and allowing police violence as will be explained in the following chapter. The repressive acts enforced by France in colonial Algeria

persisted, yet the French felt they were losing their colonial territory. In hopes to save Algeria France, the French Revolution’s promise of equality was fulfilled through the Constitution of 1958, which established full citizenship to all adult Algerian males and females “with local civil status.” The long ago promised French citizenship had finally become true. Through the decades of attempted “assimilation”, the French government failed in attaining equality but managed well at encouraging French racism. As more Algerians immigrated to France, the institutionalized racism from decades of unchecked exclusion presented problems for the nation of “égalité.” France struggled to cope with the leadership of colonial trained officers and how to treat colonial raised Algerians integrating into the Paris metropolitan sphere. The French government had no plan of how to manage the deep division between Algerians and French, which was only growing larger as the Algerian War progressed.

**From Algeria to France:**

On October 17, 1961, a manifestation of 30,000 Algerian immigrants gathered on the streets and bridges of Paris. The peaceful protest rallied against the government’s newly imposed night curfew, which stated that all Algerian immigrants had to be home by 8:30pm and could not leave their homes until 5:30am. As the violence grew in Algeria regarding the war, so the turmoil deepened in France. Countless demonstrations erupted weekly, instigated by the FLN and counter-attacks came soon after from the OAS. Tensions were high amongst the people and the police. The eruption occurred on a night of an expression of “fraternité”. Algerians were marching in solidarity for their rights as well as for those of their brothers. The march intended to bring attention to the Algerian

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24 Shepard, Todd, 46.
25 Shepard, Todd, 47.
people and to spread news of their plight. But the police saw the unity of the Algerians as bold defiance. In turn, the police marched in full force exploiting their power in violence. The march was halted as the police brought out their batons and guns. The people disintegrated under the thumb of the law; thousands were arrested and dozens murdered. A night that was meant to bring support and harmony instead resulted in death and denial.26

Colonial dominance provided France with the ideal implementation of authority. France paraded its power and took possession of other nations, and in return brought the French way of life to the colonies. The French principles encouraged assimilation—become French and act French. Yet they sought division from these immigrants, wanting to retain their own national identity and remain separate from the immigrants coming in. While the French colonial institution encouraged French identity, the French did not view the Algerians as privileged enough to deserve this identity. Hypocrisy thrived through the demands of colonial France. Even though the people recognized the injustices occurring, the discussion of such exclusive or violent acts by the French was deemed taboo.27 As an acknowledged rule, when France “forgot” or repressed memories of demeaning and humiliating events, nothing was done. This repression of memory can be connected to the term collective memory, which refers to “that which is conveyed, maintained, and celebrated by all instruments of public opinion (scholarly works, manuals, monuments, 

and official ceremonies)."\(^{28}\) Yet in the French situation, this collective memory has been lost.

Due to the aggressive acts committed in the name of the “civilizing mission” or colonization and the desire to preserve such authority, the collective memory of France has willfully forgotten some of its past. Patricia Lorcin states, "Whether such restructuring is a subconscious reaction to personal trauma or a conscious attempt to perpetrate national or individual myths by erasing aspects of the past that are contentious, it constitutes the politics of memory discourses."\(^{29}\) This brings up the question of why and how? Why would France refuse to acknowledge their exclusionary policies in colonial Algeria? Days when they were so convinced of their mission to civilize the world. Why would France repress the memory of their violent actions against Algerians? How does an entire nation, society “forget” an event? How does something so influential in French history remain hidden?

In reference to the idea of the French nation as having “lost”, “forgotten”, and “repressed” memory, this thesis is noting the French possession of collective memory in which the nation shared a group memory in awareness of political and social occurrences. The different theories of collective memory will be presented to understand the reasoning behind the united group mentality of 1960s France, specifically what took place in the year of 1961. The theory of collective memory began with none other than a Frenchman, Maurice Halbwachs, who wrote *La mémoire collective*. According to Halbwachs, memory can be collected, distributed, and passed on amongst social groups of all sizes. Groups have the benefit of remembering more together, than an individual will remember.

\(^{28}\) Noiriel, Gerard. 368

\(^{29}\) Lorcin, Patricia E., XXI.
alone, as many memories collaborate to form a collective memory that relies on the
group.  

Paul Ricoeur, a French philosopher and historian emphasizes the relations
among individuals within the group and the sharing of memory depending on the
relationship. Ricoeur connects collective identity to his theory of narrative identity,
noting that narratives provide an understanding of connections from one individual to
another. According to David Leichter, who studied Pau Picoeur, collective memory
“makes sense of a shared path.” In Vichy France, the mindset of collaboration and
indoctrination prompted wartime trauma that the French collective memory resisted
remembering. In this thesis, collective memory will be used to demonstrate the shared
path taken by the French in response to violent state repression and discrimination.

Taboos, while often avoided, do not have the power to repress the magnitude of
information or knowledge that has been “lost”. More than the result of hypocrisy or
misdoings, the collective memory loss of France stems from a much grander issue. Early
on French colonialism provoked an exclusionary and repressive political and social
atmosphere that separated them from “Muslim” Algerians. Not even the fulfilled promise
of French citizenship mollified the institutionalized racism the French government
demonstrated in Algeria and returned back to France with. The French Revolution fought
the issue of exclusion and was thought to have resolved the injustice. But evidence in the
context of Algeria provides proof that this is not the case. Instead, the exclusionary
elements have persisted. While the Algerian massacre of October 17, 1961 impacted the

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31 Leichter, David J. “Collective Identity and Collective Memory in the Philosophy of
32 Scullion, Rosemarie. “Unforgettable: History, Memory, and the Vichy Syndrome,
lives of thousands, the event was not discussed publicly in France for two decades.

France carried these exclusionary values to the colonies, brought them back, and the nation, despite attempts to revoke such inequality, still reflects such exclusive actions today.
CHAPTER TWO: October 17th, 1961

“The day that Paris did not stir”

—Pierre Vidal-Naquet

The exclusionary practices of the French police erupted on the evening of October 17th, 1961 when 30,000 Algerians gathered throughout the streets of Paris in peaceful demonstration against a night curfew imposed by the Prefect of Police. In this chapter, I will examine the accounts of the evening of October 17th and the days after in attempts to gain a deeper understanding of the event alongside the role of the French police and the reaction of the public in regards to the demonstrations. What led to such a violent evening that has since been labeled “the Algerian massacre”? How were the French police involved and to what extent does their involvement make them responsible? What were the repercussions of such a traumatic experience to the French nation? I will compile several secondary sources to interpret the “what happened” on October 17th, 1961. Due to the numerous testimonies, accounts vary according to how the events of the evening took place. Primarily two books in this chapter will provide information about the otherwise limited evidence that has appeared in the decades following 1961. With the research of several renowned French historians, I have constructed an accepted timetable, which tracks the progress of the demonstration. This chapter will be compromised of sections dividing the concentrated events leading up to October 17th, 1961 and the responses to La Bataille de Paris (The Battle of Paris).
For this chapter, two main texts will be referenced to establish the research gathered from the demonstrations of October 17th, 1961—the weeks leading up and the days after, as well as the reactions to the demonstrations. The first text by Jim House and Neil MacMaster in 2006, *Paris 1961: Algerians, State Terror, and Memory*, provides an in-depth investigation of French repression through newly uncovered archives and past resources. The state terror is narrowed back to colonial France, which prompts the violent state tactics in Paris. House and MacMaster find the Algerian massacre arose from encouraged state discrimination and a repressed collective memory. The second text is *La Bataille de Paris: 17 octobre 1961* written by Jean-Luc Einaudi in 1991 in which narratives of October 17th, 1961 are recorded and retraced in this astonishing account of the Battle of Paris. The repression is devastating as it is revealed the lives that are lost and violence that is unleashed throughout the streets of Paris. Einaudi gathers a culmination of narratives, forgotten for decades, that tell one of the saddest stories of the French government.

The demonstrations occurred throughout Paris, and while hundreds of people witnessed the proceedings, the biased social and political atmosphere of Paris quieted public knowledge of the event. To this day the events in the evening of October 17th remain a mystery. Due to government conflicts and the suppression of information regarding the evening of October 17th, data and documentation for the demonstration are limited, yet since the release of the archives in the late 1990s, more information on the event has come forth through the aid of several historians. For the beginning of this chapter, a narrative of the events will provide a framework for the events of October 17th, 1961, presenting the reason for the demonstrations, the planning leading up to the
demonstrations, and the involvement of Algerians, police, and Parisians in what came to be known as the Algerian massacre.

**Narrative of the event, October 17th, 1961:**

On the night of October 17th, 1961, crowds of Algerians gathered across the bridges and streets of Paris, standing in the rain protesting against the discrimination that battered them. The war against Algeria had been waging for eight years without reprieve and the violence had spread from the lands of Algeria to those of France. Many Algerians came to France during World War II and remained in hopes of living a better life than the one offered by colonial Algeria. Yet the opportunities were slimmer, and the discrimination was significant abroad; France consisted of the same exclusions that stifled the growth of Algerians in their homeland. The promised gift of equality that the French boasted of did not exist. In 1954 when battles for independence broke out in Algeria, hope began to grow in the hearts of Algerians. Their brothers in France echoed the victorious cries, and soon an uprising of FLN began growing in the neighborhoods and *bidonvilles* (slums) of Paris. Members of the FLN in Paris believed that making the Algerian plight of inequality heard was their duty.

