

## **The modernization of North African families in the Paris area**

# New Babylon



*Studies in the Social Sciences*

16

**The modernization  
of North African families  
in the Paris area**

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## Introduction

The author's research into the causes and circumstances of Algerian emigration to France gave her the opportunity of undertaking further sociological studies of the inter-ethnic relations between the two heterogeneous ethnic groups. These studies deal with the contact of the two groups which the colonial period had brought about.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the family life of Algerian immigrants in France was an integral part of the author's work and was the subject of several other studies.<sup>2</sup> Alain Girard and J. Stoetzel of the Institut National d'Etudes Demographiques, had, on the other hand, made studies of Algerian families in France from the aspect of their adaptation to French life.<sup>3</sup>

For a long time it has been considered that the problem of contacts between these two heterogeneous groups, one being dependent on the other, could only be resolved by 'assimilation'; 'accommodation' being an intermediary period of adaptation of the minority group to the norms, custom and behavior of the majority. Paul Albou, however, reminds us that another alternative is possible: the fusion of the groups in contact into a new society — the marginal

1. This outlook was inspired in part by the work of Georges Balandier on the sociology of dependence and colonial situation. See in particular Georges Balandier: 'La situation coloniale', *Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie*, 1951, Vol. XI. This led to the publication by the author of a study *Les Travailleurs algériens en France*, Paris, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1957.

2. The Algerian families in the Paris area were the object of a typology in *l'famille, industrialisation logement*, Paris, C.N.R.S., 1959.

3. A. Girard and J. Stoetzel: *Français et immigrés*, Vol. II: *Nouveaux documents sur l'adaption: Algériens, Italiens, Polonais*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1954.

## 2 Introduction

society.<sup>4</sup> Roger Bastide defines the marginal society as being 'a society which synthesizes the elements of two civilizations; the individuals who make up this hybrid society can adapt themselves very easily to the marginal society without being marginal themselves'.<sup>5</sup> As a result, the hypothesis of unilateral 'adaptation' of one community to another seems today to have given way to the more profitable one of the appearance of a *marginal society* in which each group partly, but never completely, adopts some values, norms, behavior, and material objects of the other group with which it is in contact.

As a result, the author's aim, in using the concept of 'modernization', is not to show how the Algerians adapt themselves to, or are assimilated into French society by adopting the family values characterizing this society. The author is perfectly aware of the inadequacy of the hypothesis dealing with the 'adaptation' or 'assimilation' of one ethnic group to another. Only the reciprocal adoption by each group of certain values, behavior and material features of the group with which it is in contact, is pertinent to the studies which have recently been made on the sociology of the contacts between two heterogeneous ethnic groups.

Unfortunately, until now there have been no studies made on the adoption in France of certain values and traits of Algerian culture by the French group. And yet this adoption does occur, and constitutes an area which should in the future excite the curiosity of young research workers in the field of inter-ethnic relations. Two characteristics of Algerian society can be cited: one material, the other cultural, both of which have been adopted by French society. The material feature is the national Algerian dish, *couscous*, which has become well known in the most popular Parisian restaurants and which is becoming a great favourite with the public. The cultural feature is to be found in the novels of Algerian writers who write in French, the literary quality and exceptional sociological interest of which are responsible for their well-merited acceptance in French

4. Paul Albou: *Le Problème des contacts; Introduction à l'étude des relations inter-ethniques*, mimeographed document, 34 pages, November 1955.

5. Roger Bastide: *Initiation aux recherches sur l'interpénétration des civilisations*, Paris, Centre de Documentation Universitaire, 1948.

literary circles.<sup>6</sup> Let us now consider the other aspect of the contact between the Algerian and French groups: the adoption of material and cultural characteristics of French life by the immigrant Algerian group in France. Certain aspects of this adoption have been described by A. Girard and J. Stoetzel, the observed changes being in the family and daily life of the Algerian immigrants.<sup>7</sup> A. Michel has also described in her earlier studies the qualitative changes provoked in the Algerian family in France by urban life, salaried work and the consciousness of new norms ruling family life. The present study uses this analysis on a greater scale and by another method. The author began this research by an intensive study of over a hundred North African families in Paris, followed by a systematic interview of 950 North African men and women living in the Paris area.

The research here presented is limited to the acculturation of Algerian immigrants in France in relation to the French values and norms relative to the nuclear family. An earlier study has shown how life in France allows the Algerians to adhere to a type of family entirely different from the agnatic family of North Africa to which they belong. This is the conjugal family of the French workers with whom the Algerians in France have contact in the place of residence, in a furnished hotel, or in an *H.L.M.*<sup>8</sup> The extended type of family whose values and norms still orient the family behavior of the Algerian immigrant in Paris has been described. Even when the latter seems to reject these old norms and adopt new ones with regard to the family, his attitude remains ambivalent . . . Certain aspects of French family life, such as free choice of spouse, meet with his approval; other aspects such as the deprivation and isolation of elderly people seem, to him, quite rightly, scandalous.<sup>9</sup> Consequently, the attitudes of the Algerian immigrant towards the French nuclear family are divided. The immigrant's ambivalence is reflected by his behavior in the family; that is to say, his desire for modern things in contrast with his desire not to be cut off from the original

6. See in particular the novels of Mouloud Feraoun, Mouloud Mammeri, Mohammed Bourboune, Ali Boumadhi, Rachid Boudjera.

7. A. Girard, J. Stoetzel, *op.cit.*

8. Cf. A. Michel: 'The family life of furnished hotel paying guests of the Seine', *Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie*, Vol. XXVII, 1959.

