

Ahmed Ben Bella was one of the Nine Historical leaders of the Algerian Revolution

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Summary:

Ahmed Ben Bella joined the secret organization of the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties MTLN early on. He headed the secret organization OS after the removal of Ait Ahmed Hocine in 1949. He was one of the nine historical leaders who ignited the revolution and a founder of the National Liberation Front FLN. He was part of the external delegation in Cairo, along with Mohamed Khider and Ait Ahmed Hocine, until his arrest by the colonial authorities on October 22, 1956. He experienced imprisonment once again until independence and became a leading figure in liberation movements worldwide.

In the aftermath of independence, Algeria experienced a power struggle between the Provisional Government GPRA and the General Staff of the Army (EMG). The army ultimately prevailed, establishing the Political Bureau under the leadership of Ahmed Ben Bella. Ben Bella seized control of the capital, forcing Youssef Ben Khedda to withdraw. During his time in power, Ben Khedda faced numerous challenges stemming from the legacy of French colonialism. The administration was dysfunctional, the economy crippled, capital was being smuggled to France, schools were virtually closed, and the country was left in a state of paralysis. This was compounded by internal opposition and the Sand War with neighboring Morocco.

Ahmed Ben Bella remained president of the republic for three years until he was overthrown in a coup by his Minister of Defense, Colonel Houari Boumediene, on June 19, 1965. He was imprisoned until July 14, 1979, when he was released by President Chadli Bendjedid in 1982. Ahmed Ben Bella is considered the Nelson Mandela of Algeria. While Mandela spent 27 years in apartheid prisons in South Africa, Ahmed Ben Bella spent 22 years in prison, dedicating his youth and life to serving his country.

Keywords :

Algerian Revolution, Secret Organization, French colonialism, Independent Algeria

Introduction

The liberation of Algeria came at a price paid by the Algerian people, who remained steadfast and resilient despite the turbulent circumstances they faced. From the moment the French colonizer set foot on Algerian soil, the people struggled to free themselves from its yoke. With the end of the 1940s and the founding of the Secret Organization (OS), its members took it upon

themselves to launch the armed struggle on November 1, 1954. Among its most prominent leaders was Ahmed Ben Bella, one of the nine historical founders of the National Liberation Front (FLN). He was imprisoned twice during the national movement and the War of Independence, and he became the first president of the independent Algerian state.

With the restoration of sovereignty in 1962, the revolutionary leadership had a different vision, leading to the summer crisis of 1962. Upon assuming power, President Ahmed Ben Bella inherited numerous problems across various economic, social, and administrative sectors, particularly following the departure of the colonial settlers, who left a significant void in state institutions. His rule was marked by various crises, including internal ones such as the rebellions of Ait Ahmed Hocine and Colonel Chaabani, and the assassination of Foreign Minister Mohamed Khemisti. Externally, newly independent Algeria faced aggression from neighboring Morocco. However, his rule lasted only three years before he was overthrown by his former ally, Colonel Houari Boumediene, and returned to prison.

This leads us to the following question :

What was the life of the freedom fighter Ahmed Ben Bella ?

From this, the following questions branch out :

What was Ahmed Ben Bella's political life like ?

What was his role in supplying and arming the revolution?

What was his stance on the Soummam Conference?

How was he arrested?

How did he come to power ?

What crises plagued Algeria in the aftermath of independence?

What were its most significant achievements?

And how was it overthrown?

I. Introduction to the Personality of Ahmed Ben Bella

1. His Birth

Ahmed Ben Bella was born on September 25, 1918, in Maghnia, in western Algeria.¹ He came from a poor rural family. His father, who worked in agriculture, died in 1939.² He completed his secondary education in Tlemcen, obtaining his brevet (high school diploma). He performed his military service in 1937, was discharged in 1940, and then recalled in 1943.³ He served in the 14th Algerian Rifle Battalion and participated in the French military campaign in Italy, specifically in Monte Cassino.⁴

Ahmed Ben Bella was a minor notable, hailing from a rural area without wealth, a farmer by trade. His family had a religious lodge (zawiya), and his origins trace back to Marrakesh. He was drafted into the army during World War II as an adjutant and distinguished himself in the Italian campaign. He had a secondary school education and spoke fluent French. His reputation

¹ - Historia Magazine. La guerre d'Algérie. N°. 195. p. 45.

² - Benjamin Stora. Dictionnaire biographique de militants Algériens. ENA - PPA - MTL. 1926 -1954. Editions L'harmattan. Paris. 1985. p. 271.

³ - Historia Magazine. La guerre d'Algérie. N°. 195. p. 45.

⁴ - Achour Cheurfi. La classe politique algérienne de 1900 à nos jours. Edition Casbah. Alger. 2001. p. 70.

and service earned him the respect of his fellow citizens, which led to his election to the municipal council of Maghnia after the war.⁵

In his memoirs, he recounts: "Suddenly, German Stuka aircraft appeared in the sky and began firing at us. We managed to shoot down several enemy planes, and this battle became the talk of the town. A few days later, the colonel pinned the medal on my chest." In 1943, General Charles de Gaulle awarded him the War Medal.⁶ In total, he received four medals of merit.⁷

2. His Political Struggle

He was deeply affected by the massacres of May 8, 1945, in eastern Algeria. His superiors suggested he remain in the French army, offering him admission to officer training school and graduating as a lieutenant, but he refused. The repression Algeria experienced had created an unbridgeable divide between Algerians and the French.⁸

3. His Leadership of the Secret Organization (OS)

Ahmed Ben Bella was appointed to the Oran region after the OS's membership reached approximately 1,000 men.⁹ He then succeeded Ait Ahmed as its leader after the latter was unjustly dismissed in October 1949,¹⁰ due to his military experience.¹¹

On April 5, 1949, the Oran post office operation was carried out,¹² led by Ahmed Ben Bella, in which the commando group¹³ seized 3,070,000 francs, which led to his arrest and that of his companion Ahmed Mahsas,¹⁴ following the dismantling of the secret organization.¹⁵ He escaped from Blida prison on March 16, 1952, with his friend Mahsas, where the secret organization was freed from the political influence of the leaders of the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties, to become an independent force to prepare for revolutionary action.¹⁶ He was sentenced to 7 years in prison¹⁷ on charges of harming state security.¹⁸

⁵ - Gilbert Meynier. *Histoire Intérieure du FLN. 1954 - 1962*. Préface de Mohamed Harbi. Editions Casbah. Alger. 2003. p. 130.

⁶ - Robert Merle, *Memoirs of Ahmed Ben Bella*, translated by Al-Afif Lakhdar, Dar Al-Adab, Beirut, pp. 40-41.

⁷ - Claude Paillat. *Dossier secret de l'Algérie. 1954 - 1958*. T. 1. Presse de la cité. Paris. 1962. p. 13.

⁸ - Ahmed Ben Bella's *Memoirs*, previous reference, p. 67.