**Week leading up to manifestations:**

In 1961, as a war was being fought in Algeria, a war also erupted amongst the streets of Paris between the OAS and the FLN with the police in the midst. For months, the political groups went back and forth, scheming against the other. The intensity of the plots slowly gained ground and worsened, leading to unidentifiable corpses of North Africans being found in the Seine during September and October of 1961.\(^{33}\) The police

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\(^{33}\) House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 106-109
were assumed to be involved in the deaths, but the Prefect and his senior officers denied all responsibility despite several reports of accusations against them. The Algerians feared the strength and influence of the French police, yet in their helpless position, their complaints were disregarded. As a ramification of the augmenting violence in the city, the police were encouraged to restrict the liberty of those who were causing said disorder in Paris. Maurice Papon, the Prefect of Police in Paris in 1961, is seen as an emblem of the corrupt French state to this day. A Nazi collaborator during World War II, the French government specifically chose Papon to lead the police of Paris during a time of disruption when “the battle” against the FLN began in 1958 because of Papon’s extensive background experience in policing colonial insurgencies. In order to grasp the full extent of how corrupt the French government was, one must understand the man that the government placed in charge of their policing system for almost a decade. Papon came to his position of Prefect through the mentorship of Jean Baylot, who modeled the discriminatory campaign against Algerians. From his involvement in colonial Algeria, Papon arrived in Paris with a position of power and habits of violence. In 1995, Papon was tried for his involvement in a heinous crime of the 1940s: deporting Jews to internment camps. Papon brought thousands of Jews to their death and yet was given control of the Parisian police and assigned to protect the public from harm. Several years in Algeria then led Papon to Morocco, where he was brought in to “reinforce the position of the colonial elites through repression rather than any policy of reform or concession to the nationalists.” As his training in Vichy France, French Algeria, and colonial

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Einaudi, Jean-Luc. 86-92
34 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 38-40
35 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 43
Morocco taught him, Papon utilized the repressive state tactics of institutionalized racism to increase discrimination in the battle of Paris. The morning of October 5th, 1961, the Prefect of Paris police, Maurice Papon implemented “un couvre-feu” (a night curfew). From 8:30pm to 5:30am every day, the night curfew obliged Algerians to stay out of the streets and in their homes. The only exception was a job conflict, but even such access had to be approved by the sector coordinator of their banlieue (neighborhood)\textsuperscript{36}. Immigrants typically kept identity papers on hand, which provided police the ability to separate Algerians from other immigrants.\textsuperscript{37} While the curfew was difficult to enforce, an increase in police force and aggressiveness encouraged complicity within the majority of Algerians for a time. But the discrimination solely against Algerians did not rest unchallenged for long. The additional obstacle on their already limited freedom became too much for the FLN party. Algerians were no longer solely immigrants in a foreign country; they were enemies, targeted and punished for criminal acts that were not the fault of the majority. It is in this setting of this social turmoil that the events in the evening of the FLN’s peaceful protests unfolded.

Two days after the ordinance by Papon, discussion of boycotting the night curfew was already in effect. FLN thought it urgent to show resistance and refusal to be treated in such a lowly manner.

\textit{Dans ce cas, vous pouvez et nous devons ici sur place mettre au pied du mur le peuple français}\textsuperscript{38}-Mohammedi Saddek

\textsuperscript{36} Einaudi, Jean-Luc. 100
\textsuperscript{37} Einaudi, Jean-Luc. 100
\textsuperscript{38} Einaudi, Jean-Luc. 109
(In this case, we can and we must here on this spot back the French people into a corner.)

The boycott was to provide an opportunity of Algerian support against discrimination. While the Algerians were foreign, the FLN did not believe they were not to be deemed inferior to the French. Yet this is precisely what the order by the Prefect of police encouraged: a strict division that prohibited Algerians from living a normal life in Paris. The FLN decided to peacefully protest such blatant discrimination. Three days before the manifestations on October 14th, Mohamed Zouaoui, the leader of FLN operations in Paris, sent out an order of a campaign: boycott the curfew. The order declared that ALL Algerians, men, women, children, and elderly were to participate in the demonstrations; those who failed to participate would “be the ‘object of very serious sanctions,’” according to the text instructions for the demonstrations of the 17th of October, which were found on a FLN member by the police.\textsuperscript{39} The demonstrations were to be arranged discreetly as to not raise alarm within the police networks, but information was leaked as soon as the date of the boycott was decided upon in newspapers in Geneva and Paris.\textsuperscript{40} Yet the Prefect of Police did not realize the extent of the mobilization until the evening of 16-17 October. It is by this advantage that the FLN were able to organize without much difficulty at the beginning of the evening. The details of the FLN operation were unknown, yet the police would take no risk as to be caught unaware and unprepared. Papon had previously employed an operation that set up police at all key entrances (portes) of Paris. The day of October 17th, Papon received a copy of the FLN plan,

\textsuperscript{39} APP-HA110, House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 112.
\textsuperscript{40} Le Journal de Genève and Témoignage chrétien. Einaudi, Jean-Luc. La Bataille de Paris: 17 octobre 1961. 112
containing the arrangements of the demonstrations: the date, the intent of peace, and that
woman and children were to be involved.41 While the majority of the information
regarding the event remained a secret to the police, Papon uncovered enough to
understand the FLN was not seeking revenge for the discriminatory acts against them.
Knowing the pacifist goal of the Algerians, Papon still armed his men with riot sticks,
pistols, and guns. Many of these men had previously fought in colonial Algeria.
Techniques developed in Algeria encouraged disproportionate retaliation of French
military in response to unarmed demonstrations such as in the Sétif massacre of 1945,
where peasant insurgency brought about mass killings conducted by police and armed
forces. Likewise, the colonial authorities practiced regular concealment of these illegal
brutal acts.42 They were not strangers to the tactics of battle, and after the policy issued
by Papon (part of which is below) many no longer felt compelled to contain their
vengeful desire.

« En vue de mettre un terme sans délai aux agissements criminels des terroristes
algériens, des mesures nouvelles viennent d’être décidées par la préfecture de
police. En vue d’en faciliter l’exécution, il est conseillé de la façon la plus
pressante aux travailleurs musulmans algériens de s’abstenir de circuler la nuit
dans les rues de Paris et de la banlieue parisienne, et plus particulièrement de 20
h 30 à 5 h 30 du matin. » (With view to putting an end without delay to the
criminal acts of Algerian terrorism, new measures have just been decided by the
Prefect of Police. In order to facilitate execution, it is advisable in the most urgent
way for Algerian Muslim workers to refrain from circulating at night in the streets

41 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 116
42 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 36-37
of Paris and the suburbs of Paris, and more particularly from 8:30pm to 5:30 in the morning.)

One police officer, Raoul Letard, is quoted as saying, “and our dream, we would say to ourselves, was that one day, one day at least they are going to do the bloody stupid thing of coming out all together… and we would be able to pay things back.” A protest with women, children, and the elderly would not possess the capabilities of ever overwhelming these men. Instead of fearing possible violence, the police were anticipating the possibility of revenge.

**Plans of the FLN:**

“*La Bataille de Paris*” (The Battle of Paris) began weeks before the manifestations were seen on the streets. In response to the night curfew, the FLN strategically planned the peaceful wide-scale demonstration so as to draw attention and inspire support for their cause, while simultaneously making it clear to the police that they were not afraid. The formation of the FLN unit in Paris was structured for ease of communication. A meeting was held every week that provided updates to the groups, which were then dispersed to the more local *bidonville* groups. As a result, the boycott mandate quickly spread. The smaller groups were instructed to contain the essential information until the required time, so that the police could discover less beforehand. As soon as the initiating order was sent out “encouraging” all members, men women, children and elderly to come, a plan was made to channel the crowds around Paris in the most effective manner. Zouaoui divided Paris into three major sectors, allowing separate parties to enter in through other *portes* of Paris, but still assemble in the center. These

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43 Einaudi, Jean-Luc. 100
44 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 113-117
zones provide a distinct separation between the routes that were used during the demonstrations and aid in understanding how and where the crowds came from and went to. The three sectors were as follows: sector 1—the pont de Neuilly-Étoile Axis, sector 2—the Boulevards Saint-Michel and Saint-Germain, sector 3—from Opéra to Place de la République. The sectors were helpful to form small groups based upon the neighborhoods, in this way less attention could be drawn to the groups and arise suspicion on their route to the center of Paris. Groups were purposely instructed to exit from separate metro stations, so the police and public would not be alarmed.

Map 1. FLN March Route on October 17, 1961 in Paris

Above all, the plan of protests called for peace. The FLN orders urged the necessity of such demeanor as any misstep could result in grave repercussions from the
Some FLN officials even went so far as to conduct body searches for weapons. With the existing social and political situation straining the relationship between the FLN and the police, the protesters had to appear without fault and united. Thus, the FLN imposed participation in the protests, threatening penalties for those who did not partake in the event. While this may have seemed severe, the intentions were clear: support was required, “peacefully, with dignity and an absolute calm.” A united front was to be assumed in hopes that an effective protest that would draw the police’s attention of their unjust discrimination against Algerians in France. The FLN appropriately anticipated the obstacles that would accompany the protests. Yet despite their prepared ground rules, chaos found its way through the peaceful plans.

**Day of the Protest:**

The day of October 17th, 1961, events unfolded intermittently. The intention was to promote support of the FLN movement in France while simultaneously opposing the segregation the police were imposing upon Algerians in France. The demonstrators found pride in this movement. After being rejected and overlooked for centuries in colonial Algeria and then decades of discrimination in France, the Algerian people were enthralled to demonstrate their political and social voice. France had placed Algerians in a restrictive social sphere, not providing the equality that others were given freely. This is the moment that the Algerians in France banded together to challenge such restrictions and demand freedom. The well-prepared plans detailed an evening of peaceful demonstrations. Yet their ideals of a peaceful evening did not come true.

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45 Einaudi, Jean-Luc. 111
46 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 114
“Peace in Algeria”—FLN protesters march in solidarity, October 17th, 1961

The instructions by the FLN to carry out a peaceful demonstration that would not provoke concern or violence from the police were respected, according to the majority of witnesses. It is only in the case of police statements that blame is placed upon the protesters, while in all other circumstances bystanders have attested that it was the police who wielded the weapons. Demonstrations were intended to take place in the evening, but several groups preemptively began protesting in the metro, which immediately alerted the police. This prompted the immediate initiation of Papon’s aforementioned plans.

