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Entangled migration states: mobility and state-building in France and Algeria

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ABSTRACT

This article develops the concept of ‘entangled migration states’ as a means of highlighting the centrality of migration governance to state-building processes, the constitution of state sovereignty, and interstate relations. Drawing on the example of France and Algeria, it demonstrates the key role that migration played in three phases of state-building: the colonial period of *Algérie française*; the Algerian nationalist independence movement; and postcolonial state-building. In the case of France and Algeria, at least three actors constructed and instrumentalised migration and mobility regimes as sources of power and control – the French imperial state; the non-state Algerian independence movement; and the newly sovereign postcolonial Algerian state. A focus on the entangled nature of migration management allows for a deeper historicisation of contemporary migration regimes and draws attention to the central role played by migration diplomacy and transnational governmentality in contemporary migration management regimes, thus calling into question some of the spatial assumptions undergirding the ‘migration state’ concept. The article traces the evolution of mobility patterns and control in the Franco-Algerian case; their relationship to state-building processes; and the implications for rethinking the ‘migration state’.

KEYWORDS

Algeria; France; colonialism; migration; decolonisation

Introduction

In October 2021 Algeria recalled its ambassador to France in response to France’s decision to cut the number of visas issued to Algerians and to protest public comments made by French President Emmanuel Macron.¹ Two months later the French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian visited Algeria in an attempt to repair the Franco-Algerian relationship. Among the central themes of the visit was migration, with the meetings ending in ‘the resumption of operational dialogue ... on human and migratory issues’.² The significance of the Franco-Algerian relationship can be seen in the extent to which their relations continue to be deeply entangled via ongoing migration flows and diplomatic interactions even sixty years after formal decolonisation. Although there

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has been some diversification of migration patterns from Algeria (Collyer 2012; Natter 2014), the vast majority of Algerian migration is still directed to France, France continues to exercise an outsized influence on Algeria, and migration issues remain significant matters of bilateral diplomacy between the two states.

The Franco-Algerian relationship provides a useful example of *entangled* migration states – states whose migration management is deeply interconnected due to shared colonial histories or other factors. A significant population of Algerians moved to France during the colonial period, where they worked as labourers in factories. Following Algerian independence, migration flows between the two states did not stop – but rather increased. During the 1960s and 1970s, migration between Algeria and France transformed from being a feature of a colonial relationship between an imperial metropole and a colonised periphery to a feature of neo-colonial relations between a ‘migration-sending’ and ‘migration-receiving’ state. Similar processes shaped cross-border mobility patterns between other former imperial centres of power and the decolonised world (Augusto et al. 2022; Buettner 2016).

These transformations and their implications have not been a major focus in migration policy studies and did not form a central part of Hollifield’s (2004) conceptualisation of the migration state. Decolonisation is mentioned in passing in Hollifield’s (1992) discussion of France’s post-war immigration policy which focused, like much of the literature on immigration policy in Europe, on the post-WWII period and the signing of official labour agreements between migration-sending and –receiving states (see, e.g. Iskander 2010). This literature frequently treats migration as an external force that states manage via domestic policy choices in their attempts to reconcile the liberal paradox, i.e. the need to balance competing pressures for economic openness and political closure (Adamson, Chung, and Hollifield 2023; Hollifield 1992; 2004; Triadafilopoulos and Taylor 2023). Migration management is thus seen to emerge as an increasingly significant function of the state in post-war Europe – on a par with the management of war, peace and international trade (Hollifield 2004).

This article challenges this narrative through an examination of continuities and ruptures in migration management and nation-building in colonial and postcolonial states, in line with other contributions to this special issue (Klotz 2023; Sadiq and Tsourapas 2023). By looking at the entangled histories of France and Algeria, it sheds light on the relationship between migration management and contemporary state-building through an analysis of patterns of colonial mobility and circulation; their significance for understanding the emergence of anti-colonial independence movements; and the subsequent bilateral management of migratory flows in the postcolonial period. For both France and Algeria, mobility and its management have been key to contemporary state-building processes, albeit in different – yet entangled – ways. Colonial transformations, in a sense, required the *invention* of immigration as a new force that replaced earlier colonial mobility regimes. The observation that between 1945 and 1962 in France *les travailleurs maghrébins devinrent des travailleurs immigrés* – Maghrebian workers became immigrant workers – perfectly illustrates both the continuities and discontinuities that marked this shift from colonial mobility regimes to postcolonial migration management regimes (Cornu 1982).

The argument is developed in the following manner. First, I discuss the burgeoning literature on post- and de-colonial approaches to migration, including recent

elaborations of how this literature intersects with the ‘migration state’ concept. Next, I introduce the concept of ‘entangled migration states’ as a means of capturing the relational and historically embedded qualities of contemporary migration regimes, their ongoing connections via *migration diplomacy*, and their often-transnational character. I then illustrate this by tracing the role that mobility and its management played in three phases of state-building in France and Algeria: the colonial period; the period of the Algerian independence struggle; and postcolonial state-building. I show that in each phase, migration and mobility regimes have been constructed and instrumentalised as key sources of power and control, variously utilised by the French imperial state; the non-state Algerian independence movement; and the newly sovereign Algerian state. I conclude by drawing out the implications for rethinking the ‘migration state’ concept.

