



'Ni Oiseau ni Poisson': Algerian Jewish Literature

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Abstract

Literature has always been a refuge and a means of resistance for ethnic minorities. Algerian Jewish Literature has evolved through time as a testimony of existence. It reiterates the echo of the Algerian Jewish experience on the Algerian soil with all its intricacies during the French colonization. Algerian Jewish literature provides an interesting workspace to study the historical tie between two religions, two cultures, two memories that split due to a historical choice. The Cremieux decree was a kind of favoritism to Jews that made them absolutely distant from the people they lived with for centuries. The article examines the assimilation of Jews to the French that worked well since the beginning of colonization. Identification with the French has been ultimate and critical in the eyes of the Muslims. With the coming of independence, exile became more and more central. Though exile is a recurrent phenomenon for Jews, it is nevertheless a step in the making of their identity in French society. By 1962, Jews were complete strangers in their native land, and exile became an obligatory step. The Jews have probably whispered the victory of France, and they dreamt of it while aspiring to remain home. As the time for departure neared, many Jews still assumed a happy end for France, but the events went differently.

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1. Introduction

People of my generation have never met a Jew; however, we hear about the famous Jews who are originally from Algeria through the media. (!)In Algeria, Jewish vestiges are part of our patrimony. In each city, there is at least one monument, one shrine or one tomb that speaks against the present invisibility of these people. Roland Bacri recounts in a very funny way how the French invaded Algeria because of a Jewish named Bacri. We cannot distinguish the jokes in English because many words are written in a pataouéte French (pataouéte is a name given to the French dialect of Bab el Oued in Algiers with all its contractions and ellipsis). He wrote:

BACRI: a very important Algerian Family. It is a historical name since we are the cause of the French conquest of Algeria, I do not exaggerate, you'll see. This is how the Bacri wrote their name (before the Cremieux decree because they were not yet French) Arabic: بقري
It means: cowherd. Before their settlement in Algiers, they lived in Livorno, Italy. In 1794, the Bacri, big bankers and international grain traders therefore sold 14 million gold francs wheat to the French Republic, which has never been paid back. The story ended with the landing of the French troops at the beautiful beach of Sidi Ferruch. (@)

Since Bacri-Bushnach's story, the financial situation of the Jewish community has weakened. The consulate of the United States in Algeria Shaler described the degrading situation of Jews, particularly in Algiers. Even if this story is just a pretext for invasion, it is proof of the presence of Jews in Algeria. Benjamin Stora believes that this invisibility is not specific to Algeria, but it is also a phenomenon in France after 1960. The Algerian Jews' reality in France is far from the other "Sephardi", such as Tunisian or Moroccan Jews.(#)

Jewish people did not emerge as a community, they rather melted within Europeans, and their history is still a vacuum in the research of contemporary Algeria. Stora entitled his book "les Trois Exils Juifs d' Algérie" the three Jewish exiles of Algeria. He has rightly mentioned at the beginning of the book the first exile, which happened just after the destruction of the Temple. This occurrence

resulted in the first settlement of the Jewish diaspora in the Maghrib. Algeria was not yet named as such. The second exile is the forced departure of Jews from Andalusia in 1492. (\$) And the last one is to France. Stora then stated cleverly the three Algerian Jewish exiles where he considered the emancipation of the Cremieux decree as the first Algerian exile and the Vichy abrogation of it as the second exile and the independence of Algeria as the third exile. Judaism in Algeria has been seriously taken in charge since the beginning of colonization in 1830. "French authorities generally saw Algerian Jews as corrupt and immoral, but also as potentially useful allies in the conquest of Algeria." (%) They were naturalized French (by the Cremieux decree in 1870), which has challenged all their traditional community structures, divorce and polygamy became defective in the process of assimilation. Algerian Jews eventually become "expatriates" within the country where they have lived for centuries. In 1871, Charles du Bouzet, a former prefect of Oran and a special commissioner in Algeria, insisted that Algerian Jews were oriental in all the details of their daily life. Bouzet believed that even with the Cremieux decree, Jews would remain "strangers to the traditions of the French nationality." (^) Du Bouzet claimed, "Indigenous Israelites are not Frenchmen, but Arabs of Jewish faith." (&) This is why Schreier has probably entitled his book: "Arabs of Jewish Faith". He insisted on the fact that religion was often a minor significance in defining public identities. In 1845, a French attested that many Jews lived equally the same as Arabs. It was perceived in their arms and dresses. It was impossible to differentiate an Arab from a Jew. (*) Their accession to the French nationality is a new "escape from Egypt", as mentioned by Adolphe Cremieux in 1860, the principal actor of this naturalization. He considered Algiers like Egypt, where his brothers were freed from servitude. He said talking about Algerian Jews: "look at the progress they have made ... look at the huge intellectual distance they have made in comparison with Arabs ... They want to be French, they are worthy of it and they will become soon." (-)

For Bernard Lewis, the Jewish communities of Europe were very few in comparison to the Jews of the Islamic world. The Jewish diaspora in Algeria was consequent in number and importance in comparison to Tunisia and Morocco; moreover, they were staying

in Algeria centuries before the French coming. Algerian Jews had their own literature. They also had their own periodical press. Eleven weekly newspapers originated in Algeria. According to Robert Attal, Algerian Jews have managed to maintain Arab-Jewish literature of their own, despite colonization and the dominant influence of the French.(+) They were outstandingly advanced. Lewis said: "The Jewish communities of Europe formed a kind of cultural dependency on the Jews of the far more advanced and sophisticated Islamic world."(!) This is also explained differently in Blanche Bendahan's *Mazaltob*, where a Jewish as quenazi is treated as a foreigner in Tetouan; however, she is heavily discriminated against by Jewish Sephardi. She said:

It is already quite unfortunate for her, poor lady, to belong to the plebeian branch of Israel! As Sephardim (of Sephard, the Hebrew name of Spain) consider themselves aristocrats in comparison to their worldwide spread co-religionists. And when you ask a Sephardi why this prejudice - as paradoxical as it may seem prejudices often have reason - here's what he says: "Our ancestors, Spanish Jews emigrated to Palestine before the destruction of second Temple. They have not experienced the terrible siege of Jerusalem. They have not experienced the excruciating humiliation to bend under the yoke of the winner until the exodus from Spain in March 1492 - their story was brilliant. They participated in the councils of kings. They had their tents in the armed campaign of war. They were ennobled, they had coats of arms and vassals.(@@)

