

The Proclamation of 1 November 1954: A Reading from the Perspective of citizenship

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Abstract:

This study undertakes a examination of the Proclamation of 1 November 1954 as both a seminal text and a constitutive framework for the Algerian nation-state, through an analytical focus on its articulation of citizenship principles. The investigation posits that the document transcends its immediate function as a revolutionary manifesto, revealing itself as a normative charter imbued with universal humanistic and ethical imperatives.

Beyond its catalytic role in anticolonial resistance, the declaration articulated a prescient sociopolitical blueprint, envisioning a sovereign polity anchored in democratic governance, equality and social justice.

Keywords: The Proclamation of 1 November 1954; Algerian Revolution; Citizenship; Algerian people; freedom.

INTRODUCTION

The Algerian Revolution of 1954 stands as a historically significant event on the global stage, distinguished not merely by the moral legitimacy of its objectives but also by its embodiment of elevated humanistic ideals and universal principles. This profound dimension is discernible from the inaugural address delivered by revolutionary leaders to both the Algerian populace and the international community, which articulated a coherent blueprint for reconstructing the Algerian state upon robust national foundations. Central to this vision was the seminal Proclamation of 1 November 1954, a foundational document that continues to inform the collective consciousness of Algerian society and underpin the political ethos of the nation in contemporary times.

Transcending its role as the inaugural manifesto of a monumental revolutionary movement, the Proclamation of 1 November 1954 encapsulates a sophisticated framework of ethical and civic values that extend beyond its immediate historical context. Within this paradigm, the present study undertakes a critical re-examination and analytical exploration of the declaration through the lens of citizenship and its attendant principles, framed by the central inquiry: **How are citizenship values articulated within the Proclamation of 1 November 1954?** To address this question, a three - pronged methods framework was employed, integrating descriptive, historical, and content analysis. This approach was informed by a meticulous examination of both the original French-language text and its Arabic translation.

The analysis is structured along two principal sections: the first offers a comprehensive overview of the declaration's ideological framework and strategic objectives, while the second conducts a granular examination of its textual content, with particular emphasis on the codification and expression of citizenship values. The study culminates in a synthesis of key findings, elucidating the enduring relevance of the declaration's ethical and civic imperatives.

first section: The Proclamation of 1 November 1954: An Overview

The Proclamation of 1 November 1954, represents the inaugural manifesto through which the leaders of the Algerian Revolution, embodied by the National Secretariat of the National Liberation Front (FLN), formally addressed the Algerian populace—prioritizing the nation's activists—as well as France and the international community. This historic proclamation was disseminated initially through printed leaflets and subsequently broadcast via radio, notably through Cairo's Voice of the Arabs station.

This manifesto is, at its core, a multi-dimensional political and historical document, its features defined in French in its original form, as an address to the colonial powers and global diplomacy. It was then translated into Arabic and read by Ahmed Ben Bella from the Egyptian capital, signaling the revolution's connection to the Arab world and its reclaiming of its linguistic identity. As for the process of drafting the text, historical sources agree that the task was entrusted to leaders **Mohamed Boudiaf** and **Mourad Didouche**, commissioned by the "Group of Six," while journalist **Mohamed Laichaoui** was tasked with final editing and printing the text, in preparation for its widespread publication.⁽¹⁾

The Proclamation of 1 November 1954, stands as the seminal text in the refoundation of the modern Algerian state. This historic document articulated the objectives, strategic blueprint, and ideological vision of the revolutionary leaders, delineating their aspirations for the structure, identity, and sovereignty of an independent Algeria. It further outlined the anticipated trajectory of Algeria's relations with the colonial power and neighboring nations. Serving as the cornerstone of the state's reconstitution and revitalization, The Proclamation of 1 November 1954 holds profound significance in both guiding the revolutionary struggle and shaping the political, social, and cultural contours of the nascent sovereign state. Its enumerated principles—spanning immediate imperatives and long-term ambitions—established a comprehensive framework for Algeria's domestic and international orientation. Notably, it emphasized universal humanist values, including commitments to global solidarity and foundational civic ideals, such as the concept of inclusive citizenship, which remain integral to the nation's ethos. Thus, The Proclamation not only catalyzed Algeria's liberation but also enshrined the ideological pillars underpinning its postcolonial identity and governance.

