

French Cultural Front's Contributions to Combating Colonial Politics and Defending the Algerian Revolution

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Summary:

As an occupying Power, France has violated Algeria's international humanitarian law by pursuing arbitrary and barbaric policies, brutal practices and mass massacres. right to freedom and their own affairs without outside interference, Even more so, all these French policies in Algeria have been assisted by major powers such as the United States of America and NATO. In Algeria, French people have used the most heinous criminal methods, some of whom testify, such as strugglers from communist parties and intellectual class committees. Who deplored the French army's crimes against Algerians, the elite made significant contributions to the struggle against violence and colonialism by using many methods, such as information, societal and cultural activities and other means through which they tried to provide assistance in the name of humanism? We therefore decided to address this issue by raising the problem: To what extent has the French Cultural Front contributed to the struggle against authoritarianism.

Keywords:Cultural Front - Révolution - Humanism - Colonialism

1. Introduction

French colonialism in Algeria implemented an arbitrary and oppressive policy that encompassed all spheres of life. Its consequences were catastrophic, leaving Algeria in a miserable and tragic condition. However, these harsh circumstances only strengthened the resilience, determination, and steadfastness of the Algerian people in their struggle for liberation. As a result, an entire generation of activists emerged, imbued with revolutionary ideals, committed to the national ideology, and fully determined to free themselves from the chains of colonial occupation and to live in dignity and freedom.

The impact of these conditions was not limited to Algerians alone; it also extended to many freedom-loving French citizens, particularly intellectuals, who were deeply troubled by the situation in Algeria. They openly or implicitly expressed their rejection of the barbaric and brutal colonial policies imposed upon the Algerian people. Some even compared their country's colonial practices to Hitler's Nazi regime.

The attempts of the colonial authorities to entrench the idea that Algeria was French ultimately failed miserably. Their ambitions vanished with the outbreak of the Algerian Liberation Revolution, which was wholeheartedly embraced by the Algerian people. The revolution gained significant political influence abroad while striking at the military foundations of colonial rule within Algeria, despite the hostile propaganda campaign launched by the French government to minimize and discredit it through every possible means.

The French authorities also exerted immense pressure on the Algerian population by implementing some of the most horrific forms of repression, persecution, and torture. Nevertheless, they failed to achieve their objectives on the ground, particularly after losing the support of international public opinion and even that of many French citizens. Within France itself, groups emerged that supported the Algerians' struggle and their right to self-determination. This position was notably embodied by the French intellectual class, which actively served the Algerian Revolution and provided remarkable examples of solidarity and support. This segment included all those sincerely committed to the Algerian national cause, including thinkers, lawyers, writers, philosophers, journalists, and physicians.

2. Manifestations of Humanitarian Support by the French Cultural Front toward the Algerian Revolution

2.1. The Manifesto of the Anti-Colonialist Movement

Although anti-colonialism had become clearly visible since the Second World War and expanded further after its end, when colonial issues increasingly became the concern of colonized peoples, anti-colonial activists gradually assumed the role of supporters, helpers, and advocates. Nevertheless, this movement gained greater momentum and affirmed its presence through the French intellectual elite, who supported the Algerian cause and opposed French colonialism and its repressive policies in Algeria.

At the end of July 1960, they founded the Anti-Colonialist Movement in Switzerland and published a manifesto introducing the organization. The movement was led by Henry Corbel and represented a struggle against all forms of colonialism. Initially, it provided individual assistance from French citizens to Algerian activists. It then worked through small groups across France by establishing contacts with local Algerian revolutionary networks. Subsequently, it became organized into centralized groups of French supporters dedicated to assisting the Algerian resistance.

On September 5, 1960, the movement issued a declaration addressed to the French people, known as the "Manifesto of the 121."ⁱ It was signed by French intellectuals from various fields, including literature, philosophy, journalism, and the arts, and was joined by academics from all educational levels, including professors from the prestigious Sorbonne University.ⁱⁱ

The manifesto called for the refusal to bear arms against the Algerian people, expressing support for the French youth who had taken such a stance. It also affirmed solidarity with the oppressed Algerian people in the name of the French people. The group chose an opportune moment to publish the declaration,ⁱⁱⁱ coinciding with the trial of the revolutionary support network known as the Jeanson Network, at a time when French public opinion was closely awaiting the outcome of the proceedings.