In 1307, Ibn Khaldun attested in his writings the presence of Jews in the Maghrib and Tlemcen in particular. Some historians say that even the queen of the Aures, the woman warrior, the Kahina who fought the Arabs in the seventh century, was Jewish of Berber origin. Alain Moutot said that it is likely that soon after the destruction of the First Temple, some Jews found shelter in this new Promised Land. This holy land is Tlemcen, the beloved city of Ibn Khaldoun. It was called the pearl of the Maghreb; people think of Tlemcen as a holy city, 'the well-guarded by God' (##). It is likely that some autochthones were already converted to Judaism.(\$\$) However, they were living in Agadir, the suburb of Tlemcen, and it

was only after the rabbi Ephraim Aln Kaoua, a faith healer who was able to heal the Tlemcenian princess, that the Jews moved to the center of the city. Tlemcennien Muslims marked this event. The divine messenger refused any personal gift. He asked only for a sheepskin that he cut into strips, and then he requested an equivalent number of streets for the stay of his coreligionists. From the year of grace 1393, the Jews who were until then confined to Agadir were finally living in the heart of Tlemcen. The holiness of the rabbi Ephraim Aln Kaoua has made Tlemcen the western Jerusalem for many Jewish refugees: Spanish, Moroccan, and Tunisian. This great miracle was commemorated once a year. It was followed by the Hilloula ceremony that marked the life of every Jewish pilgrim for the entire year.%%) Emile Moattialso talks about a Rabbi named Moatti, who is considered the founder of the Jewish community in Oran, whose tomb is also venerated by Muslims.^^)

The Jews of Algeria and the Islamic world lived under the dhimma. It is the result of the pact of Omar Ibn Khattab, which is Muslim protection for monotheist religions or people of the book (ahl al kitab). Many historians consider this pact as an act of tolerance. However, the dhimmi status involved several duties. The main issue was the payment of a poll tax (djizia). Dhimmis also had to show political and military loyalty to the Muslim power. They had to respect the Islamic religion. At the beginning of the Hijri era, 90 % of the Jewish population lived in countries under Muslim rule, the contract of dhimma was generally respected.&&) Many historians consider the Muslim world as a tolerant world vis-à-vis Jewish people. The only period where the Jews suffered in the Islamic world was the period of the Almohads; they were unforgiving with the Jews who refused to convert. In 1146, they strictly obliged the Jews of Tlemcen to choose between death and conversion to Islam.**) There is a main passage in the Quran that addresses other religions: "Indeed, those who believed and those who were Jews or Christians or Sabeans [before Prophet Muhammad] - those [among them] who believed in Allah and the Last Day and did righteousness - will have their reward with their Lord, and no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve."(--)

The divine text is clear on the issue of Muslim tolerance toward other religions. Goitein comments that the strong belief of prophet Mohamed that both Jewish and Christian religions contain the same truth. He said: "Muslim law guarantees to Jews and Christians the free exercise of their religion provided that it is not offensive to Muslims."(++) Lewis asserts, "There is nothing like Auschwitz in Islamic history"(+!), in fact, many Jews regretted the dhimmi status during the Vichy government with its pro-Nazi policies, particularly that Algerian Jews preferred France to Israel, in comparison to Moroccan and Tunisian Jews.(+@) The Vichy government incited the Muslims to rebel against Jews. They wanted them to regain the status of the pre-cremieux decree period; moreover, they obliged them to wear the yellow star. Jews agreed that only unity could help them in times of adversity. In Blanche Bendahan's book, the grandmother said to her little girl: "O Mazaltob, despite the jealous hatred of nations, it is solidarity that will allow the descendants of Jacob to reach the end of time!"(+#) This story is one among many that shows the relationship between Jews and Muslims in Algeria. It expresses many affinities between Jews and Muslims in what concerns religion. Etoile, the major character in Ben Aych's book, talks candidly about this religious empathy. She said:

Muslims are more like us with God than Catholics. They are more like us, once and for all with God, we Jews and Muslims are rather concerned with ourselves, we are not constantly in the process of debating whether it is good or bad ...It must be easier with God. No need to ask for forgiveness all the time, once a year is enough, as for us we have the Day of Atonement or Ramadan for Muslims.(+\$)

There is also a cultural empathy between Jews and Muslims. They both eat the meat of slaughtered animals. They both practice circumcision, and they particularly favour baby boys.

In the book of Mazaltob written by the Algerian Jewish author Blanche Bendahan, the impotent grandmother said to her little girl: "O Mazaltob, my light, your name means: good luck. I wish you a hundred years of happy life. You will get married. You will have boys. In your house, there will be circumcisions and communions! ... O Mazaltob, the face of joy, pure diamond, your name and your

beauty will bring you happiness.”(+%) The separation between Jews and Muslims occurred during the French colonisation. Mazaltob preferred education, and her emancipation was through schooling. The French model fascinated deeply young Jews, and this was at the heart of many historical changes in the Maghreb. Mazaltob paid the price for having transgressed the Mellah’s code, which is basically derived from religion, just like Muslims. Many details in the story remind us of the cultural similarities between Muslims and Jews in Algeria. Jewish literature mirrors social and cultural changes that shaped the new North-African Jew.

The Crémieux Decree encouraged many Algerian Jews to leave Algeria. Benjamin Stora said in a conference on the 21st January 2014 in Algiers that the separation between Muslims and Jews did not start with the Crémieux Decree in 1870 that gave the French nationality to 35000 Algerian Jews. Separation is due for him to be the result of a long historical process.(+^) Once liberated from the dhimmi status, the Jews in Algeria stopped showing any will to integrate culturally and socially with the surrounding society. They did not share the same fear concerning French imperialism, such as the Muslims. While they accepted the European institutions, they became suspect in the eyes of much of the population that had started considering them as more or less faithful agents of imperialism. It is a serious accusation, particularly that nationalism started to emerge within Arab scholars in the late nineteenth century. The French colonisation has definitely succeeded in breaking ethnic relations since Jews have immediately embraced the French language and culture. Benjamin Stora shows in his book some photos of his own family; in the oldest ones, the oriental clothing is kept, whereas, for the new generation (after the first world war), all the members of his family are dressed like Europeans. We cannot differentiate them from French. The Jewish empathy to the coloniser is perceived in the smallest details of life. The identification to the French was to the detriment of the religious feeling. The French model has somehow distanced Algerian Jewish people from their own religion.