Police flooded the metro stations and entrances to the city of Paris, waiting for the masses of people that were to come their way. The majority of demonstrators began to gather in the evening after work. People traveled from hours outside of Paris to take part in solidarity. Dressed in their nicest suits and dresses, the groups of men and women carefully went to their designated sector. Metros were taken only by small groups as to not draw attention, but the police were already stationed throughout the metros. Other
groups made their way by bus or simply walking the streets. It was reported that around 8:30-9pm, crowds could be seen crossing the Pont de Neuilly.\textsuperscript{47}

**Outbreak of Violence:**

As the crowds thickened on the bridge, reports indicate that two shots were fired, chaos ensuing. Police blocked off the bridge and subjected the crowds to swinging \textit{bidules} (batons), resulting in fractured skulls, broken legs, and blood. Police reports accuse an Algerian protester for the commencement of the shots; officer Pierre Mézière reported, “the police ‘had to fire as a response to the numerous gun-shots fired by the demonstrators.’”\textsuperscript{48} Yet no officers were killed on the bridge during this rampage of violence. As the violence worsened, tactics turned. Police did not restrain themselves, hitting protesters as they saw fit with their \textit{bidules}. Witnesses insisted upon seeing the bodies of corpses and those who seemed unconscious being thrown into the Seine off of the bridges. Similar statements were repeated in the other sectors. On the Pont Saint-Michel in the second sector, witnesses watched a man cling to a pole, who was then pulled off by police and thrown into the river. French historian Jean-Luc Einaudi interviewed Paul Rousseau, a witness of the events on the Pont Clichy, who saw police grab the bodies of those that had been beaten to death and then toss the bodies into the Seine.\textsuperscript{49} The blood was all along the bridges. Throughout the months and weeks following the demonstrations, these bodies would appear washed up on the sides of the Seine, a constant reminder of the violence that the police tried to submerge in the Seine.

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\textsuperscript{47} House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 118  \\
\textsuperscript{48} APP-HA1B34, Report of Mézière, 17 Oct. and House, “The Demonstrations, 17 to 20 October: Sector 1, the Pont de Neuilly-Étoile Axis.” 118  \\
\textsuperscript{49} Einaudi, Jean-Luc. 145
\end{flushright}
Algerian protesters terrified by the police, October 17\textsuperscript{th}, 1961

Famous photograph of an injured Algerian protester—the cover of \textit{La Bataille de Paris}, October 17\textsuperscript{th}, 1961

The violence affected all involved in the protest; the police did not refrain from people due to age nor gender. Primarily, the police sought out men as they were seen as the root instigators of the demonstrations. Women and children ran away while men tried to prevent them from being harmed. But nowhere was safe. Those involved were rounded
up in the metros, buses, and trains, blocked from leaving the stations or brought to the 
stations to receive punishment. In some cases, the protesters were kept for hours, 
subjected to random beatings and endless taunts by the police\textsuperscript{50}. This intensity of 
aggression persisted around every street of Paris, only beginning to lessen as arrests were 
made. Police began to round up Algerian men into buses and open trucks, moving them 
to arenas around Paris such as Palais des Sports, the Stade de Coubertin, and the Hôpital 
Beaujon. In total, on October 17\textsuperscript{th}, 12, 520 men were arrested. This was almost half of the 
people involved in the protests. 12, 520 men were taken into custody by total force of 
1,658 police officers, which according to Papon, was “\textsuperscript{51}‘extraordinarily weak’.” Of those 
12,520, several hundred were deported back to Algeria, an action encouraged by Roger 
Frey, the Minister of Interior. The goal of the police was to clear the protesters from the 
streets through arrests and end the demonstrations as soon as they began. Papon was not 
interested in the political or social statement the protesters were trying to make. His sole 
concern revolved around silencing the protesters and stopping an Algerian supported 
movement.

![Arrested protesters gathered on a bus, evening of the 17\textsuperscript{th}]()

\textsuperscript{50} Einaudi, Jean-Luc. 167
Arrested Algerians waiting to be deported back to Algeria, between 18th-21st October 1961

Map 2. Placement of important buildings/centers used during FLN demonstrations

The arrest of the men did not cease the violence. As men were brought into the arenas around the city that functioned as detention centers, they were beaten aggressively. Upon entering any detention building, the protesters had to walk through a line of police, holding all tools possible of inflicting pain: wooden sticks, bars, bludgeons, etc. that awaited them. Guy Hébert, a military conscript, witnessed the ferocity, citing that men,
who fell, instantly received blows from the police. (130) Ironically, police brought in doctors and graduate students to some of these locations in attempt to bandage up those who were seriously injured after 3 to 5 days had passed. These were the same injured men the police had earlier wounded. Even the seriously injured men remained in the detention centers until the doctors arrived. While the doctors did not possess the instruments at hand for any in depth procedures, they were able to wrap bleeding heads and limbs. They were also instructed to transfer the severely injured to hospitals of unknown locations at the time. Later on, the logs of these hospitals provided historians with the factual numbers and notes on men injured and on men that died in the hospital, etc. These logs are the extent of official information regarding victims and/or injuries of the demonstrations. The FLN carried out their own investigation of these records from 7 hospitals and estimated that an almost 2,300 were injured while only 13 policemen visited the hospital in concern to injuries.53

Figure 1. The Arrests of 17th October 1961: 12, 520 Algerians Arrested in Paris

52 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 134
Amongst the injured, the doctors discovered corpses. At most of the arenas and police stations, dead bodies piled up and were overlooked. As buses of men continued to arrive, the centers only grew more congested, and the injured were difficult to keep track of. The doctors were advised to disregard the bodies and continue their work, the police once again pushing the importance of not later discussing what they had witnessed. This will be further observed in the documentary analyzed in Chapter 3, in which doctors who participated in this later told their stories of involvement, despite the police threats of remaining silent. It was in these situations that even the French involved, outside of the government, kept quiet as to not draw attention to the situation. So instead, the events did not gather the recognition they sought or deserved.

**Days after, October 18th-20th**

**October 18th:**

The FLN protests did not end as the police hoped. Arrests and beatings would not dampen the spirit of the Algerian people in their hopes of gaining social peace and political liberties. *La Bataille de Paris* continued demonstrating the movement’s unwavering support, through the most public way, demonstrations. The day after the manifestations on October 18th, a commercial strike occurred—all Algerians that owned businesses were to shut down their business for 24 hours, in addition to all workers protesting again in defiance of the curfew. This strike was planned by the FLN to further the extent of the protests and prolong the boycott. The key component was solidarity throughout the Algerian community. Without the support of the 30,000 members none of the demonstrations would have been possible. But as a result of the

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54 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 124
massive amount of arrests the night before, the numbers of protesters had decreased immensely.

A protest of 30,000 people, men women, children and the elderly dwindled to almost 1,000 in the days following the boycott. The police, awaiting the possibility of any action, blocked all central access routes within the city. On the night of 18th, after the morning/afternoon of strikes, protests erupted again, mainly focused in the bidonvilles at La Garenne-Colombes. Due to the dwindling numbers, small groups went throughout neighborhoods and across bridges, taking a more individualistic approach as the numbers called for. This allowed the police to covertly arrest and even kill individuals. Several deaths were reported from that evening, and a couple of bodies of men out protesting that evening were found a couple days later in the Seine.

**October 19th & 20th:**

Despite the diminishing supporters—more and more men being arrested; the women of the FLN remained. The plan of the FLN had incorporated protests of the curfew to continue on October 19th, but in regards to the massive arrests and men that were still detained, the supporters were not prepared. Many of the men who had been arrested left behind wives and children that no longer had someone to lead them. These women had no way to support their families without their husbands, leaving them anxious and scared. They had marched alongside their husbands and brothers on the evening of the 17th, witnesses to the violence that took away the ones they loved most. For two days, they had little to no knowledge of what was happening with their loved ones, whether they were safe or even alive. With those thoughts and memories close at
hand, the women courageously gathered on October 20th, the fourth and last day of the demonstrations.

Hundreds of women gathered across the metros and central locations of Paris: Place de la République, Place d’Italie, and the Hôtel de Ville. The crowds carried signs that expressed their frustration of being kept in the dark, “Free our husbands”, “Down with the curfew”, and “Total Independence for Algeria”. Throughout the days of demonstrating, the media grew impatient, hearing rumors of violence, while being strictly prohibited from taking photos by the Prefect. In order to eliminate the spread of such “rumors”, the police decided to allow “photo opportunities” during the women’s protest. As a result, the police instructed all officers to refrain from any violence that would cause the media to misinterpret the events. But a report states that several women were hospitalized, while another woman was reported having a miscarriage in the street.55 Despite the police’s “good intentions”, the violence that had been instilled into the police’s tactics persisted in every area of their work. The police attempted to retain protesting women and children by bussing them to a local psychiatric hospital. The staff, unaware of the detainees’ objection, soon discovered the truth and objected alongside the women, forcing the police to free the women and children. Like the doctors who helped the men in the arenas, the staff protested against the treatment of the women. Yet before this instance, the French had not blatantly spoken out against the mistreatment, despite the fact that the protests happened in the center of Paris. Such large-scale demonstrations could not simply be ignored. Even without the men, the women still impacted the movement, emphasizing the voice of all Algerians. Alongside the ability to protest came

55 APP-H1B21, report of cadre, 2131
the consequences of demonstrating. The same report that noted the banners, issued that an “estimated 979 women and 595 children were intercepted and detained on 20 Oct.”56

While the demonstrations ended on October 20th, 1961, *La Bataille de Paris* continued in the hearts and lives of those impacted by this violent fight for social and political freedom. In total, it is reported that 14,094 men were taken into custody between the period 17-19th of October57. In addition to the men detained, it is estimated between 40-200+ men died from injuries sustained during the demonstrations. The actual number is unknown due to the lack of records. In contrast, three officers died during the four days of protests, and Papon records only 3 deaths to the Assembly. Jean-Luc Einaudi and Jean Paul Brunet, the two leading historians on this case for the first 30-40 years after the event, differ on their conclusions concerning the amount of demonstrator deaths. Einaudi adamantly insists upon the estimation of more than 200 deaths. Through his interviews and recollections of witnesses, his search narrowed him down to the number of: 210. On November 6th of 1961, the police visited the center identification of Vincennes, it was reported that 1,500 French Muslims resided there. Yet upon reporting it to the National Assembly, the number 1,710 French Muslims was reported.58 Einaudi believed the number of 210 makes up for the amount of men that the police estimated lost their lives. Brunet sides more on that of the French, blaming the FLN for the deaths and expressing his estimate as 40 deaths. Other historians have similarly shared their estimations, all-ranging from 40-200. As to the exact amount, it will never be known; bodies were found in the Seine days, weeks, and months after. Some from the demonstrations, maybe some

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57 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 129
58 Einaudi, Jean-Luc. 316-318
from other violent outbreaks. What is known is that many Algerian families suffered loss. Numbers of around 1,000 men did not return home to their families as they were deported back to Algeria, and many women were left without answers as to the fate of their husbands. While the 1,500 women and children were all released, they returned to empty homes, many still missing their husbands and fathers. The four days of the demonstrations involved more than simply the repression of a people, it propelled the repression of lives, neglecting the memory of those who lost their lives for the sake of freedom.