*H.L.M.* is a Public Housing Project.

9. A. Michel, *op.cit.* See in particular p. 334.

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group to which he, in spite of geographic distance, stays tightly bound. For a long time the Algerians' ambivalence regarding new family values was reinforced as a consequence of their political and social dependence in the context of immigration. Oppressed by the colonial situation, threatened by the loss of their culture, the Algerians, in France as well as in Algeria, fell back to their traditional values, of which the family is one of the most important. G. Balandier has justly analyzed the reactions which arise from contact between two ethnic groups, of which one is in a position of colonial dependence on the other. This produces, among other reactions, a *counter-acculturation* which is defined as a return to the values of the past, loaded with a meaning which the old values and institutions did not always possess.<sup>10</sup> Frantz Fanon has illustrated one aspect of the *counter-acculturation* of the Algerians faced with colonial society by reference to the Algerian women's veil: 'it is the colonialist's madness to want to unveil the Algerian woman, at whatever cost he is set upon a victory over the veil which will challenge the very mainstay of autochtone.'<sup>11</sup> While the colonialist wants to emancipate the Algerian woman, the Algerian group concentrates its resistance at just this point, making the woman and the family the pivot of the conservation of Algerian culture, its very integrity being threatened by colonial society. When the colonialist group complained about the 'proliferation' of the native people, the Algerian politicians commended the high birthrate, presenting it as one of the most effective weapons for combatting colonial politics of assimilation. Today, this aspect of counteracculturation is over, to the extent, at least, that Algeria has obtained her independence and political sovereignty which the country's leaders consider, however, as but a first step toward economic independence.

Even if the obstacle to modernism created by the colonial situation were to disappear, the transition from a traditional family system characterized by an extended agnatic family to that of the European conjugal family, cannot be made without shock and without conflict for the Algerian group in France. No stages can be eliminated without doing harm. Someone will retort that it is a neo-colonialist attitude to want to impose, in the name of 'modernity', the family values and behavior of the majority society (French

10. Georges Balandier: 'Sociologie de la dépendance', *Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie*, Vol. XII, 1952.

11. Frantz Fanon: *L'An V de la révolution algérienne*, Paris, Maspéro, 1962.

society) on the minority group (the Algerian immigrants in France). Certainly, even these values of 'modernity' (limiting the size of the family, autonomy of the conjugal family, etc.) are today contested by a new wave of dissenters. But it is none the less certain that these values have contributed at least partly to the emancipation of the couple from the traditional parental guardianship, and the young adult from the authority of his elders. On the other hand, the extension of birth control in Western society has been described as 'one of the most important biological inventions in history', since, thanks to this control man has introduced calculation and reason where before there had been only 'naive submission to natural laws'. Man's domination of his own biological nature is generally considered one of the great inventions of modern times. It is thus supplied with these criteria of modernity, relative to the history of humanity, that the author presents here an analysis of 'the modernization of the North African families in the Paris area', this modernization being exclusively considered here from the point of view of family behavior and values. Certain people might complain of the dryness of the following document even though the most picturesque replies gathered over the course of the interviews have been reported in the appendix. However this research shows that it is possible to gather information on populations coming from countries in the process of developing by adopting the interview method which is generally used for more educated people from developed countries. Certainly the difficulties were numerous; above all there was the language barrier which could only be overcome, in certain cases, by finding investigators who could speak the language of the subjects. To suggest the possibility of using the interview method for the population we are discussing does not however mean that this method is sufficient. Without the author's qualitative knowledge of the values, norms and behavior of Algerian families acquired during the course of her earlier investigations using both the ethnographic method and that of participant observation, the interpretation of the collected results would have been impossible. However imperfect this attempt, it impresses upon us the need to successively use the qualitative and quantitative methods, particularly when the research is applied to developing societies. The refinement of the interview guide used for the collection of data from 950 Algerian immigrants in Paris was facilitated by the introductory Seminar on the Sociology of Family Planning, attended by the author at the University of

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Chicago in June and July, 1966, thanks to the invitation of Professor Donald Bogue, Director of the Community and Family Study Center of the University of Chicago, and to the help of Professor Reuben Hill, of the Family Study Center of the University of Minnesota. Another feature of this research is that it is the result of an international scientific collaboration which paid no attention to frontiers: besides the facilities offered by the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (Paris), the author benefited from the material support of the Population Council, of the Family Study Center of the University of Minnesota, and from the Conseil des Arts du Canada.