It is quite arresting because, before the French colonization, Jews adapted fully to the Islamic world. Bernard Lewis underlines the Judeo-Muslim relations. He said: “A comparison between the Jews

of Christendom and the Jews of Islam shows to what extent the Jewish minorities followed the Muslims and adopted the norms of the dominant communities, even in matters of intimate personal and religious significance.”(+*) Lewis cited the example of polygamy that was practiced by the Jews of the Islamic world and completely banned by the Jews of Christendom. The affinity was also culinary because both Jews and Muslims have some divine restrictions in relation to food.(+-)

Today, it seems that there is an intentional forgetting of the slightest details of the past of these two communities together. It is like some divorced couples; while they separate, they tear out the memories of their common past. Their rupture is very far from the history of Jews in Tunisia and Morocco.

Jacques Derrida, one of the famous Algerian Jews, expresses the problems of identity in being a Jew in colonial Algeria. He states, “In the world where I lived they said ‘Catholics’ they called ‘Catholics’ all the French who are not Jews, although they were sometimes Protestants, or, I do not know, orthodox. ‘Catholics’ meant everything that was neither Jew nor Berber or Arabic. These young indigenous Jews could not then easily identify with ‘Catholics’, Arabs or Berbers. They did not speak the language. Two generations ago, some of their grandparents spoke Arabic, at least some Arabic.”(!!!) The identification of the French was also observed in the language, as stated by Derrida. The last generation of Jews in Algeria does not speak Arabic.

2. The Jewish Departure from Algeria

Benjamin Stora demonstrates the Jewish departure with a photo at the beginning of his chapter in his book *Les Trois Exils Juifs D’Algérie*. The photo shows the terrible exile of June 1962. He describes the picture as follows:

A crowd is about to embark on the ship in the port of Algiers. All people are visibly distraught, preoccupied with their luggage. They are anxious also because most have never crossed the sea. Despite the heat of June, they are wearing pullovers, coats, hats, to take the maximum of clothes, because each person is allowed to take two

suitcases only... My parents did not talk to us, they expected us to be asleep. My sister and I could hear them whispering in the middle of the night through the wall. They were extremely anxious, they had questions but they knew they would eventually leave, there was no other solution.(@@@)

Exile implies suffering, separation, unsettledness, an extreme awareness that one has lost all that he has. Algerian Jews were entirely conscious that they would have a new home. "Next year in Jerusalem" is a famous expression whispered by Jewish people to express hope and trust in the future. Despite the fact that Jerusalem for them is a metaphor for a stable place where they feel free, very few Jewish Algerians went to Jerusalem. At that moment, France was the Promised Land. Félix Allouche was the protagonist of Zionism in North Africa, but he failed since Dr. Seban asserts: "We can not say there was Zionism in Algeria or systematic Zionist policy. There has been, in fact, some mysticism in respect to Eretz Israel." The rabbi Choubana explains that the religious relationship between the Jewish community and Israel is not associated with the ideology of Theodor Herzl, Max Landauor Jabotinsky; it is rather linked to the synagogue. Rabbi Chouchana believes that Algerian Jews came to Israel for an ideal rather than something else.(###)

Benjamin Stora talks about that decisive moment of departure. He said:

My mother cleaned the apartment until the last minute. On the 12th of June, she checked that everything was clean before leaving. My father closed the door, he slipped the key in his pocket, each one of us grabbed his two suitcases and we left. As if we were going on vacation. But we knew that it was over, we will not return. That moment was the most important in our life, a leap into the unknown. To reassure us, or presumably to reassure himself, my father repeated: "Do not worry kids, I have a plan."(\$\$\$)

The exile to France became more and more compelling. Gil Ben Aych also gives an interesting account of the experience of exile in his book *Le Livre d'Etoile*. His major character, Etoile, experiences all the difficulties of an old lady who spent all her life in Tlemcen and how dreary it was for her to leave Algeria to join the rest of the

family that was already expatriated in France. Etoile left her spring water. She said: "In Arabic, Tlemcen means "spring water" I was born in the spring and I have to return to it, Tlemcen my darling water spring, my water bag."(%%%) Etoile agrees finally to go but her heart remained in Algeria, she accepted to go because she was sure that she couldn't do otherwise. She recounts how she was obliged to quit the tranquillity of Tlemcen. She said: "One day, I was so calm in Tlemcen, at home, it was the "events of war", but it was quiet in Tlemcen, I would prepare the Sabbath, it was Friday night, you know, there is much to do on a Friday night."(^^^) She had to prepare the tfina and the couscous while her daughter came to inform her that they had to leave. Etoile said: "leister"(&&&), these two Arabic words combined here to mean " may God protect us" Her daughter replied: "We won't stay anymore in Tlemcen, it is no more possible, it is not possible, we should resign ourselves, you see all these attacks, not always in Tlemcen, but in all Algeria, we see the bombings more and more, war, in July it is the independence."(***)

The author is probably talking about the event of 22 June 1961. A Muslim has killed the great musician of the Arab-Andalousian song 'Cheikh Raymond' and the father-in-law of Enrico Macias in Constantine. This event has been terrible for the Jewish community, and the actions of OAS have accentuated the Jewish departure.

Etoile is feeling alone. She did not accept her fate. She is leaving everything behind. She left her husband, her family and ancestors who are buried there. She said:

Alone. Alone. Alone. Alone in the house, in the street, in the city of Tlemcen, in Algeria, in the world. I am alone in the world with this news, the suitcase to prepare, it takes not much time, so I take my suitcase and I go, we are not thieves, why we have to go like this, what did we do to be treated like this, we have always lived here, I was born here, I lived here, I got married here, I had children here, my children have had children here, and we're going like that, one day we are here, the next day we aren't, this is not possible, God does not want it, I'm sure, it's not God who wants all that, devilish, my husband died here, my ancestors are buried here and I'm like to leave one morning,

leaving everything, what to do, when will I see my house, if I am to see it only once, before I die ... I remain silent with the sound of the city that goes down gradually.(---)

When we usually ask people who left Algeria about what they missed much, they usually answer "les odeurs" which means "smells" Etoile said: "it smells like thyme and coriander"(+++)
it was an ordeal for her to do the suitcase. She hesitated a long time on the things she could take and the things she could leave forever. The first thing she has noticed was a painting that her father gave her for her wedding. It is a beautiful oriental singer with a band of Arabs in a costume of the old period. She decided to put it in the suitcase.(!!!!)