‘Decolonising’ the migration state

Recent work in migration studies has grappled with the question of how colonialism and colonial histories have impacted contemporary migration and mobility regimes (Favell 2022; Lemberg-Pedersen et al. 2022; Mayblin and Turner 2021; Rodríguez 2018; Rosenberg 2022; Samaddar 2020; Sharma 2020). Taking a broadly critical and decolonial perspective, such work has examined how contemporary immigration, asylum, refugee and citizenship policies did not simply develop from the ruins of WWII, but were also crafted in the aftermath of the end of European empires (El-Anany 2020; Klotz 2013; Krause 2021; Mayblin 2017; Patel 2021; Stricker 2019). Decolonisation processes often led to an ‘unmixing of peoples’ as European colonial settlers and administrators either moved to European metropole states following decolonisation or were expelled in processes of post-imperial and postcolonial state formation (Adamson and Tsourapas 2020; Brubaker 1995). Such ‘return’ movements were frequently viewed as forms of repatriation – even if many of these postcolonial migrants had never resided or originated in the European metropolises to which they migrated (Ballinger 2020; Buettner 2016; Choi 2016; Kalter 2022; Smith 2002).

At the same time, other movements from former colonies to imperial metropolises were not treated as homecomings, but rather as forms of economic immigration to fill the labour shortage that had arisen following the end of the Second World War. In many respects, the differentiated migration regimes for these different postcolonial migrations can be traced back to deep-seated racial hierarchies that had structured European colonial projects and policies (Getachew 2019; Klotz 2022; Lake and Reynolds 2008). Indeed, as a number of migration scholars have shown, the emergence of state migration controls around the world cannot be separated from the overall racialisation of global mobility regimes, which developed in tandem with colonial structures of circulation (Klotz 2013; Mau et al. 2015; Mongia 2018), but also characterised the state-building processes of independent settler colonial states (FitzGerald and Cook-Martin 2014; Klotz 2023; Triadafilopoulos 2004; Zolberg 2006).

In its most critical vein, such scholarship argues that the emergence of contemporary migration and mobility regimes is akin to a global apartheid, which is embedded in the very structure of the state system and ideologies of nationalism (see, e.g. Nişancıoğlu 2020). Through this lens, broader developments such as the emergence of the European Union, the transatlantic alliance and the idea of the ‘West’ are viewed as a white

supremacist response to decolonisation processes as much as to the broader Cold War context, with ‘the colonial garrison’ ultimately the site ‘where European identity was first forged’ (El-Anany 2020, 185; cf. Balibar 1993, 43; Balibar 2004, 45). Achiume (2019) has argued that South–North migration can therefore be conceptualised as a political act that challenges this order – with contemporary migration processes understood as ongoing forms of decolonisation, in which citizens of the Global South have the right to stake claims of belonging in the Global North as political and cultural ‘insiders’ based on past colonial histories and continuing neocolonial entanglements.

Such perspectives draw attention to enduring global inequities in migration and mobility regimes, and their historical origins, but they also tend to downplay the histories and agency of states and other actors in the Global South, including the role that mobility management has played in histories of postcolonial state-building (Adamson and Tsourapas 2020). Newly postcolonial states had to grapple with what Sadiq and Tsourapas (2021) have termed the ‘postcolonial paradox’ of managing emigration while building state capacity and internal citizenship regimes. Thus, the ‘migration state’ in the Global South is as prevalent as it is in the Global North (Chung, Draudt, and Tian 2023; Natter 2023; Thiollet 2023), although it has emerged under different structural constraints, facing pressures to simultaneously engage in both *nationalizing* and *developmental* forms of migration management which are often, in effect, at odds with each other (Adamson and Tsourapas 2020). In many states in the Global South, migration management has focused as much on *emigration* as *immigration* – thereby highlighting the significance of extraterritorial governmentality and state-led diaspora engagement policies (Brand 2006; Collyer 2006; Tsourapas 2020). This means that nation- and state-building practices are frequently entangled, with states in *both* the postcolonial metropole *and* periphery tied together by state-building practices that rely heavily on the management of migration flows as a means of producing and re-producing state sovereignty under conditions of ongoing globalisation.

Migratory entanglements and colonial and postcolonial state-building

Migration is not simply a process that takes place *between* states but, in many respects, migration management actually constitutes states (Torpey 1998; Zolberg 2006). Migration states are always to some extent *entangled* with other states, and migration policy-making is made not just in response to domestic factors, but is also shaped by nation-building imperatives and foreign policy interests (Adamson 2023; Adamson and Greenhill 2021, 2022). Why does this matter for thinking through the ‘migration state’ concept? Rather than just being another ‘adjective’ attached to the notion of the migration state (Klotz 2023), the claim that migration states are *entangled* suggests some more fundamental critiques – but also ultimately ends up re-affirming the concept’s centrality and significance.