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The Proclamation of 1 November 1954, as a foundational political manifesto, originated as an official proclamation issued by the National Secretariat of the National Liberation Front (FLN). Addressed to a diverse array of stakeholders—including the Algerian populace, advocates of the Algerian national movement, the French government, the Pieds-Noirs community (*), neighboring states such as Morocco and Tunisia, and the broader international community—this document functioned as a comprehensive political program. It meticulously delineated the revolutionary objectives, enumerating both pragmatic and aspirational methodologies to secure independence and construct a sovereign Algerian state grounded in Islamic principles.

It also expressed in it the methods of dealing with the colonial authorities during periods of war and peace, in addition to Algeria's relations with the outside world. Accordingly, The Proclamation of 1 November 1954 is considered the "constitution" of the revolution and its spirit, which worked to guide and unite Algerians on the principle of independence, freedom, and building the modern Algerian state.

the foundational principles articulated in the Proclamation may be distilled into the following key tenets: ⁽²⁾

i. **Contextualizing the Revolution:** A systematic exposition of the sociopolitical rationale for the uprising, emphasizing its central aim of sovereignty, while situating the struggle within the broader domestic, regional (notably Tunisia and Morocco), and global geopolitical landscape. This included an analytical assessment of Algeria's internal colonial subjugation, regional solidarity dynamics, and international diplomatic opportunities.

(*) **The pieds-noirs** (literally "black feet") constitute an ethno-cultural group composed of individuals of French and other European ancestry who were born in Algeria during the period of French colonial rule (1830–1962). Following the Algerian War of Independence, a significant number of them migrated to mainland France during and after 1962, coinciding with Algeria's attainment of independence.

ii. **The Imperative of Armed Resistance:** A critical evaluation of the futility of prior peaceful political mobilization, underscoring the inevitability of transitioning to armed struggle as the sole viable mechanism to dismantle colonial hegemony and assert national self-determination.

iii. **Strategic Objectives and Modalities of the FLN:** A clear delineation of the National Liberation Front's dual mandate—immediate liberation and long-term state-building—coupled with a pragmatic enumeration of methodologies. These encompassed both militant resistance and diplomatic outreach, harmonizing ideological rigor with tactical flexibility to achieve independence within an Islamic ethical framework.

iv. **Mobilization of National Unity:** An urgent appeal to the Algerian populace to coalesce around the revolutionary cause, fostering a unified national consciousness rooted in collective sacrifice, solidarity, and active participation in the liberation struggle. This call sought to transcend regional, social, and ideological divides, positioning the revolution as both a moral imperative and a shared existential project.

By synthesizing these principles, the Proclamation not only provided a coherent ideological scaffold but also operationalized a transformative vision, binding theory to praxis in the service of Algeria's emancipation and the crystallization of its postcolonial identity.

The Proclamation of 1 November 1954 constitutes a seminal political manifesto that elucidates three critical dimensions of Algeria's revolutionary context and strategy:

1. **Diagnosis of Sociopolitical Disarray:** The text delineates a state of profound institutional and ideological crisis, marked by the stagnation of the national movement. It critiques the strategic impasse resulting from the futility of reformist approaches and diplomatic negotiations, which not only failed to advance liberation but also precipitated regional fragmentation. The document underscores the collapse of collaborative efforts among Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco, leaving the anticolonial struggle fractured and directionless.

2. **Prescription for Remediation:** In response to this existential crisis, the Proclamation advocates for a radical corrective framework. This

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entails political purification—a systematic dismantling of compromised structures and ideologies—to reclaim the nation’s agency. It posits the urgent imperative of restoring sovereignty through a unified, revolutionary project aimed at emancipating Algeria from colonial subjugation and revitalizing its collective political and moral autonomy.

3. **Operationalization of Revolutionary Praxis:** The manifesto articulates a dual-axis strategy for liberation, bifurcated into internal and external spheres of action. Internally, it prioritizes the synchronization of political mobilization and military resistance, framing armed struggle as indispensable to dismantling colonial authority. Externally, it emphasizes diplomatic outreach to secure international legitimacy and solidarity, thereby globalizing Algeria’s cause. This integrated approach underscores the necessity of coherence between ideological objectives and tactical execution, ensuring the revolution’s alignment with its ultimate goals of independence and statehood.

An analysis of the Proclamation of 1 November 1954, reveals the strategic foresight and prescient vision that distinguished the vanguard leaders of the Algerian Revolution. Their manifesto not only demonstrated an incisive comprehension of the sociopolitical exigencies of their era but also articulated a holistic blueprint for postcolonial statehood. The document addressed, albeit in broad strokes, the multifaceted dimensions—political, economic, religious, and cultural—that would define the contours of an independent Algeria, prefiguring its institutional and ideological foundations.