The train was the next obligatory step after the suitcase. Etoile is again alone on the train, and she remembered the tomb of the Rabbi of Tlemcen and how Jewish people go to see him to remove the evil eye or to get cured in case of serious illnesses. Whereas all came to her mind at once, she heard "travellers to Algiers."(@@@@)
She saw a boy in the train who reminded her of the celebration of the Mitzvah. A day before she was attending Meyer's son communion in the synagogue(####), she remembered how brilliant he was in pronouncing the Hebrew language.(\$\$\$\$) In Algiers, Etoile's daughter started the psychological preparation of her mother for the great departure. She said:

We are going, mama, we can talk for hours and hours, we cannot stay longer, we the Jews we are obliged to follow the French. If you want to stay, what can we do, everyone goes, even if the Arabs accept us, we cannot remain there. All children will be soon be in France, Joseph and Elie have already gone, one in Paris the other in Marseilles, that is how the separation goes on, I know it's hard ...every one is going.(%%%)

Only yesterday, Etoile was at home in Belair,(^^^)^Tlemcen, she is now lost, and she feels like her future is uncertain, unsure. She started asking her daughter some questions on the travelling ways to get to France, and her daughter answered "ship or plane" there are no other means because the Mediterranean sea is separating the two countries. Etoile refused quickly:

“No my daughter, me in the boat or plane, never in my life!
My heart split in two if I do that, impossible, I won't take it,
that's enough”

“No never in my life, neither the boat nor the plane, I shall
not take it... ma n'djemch ma n'djemch, I cannot, I beg you...
me in the rolling or flying machines, I am neither a bird nor
a fish, leave me alone with all this.”(&&&&)

Etoile started then to lament her condition. She was crying her destiny while, of course, having a great communal sense of all the Jews in Algeria and making a slight allusion to the deportation to the camps during the Second World War. She said: “With independence the French will remain in France, Algerians in Algeria, and we Jews... We have to move, forced and deported as during the war... the French returning from Algeria to France, are really coming back, and they are at home, we are not at home, when shall we be at home, perhaps never.”(****) Etoile has finally overcome all her fear of travelling by plane; she accepted her fate but with a lot of regrets and sorrow. She said: “God is perhaps no more with us since we left Algeria. God does not like those who leave their country... For God, one must stay in his country.”(----) She considered her exile as a divine punishment.

In France, she went to the synagogue. She said: “It's not like the synagogue of Tlemcen, I can still see it very well, I left it yesterday, the Star of David at the entrance with stained glass windows.”(++++) Etoile is perfectly aware of the allegorical dimension of her name. Her name is representative of a whole Jewish society. She said: “this is the deferred Star[Etoile in French] like my name, Star, Star of David, the Jews have got my name as a badge, my name is the badge of Jews.”(+!) When she visited Marseille, it was the same, the green colour reminded her Mansourah and El Khala in Tlemcen.(+@@) Algeria was part of her family's discussion, she was conscious that Algeria was over, and all that could remain were the hazy memories of it.(+##)

3. The Jewish-Muslim coexistence in Algeria

It is true, as Ghaleb Ben cheikh El Hocine said that only an intelligent association to sacred scriptures, and only the acquisition

of knowledge and learning, with a primary aesthetic concern of beauty, can make it possible for us to live and develop in modern society. (+%%)

The history of Jews-Muslims Relations is subject to controversy, taboo, and prohibition. The unstable history of the Muslim - Jewish couple releases passions and fury on both sides. President Bouteflika was the first Algerian president to recognize that Judaism was part of Algeria in 1999 in Constantine. Assimilation of the Jews of Algeria began in 1830 that is immediately after colonization. In the independence of Algeria, Jews were already French for at least a century. Even if Jews have disappeared physically from the land of Islam, they still persist in the collective imagination. If colonization did not occur, Jews would have still been in Algeria. Jean Daniel(+%%) assumed another depraved effect. He said:

Huntington is mistaken when he does not see the contribution of the West within Islam for at least two centuries. Historians agree to consider Bonaparte's expedition to Egypt as the significant moment. Bonaparte brought with him the state nation and it is Arab nationalism, imported from abroad, which will erase the democratic dimension. It is important to name Bernard Lewis. He highlights how the traditional government in Islam, was a government by consultation, not by representation, like Westerners. What the West has brought, in fact, is despotism of the elected and dictatorship.(+^^)

I have never found in Algerian Jewish literature something like Albert Memmi's description of his own alienation in Tunisia during the French protectorate. He said:

My native city is after my own image... I discovered I was doomed forever to be an outsider in my own native city. And one's home town can no more be replaced than one's mother... I am my city's illegitimate son, the child of a whore of a city whose heart has been divided among all those to whom she has been a slave... slowly, painfully, I understood that I had made a mess of my own birth by choosing the wrong city.(+&&)

The Muslims would have probably liked it if the Jews refused the Cremieux Decree to show their support to Algerians. They were surprised by the number of Jews who rushed to be naturalised French. The few Jews who refused were those old and very traditional people who remained Algerian to protect their religion and traditions. Many Jews have been appointed in very important positions. Alfred Alphandéry was appointed in the bank of Algiers in 1862, Messaoud Karoubi was appointed in the bank of Oran. Gougenheim, Seyman and Meyer Chiche were bankers in Algiers.(+**)

The Second World War was dramatic, and the Vichy government was merciless toward Jews. In these terrible events, some Algerians proved their humanitarian character, among them Si Kaddour Benghabrit, the rector of the Great Mosque of Paris. He saved a lot of Jews from deportation to the concentration Nazi camps, among them the well-known singer Salim Halali. Benghabrit used the mosque to protect Jews, and he was delivering a false certificate of Muslim identity. A North African Jew named Albert Assouline, who had escaped from a German prison camp, wrote of his experience hiding in the mosque, "No fewer than 1,732 resistance fighters found refuge in its underground caverns. These included Muslim escapees but also Christians and Jews."(+--)