One critique – shared by Klotz, Thiollet and others in this special issue – is of an ahistorical Westphalian view of fully developed states that confront migration as a novel challenge within the post-1945 context of the liberal international order. A decolonial perspective instead suggests that any theorisation of the ‘migration state’ is incomplete without an account of histories of colonial mobility management and circulation that helped to structure states across *both* the Global North and South – yet in very

different ways (Adamson, Chung, and Hollifield 2023; Natter 2023). The contemporary ‘migration state’ is not only tasked with managing the *effects* of cross-border population flows – but is also the *outcome* of historical processes and regimes of migration management (cf. Thiollet 2022; Vigneswaran 2013; Vigneswaran and Quirk 2015). Indeed, migration management is a central means by which states constitute and reconstitute themselves or ‘perform’ sovereignty and statehood (cf. Mitchell 1991).

Another implication of conceptualising migration states as *entangled* is that it points to the centrality of *migration diplomacy*, i.e. ‘the use of diplomatic tools, processes, and procedures to manage cross-border population mobility’ (Adamson and Tsourapas 2019, 115–116; Thiollet 2011; Tolay 2023). The study of migration policy-making in North America and Europe has historically treated migration as a largely domestic policy issue, often ignoring its geopolitical dimensions and how it intersects with states’ international relations (Adamson 2006). Yet, for postcolonial states in the Global South heavily reliant on remittances, migration management is a key issue in their foreign relations, as they negotiate labour agreements with receiving states; facilitate remittances and circular and return migration; and manage their citizens abroad – often under conditions of unequal power relations and systemic-level constraints. Postcolonial arrangements between the colonial metropole and periphery following independence are often marked by a combination of ongoing *de facto* (and structurally unequal) migratory entanglements, combined with *de jure* disentanglement (political and juridical sovereignty), the management of which requires bilateral forms of migration diplomacy.

The reliance on emigration by postcolonial states as part of their developmental strategies further points to the extent to which emigration management also creates incentives for the emergence of transnational state structures (Basch, Schiller, and Blanc 1994; Chung 2017; Collyer and King 2015; Lacroix 2022). As Collyer (2006, 838) notes, ‘For home governments, emigration creates a mismatch between techniques of governmentality and techniques of territoriality that must be addressed if they are to retain influence on their emigrant populations’. In other words, as states reach out to manage and govern citizens abroad, they develop transnational policies and institutions around issues of emigration, diaspora and return (Brand 2006; Lacroix 2022; Tsourapas 2020). This transnational dimension is not necessarily unique to emigration states, as policies of externalisation and remote control are illustrative of how this same dynamic also operates in immigration states (FitzGerald 2019; Lacroix 2022). However, the governance and control of diasporas abroad often suggests a spatial extension of state power and control that complicates our understanding of how the migration state operates. The realities of transnational state practices that embrace ‘co-nationals’ and diasporas beyond the state suggest the need to theorise the migration state beyond the constraints of a territorially-based methodological nationalism (Adamson 2016a, 2016b; Adamson and Demetriou 2007; Zederman 2018).

In the remainder of this article, I explore these dynamics and illustrate the utility of rethinking the migration state through a ‘decolonial lens’ by analysing Algeria and France as entangled migration states. While the history of Franco-Algerian relations and migratory networks is unique in many respects, the paired comparison can also be useful in illuminating broader structural dynamics that exist between states of emigration and immigration, thus helping ‘us better understand and engage the globally entangled nature of migration regimes’ (Adamson and Tsourapas 2020, 871).

Algeria and France as entangled migration states

A vast literature exists on the Franco-Algerian relationship, with a number of notable studies that trace the history of migration between Algeria and France (e.g. Blanchard 2018; Stora 1992). Perhaps most significant is the work of the Algerian sociologist Abdelmalek Sayad, whose elaboration of the ‘three ages’ of Algerian emigration is considered the starting point for understanding Algerian migration to France (Collyer 2012; Lacroix and Lemoux 2019; Sayad 1977; Thiollet 2023). Yet, despite the wealth of material on the case, and its influence in fields such as global history, geography, and Francophone migration studies, insights from the Franco-Algerian migration relationship have not been fully drawn upon in ways that can inform our understanding of the historical emergence of contemporary ‘migration states’.

For both France and Algeria, migration management in the context of the colonial experience was not external to other nation-building processes, but rather essential to the very construction of France and Algeria as contemporary nation-states (Balibar 1990, 1998; House 2006; Shepard 2008; Sayad 1984). Migration played a key role in all three phases of French and Algerian state-building: in the colonial period; during the national independence movement; and as part of postcolonial state-building.³ In each of these phases, the French imperial state; the non-state Algerian nationalist movement; and the newly sovereign Algerian state constructed and instrumentalised migration and mobility regimes as sources of power and control. The shift from colonial to postcolonial migration management also transformed it from an intra-imperial issue to one of inter-state relations and *migration diplomacy*. Colonial-era mobility management institutions were repurposed post-independence, and the construction of postcolonial national sovereignty involved *both* territorial closure *and* the development of extraterritorial forms of state power to manage populations abroad (Collyer 2006; Collyer and King 2015; Lacroix 2022).