Among the statements contained in the manifesto was the following:

"By remaining silent, the French become accomplices in these racist acts of oppression that have turned Paris into a stage reminiscent of the dark days of Nazi occupation... The signatories call upon all political parties, trade unions, and democratic organizations not only to put an end to these measures but also to express their solidarity with the Algerians... The cause of the Algerian people contributes decisively to the destruction of the colonial system; it is the cause of all free men."^{iv}

This manifesto, which effectively called for the formation of a front against the French army, against the war in Algeria, for the rejection of military orders, and for support of the Algerian Revolution and the Algerian people, exposed its signatories to penalties under French military criminal law of up to five years' imprisonment. Consequently, the French press did not publish the manifesto, and it remained largely censored within France.^v

Regarding the opposition of the French intellectual elite to colonialism, Jean-Paul Sartre stated: "Colonialism is in a state of self-destruction, yet it continues to poison the atmosphere. It is our shame; it mocks or undermines our laws; it disgraces us through its racism... Our role is to help it die. The only thing that can and must be done is to fight alongside the Algerian people in order to free both Algerians and Frenchmen from the tyranny of colonialism."^{vi}

2. Military Support for the Algerians' Struggle for Freedom

A group of French intellectuals and nationalist politicians emerged who became firmly convinced that the colonies had no future within the French framework and that the only realistic solution was to allow these peoples to decide freely for themselves what they wanted to do. They took upon themselves the task of opposing colonialism and exposing its deception and falsehoods. Some even analyzed the colonial phenomenon from psychological and historical perspectives, concluding that colonial thinking was fundamentally based on superiority, exploitation, and oppression. They argued that the only way to overcome it was through force and armed struggle, thereby justifying the use of revolutionary violence to end occupation. Through their humanitarian positions, they declared their unconditional support for the Algerian Revolution and their complete opposition to French colonial policy.

In 1955, the writer Aimé Césaire, originally from the Antilles, wrote in his *Discourse on Colonialism*: "We must first study how the colonial act destroys every sense of civilization in the colonizer himself... It brings about a universal moral regression and deepens decay until corruption spreads everywhere."^{vii}

Similarly, the publisher Jean Souyris (or Saint-Souyris), who secretly published numerous newspapers and works supporting the National Liberation Front (FLN), explained several reasons for his commitment, stating: "As a former resistance fighter,^{viii} I often thought that if I had been a young Algerian, I would have joined the maquis (the armed resistance in the mountains)."

The support provided by the French intellectual elite to the Algerian Revolution was diverse and invaluable. It even included French military officers who assisted Algerian activists in smuggling weapons from French army stocks. For example,^{ix} during the first week of March 1956, Saïd Landouchine coordinated with Mohamed Aouacheria and Abderrahmane Ben Salem the defection of an entire battalion of 130 soldiers under the supervision of a French officer. Of these soldiers, 106 were Algerians and the remainder were French. The operation also resulted in the seizure of a large quantity of weapons.

Henri Maillot decided to join the armed resistance and defend the Algerian people's right to self-determination. On April 4, 1956, he diverted a French army truck loaded with weapons and delivered it to the National Liberation Army (ALN). The truck contained 300 rifles, machine guns, pistols, bags of grenades, large quantities of ammunition, and communication equipment. These supplies were transported to the mountains of the Ain Defla region, where Algerian

revolutionaries were waiting. In a letter sent to the press and later published in a Paris newspaper, Maillot wrote:

“I am not a Muslim, but I am an Algerian of European origin. I consider Algeria my homeland, and I must fulfill all my duties toward it, just like any other Algerian, by providing Algerian fighters with the weapons they need in their struggle for liberation.”^x

The French intellectual elite contributed significantly to financing and supporting the revolution with arms. One of the most important examples was the Jeanson Network, which collected funds, donations, and subscriptions, transferred them outside France, and managed the purchase and shipment of weapons to support the Algerian Revolution.^{xi}

2.3 Opposition to French Torture Practices

The war of destruction in Algeria was not limited to killings and collective or individual massacres. French authorities expanded their policy of repression and brutality by resorting to even more savage methods. Torture in all its forms was systematically employed, particularly after Guy Mollet became Prime Minister and approved legislation granting extraordinary powers, which the army exploited extensively. Officers such as Jacques Massu and Paul Aussaresses committed countless acts of torture and abuse.^{xii}