The Cremieux Decree has been removed. In October 1940, the Jews were deprived of the French nationality; they lost their work, and some schools refused Jewish children. Some Algerian families started hiding Jewish children. They also helped them financially. The Vichy government expelled 2000 Jewish people from their jobs. They were not allowed to have any land or property. They were deprived of running their own businesses such as cafes. The Muslims helped the Jews to keep their possessions momentarily till the end of the crisis. The imams were calling people to help the Jews.(++!) Among the famous savers of Jews, Mahieddine Bachtarzi, who comes from a prestigious Algerian family. He incarnates a great cultural heritage, being a singer and the creator of the Algerian theatre. His team comprised many Jews that Bachtarzi considered as brothers. He worked with them under Muslim names in the Algerian south (Djelfa, Ghardaia, Biskra and

Laghouat)(++@). Despite the encouragement of the French to kill Jews, the Muslims refused.

Since 1954, the Jews started thinking about their choice, the dilemma that they had either to remain in Algeria, where they lived for centuries or to go and start a new life in France. They remained silent for two years. There are some cases of Jews who remained faithful to the Algerian revolution: Henry Alleg, the director of *Alger Républicain*, Jean Daniel Bensaid, Jean Jacques Servan Schreiber, Marcel Belaiche, Raymond Louzoum, Roland Rhais, Raymond Aron, Pierre Vidal Naquet, and Gilberte, Chemouilli's cousin, the one who considered Algeria as a refuge for persecuted Jews during the fall of Andalusia. Gilberte married an Algerian communist, Bouali Taleb, who was killed by the French; she was a secretary in *Alger-Républicain*, she was soon sent to Marseille, and returned to her previous job as a wife of a martyr after independence. (++#)

Benjamin Stora returned as well to Algeria by the end of his book. It is not a physical return. It is an emotional return as a historian and as an exiled to the history of these two peoples, Algerian and Jewish, who have undergone a difficult separation. He re-examines the identity changes that boost this event, the Jewish exile. There is a feeling of a historical pause when Stora suddenly had the epiphany that holds a lot of truth about the echo of an old love towards Algeria, buried, asleep in the desire to turn the page, to forget this origin and create another. In short, this historical legacy of the three Jewish exiles awakened in him as he said a long memory of anxiety. He said that he had "the stubborn certainty that it is possible to be both Jewish and French republican and understanding religious rites, oriented towards the West and marked forever by the East, by Algeria."(++\$)

End Notes

(!) – The list below is not exhaustive; there are few Jewish people who succeeded in France in many domains: politics, philosophy, history, cinema, journalism, and entrepreneurship. They all have one thing in common: Algeria. Roland Bacri, Patrick Bruel, Hélène Cixous, Jean Daniel, Jean-Pierre Elkabbach, Enrico Macias, Alain

Afflelou, Paul Amar, the brothers Jacques et Bernard Attali, Jean-Luc Azoulay, Jean-Pierre Bacri, Phil Barney, Guy Bedos, Jean Benguigui, Richard Berry, Alain Chabat, Elisabeth Chemla, Elie Chouraqui, Jean-François Copé, Gérard Darmon, José Dayan, Jacques Derrida, Julien Dray, Ezratty Hasday, Roger Hanin, Claude Lelouch: a film director, Bernard-Henri Levy, Benjamin Stora, Élisabeth Teissier, and Patrick Timsit. Robert Cohen: a world Bantam weight Boxer Champion, Baruj Benasseraf: a Nobel Prize immunologist and Clause Cohen-Tannoudji: Nobel Prize in physics.

(@) – Bacri, Roland. Trésors des Racines Pataouètes. Paris : Belin, 1983. pp. 29-30.

My translation : « BACRI : Famille très important ed' Alger, historique meme puisque c'est à cause de nous que les Français ont fait la conquête de l'Algérie, j'exagère pas, vous allez voir. Les Bacri d'Alger crivent leur nom (avant le décret Crémieux, car ils étaient pas encore Français à part entière) en arabe: بقري

ça veut dire: bouvier ou vacher. D'autres disent: Boulanger, allez savoir! Avant de venir installer à Alger, ils vivaient à Livourne, Italie, très prospères y paraît. En 1794, les Bacri, gros banquiers et marchands d' céréales internationales aux donc (on les appelait "Les Rois d'Alger" c'est bien simple), avaient vendu, pour 14 millions de francs-or de l'époque, de blé à Bonaparte. Pour sa campagne d' Egypte. En 1827 : pas encore un sou d' remboursé, j'vous passe les péripéties avec la Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations, tout !

Donc, sacs de blé, sac de nœuds, sac d'embrouilles le roi de France Charles X, pour régler les contentieux ou le compte anxieux, bon ! il envoie son consul Deval à Alger chez Dey Hussein (y avait la domination turque).

(#) – Stora, Benjamin. Les Trois Exils Juifs D'Algérie. Paris : Hachette Littératures, 2008. p 9.

(\$) – Ibid., p. 10.

(%) – Schreier, Joshua. Arabs of the Jewish Faith: The Civilizing Mission in Colonial Algeria. 2010. p. 2.

(^) - Ibid., p. 8.

(&) - Ibid., p. 8.

(*) - Ibid., p. 12.

(-) - Abitol, Michel. "Etre Juifen Terre d' Islam" dans Benbassa, Esther et Attias, Jean-Christophe. Juifs et Musulmans: Une Histoire Partagée, un Dialogue à Construire. Paris: la Découverte, 2006. pp. 49-50.

Leur accession à la nationalité française est une nouvelle « sortie d' Egypte », dira à leur propos, en 1860, Adolphe Crémieux, principal artisan de cette naturalisation : L' Egypte, c' est Alger, Alger pour mes malheureux frères, la terre de servitude don' t ils sont affranchi depuis trente ans à peine. Et depuis cette époque, regardez les progrès qu' ils ont faits...entre eux et les Arabes la distance intellectuelle est immense...Ils veulent être français ; ils sont dignes de l' être et ils le seront bientôt.