Colonial entanglements: migration and the construction of Algérie française

Whereas Canada, the United States, South Africa and Australia can all be analysed as settler colonial states (Klotz 2023), they are not representative of most postcolonial migration states across the Global South. In the case of France and Algeria, the management of migratory flows emerged as a means of incorporating Algeria into France – first as a colony and then, from the mid-nineteenth century, as an integral part of the French state. Yet many of these same migratory flows formed the social and material basis of the Algerian independence movement, paradoxically also placing mobility and its management at the very heart of the Algerian state-building project.

The process of colonial entanglement can be traced to the French conquest of Algeria from the Ottomans in 1830, which both transformed mobility patterns in the region and opened Algeria to European settlement (Collot 1987, 294–312; Kateb 2001). During the initial period of colonisation, mobility was largely in the direction of Europe to North Africa, with the Maghreb representing ‘a frontier for certain classes of Europeans, a pole of attraction for those seeking socio-economic opportunity in much the same way that the Americas did’ (Clancy-Smith 1997, 389). By 1836 more than 14,000 Europeans had settled in the urban centres of Algeria, and by 1847 the number of European

settlers was already at 100,000. By 1850 Algeria had been formally incorporated into France and there were five roundtrip ferries a week between Marseille and Algiers. The late nineteenth century saw an influx of European immigrants, many from Italy, Spain and Malta, in addition to France. By 1892 the number of French citizens in Algeria was approximately 300,000, and the non-French European population reached 200,000 (Stone 1997, 32). France's 1889 Nationality Law, which provided for *jus soli* citizenship, was extended to the European settler population in Algeria (but not native Algerians) thus transforming this diverse population into French nationals (Hajjat 2012)

This growth in European settlement was encouraged by France. From 1841, the French state facilitated emigration to Algeria as part of its colonisation strategy, but also as a means of managing its own domestic politico-economic problems. Formal state policies included the establishment of migrant recruitment stations; the promise of land entitlements and other benefits to would-be migrants; and the setting up of purpose-built colonial villages, but also deporting the unemployed or other 'undesirables' such as political prisoners or criminals in France to Algeria and other colonies (Davis 2002; Delnore 2015; Gulley 2018, 12). Following the 1848 revolution approximately '10,000 unemployed people were forcibly shipped to Algeria aided by 50 million francs from the National Assembly' (Samers 1997, 39). The French state also offered free land to Alsatians displaced by the Franco-German war of 1870–1871 – an offer later extended to other French populations, and which eventually became a fully-fledged programme of settler colonisation (Gulley 2018, 16ff; McDougall 2017, 96ff). These policies meant that by 1886 almost 220,000 non-Algerian French people were residing in purpose-built colonial villages (Heffernan and Sutton 1991). Emigrations were accompanied by the French state's confiscation and appropriation of property, while also co-opting the local *khammessat* or sharecropping system. Economically, Algeria served as an outlet for the regulation of the domestic economy in France, including managing displacement in France that had been produced by processes of capital accumulation (Samers 1997).

The displacement of Algerians from their land ironically created the impetus for a long history of migration flows in the opposite direction – from Algeria to the French metropole. Displaced rural workers first moved to Algeria's interior cities, then to Algiers, and eventually to Marseille, Lyon, Paris and Lille (McDougall 2006, 34). Algerians began migrating to France in the 1870s (Stone 1997, 35). Early migrants from Algeria to France were disproportionately from Kabyle regions of the periphery and took jobs in the metropole as 'sailors, servants, dockers and itinerant salesmen' (Rosenberg 2006, 112). By 1905 Algerian workers were sent to Marseilles to work in oil refineries or recruited by Parisian agents for work in factories. In 1912, there were approximately 5,000 Algerians in France, the majority from Kabylia, thus starting a regional pattern of chain migration that would influence patterns of Algerian settlement in France for the first part of the twentieth century (Adler 1977, 4; Horne 1987, 63–64; Potts 1990, 134–135; Stora 1992, 13).

There were large increases in Algerian migration to France from 1915, partly as a result of the introduction of new industrial production techniques, but also due to a loss of labour in France on account of WWI and the introduction of a 1916 decree that 'permitted the massive mobilisation of Algerians into French factories' (Samers 1997, 45). Already in 1918 Algerian workers in France were sending back 15 million francs a year, and by 1929 the amount was estimated at 100 million francs annually –

figures which only account for official transfers, and not money brought back directly or sent home via informal channels (Zagoria 1973, 36 and 41). Out-migration actually allowed some Algerians to accumulate sufficient capital to return and purchase land back from settlers – from 1936 to 1940 the amount of land bought back by Algerians exceeded the amount purchased by Europeans; throughout the 1940s income in the Kabyle region doubled as a result of remittances (Samers 1997, 48–49).