ID Photos of Algerian men arrested during the manifestations

**Police reactions:**

Reactions regarding the demonstrations of the FLN began as soon as the first march took place. In the case of the police, many officers had preconceived arguments, concerning their position or attitude towards the Algerians. The police did not react in solidarity. Those who agreed and took part in the violence saw the ever-growing independence of Algeria as frightening, and those who had accepted Algeria gaining its

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independence did not see the sense in the violence. As stated earlier in the chapter, when the call for preparation came, some officers gathered their *bidules* (clubs), anticipating the violence to come. Many officers involved in the manifestations were men that had previously worked in colonial Algeria under the French military. The colonial ideals promoted violence and aggression, pushing the idea that even in a foreign country they were the ones in charge. The ideals were carried back to France and allowed for the discrimination to augment. House and MacMaster express it well in the statement, “Police repression was descending into open racism, targeting men by the color of their skin, and into acts of torture that had last been seen in France under the Nazis.”60 And Paris adapted to these horrific ideals until the violence and unnecessary discrimination no longer seemed foreign, but something that was natural and thusly employed so. The high morals of equality for all manifested the reverse as repressive tendencies of exclusion and violence.

As a result of the growing violence amongst the police force, specifically concerning the demonstrations of October 17th and the days that followed, the press began to accumulate evidence against the Prefect and his police officers. Papon intended for all the officers to unite against the information contained in the documents, which criticized and blamed the police for violence and murder, but lack of agreement amongst the Prefecture led to a compromise. The role of blame no longer was to be enforced by the SGP (Syndicat général de la police) Conseil, the highest of the police unions; instead the convictions were to be decided by parliamentary of judicial level. An officer at a SGP meeting on November 7th, remembered the night as shocking: “I saw abominable scenes,

60 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 140
colleagues who fell with all their weight onto a North African lying on the ground in a coma… Once order was restored, why beat them to death with kicks and punches in the police-stations, why massacre them? The feelings of dissent ran deep amongst the police in France, but these were not nationally shared. Some officers were rightly revolted at the discrimination and violence. As the SGP was not in the position to decide who should be held responsible or make the decision of whether or not the accusations of brutality were true, the French government—De Gaulle—became the primary decider. The responsibility of punishing the police was rightly entrusted to both De Gaulle and Papon, the superiors of France, but what benefit would this provide the Algerians wronged if as those responsible, they knew and ignored the brutal repression the entire time?

While France was slowly relinquishing its control of Algeria in the 1960’s, the change in political and social roles heightened the already strained relationship between Algerians and the French. France had imposed a French way of life upon colonial Algeria, ensuring the law and social life to adhere to the standards of France. The people of France knew Algeria only as one of France’s colonies, so upon the initiation of French withdrawal from the colony, Charles de Gaulle employed an increase of military presence in Algeria to distract the French from the loss as he did not want to alarm those who were in opposition to Algerian Independence. During this time de Gaulle was deeply involved in the process of continuing France and Algeria’s relationship, consequently when the FLN demonstrations occurred, de Gaulle concentrated on the current events in Algeria and neglected to intervene/involve himself in the affairs in Paris. De Gaulle saw Algerian

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61 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 133
independence as inevitable, and that Algeria needed to become independent, as Algerians were not French to de Gaulle. In 1959 at a dinnertime discussion, de Gaulle notes that the problem of colonization was the French tried to make Algerians French, but they could not be. De Gaulle is recorded saying, “You cannot possibly consider that one day an Arab, a Muslim, could be equal to a Frenchman?” Making France a political and economic world player prevented de Gaulle from personally handling the horrors that were happening in his own home. The preoccupation led him to appoint and trust in a man that did not have the concern of all people in his heart, Maurice Papon. De Gaulle’s neglect of attention to the event has not been very widely commented on. Historians touch on his inattention, as House and MacMaster state,

“De Gaulle was fully prepared to intensify repressive action against the FLN and generally approved of Papon’s role as Prefect of Police since he was a loyal Gaullist servant firmly under the eye of the Paris government and, in particular, of the Prime Minister Michel Debré who was quite willing to resort to state terror against the Algerian nationalists. De Gaulle aimed to reverse the military appropriation of civil police powers in Algeria, but was less concerned by Papon’s militarization of the Paris police.”

La Bataille de Paris did not deem itself an event major enough to distract de Gaulle from the important process of decolonizing Algeria and promoting France. He entrusted Papon with the responsibility of handling the Algerian national “radicalism”, believing in Papon’s “no nonsense” style of maintaining order in Paris, apparently even if this

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62 Shepard, Todd. 74
63 Shepard, Todd. 75
64 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 28
65 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 144
involved violent measures.\textsuperscript{66} While the demonstrations only spanned four days, their impact spanned decades. The disinterest of the major French leader on such an important event only furthered the French mentality of repression and collective memory loss.

The lack of involvement from de Gaulle in the French state spurred more situations where the state was willing to overlook the evidence within the official commission of inquiry, which took place on October 27\textsuperscript{th} with the Paris Council, October 30\textsuperscript{th} with the National Assembly, and October 31\textsuperscript{st} with the Senate.\textsuperscript{67} As information leaked that contradicted the reports of Papon and Roger Frey, the Minister of Interior, evidence accumulated against the men in power. On October 30\textsuperscript{th}, the National Assembly examined the cases brought against the Paris police, which accused the French police, specifically Papon, of repressing men of color and “the unleashing of ‘the hideous beast of racism.’”\textsuperscript{68} The next day in the Senate, Papon and Frey were once again openly confronted, yet this time more evidence of their violent tactics of police racism had erupted. A commission of inquiry was opened against them. But Papon and Frey had prepared for this possibility and knew that the \textit{ordonnance} of 17 November 1958 prevented a commission of inquiry being opened in regards to a case currently under judicial review as this case was. It was discovered that judicial investigations of the numerous corpses found after October 17\textsuperscript{th} had not been opened like they typically were, but instead shelved and neglected until October 30\textsuperscript{th} when they were rediscovered and registered. This took place the same day as the meeting of the proposal for the commission of inquiry. Papon was guilty of this “blocking tactic” in 1953 and 1962. Thus

\textsuperscript{67} House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 139
\textsuperscript{68} House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 140
the accusations were out-maneuvered and the issue, while it was scheduled to continue until early December, was neglected and no longer relevant by early November. The cases disappeared into the shadows as each one was disregarded and pushed to the side by the French government until the seal was closed on the issue. Papon managed to remain unscathed from a battle he initiated, and his men followed suit without any scratches on their record.

**Maurice Papon, the Prefect of Police:**

The culture of manipulation and discrimination only amplified in the midst of the demonstrations, allowing the police to overlook their actions of brutality while simultaneously actively seeking validation for their actions. And so a “perversion of justice” endured. One could say the most involved man in the “perversion of justice” was Maurice Papon, the Prefect of Police in Paris from 1958 to 1967. Due to the necessity of de Gaulle’s attention abroad, Papon, a man trained in the brutal colonial oppressive measures, was given full reign of the Parisian police system during these four years of the Algerian War. This does not imply that de Gaulle would have reacted any differently or more justly handled the events. Through de Gaulle’s action of appointing Papon as the man in charge, de Gaulle took full responsibility for Papon’s corruption as he instigated such actions by neglecting his country’s problems during such a tense time. Through his transfer of power to Papon, de Gaulle promoted and can be associated side by side with the violent methods of the Prefect of Police. Papon’s method of command, classified as “the Papon System”, can be closely related to that of the Vichy era. Similar to the techniques used on Jews during WWII, “the Papon System” employed the use of

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69 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 141
70 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 153
regular round-ups to detention centers and discriminatory policies such as the night curfew against the Algerians. The goal was to promote separation and distinguish those who were different as bad. Accepting these callous dealings of the situations instilled the repressive tendencies in Papon’s own manner of policing.

“Papon’s strategy was to manipulate public opinion by diverting attention away from well-documented evidence of police-violence towards anonymous and dubious accusations that could not be substantiated.”71

Papon manipulated numerous people to keep his secrets and withhold the truth. This deceitful behavior lasted for decades, infringing upon every role he took part in. Even at his trial in 1996, Papon would not admit to his wrongdoings in 1961.72 Papon discusses his heroism in his autobiography entitled, *Les Chevaux du Pouvoir* (Horses of Power). In addressing his deeds involving the deportment of Jews and the violent repression of Algerians, Papon manages to romanticize actions that killed thousands and withheld liberties from thousands of others. House and MacMaster illustrate this well in their statement,

“Papon claimed the no massacre had taken place, the FLN gunmen had fired at the police from the safety of the demonstration in order to provoke a bloodbath, and that his men had shown valiant self-discipline in containing a dangerous assault on the seat of government during which only two Algerians had died.”73

Through the trial and the study of Papon’s misdeeds, it can be seen that there was a larger driving force behind the violence and suppression of human rights that he was

71 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 148
73 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 7
involved in. It was the French government who elected him the Prefect of Police, aware of his aggressive tendencies in colonial Algeria. De Gaulle, conscious of Papon’s involvement in the Algerian killings, awarded Papon the Légion d’Honneur the same year as the Paris massacre. Why was he rewarded for his violent tactics? Why would the French government appoint a man of such discriminatory values if those were not also their values? This will be discussed further in the Conclusion when the links through history are regarded in relation to the present.

Maurice Papon, Prefect of Paris Police circa 1940s

**Reaction of the Press:**

The night of the event photographers and journalists followed the crowds, attempting to capture the chaos before their eyes. But censorship of the press during the war prevented many from publishing what they had captured, afraid of backlash by the police. The French government was not the only one involved in the “burying” of information. The GPRA (Gouvernement provisoire de la République algérienne) would not let current events of violence or discrimination interfere with the negotiation process.
that was moving towards finalizing independence.\textsuperscript{74} The cover-up of the events was called an \textit{acte forclos}, a term invented by Michel Laronde.\textsuperscript{75} This term refers to the act of preventing media from publishing the events, or completely shutting one out of an event. Despite French and Algerian attempts to cover-up the violent results of the police involvement in the demonstrations, media soon began publishing the official story issued by the police. Chapter 3 will go more in detail on the extent to which the media published this. What can be said is that the reaction of the media to the repression of the state violence was not obedient. This chapter has used two extremely renowned texts on the event written by historians: \textit{Paris 1961: Algerians, State Terror, and Memory} by Jim House and Neil MacMaster and \textit{La Bataille de Paris: 17 octobre 1961} by Jean-Luc Einaudi. Einaudi uses the testimony of journalists, police, and witnesses—any and everyone involved—he includes their stories to build an account of the event. This aids in the compilation of memories of the demonstrations. House and MacMaster’s text provides a chronological mapping of the events, pinpointing those involved while also combining discovered artifacts to recreate the event. Both of these texts are both widely regarded and discussed as they provide wide-ranging information on October 17, 1961 with varying opinions integrated into the narratives.