One of the most dangerous methods used by French forces during the Algerian War of Independence was torture. This was later acknowledged by occupation army commanders, military personnel, and members of the French elite themselves. Torture was practiced in many forms and was not limited to captured members of the National Liberation Army. It affected Algerians of all ages and social groups, including unarmed civilians. The only requirement for arrest, torture, and abuse was simply being Algerian.^{xiii}

Several French thinkers played an important role in influencing French public opinion and advocating for a political solution that could put an end to the bloodshed in Algeria. Among them were intellectuals close to socialist leaders, such as Jean-Paul Sartre, André Mandouze, Robert Barrat, and Raymond Aron. Many French intellectuals publicly expressed their sympathy for the Algerian cause and their support for it after witnessing the crimes committed against the indigenous population.

They were deeply affected by the scale of the inhumane atrocities committed by the colonial authorities against Algerians. Numerous innocent people became victims of systematic repression, revenge, persecution, and organized violence.

This resistance to torture and oppression during the Algerian Revolution inspired a body of committed literature, published in numerous detailed works. A notable example is “The Tragedy of Algeria” by the conservative writer Raymond Aron, whose conscience was awakened by the Algerian cause. In this book, Aron describes the deteriorating conditions in Algeria, the difficult and catastrophic reality faced by Algerians, and the painful events they endured daily, while strongly denouncing torture, repression, and the degrading policies of the French colonial administration.^{xiv}

3. Humanitarian Positions of the Leading Figures of the French Cultural Front Toward the Algerian Revolution

The humanitarian positions adopted by many French intellectuals demonstrated their full support for the Algerian people's struggle and their absolute opposition to the colonial reality. They strongly denounced the unjust French colonial policy implemented against Algerians,

which violated international laws, universal humanitarian charters, and principles upheld by all divine religions. One notable example was Professor André Mandouze of the University of Algiers. His opposition to French policy in Algeria was not limited to the period of the Algerian War of Independence; rather, he had openly rejected colonialism even before the outbreak of the revolution. He authored several critical writings against the colonial system, including an article published in the journal *Esprit* in 1948 entitled "Let Us Avoid War in North Africa." In this article, he predicted an impending tragedy in Algeria unless the French authorities urgently adopted the necessary preventive measures to address the prevailing conditions in the country.

^{xv}However, among those who played the most significant role in supporting the Algerian cause and challenging French colonialism were the following:

3.1 Francis Jeanson

Francis Jeanson was among the French intellectuals who honorably supported the Algerian cause and the struggle of its people.^{xvi} He displayed courageous positions against the French occupation in Algeria. He led a large group of French citizens who signed a manifesto condemning the colonial war and its policies, calling for the recognition of the National Liberation Front (FLN) as the legitimate representative of the Algerian people and urging negotiations with it concerning independence and the right to self-determination.^{xvii}

Jeanson arrived in Algeria with his wife between September 1948 and May 1949. Their objective was to establish contacts with leaders of the Revolutionary Committee for Unity and Action, gain insight into the living conditions of the population, and understand the early developments of revolutionary activity. Referring to this experience, he stated:^{xviii}

"I arrived in the city of Algiers in February 1955. Initially, I met two friends who were activists within the Democratic Union of the Algerian Manifesto: Ali Boumendjel and Dr. Francis. Their attitude reflected considerable caution regarding the outbreak of the armed uprising. I then met several activists of the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties (MTLD)... There, I discovered genuine militants and realized that the Revolutionary Committee for Unity and Action enjoyed real popular support. Finally, on the eve of my departure from Algeria, I met Salah Louanchi, who had been wanted by the security services since the banning of the MTLD." Jeanson publicly expressed his intellectual and literary support for the Algerian Revolution and its just cause. Together with his wife, Colette Jeanson, he undertook efforts to expose and denounce the colonial crimes committed by France against Algerians before French and international public opinion. At the same time,^{xix} they worked to raise awareness of the Algerian cause and promote its internationalization by gaining sympathy and support from as many countries as possible. The same stance was adopted by Henri Alleg and his wife Gilberte Serveti, who also joined in supporting the Algerian cause.^{xx} They denounced the poverty, injustice, and discrimination suffered by Algerians and criticized the major European settlers through the newspaper *Alger Républicain*, whose exposure of colonial abuses greatly disturbed the French administration, leading to the arrest of many of its officials.

