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The consequences of the Civil Status Law of March 23, 1882, on the Algerian surname system

تداعيات قانون الحالة المدنية الصادر في 23 مارس 1882م على منظومة الألقاب الجزائرية

Les conséquences de la loi sur l'état civil du 23 mars 1882 sur le système des patronymes algériens

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ملخص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى الكشف عن أهداف الاستعمار الفرنسي من سن قانون الحالة المدنية الصادر في 23 مارس 1882م، الذي حولت بموجبه ألقاب الجزائريين إلى ألقاب لا ترتبط بالنسب بهدف ضرب هوية وثقافة الجزائريين ولم تكتف السلطات الاستعمارية بتغيير أسماء وألقاب الجزائريين عشوائية بل عوضت العديد منها مشينة ونابية؛ وهذا ما أنتج قاعدة اسمية جزائرية قائمة على القاعدة الثلاثية أو الرباعية شبيهة بتلك الحالة المدنية القائمة بالمشرق العربي حتى اليوم، وعلى العموم فالإدارة الفرنسية حاولت استبدال ألقاب الجزائريين الثلاثية (الابن، الأب، الجد) وتعويضها بألقاب لا ترتبط بالنسب وسبق صدور هذا القانون محاولات متواصلة لطمس الهوية الجزائرية، الغاية من استبدال ألقاب الجزائريين الثلاثية وتعويضها بألقاب لا ترتبط بالنسب هو تفكيك نظام القبيلة لتسهيل الاستيلاء على الأراضي وإبراز الفرد كنصر معزول وتغيير أساس الملكية إلى الأساس الفردي بدلا من أساس القبيلة، وطمس الهوية العربية الإسلامية من خلال تغير الأسماء ذات الدلالة الدينية وتعويضها بهوية هجينة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاستعمار الفرنسي؛ التفكيك الاجتماعي؛ الحالة المدنية؛ قانون الألقاب؛ المسلمين الجزائريين.

Abstract :

This study explores the motives behind the French colonial administration's enactment of the Civil Status Law on March 23, 1882. Through this law, France redefined Algerian surnames, intentionally detaching them from lineage to erode Algerian cultural identity. Colonial authorities did not merely alter Algerians' names arbitrarily; they often replaced them with derogatory or offensive terms, establishing a naming structure similar to the multi-part format seen in the Levant. The French administration sought to replace the traditional Algerian tripartite naming system (father, son, grandfather) with surnames disconnected from lineage; this strategy was part of a larger colonial agenda to dismantle tribal structures, facilitating land seizures, isolating individuals, and shifting property ownership from a collective to an individual basis. By replacing religiously significant names, the law aimed to obscure Arab-Islamic identity, fostering a hybrid identity instead.

Keywords: French colonialism; social disintegration; civil status; surname law; Algerian Muslims.

Résumé :

Cette étude explore Cette étude explore les motivations derrière la promulgation de la loi sur l'état civil du 23 mars 1882 par l'administration coloniale française. À travers cette loi, la France a redéfini les noms de famille algériens, les détachants intentionnellement de la lignée pour éroder l'identité culturelle algérienne. Les autorités coloniales n'ont pas simplement modifié les noms des Algériens

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de manière arbitraire ; elles les ont souvent remplacés par des termes dérogatoires ou offensants, établissant une structure de nommage similaire au format en plusieurs parties observé au Levant. L'administration française cherchait à remplacer le système de nommage tripartite traditionnel algérien (père, fils, grand-père) par des noms de famille déconnectés de la lignée ; Cette stratégie faisait partie d'un agenda colonial plus vaste visant à démanteler les structures tribales, facilitant les saisies de terres, isolant les individus et transférant la propriété foncière d'une base collective à une base individuelle. En remplaçant les noms religieusement significatifs, la loi visait à obscurcir l'identité arabo-islamique, favorisant plutôt une identité hybride.

Mots clés : colonisation française; désintégration sociale; état civil; loi sur les noms de famille; les musulmans algériens.

Introduction :

Starting in the latter half of the 19th century, Algeria saw the formal and systematic registration of birth records. The city of Constantine led to birth registrations in 1870-preceding surname law. Algerians were provided with birth and death records, and the French occupation created a third type of registry known as the "surname register" (family ledger), derived from Algerians' genealogical trees.