While news of the event was kept “hush-hush” in France, i.e. not circulated or discussed till years, decades after, the FLN demonstrations found its way into newspapers around the world. Unsurprisingly, the international press reaction proved to be greater than that of the French, due to the lack of censorship in neighboring nations and beyond.

\textsuperscript{74} House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 156
\textsuperscript{75} Laronde, M. “Effets d’histoire: Représenter l’histoire colonial forclos,” International Journal of Francophone Studies, 10/1+2: 139-155, 2007) 147
Instances appear “In the Absence of the Archives”, where articles and books were written in response to the massacre, but they found no leverage in France due to the government’s power of control and voice. Moreover the international press was not intimidated by the French state, and chose to publish the “un”official story. Pakistan, Egypt, India, and Ghana published blatant words against the violence of the French police, the story of violence receiving most attention by the Third World. K.S. Karol is recorded to have stated that due to the silence from the West, “‘the West as a whole will ultimately have to pay the price for the Paris Pogrom.’”76 Western nations like Britain and the United States showed concern over the fate of the Algerian people who felt that they had to demonstrate, but the West sympathized only so far. The response ultimately varied according to ideological considerations with nations spouting similar stories of the massacre or “lack of”.

“By the thousands, Algerians manifested yesterday in Paris.” October 18th, 1961

Critical publications of the official report or addressing the police repression were few and far between in France, but some newspapers like *L’Humanité* and *Libération* lightly discussed the violence that occurred.77 What helped the most in spreading knowledge was

77 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 223
the publication of narratives or eyewitness accounts of the demonstrations used in newspapers like Libération, Témoignage, and Le Monde who all published accounts from people or letters of witnesses.

**Reaction of the French Public:**

“If the events of “October 17”—a sobriquet of convenience and the rhetorical embodiment of the massacre’s failure to find traction in the national narrative—have long been repressed in the French collective psyche, it is not simply a result of the efficiency with which police operations made the event invisible, but rather the product of complex institutional forces that conspired to render the historical record invisible, foreclosing—for nearly 50 years—the possibility of historiographical operations.”

The government and police readily overlooked the aftermath of the violence they had allowed to develop, and thus the French public did the same. The public learned from their leaders, ignoring that which seemed insignificant or unproblematic to their own lives. The public witnessed the scenes of violence and lived through the displays of police brutality. The demonstrations occurred in the streets and the heart of Paris. It was not possible for the public to entirely overlook the events, but the influence of their political leaders imposed such ideas of ignorance that the French public willingly went along. The public trusted the word of the police and such naïve allegiance permitted the public to be blinded from the truth that was seeping out of the press little by little. This cannot be said for every individual as there were the cases of doctors and train workers

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78 Brosgal, Lia. “In the Absence of the Archive (Paris, October 17, 1961)”. *South Central Review* 31.3 (Spring 2014). 4, 47.
who tried to speak out against the violence but were stopped from repeating what they had seen, thus silencing their moral voice.

The French public did not disregard the brutality of the French police. While the inquiry of the case may not have been successful, it did bring forward people to speak against Papon and the police repression. According to an article in *Le Monde* from November 1, 1961, during the Senate inquiry, Muslim students gathered to object to the violence suffered by Algerians and declare their solidarity.\(^7^9\) House and MacMaster discuss the rising up of humanitarian left-wing protests in response to the inhumane actions of the police.\(^8^0\) People saw this as a large political occurrence that could bring more tension to racial relations. Paul Rousseau, a delegate of the SGP in the 10\(^{th}\) arrondissement, could not understand the reasoning of the French’s brutal tactics,

> “Mais croyez-vous qu’emprunter le chemin de la violence aidera à résoudre une question dont le gouvernement cherche encore la solution acceptable?”\(^8^1\)

> “But do you believe that taking the violent path will help resolve a problem for which the government is still searching for an acceptable solution?”

Despite people such as Paul Rousseau who was on the inside of the event happenings, the general voice of the French public has been assumed as uninterested and uncaring. The years after resulted in few outbreaks against the French state. People were afraid of change and refused to challenge the official discourse, in turn, the French public realized the violence that had taken place but continued to live under a government that allowed a massacre to happen in their streets. The repression was not the cause of the people, but

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\(^8^0\) House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 226-227

\(^8^1\) Einaudi, Jean-Luc. 142
the institutionalized exclusionary tendencies of the French allowed for the government to overlook those who did comment on the injustice of police treatment against Algerian protesters.

**The Impact of the Repressive Violent French State**

The FLN, passionate about a movement towards equal social liberties and political voice, rose up to peacefully protest an exclusionary curfew put in place by the Prefect of Police, Maurice Papon in 1961. Yet the institutionalized exclusionary policies and brutal tactics of coercion employed in colonial Algeria impacted the methods of the French state causing the French police to transform a peaceful act of demonstrating into a battle in the heart of Paris. These same practices prompted officers to commit acts of brutality against people who sought only the same liberties as the officers. Through the examination of the French state during the decades before the massacre, all sources point to the state as the issue. The state encouraged the censorship, manipulation, brutality, and dishonesty that bred the repressive officers and government of France, in turn infiltrating the public and promoting the forgetting of the October 17\textsuperscript{th}, 1961.

As Chapter two has examined the events of October 17\textsuperscript{th}, 1961 and its after effects of collective memory loss, Chapter three will analyze three important sources of information that came in response to the massacre: a satirical newspaper, a novel, and a film. Similarly, Chapter three will utilize the three primary sources to demonstrate the impact of the French state’s repressive behavior on public memory. These sources pinpoint key sections of time since the massacre where the revelations of memory have been interpreted by through different means.
CHAPTER THREE: The Use of a Satirical Newspaper, a novel, and a film to convey memory of October 17\textsuperscript{th}, 1961

As the French government dealt with the repercussions of a violent state outbreak in their capitol, the media scrambled to take advantage of the government’s gap in attention, hoping to share with the world the monumental events of the past several days. Yet despite the numerous assemblies and growing suspicion of the government members, the police maintained a strong hold on the media. This is not to say that the media was uninvolved in the process. Quite the opposite, newspapers released accounts the day after October 17\textsuperscript{th}, rallying against the Algerian protesters and imposing the police verified story of FLN violence. \textit{Le Monde} and \textit{France-Soir} initially supported the police version, and other newspapers just as \textit{Le Parisien Libéré, L’Aurore, Paris-Match} likewise went along with the idea of Algerian brutality, claiming it supported the opinion of “the aggressive nature” that most media outlets formed of Algerians\textsuperscript{82}. It was not until three or four days following the start of the event that newspapers began to question the validity of the police reports and publications emerged stating that the demonstrations had been largely peaceful. The expansion of knowledge brought further questioning to the police and witnesses started emerging. Initially, the news circulated in the hub of Algerian \textit{bidonvilles}, limiting knowledge of those who were not in the Algerian sphere of Paris. 

\textsuperscript{82} Thénault, ‘La Presse silencieuse?’ and House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 223
But as the police version lost traction among the newspapers, the testimonies and narratives grew in circulation, amplifying the public’s attention.

This chapter will concentrate on three sources of information that provide unique perspectives on October 17th, 1961. Throughout the years following the demonstrations, certain decades have produced revivals of La Bataille de Paris such as in 1981 when a few select French historians were able to view the police archives, while other times have repressed the event further. The three sources—a satirical newspaper, a novel, and a film, emerge in three different periods, with each source representing varied access to documents, media outlets, etc. of the demonstrations. The range of periods will aid in understanding the gradual progression of knowledge of the repression, followed by knowledge of the initial reaction of the police, media, and public. Gradually from newspaper to novel to film, more information became readily available. It needs to be reiterated that public information throughout the decades after the event has been extremely limited. Due to the delayed classification of official archives, an agreed upon version of the demonstrations was not possible, and that still does not exist in the present. With such dissonance in mind, it must be acknowledged that some sources carry biased arguments while others try their best at an impartial version, relying on witness stories to corroborate the events.

Upon analyzing sources that provide key information regarding October 17th, 1961 at varying points of time, the reoccurring repression emphasized throughout Chapter two will take a different approach in this chapter. While the collective repression within France will still persist for decades after, a timeline of anamnesis intervenes and has begun to prevail in the recent decades. Anamnesis is the recalling of memory or the
recollect something, bringing past things to the present. This is to say that there has been a very gradual process of recalling of memory through different methods and varying sources. Newspaper publications such as *L’Express* and *Esprit* emphasized that such violent events had been occurring for decades under French rule in colonial Algeria and the current war in Algeria. *Les Temps modernes* did not want to differentiate between the actions of the Vichy state and the actions of 1961, but they were the few who criticized the police as going too far. Newspaper publications such as *L’Express* and *Esprit* emphasized that such violent events had been occurring for decades under French rule in colonial Algeria and the current war in Algeria. *Les Temps modernes* did not want to differentiate between the actions of the Vichy state and the actions of 1961, but they were the few who criticized the police as going too far.83 Newspapers first began the recount of the event, but then subsided as other events quickly took the center stage, like the Charonne massacre of 1962, which prompted more national and international coverage than that of the Algerian massacre of 1961. The responsibility of recall then came to develop through novels, as they offered an unveiling of the events without a blatant reveal. Key leaders could be renamed, geography was changed, but the cover-up of state violence against Algerians remained the same. When select historians were finally able to review closed documents by the French government, this allowed for the event to gain ground within the historical realm. Specifically the texts discussed in Chapter two by Einaudi and Brunet, concentrate on records that were not released to the public until decades later. But when the archives were finally opened in October 2011, overwhelming amounts of information came out.85 While there were many films throughout the decades before, the declassification of the archives prompted more visual productions as at last photographs and videos that had been confiscated were released. Lia Brozgal proposes a term to

83 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 223-224
84 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster. 17-18
85 Brosigal, Lia. 49
describe the effects of such a late declassification of an event, “anarchive.”86 The satirical newspapers, texts, films, etc. that emerged using classified police documents, has allowed for “unofficial” stories to have just as much significance as the recently released “official” stories. Essentially, due to the unique circumstances involving the archives of October 17th, the “official” and “unofficial” stories have no superiority over the other. “Anarchive” literally refers to being without an official state archive—the lack of archive. France had already repressed these events in the memory of the public by denying involvement and quickly moving on. As a result, the continued repression in the state’s archives created a voracious need amongst journalists and the public for information.