Jeanson's support for the justice of the Algerian cause did not stop there. He went on to establish a clandestine support organization for Algerian militants, which became known as the Jeanson Network (*Réseau Jeanson*).^{xxi}

Through this secret network, Jeanson sought to support the Algerian Revolution and bring an end to the war in Algeria. The network played an active role in assisting Algerian immigrants

in France, particularly FLN militants. Its activities included collecting funds and membership contributions paid by Algerian workers and ensuring their transfer to the liberation movement.^{xxii} It also established an efficient organizational structure that facilitated the movement of Algerian activists across French borders, assisted imprisoned militants in escaping detention, organized their escape during transfers between prisons, and secured their departure from French territory.

Furthermore, Jeanson and his wife contributed to the revolutionary cause through their publications. In 1955, they published their first book based on testimonies they had collected. The book caused a major controversy due to its provocative title, *Algeria Outlawed* (*L'Algérie hors la loi*). In 1960, they published a second work entitled *Our War: Voices Against Colonialism* (*Notre Guerre*), which strongly condemned colonialism and the torture practices carried out in Algeria.^{xxiii}

In his opposition to French policy in Algeria, Jeanson stated in his book *Algeria Outlawed* that the French occupation had caused a severe deterioration of the country's economic and social conditions. He described the suffering of the Algerian people, who endured poverty and deprivation as a result of colonial policies.^{xxiv} His work stirred French public opinion and generated numerous media reactions supportive of the Algerian Revolution and the Algerian people's struggle. At the same time, it shocked circles that supported French colonial policy in Algeria and opposed the Algerian cause, to the extent that some demanded that the authorities ban the publication of the book and prosecute its authors. They had exposed serious French abuses against Algerians.^{xxv}

Nevertheless, Jeanson did not regard the Algerian Revolution as merely a revolt of the hungry and the peasantry, as Charles de Gaulle sought to portray it to the world. Rather, he viewed it as a revolution of free people pursuing noble and humanitarian objectives, whose ultimate aim was freedom and liberation from subjugation.^{xxvi} He argued that the outbreak of the revolution was not primarily due to poor economic and social conditions, but rather to the Algerian people's political consciousness and their determination to achieve independence.^{xxvii} Expressing his conviction regarding the legitimacy of the Algerian liberation struggle, he declared: "I was convinced that the Algerians' struggle was not only legitimate, but necessary—indeed vitally necessary for them."^{xxviii}

In France, Jeanson and his wife had been meeting regularly since 1955 with Algerian immigrants and leaders of the National Liberation Front (FLN) Federation in Paris. Within a single year, Jeanson managed, together with six Algerians, to transfer ten million French francs from France to Swiss banks.^{xxix} Omar Boudaoud praised Jeanson's efforts in exposing the crimes of French policy in Algeria before French public opinion, stating: "Convincing public opinion of the injustices suffered by the colony and of the futility of the war being waged in Algeria was of paramount importance. The efforts made by Jeanson to inform public opinion about the reality of this war deserved far more than mere appreciation."^{xxx}

3.2 Jacques Vergès

Jacques Vergès was among the most famous and active French lawyers defending Algerian militants, to the point that he became a member of the National Liberation Front in France.^{xxxi} He emerged as a prominent figure during the Algerian Revolution and worked tirelessly to expose colonial policies in order to mobilize French and international public opinion in support

of occupied Algeria. In French courts, his voice was heard rejecting what he termed a “defense of complicity,” which merely sought to reduce criminal penalties for his clients. Instead, in coordination with the FLN Federation in France, he developed a new legal strategy to defend activists of the national cause who were brought before French courts.^{xxxii}

Among the individuals he defended was the renowned activist Djamila Bouhired, who had been accused of bombing a café and had endured severe torture at the hands of French intelligence services. Vergès dedicated a book to her entitled *For Djamila*, in which he documented the reports of the French physician Dr. Ginette Belkhodja, who supervised Bouhired’s treatment in prison. These reports detailed the physical, psychological, and sexual torture to which she had been subjected. Although Bouhired was sentenced to death, Vergès continued to defend her until he succeeded in proving her innocence. After her release from prison in 1956, she later became his wife.^{xxxiii}