Despite formal incorporation into the French metropole, however, colonial Algeria had an ambiguous status in relation to France. Like Ireland's relationship to Britain, Algeria's relationship to France vacillated between being treated as a colony to an integral part of the French nation-state. As Lustick (1993, 81ff) argues, it is only in retrospect that one can determine which social and political processes lead to the formation of empire, and which lead to state-building. Despite formal incorporation, however, movement from Algeria to France remained restricted until the early twentieth century – free movement of Algerians to France was not instituted until 1914, and it was not until 1946 that Algerians could travel from Algiers to Marseille without some kind of passport (McDougall 2006, 34; Rosenberg 2006, 129–152). By the mid-twentieth century, however, French colonisation had effectively reoriented 'the dominant channels of physical movement and the transfer of resources along new lines of legitimate transmission – of labour to French factories [and] intellectual talent to French universities and Paris publishers' (McDougall 2006, 33–34).

From World War II onwards, France and Algeria were deeply entangled via two-way and circular mobility, with about equal numbers of people moving back and forth between Algeria and France (Samers 1997, 46). Article three of *la loi organique d'Algérie* from 1947 granted all Algerians the right of circulation within metropolitan France, as well as full citizenship rights, and the population became known as *français musulmans d'Algérie* (FMA) – although free movement was often de facto curtailed via increased policing and additional bureaucratic requirements around housing, settlement and family unification (Lyons 2014, 127–129; Rosenberg 2006). Whereas during World War I labour recruitment had been facilitated by the *Service de l'organisation des travailleurs coloniaux* in the Ministry of War, following WWII there were greater efforts to institutionalise migration and recruitment. The *Office national d'immigration* (ONI) was founded in 1945, although workers from Algeria fell outside its remit (Samers 1997, 49–50). In the 1950s a branch of the CNPF (*Conseil national du patronat français*) – *Le Centre de liaison des employeurs métropolitains* (CLEM) – was set up in Algiers. In 1956 France opened the OFAMO (*Office algérien de la main-d'œuvre*) to manage and supervise labour recruitment – matching firms in France with labour in Algeria – and in 1958 the *Fonds d'action sociale* (FAS) was established to promote the social welfare of the Algerian community in France (Naylor 2000, 21). Thus, in the years following WWII, 'emigration had become a massive, structural feature of both the French and Algerian economies'. By 1954, at the start of the Algerian War, there were over 1,000,000 European settlers in Algeria, approximately half of whom were not of French origin, and there were between 200,000 and 350,000 Algerians in the French metropole (Naylor 2000, 14–26).

The role of migration in the Algerian nationalist movement

In order to understand the significance of migration management in the post-independence period, it is helpful to first examine some of the dynamics of the Algerian

nationalist movement, including the central role that communities of Algerian workers in France played in the emergence of Algerian nationalism. As with many anti-colonial nationalist movements, Algerian nationalism largely emerged in exile and in the imperial metropole, and it was the increase in migration to France over the course of the colonial period that in turn formed the material and social basis of the Algerian nationalist movement and thus also, eventually, the emergence of an independent Algerian state. Although it was French colonial policy and state interests that provided the impetus for migration between France and Algeria, once those migration networks were set in motion they developed their own internal logics and interests. Both sets of migration networks (Algerian migrants to France, and European migrants to colonial Algeria) would eventually serve as the basis of new organisational infrastructures that would directly challenge the interests of the French state – the Algerian *Front de libération nationale* (FLN) and the ‘*pieds-noirs*’ *Organisation armée secrète* (OAS).

It was via migration processes that diverse local ‘Algerian’ identities and affiliations were first transformed into a national consciousness within the context provided by metropolitan France, which was in turn reimported back into Algeria via circular and return migration (Stora 1993, 50–52, 75). From the 1920s to the start of the Algerian War in 1954, successive groups led by Algerian nationalist Messali Hadj, including *Étoile nord-africaine* (ENA), *Parti du peuple algérien* (PPA), and *Mouvement pour le triomphe des libertés démocratiques* (MTLD), were active within the community of Algerians in France. Algerian nationalist groups were closely affiliated with existing trade unions and the French communist party, and Algerian workers became embedded in broader networks of anti-colonial and revolutionary movements in Paris (Aissaoui 2009; El Yazami 1997; Goebel 2015). Hadj’s ENA was already demanding independence from France in the 1920s, making connections between the conditions of Algerian workers in France and the conditions of Algeria under French rule (Stora 1992). The movement’s strength grew following WWII, in tandem with increasing migration of Algerians to France, and then spread to Algeria via return migration (Zagoria 1973, 72). By 1954, the MTLD had expanded in both France and Algeria, pursuing a dual strategy of electoral politics and clandestine organising via an armed movement. The latter would form the basis of the breakaway FLN, which had its origins at a café in Paris near the Odéon (Horne 1987, 79).