The first two grants of the Population Council (No D66/101, D67/0114) were sent to the National Center of Scientific Research in Paris, for the collection of data on 950 North African families in the Paris area. The third one (D68/02) was sent to the University of Minnesota where the author stayed at the Family Study Center of this University, for the analysis of data. The author is very grateful to Dr Dudley Kirk and Dr Parker Mauldin for their support at the Population Council, and to Dr Reuben Hill who offered other facilities at the University of Minnesota. Our thanks are also addressed to the numerous French and American students who participated in this research. The difficult task of interviewing the North African respondents was undertaken in the Paris area from September 1966 to June 1967 by Jean Benjamin, Pierre Bourguignon, Monira Bouzid, Monique Clément, Assiana Drissi, Simone Iff, Lizot, Kamel Tmarzizet, Maria Jo Pineau, John Roberts, Soufflez and Bernard Terranova, under the direction of F. Lautman Feyrabend. The coding was done between September 1967 and December 1968 by F. Lautman Feyrabend and Jacques Vigne-Sunz at the Center of Sociological Studies in Paris. The analysis of data was conducted by A. Michel at the Family Study Center of the University of Minnesota from January 1968 to March 1968. Dr Yoon Kim, Judith Allard and Jacques Banhoff wrote the program for the computer. A. Michel wrote the preliminary report at the F.S.C. and the final report at the University of Ottawa in 1969-1970 thanks to the grant No S69/1038 from the Canada Arts Council and the help of F. Fernande Kretz, research assistant at the University of Ottawa, and Roch Paris, from the Computing Center. Finally the author is very grateful to Dr Robert Lapham from the Population Council for his comments on the first part of this book. The qualitative answers of the appendix were selected by A. Langevin and M. Souchet.



**Part I**

**Attitudes, knowledge, practices toward birth control  
of North African families in the Paris area**



## CHAPTER I

### The choice of the sample

The population of North African families living in the Paris area surveyed in 1966-1967 comprised 954 persons: 481 women and 473 men, most of them married and living together. Although dealing with the 'Modernization' of North African families living in the Paris area, this first part is mainly a KAP survey, concerned with the knowledge, attitudes and practices of North African people living in the Paris area about family planning methods.<sup>1</sup> The additional themes concerning the marriage (age, choice of the spouse), the parent-child relations, the education of the children and the impact of differentials other than sex and age on the modernization will be treated in the second and third parts of this book.

*The choice of the sample.* The population of the survey was made up of an area sample. Every quarter of the Paris area where the presence of several North African families was noted by the Office for North African families at the *Hôtel de Ville* de Paris was listed. Also listed were the quarters of the cities in the Parisian basin where there was a large concentration of North African families. These quarters were divided into 5 categories, according to the North African families type of housing. The kinds of housing were classified as follow: shacks, furnished hotels, cities of transits, unmixed and mixed public housing projects. It was not necessary to divide shacks, furnished hotels and cities of transients according to

1. In July 1966, thanks to Dr. Reuben Hill, then Director of the Family Study Center at the University of Minnesota and program consultant at the Ford Foundation, and thanks to Dr. Donald Bogue, Director of the Center of Family Studies at the University of Chicago, the author attended the Workshop on the Sociology of Family Planning directed by Donald Bogue at the University of Chicago and became familiar with the techniques of the KAP survey

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the ethnic group, since these kinds of housing are usually made up of a large concentration of North African families without the presence of European families. Only the public housing projects are either entirely inhabited by North African families or by a mixture of North African and European families. North African families living in ordinary apartments were not interviewed, but these people constitute a very small minority of families, scattered throughout the Paris area, and there was no census or listing of these families. Most of the ordinary apartments inhabited by the North African families are deteriorated accommodations in slum areas, near the quarters of shacks and furnished hotels, slum areas which have been deserted by European families because they lack comfort, security and hygiene. Therefore, it is not very probable that the inclusion of this group of families in the sample would have changed the results of this research, for these families do not constitute a specific group of North African families, different from the others by the standard of living, the educational level or the comfort of the home.

As the kinds of housing inhabited by North African families were listed by quarter in the Paris area, it was easy to draw at random from this list a sample group from each kind of housing. When the sample did not include enough families, another sample was drawn at random in the same kind of housing. The objective was to interview the same number of families in each kind of housing, but this was difficult, since, at the same time of the survey, Urban Renewal was destroying most of the shacks and furnished hotels in slum areas. Therefore, it was difficult to interview as many families in shacks and furnished hotels as in the cities of transients (262) and in the public housing projects (371), which were the kinds of housing built by the public authorities in the recent years to house the North African families, formerly residing in the shacks and furnished hotels of the slum areas. Interviewing the North African families living in furnished hotels was particularly difficult. As nobody knew where the North African families in the furnished hotels lived, the interviewer had the difficult task of looking in every block in this quarter in order to find the furnished hotels where the North Africans were located.

Although it was easier to interview the North African families in the shacks, because they comprise a concentration of families exclusively North African, some difficulties arose. In these areas there is no

pavement, the streets are muddy in winter and the situation precarious the whole year. One interviewer had the misfortune of being in a shack when a fire broke out: he helped the North African families to carry their belongings to safety. The geographical access to the families was easier in the cities of transients and public housing projects. These events are only noted to make the reader understand that the communication with North African families living in the shacks and the furnished hotels was the most difficult. Table 1 gives the distribution of the North African respondents of the survey according to the kind of housing.

*Table 1. Distribution of the North African families according to kind of housing*

| Kind of housing                | N     | %     |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Shacks                         | 190   | 20.0  |
| Furnished hotels               | 131   | 13.8  |
| Cities of transients           | 262   | 27.3  |
| Unmixed public housing project | 184   | 19.5  |
| Mixed public housing project   | 184   | 19.4  |
| Total                          | (951) | 100.0 |

Once the responsibility of an area was assigned to a team of interviewers, they were instructed to interview every person living in this area, thus conforming to the requirement for the area sample. Here again, another difficulty arose: about 41% of the women that the interviewers talked to did not speak or understand French. To overcome this obstacle, the interviewers were chosen from among the North African students in Paris, most of them either Tunisian or Moroccan. Table 2 gives the distribution of the respondents of the survey who were interviewed by male and female interviewers, of either European or North African origin.