To reinforce this policy, the colonial authorities aimed to reshape the Algerian individual into a compliant figure under French law. They promoted a form of "Frenchification" to assimilate and naturalize Algerians while eroding their national, cultural, and civilizational identity. Recognizing that Algerians' resilience derives from interconnected social and landholding structures, French policy experts advised dismantling these systems through laws. Key among these was the Sénatus-consulte law of 1863, which had profound repercussions for Algerian society (saleh, 2013-2014, pp. 113-134) .

The French administration further documented Algerian land ownership following the Warnier Law enactment on July 26, 1873. This law excluded Algerians from vast tracts of land because they lacked distinct surnames and official land ownership documents. Article 17 stipulated the necessity of a surname alongside property titles: "Every property title must include a family name in addition to the name by which the claimant is identified. If no permanent name exists, the land shall be registered under the name associated with the parcel itself." This policy allowed state property managers to assign surnames based on a property's characteristics, such as colour, vegetation, and terrain, often resulting in pejorative names for Algerian landowners.
Consequently, Algerians without formal land deeds often cannot trace their lineage beyond the third or fourth generation. In contrast, those with land documents can sometimes trace their roots back seven or eight generations. The March 23, 1882 law established a mandatory family surname system in Algeria (El-deeb, December 6-7, 2017, p. 57) Accordingly, this article is titled: "French Policy of Social Disintegration in Algeria: A Study of the Contents and Objectives of the Civil Status Law Issued on March 23, 1882."

This study addresses several key questions.

- What were the circumstances surrounding this law ?

- What were the principal legal measures introduced by this law ?

- What objectives did the French authorities pursue in enacting this law ?

- Was the law originally intended to organize family affairs in Algerian households ?

- To what extent did the law serve the colonial agenda by fragmenting and assimilation Algerian society ?

- What impact did this law have on Algerian society ?

Significance of the Study:

This research aims to shed light on the French colonial legal strategy for controlling and dismantling Algeria's social structure during the occupation. This is a structure traditionally rooted in tribal affiliations, now shifted to a system of new family names laden with meanings primarily intended to demean Algerians. This strategy facilitated Algerian land expropriation by eroding collective ownership structures.

The study also highlights an often-overlooked aspect of France's colonial crimes in Algeria, alongside killings, torture, displacement, and impoverishment: the systematic erasure of Algerian identity.

A Review of French Legislation Preceding the Civil Status Law

- The Colonial Administration's Initial Directives: On December 7, 1830, the French colonial administration issued a decree mandating burial permits and birth registration in Algiers (Bouacha, kamal, december 6-7,2017, p. 19) While the implementation of this decree saw moderate success, especially in registering the deceased rather than the living, it was soon expanded to other major coastal cities, such as Oran and Annaba. In 1834, civil status offices dedicated to recording deaths were established in these cities, following a decree on October 20, 1834 (Sari, Ahmed, October 29-30, 2019, p. 132).

- 1838 Establishing Civil Status Services for the Local Population: In 1838, a civil status department was created in the capital specifically for the local population, assigning midwives the responsibility of recording births. However, this initiative lasted only for a few months (Bouacha, kamal, december 6-7,2017, p. 19).

- The 1842 Ministerial Decision to Organize Civil Status Services: A ministerial decision on December 18, 1842, sought to organize civil status services. Article 19 of this law set fees for document copies and tasked judicial commissioners with managing civil status records, including birth, death, and marriage registrations (Bouacha, kamal, december 6-7,2017, p. 20).

- Expansion of Civil Administration for Local Algerians (1848): On May 11, 1848, a civil administration department was established to serve the local population in Algiers, and similar services were extended across Algeria. In Constantine, for example, a decree issued on July 20, 1848, required mandatory birth registrations under the supervision of the qa'id (tribal leader) (Amara,Alaoua, October 29-30, 2019, p. 132).

- Instructions for Registering Tribes in Civil Status Records (1851): On April 15, 1851, the Secretary-General of the Algerian General Government issued a directive to the generals of Constantine and Algiers, instructing them to have judges compile tribal records within a civil status register (Bouacha, kamal, december 6-7,2017, p. 22).

- The August 8, 1854 Decree on Birth and Death Declarations: A decree on August 8, 1854, mandated that Algerians report births and deaths to the tribal elder, who recorded the events in Arabic. These records were then submitted to the municipal head, where they were translated into French and logged

in the civil status register. These records included birth, death, marriage, and divorce contracts. However, resistance to this decree led French legislators to impose fines and even prison sentences on non-compliants (Sari, Ahmed, October 29-30, 2019, pp. 96-97).