This visionary outlook was rooted in the profound political acumen cultivated by the revolution’s architects through decades of activism within Algeria’s nationalist movements, including the People’s Party (PPA) and the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties (MTLD). Their immersion in these organizations honed their understanding of colonial oppression, the limitations of reformist strategies, and the imperative of radical action. Crucially, their experiences solidified a conviction in the necessity of armed resistance as the sole viable pathway to dismantle colonial hegemony—a conclusion borne of both pragmatic assessment and ideological resolve.

second section: Citizenship Values in the Proclamation of 1 November 1954

The Proclamation of 1 November 1954, while rooted in the exigencies of anticolonial struggle, exhibits a striking alignment with foundational principles of citizenship as conceptualized in modern political discourse. Though the term "citizenship" itself is not explicitly invoked in the text, the document implicitly engages with its core tenets—particularly the reciprocal relationship between the individual and the state, the assertion of collective rights, and the articulation of shared civic identity.

Central to the Proclamation is the notion of national sovereignty, which it frames not merely as territorial independence but as the collective right of Algerians to self-determination—a principle that mirrors the modern understanding of citizenship as a bond of mutual obligation. By demanding liberation from colonial rule, the text underscores the state's duty to guarantee its people's political agency, while simultaneously obligating citizens to unite in defense of their nascent nation. This reciprocal dynamic echoes the classical ideal of citizenship, wherein loyalty to the state is contingent upon the state's fulfillment of its responsibilities to safeguard freedom, dignity, and participatory governance.

Moreover, the Proclamation's emphasis on egalitarian rights—albeit articulated through the lens of Islamic ethical frameworks—prefigures contemporary citizenship paradigms. While it does not enumerate individual entitlements such as passport rights or labor protections, it implicitly advocates for a civic order where Algerians, liberated from colonial subjugation, would enjoy equal standing in shaping their political and cultural destiny. The text's call for national unity transcends ethnic or regional divides, advocating for a cohesive identity grounded in shared struggle and collective purpose—a vision resonant with citizenship's role in fostering social cohesion and inclusive belonging.

However, the Proclamation's conception of citizenship diverges from Western liberal models in its integration of religious and anticolonial imperatives. By situating state-building within Islamic principles, it aligns civic identity with cultural and spiritual heritage, reflecting a synthesis of universal humanist values and localized traditions. This approach contrasts with secular, individualist notions of citizenship, instead prioritizing

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communal solidarity and moral responsibility as pillars of national belonging.

Ultimately, the document's resonance with citizenship theory lies in its aspirational blueprint for a polity where the state derives legitimacy from its people, and citizens are empowered as active agents in shaping their collective future. While shaped by the urgency of anticolonial resistance, its vision of sovereignty, equity, and civic participation transcends its historical moment, offering a compelling case study in how revolutionary movements can prefigure—and redefine—the contours of citizenship within postcolonial contexts.

The concept of citizenship, like many constructs within political theory, resists singular or exhaustive definition, existing instead as a multifaceted and evolving sociopolitical bond. Broadly construed, citizenship denotes the legal and moral relationship between an individual and the polity to which they belong—a relationship formalized through nationality, codified in law, and operationalized through mutual rights and responsibilities.⁽³⁾ At its core, citizenship implies a juridical status: the individual's formal allegiance to a state, subjection to its legal framework, and entitlement to the protections and privileges conferred by membership within the political community.⁽⁴⁾

Simultaneously, citizenship transcends mere legal formalism, encompassing the principle of equitable civic participation. It guarantees that all individuals, irrespective of identity or background, enjoy equal access to civil, political, and social rights—from suffrage and labor protections to freedom of movement—without systemic discrimination. This egalitarian dimension underscores citizenship's role as a mechanism for social cohesion, fostering a shared sense of belonging and collective responsibility.⁽⁵⁾

Crucially, citizenship also entails a reciprocal obligation: the citizen's duty to contribute to the common good through civic engagement, adherence to laws, and defense of the state's sovereignty. This duality—rights paired with responsibilities—epitomizes citizenship as a dynamic equilibrium, where the state's mandate to uphold justice and welfare is counterbalanced by the citizen's active stewardship of democratic ideals.⁽⁶⁾

Thus, citizenship is best understood not as a static legal category but as a relational praxis, harmonizing individual autonomy with collective solidarity. It reflects the interdependence of state legitimacy and civic agency, wherein the vitality of the polity depends on its capacity to nurture inclusive participation while demanding ethical accountability from its members. In this synthesis of rights, duties, and belonging, citizenship emerges as both a foundational pillar of modern governance and a contested terrain of ideological negotiation, perpetually redefined by historical, cultural, and political exigencies.