Vergès also strongly opposed the torture inflicted upon Algerians. Along with several colleagues, he filed numerous legal complaints against those responsible for such acts, considering torture a crime against humanity. He further authored the book *State Crimes*, in which he discussed torture and the repressive French policy in Algeria. Although the impact of these testimonies concerning the reality of the situation in Algeria and French colonial policy was limited at the time, they nevertheless contributed to raising awareness within certain circles of the need to find a fundamental solution to the Algerian issue.^{xxxiv}

Thus, following in the footsteps of other French intellectuals who opposed colonial policy, the French lawyer Jacques Vergès, nicknamed “Uncle Mansour,” openly and sharply criticized all the inhumane French practices in Algeria. He explicitly rejected the colonial system founded on injustice and oppression. His conviction in the justice of the Algerian cause became so strong that he undertook the defense of soldiers of the National Liberation Army before French courts,^{xxxv} whether military or civilian. According to his beliefs, it was illogical to prosecute those fighting for a noble cause—freedom. From this perspective, the French trials of Algerians were unjust, illegitimate, and lacking any legal foundation. In this regard, he stated:

“It was an exceptional situation that deprived the Algerian defendants of all guarantees, whether those provided by ordinary law or by international humanitarian law as stipulated in the Geneva Convention.”^{xxxvi}

3.3 Jean-Paul Sartre

Jean-Paul Sartre is considered one of the most prominent French figures who stood alongside the Algerian people in their struggle to free themselves from oppressive colonial rule.^{xxxvii} He was a strong opponent of French colonial policy in Algeria and of the torture methods used against Algerians. Consequently, he became one of the leading intellectual defenders of the Algerian Revolution. Renowned for his existentialist philosophy, his commitment to the principle of freedom, and his anti-colonial positions, Sartre participated in numerous demonstrations supporting the Algerian people and protesting the war in Algeria.

Among his most significant works is *Our Shame in Algeria*, which serves as both a living testimony and a political document. Sartre supported the Algerian people,^{xxxviii} convinced that revolution was the only solution to ending colonialism. His conviction was influenced by the writings of Frantz Fanon and stemmed from a profound analysis of Fanon’s ideas and theories.

At the beginning of the Algerian War of Independence, Sartre was not fully aware of the torture inflicted upon Algerians through various forms of repression. Gradually, however, like many other intellectuals, he came to understand the reality of torture in Algeria. This indicates that Sartre had no prior direct knowledge of the torture of Algerians because he had not seen the victims himself.^{xxxix} Nevertheless, as an intellectual, he believed he had a historical and social responsibility to confront and expose such realities. He explained:

“Here and there, they arbitrarily arrest any Muslim who can be interrogated. Unless they provide false testimony or falsely accuse themselves of a crime to escape suffering, those who are able to speak generally remain silent.^{xl} Neither Adin, Allal, nor Garrouj opened their mouths. Undoubtedly, the torturers of El Biar know much more about this matter.”

Sartre’s anti-colonial consciousness did not begin at this point, nor with the Algerian uprising of 1954, but several years earlier. He had previously supported the cause of the new constitution in Tunisia and the cause of Moroccan independence at a conference in which he participated in 1948. In 1952, he gave an interview to *La République Algérienne*, the newspaper affiliated with Ferhat Abbas. In the autumn of 1955, he also supported the movement of the Committee of Intellectuals against the continuation of the Algerian War.^{xli}

In this context, Mohammed Harbi wrote in 1990:

“Sartre experienced a moral renewal that led him to discover a new subject of history, more radical than the proletariat—the colonized peoples. The Algerian Revolution benefited greatly from this discovery, gaining the support of a broad cultural front in France.

Sartre wrote extensively to expose the lies of colonialism and its betrayal of all humanitarian principles in Algeria.^{xlii} Revealing the brutality of the colonial policy imposed on Algerians, he devoted an entire article to denouncing torture practices entitled “You Are Wonderful”, published in *Les Temps Modernes* in May 1957. Initially, he had titled it “The Institution of Corruption.” The newspaper *Le Monde* had requested the article but later refused to publish it, considering it excessively violent. The article drew upon a collection of testimonies from newly enlisted soldiers, most of them priests, which had been published two months earlier under the title “Conscripts Bear Witness.”^{xliii} In it, Sartre condemned the complicity of the French media and public, who were nevertheless capable of offering assistance in the name of humanitarian values. He also denounced, during a radio broadcast hosted by Jean Nohain, the horrors of torture and other forms of violence practiced in Algeria: “...the organized and brutal use of absolute violence, looting and rape, retaliatory operations against civilian populations, mass executions, and the use of torture to extract confessions or information.”^{xliv}