⁹ - Hussein Ait Ahmed, *The Spirit of Independence : Memoirs of a Fighter 1942-1962*, Barzakh Publications, 2002, pp. 183 -184.

¹⁰ - Tramor Quemeneur, Ouanassa Siari Tengour, Sylvie Thénault. *Dictionnaire de la guerre d'Algérie*. Paris. Editions Bouquins. 2023. p. 33.

¹¹ - Ibrahim Lounici, *The Political Conflict in Algeria during the Era of President Ahmed Ben Bella*, Dar Houma, Algeria, 2011.

¹² - Ben Youssef Ben Khedda, *Roots of November 1, 1954*, Dar Houma, Algeria, 2010, pp. 211 - 220.

¹³ - Hussein Ait Ahmed, previous reference, p. 195.

¹⁴ - Claude Paillat. *Dossier secret de l'Algérie. 1954 - 1958*. T. 1. Op. Cit. p. 13.

¹⁵ - Historia Magazine. *La guerre d'Algérie*. N°. 195. p. 51.

¹⁶ - FR/ C.A.O.M. 7G/ 1203. *L'organisation spéciale*.

¹⁷ - I would like to mention the two French communist lawyers who defended him during his imprisonment:

Pierre Braun et Henri Douzon. See: Sylvie Thénault. *Une Drôle de justice, Les magistrats dans la guerre d'Algérie*. EDIF. 2000. Réghaia. Algérie. 2010. p. 26.

¹⁸ - Achour Cheurfi .Op. Cit. p.70.

He secretly sought refuge in Paris where he lived in a small apartment, then moved to Cairo,¹⁹ as part of the MTL D delegation along with Ait Ahmed and Mohamed Khider, who took it upon themselves to prepare for the armed struggle. He entered into active preparations after the meeting between Ben Bella and Mohamed Boudiaf in Bern, Switzerland,²⁰ and it was here that the Revolutionary Committee for Unity and Action (CRUA) was founded,²¹ on March 23, 1954.²²

Ahmed Ben Bella is one of the nine historical leaders who founded the National Liberation Front (FLN). They put an end to the old political practices and embodied the historical group that launched the liberation revolution²³ on November 1, 1954, and which adopted all military operations.²⁴ These nine historical figures resolved the ambiguity that had long surrounded the national movement,²⁵ namely that the Algerian revolution could be achieved without the leader Messali Hadj, who opposed it. His obstinacy reached such a point in the spring of 1954 that he believed what was done without him was done against him,²⁶ leading him to establish the Algerian National Movement (MNA).²⁷

The tripartite delegation suffered from personal disagreements, and Ben Bella was upset about having to speak in French because the Egyptians did not understand his language (Algerian dialect).²⁸ French intelligence attempted to assassinate him in 1956.²⁹ He used aliases such as Si Hamid, Ould Lembarak, El Maghribi, Si Messaoud, Mustafa, and Saidi.³⁰ According to a French archival document sent from the Governor-General to the Wali (governor), it is highly likely that Ben Bella entered Algeria. Three forged identity cards were found:

- Meziani Massoud, born in 1918, from Cher, son of Belkacem Ben Ahmed and Regak Fatima Bint Amar, from the mixed municipality of Aurès.
- Fares Zerzour, born on January 1, 1926, in Ain Touta, son of Ahmed Ben Mohamed and Bouhali Ladmia Ben Thabet.
- Soudani Belkacem, born on March 11, 1926, in Ain Touta, son of Ahmed and Soudani Aicha.³¹

¹⁹ - Historia Magazine. La guerre d'Algérie. N°. 200. p. 193.

²⁰ - Mohamed Harbi. Les Archives de la révolution algérienne. Editions Dahlab. Alger. 2010. p. 542.

²¹ - Claude Paillat. Dossier secret de l'Algérie. 1954 - 1958. T. 1. Op. Cit. p. 71.

²² - Mohamed Harbi. La guerre commence en Algérie 1954, Parlons- en. Alger. Editions Barzakh. 2005. p. 57

²³ - Gilbert Meynier. Op. Cit. p. 129.

²⁴ - Benjamin Stora. Algérie 1954. Une chute ou ralenti. Editions Casbah. Alger. 2014. p. 95.

²⁵ - Gilbert Meynier. Op. Cit. p. 136.

²⁶ - Yves Courrière. La guerre d'Algérie. Les Fils de la Toussaint. Préface de Josèphe Kassel. Editions Fayard. Paris. 1968. p. 92.

²⁷ - Benjamin Stora. Algérie Histoire Contemporaine. Edition Casbah. Alger. 2004. p. 129.

²⁸ - Alistair Horne. Histoire de la guerre d'Algérie. Traduit de l'anglais par Yves du Guerny. Editions Albin Michel. Paris. 1980. p. 87.

²⁹ - Yves Courrière. La guerre d'Algérie. Les feux du désespoir, La fin d'un Empire. Editions Fayard. Paris. 1971. p. 38.

³⁰ - FR/ C.A.O.M. 7G/ 1203. Les principaux responsables de l'ALN.

³¹ - FR/ C.A.O.M. 91.5Q. 124. Le 16.03.1955.

He exploited his relationship with Gamal Abdel Nasser, focusing on military matters and arms purchases.³² He recruited, organized, and trained fighters from North Africa, particularly Algerians, in commando units. He showed interest in independent groups and declared his support for their operations through funds allocated to aid North African nationalists participating in the struggle.³³

4. Logistics and Arms Supply

Ben Bella was responsible for supplying the revolutionary strongholds with weapons, a task he continued until his arrest on October 22, 1956.³⁴ He personally oversaw the organization of supply operations. Beginning in 1955, he frequently traveled to Libya, Italy, and Switzerland, as well as Spain and Spanish Morocco (the Rif region). Several major supply routes converged in Libya:

- A route originating from Egypt and some Arab countries, primarily consisting of British-made weapons.
- A route from Europe via international arms dealers from Italy, Germany, and Czechoslovakia.
- Libya served as a distribution base for weapons destined for Algeria, either directly via southern routes or through Tunisia as a transit point.
- A third route involved ongoing amphibious landings along the Tunisian coast, where shipments arrived from Egypt and Europe.³⁵

The National Liberation Army (ALN) is based in Tripoli, Libya, and is reportedly under the command of a man named Mohamed al-Hadi. The network includes the following known centers of activity:

- Ghadames, a traditional smuggling hub from which convoys can reach Algeria via the Souf region.
- Nalut, a starting point for routes leading directly to Bir el-Ater and Negrine in Algeria by crossing one side of the Chott el-Jerid estuary.
- Zuwarah, a point of entry for weapons destined for Tunisia, either via the Matmata mountain range or by sea using fishing boats departing from the island of Djerba.