The concept of citizenship, as a cornerstone of political and social organization, encompasses a constellation of practices, values, and legal frameworks that define the individual's role within the state. It is characterized by a sociopolitical contract wherein the citizen, whether by birth or naturalization, internalizes a set of obligations and entitlements that bind them to the polity. This relationship is predicated on the principle of equality before the law, ensuring that all individuals, irrespective of race, language, or creed, are subject to the same legal standards and granted identical rights to participate in civic life. Citizenship thus operates as both a juridical status and a moral commitment, demanding adherence to the state's laws while guaranteeing protections such as political enfranchisement, labor rights, and freedom of movement.

Central to this construct is the notion of civic agency, wherein citizens are not merely passive recipients of state authority but active contributors to governance. This includes engagement in political processes—voting, holding public office, or influencing policy—as well as the fulfillment of civic duties, such as military service, tax compliance, and respect for communal norms. Such reciprocity fosters a sense of belonging, anchoring the individual's identity within the collective project of nationhood.⁽⁷⁾ As the **Encyclopedia Britannica** delineates, citizenship is “relationship between an individual and a state to which the individual owes allegiance and in turn is entitled to its protection. Citizenship implies the status of freedom with accompanying responsibilities. Citizens have certain rights, duties, and responsibilities that are denied or only partially extended to aliens and other noncitizens residing in a country. In general, full political rights, including the right to vote and to hold public office, are predicated upon citizenship. The usual responsibilities of citizenship are allegiance, taxation, and military service. ”⁽⁸⁾

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Crucially, citizenship transcends transactional legality to embody a cultural and ethical praxis. It requires the internalization of shared values—patriotism, solidarity, and respect for pluralism—that sustain the social fabric. This dynamic is exemplified in contexts such as Algeria’s anticolonial struggle, where citizenship was reimagined not merely as legal nationality but as a revolutionary ethos of collective liberation. The Proclamation of 1 November 1954, while rooted in Islamic and anticolonial frameworks, implicitly advanced a vision of citizenship predicated on unity, equitable participation, and resistance to oppression, thereby harmonizing universal ideals of justice with localized cultural imperatives.

In essence, citizenship emerges as a dialectical institution, balancing individual autonomy with collective responsibility. It is both a shield against discrimination and a sword for civic empowerment, reflecting the interdependence of state legitimacy and citizen agency. By codifying rights, enforcing duties, and nurturing belonging, citizenship remains a vital mechanism for reconciling diversity with cohesion, ensuring that the polity thrives as a community of equals united by shared purpose and mutual accountability.⁽⁹⁾

The concept of citizenship, as a multidimensional construct within political and social theory, is conventionally structured around three interdependent pillars that collectively define its scope and function in modern governance:⁽¹⁰⁾

1 .Civil Element:

This dimension constitutes the juridical-legal framework of citizenship, enshrining individual liberties as foundational to civic identity. It encompasses inalienable rights such as freedom of speech, conscience, and belief; the right to property ownership; and access to impartial judicial recourse. These liberties form the bedrock of personal autonomy, ensuring protection against arbitrary state encroachment while affirming the citizen’s capacity to act as a self-determining agent within the bounds of law. Historically rooted in Enlightenment principles, this element underscores citizenship’s role as a guarantor of human dignity and legal equality, transcending identity-based hierarchies to affirm universal personhood.⁽¹¹⁾

2 .Political Element:

Central to citizenship's democratic praxis, this pillar embodies the right to participatory governance and the exercise of political agency. It entails both formal entitlements—such as suffrage, eligibility for public office, and engagement in policymaking—and the cultivation of civic competencies, including political literacy, deliberative discourse, and critical engagement with institutional structures. The political dimension demands more than passive adherence to authority; it necessitates active stewardship of democratic norms, fostering a citizenry capable of holding power accountable. This element thus bridges individual rights with collective responsibility, positioning citizenship as a dynamic process of co-creating and contesting the terms of communal life.⁽¹²⁾

3 .Social and Economic Element:

This facet addresses citizenship's socioeconomic equity, emphasizing the material and relational conditions necessary for substantive inclusion. Social citizenship mandates solidarity, mutual respect, and shared responsibility among individuals, fostering cohesion across diverse identities. Economically, it asserts the right to dignified labor, fair wages, and access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and housing—prerequisites for meaningful participation in civic life. By linking economic justice to social stability, this element challenges structural inequities, advocating for redistributive mechanisms that mitigate poverty and marginalization. It reflects T.H. Marshall's seminal assertion that citizenship remains incomplete without the democratization of welfare and opportunity.⁽¹³⁾

These elements collectively frame citizenship not as a static legal status but as a sociopolitical equilibrium, harmonizing individual freedoms with communal obligations. In contexts such as Algeria's anticolonial struggle, articulated through the 1 November Proclamation, citizenship was reimagined as a revolutionary ethos—uniting civil resistance, political mobilization, and socioeconomic emancipation under the banner of national liberation. The document's implicit alignment with these pillars—through its demands for justice, participatory sovereignty, and equitable development—illustrates how citizenship, even in nascent forms, serves as both a shield against oppression and a scaffold for emancipatory futures.

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As for the components of citizenship, they are numerous and vary according to our understanding and application of them. However, the most important of them are: patriotism, equality and justice, religious and cultural coexistence and non-discrimination among citizens, and the right to participate in public affairs for all without exclusion.

These components collectively articulate citizenship as both a moral compact and a dynamic practice, balancing rights with responsibilities, unity with diversity, and individual agency with communal obligations. In contexts such as postcolonial state-building—exemplified by Algeria’s Proclamation—these ideals were operationalized to forge a national identity rooted in liberation, equity, and participatory sovereignty. Thus, citizenship emerges not merely as a legal status but as a lived ethic, perpetually negotiated to reconcile universal principles with the particularities of historical and cultural exigencies.

The Proclamation of 1 November 1954, while primarily a revolutionary manifesto, implicitly enshrines a vision of citizenship that aligns with both its anticolonial ethos and the aspirational foundations of a sovereign Algerian state. Though the term “citizenship” is not explicitly invoked, the document’s principles resonate with core civic values, reframed through the lens of liberation, unity, and postcolonial nation-building. Below is an analysis of the citizenship ideals embedded within the Proclamation:

A. Nationalism and sovereignty:

The Proclamation of 1 November 1954 profoundly embeds the value of Nationalism (patriotism) as a cornerstone of its ideological and mobilizational framework, reflecting both a reclaiming of Algerian identity and a radical redefinition of citizenship in the context of anticolonial struggle. Through a content analysis of the document, the centrality of patriotic ethos emerges not only in its explicit terminology but also in its symbolic and rhetorical architecture. Here is a structured analysis of how patriotism is articulated and operationalized in the Proclamation:

The document’s repetitive invocation of terms such as “Algeria” (20 mentions), “the Algerian people” (7 times), “Algerian”, “struggle” (8 instances), and “National Liberation Front” (4 times) underscores a

deliberate effort to reconstruct a collective national consciousness. This lexical pattern serves multiple purposes:

- **Reclamation of Identity:** By repeatedly naming “Algeria” and “Algerians,” the Proclamation defiantly counters colonial erasure, asserting Algerians’ right to self-identification after decades of French assimilationist policies that denied their national existence.
- **Inclusive Nationalism:** The explicit mention of “Algerian” signals a revolutionary inclusivity.
- **Unifying Symbolism:** Terms like “struggle” and “people” transcend regional or ethnic divisions, fostering a unified patriotic front against colonial fragmentation.

The Proclamation frames patriotism not as passive loyalty but as active, militant commitment to liberation. It posits armed struggle as the ultimate expression of patriotic duty, declaring:

“The restoration of the Algerian state, sovereign, democratic, and social, within the framework of Islamic principles... will only be achieved through the destruction of the colonial system ”.⁽¹⁴⁾

Here, patriotism is inseparable from resistance—a civic obligation to reclaim sovereignty and dismantle colonial oppression. This aligns with **Frantz Fanon’s** conception of anticolonial nationalism, where violence becomes a cathartic act of reclaiming agency and identity.⁽¹⁵⁾

The text implicitly contrasts colonial France’s denial of Algerian nationality—reducing Algerians to “**indigènes**” (natives) stripped of civic rights—with its vision of a postcolonial citizenship rooted in patriotic belonging. By invoking “the Algerian people” as a sovereign collective, the Proclamation restores their status as political subjects entitled to self-determination. Patriotism, in this context, becomes a corrective mechanism, repairing the rupture caused by colonialism and reestablishing Algerians as citizens of their own nation, not subjects of an empire.