(+) - Attal, Robert. Regard sur les Juifs d'Algérie. Paris, L' Harmattan, 1996. p. 169.

(!!) - Lewis, Bernard. The Jews of Islam. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984. p. 67.

(@@) - Bendahan, Blanche. Mazaltob. Paris : Editions du Tambourin, 1930. p. 111-112.

My translation : « C' est déjà assez malheureux pour elle, la pauvre, d' appartenir à la branche plébéienne d' Israël !

Car les Séphardim (de Sephard, nom hébraïque de l' Espagne) se considèrent comme des aristocrates par rapport à leurs coreligionnaires disséminés dans le monde. Et quand on demande à un Séphardi le pourquoi de ce préjugé- aussi paradoxal que cela paraisse les préjugés ont souvent des pourquoi - voici ce qu' il répond : « Nos ancêtres à nous, Juifs espagnols, ont émigré de Palestine bien avant la destruction du second Temple. Ils n' ont pas connu le terrible siège de Jérusalem. Ils n' ont pas connu la déchirante humiliation de se courber sous le joug du vainqueur, jusqu' à l' exode d' Espagne -édit de mars 1492- leur histoire a été brillante. Ils participèrent aux conseils des rois. Ils eurent leurs

tentes de campagne dans les armées de guerre. Anoblis, ils eurent des blasons et des vassaux. »

(##) - La bien gardée de Dieu.

(\$\$) - Moutot, Alain. Si je t'Oublie, Tlemcen...Les Juifs d'Algérie Images et Textes. Paris : Editions du Scribe, 1987. p. 132.

(%%) - Ibid., p. 136.

(^^) - Actes du XIXème Colloque D'Aubazine-Brive. « L'Algérie en Mal de son Identité », Paris : Imprimerie Chastrusse, 1995. p 64 « Il y a eu un rabbin Moatti dans la région d'Oran (considéré comme le fondateur de la communauté juive d'Oran), sur la tombe duquel des Musulmans allaient prier. »

(&&) - Lory, Pierre "le Judaïsme et les Juifs dans le Coran et la Tradition musulmane" dans Benbassa, Esther et Attias, Jean-Christophe. Juifs et Musulmans: Une Histoire Partagée, un Dialogue à Construire. Paris: la Découverte, 2006. p. 24.

(**) - Taieb-Carlen, Sarah. The Jews of North Africa: From Dido to De Gaulle. USA.

(--) - Coran II 62 et V, 69.

(++) - Goitein. S. D. Jews and Arabs : Their Contacts Through Ages. NY : Schocken Books, 1964. p. 66.

(+!) - Lewis, Bernard. The Jews of Islam. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984. p. 7.

(+@) - Kateb, Kamel. Européens, "indigènes" et juifs en Algérie (1830 - 1962): représentations et Réalités des Populations. Paris. INED, 2001. p. 242.

(+#) - Bendahan, Blanche. Mazaltob. Paris : Editions du Tambourin, 1930. p. 26.

My translation : « O Mazaltob, malgré la haine jalouse des nations, c'est la solidarité qui permettra aux descendants de Jacob d'atteindre la fin des siècles !.. »

(+\$\$) - Ben Aych, Gil. Le Livre d'Etoile. Paris : Edition du Seuil, 1986. p. 164.

My translation : « Les Musulmans sont plutôt comme nous avec Dieu que comme les catholiques. Ils font plutôt comme nous, une fois pour toutes avec Dieu et après, nous les juifs et les musulmans on s'occupe plutôt de nous, pas sans arrêt entrain de discuter pour savoir si c'est du bien ou du mal...Il faut être plus simple avec Dieu. Pas besoin de lui demander pardon à tout bout de champs, une fois par an ça suffit, comme pour nous le Grand Pardon ou pour les Musulmans le Ramadan. »

(+%) - Bendahan, Blanche. Mazaltob. Paris : Editions du Tambourin, 1930. pp. 11-12.

My translation : « O Mazaltob, ma lumière, ton nom veut dire : bonne chance. Je te souhaite cent ans d'heureuse vie. Que tu te maries. Que tu aies des garçons. Qu'il y ait chez toi des circoncisions et des communions !... O Mazaltob, visage de joie, diamant clair, ton nom et ta beauté te porteront bonheur. »

(+^) - El Watan 23 Janvier 2014 La «séparation» entre musulmans et juifs n'a pas commencé avec le décret Crémieux (1870) qui accorda la citoyenneté française aux 35 000 juifs d'Algérie. La «séparation» est la résultante, selon lui, d'un «long processus historique».

(+&) - Stora, Benjamin. Les Trois Exils Juifs D'Algérie. Paris : Hachette Littératures, 2008. p 55.

The Rab, Emmanuel Chouchana, was sorry for the place of Judaism during this period of identification. Practicing religion was somehow incompatible with acculturation.

(+*) - Lewis, Bernard. The Jews of Islam. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984. p. 82.

(+ -) - Tapia, Claude. Les juifssé pharadesen France, 1965-1985: études psychosociologiques et Historiques. Paris. L'Harmattan. 1986. p. 35.

Pr. Tapia talked about some Sephardi culinary traditions, he said that Jews do not eat many dairy products. They used to make cereal balls, also called 'Algiers Kouklou', bread soup and croquettes, which is a Spanish heritage.

(!!!) - Quoted by Anidjar, Gil : « Postface : Réflexions sur la Question » dans Benbassa, Esther et Attias, Jean-Christophe. Juifs et Musulmans: Une Histoire Partagée, un Dialogue à Construire. Paris: la Découverte, 2006. p. 124.

Jacques Derrida a dit « Dans le milieu où je vivais on disait « les catholiques », on appelait « catholiques » tous les Français non juifs, même s'ils étaient, parfois, protestants, ou, je ne sais plus, orthodoxes : « catholique » signifiait tout ce qui n'était ni juif ni berbère ni arabe. Ces jeunes juifs indigènes ne pouvaient alors s'identifier facilement ni aux « catholiques » ni aux Arabes ou aux berbères dont en général, dans cette génération, ils ne parlaient pas la langue. Deux générations auparavant, certains de leur grands-parents parlaient encore l'arabe, au moins un certain arabe. »

(@@@) - Stora, Benjamin. Les Trois Exils Juifs D'Algérie. Paris : Hachette Littératures, 2008. P. 129-130.