Shipping operations are carried out in small quantities: approximately 20 rifles, accompanied by two or three camels and a group of five to ten men. The French government accuses Libya of complicity, alleging that the Libyan army openly unloads and transports the weapons.³⁶ This led to an assassination attempt by the Red Hand organization (La Main Rouge) against Ahmed Ben Bella in Tripoli in 1955³⁷ at the Mahari Hotel,³⁸ where he was seriously wounded.³⁹

³² - Achour Cheurfi. Op. Cit. p. 70.

³³ - FR/ C.A.O.M. GGA 3R 455 - 456.

³⁴ - Historia Magazine. La guerre d'Algérie. N°. 195. p. 46.

³⁵ - FR/ C.A.O.M. GGA 3R 455 - 456.

³⁶ - FR/ C.A.O.M. GGA 3R 455 - 456.

³⁷ - Le Tourneau Roger. Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée, N°. 7, 1970. pp. 223 - 225. Ahmed Ben Bella's Memoirs, previous reference, p. 109.

³⁸ - Historia Magazine. La guerre d'Algérie. N°. 195. p. 46.

³⁹ - La Dépêche de Constantine. N°. 16.497. Le 21.12.1955.

5. His stance on the Soummam Conference, August 20, 1956

Ben Bella had previously rejected the Soummam Conference resolutions, and the conflict between him (abroad) and Abane Ramdane (inside) intensified. He criticized the conference on several important points : its lack of representativeness, and the unsuitability of Abane and his companions to control the fate of the revolution, about which they knew nothing.⁴⁰ After the abduction of the four leaders, both Ben Bella and Khider declared that Abane, Krim, and Ouamrane were merely operatives.⁴¹

Where did the Soummam Conference, with its outcomes, constitute a first step towards establishing an alternative legitimacy to that of the historical figures who attended the revolution and led it in its early stages ? The conference's explanations did not reach the officials in the regions in a timely manner, and not everyone was convinced by them. This led to continued debate in the mountains between supporters of "the primacy of the Front" and advocates of "the primacy of the Army," leaving devastating effects in some areas, especially in the Aurès region,⁴² where the National Liberation Army (ALN) prided itself on being the instigators and pioneers of the revolution and did not acknowledge receiving foreign orders.⁴³

Ahmed Ben Bella had a close relationship with the first region and its leader, Mustafa Ben Boulaïd, and he disseminated among the mujahideen the slogan of the primacy of the National Liberation Army over the National Liberation Front.⁴⁴ Ben Bella sent emissaries to the Aurès to bridge the divide between the mujahideen there.⁴⁵ With Ben Bella's arrest, and Mahsas's refusal to submit to the Coordination and Implementation Committee (CCE), the neutralization of the first region was completed, and the problem of linking Souk Ahras to the second region was resolved.⁴⁶ Thus, after the Chaoui leaders of the Aurès were summoned to Tunis, the capital, they were liquidated.⁴⁷

While the Soummam Conference was able to offer a relatively satisfactory solution to the problem of centralization, its proponents saw their efforts hampered by the opposition of Ben Bella's faction and the extremism of regional identity. After freeing himself from his rivals, the three Bs emerged: Krim, Ben Tobbal, and Boussouf. Then a new faction was born, represented by the General Staff Command (EMG) under the leadership of Houari Boumediene.⁴⁸

⁴⁰ - Mohammed Harbi. *Les Archives de la révolution Algérienne*. Op. Cit. pp. 168 - 171.

⁴¹ - *Le Journal d'Alger*. N°. 2256. Le 26.10.1956.

⁴² - Mohammed Abbas, *The Algerian Revolution 1954 - 1962 : A Victory Without a Price*, Dar Al-Qasbah, Algeria, 2007, p. 342.

⁴³ - Nouredine Boulhais. *Des harkis berbères de l'Aurès au nord de la France*. Presses Universitaires de Septentrion. Paris. 2012. p. 169.

⁴⁴ - Mohammed Zeroual, *The Nemencha in the Revolution*, Dar Houma, Algeria, 2003, p. 292.

⁴⁵ - Testimony of Abdelkrim Ben Mehich, officer of the Liberation Army, personal interview at his home in Takout on 21.07.2023 from 16:00 to 17:00.

⁴⁶ - A.N.O.M. 3R/ 265/ N°. 145. *Les démissions rebelles dans l'est*.

⁴⁷ - Jacques Valette. 1956 le FLN portent la guerre d'Algérie en Tunisie. *Revue Guerre mondiales et conflit contemporaines*. PUF. 2006/4. N°. 224. pp. 65 - 79.

⁴⁸ - Mohamed Harbi. *L'Algérie et son destin. Croyants ou Citoyens*. Editions Arcantère. Paris. 1993. p. 133.

6. His Arrest

On October 22, 1956, the Moroccan plane carrying the four leaders⁴⁹ - Ahmed Ben Bella, Boudiaf, Ait Ahmed, and Mohamed Khider - was hijacked.⁵⁰ They had just returned from Morocco after meeting with King Mohammed V and were preparing to travel to Tunisia to see Bourguiba.⁵¹ Ben Bella was carrying a Beretta submachine gun with a 30-round magazine when he was arrested.⁵² The Moroccan DC-3K plane, which was scheduled to fly from Casablanca to Tunisia for a conference, was diverted to Algeria. He addressed them, saying, "I didn't think the French were capable of doing this."⁵³ He was then taken into custody and imprisoned in La Santé prison, then on Île d'Aix, then in the Turquant fortress, and finally in Aulnoye.⁵⁴

Following the arrest of Ben Bella and his companions, the Coordination and Implementation Committee began taking decisive measures to reorganize and consolidate its control over Wilaya I. The issue of annexing the Souk Ahras region to Wilaya II remained unresolved. Previously, Ahmed Mahsas had been dispatched to secure the rear bases of the National Liberation Army (ALN) in Tunisia.⁵⁵ On February 16, 1957, Ouamrane,⁵⁶ with Bourguiba's assistance, was installed in Mahsas's place to oversee the military affairs of the revolution in Tunisia.⁵⁷ arrested Mahsas,⁵⁸ whom Bourguiba considered the sole representative of the ALN,⁵⁹ seized control of the ALN's rear bases, eliminated his rivals, and paved the way for the four members of the CIC. This occurred after they had spent four months on foot reaching Tunisia,⁶⁰ unable to remain in Algeria.⁶¹

Ouamrane became the head of the ALN's external delegation in Tunisia,⁶² having previously served as Krim's deputy in the command of Wilaya III.⁶³ After consolidating his control over the ALN in Tunisia with Bourguiba's support, he carried out several arrests targeting members of Mahsas's committee.⁶⁴

⁴⁹ - Charles Robert Agéron, *Contemporary History of Algeria*, trans. Issa Asfour, Oueidat Publications, Beirut, Paris, 1982, p. 168. It is believed that Prince Hassan sold the four leaders to the French. See: Muhammad Abbas, vol. 9, *The Epic of History*, p. 378.