“Over the course of the five decades that followed, the police archives of October 17 were subject to regulations that prevented their transmission to the public (a category which included not only the casually curious but also eminent historians and journalists). Historical accounts of October 17 began to emerge in the mid-1980s; in light of the classified status of the police archives, however, scholars relied on other forms of documentation (FLN archives, eyewitness testimony, and coroner’s records) to ground analyses often in contradiction with one another.”87

Brosgal refers to the “absence” or void that existed due to the “classified” documents. It is this “absence”, which spurred the movement of satirical newspaper articles, fictional texts, and films that has compiled stories to “fill in” the gap of information erased by the French state through these “unofficial” archives, anarchives.

86 Brosgal, Lia. 50
87 Brosgal, Lia. 7
Satirical Newspaper: *Le Canard enchaîné*

While there exist archives and cabinets containing physical copies of these publications, the majority of the newspapers and stories surrounding the early weeks after the event are not to be found online. The limited online presence makes it difficult for researchers who do not have the time or resources to thus track down hard copies of such articles. Yet there are still publications that surface from time to time online. The publication from a satirical newspaper that was found on E-bay will be analyzed to identify the significance of this “anarchive”—what was learned through pieces of unconventional information on the Algerian massacre such as this satirical article that produced knowledge on the event despite the police’s repressive action?

Published on October 21, 1961, only days after the event, this publication is written in a manner as to poke fun at the police. *Le Canard enchaîné*, meaning *The Chained Duck* or *The Chained Newspaper*, is a satirical newspaper founded in 1915 during World War I. Due to it being a publication in a satirical article, the government was less likely to vehemently oppose its release. The newspaper features leaks and investigative journalism looking at inside sources of the French government, the French political world, and the French business world. Typically, publications address a variety of issues, concentrating on news events, political and social. The publication is composed of an 8-page format, of which, 5 articles will be analyzed. As this is a satirical newspaper, the publications are all written with a political, social, or economic goal in mind. The publication of October 21, 1961 has the title, “*Comment ça va le monde?—Caïn—chaos*” (How is the world doing—Cain—chaos), which immediately references the recent events on the streets of Paris. The five articles that will be discussed from the publication all
refer to the events of October 17, 1961. The formats differ from a normal article to that of a comic. These five texts clearly indicate the knowledge of the FLN demonstrations within Paris, and the fact that despite pressure from the government, information was still being spread.

**Article 1: “Le Marmite de Papon” (The Blitz of Papon)**

The publication begins with a traditional article that covers half of the first page, reading “Le Marmite de Papon” (The Blitz of Papon). The “Bombardment”, “attack”, “onslaught” of Papon—all negative words that concentrate on the harmful impact of Papon’s influence. The focus of this article is a metaphorical “bomb” that has exploded on Paris and those responsible are Maurice Papon and Roger Frey, the Minister of Interior. As a result of this “bomb”, unknown fallout is inevitable, but whom will it affect? In the article, the bomb is referred to as the bomb “Haine” because the “bomb” embodied the police violence and brutality during the demonstrations, the hate that the police had bottled up against the Algerians. Released in response to the seven years of war raged between France and Algeria, it resulted in chaos. The “clean” bomb of “Haine” made for a dirty war. The police seemed to massacre without any consequence to them. Paris is outraged by this bomb, what will the fallout mean for them? But the author of the article, R. Tréno, states it could result in the loss of *la nation française, l’âme française* (the French nation, the French soul). The reparations of such violent acts could cost the nation its very soul. What does this mean for those who instigated the “bomb”? Tréno decries Papon and Frey, mocking them, “*Belle besogne, monsieur Frey! Joli travail, monsieur Papon!*” (Beautiful job, Nice Work) And who assisted you the author asks? The police agents respond Papon and Frey enthusiastically. This article provides open
disapproval of Papon and Frey’s actions. Much emphasis is placed upon Papon and his involvement, his culpability that does not appear to phase his heroic vision of himself. “*Capable à la fois de défendre la ‘patrie du socialisme’ et de détruire toute l’humanité*” (Capable at the time of both defending “the homeland of socialism” and destroying all humanity. The accusations against Papon are not small. The satirical article makes it obvious that the atrocious deeds of Papon are public news; it is just up to the public as to whether or not they want to believe. Questioning his colleagues, Tréno asks, “Well my colleagues, what have you heard of the “bomb”, ‘*cette bombe Haine*’? “You don’t know? I doubt that.” Even journalists denied acknowledgement of the events, despite seeing articles and being blatantly prevented from publishing certain things by the police. Tréno ends the article by stating, “It would be an honor for me to be dragged to the courts. I would not be the only one, thank you God.” The courts no longer have authority over the people of France. How can they when they allow rampant brutality by those leaders who are supposed to enforce the law?

This article against Papon supports the aforementioned information of Papon’s guilt yet continued excused behavior. Tréno clearly points out that the problem did not lie solely in the hands of Papon and Frey who issued for the police officers to take action. No, the problem is a deeper institutional illness that had infected all the branches: the police, the courts, the people of France, and the soul of France.

**Article 2: “Cinglante réplique au F.L.N.” (Scathing response to the FLN)**

The second article in this publication that references the FLN demonstrations provides a satirical account of an OAS march. This article lives up to the legacy of *Le Canard enchaîné* by sarcastically recounting an OAS march and emphasizing the French
government’s blatant acceptance of the OAS and its terrorist agenda, which prompts a “scathing response” to the approach of the French police. The police concentrate their violence on the terrorists they see most guilty, the FLN, while the OAS who are just as guilty of sabotage and assassinations receive none of the police repression. The article begins slowly, explaining the events of the march, members of the OAS gather together, chanting in the streets, crying, “Algérie française” (French Algeria). Then quickly the article takes a turn toward the absurd, illustrating the ease of an OAS march. The “scathing response” as the title insists, is rather the opposite. Instead of the protesters being arrested and detained, beaten while they wait, they are driven to salons, attending a little party. Then the Interior minister instructs the police to not interrogate the protesters too much, as they will soon be back in their groups again, repeating the same thing. The mocking tone is heavily imposed. The article is clearly doing so in reference to the complete opposite treatment of the FLN march. It is obvious the author, Jean-Paul Grosset, knows the truth of the FLN demonstrations and of the violence that the police demonstrated used against the protesters, yet the OAS experienced all the grace of the French police. Grosset’s “scathing response” is intriguing as it provides a fairytale picture of what the OAS experienced while the FLN received the brunt of the police retaliation.

How did the French government justify their unfair treatment of the two terrorist groups? Such repressive tendencies to overlook the truth of an issue brings to surface many problems. Through the words of Grosset, it is easy to believe the scene of police preference to those of their own kind as colonial Algeria institutionalized such racism, but it is difficult to grasp how such unequal treatment of two groups could be justified.

Article 3: “Le festival des aveugles” (Festival of the blind)
At the Palais des Sports, a scheduled concert to be performed by Ray Charles was postponed till later as the arena was one of the places used as a detention center. This article by Gabriel Macé, involves the mocking of the demonstrations, entitled: “Le festival des aveugles” (The festival of the blind). There is a comic illustration on the side, which shows two cops escorting Ray Charles away from his concert venue Palais des Sports and towards the Parc des Expositions, which was also used to detain protesters. The figure of Ray Charles is captioned saying, “Mais puisque je vous dis que je suis Ray Charles!...” (But I’m telling you that I am Ray Charles!) It brings to light the extreme racial discrimination within France. Anyone with black or dark skin was assumed to be the current “bullied” ethnicity of the time. As in this case, Ray Charles, an American singer, is mistaken for an Algerian violating the night curfew. He is grouped together with the protesters that occurred a couple days before because of the color of his skin.

**Article 4: “Le flic aux Africains” (Cop to the Africans)**

Instead of a traditional article, this excerpt has bullet points asserting the relationship between North Africans and the police, stating comments like, “violent clashes between Algerians and the guardians of the peace”, the tension is perceived throughout France. Algerians are made out in this passage as the problem, ces fous (these crazies). They bring their drama and live in the bidonvilles or under the bridges… These points of declaration about the relationship between the police and Algerians assert clarity on the demonstrations, condensing the week of events into a matter of lines. The author, Jean-Paul Grosset (the same author as the first article), sarcastically refers to the Algerians as the ones who have brought upon the violence, but it is obvious in his

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88 Shepard, Todd. *The Invention of Decolonization: the Algerian War the Remaking of France.*
opinion it is really the police who are to blame. The police do not fear the violence of North Africans, they are just happy to arrest them. Frey and Papon are once again mentioned. Frey’s advice is to send the Algerians back to their country of origins. The police are violent, and they disregard the emotions and liberties of North Africans. These points reiterate the control of the police and the lack of voice that North Africans had; the relationship was one of inequality. It was this inequality that pushed Algerians to protest, and it was this inequality again that allowed the police to cover-up their violent hand in the demonstrations.

Article 5: “Comment se faire ‘discriminer-racial’”—a comic (How to racially discriminate)

The last of the articles is rather a comic, a “how to” on being racially discriminating. The comic gives steps on the process, tinged by sarcasm directed at the French state. The process is as follows: 1. Make sure to notice the difference of skin color in your surroundings 2. Paint yourself green 3. Wait till 11:30pm then stick some feathers in your hair or cap 4. Go point at your workplace “avec d’autres puent-la-bière des Jerrycanvillie environnants” (with other stinky beers from the surrounding Jerrycanville) 5. Then go discreetly get the attention of the gentlemen police 6. Make acquaintances with them 7. From there, they will bring you to a meeting place, which has hot whiskey 8. Finally they will kindly bring you back home around 5am 9. Where your wife listening to the raccoon’s family is waiting for you in tears The comic is poking fun at the demonstrations, making reality into something of dress-up, a game. Instead of presenting the negative relationship between police and the person of color, the comic makes it seem like a fun outing where upon meeting the police, they will bring you to a party and then
escort you home. This was in essence what the French public wanted to believe had happened between the police and Algerian protesters. Similar to the other pieces in *Le Canard enchaîné*, this comic strip emphasizes the lack of attention to the severity and violence that surrounded the events of October 17, 1961. The first days after, even newspapers still believed the official report of the police, which claimed, “that the police had dispersed a demonstration which the mass of Algerians had been forced to attend by militants and ‘gun shots were aimed at the police forces who returned fire.” Most mass publications—*Le Parisien Libere, L’Aurore, Paris-Match*, recounted the official version. While these few articles have referenced and illustrated that knowledge of the police repression existed, it should be understood that this was not widespread. It required months, years, and decades for awareness or the reality to be raised. The repression of the event denied the punishment of those responsible and acknowledgement of their wrongdoing.