From the outset, the anti-colonial strategy of the FLN centred heavily on the Algerian worker community in France. The FLN in effect undertook a form of transnational state-building, creating an incipient parallel state within France, which it referred to as the seventh *wilaya* (Algerian administrative unit) (Haroun 2012). It operated in France as the *Fédération de France du FLN* (FFFLN) and set up parallel structures including judicial services, social aid, internal policing, and hygiene commissions. The aim was to establish a ‘*contre-société*’ within France for the Algerian community, to extract resources via enforced taxes, and to mobilise the support of the French left. Key to its strategy was securing the loyalty of Algerian workers in France – who at the time were mostly attached to rival Messalist organisations – and to mobilise them for the war effort (Horne 1987, 236–237). The battle for the loyalty of the Algerian population in France was achieved in no small part through the use of political violence during the ‘*café wars*’ that killed approximately 4000 and wounded around 10,000 Algerians in internecine battles between the two organisations (MacMaster 1997, 195). Throughout the war, the Algerian

community in France provided about 60% of the FLN's internal budget, which was used to purchase arms, fund the FLN's diplomatic missions, and support the family of members who were killed or wounded (Haroun 2012; Stora 1992; Quandt 1969, 121–122).

The FLN also instrumentalised the newly-established international refugee regime, asserting itself regionally and internationally via control of Algerian refugee populations displaced by the war in the neighbouring states of Morocco and Tunisia. The FLN took responsibility for them either directly or through affiliated agencies, such as the Algerian Red Crescent, which was founded in 1957 in Tangier and Tunis – where the FLN leadership lived in exile (Perret and Bugnion 2011; Johnson 2015; Rahal and White 2022, 7; Müller-Funk, Fröhlich, and Bank 2023). In interactions with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Tunisian and Moroccan states, the FLN presented itself as the 'refugees' representative government-in-exile' and provided consular support, legal protection, housing assistance and a family allowance. Throughout the war, the FLN-affiliated *Amicale des Algériens musulmans* (AAM) registered Algerian migrants in Morocco, issuing documents and recording births, deaths and weddings (Rahal and White 2022, 3, 6).

The French government continued to allow freedom of movement between Algeria and France throughout the conflict (Lyons 2014, 127). Yet, de facto, Algerians who moved to France found themselves physically separated and subject to repression by both Algerian political actors and French authorities – the Paris *Prefecture de police* acted as a form of immigration control within Paris and became part of the internal management of the effects of the Algerian war in France (House and MacMaster 2006; Rosenberg 2006). The climax of the Algerian war in France was in 1961–1962, when France was on the verge of civil war over the conflict – in 1961 French police killed hundreds of Algerians during a demonstration in Paris; the OAS and other extremist organisations also mobilised in France, even attempting assassinations of some French intellectuals, such as Jean-Paul Sartre, who had supported the FLN. In 1962, there was a demonstration in Paris against these actions, which resulted in eight deaths. The ensuing funeral procession drew a crowd of half a million and the Évian Accords, which brought an end to the war and granted Algeria its independence, were signed just weeks later (Horne 1987).

The shift to 'migration-sending' and 'migration-receiving' states

The end of the Algerian War transformed the relationship between France and Algeria to one of two separate sovereign states. This outcome had not been a foregone conclusion – the ideology of revolutionary nationalism, which implied full independence from France, had competed with Algerian reform movements which had supported not independence, but rather universal and equal rights for Algerians within the French political system (Lawrence 2013). The existence of a large European settler community in Algeria, which had also taken up armed struggle, meant that the outcome of the conflict could also have been a Francophone settler-dominated apartheid-like state, rather than the Arab nationalist state that emerged from the conflict. Finally, the legacy of the significant *harki* population – Algerians who fought on the side of the French state during the war – attests to the complexity and contingent nature of the conflict – which also manifested itself in the complicated role that migration played in post-conflict state-building in both France and Algeria.

During the 1960s and 1970s, migration between Algeria and France moved from being a feature of a colonial relationship between a colonising metropole and a colonised periphery, to a feature of economic, political, and diplomatic relations between two sovereign ‘migration-sending’ and ‘migration-receiving’ states (Pickles 1963). A recognition of the ongoing entanglements that were to be expected following independence can be seen in the provisions of the Évian Accords. The accords included a stipulation for freedom of movement between the two states, outlining the rights of Algerians in France, and French in Algeria – although in an unequal manner: the European population could retain their French citizenship in Algeria, whereas Algerians could only do so if they moved to France and declared themselves French nationals. Fourteen articles outlined the rights of Europeans in Algeria, whereas only two outlined the rights of Algerians in France (Lyons 2014, 129–130). Although many provisions were put in place to protect the interests of the European settler population in Algeria, following the mass exodus of the majority of the European settlers and the *harkis*, the provisions ended up providing the legal basis for continued Algerian employment in France following Algerian independence (Adler 1977, 73–76; Miller 1979).

The Algerian government had an economic need for labour emigration, especially following the widespread unemployment (up to 45%) that resulted from the withdrawal of capital and production facilities with the exit of the European population, but it also needed to assert its sovereignty and lack of dependence on France (Samers 1997, 54). Post-independence, the Algerian economy was heavily reliant on the remittances sent by the approximately half a million Algerian workers in France, and by 1964 remittances from workers in Algeria amounted to approximately 200 million dollars annually (Miller 1979, 222; Ruedy 1992). The decision by the new Algerian government to continue labour migration to France created a split between the more revolutionary and pragmatic elements of the Algerian leadership, with the pragmatists viewing ongoing migration as an economic necessity, while the leftists viewed it as a ‘sequel to colonialism’ and perpetuation of neocolonialism (Lawless 1986, 178; Miller 1979, 222). During the first years of independence the Algerian government, however, engaged in a capital-led development programme focused on the petrochemical and industrial sectors and received more than a billion francs annually in overseas financial and technical development aid, much of it from France. The management of labour emigration was key to this strategy, with negotiations around labour migration bound up with other economic interests (Ruedy 1992).