⁵⁰ - FR/ C.A.O.M. GGA 3R 455 - 456.

⁵¹ - Daho Djerbal. Lakhdar Bentoubbal *Mémoires de L'intérieur*. Editions Chihab. Alger. 2021. p. 349.

⁵² - *La Dépêche Quotidienne*. N°. 2498. Le 24.10.1956. p. 4.

⁵³ - J-R Tournoux. *Secret d'état*. Librairie Plon. Paris. 1960. pp. 127 - 130.

⁵⁴ - *Historia Magazine*. *La guerre d'Algérie*. N°. 195. p. 46.

⁵⁵ - FR/ C.A.O.M. GGA 3R 455 - 456.

⁵⁶ - Oumran held the rank of sergeant in the French army. See: A.N.O.M. 91/5B/146.

⁵⁷ - Jacques Valette. *Op. Cit.* pp. 65 - 79.

⁵⁸ - Noureddine Boulhais. *Op. Cit.* p. 264.

⁵⁹ - *Tunisian Al-Sabah Newspaper*, Issue No. 1632, Date : 11.04.1957.

⁶⁰ - Henri Le- Mire. *Histoire militaire de la guerre d'Algérie*. *Op. Cit.* p. 193.

⁶¹ - Daho Djerbal. Lakhdar Bentoubbal, *La conquete de la souveraineté*. Editions Chihab. Alger. 2022. p. 15.

⁶² - *Le Figaro*. N°. 4012. Le 31.07.1957.

⁶³ - FR/ C.A.O.M. 7G/ 1203. *Les principaux responsables de l'ALN*.

⁶⁴ - FR/ C.A.O.M. GGA 3R 455 - 456.

In July 1957, 17 leaders of the First Wilaya in Tunisia were liquidated,⁶⁵ following a sham trial in the Tunisian city of Teboursouk, where the court panel consisted of: Abdullah Ben Tobbal⁶⁶ as president, Ammar Ben Aouda as vice president, Amara Bouglaz as a member, and Mahmoud Cherif as public prosecutor,⁶⁷ after the new leadership emerging from the Soummam Conference accused the leadership of the Aurès of opposing it.⁶⁸ While Mahsas fled with Omar Ben Boulaid from Tunisia,⁶⁹ in March 1959, four high-ranking officers were executed, including Colonels Nouaoura Ahmed and Lamouri Mohamed.⁷⁰ Captain Zoubir,⁷¹ who opposed the leadership of the Fifth Wilaya, was also executed in Morocco in 1960.⁷²

In 1958, Ben Bella and his companions were granted the rank of Minister of State during the establishment of the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic (GPRA).⁷³ They were proposed as official spokespeople for the Algerian Revolution, qualified to negotiate with the French government,⁷⁴ although Paris was expected to reject them.⁷⁵ After General de Gaulle assumed office in Paris on January 8, 1959, he released 7,000 Algerian prisoners, commuted death sentences to life imprisonment, and freed the five prisoners who had been detained in the Maison Blanche prison, transferring them to Île d'Aix.⁷⁶ Ben Bella remained in prison until the ceasefire between Algeria and France was declared on March 19, 1962.⁷⁷

II. Algeria in the Aftermath of Independence

If the Evian Accords were the only way for France to resolve the Algerian issue, and to gradually transfer sovereignty to the Algerian state, and after the ceasefire on March 19, 1962, the organization of a referendum in metropolitan France on April 8, 1962, the establishment of

⁶⁵ - Gilbert Meynier. *Op. Cit.* p. 219.

⁶⁶ - Abdullah Ben Tobbal possessed a network of agents he had established for assassinations, carrying out purges and physical eliminations he deemed necessary. He began to feel fear even among his colleagues in the executive branch, and the FLN's external cadres nicknamed him the Soviet state security minister with a sinister memory, Beria of the FLN. See: Philippe Tripiet. *Autopsie de la guerre d'Algérie*. Editions de la France- Empire. Paris. 1972. p. 266.

⁶⁷ - Mohammed Zeroual, Previous reference, p. 380.

⁶⁸ - Mohammed Harbi. *Lee Archives de la révolution Algérienne*. *Op. Cit.* pp. 168 - 171.

⁶⁹ - FR/ C.A.O.M. GGA 3R 455 - 456.

⁷⁰ - When Colonel Mohamed Lamouri was imprisoned, Lakhdar Ben Tobbal tortured him. Under torture, he wrote in his own blood on the wall of his cell: God, Mohamed, the Nation. Bourguiba suggested they seek asylum from the Tunisian government, but they refused. See: Taher Saidani, *Memoirs of the Eastern Base: The Beating Heart of the Revolution*, Dar al-Umma, 2010, p. 198.

⁷¹ - Where did Houari Boumediene say that since his arrival in the First Region, he had been making mistakes with the officers of the National Liberation Army and with the population, and that officials should not be criticized, even though he was a competent officer? See: Mohamed Lemkani. *Les hommes de l'ombre, Mémoires d'un officier du MALG*. Editions ANEP. 2004. p. 211.

⁷² - Gilbert Meynier. *Op. Cit.* p. 219.

⁷³ - Chantal Morelle. *Comment De Gaulle et le FLN ont mis fin à la guerre d'Algérie*. Média- plus. Constantine. 2012. p. 25.

⁷⁴ - Historia Magazine. *La guerre d'Algérie*. N°. 355. p. 2982.

⁷⁵ - Historia Magazine. *La guerre d'Algérie*. N°. 297. p. 2177.

⁷⁶ - Charles de Gaulle, *Memoirs of Hope*, trans. Samouhi Fawq al-Adah, Oueidat Publications, Beirut, 1971, p. 81.

⁷⁷ - Benjamin Stora. *Dictionnaire biographique de militants Algériens*. *Op. Cit.* p. 272.

the Provisional Franco-Algerian Committee in constant contact with the French High Commission, and the Algerian side's own referendum on the Evian Accords on July 1, 1962, France recognized Algeria's independence on July 3, 1962,⁷⁸ noting that between 30 and 40 people were killed in the final months during the negotiations.⁷⁹

After his release following the ceasefire, he first visited Cairo, then Benghazi and Tripoli, to join the meetings of the National Council of the Algerian Revolution (CNRA),⁸⁰ held from August 21 to 27. There, the leaders of the National Liberation Army (ALN) presented their accusation that the political leaders in Tunisia were becoming increasingly bourgeois. Members of the General Staff had already submitted their resignations in July 1962, demanding that their dispute be presented to the CNRA.⁸¹