- Napoleon III's Directive for a Unified Naming Dictionary (1865) : On June 25, 1865, Emperor Napoleon III sent a letter to the Governor-General of Algeria, urging the creation of a standardized dictionary of Algerian names to ensure consistent transcription and spelling. This followed an earlier attempt in 1860 to compile a list of common Algerian names with their French translations, which resulted in numerous errors, especially in transliterating Arabic names (Bouacha, kamal, december 6-7,2017, p. 24).

- The May 20, 1868 Decree by Governor-General MacMahon: Governor-General MacMahon issued a decree on May 20, 1868, assigning responsibility for civil status registers in military zones to the "community secretary" instead of the QAID. These registers included births, marriages, and deaths (Ben Zarda, October 29-30, 2019, p. 111).

- August 18, 1868: Parents' Responsibility for Reporting Births and From August August 18, 1868, parents were required to report births and deaths directly to the municipal civil status officer.

- The February 11, 1869 Decree on Marriage Registration: A decree on February 11, 1869, mandating the compulsory registration of marriage contracts with the local judge.

- The July 26, 1873 Law on Individual Property and Family Names: The July 26, 1873 law introduced individual property rights for Algerians and assigned each landowner a family surname in line with the French civil status system (Hashemi, October 29-30,2019).

- The May 29, 1875 Decree on Reporting Marriages and Divorces: On May 29, 1875, Governor-General Chanzy issued Decree No. 167, mandating Algerians to declare the number of their wives and any divorce cases (Bouacha, kamal, december 6-7,2017, p. 28).

- The July 22, 1876 Law on Marriage and Divorce Reporting Penalties: The July 22, 1876 law encouraged provincial governors to impose penalties on those who refused or delayed declaring marriages or divorces.

- The July 31, 1876 Decision by the Director of State Property: The State Property Director's decision on July 31, 1876, deemed the refusal to declare marriages or divorces a punishable offense (Bouacha, kamal, december 6-7,2017, p. 30).

From the above, it is evident that the series of French laws and decrees enacted from December 7, 1830, until the March 23, 1882 Civil Status Law, laid the groundwork for the colonial strategy of social control in Algeria. This approach undermined the social structure by fragmenting the tribal system into smaller clans or family units bearing distinct surnames. This was despite shared ancestral and tribal affiliations. In doing so, these policies targeted the foundational social and land-based bonds of Algerian society, aiming to dissolve the collective identity that supported their resistance to colonial rule.

2. The Context and Content of the Civil Status Law for Algerian Muslims, March 23, 1882

The French colonial administration's intention to revise the civil status system, especially the naming conventions, was not arbitrary. Rather, it was a key part of implementing their broader colonial policy, which had been hindered by Algerian surname complexities. The French, wherever they established control, imposed their unique systems across various domains, including laws, urban

planning, language, population distribution, and even people's names—the latter being among the most intimate aspects of identity (Bouacha, kamal, december 6-7,2017, p. 17).

To execute this policy, the colonial authorities swiftly presented the draft of the Civil Status Law to the Chamber of Deputies on March 6, 1882, then to the Senate on March 8, 1882, and finally to the French Parliament, which approved it on March 23, 1882, after revisions by Deputy Jacques.

This law, specifically targeting Muslim Algerian civil status, was composed of 23 articles organized into two sections. The first section was titled "**Establishment of Personal Status for Indigenous Muslims**" and included 15 articles (Articles 1-15). These articles detailed the establishment of a naming system for Algerians, specifying how names would be recorded in a special ledger known as the "family ledger" (Saidi, 2008-2009, p. 197) The articles are summarized:

- Article **1**: The civil status system for Algeria's indigenous population will be implemented (Estoublon & Lefébure, Adolphe, 1896, p. 569).

- **Article 2**: In each municipality or municipal district, a census of the Muslim population must be conducted by civil status registrars or by an appointed officer in their absence. This census, recorded in duplicate, will include names, given names, occupation, residence, and, if possible, the age and birthplace of all registered individuals (Seddouk, December 6-7, 2017, p. 38).