In the decade following the conflict, migration was a constant feature in bilateral negotiations. The 1964 Nekkache-Grandval Accords were signed in April 1964, and slightly amended the Évian Accords. Algeria sought to exert more control over emigration while ensuring economic benefits from remittances and French development aid, whereas France had an interest in ‘rationalising’ and limiting immigration. The accords eventually included a quota system based on a combination of job openings in France and unemployment levels in Algeria, and also set out provisions for more screening of potential migrants from Algeria to France. In Algeria, the conditions of the agreement ‘probably contributed to the downfall of the Ben Bella government in 1965’ (Miller 1979, 178). Algeria was supposed to limit emigration to a quota of 12,000 per year – although actual numbers were approximately 20,000 per year until the agreement’s renegotiation in 1968, which both increased the quota to 35,000 and ended the right of

Algerians to enter France without controls (Lyons 2014, 137). The increased quota may have been partly tied to France's interest in keeping close relations with Algeria in the wake of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, and a nod towards Algeria's growing influence amongst Arab states (Miller 1979, 224). Despite the formal agreements in effect, there were material interests on both sides to keep a 'porous' form of migration management – France wanted to have ongoing influence in Algeria and needed cheap labour, whereas Algeria was interested in remittances and exercising control over emigration (Lyons 2014, 143). Thus, there was a 'gap' between the official language of restricting migration and instituting quotas and actual levels of ongoing circulation and 'irregular' migration.

A colonial relationship was thus transformed into a 'diplomatic' relationship, and migration management became a key – and at times contentious – aspect of the two countries' diplomacy, often linked closely to other issues such as oil, wine and French foreign policy concerns around regional conflicts and liberation movements, for which Algeria was increasingly seen as a key actor (see e.g. Byrne 2016). The foreign labour programme 'dramatically affected' the two countries' bilateral relations and ensured that the two societies continued to be 'interwoven' (Miller 1979). Adler (1977) suggests that labour migration agreements can be correlated with years in which the economic relations of the two countries encountered unusual difficulty over trade agreements (Samers 1997, 54). The issue of labour migration became an especially heated matter of discussion in bilateral relations when Algeria nationalised French businesses, including when Algeria unilaterally nationalised French oil companies in 1971, which led to the French government reducing the annual migrant quota to 25,000 during a review of the 1968 agreement that same year.

Throughout the 1970s migration became an increasingly contentious political issue in the two countries' diplomacy. Algeria halted emigration to France in 1973 for political reasons, including a series of racist attacks in France, but also because it had increased leverage due to its growing income from natural gas (Wihtol de Wenden 2020), despite the ongoing demand for emigration in Algeria (in 1972 over 200,000 applied to emigrate, when there was a quota of only 25,000). When French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, who prioritised an improvement in Franco-Algerian relations, made a diplomatic trip to Algeria in 1975, a joint declaration pledged further cooperation on migration, with France committing to provide additional housing and job training to the Algerian community in France. However, relations deteriorated and by 1977 France was offering a cash incentive return repatriation programme and announced its preference to not renew 300,000 Algerian work permits set to expire in 1978 (ten years after the 1968 agreement) (Wihtol de Wenden 1983).⁴ At the same time, the Algerian state set up a return and reinsertion programme that provided incentives for Algerian workers to return to Algeria – although these were only partially successful and, despite the official policy, the Algerian state continued *de facto* to rely on ongoing out-migration, making return voluntary rather than required, thus again producing a gap between policy and reality (Lawless 1986, 182; Miller 1979, 228).

In addition to migration diplomacy, the movement from colonial ties to sovereign control over migration by the two countries involved the repurposing of colonial institutions originally set up to control colonial mobility and migration. In France, there was a movement of colonial administrators into the field of migration management, with ex-colonial officials taking up positions in local prefectures to manage or exercise

authority over immigration decisions (Laurens 2006; Spire 2020). There was also a transfer of duties from the colonial administration to the new Algerian government. For example, the French OFAMO, which was set up in 1956, was transformed in 1962 into the ONAMO agency (*Office national algérien de la main-d'œuvre*), giving the new Algerian government the power to select which emigrants would go to France. The Algerian government took up screening processes (including medical examinations) that had been previously carried out by the French authorities. In addition, the Algerian state continually adjusted its selection criteria according to its developmental needs, by introducing internal quotas and promoting internal diversification of emigration across different regions (Lawless 1986, 179). There was also a state-led transformation of the old transnational FLN revolutionary structures: the entire FFFLN structure that had been built in France became an arm of the Algerian government – via the *Amicale des Algériens en France/Amicale des Algériens en Europe* (AAE). The organisation had almost complete control of Algerians in France until 1981, and ‘operated as a sort of secondary diplomatic system, linked to the Ministry of the Interior, rather than the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’. Those who ran the various branch offices abroad were ‘always sent from Algeria, never appointed from within the emigrant community’ – so close were they to the government that representatives of branches in France often came from the FLN’s ruling council in Algeria (Collyer 2006, 840–841; Miller 1979, 233).