Benjamin Stora describes a photo that represents the Jewish departure to France in June 1962. He said: My translation : « une foule s'apprête à embarquer sur le navire à quai dans le port d'Alger. Tous sont visiblement désemparés, préoccupés par leur bagages. Anxieux aussi car la plupart n'ont jamais traversé la mer. Malgré la chaleur de Juin, ils ont des pull-overs, des manteaux, des chapeaux, pour emporter le maximum, car chaque personne n'a droit qu'à deux valises... Mes parents ne parlaient pas devant nous, ils attendaient que nous soyons endormis. Ma sœur et moi les entendions chuchoter au milieu de la nuit à travers la cloison. Ils étaient extrêmement angoissés, ils se posaient des questions mais ils savaient bien qu'ils finiraient par partir, qu'il n'y avait pas d'autre solution. »

(###) - Stora, Benjamin. Les Trois Exils Juifs D'Algérie. Paris : Hachette Littératures, 2008. p. 120-121.

Le courant sioniste en Afrique du Nord venait de Félix Allouche. Le Dr Sebantémoigne: "On ne peut pas dire qu'il y eut du sionisme en Algérie, le sionisme systématique, politique. Il y avait en fait du mysticisme à l'égard d'Eretz Israel." Le grand rabbin Choubana explique bien, lui aussi, ce rapport religieux entre la communauté juive et Israël: "Le judaïsme algérien n'a pas connu Théodore Herzl, Max Landau ou Jabotinsky. Il ne les a connus que

de nom. Mais il vivait autour de la synagogue. et d'après le Rabbin Chouchana, les juifs qui sont venus d'Algérie vers Israël sont plus venus par idéal que autre chose.

(\$\$\$) - Stora, Benjamin. Les Trois Exils Juifs D'Algérie. Paris : Hachette Littératures, 2008. p 131.

My translation : « Ma mère a nettoyé l'appartement jusqu'à la dernière minute. Le 12 juin, elle a vérifié que tout était bien propre avant de sortir. Mon père a fermé la porte à clef, il a glissé la clef dans sa poche, nous avons chacun empoigné nos deux valises et nous sommes partis. Comme si nous allions en vacances. Mais nous savions bien que c'était fini, que nous ne reviendrons pas. Ce moment a été le plus important de notre vie, un saut dans l'inconnu. Pour nous rassurer, sans doute pour se rassurer lui même, mon père répétait : « Ne vous en faites pas les enfants, j'ai un plan. »

(%%%) - Ben Aych, Gil. Le Livre d'Etoile. Paris : Edition du Seuil, 1986. p. 113.

My translation : « En Arabe, Tlemcen ça veut dire « la source » Je suis née à la source et je viens de la source, Tlemcen ma source chérie, ma poche d'eau.»

(^^^)^ - Ben Aych, Gil. Le Livre d'Etoile. Paris : Edition du Seuil, 1986. p. 11

My translation : « Un jour, j'étais bien tranquille à Tlemcen, chez moi, c'était « les événements », la guerre quoi, mais c'était calme à Tlemcen, j'allais préparer le shabbat, c'était vendredi soir, tu sais, y a beaucoup à faire un vendredi soir... »

(&&&) - Arabic words are used from time to time. Another example is when Etoile's daughter said: « wakila, ça se calme et je reviens. » (1986, p. 14.) wakila means maybe. Another passage also where she speaks Arabic, when she vomited and she asked her son in law to forgive her. She said: « Mon fils, samehna » which means "my son forgive me" (1986. p. 107.)

(***) - Ben Aych, Gil. Le Livre d'Etoile. Paris : Edition du Seuil, 1986. p. 13.

My translation : « On va plus rester à Tlemcen, c'est plus possible, c'est pas possible, il faut se faire une raison, tu vois tous ces attentats, pas toujours à Tlemcen, mais dans toute l'Algérie, on voit des attentats et de plus en plus la guerre, maintenant au mois de juillet ça va être l'indépendance.»

(---) - Ben Aych, Gil. *Le Livre d'Etoile*. Paris : Edition du Seuil, 1986. p. 15

My translation : « Seule. Seule. Seule. Seule dans la maison, dans la rue, dans la ville de Tlemcen, en Algérie, dans le monde. Seule au monde je suis avec cette nouvelle à ce moment-la, une valise à préparer, ça prend pas beaucoup de temps, comme ça je prends ma valise et je m'en vais, on est pas des voleurs, pourquoi on s'en va comme ça, qu'est-ce qu'on a fait pour qu'on nous traite ainsi, on a toujours vécu ici, je suis née ici, j'ai vécu ici, je me suis mariée ici, j'ai eu des enfants ici, mes enfants ont eu des enfants ici, et on s'en va comme ça, un jour on est la, le lendemain on n'est plus, c'est pas possible, le bon Dieu il veut pas ça, je suis sûre, c'est pas lui qui veut tout ça, diabolique, mon marié est mort ici, mes ancêtres sont enterrés ici et je m'en vais comme ça un beau matin, en laissant tout ça, comment faire, à savoir quand est-ce que je reverrai ma maison, et si je la reverrai, seulement une fois, d'ici que je meurs, à savoir...je reste silencieuse avec le bruit de la ville qui s'éteint petit à petit »

(+++) - « ça sent le thym et le coriandre »

(!!!!) - Ben Aych, Gil. *Le Livre d'Etoile*. Paris : Edition du Seuil, 1986. p.16.

(@@@@) - Ibid., p. 21. My translation : « Tout ça, je revois dans ma tête pour moi seule, que je suis dans ce train, seule, à attendre, le Rabb de Tlemcen ou on allait prier avec la tombe du Grand Rabbin, les marabouts qu'ils enlèvent le mauvais oeil quand quelqu'un dans la famille a une maladie grave...tout ça je vois dans ma tête, toute seule, j'attends que le train démarre, j'entend dire au micro « les voyageurs pour Alger »

(####) - On the 18th February 2014, I visited the synagogue of Tlemcen. It is today transformed into a karate club. I saw the glass window which is in the form of a star that Etoile has mentioned.