Men were mainly interviewed by male interviewers while women were interviewed by female interviewers. The 276 respondents who were interviewed by a North African interviewer were mainly North African women, unable to understand or speak French (see chapter II, table 8).

The distribution of North African families according to the Paris area is given in Table 3.

The North African families interviewed in Paris 11th 'arrondisse-

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*Table 2. Distribution of the respondents according to the sex and the origin of the interviewer*

| Sex/origin interviewer         | N   | %    |
|--------------------------------|-----|------|
| <i>According to sex</i>        |     |      |
| Interviewed by a man           | 474 | 49.7 |
| Interviewed by a woman         | 479 | 50.3 |
| <i>According to origin</i>     |     |      |
| Interviewed by an European     | 677 | 71.0 |
| Interviewed by a North African | 276 | 29.0 |

*Table 3. Distribution of North African respondents according to the Paris area*

| Paris area                     | N     | %     |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|
| 11th 'arrondissement' in Paris | 136   | 14.3  |
| West Paris suburbs             | 510   | 53.5  |
| North Paris suburbs            | 74    | 7.8   |
| East Paris suburbs             | 34    | 3.6   |
| South Paris suburbs            | 35    | 3.7   |
| Parisian basin (Rouen)         | 164   | 17.2  |
|                                | (953) | 100.0 |

ment' include families living in furnished hotels and 5 families living in ordinary apartments with the same facilities as furnished hotels. The shacks, cities of transients and public housing projects are situated in the Parisian suburbs, because of the lack of space in Paris for this type of housing. The West and North Paris suburbs are more highly populated by North African families than the Southern and the Eastern Paris areas. Rouen is a city of 100,000 inhabitants in the Parisian Basin, where 164 North African families living in cities of transients and public housing projects were interviewed. The concentration of North African families in the Paris area was in the industrial quarters where there are factories and employment for blue collar workers. The percentage of North African families which could not be reached was about 5%, except in the hotels where the proportion rises to 8%, because of specific obstacles concerning this kind of housing.

## CHAPTER II

### The population of the survey

#### *The citizenship of the population*

All the respondents, except 6 who did not give their citizenship and 4 who were born in Morocco or Tunisia, have either Algerian or French citizenship. But, even in the latter case, the respondents were born in Algeria into Algerian families and not into French families living in Algeria.

*Table 1. Distribution of the respondents according to their citizenship*

| Citizenship | N*  | %    |
|-------------|-----|------|
| Algerian    | 813 | 85.3 |
| French      | 131 | 14.2 |
| Moroccan    | 2   | 0.2  |
| Tunisian    | 2   | 0.2  |

\*Of the 954 respondents, 6 did not give their citizenship.

The Agreement of Evian (1962) permitted Algerian people, born in Algeria into Algerian families, to choose either Algerian or French citizenship. Therefore, a percentage of Algerian families living in France took French citizenship.

#### *The origin of the population*

Table 2 indicates where the respondents were born, according to the size of the city.

Two thirds of the population was born in villages in Algeria and only 37.8% were born in small towns, average size towns or cities in Algeria or in France. But, of these 38%, only 2% were born in France into Algerian families. Therefore, the population of the survey is mainly composed of Algerians of rural origin with either French or Algerian citizenship.

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*Table 2. Distribution of the respondents according to the origin*

| Origin                                | N     | %     |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Born in villages in Algeria           | 586   | 62.2  |
| Born in small towns in Algeria        | 68    | 7.2   |
| Born in average size towns in Algeria | 119   | 12.6  |
| Born in cities in Algeria             | 152   | 16.2  |
| Born in France in towns and cities    | 18    | 1.8   |
| Total                                 | (943) | 100.0 |

#### *Age and matrimonial status*

At the period of the survey (October 1966-June 1967), the average age of the respondent was:

31 years 1 month for women,

38 years 8 months for men.

All the respondents were married, as this was a condition of the survey. The average age at marriage for the respondents was:

17 years 4 months for the women,

23 years 2 months for the men.

The average age at marriage seems relatively high for Algerian women since the legal minimum age of marriage for women was fixed by French law at 16 years. Most of the respondents were married during the French colonialism. The Algerian government after Independence (1962) ratified the law concerning the minimum age of marriage for men and women (16 years for women, 18 years for men). However, the following table concerning the distribution of the age at marriage for the respondents (men and women) shows that the Algerian parents did not all obey the French or the Algerian laws concerning marriage.

Table 3 shows that 35% of the Algerian women were married under the minimum legal age for marriage while this percentage was only 10% for the men. If the age of puberty is considered to be 15 (which is possible for a population which is undernourished), the respective percentage of Algerian respondents who were married before puberty is:

1.7% for the men (8 men out of 463), and

19% for the women (88 women out of 465).



Table 3. Distribution of the age at marriage of the respondents

| Age at marriage               | Men   |     | Women |     |
|-------------------------------|-------|-----|-------|-----|
|                               | N     | %   | N     | %   |
| 11 years                      | 3     |     | 5     | 1   |
| 12 years                      | 1     |     | 20    | 4   |
| 13 years                      | —     |     | 17    | 4   |
| 14 years                      | 4     |     | 46    | 10  |
| 15 years                      | 7     |     | 75    | 16  |
| 16 years (and over for women) | 10    |     | 302   | 65  |
| 17 years                      | 25    | 50  | —     |     |
| 18 years (and over for men)   | 413   | 90  |       |     |
| Total                         | (463) | 100 | (465) | 100 |

These data indicate that people were inclined to violate the law more where their daughters were concerned than where it was their sons. The preceding data would be difficult to explain if one wasn't reminded that the most common marriage in Algeria is one arranged by the parents. Therefore, parents can arrange the marriage for their children, even when the children are too young to want to be married.