The political program was approved and unanimously adopted under the name "Tripoli Program." Internal disagreements arose, including an attack on the Provisional Government leadership of Ben Khedda and the powerful trio of Krim, Ben Tobbal, and Boussouf by Ben Bella and the General Staff, relying on Colonel Boumediene and his army to seize power in Algeria. His most prominent allies included Mohamed Khider, Ferhat Abbas, Ahmed Francis, and Ahmed Boumendjel. The Provisional Government was supported by the FLN Federation in France, represented by Omar Boudaoud, Rabah Bouaziz, and the lawyers Ladlali. Haroun, along with the two historical leaders : Boudiaf and Ait Ahmed.⁸²

1. The Summer Crisis of 1962

The political situation in Algeria during 1962 was characterized by strained relations between the Provisional Government and the General Staff, and by the latter's alliance with Ahmed Ben Bella since his imprisonment in France in 1960.⁸³ This alliance was further solidified after Houari Boumediene persuaded Ben Bella to assume power through his intermediary, Si Abdelkader (later known as Bouteflika), having failed to win over Mohamed Boudiaf.⁸⁴ Ben Bella also possessed the formidable strength of the Border Army, comprising 23 regiments with a total of 23,000 soldiers and 5 heavy battalions.⁸⁵ The General Staff headquarters was located in Ghardimaou, Tunisia, and consisted of Colonel Boumediene, Major Menjli, and Major Slimane.⁸⁶

⁷⁸ - René Gallissot. *Les Accords d'Evian*. Editions Casbah. Alger. 1997. p. 135.

⁷⁹ - Matthieu Connelly. *L'armée secrète du FLN, Comment de Gaulle a perdu la guerre d'Algérie*, Traduit de l'anglais (étas unis) par Français Bouillot. Editions Payot. Paris. 2011. p. 352.

⁸⁰ - Benjamin Stora et Daoud Zakia. *Ferhat Abbas une autre Algérie*. Editions Casbah. Alger. 1995. p. 356.

⁸¹ - Historia Magazine. *La guerre d'Algérie*. N°.347. p. 2893.

⁸² - Historia Magazine. *La guerre d'Algérie*. N°.367. p. 3172.

⁸³ - Saleh Belhadj, *History of the Liberation Revolution*, Dar Al-Kitab Al-Hadith, Algeria, 2008, p. 511.

⁸⁴ - Abdelmadjid Merdaci. *Les Chemins De L'indépendance 1962*. Editions ANEP. Alger. 2012. p. 84.

⁸⁵ - Ali Kafi, *Memoirs of President Ali Kafi: From Political Activist to Military Leader 1946-1962*, Dar Al-Qasbah, Algeria, 1999, p. 258.

⁸⁶ - Historia Magazine. *La guerre d'Algérie*. N°.347. p. 2893.

Ahmed Ben Bella found support in the First (Aurès-Nemencha), Fifth, and Sixth (Sahara) Wilayas, while the Second, Third, and Fourth Wilayas opposed him.⁸⁷ On August 3, 1962, Ben Bella ordered his loyal forces to march on the capital, prompting mass demonstrations in the Fourth Wilaya. Seven years of blessings.⁸⁸

The Political Bureau was installed, and its opponents were removed.⁸⁹ On September 25, 1962, the National Constituent Assembly, elected on September 20, 1962, declared the birth of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, granting confidence by a majority of 159 votes to one to the government that appointed Ahmed Ben Bella as Prime Minister.⁹⁰ He then became the first President of the Algerian Republic,⁹¹ until June 1965, when he was overthrown by Houari Boumediene.⁹²

2. Economic and Social Conditions in the Aftermath of Independence

Algeria inherited from French colonialism extremely dire and miserable economic and social conditions, characterized by :

2.1. Economic

- Vast tracts of land planted with vineyards and dedicated to wine production.
- A decline in livestock numbers, estimated at 4 millions head, down from 7 million. The number of cows dwindled to 4,000, down from 32,000.⁹³
- The monopoly of foreign companies, particularly French ones, over the exploitation of mines, oil wells, and gas fields.⁹⁴
- A severe shortage of qualified personnel in various institutions, due to the departure of the settlers,⁹⁵ whose numbers were estimated at around 800,000.⁹⁶

2.2. Social

- The war left more than 1.5 million martyrs.
- 100,000 wounded, amputees, and sick.
- Thousands of returnees and survivors from detention centers and camps.⁹⁷
- 300,000 orphaned children, including 30,000 who had lost both parents.
- 300,000 Algerian refugees on Algeria's eastern and western borders.
- 400,000 migrants to France.

⁸⁷ - Amar Mohand-Amer. Les Wilayas dans la crise du FLN de l'été 1962. *Insaniyat*. N° 65 - 66 juillet - décembre 2014. p. 108.

⁸⁸ - Saad bin Al-Bashir Al-Amira, Houari Boumediene the President Commander 1932 - 1978, Palace of the Book, Blida, 1997, p. 43.

⁸⁹ - Rabah Lounici, Algeria in the Whirlpool of Conflict between the Military and Politicians, Dar Al-Maarefa, Algeria, 2000, p. 66.

⁹⁰ - Benjamin Stora. *Algérie Histoire Contemporaine*. Op. Cit. p. 238.

⁹¹ - Mohamed Harbi. La guerre commence en Algérie 1954. Op. Cit p. 189.

⁹² - Historia magazine. La guerre d'Algérie. N°. 195. p. 46.

⁹³ - Mohamed Larbi Zoubir, Contemporary History of Algeria, Vol. 3, Dar Al Hikma, Algeria, 2014, pp. 206 -229.

⁹⁴ - Hajj Moussa Ben Omar, French Oil Policy in Algeria 1952-1962, EFE Publishing and Distribution, Algeria, 2013, p. 89.

⁹⁵ - Al-Siddiq Tawti, Training of Frameworks in Algeria for Development, Dar Al-Umma, Algeria, 2001, p. 69.

⁹⁶ - Matthieu Connelly. Op. Cit. p. 352.

⁹⁷ - Mohamed Harbi, Benjamin Stora. La Guerre d'Algérie 1954 - 2004. Robert Laffont. Paris. 2004. p. 478.

- 3,000,000 homeless after their homes were destroyed.⁹⁸

2.3. Administration

The European minority, estimated at around 900,000 people, left a significant void in the administration and economic institutions, including:

- 100,000 employees and middle managers.
- 15,000 seniors managers in the civil service and the liberal professions.
- 35,000 skilled workers.
- 23,000 contractors.

This confused the officials at the time, who were unprepared for it, so the Algerian state resorted to :

- 13,729 French employees under the guise of cooperation.
- 22,182 Algerian graduates of the colonial administration.
- 34,097 Algerian cadres graduated from the National Liberation Front (FLN) school.⁹⁹

When President Ahmed Ben Bella assumed power in early October 1962, he faced a collapsed situation left behind by the European settlers, estimated at around one million, who controlled everything in occupied Algeria.¹⁰⁰ The OAS (Organisation for French Algeria) implemented a scorched-earth policy, as despair drove some to destructive madness.¹⁰¹ They wanted to leave, yes, but without leaving anything behind.¹⁰²

3. The most important achievements of Algeria during the era of Ahmed Ben Bella

3.1. Self-Management

Self-management is a formula or method established by the Algerian state under exceptional circumstances, attempting to regulate the exploitation of agricultural lands occupied by Algerians after the departure of the settlers. These lands, estimated at approximately 2 million hectares out of a total of 6.8 millions hectares, are considered among the most fertile and productive agricultural lands in Algeria.¹⁰³ President Ahmed Ben Bella nationalized the settlers' lands and implemented a self-management system, relying on former workers and refugees returning from Tunisia and Morocco.