Alongside the concepts of the oppressed and the oppressor that recur throughout Sartre’s writings, the historian Mohammed Harbi argues that the implicit notions of the colonized and the colonizer must also be added. Colonial repression manifested itself simultaneously on economic and ideological levels, leading to the predominance of the theme of the “inhuman” throughout Sartre’s writings on the Algerian War. This violence assumed various tyrannical forms,^{xlv} which the philosopher once again evoked following the signing of the Evian Accords in 1962. Thus, in his article “The Sleepwalkers”, one can perceive a profound sense of bitterness. For Sartre, dehumanization stemmed from the fact that the colonized remained subjected to a repressive system that treated them no differently from animals. This reality was reflected in the denial of law, culture, and everything that contradicted the principles of human

rights so often proclaimed by France. He also expressed his anger in the following terms: “It must be said that we have been pursuing an illusion of happiness. For seven years, France has embodied the image of a rabid dog chasing its own tail, growing more terrified each day because of the noise and turmoil it creates itself. No one today can deny that we sought to destroy, starve, and kill a helpless people in order to force them into submission, yet they remained steadfast.”^{xlvi}

In 1959, Sartre wrote his play *Morts sans Sépulture* (Men Without Graves), a work without a conventional hero despite its heroic character. Simone de Beauvoir described the circumstances in which Sartre wrote the play, stating: “For four full years Sartre reflected deeply on torture, both alone and with his friends; most of the ideas that inspired this play emerged during that period.” Nine years after writing it, Sartre found what he considered a true hero in Henri Alleg, who courageously resisted the torture inflicted upon him by the French army.^{xlvii} Through Alleg’s experience, Sartre came to understand the reality of the torture imposed upon the Algerian people and denounced these savage and inhumane methods that degraded human dignity and reduced individuals to the status of animals even in death.^{xlviii}

Sartre also wrote: “Torture imposed itself naturally until it became commonplace.” He further devoted attention to studying the personalities and psychology of French torturers, as well as the brutal and inhumane actions committed by the French army. This serves as evidence of the various torture methods employed by the French, methods they considered sophisticated, including water immersion, electric shocks, the use of broken glass, and many others. One torturer admitted:

“After several months of practicing torture, I became able to recognize the point at which a prisoner was exhausted and the moment when he could no longer resist. In such a situation, I could not let him go; I used every possible means to obtain information—beatings, threats of death with a pistol in hand...”

Likewise, the French officer Pierre Aléolat, in documents published concerning Algeria during the War of Independence (1954–1957), acknowledged that:

“Since torture had become an official method used during interrogations to obtain information, France established more institutions dedicated to torture than schools for education or hospitals for the sick.”

He further wrote that French forces often slept during the day and carried out secret night operations aimed at killing innocent civilians and burning homes, shantytowns, and their inhabitants.

In the same year (1959), he also wrote the theatrical novel *The Prisoners of Tona*, which dealt with methods of torture. It was staged in one of Paris's theaters and focused on the torture practices employed by the French army, as well as the crimes committed by Nazism, drawing a parallel with the French who were torturing Algerians.^{xlix} He stated:

“My subject is that of a young man who returned from Algeria after witnessing certain things there and perhaps even taking part in them, yet chose to remain silent... The political situation in France has made the healing of certain individuals a necessity for society...”

By “healing,” he meant strengthening and mobilizing French public opinion against the brutality and war imposed upon the Algerian people, as well as against violations of freedom and human dignity.¹

Sartre's struggle was not merely a literary one; it was the struggle of a committed intellectual, manifested on every front to which events led him. He participated in several meetings advocating peace in Algeria in June 1960 and in Rome in December 1961. He also took part in a silent demonstration on November 1, 1961, condemning the massacres of October 17, 1961, and in a February 1962 protest against the bloody repression at the Charonne Metro station. Furthermore, he testified in most of the trials of the "suitcase carriers," known as the Jeanson Network Trial. Sartre declared:

"Use me as you wish."

He then added his name to the signatories of what became known as the Manifesto of the 121, before traveling to Latin America, where support for Algeria's independence cause was widespread.