The circumstances of the marriage in the Algerian society will appear more clearly in the following data. Table 4 indicates the distribution of the respondents to the question: 'Did you see and did you meet your spouse before marriage?'

One woman out of 3 and one man out of 5 had not seen their mate before the day of the marriage. Only 19.4% of the women

Table 4. Distribution of the respondents according to the answers to the question: 'Did you see and did you meet your spouse before marriage?'

| Relationship with spouse before marriage   | Men   |       | Women |       |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|  | N     | %     | N     | %     |
| Has never seen the spouse before marriage  | 93    | 20.7  | 155   | 33.5  |
| Has seen the spouse but not met him or her | 180   | 40.0  | 206   | 44.5  |
| Has met the spouse                         | 174   | 38.7  | 90    | 19.4  |
| Other answers                              | 3     | 0.6   | 12    | 2.6   |
| Total                                      | (450) | 100.0 | (463) | 100.0 |

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and 38.7% of the men said that they had met their mate before marriage. 78% of the women and 60.7% of the men had not met their mate before marriage. The difference in the percentages for men and women appears very high considering that most of the respondents are married and living together. This difference might be explained in two ways:

a) Men more than women may have identified their mate before marriage because more were informed about the choice of their future wife by their parents. Conversely, fewer women might have been told what husband had been chosen by their parents and consequently fewer identified their mate before marriage.

b) The second explanation for this difference might be the men's wish to appear more modern than in fact they had been in the Algerian family situation where marriage was mostly the arrangement of 2 families and not the arrangement of 2 individuals. Algerian men, being more influenced by modern culture since they have been in France longer than the women, are also more sophisticated and want to appear more modern to the interviewers.

Table 5 gives the distribution of the respondents according to their answers to the question: 'Did you choose your spouse yourself?'

*Table 5. Distribution of the respondents according to the choice of the mate*

| Choice of the mate                                 | Men   |       | Women |       |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|  | N     | %     | N     | %     |
| The parents of the respondent chose his/her spouse | 230   | 50.5  | 382   | 82.8  |
| The respondent chose his/her mate himself/herself  | 225   | 49.5  | 83    | 17.2  |
| Total  | (455) | 100.0 | (465) | 100.0 |

There is one man out of two whose spouse was chosen by the parents, while there were 4 women out of 5 whose spouse was chosen by the parents. Here again, the discrepancy between the 2 sexes appears high. One explanation could be that the marriage being generally an arrangement between 2 families in the Algerian society, more parents of the son than of the daughter tried to persuade their child that he had chosen his spouse himself, in order to produce a better acceptance of their choice. Furthermore, some Algerian men could have tried to appear more emancipated than they were in fact.

Table 6 indicates that for most of the Algerian people the choice

of the mate was very narrowly circumscribed to a local area: the kin group, the same *kharouba*, the same village, the same town.

Table 6. *Distribution of the respondents according to the answers to the question: 'Did you marry somebody from your kin group, your kharouba, your village, etc.?'*

| Married somebody from            | Men   |       | Women    |           |
|----------------------------------|-------|-------|----------|-----------|
|                                  | N     | %     | N        | %         |
| The same kin group               | 155   | 33.6  | 172      | 36.4      |
| The same kharouba, village, clan | 108   | 23.5  | 57.1 117 | 24.8 61.2 |
| The same town                    | 57    | 12.4  | 66       | 14.0      |
| The same department              | 45    | 9.8   | 36       | 7.6       |
| The same country                 | 61    | 13.2  | 70       | 14.8      |
| Married a foreigner              | 35    | 7.6   | 11       | 2.3       |
| Total                            | (461) | 100.0 | (472)    | 100.0     |

One third of the men and women married somebody of the same kin group. About 1 out of 4 men and women married somebody external to the kin group whose geographical and moral proximity is very strong: this group includes the spouses living in the same *kharouba* (quarter) of the village, in the same village or in the same clan. The *Kharouba* is a quarter of the village where each extended family considers itself linked by a common ancestor, the clan is an extension of the *kharouba* outside the village whose people are generally living in the nearest villages. The Algerian village is a very small community, where the number of inhabitants rarely exceeds 1,000. It is therefore from a very narrow circle that the spouse was chosen for 60% of the men and women.

The choice of the mate in the town was also relatively limited because the Algerian towns are small. Finally, it can be observed that in this mobile population where the men have emigrated from their native country for several generations, there are only 7.6% of mixed marriages with foreigners which are reported by men and 2.3% of mixed marriage reported by women.

These data indicate the strong attachment of Algerian people to their kin group and their native village, attachment that the emigration to a remote country was not able to destroy. It suggests also that the choice of the spouse is still today, for most Algerian people, the affair of the parents who prefer to choose a mate for their child in the same kin group or village. The geographical and parental homo-

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gamy is still highly praised in the Algerian society.<sup>1</sup> In France, A. Girard has shown that the socio-economic homogamy is still appreciated.<sup>2</sup>

### *Education of the respondents*

Table 7 gives the education of the respondents by sex.