The synagogue is situated in the center of Tlemcen, in Derbel Yhoud, (the Jewish district). One of the very old houses is still receiving its electricity bill under the name of the former Jewish owner of the house.

(\$\$\$\$) - Ben Aych, Gil. Le Livre d'Etoile. Paris : Edition du Seuil, 1986. p. 23.

My translation : « une belle communion, quelle réception dans une grande salle à coté de la mairie, il avait très bien lu à la synagogue, comme il prononçait bien l'hébreu »

(% % %) - Ben Aych, Gil. Le Livre d'Etoile. Paris : Edition du Seuil, 1986. p. 33.

My translation « On s'en va, maman, on peut discuter des heures et des heures, on peut plus rester, nous les juifs on est obligé de suivre les Français. Si toi tu veux rester, comment faire, tout le monde s'en va ; même si les Arabes ils nous acceptent, on pourra pas s'y faire. Tout les enfants ils vont être en France bientôt, Joseph et Elie c'est déjà fait, un à Paris l'autre à Marseille, c'est comme ça la séparation, je sais que c'est dur...tout le monde s'en va. »

(^^ ^^) - Ben Aych, Gil. Le Livre d'Etoile. Paris : Edition du Seuil, 1986. p. 35.

My translation : « c'est vrai qu'hier, hier-hier, j'étais à Tlemcen, belair-belair, hier-hier, et aujourd'hui, à Alger, et demain, je sais pasou. »

(&&&&) - Ben Aych, Gil. Le Livre d'Etoile. Paris : Edition du Seuil, 1986. pp. 36-37.

My translation « - Non ma fille, moi dans le bateau ou l'avion, jamais de la vie ! ...Mon cœur fendu en deux si je fais ça, impossible, je prends pas, ça suffit tout ça »

« Jamais de la vie, ni le bateau ni l'avion, moi, je ne prend...ma n'djemch, ma n'djemch, j'peux pas, je t'en supplie ...moi dans ces machines roulantes ou volantes, je suis ni oiseau ni le poisson, laisse moi tranquille avec tout ça. »

(****) - Ben Aych, Gil. Le Livre d'Etoile. Paris : Edition du Seuil, 1986. p. 59.

My translation « les Français désormais avec l'indépendance restent en France, les Algériens en Algérie, et nous les Juifs...on se déplace comme forcés, déportés disions-nous pendant la guerre...les Français qui reviennent d'Algérie en France, eux reviennent vraiment, et sont chez eux, nous ne sommes pas chez nous, quand serons-nous chez nous, peut-être jamais »

(---) - Ben Aych, Gil. Le Livre d'Etoile. Paris : Edition du Seuil, 1986. p. 83.

My translation « Dieu n'est peut-être plus avec nous depuis qu'on a quitté l'Algérie. Dieu n'aime pas que l'on quitte son pays...Pour Dieu, on doit rester dans son pays. »

(++++) - Ben Aych, Gil. Le Livre d'Etoile. Paris : Edition du Seuil, 1986. p. 66.

« c'est pas comme la synagogue de Tlemcen, je la vois encore très bien, je la quitte hier, l'Etoile de David à l'entrée avec les vitraux, »

(+ !!) - Ibid., p. 66.

My translation « c'est l'Etoileajournée, l'Etoilecommemonprénom, Etoile, l'Etoile de David, c'est bien, les Juifsonmonprénom pour insigne, je m'appellel'insigne des Juifs.»

(+@@) - Ibid., p. 88.

(+##) - Ibid., p. 98.

(+\$\$) - Actes du XIXème Colloque D'Aubazine-Brive. « L'Algérie en Mal de son Identité », Paris : Imprimerie Chastrusse,1995. p 79.

My translation: Ghaleb Ben cheikh El Hocinea dit « Seul un rapport intelligent aux références scripturaires sacrées, seule l'acquisition de la connaissance et du savoir, avec une préoccupation première d'ordre esthétique et de recherche du beaux, permettront d'évoluer et de vivre dans une société moderne. »

(+%%) - Jean Daniel Ben said, born in 1920 in Blida(Algeria) is a French writer and journalist. His family is algerian of Jewish confession .

(+^^) - Daniel, Jean. "le Doute est un Glaive" dans Le Débat Historique Politique Société. N° 167.Novembre-Décembre.2011.p. 8.

My translation : Jean Daniel dit : « là où Huntington se trompe, c'est quand il ne voit pas l'apport de l'occident qui travaille au sein de l'Islam depuis au moins deux siècles. Les historiens s'accordent pour considérer l'expédition de Bonaparte en Egypte comme le moment déterminant. Bonaparte a apporté avec lui l'Etat nation et c'est le nationalisme arabe, importé du dehors, qui effacera la dimension démocratique. Il est tendant de suivre là-dessous Bernard Lewis. Il souligne à quel point le gouvernement traditionnel, en terre d'Islam, était un gouvernement par consultation, pas par représentation, à l'occidentale. Ce que l'Occident a apporté, en fait, c'est le despotisme des élus et la dictature. »

(+&&) - Memmi, Albert. *The Pillar of Salt, USA*. Beacon Press. 1992. pp. 96-98.

(+**) - Fouzi saadallah p . 66.

(+--) - <http://filmsemble.wordpress.com/about/producers/>

(++!) - Fouzi saadallah p. 95.

(++@) - Ibid., p. 96

(++#) - Ibid., pp. 233-234

(++\$) - Stora, Benjamin. *Les Trois Exils Juifs D'Algérie*. Paris : Hachette Littératures, 2008. P. 182-183.

« J'ai compris aussi comment une singularité forgée par l'Histoire donne une autre impulsion au juif de l'exil, amputé de sa langue, installé dans une instabilité identitaire, ayant quitté sa terre, mais conservant l'espoir d'en trouver une autre. Dans ce travail d'historien, j'ai entendu soudain l'écho d'un vieil amour à l'égard de l'Algérie, enfoui, endormi sous la volonté de tourner la page, d'oublier cette origine et s'en fabriquer d'autres. Bref, cet héritage historique des trois exils a réveillé en moi une mémoire longue de l'inquiétude. Et la certitude obstinée qu'il est possible d'être à la fois juif et français, républicain et comprenant les rites religieux, tournée vers l'Occident et marqué à jamais, par l'Orient, par l'Algérie. »

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