Like many French intellectuals who supported the Algerian Revolution, backed Algeria's independence, and rejected the barbaric methods and repressive policies of colonialism, Sartre was subjected to harassment and threats. During a demonstration organized by war veterans in October 1960, voices were heard chanting "Execute Sartre." These same groups went on to vandalize his apartment on two occasions, in July 1961 and January 1962.

3.4. Frantz Fanon

The national, religious, and humanitarian dimensions of the Algerian Revolution, as expressed in its foundational texts—the November Declaration, the Soummam Platform, and the Tripoli Charter—made it a living model for liberation movements throughout the Third World. This was due to the human values, shared aspirations, and common ideals it embodied.

In this regard, Frantz Fanon^{li} highlighted the impact of the Algerian Revolution and its foreign policy on the French colonies in Africa, stating:

"The Algerian War violently shook the colonial balance in Africa. There is not a single institution on this continent whose structures have not been altered in response to the realities of the Algerian War."^{lii}

The Revolution played a major role in awakening many peoples, changing the destiny of numerous oppressed nations, and enabling them to challenge unjust colonial occupation and free themselves from its oppressive policies that affected all aspects of life.

Fanon also emphasized the significance of the Algerian Revolution, noting that:

"It demolished all the colonial myths and falsehoods that had previously been regarded as unquestionable truths. Thanks to its profound humanitarian character and its deep attachment to freedom, while seeking to liberate the national territory, it simultaneously aimed at the complete eradication of colonialism and its replacement with a humane system and a new society. Thus, the liberation of Algeria would signify the defeat of racism and the exploitation of man by man, and would mark the beginning of an era governed by social justice."^{liii}

Frantz Fanon represented one of the most important voices within the French intellectual front that stood in solidarity with the Algerian Liberation Revolution and supported the struggle of the Algerian people. This was especially true after he became fully aware of the inhumane abuses committed by French colonialism against colonized peoples in general and against Algerians in particular.

In 1956, he decided to permanently cease his work as a psychiatrist at the Blida Hospital and, out of deep conviction, free choice, and strong determination, joined the ranks of the Algerian

armed struggle. He dedicated all his capabilities and diverse expertise to supporting and defending the Algerian cause. In 1958, he formally and definitively joined the Algerian Liberation Revolution.

The Revolution greatly benefited from the political and intellectual experience he had acquired throughout his activist career in defending oppressed and marginalized peoples. His influence became clearly visible in the revolutionary liberation movement in Algeria through what became known as “Frantz Fanon’s experiences in revolutionary thought and practice.”^{liv}

He embraced the struggle for Algeria’s independence and became a member of the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic, which supervised the clandestine resistance movement. Prior to this, he had gained recognition through several works, including *Black Skin, White Masks* (*Peau noire, masques blancs*), *A Dying Colonialism* (*L’An V de la Révolution Algérienne*), and *The Wretched of the Earth* (*Les Damnés de la Terre*), which is considered a seminal study of resistance against colonialism. In this work, he accurately described the mechanisms of violence employed by colonial powers to subjugate oppressed peoples.

In the preface, Sartre unreservedly endorsed Fanon’s theses and reformulated them in his own distinctive style: “...The order is given to remove the population from annexed lands in order to justify treating the settlers’ subjects as animals. Colonial violence aims not only to humiliate these oppressed men but also to strip them of every human characteristic. Nothing must prevent the destruction of their traditions, the replacement of their languages with ours, and the annihilation of their culture without even providing them with our own. We are engaged in turning them into animals and exhausting them through relentless labor.” Sartre also invoked the notion of the “animal” when discussing torture practiced by executioners, stating: “The urgent task, if there is still time, is to humiliate their victims, tear pride from their hearts, and reduce them to the level of animals.”^{lv}

Fanon analyzed the colonial phenomenon from both psychological and historical perspectives and concluded that the essence of colonial thinking is based on superiority, exploitation, and repression. He argued that the only remedy was resistance through violence and armed struggle, thereby justifying the use of revolutionary violence to end colonial occupation. Francis Jeanson supported this view and paid tribute to Fanon after his death at the age of thirty-six, writing: “This Martinican, whose French education transformed him into an Algerian revolutionary, will remain in our eyes a living example of human greatness unlike any we have ever known. If I were among those who believe in heaven, I would say with certainty that Frantz Fanon now rests there alongside those ‘wretched of the earth’ whose suffering he shared, and who, like him, are now among the dead after being cut down by the injustices of colonialism.”