He found a void in administration, the judiciary, and public works, and endeavored to fill it according to available human resources. Similarly, in education, he sought assistance from sister Arab countries such as Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, and the 1962-1963 academic year commenced.¹⁰⁴

3.2. Eliminating the Phenomenon of Shoe Shiners

⁹⁸ - Amer Rakhila, *The Political and Organizational Development of the National Liberation Front Party 1962-1980*, University Publications Office, Algeria, 1993, p. 67.

⁹⁹ - Mohammed Abbas, *Colonialism Departs and the Colonizer Remains*, Vol. 8, Dar Houma, Algeria, 2013, pp. 328, 334.

¹⁰⁰ - Muhammad Abbas, *Inspired by History*, Vol. 5, Dar Houma, Algeria, 2013, p. 210.

¹⁰¹ - Benjamin Stora. *Histoire de l'Algérie depuis l'indépendance 1962 - 1988. La Découverte*. Paris. 2004. p. 11.

¹⁰² - Historia Magazine. *La guerre d'Algérie*. N°367. p. 3172.

¹⁰³ - Mohammed Al-Suwaïdi, *Self-Management in the Algerian Experience in Global Experiences*, National Book Foundation, Algeria, 1986, p. 143.

¹⁰⁴ - Muhammad Abbas, *Inspired by History*, previous reference, p. 211.

President Ahmed Ben Bella worked to eliminate the phenomenon of shoe shining by gathering the children who practiced it and enrolling them in a vocational training center after they had burned all their previous tools.¹⁰⁵

4. Crises that Independent Algeria Experienced

1.4. Internal Crises

1.1.4. The Assassination of Mohamed Khemisti

On April 11, 1963, Algeria experienced a painful event: the assassination of its first Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mohamed Khemisti.¹⁰⁶ His tenure lasted less than five months, making him the youngest Foreign Minister at the time. Born on August 11, 1930, in Maghnia, Tlemcen (the hometown of President Ahmed Ben Bella), he obtained his baccalaureate in Oran and enrolled in medical school in Montpellier, France. He joined the student union UGEMA. He was arrested in France on November 12, 1957, and temporarily released in November 1959, after which he continued his studies in Paris. He was appointed Chief of Staff to Abderrahmane Farès in 1962. He was shot as he left the National Constituent Assembly building.¹⁰⁷

4.1.2. Colonel Chaabani Mohamed's Rebellion

Since independence, Colonel Chaabani Mohamed opposed the empowerment of officers who had deserted from the French army¹⁰⁸ and demanded their purging from the military, particularly during the first congress of the National Liberation Front (FLN) party in April 1964. When this failed, he stopped attending meetings of the Ministry of Defense and the Political Bureau. He even went so far as to refuse to take up his new position as a member of the Political Bureau, in addition to his role as Deputy Chief of Staff, based in Algiers.¹⁰⁹

Several figures attempted to mediate between Colonel Chaabani and the Presidency to mend the rift and improve relations between the two men, including Colonel Youssef Khatib and Major Amar Mellah.¹¹⁰ However, he insisted on remaining in his post and refusing to assume his new position. One day, during a phone call, he overheard harsh words from the President, saying, "You resemble those corrupt politicians, if you aren't one of them." This call signaled the end of Colonel Chaabani's opposition.¹¹¹ Ahmed Ben Bella ordered his arrest, tasking Major Chadli Bendjedid, commander of the Fifth Military Region, and his deputy, Attaïlia Mohamed, with carrying it out.¹¹²

¹⁰⁵ - Robert Merle, *Memoirs of Ahmed Ben Bella*, previous reference, p. 167.

¹⁰⁶ - Muhammad Abbas, *Inspired by History*, previous reference, p. 88.

¹⁰⁷ - Achour Cheurfi .Op. Cit. p. 224.

¹⁰⁸ - Chadli Bendjedid, *Memoirs, Features of a Life 1929 - 1979*, Dar El Qasba, Algeria, 2011, p. 206.

¹⁰⁹ - Tahar Zbiri, *Half a Qan of Struggle, Memoirs of an Algerian Chief of Staff*, Al-Shorouk for Media and Publishing, Algeria, 2011, p. 57.

¹¹⁰ - A personal interview with Major Ammar Mellah at the headquarters of the Mujahideen Organization in Batna on 2021.03.22 from 11:00 to 12:00. He traveled with Colonel Zubairi secretly to the city of El Kantara, where he was located, to persuade him to return to the regime, but he refused.

¹¹¹ - Al-Tahir Al-Zubairi, previous reference, p. 58.

¹¹² - Al-Shadhili bin Jadid, previous reference, p. 208.

3.1.4. Hocine Aït Ahmed's Rebellion

Before running for and being elected to the Algerian National Constituent Assembly, Hocine Aït Ahmed had withdrawn from the political scene.¹¹³ After his election, he returned to politics, but quickly withdrew again after failing to lead a constructive opposition within the Assembly.¹¹⁴

On July 9, 1963, he joined the armed rebellion led by Colonel Mohand Oulhadj, who remained in the Kabylie region opposing the power that had seized control in the autumn of 1962. Oulhadj then founded the Socialist Forces Front (FFS) on September 29, 1963. Peaceful efforts to resolve the crisis failed, and in the face of his persistence, orders were given to the commander of the First Military Region to arrest him. He was taken to Algiers, imprisoned in El Harrach prison, tried for rebellion, and sentenced to death. However, Ben Bella did not rush to carry out the sentence.¹¹⁵

4.2. External Crises

4.2.1. The Moroccan Aggression

Immediately after independence, on October 19, 1963, Algeria was subjected to Moroccan aggression. Morocco sought to seize territory from Algeria, land liberated by the Algerians in the name of the Algerian Revolution. This territory had been drawn by the French colonial power, and its inhabitants had participated in a referendum on self-determination on July 1, 1962,¹¹⁶ led by Hassan II. This was a blatant attempt to impose its border claims by force.¹¹⁷

The lands Morocco sought to seize were Béchar, Tindouf, and the surrounding areas, claiming historical rights to them. The clashes continued for two weeks, from October 19 to November 2, 1963, resulting in deaths and injuries. This conflict became known as the Sand War, during which the Moroccan army seized some Algerian territory. However, the Algerian army forced them to retreat. The forces of Colonel Mohand Oulhadj and Colonel Chaabani Mohamed, who were rebelling against the government at the time, joined forces with the Algerian army to repel the aggression. Houari Boumediene declared at the time : "Every grain of sand liberated in the name of the revolution belongs to us." For Algeria,¹¹⁸ and since 1960 the Kingdom of Morocco has hoped to amend in their favor the Saharan borders that France established at its expense.¹¹⁹

III. The Overthrow of President Ahmed Ben Bella

1. The Coup of June 19, 1965

At the beginning of 1965, there were essentially only two political forces in Algeria : on one side, Ahmed Ben Bella alone, and on the other, the military leadership.¹²⁰ On June 19, 1965,

¹¹³ - Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi, *Memoirs of an Algerian*, Vol. 1, Dreams and Tribulations, Dar Al-Qasbah, Algeria, 2007, p. 165.