Beyond liberation, the Proclamation envisions patriotism as the moral foundation of the future state. The FLN’s call for Algerians to “rally around the revolution” transcends immediate military goals, fostering a civic ethic of sacrifice, unity, and collective responsibility. This resonates

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with **Rousseau's** concept of "**civic religion**"—patriotism as a unifying force that binds citizens to the state through shared purpose and mutual obligation.⁽¹⁶⁾

The Proclamation of 1 November 1954 implicitly critiques France's hollow offer of "French citizenship" to Algerians—a conditional and assimilationist status that demanded cultural erasure. In contrast, it frames Algerian patriotism as authentic citizenship, predicated on cultural integrity, self-rule, and dignity. The armed struggle, therefore, becomes both a rejection of colonial pseudo-citizenship and an assertion of a new social contract where rights derive from national belonging, not imperial largesse.

The concept of nationalism advocated by the National Liberation Front embodies a comprehensive and inclusive vision that neither differentiates nor categorizes Algerians. The Front emphasized that the primary objective of the revolution was the reclamation of the homeland and the restoration of its usurped sovereignty. Furthermore, it rejected the colonial narrative that nationalism was a novel phenomenon within Algerian society, asserting instead that the notion of nationalism had long been inherent to the nation. Consequently, the Front deliberately employed the phrase "**the nationalism of the Algerian people**" when drafting its Proclamation on the resurgence of the sovereign Algerian state (**La restauration de l'État algérien souverain**). This choice of wording reflects a profound political consciousness, a strategic vision, and a deep understanding of the historical identity and foundational elements of the Algerian nation.⁽¹⁷⁾

Sovereignty, in its essence, derives solely from the people. This principle is explicitly conveyed from the very outset of the Proclamation o, which directly addresses the Algerian people using the collective pronoun "**O people**" at the beginning and the singular pronoun "**O Algerian**" at the conclusion. This deliberate linguistic choice underscores the idea that the matter at hand pertains to every individual within the Algerian nation. It signifies that all Algerians are stakeholders in this Proclamation and that they alone will determine the success or failure of the revolution.

B. Freedom and the right of peoples to self-determination:

The objective of the revolution was never war or conflict for its own sake; rather, it was a struggle to reclaim the freedom and sovereignty that had been usurped by colonial rule for over 130 years. The armed revolution against colonialism and its oppressive forces was merely a legitimate means to achieve independence, pursued only after political efforts had failed and proven ineffective against an occupying power that categorically rejected all peaceful methods, responding instead with violence, as exemplified by the massacres of May 8, 1945. In this context, the Proclamation of 1 November 1954 explicitly states: “...**our movement has placed the national interest above all superficial and misleading considerations related to individuals and reputations. Thus, it is directed solely against colonialism, the only blind adversary, which, in the face of peaceful means of struggle, refused to grant even the slightest freedom.**”
(18)

The revolution’s paramount objective—the restoration of Algeria’s “stolen sovereignty”—is framed as both a restorative and transformative project. Colonialism is depicted not merely as political domination but as a denial of existential sovereignty, stripping Algerians of their right to self-definition. The Proclamation’s rhetoric shifts agency from colonial intermediaries to the Algerian masses, asserting that liberation could only be achieved through a unified, collective struggle. By addressing the populace as “**O people**” and “**O Algerian**,” the text democratizes revolutionary responsibility, positioning every citizen as a stakeholder in the nation’s destiny.

The Proclamation affirms from the outset that the revolution did not seek to spill blood but rather to preserve it, upholding the right of the Algerian people to reclaim their freedom and sovereignty. This principle is further reinforced by the National Liberation Front’s commitment to maintaining the terms of negotiation with the colonial power. The statement explicitly articulates this stance, declaring:

... 'Finally, and to avoid misinterpretations and to demonstrate our genuine desire for peace, as well as to minimize human losses and bloodshed, we have prepared for the French authorities an honorable document for discussion—should these authorities be guided by good

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***faith and finally recognize the right of the peoples they colonize to
determine their own destiny".⁽¹⁹⁾***

Moreover, the Front actively sought to internationalize the Algerian cause, garnering global support to confer legal and political legitimacy upon its struggle. By informing international opinion about the realities faced by Algerians, it aimed to exert diplomatic pressure on the colonial power, compelling it to restore the rights it had stripped from the Algerian people.