*Table 7. Distribution of the respondents by sex and by level of education*

| Educational level               | Men   |       | Women |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                                 | N     | %     | N     | %     |
| No attendance of school         | 227   | 48.7  | 359   | 76.0  |
| Some years of primary education | 130   | 27.9  | 60    | 12.7  |
| End of the primary education    | 53    | 11.4  | 37    | 7.9   |
| Technical school                | 14    | 3.0   | 5     | 1.1   |
| Secondary school                | 7     | 1.5   | 6     | 1.2   |
| Higher education                | 1     | 0.2   | —     | —     |
| Evening courses                 | 34    | 7.3   | 5     | 1.1   |
| Total                           | (466) | 100.0 | (472) | 100.0 |

About one male respondent out of 2 did not go to school, this proportion being for females 3 out of 4. Two thirds of the women and of the men who went only to the primary school did not continue to the end, but quit elementary school after some years. The education in elementary schools is divided into koranic schools where the main part of the education consists of the teaching of Koran by Arabic teachers and primary schools where the education given is similar to the education given in France to French children. Excluding evening courses, the percentage who continued their education after the end of primary school is 4.7% for men and 2.4% for women.

These data indicate that the education given to Algerian people during the French colonial period was null or very poor. Happily many North African people, who were not sent to school during their childhood to learn French, found the opportunity to do so in the occupational life in France but this opportunity has been rarer for women than for men, as table 8 suggests.

1. A. Michel has described the obstacles to the mixed marriages of Algerian immigrants with French women in *Famille, industrialisation, logement, op.cit.*

2. See Alain Girard: *Le Choix du conjoint*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1964.

Table 8. Distribution of the respondents according to their level in French

| Knowledge of French                      | Men   |       | Women |       |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|  | N     | %     | N     | %     |
| Do not speak French                      | 19    | 4.0   | 194   | 41.3  |
| Speak French (but do not read or write)  | 255   | 54.7  | 203   | 43.2  |
| Speak and read French (but do not write) | 44    | 9.4   | 10    | 2.1   |
| Speak, read and write French             | 129   | 27.7  | 61    | 13.0  |
| Other languages                          | 19    | 4.1   | 2     | 0.4   |
| Total                                    | (466) | 100.0 | (470) | 100.0 |

4% of the men and 41% of the women do not speak French. 91.8% of the male respondents can either speak, read or write French while this percentage is 58.3% for women. It has to be added that generally when North African people read or write French, they do not have the same knowledge of the French language as French people, since French is a foreign language for them, although, at the time of the French colonialism, Algeria was labelled a 'French department'. It is necessary to remember that Algerian people had their own culture and language and that it is this language which is spoken by them in the home. Therefore, the French language is only a secondary language that they learn at school. For those who did not attend a French primary school in Algeria, the occupational milieu afforded the best opportunity to learn French. Since this opportunity has been denied to most Algerian women, the consequence is that 41% of the women do not speak French compared to 4% of the men.

Table 9 gives the distribution of the respondents by religion, religious practice and sex.

Table 9. Distribution of the respondents according to their religion, religious practice and sex

| Religion                                    | Men   |       | Women |       |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|   | N     | %     | N     | %     |
| No religion                                 | 9     | 1.9   | 5     | 1.0   |
| Muslims non practising                      | 128   | 27.4  | 48    | 10.2  |
| Muslims practising the Fast                 | 194   | 41.5  | 266   | 56.4  |
| Muslims practising the Fast and the prayers | 136   | 29.1  | 153   | 32.4  |
| Total                                       | (467) | 100.0 | (472) | 100.0 |

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There is no other religion than the Muslim one among the respondents as Algerian people refuse to adopt another religion. Those who are classified as having no religion are those who declare that they do not belong to any religion. They constitute 2% of the men and 1% of the women. Muslim non-attenders are those who consider themselves Muslims but who do not practice the Fast and do not recite the prayers, the 2 most important prescriptions of the Muslim religion: this category is more than twice as large among men as among women (27% and 10%).

Practising the Fast is easier than reciting prayers for it is controlled socially by the Algerian community of the Paris area at the time of the Fast. For instance, Algerian men working in a factory do not dare to break the Fast if they have Algerian companions around them observing the Fast. As for the women, the social control is exerted by the neighbouring Algerian women who live in the same kind of housing: shacks, cities of transients, public housing projects, etc. The prayer can be recited in the intimacy of the home and is thus less subject to social control; therefore, the percentage of those who observe the prayers is smaller than the percentage who fast.

If all the categories of observance of the Muslim religion are grouped together, the data show that 70.6% of the men observe some Muslim practices compared to 88.8% of the women. This percentage is very different from the percentage of the Church attenders among French people, which is evaluated at 16% of all the adult (men and women) population in the Paris area.

### *Socio-economic status of the respondents*

Table 10 gives the distribution of the occupational level among the respondents.

The 'unemployed' are those who had an occupation in the past but were not working at the time of the survey. They constitute 11% of the men and 3% of the women. 80.5% of the Algerian male respondents (63.6 + 16.9) are blue collar workers and among them less than one out of 4 is skilled (17%). Only 5.6% are white collar workers and, as this category was so small, it was not possible to classify them by their level of occupation. Only the tradesmen (2.8%) have been isolated because they constitute a group entirely separate from the other one.