¹¹⁴ - Ibrahim Lounissi, previous reference, p. 88.

¹¹⁵ - Al-Tahir Al-Zubairi, previous reference, pp. 75, 80.

¹¹⁶ - Abdelhamid Zouzou, *Historical References of the Modern Algerian State*, Vol. 1, Dar Houma, Algeria, 2012, p. 38.

¹¹⁷ - Muhammad Abbas, *Inspired by History*, previous reference, p. 86.

¹¹⁸ - Al-Tahir Zubairi, previous reference, pp. 41- 42.

¹¹⁹ - Charles Robert Ageron, previous reference, p. 199.

¹²⁰ - Mohamed Lebjaoui. *Vérités Sur La Révolution Algérienne*. Edition ANEP. Alger. 2010. p. 211.

Colonel Houari Boumediene¹²¹ overthrew President Ahmed Ben Bella in a military coup,¹²² declaring, "I am politics from this day forward, whether people like it or not." Throughout his rule, he attempted to obscure historical facts and attribute all credit to himself through the General Staff (EMG) and the Border Army. He described discussing the history of the revolution and its pioneers as talking about the dead, or trying to revive lifeless corpses.¹²³

Ahmed Ben Bella was arrested on the eve of the Afro-Asian Conference in Algiers, which would have made him a hero of the Third World. His friends seemed unable to organize resistance, and a number of them were imprisoned.¹²⁴ Tanks were stationed in strategic areas and on main roads in the capital, the Government Palace, the Wilaya (province), near the Casbah, and the radio and television headquarters.¹²⁵ The first president of the independent Algerian Republic remained in prison for 15 years, and was not released until October 30, 1980,¹²⁶ by order of President Chadli Bendjedid. In 1982, he chose to go into exile.¹²⁷

2. The Nature of the June 19, 1965 Movement

The June 19, 1965 movement was viewed differently by writers, researchers, and political actors of the time. Some considered it a military coup, while others viewed it as a revolutionary correction.¹²⁸ Colonel Zoubir Tahar stated that the idea was to arrest the president when he went to Oran to watch a friendly match between the national team and its Brazilian counterpart. However, arresting him at Oran airport would cause problems, as they feared a popular uprising and the operation would fail, especially since Ben Bella enjoyed great popularity. They didn't have much time, so they devised a plan to arrest him at his residence in Villa Joly in the capital.¹²⁹

Before the coup attempt on the night of June 19, 1965, numerous preparatory meetings took place, during which criticism and discontent with the president's policies were voiced. Initially, this was confined to the Oujda group, but later other colonels, such as Said Obeid, Mohamed Salah Yahiaoui, and Abbas, joined in. In subsequent meetings, they agreed to overthrow him, deciding that the operation would be carried out before the Afro-Asian Conference scheduled to be held in Algiers in late June 1965. They set June 19 as the date for the coup.¹³⁰

¹²¹ - Historically, it was Ahmed Ben Bella who recruited Houari Boumediene when he was a student in Egypt, and tasked him, along with three of his colleagues, with escorting the yacht Dounia to western Algeria. See: Patrick Eveno and Jean planche, *The Algerian War: Files and Testimonies*, trans. Ben Daoud Salamnia, vol. 2, Dar Al-Wa'i for Publishing and Distribution, Algeria, 2013, p. 344.

¹²² - Mohamed Harbi. *La guerre commence en Algérie 1954*. Op. Cit. p. 189.

¹²³ - Muhammad Abbas, *Inspired by History*, previous reference, pp. 244, 279.

¹²⁴ - Charles Robert Agéron, previous reference, p. 200.

¹²⁵ - Mohamed Lebjaoui. Op. Cit. p. 216.

¹²⁶ - Benjamin Stora. *Histoire de l'Algérie depuis l'indépendance 1962 - 1988*. Op. Cit. p. 251.

¹²⁷ - Mohamed Harbi. *La guerre commence en Algérie 1954*. Op. Cit. p. 189.

¹²⁸ - Ahmed Taleb Ibrahim, *Memoirs*, Vol. 2, *The Obsession with Construction 1965 - 1978*, Dar Al-Qasbah, Algeria, 2008, p. 21.

¹²⁹ - Al-Tahir Zubairi, previous reference, p. 112.

¹³⁰ - Ibid. pp. 106 -113.

On the day of his arrest, he found no one to defend him, protest against him, support him, or even show him sympathy.¹³¹ Despite his considerable international reputation, which led some French writers to call him "Algeria's Castro,"¹³² the coup was not a correction but merely a disruption of the institutions of a state that was still in its infancy.¹³³

Conclusion

Ahmed Ben Bella joined the political struggle early on, joining the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties (MTLD) after the end of World War II, in which he, like many Algerians, participated. He witnessed firsthand the vast gap between the local population and the Europeans. He participated in the Oran post office operation, headed the secret organization in 1950, and was subsequently arrested. He managed to escape from Blida prison along with Ahmed Mahsas and joined the external delegation in Cairo. He was one of the nine historical leaders who launched the Algerian War of Independence. He opposed the Soummam Conference, and the French army intercepted his plane en route from Morocco to Tunisia to attend the conference with Bourguiba.

Ahmed Ben Bella allied himself with the EMG (Army General Staff) under Colonel Houari Boumediene, along with the First, Fifth, and Sixth Wilayas (regions), and part of the Second Wilaya. This alliance prevailed over its rivals, the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic (GPRA) led by Benyoucef Benkhedda, and the Third and Fourth Wilayas. The army thus managed to enter the capital after clashes that left approximately 1,000 dead. The Algerian people took to the streets chanting "Enough is enough!" Benyoucef Benkhedda withdrew, and the first new Algerian government after independence was formed under the leadership of Ahmed Ben Bella.