Additional continuities from the colonial period included the close ties between major French trade unions, the *amicales*, and the FLN. The main labour unions – *Confédération générale du travail* (CGT) and the *Confédération française démocratique du travail* (CFDT) had strong links with the AAE, periodically visiting Algiers to meet with high-ranking officials. The Algerian government reportedly encouraged workers to join the CGT and CFDT, which in turn lent their support to the Algerian government (Scagnetti 2018). This shared alliance reflected both the governments’ and unions’ interests in preventing Algerian workers from joining groups outside of official inter-state arrangements, such as the *Mouvement des travailleurs arabes* (MTA), a more radical organisation in France perceived as having an interest in overthrowing the Boumedienne government (Miller 1979). The new Algerian state also exercised sovereignty by taking over responsibility for refugees, often repurposing colonial documentation by overwriting French documents to produce new Algerian documents, and setting up a new *Bureau pour la protection des réfugiés et apatrides* (BAPRA) which largely replicated the old *Office français de protection des réfugiés et apatrides* (OFPRA).

Similar to Algeria, France also had to reconstruct itself following decolonisation – and in many respects is still coming to grips with its postcolonial identity.⁵ The *de jure* end of colonialism, but *de facto* ongoing entanglements created a number of structural challenges. Following 1962, for example, there was the question of the status of Algerians living in France, who had been French citizens since the end of WWII but were now claimed by the new government of Algeria (Cohen 2017; Weil 2008). After independence, the *Français musulmans d’Algérie* (FMA) had to declare whether they wished to retain French citizenship or not. Many did, but many did not, thus coming under the control of the Algerian state or AAE and/or acquiring a somewhat irregular status. In the 1960s, the Algerian population became the subject of numerous studies and concern in France (Lyons 2014, 134ff), yet it was only in 1970 that the ONI began to keep track of Algerian immigration in France (Lyons 2014, 137).

In addition, migration from Algeria to France included two large groups of forced migrants following the war. The first was the so-called ‘repatriates’, the European settler colonial population, many of whom did not historically originate from France, had lived in Algeria for more than a century, and may never have even previously visited France. The second group was composed of the Algerians who had fought on the side of the French during the war. Both these populations suffered significant discrimination within France, however, the ‘repatriates’ were considered nationals and were given financial support and benefits to promote integration and employment, whereas the *harkis* were often subject to spatial segregation and/or had to reside in long-term camps (Scioldo-Zürcher 2016). Thus, there was a patchwork of different statuses within France across the various streams of postcolonial migration. But there was also a degree of overlapping authority and ambiguity over the membership of different segments of the Algerian worker populations, based on whether they had chosen French or Algerian citizenship, and whether they had settled via the official administrative and bureaucratic procedures set up by both Algeria and France or were ‘irregular’.

Conclusion

Contemporary migration states – in the Global North, as well as the Global South – are products of entangled colonial and imperial relationships. In the case of Algeria and France, migration management played a key role in three phases of state-building: the colonial period of *Algérie française*; the Algerian nationalist independence movement; and postcolonial state-building. Following independence, migration moved from being a matter of imperial control and anti-colonial resistance to a matter of nation-state building and inter-state relations.

While the Franco-Algerian case is unique in many respects, all states have long-standing migratory entanglements and shared histories with other states, suggesting that most if not all ‘migration states’ are also, to a greater or lesser extent, ‘entangled migration states’. The concept of entangled migration states therefore has broader relevance. Beyond its ability to shed light on the key role that mobility and its management played in state-building in Algeria and France, it allows for a deeper historicisation of contemporary migration regimes, and draws attention to the central roles played by factors such as migration diplomacy; the repurposing of colonial institutions; diaspora populations; and transnational governmentality in the making of the modern migration state. By tracing the historical emergence and evolution of migration management regimes across the ‘entangled’ migration dyad of Algeria and France, we therefore gain new insights that are helpful for rethinking the ‘migration state’ concept.

Notes

1. ‘Algeria Recalls Ambassador to France as Tensions Rise’. *Agence France-Presse* 3 October 2021.
2. John Irish, ‘France Takes Baby Steps to Revive Algerian Ties’. *Reuters* 8 December 2021; Statement to the Press by Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, (Algiers, 8 December 2021). <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/algeria/news/article/statement-to-the-press-by-jean-yves-le-drian-minister-for-europe-and-foreign>

3. There is a temporal overlap between these phases – the colonial period lasted until 1962, with the national independence movement emerging from the 1920s onwards.
4. This also coincided with other actions, such as a French attack on Algerian-backed Polisario fighters in Mauritania (Miller 1979, 227–228).
5. Constant Méheut, ‘Report Aims at ‘Reconciling’ France and Algeria, Its Former Colony’. *New York Times* 20 January 2021.

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