*Table 10. Distribution of the occupational level of the respondents*

| Occupation              | Men   |       | Women |       |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                         | N     | %     | N     | %     |
| Housewives              | —     | —     | 370   | 91.4  |
| Unemployed              | 52    | 11.1  | 13    | 3.2   |
| Unskilled, semi-skilled | 297   | 63.6  | 11    | 2.7   |
| Skilled                 | 79    | 16.9  | 5     | 1.2   |
| White collars           | 26    | 5.6   | 4     | 0.9   |
| Tradesman               | 13    | 2.8   | 2     | 0.5   |
| Total                   | (467) | 100.0 | (405) | 100.0 |

The following data will illustrate the difference of occupational status between North African and European workers in the Paris area at the time of the survey. In 1964, 44% of the European blue collar workers were skilled (French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese) but only 17% of the North African workers were. This discrepancy cannot be attributed merely to the low level of education of Algerian people (see tables 7 and 8) for the level of education of other immigrants, such as Portuguese people, is as low as that of Algerian people. Furthermore, Algerian people constitute a more ancient immigration than Spanish or Portuguese people. Therefore, the assumption is that discrimination plays an important role in maintaining Algerian workers in a low level of occupation.

Among Algerian women, only 8.5% are working outside or were unemployed at the time of the survey; although this represents an innovation in comparison with the status of the Algerian women in Algeria, the discrepancy with the occupational status of French women remains very large, for 45% of the French married women in the Paris area have an occupation. The other Algerian women (91.4%) are housewives who have never worked in the French occupational milieu, which explains why there are so many Algerian women who do not speak French (table 8). These women live in an Algerian milieu where the native language is spoken and where they have no opportunity to learn French. However, it is noticeable that only 405 women out of 481 gave their occupational status. This reluctance of Algerian women to give their exact occupational status is perhaps related to the French policy concerning the 'allowance for one salary' in the family: this allowance is given to families if there is only one salary (the husband's salary) in the family. Therefore, it seems that many women who worked part time tried to hide the fact in

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order not to be deprived of this allowance. However, not all the Algerian women who failed to indicate their occupational status (75 persons) were part time workers at the time of the survey.

Table 11 gives the distribution of the husband's income for the respondents of the survey.

*Table 11. Distribution of the husband's monthly salary for the respondents (men*

| Husband's monthly salary | N     | %     |
|--------------------------|-------|-------|
| No salary                | 11    | 2.5   |
| Less than 500 F          | 43    | 9.6   |
| From 500 F to 749 F      | 184   | 41.2  |
| From 750 F to 999 F      | 132   | 29.5  |
| From 1,000 F to 1,499 F  | 60    | 13.4  |
| 1,500 F and over         | 8     | 1.8   |
| Salary not given         | 9     | 2.0   |
| Total                    | (447) | 100.0 |

The Algerian population is very reluctant to give its exact income, as is the French population. 70.7% of the population of the survey (41.2% + 29.5%) earn from 500 to 999 francs per month, which is a very low salary, most of the Parisian wages being above 1,000 francs per month. These low salaries are the consequence of the low level of education and of the high percentage of Algerian workers who are classified as unskilled or semi-skilled, even when they are entitled to a higher qualification.

### *Comfort of the housing*

The comfort of the housing according to the type of housing is very unequal among Algerian respondents.

Shacks are precarious houses built by Algerian people with scrap materials: wood, cartons, containers, sheets of metal, etc. This kind of housing always lacks even the minimum comforts: no running water, no sewage facilities, sometimes no electricity. People are obliged to walk some distance from their houses to get water at a communal fountain. People living in shacks are not protected against cold. Also as the shacks are made of materials such as wood and cardboard they are fire hazards. Generally, people living in the shacks pay rent to the owner of the shacks, who built them. However,



the ground does not belong to the owner of the shacks but to the suburban municipalities. Therefore, the renters of the shacks can be evicted at any time and this increases their insecurity.

The furnished hotels are a better protection against the cold and the hazard of fires than the shacks. However, Algerian families living in these furnished hotels have very small apartments, consisting mainly of only one room. Running water in the room is the exception and people have to get water at a communal tap, either on the same floor or in the basement. There is no toilet or bath room for the tenants. The rent is generally very high in comparison to the salaries earned by Algerian people.

It is only people living in cities of transit and public housing projects who have a minimum of comfort (current water, toilet and bathroom). They generally pay a rent which is moderate according to their salary. In the cities of transients, people are lodged only for a limited number of years, although some of them live there for 10 years or more. The size of the apartments in the cities of transit, is generally smaller than in public housing projects. In the public housing projects, people receive an allowance to help them to pay the rent if the number of people occupying the premises does not exceed the number fixed by the policy of the public housing project. Table 12 gives only a statistical picture of the comfort of the North African families of the survey.

*Table 12. Distribution of housing comfort for the Algerian respondents*

| Housing comfort                     | N   | %    |
|-------------------------------------|-----|------|
| No electricity and no running water | 21  | 2.2  |
| Electricity, no running water       | 173 | 18.5 |
| Running water, no electricity       | 31  | 3.3  |
| Electricity and running water       | 711 | 75.9 |

This table shows that 24% of the Algerian respondents are deprived of at least one commodity which is considered as a minimum for comfort: electricity or running water, 2.2% of them being deprived of both commodities.