While the police were not able to repress all counter-narratives, the French collective sentiments opposed critique of the police. Yet pieces like those from *Le Canard enchaîné* were still published and found their way through the repression. The pieces all demonstrated the knowledge that was available yet overlooked days after October 17, 1961.

**Novel: *Meurtres pour mémoire* (*Murder in Memoriam)*

The following source that conveys the repression of memory of the Algerian massacre is a fictional book, *Meurtres pour mémoire* (*Murder in Memoriam*), written in 1983 by Didier Daeninckx. This fictional account provides an intriguing historical

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89 House, Jim and Neil MacMaster 137.
perspective that occurs two decades after the massacre. As the archives are still not available when this book is written, the author uses anarchives to fill in the missing “path” of the story. Rather than these anarchives being confined to one place, they can be found anywhere. Lia Brosgal points out that these anarchives rely on subjective experiences in the absence of actual archives. 90 Daeninckx demonstrates this technique in his novel, using a fictional observer of the riots in order to discuss the violent demonstrations that were still hush-hush during the 1980’s in France and bring up past taboo events that involved the French government. In fact, there are several examples of other novels written on the event, which similarly reference the Algerian massacre through fiction: William Gardner Smith, The Stone Face (1963); Georges Mattei, La guerre de gusses (1982); Nacer Kettane, Le sourire de Brahim (1985); Medhi Lallaoui, Les beurs de Seine (1986) Leila Sebbar, La Seine était rouge (1999). All of these novels offer fictional treatment of October 17th, 1961 to bring together collective memory of the event and make gathered information more available to the public, even if these novels are not actual “archives”. As can be observed from the dates of publications, the majority of these novels were published around two decades after the demonstrations, except for The Stone Face published in 1963.

Daeninckx’s murder novel takes place in Toulouse, France and follows the investigation of two deaths and the secrets behind these deaths, but underlying the plot is the subject of October 17, 1961. The first death is of the father Roger, the witness of the Algerian massacre, who was assassinated by a member of the OAS, and the second is of his son Bernard, who was researching the father’s history in the archives of Toulouse and

90 Brosgal, Lia. 16
then was murdered. The investigator, Cadin helps to bring the secrets out of the shadows and implicate the Parisian police official as the one responsible. The story follows the investigation of this high-ranking official in the Paris police department, who closely resembles the profile of a real life Prefect of Police, Maurice Papon. Secrets are revealed of 1940’s France and 1960’s France, times of corruption and immoral doings by the French government. The 1940’s saw French police involved in the deportation of French Jews to concentration camps. Some believe that Daeninckx’s novel had a role in bringing Papon to trial over his involvement in the deportation of Jews. While searching for answers, the book also educates the audience on the two hidden histories of France, and how the repression of these events impacted the average person.

Through the eyes of investigator Cadin, the audience is provided ample information on Drancy, the Jewish concentration camp, and the Algerian massacre, and information evolves to discover a connection between the similar police treatment of the two situations. This is where Papon’s fictional character’s role in both affairs comes to the surface. Daeninckx emphasizes that the past must be known to understand the present. Through the discovery of police involvement in Jewish deportation during the Occupation, more came to be understood of the violent demonstrations in Paris during the Algerian War. Known for his use of history in literature, Daeninckx bases the Algerian massacre as the subplot of his narrative to “throw History live and kicking into literature, to make it spew up the things it usually doesn’t talk about.” He uses a mystery novel as

an *anarchive* to draw people in and inform them on an issue that happened 20 years earlier.

**Film: “Ici, on noie les algériens”** (Here we drown Algerians)

Released in the wake of the 50\(^{th}\) anniversary of October 17\(^{th}\), 1961 by Yasmina Adi, “Ici on noie les algériens” (Here we drown Algerians) offers a visual representation of the FLN manifestations that arose in response to the night curfew imposed against Algerians in Paris during the Algerian war of independence. The documentary describes the events of the evening, the prompting of the night curfew and the aftermath of what was meant to be a peaceful march. The documentary opens to the scene of a widowed woman riding in a car across what appears to be a bridge, and then the camera pans to water, la Seine, where the tragedy of the forgotten, chaotic event overflowed. Despite the event having occurred five decades earlier, the despair and loss that the police wrought upon the Algerian demonstrators can be felt in the tone of the witnesses and videos in the documentary. Radio clippings of police broadcasts, protester testimonies, and video clips from the demonstrations are included in the documentary, presenting more factual evidence than many of the sources before had the capability of including. While the documentary “Ici on noie les algériens” is not the first of documentaries or films on the Algerian massacre, unlike others it provides unseen material and ample interviews of witnesses; people who marched, people who lost loved ones, doctors involved in bandaging the injured. But the same story is told throughout the dozens of sources: a peaceful Algerian march was turned violent by the involvement of the French police.

Rather than the satirical approach of the newspaper or the historical fiction approach of the novel, what can be inferred from the documentary is rather a collective
experience. The film offers emotional connection through the stories and personal narratives of the eyewitnesses and protesters interviewed. Rather than a single voice describing the events, several perspectives are shared, presenting a collaborative effort. The voices together embody the common sentiments of the crowd: hurt, despair, loss, confusion, and powerlessness. The theme of the film does not reflect the power hungry “chase” that the police sought, instead Adi approaches the event through the narrative of those involved, demonstrating the moral, human dimension within the brutality of the Algerian massacre. The title of the documentary opens up the film with a very heavy feeling: “ici on noie les algériens” (Here we drown Algerians). This phrase is closely associated with the Algerian massacre, as days after the demonstrations it was painted on a quay alongside the Seine but quickly erased. The removal of this slogan could not be erased from the minds and hearts of those who took part in the demonstrations. They marched alongside men who drowned; they lost loved ones and felt as if they were drowning in the sea of chaos and violence brought on by the police brutality.

“Ici on noie les algériens” (Here we drown Algerians) written on the Pont du Saint-Michel
A crowd of 30,000 Algerians gathered to make their cry for liberty and equality heard. Real newspapers that were displayed in the film labeled the event, “Puissant Mouvement” (Powerful movement). While the Puissant Mouvement describes the outbreak of violence initiated and carried out by the police, what is remembered more than the amount of protesters or the initial goal of peace is the brutality demonstrated by the state. The violent manifestations are nicknamed, “honteuse chasse à l’arabe” (the shameful hunt of Arabs). Photo after photo in the documentary display the fear in the faces of the protesters. Their lives were at stake due to their race. The racial discrimination that enforced the law of French authority in Algeria continued to carry weight in France. One of the protesters states in his testimony, “Our goal was only to free ourselves from colonization, to finally be able to live a life where we could decide our life.”(31:18-28)

The radio clips, tactics, and terms used by the police against the Algerians employ superiors over inferiors. Such blatant discrimination is seen throughout the week of FLN demonstrations, but specifically on October 20th when the women marched in the absence of their arrested husbands. The women interviewed remember asking the police questions about their husbands’ arrests, but the only response was the police arresting them in turn. And yet the women continued to participate in the demonstrations—980 women and 550 children were taken into the hands of the police (54:10).

While some of the clips used in the film did not resurface from the archives until 50 years after the massacre, through several documentaries such as “Ici on noie les algériens”, moments and memories of the massacre have been preserved despite the

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93 Adi, Yasmina, “Ici on noie les algériens”
94 Adi, Yasmina, “Ici on noie les algériens”
French state trying to promote their version of the event that left out much of the truth. Film is capable of visually revealing the events, thus allowing some to relive the event while others the opportunity to understand and see the truth. Despite best attempts to remain neutral, in books and articles, the bias of the author is always involved. In the case of the documentary, the bias of both sides can be overlooked to a certain extent and the public can see the events through the eyes and words of those who experienced the peaceful demonstrations turn violent. Those interviewed, more so than archives, provide living memory of what occurred on October 17, 1961 that for so long has been hidden away.

Adi makes it known that despite the recovery of archives and “memory”, the full truth has not yet been told or acknowledged. The film ends with the headline of newspaper after newspaper reporting the discovery of North Africans in the Seine that appeared soon after the demonstrations, but this headline did exactly what the police wanted to do. It refrained from drawing attention to Algerians or police violence and instead prompted thoughts on the deaths of North Africans, offering none of the important details that go along with October 17, 1961. It was just as the French police wanted it, their violent actions were not recorded, and the people they repressed were not remembered clearly. The newspapers appear to be floating in the water that carries so much weight of the Algerian massacre. The water where bodies of protesters came to rest and the water that covered-up the truth of October 17, 1961. Answers have not been given to many of the questions asked by the protesters and witnesses. Questions remain
despite the decades that have passed. “The victims still wait for the French government to recognize their responsibility in the event.” (1:26:47)\(^9^5\)

\(^9^5\) Adi, Yasmina, “Ici on noie les algériens”
Conclusion: The Reappearance of Memory

French discrimination traces back to colonial times, founding the relationship of Algeria and France on unequal terms. France emphasized their superiority through political and social control, determining Algerian’s liberty in the nation of Algeria. This relationship of superiority vs. inferiority continued in France, and the state persisted to aggravate the relationship with the many restrictions placed upon Algerian immigrants. Specifically, Charles De Gaulle, Maurice Papon, and the French police corroborated in government neglect against the FLN, overlooking obvious acts of injustice, which they committed. In 1961, violence escalated when peaceful protests planned by the FLN branch in Paris were smothered by police brutality. While bits of information were released, the “official” police report lacked much of the truth. The public quickly moved on to other issues, and the media did not have the information to further pursue such a restricted event. Despite the immediate state cover-up and declassified archives, over several decades the event leaked out through bits and pieces of anarchive sources.