Independent Algeria faced numerous difficulties in all political, economic, and social spheres. It inherited a deteriorating situation following the colonial period, particularly after the departure of the settlers, who had formed the backbone of the Algerian economy. Algeria appealed to its sister and friendly nations for assistance. It nationalized the settlers' lands and implemented a system of self-management in agriculture. In addition, Algeria faced political instability, including the assassination of Foreign Minister Mohamed Khemisti, the emergence of opposition figures, and military mutinies such as that of Colonel Chaabani. Ait Ahmed Hussein, on the international front, confronted Moroccan aggression in southwestern Algeria. It wasn't long before his Minister of Defense, his former ally, turned against him under the banner of revolutionary correction and imprisoned the first president of independent Algeria, where he spent 15 years in prison, in addition to the years of colonial prisons during the revolution and the national movement, totaling 22 years. He had sacrificed his life and youth for his homeland, Algeria, and enjoyed widespread popularity. We ask the Almighty to have mercy on him and grant him peace.

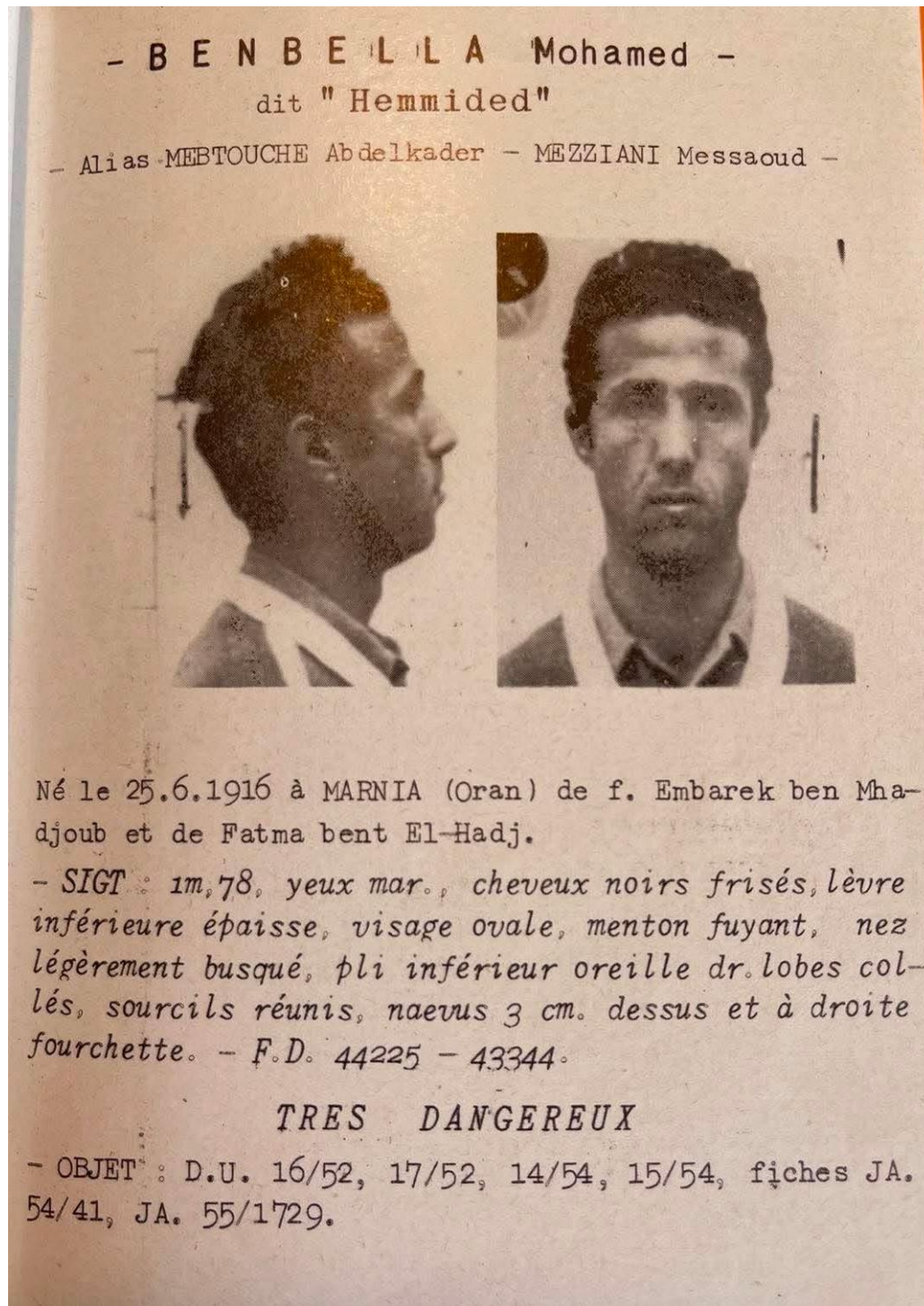
¹³¹ - Muhammad Abbas, *The Epic of Liberation*, Vol. 9, pp. 163, 371.

¹³² - Muhammad Abbas, *The Epic of Liberation*, Vol. 9, pp. 163, 371.

¹³³ - Muhammad Abbas, *Inspired by History*, previous reference, p. 281.

Appendices

Appendix No. (01). A photograph of Ahmed Ben Bella issued by the French General Intelligence Directorate for the purpose of searching for him.



1. FR/ C.A.O.M. 7G/ 1203. L'organisation spéciale

Appendix No. (02). On 10/22/1956, the leadership of the revolution, while leaving Casablanca Airport in Morocco to attend a conference in Tunisia with Prince Hassan II, where their plane was diverted by the French army to Algeria on the same day



Renaud de Rochebrune, Benjamin Stora. La guerre d'Algérie vue par les algériens, Des origines à la bataille d'Alger. Préface de Mohamed Harbi. Editions Denoël. 2011. Paris. p. 145.

**Appendix No. (03). The leadership of the Algerian Revolution in the
Château d'Aulnoy, France**



Historia Magazine. La guerre d'Algérie. N°.355. p. 2985.

Appendix No. (04). The five leaders, with Ahmed Ben Bella in the middle, with the border army in Tunisia, after their release from France



Historia Magazine. La guerre d'Algérie. N°.367. p. 3172.

Appendix No. (05). Ahmed Ben Bella upon his arrival at the airport in Morocco after his release



Historia Magazine. La guerre d'Algérie. N°.363. p. 3116.

Appendix No. (06). Ahmed Ben Bella enters the Algerian capital



Historia Magazine. La guerre d'Algérie. N°.369. p. 3189.

Appendix No. (07). The leadership of the Algerian Revolution: Ahmed Ben Bella
with Benyoucef Benkhedda on Independence Day in Algiers



Historia Magazine. La guerre d'Algérie. N°.363. p. 3116.

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Eyewitness Testimonies

1. Personal interview with Major Ammar Mellah at the headquarters of the Mujahideen Organization in Batna on November 22, 2023, from 9:00 to 11:00 AM
2. Testimony of Abdelkrim Ben Mchich, an officer in the National Liberation Army, personal interview at his home in T'kout on July 21, 2023, from 4:00 to 5:00 PM

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