- **Article 3**: Any Muslim without a male relative—father, grandfather, uncle, or elder brother—must select a family surname upon establishment of the primary register. If a Muslim has such a relative, the right to choose the family name is prioritized from the father to the grandfather, and so on. If the eligible family member is absent, the right transfers to the next closest relative, unless the individual is a minor, in which case the guardian exercises this right (Seddouk, December 6-7, 2017, p. 38).

- **Article 4:** If a family consists only of a woman, the right to select a family name ascends through her lineage, or to her sisters, in accordance with the principle outlined in Article 3.

- **Article 5**: In cases where eligible family members refuse or neglect to choose a family name, or if a previously chosen name is not accepted by one or more family members, the civil commissioner has the authority to assign a family name.

- **Article 6:** Once approved, the designated name is added to the primary register. When the civil status commissioner approves it, the family name becomes part of the official civil status record. The duplicate register is sent to the municipal office, with one copy remaining with the municipality and the other forwarded to the district civil court. This is to enable the issue of identification cards with an individual reference number for each citizen (Estoublon & Lefébure, Adolphe, 1896, pp. 573-574).

- **Article 7**: If a well-known family head's name exists within an electoral district, the civil status official must notify the family that this name must be carried by the head's children and grandchildren. Identity cards will be issued accordingly. If the family name does not align with the current electoral district, the citizen will be registered in the residence specified by the mayor, based on the commissioner's discretion, under the name chosen for the family group (Estoublon & Lefébure, Adolphe, 1896, p. 574).

- **Article 8:** In districts where the Law of July 26, 1873, on individual property applies, the family name of the original landowner will not automatically be transferred to the family unless it has been

chosen by those with this right under Articles 3 and 17. If an alternative name is chosen, it will be added to the property title and appear in mortgage office records.

- **Article 9:** These provisions apply to indigenous Muslims residing in institutions such as the military, hospitals, or prisons within France or Algeria. The heads of these institutions must act on behalf of municipal authorities in executing this law.

- **Article 10:** Family surnames assigned under this law, or the Law of July 26, 1873, must appear in the margins of birth, marriage, and death records. Identity cards must be issued as requested by the named individuals or by the public prosecutor.

- **Article 11**: After establishing civil status records in an electoral district, public notice will be posted in Le Moniteur and the municipality. A one-month period is provided to correct any errors or omissions.

- **Article 12:** Following this period, the commissioner must rectify any reported errors as appropriate.

- **Article 13:** After this final review period, the commissioner's work is temporarily validated and submitted to the civil governor, who, after consulting the Government Council, declares the records official. Any contested cases will be referred to the courts, either by the commissioner or the governor general, without delay (Estoublon & Lefébure, Adolphe, 1896, p. 574).

- **Article 14**: Once approved, Muslims must use their family name in all civil matters. Clerks preparing documents may only use the names recorded on identity papers, with fines between 60 and 200 francs for non-compliance.

- **Article 15:** Any Muslim without a surname who resides in a district subject to the civil status code must declare a surname within one month at the municipal office. If no declaration is made, one will be assigned as per the guidelines in the previous articles.

Section 2: Procedures for Civil Status Contracts This section contains eight articles, with Articles 16-19 explaining the organization and registration of birth, marriage, and death certificates, while the remaining articles outline general civil status guidelines, including penalties for non-compliance.

- **Article 16:** From the date established under Article 14, Muslims are required to declare births, deaths, marriages, and divorces using their registered names. These declarations must be backed by identity cards with names recorded exactly as registered.

- **Article 17**: Birth and death records are prepared according to French law, while marriage and divorce records follow a three-day reporting period with witness presence in line with Islamic law.

- **Article 18:** Certificates related to birth, death, marriage, and divorce must be recorded and sent within eight days to the municipal civil registry.

- **Article 19:** Corrections to civil status records are handled according to French law. During the five years following the issuance of identity cards, these corrections will be managed by the public prosecutor, and during a time civil status extracts will be provided tax-free on a standard form costing 25 centimes.

- **Article 20**: Crimes, offenses, and violations related to births, deaths, marriages, and divorces are penalized in accordance with French law.

- **Article 21**: Any individual who manufactures, forges, or uses a forged identity card will be punished according to Articles 153 and 154 of the Penal Code, with reference to Article 463 of the same code.

- **Article 22:** The administration will set forth specific guidelines for implementing this law, which will immediately apply across the Tell region of Algeria, as outlined in the February 20, 1873 decree concerning electoral districts. The Governor-General's orders will define the areas where this law will become enforceable.