Although the revolution and its Proclamation of were deeply rooted in Algeria's specific historical experience, they also carried broader humanitarian dimensions, advocating for the universal right of all peoples to self-determination and the defense of just causes. This commitment remains a defining principle of Algerian foreign policy to this day. Ultimately, these efforts reflect a profound respect for the sovereignty of individuals over their homeland and their right to national identity, distinction, and self-determination in opposition to foreign domination.

C. National Unity and Maghreb Unity

The leaders of the revolution recognized that the divisions and internal conflicts that had plagued the national movement were a major obstacle to Algerians' mobilization for the revolutionary cause. They also understood that such fragmentation could jeopardize the success of certain revolutionary efforts. Therefore, from the very first day, they prioritized the achievement of internal unity among Algerians, setting aside all political, religious, social, and ideological differences. Their strategy was to open a new chapter that embraced all groups and perspectives, fostering collective participation in the struggle for national liberation.

This commitment to unity was explicitly articulated in the Proclamation, which stated:

***"...we offer the opportunity to all Algerian citizens from all social
classes, as well as to all Algerian parties and movements, to join the
liberation struggle without the slightest other consideration." ⁽²⁰⁾***

The National Liberation Front (FLN)—a name deliberately chosen to reflect unity and inclusivity—was not intended to exclude any political or social group. Instead, it aimed to encourage broad participation in the

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revolution, the liberation struggle, and the restoration of the homeland. The FLN was the first to call for national cohesion, striving to reunite a people fragmented by internal divisions and personal ambitions.

Beyond national borders, the revolution's leaders embraced a vision of regional unity. Their aspirations extended to the broader Maghreb, advocating for the unification of Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria within their shared Arab and Islamic framework. This pursuit of North African unity was closely linked to the FLN's strategy of internationalizing the Algerian cause, ensuring global recognition and support.

The Proclamation of 1 November 1954 explicitly conveys this objective, stating:

"...the time has come to liberate the national movement from the deadlock imposed by internal rivalries and struggles for influence, and to propel it into the true revolutionary struggle alongside our Moroccan and Tunisian brothers." ⁽²¹⁾

These external dimensions of the revolution were instrumental in laying the foundations for the construction of the Algerian national identity, firmly anchored in its Arab, Islamic, and African heritage. Moreover, they served as a bulwark against the state of alienation imposed by the colonial regime. The formation of the Algerian citizen within the framework of an independent state is an ongoing process—one that remains incomplete unless it fully integrates its fundamental components and existential dimensions, including religion, identity, culture, history, language, and a shared destiny. At the same time, this identity must remain open to universal human values, ensuring that Algeria's national character is both deeply rooted and globally engaged.

D. Democracy and Participation

The Proclamation's discourse was explicitly directed at the people, recognizing them as the source and ultimate bearers of sovereignty. It is through their will that the fate and future of the revolution would be determined. Given that democracy is fundamentally a system of governance in which the people actively participate in the public sphere, it was the natural choice to ensure that Algerians could exercise the sovereignty that had long been denied to them by colonial rule.

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While the leaders of the revolution deliberately avoided specifying a particular form of government—despite their known preference for a republican system—they instead referred to the establishment of a democratic Algerian state. This cautious approach stemmed from political considerations, particularly the need to distance their vision from the concept of the "Algerian Republic" promoted by advocates of integration with France within the national movement. To dispel any ambiguity, the Proclamation explicitly included the term "sovereign", underscoring the revolutionary commitment to a truly independent and self-determined Algerian state.

This approach reflects the profound understanding and political acumen of the drafters of the Proclamation, who exercised great foresight and prudence in their formulation. Aware of the potential for misinterpretation or ambiguity, they sought to ensure that their ideas were clearly articulated, direct, and precisely defined. Their careful wording demonstrates a deliberate effort to convey the revolutionary vision with clarity, leaving little room for misrepresentation while reinforcing the principles of national sovereignty, democracy, and self-determination.

E. Equality and religious and cultural coexistence

The revolution proclaimed from its inception that its primary objective was the attainment of national independence through the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, and socially just Algerian state, founded upon Islamic principles. This envisioned state upholds fundamental freedoms and firmly rejects all forms of racial or religious discrimination. It aspires to be a society of equality, where no distinctions exist among individuals, and all citizens are granted the same rights and responsibilities.