These French intellectuals made significant and practical contributions to the Algerian Revolution, including sheltering activists, collecting donations, conducting media campaigns, publicizing the Algerian cause, and carrying out numerous other activities in support of the Algerian Revolution in particular and humanitarian principles in general. Despite the surveillance, pressure, and threats directed against supporters of the Algerian Revolution—whether from the French authorities or from groups aligned with them and opposed to the Algerian cause, despite recognizing its justice and humanity—the commitment of these advocates to the legitimacy of the Algerian struggle remained unwavering. Their condemnation

of the excesses and brutality of French colonial policy against Algerians continued without interruption.

In this context, the words of Bishop Duval, who steadfastly supported the Algerian cause and its revolution, became especially significant: “The human right to life is incompatible with the practice of torture and executions without trial.” Because of the fear of persecution by the French administration, most of these activities and forms of assistance were carried out discreetly and in secrecy in order to avoid attracting the suspicions of the French police. This was particularly important because these intellectuals were French citizens, unlike Algerians—especially immigrants living in France—who were subjected to intense police and military surveillance.^{lvi}

4. Conclusion

The French cultural front played an effective role in promoting anti-colonial slogans and recognizing the justice of the Algerian cause, thereby supporting the Algerian people's right to self-determination and the recovery of their freedom, particularly during the last eight years of colonial rule. These intellectuals, especially those from the political left, expressed strong solidarity with the Algerian Revolution and made significant humanitarian contributions to the struggle against colonialism and its repressive policies in Algeria. Having become convinced of the necessity of supporting just causes around the world, they dedicated themselves to defending the Algerian people. This front included doctors, lawyers, students, journalists, and numerous Christian clergymen, all of whom committed themselves to standing alongside and defending the Algerian people. Through their writings in various newspapers and journals, they sharply criticized the French occupation and denounced its crimes. This position marked a decisive turning point, prompting the French government and its supporters to reconsider their stance in order to safeguard their interests and adapt to changing international circumstances, especially as the Algerian question became a major concern within the international community.

The principal findings of this study are as follows:

The support of the French cultural front for the Algerian Revolution helped present it to the world as a humanitarian struggle for liberation. It served as a cornerstone in enlightening French and international public opinion about French abuses in Algeria and the legitimacy of the Algerian national cause. In doing so, it became a significant pressure force within France against the ruling authorities and oppressive institutions, while also serving as a source of hope for colonized peoples and liberation movements.

The positions adopted by these French intellectuals constituted genuine support for the Algerian Revolution and provided a realistic exposure of French colonialism and its repressive policies. They brilliantly represented an important social group that rebelled against the existing regime and its ruthless policies toward defenseless Algerians. Through both words and actions, they devoted themselves to supporting and defending the Algerian Revolution, thereby setting an exemplary model of humanitarian commitment and the defense of justice regardless of differences in nationality or background.

These intellectuals embodied a community of free-thinking individuals affiliated with civil society organizations and cultural forums. Their expertise spanned numerous intellectual, scientific, artistic, and philosophical fields. Their lives were marked by a steadfast commitment

to defending justice despite the pressures and harassment that often affected their professional and family lives. They actively participated in international forums aimed at challenging colonial systems, supporting just causes, and opposing colonialism and its repressive and arbitrary policies, which violated international norms, laws, and fundamental humanitarian principles.

In doing so, they represented the living forces that cherished peace and freedom and remained faithful to the values and ideals of the French Revolution. Overcoming fear and breaking their silence, they united their efforts in the service of democracy and in defense of the Algerian cause, affirming its legitimacy. This earned them considerable influence within both French and international cultural spheres. They campaigned within a broad movement opposed to the war in Algeria and advocated for its termination, with many expressing their views and making their voices heard either individually or collectively.

Owing to the nobility of its objectives, the justice of its demands, and the universality of its humanitarian values, the Algerian Revolution succeeded in winning the support of many French intellectuals and advocates of freedom. These individuals openly expressed their sympathy, support, and solidarity with the Revolution and its moral principles, while condemning French crimes against the Algerian people and rejecting the French colonial project. Throughout the period of French occupation, they demonstrated their commitment through numerous positive actions and humanitarian initiatives in support of Algeria.

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