- **Article 23:** All provisions conflicting with this law are repealed (Estoublon & Lefébure, Adolphe, 1896, pp. 574-575).

After examining the articles of the Civil Status Law of March 23, 1882, one notes that the French legislator's official purpose was to standardize surnames. At face value, this approach appeared to be a way of organizing Algerian society by distinguishing individuals within specific regions and across Algeria. However, the deeper reason was quite different.

A careful reading of the law's articles reveals that the French legislator intended to weaken and fragment family lines among Algerians. This intent is subtly embedded in provisions that at times require members of the same family to adopt different surnames. As a result, future generations would be less connected to their lineage, with some descendants potentially losing any link to their ancestral names.

Looking closely at the law, one can observe that it was primarily a tool to facilitate the work of both civil and military authorities. By creating a system in which civil status officers recorded each Algerian's name, occupation, residence, age, and place of birth in a registry, the French authorities gained easier access to detailed data on the Algerian population. This is clearly outlined in Article 2 of the law. Additionally, Article 3 mandates that individuals without direct male lineage (i.e., without a father, grandfather, uncle, etc.) must adopt the name of a selected local figure. In this way, the law restructured individual identities and severed connections to traditional kinship. Furthermore, Article 5 grants each family's head or a civil commissioner the right to assign surnames (Ould ennebia, 2009, p. 03).

Article 15 particularly stands out, as it authorizes civil status officials to assign another name to anyone who resists or refuses to select a surname. It specifies: "If a citizen entitled to choose a name abstains, or if they persist in using a previously selected name adopted by one or more family members, the right to name selection passes not to another family member but to the civil status commissioner."

Moreover, Article 20 regulates the transcription of original names, stipulating that "the current names of citizens, their ancestors, and those assigned names are to be recorded in French, following transcription standards set by the Algerian General Government in consultation with the Government Council." Although Arabic was still used, it was relegated to a secondary role, and its usage was sometimes omitted entirely, with no reference to Berber names. Thus, the original languages were placed in the background or disregarded altogether. Furthermore, Arabic transcription was not even included in the main registry.

The law emerged as a practical solution aimed at integrating Algerians into French civil society and promoting civil rights awareness. For instance, Algerian students attending colonial schools and employees working in French institutions were required to present identity documents. This differentiated individuals based on official records. To this end, the French administration created a

surname system based on individual names and family names. This diverged from the Algerian naming system, which had several distinct characteristics, summarized below (Ageron, 2007, p. 332):

· Honorific titles (e.g., Haj, Sidi, Si).

· The individual's given name.

· The father's lineage.

· Sometimes, names distinguished between religious and military families.

· Surnames that related to places of birth or, occasionally, profession.

This structure produced an Algerian naming pattern resembling the tripartite or quadripartite system found in the Arab Levant. The French administration aimed to replace these traditional three-part names (father, son, grandfather) with single-family names unlinked to lineage. Before the law, there were ongoing attempts to erase Algerian identity, though these efforts faced challenges in practice (Ageron, 2007, pp. 333-335). A key part of this policy was the mandate for indigenous Algerians to register births and marriages with the French civil status office. This was rather than proceeding through the traditional Quadi or community elder.

In addition, the civil status system led to the assignment of offensive and derogatory surnames that were, at times, difficult to pronounce. Some names were derived from animals, such as Boubaqra ("Father of the Cow"), Boumaaza ("Father of the Goat"), Bouhamara ("Father of the Donkey"), and Arneb ("Rabbit"). Others referenced physical deformities, like Laib ("the Crippled"), Laour ("the One-eyed"), and Lebras ("Leprous"). Certain names described body parts, such as Bousbaa ("Fingered"), Bouras ("Headed"), and Boulesan ("Lunged"). Some names were based on occupations or the conditions in which the individual was labeled, including Kennes ("Sweeper"), Tabbal ("Drummer"), and Ghayat ("Crier"). Other names referenced types of food, like Bouelmara ("Stew-eater"), Bouchakhchoukha ("Broth-eater"), Boularfis ("Pie-eater"), Bouelasl ("Honey-eater"), and Boudjicha ("Porridge-eater"). Names were also drawn from clothing types, such as Bouamama ("Father of the Turban"), Bouqendoura ("Father of the Dress"), Bouchmela ("Father of the Shawl"), and Bouhbila ("Father of the Veil").