The recovery of the Algerian massacre has been a tedious process, spanning decades. Some of the pieces that have uncovered the repressed information were analyzed in this thesis. In Chapter one, the history of Algeria and France’s relationship was examined to understand the beginning dynamics between the two nations. As the turmoil between the two grew during the Algerian war, Chapter two comes into focus, and the specific event of October 17th, 1961 is discussed in detail. A narrative is
presented to guide the reader through the extremities of state involvement and police violence in the FLN protests. In Chapter three, three primary sources expand upon the events of October 17th, 1961. These sources are published in varying times following the Algerian massacre, and thus rely differently on archives versus the declassified archives. From the narrative of primary and secondary sources, a reliable description and understanding of October 17th, 1961 has been forming over the last 30 years. The memories that were repressed and forgotten by the French have resurfaced thanks to the perseverance of historians and the memories of those involved in the Algerian massacre.

The French state permitted a select few French historians to examine the classified archives, but not until October of 2011 were the state archives declassified to the public, making the information available 50 years after October 1961. Yet this small success has meant little in the grand scheme. In 2001, France placed a plaque along the quay by the Seine in honor of the lives lost to the Algerian massacre, it reads: À la mémoire des nombreux Algériens tués lors de la sanglante répression de la manifestation pacifique du 17 octobre 1961 (In memory of the many Algerians killed during the bloody repression of the peaceful demonstration of October 17th, 1961). But at this time, not even the French state had recognized their repression of Algerian deaths resulting from the demonstrations, as state official reports only recorded two deaths. The declassification came after the plaque in 2011, and a year later on October 17th, 2012; François Hollande acknowledged the massacre of Algerians in France. This became the “first governmental recognition of police culpability in the events of October 17”.

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97 Brosigal, Lia. 49
day, the French government has not recognized the possibility of more than 43 deaths from the demonstrations, which is the lowest estimation of any historian. More than protests, La Bataille de Paris led to the suppression of truth regarding the lives of 200 lives. France is still trying to find its way to confront their wrongdoings of the past and admitting to the institutional racism within its nation’s history.

What can be concluded from the research and sources analyzed is one thing in particular: it was not only one person who orchestrated or influenced the state repression and violence that resulted in such a catastrophe. Rather than blaming Maurice Papon or placing all the responsibility on the French state or accusing the French public as the problem, the conclusion can be reached that multiple forces played a part in the Algerian Massacre. De Gaulle, Papon, and the French police were all components of this nation-wide repression, which allowed rampant discrimination and oversaw violent interference in peaceful led demonstrations. So how could the French government appoint two men and employ police of such discriminatory values if those were not also their values? Obviously, France allowed this to happen. The French state and public were complicit in the cover-up of the violence. Despite not openly identifying with such violence, their silence has spoken volumes of the inherent discrimination exclusionary policies passed on from French colonialism in Algeria to the heart of France.

In order for reparations to be made, “anamnesis” has to occur. Memory of the event must be brought to the surface and acknowledged by those who for so long smothered the memory. These sources allow the public to see the progression of

98 Sebbar, The Seine was Red. Trans. by Mildred Mortimer (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana, IUP 2008)
acceptance of memory, which has grown throughout the years as access to documents and police imposed bans have been lifted. Journalists, authors, filmmakers have used their creative outlets and mixed that with the known and rumored information to build anarchives or “archives” of memory. Memory has gained much ground surrounding the Algerian massacre in Paris. While memories and moments of the demonstrations have been lost due to the years of unofficial knowledge and hush-hush, which surrounded and continue to surround the massacre, knowledge and memory about October 17, 1961 still prevail. The lack of archives did not withhold curiosity or investigation into the subject, as can be seen in the sources above.

When beginning this thesis, I planned to analyze French repression and inherent discrimination throughout many levels of the French sphere through a longer timeframe while concentrating more on the modern events. After being introduced to the Algerian massacre and reading the extent of repression that was laced in with the demonstrations, the purpose of this thesis changed to revolve solely around one circumstance of repression of state imposed violence: October 17th, 1961.

“17th October 1961: we do not forget!”
Comment va le monde ? — Cain-chaos

La marmite de Papon

La super-bombe marxiste-léniniste a explosé et l’insignifiance de toutes les médiocres poussées du monde, non communiste y peut plus rien. N’y a-t-il que l’affaire ?

...Marx ou crève !

Tabacs de France

M. Pisani se venge
(Paysans bretons kidnappés à Paris)

Cinglante réplique au F. L. N.
Le festival des aveugles

PARC DES ESPOIRS

PALAIS DES SPORTS

PAResanr

A la manière de Prévert

Chanson des enfants d'Aubervilliers

Petits enfants d'Aubervilliers
De Palepou et puis de Nanterre
Vous voilà la tête la première.
Dans les métaux Maxber, Villiers
Vous êtes les bras de notre maîtresse.

Contre les forces policières
Un monde hostile et sans pitié
La route de la douleur de l'amitié.
Sans eau, sans gaz et sans lumière
Vous êtes les victimes de la guerre.

Dans les boulevards, les rues, dans la ville
Vous êtes les enfants d'Aubervilliers.

Un jour en plein cœur de la ville
L'amitié de vos parents, de vos voisins.
Vous êtes les enfants d'Aubervilliers.

Les deux barrus au rapport

Chorale de la jeunesse et de la famille
Leur voix est une force qui ne se fait pas entendre.

Y a une paie qu'on n'avait pas autant rigolé au Consul des ministres !

Le ministre de la Justice a dû avouer que la situation était devenue critique.

Le procureur général a fait savoir que la justice n'allait pas tarder à agir.

Le parquet a été saisi.

M. le procureur général a été chargé de l'affaire.

En réaction, plusieurs manifestants ont été arrêtés.

La manifestation a été interdite.

La police a procédé à des arrestations massives.

Le gouvernement a décrété l'état d'urgence.

Le préfet de police a ordonné l'expulsion des manifestants.

Le gouvernement a adopté une loi anticlérical.

La société civile a exprimé sa déception.

La manifestation a été interdite.

Le gouvernement a adopté une loi anticlérical.

La société civile a exprimé sa déception.

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La société civile a exprimé sa déception.

La manifestation a été interdite.
MINE DE RENI

Le Festival de la Satire de Reni, qui a été créé en 1979, est une manifestation culturelle annuelle qui se déroule dans la petite ville de Reni, en Roumanie. L'événement est réputé pour ses débats ouverts et ses conférences sur des thèmes politiques, sociaux et culturels. Le festival attire chaque année une grande audience, notamment des journalistes et des écrivains. Les conférences sont animées par des personnalités du monde de la politique, de l'écriture et de l'art, qui abordent des sujets d'actualité et de réflexion. Le Festival de la Satire de Reni a pour objet de favoriser la libre expression et le débat. Les conférences sont accessibles au public et gratuits. Les conférenciers abordent des thèmes variés, allant de l'actualité politique internationale à la littérature contemporaine. Le festival est une occasion privilégiée pour les écrivains et les intellectuels de se rassembler et de discuter des questions qui préoccupent la société. Les conférenciers sont invités à apporter leurs visions personnelles et leurs analyses des événements actuels. Les conférences sont retransmises en direct sur internet, permettant à une audience plus large de participer à l'événement. Le Festival de la Satire de Reni est un événement essentiel pour les intellectuels et les artistes, qui y participent activement et y apportent leur contribution à la liberté de pensée et d'expression.
A travers la presse déchirée
QU'IMPORTE LE FLOCON... MOSCUK et PÉKIN AU FROID... (29-10)...

ABONDANTES CHUTES DE NEIGE SUR LES ALPES ET LE BAS-DAUPHINE

Vivement que la pluie soit remisée ! (Chablais libre, 20-10)

ON LIQUE LIQUIDATION LÉGÈRE

Les noms des 1,108 officiers et sous-officiers mis en congé spécial ne seront pas publiés... (Aventi Année, 29-10, dans les pages principales)

C'était sans foi et sans loi... (France-soir, 29-10)

Les belles bandes... Du Soir de Bruxelles dans les pages principales, deux lettres de fils... (Le Progrès, 29-10)

C'était la moindre des choses... (Cahiers de Paris, 29-10)

A bon vent... Du Progrès du Rhône (29-10) : Cet «Office national du Touchard» était créé en 1859... (Le Progrès, 29-10)

M. Sainte était déjà ministre... (Le Progrès, 29-10)

Mauvaise conduite... Du Parti Libéral (29-10) : Le malheur... Les uns en prétextant le repos, les autres en voyant... (Le Progrès, 29-10)

Prisonnier... D'Ouest-France (29-10) : Dans la braguette, fermeture... La justice a donné l'ordre... (Le Progrès, 29-10)

Pris en flagrant délit... (Le Progrès, 29-10) : Dans la braguette, fermeture... (Le Progrès, 29-10)

Prisonnier... D'Ouest-France (29-10) : Dans la braguette, fermeture... (Le Progrès, 29-10)

Pris en flagrant délit... (Le Progrès, 29-10) : Dans la braguette, fermeture... (Le Progrès, 29-10)

Prisonnier... D'Ouest-France (29-10) : Dans la braguette, fermeture... (Le Progrès, 29-10)

Pris en flagrant délit... (Le Progrès, 29-10) : Dans la braguette, fermeture... (Le Progrès, 29-10)
C'est une gentille amie qui m'a fait la surprise.
Le "louangeur" a annoncé que des saisons de parlementaires, et les journalistes, n'ont pas manqué de prononcer cet hommage. Je suis fière de cette reconnaissance. Elle me donne plus de courage, de volonté, de résolution et de détermination pour poursuivre mes idées et mes projets.

Valentine de Coincoin.

À la mémoire des défenseurs de la cause de la libération de l'Algérie.

Je ne peux que vous dire que j'en suis profondément émue, car j'ai toujours été convaincue de l'importance de la lutte pour la liberté et la justice. Je suis heureuse de voir que mes efforts n'ont pas été vains, et que mes idées sont de plus en plus reconnues par les gens à travers le monde.

Ensemble, nous pouvons continuer à lutter pour un monde meilleur, pour une justice sociale et pour la paix durable.

Je vous remercie sincèrement pour cette reconnaissance, et je vous souhaite de continuer à faire vibrer les cordes de la liberté pour tous les peuples du monde.
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