Moreover, this state is committed to the protection of human rights, irrespective of race, religion, language, or other distinctions, aligning itself with universal humanitarian values. It draws upon the principles of Islamic tolerance as well as international agreements and charters concerning human and civil rights. Furthermore, Algeria's historical experience of colonial oppression, injustice, and discrimination has instilled in its people a profound awareness and sensitivity toward such matters. Consequently, they remain resolute in ensuring that these injustices are never replicated within their nation and society.

Furthermore, the Proclamation explicitly addressed the revolution's stance on the *pieds-noirs* affirming their right to freely decide between two options: residing in Algeria as French nationals, thereby holding the legal status of foreigners, or opting for Algerian citizenship, which would grant them full rights and responsibilities as Algerian citizens. The statement articulated this position as follows:

"All French individuals who wish to remain in Algeria will have the choice between retaining their original nationality and being regarded as foreigners under the applicable laws, or selecting Algerian nationality, in which case they will be recognized as Algerians with all the corresponding rights and obligations." ⁽²²⁾

In truth, the Algerian Revolution was a global movement in every sense, embodying a just cause fundamentally rooted in the universal aspiration for freedom. This profound struggle for liberation resonated beyond national borders, inspiring solidarity and support from individuals of diverse nationalities. Even among the French, there were those who sympathized with or actively participated in the revolution, recognizing its legitimacy and the principles of justice it sought to uphold.

Social Justice:

The principle of social justice lies at the core of the Algerian Revolution's philosophy, as reflected in the Proclamation's emphasis on the "social character of the state." The revolution's leaders aspired to establish a state fundamentally different from the liberal capitalist model, which was marked by social injustice, oppression, and discrimination favoring specific classes or elites.

On this foundation, the vision for a socially oriented state—one that considers the needs of all classes and social groups, particularly the most vulnerable—stands as one of the revolution's most significant and enduring achievements. Genuine citizenship can only be realized within a framework of justice and equality, where all individuals have the opportunity to fulfill their roles and equitably benefit from the nation's resources. Such an environment not only ensures fairness but also fosters a deepened sense of patriotism and collective responsibility.

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Conclusion:

In conclusion, despite not having received the extensive academic study and critical analysis it merits, The Proclamation of 1 November 1954 remains a foundational document of profound and enduring significance. More than seven decades after its issuance under exceptional historical circumstances, it continues to serve as a crucial reference not only in Algerian history but also within the broader narrative of human civilization. Its lasting relevance stems from the universal values and principles it enshrines—values that transcend temporal and geographical boundaries.

Although primarily a political manifesto, the embodies deep humanistic ideals, reflecting remarkable awareness and foresight concerning both the present realities and the aspirations for the future. It underscores the revolutionary leaders' visionary commitment to establishing a state of law and citizenship—one that upholds the sovereignty of the people and guarantees fundamental freedoms, irrespective of ethnic, religious, or linguistic distinctions.

By synthesizing historical consciousness, experiential wisdom, and revolutionary pragmatism, the declaration transcended mere tactical directives, instead articulating a coherent philosophy of liberation. It emphasized the interdependence of military, political, and cultural struggles, defining independence not merely as territorial sovereignty but as the reclamation of Algeria's civilizational identity. This intellectual and strategic synthesis highlights the leaders' ability to harmonize immediate imperatives with long-term aspirations, solidifying the Proclamation as both a product of its time and a timeless testament to revolutionary foresight.

Furthermore, The Proclamation of 1 November 1954 reimagines citizenship not as a static legal status but as a dynamic and emancipatory practice. It intertwines anticolonial resistance with nation-building, compelling Algerians to actively shape their civic identity through struggle, unity, and moral integrity. While deeply rooted in Islamic and anticolonial thought, its core principles—sovereignty, equality, participation, and cultural cohesion—resonate with universal ideals of citizenship, adapted to Algeria's unique historical and ideological context.

Ultimately, the Proclamation's enduring relevance lies in its ability to bridge the immediacy of revolutionary struggle with the aspirational project of inclusive citizenship. It offers a paradigm for how postcolonial states might navigate the tension between particularist identity and the principles of civic belonging. By framing liberation as the essential precondition for true citizenship, it reminds us that civic rights are not merely granted but actively fought for—affirming that the struggle for justice and the struggle for citizenship are inseparable.

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