3. Objectives of the Civil Status Law of March 23, 1882

- Humiliating and Degrading Algerians through Names: Under this law, the colonial authorities did not change Algerian names and surnames arbitrarily; they replaced many of them with degrading and offensive names. These new surnames were often derived from body parts, physical disabilities, colors, seasons, agricultural tools, insects, clothing, animals, and cooking utensils. The selection of these names lacked logic or respect. It was only demoralizing Algerians by forcing them to carry names that could be ridiculed or demeaned for generations. Since 1882, these imposed names have been passed down from parents to children, forcing descendants to bear names that neither they nor their ancestors chose.

- Undermining Tribal Structure and Facilitating Land Seizure: By replacing the traditional three-part surnames connected to lineage with arbitrary family names, the law aimed to dismantle the tribal structure, which traditionally served as the basis of social organization in Algeria. This shift facilitated land seizure by isolating individuals and shifting ownership from tribal to individual. The law also sought to erase Arab and Islamic identity by removing religiously significant names and replacing them with hybridized names. In administrative transactions and documentation, the individual was

emphasized over the community, and the French custom of addressing people by surname, rather than by given name, was enforced.

- Integrating Algerians into the Colonial System by Undermining Tribal Society: The surname law was part of the broader French colonial policy aimed at assimilating Algerians by dismantling traditional tribal structures in the region. By focusing solely on family and individual identity and completely omitting references to the tribe, the law emphasized the colonial agenda of isolating individuals from the influence of the larger tribal community (Saidi, 2008-2009, p. 197).

- Disconnecting Algerians from Their National and Cultural Heritage: The law sought to detach Algerians from their longstanding national and cultural identity by fragmenting tribal unity. Where once families shared a collective tribal identity, each family received a unique surname. This was regardless of whether they were related to other families within the same tribe.

- Replacing Islamic Law with French Law in Land Ownership: The law replaced Islamic law, which governed land ownership and inheritance, with French legal structures, thus facilitating the establishment of individual property ownership under French law instead of collective property rights customary in Islamic jurisprudence.

Institutionalizing Family Names to Disrupt Traditional Naming Practices: The law enforced the adoption of family names to break with the prevailing naming conventions, further tarnishing Algerian image through identification documents. This change not only aimed to standardize identity within the community but also sought to impose an alternative social order that aligned with contemporary values. As a result, many individuals grappled with the loss of cultural heritage and the implications of a name that no longer held the same significance.

- Compulsory Surnames as a Solution to French Administrative Challenges: In practice, French administrators found it challenging to manage Algeria’s dynamic naming conventions, which often varied and were frequently expanded or contracted. Additionally, the limited number of traditional names and their similarity complicated French administrative work, as there was no consistent family surname system. To address these issues, the French authorities mandated fixed family surnames for all Algerians, ensuring uniformity and administrative ease.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is evident that since France's arrival in Algeria in 1830, it has systematically planned to assert full control over its colony. This is done by separating the Algerian people from their land, thereby facilitating a seamless occupation. To achieve this, France sought to implement a social fragmentation policy, particularly after recognizing that Algerian resistance was strong rooted in two key elements: the tribe and the land. To undermine these foundations, France enacted numerous laws aimed at eroding Algerian social cohesion and morale. One of the most significant laws was the Civil Status Law of March 23, 1882. This law introduced a new social structure based on family surnames. It shifted individual loyalty to the newly imposed surname at the expense of tribal affiliation.

In the process of enforcing the Civil Status Law, serious errors were made—some intentional and others not. These errors forced Algerians to adopt arbitrary, imposed surnames, many of which were offensive, revolting, or frightening, with no connection to their original lineage. In some cases, they were assigned nameless surnames that obscured their ancestry, targeting families from tribes known to resist the occupation. This practice was intended to humiliate those associated with these families, leaving a lasting psychological wound on everyone connected to them. By doing so, the

French occupation added yet another crime to its dark legacy: manipulating the Algerian people's identity, heritage, and nobility. This policy sowed seeds of doubt and resentment among Algerians, who had once been united. It incited divisions along tribal, ethnic, and sectarian lines—between Arab, Berber, Chaoui, Mozabite, and Tuareg communities.

Ultimately, this manipulation reveals the brutal reality of French colonialism, a truth that must be exposed and acknowledged. This reality stands in stark contrast to the lofty ideals of "liberty, equality, justice, and civilization" that France purported to spread, masking its true intentions with these deceptive slogans.

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