Table 13 gives the distribution of the number of rooms for the Algerian respondents:

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*Table 13. Number of rooms for the Algerian respondents*

| Number of rooms | N   | %    |
|-----------------|-----|------|
| 1 room          | 180 | 19.2 |
| 2 rooms         | 222 | 23.6 |
| 3 rooms         | 288 | 30.7 |
| 4 rooms         | 179 | 19.0 |
| 5 rooms         | 55  | 5.9  |
| 6 and 7 rooms   | 15  | 1.6  |

This table shows that more than 19% of the Algerian families live in a single room which is usually very small. These single rooms are generally to be found in shacks or furnished hotels. The majority of the respondents (54.3%) have either 2 or 3 rooms (the living room being included in the total). Only one-fourth of the respondents (26.5%) have 4 or more rooms, although the average number of living children is about 5. The absence of space creates cohabitation of parents and children in the same room. Table 14 shows that some Algerian parents in the Paris area sleep in the same bedroom as their children.

*Table 14. Distribution of the respondents according to the presence of children in their bedroom*

| Children in parents' bedroom | N     | %     |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Presence of children         | 543   | 62.7  |
| Children not present         | 323   | 37.3  |
| Total                        | (866) | 100.0 |

More than 62% of the parents share the same bedroom with their children. These parents include mainly people living in shacks and furnished hotels who generally have only one room but also people living in cities of transients and public housing projects, since the number of rooms in this kind of housing is insufficient to lodge the large families of the North African immigrants living in the Paris area.

### *Composition of the families*

Table 15 gives the composition of the families of the respondents by the children's ages.

Preschool children include those from 0 to 5 years, school age

*Table 15. Composition of the families of the respondents by children's ages*

| Children's ages                       | N     | %     |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| No children*                          | 24    | 2.7   |
| All preschool                         | 189   | 21.4  |
| All school age                        | 142   | 16.1  |
| All adolescents                       | 17    | 1.9   |
| All adults                            | 16    | 1.6   |
| Preschool and school age              | 307   | 34.8  |
| Preschool and adolescents             | 23    | 2.6   |
| Adolescents and adults                | 12    | 1.4   |
| Preschool, school age and adolescents | 90    | 10.2  |
| Other combinations                    | 62    | 7.0   |
| Total                                 | (882) | 100.0 |

\* Most of those who have no child are couples recently married.

includes those from 6 to 14 years, adolescents include those from 15 to 18, the adults are those 19 years and over. Families having preschool children (21.4%), school children (16.1%) and both preschool and school age children (34.8%), constitute the most important group as they account for 72.3% of all the families of the survey.

After this group, the second in importance is the group of families having preschool children, school age children and adolescents (10.2%). Along with families having both preschool children and adolescents (2.6%), this group constitutes 12.8% of all the families in the survey. The existence of the latter seems to indicate that the arrival of children in North African families is not as concentrated in time as is the case in European families.

The conjugal family in Algeria is rarely cut off from the extended family, since parents and married children live with other kin in the same house. (In Kabylie for instance, the house is made up of several rooms, each of them inhabited by a married couple, but opening on the same court, common to all the members of the same extended family group). Table 16 indicates the number of Algerian respondents of the survey, who share their apartment with persons outside of the conjugal group (spouse and unmarried children).

15.2% of the North African families share their lodging with one or more persons other than the spouse and unmarried children, but this percentage can be considered as high, given the exiguity of the apartments of this population. Other statistics indicate that half of

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*Table 16. Distribution of the North African respondents according to the number of persons other than the spouse and unmarried children living in the same apartment*

| Number of persons  | N     | %     |
|--------------------|-------|-------|
| No person          | 748   | 84.7  |
| 1 and 2 persons    | 93    | 10.5  |
| 3, 4 and 5 persons | 28    | 3.2   |
| 6 persons and over | 14    | 1.5   |
| Total              | (883) | 100.0 |

these persons are members of the husband's kin group, 22% are members of the wife's kin group; 12% are relatives without precision and 13% are other than people of the same kin group, generally people from the same village.

When the extended kin group cannot reconstitute itself in the same apartment, the members of the kin group live in the same neighborhood. Table 17 gives the distribution of the North African respondents according to the presence of members of their kin group in the neighborhood.

*Table 17. Distribution of the North African respondents according to the number of persons from the same extended family living in the same neighborhood*

| Number of persons of same kin group | N     | %     |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| No member of the same kin group     | 377   | 53.6  |
| 1, 2 and 3 members                  | 225   | 32.0  |
| 4 members and over                  | 101   | 14.5  |
| Total                               | (703) | 100.0 |

About half of the North African respondents have one or more members of their kin group living in the same neighborhood, and for 5% of these respondents the number of this kin group is 9 or over. Statistics from tables 16 and 17 indicate that when North African families live in the Paris area, about 60% tend to live in an environment which reconstitutes partially the extended family group to which they belong.

## CHAPTER III

### The real number of children

Table 1 gives the average number of living children and the average number of children born alive by sex and age groups. The average number of living children represents all the children that the respondent has had, either in Algeria or in France, who were still living at the time of the survey. The average number of children born alive has been obtained by adding the total number of children still living in Algeria and in France plus the number of children born alive who died either one or more years after birth. From this average number have been excluded still births and spontaneous or voluntary abortions.

*Table 1. Average number of living children and average number of children born alive by sex and by age groups*

| Average number of children                 | Men  |       | Women |       |
|--|------|-------|-------|-------|
|  | Mean | (N)   | Mean  | (N)   |
| <i>Age group from 15 years to 29 years</i> |      |       |       |       |
| Living children                            | 2.34 | ( 64) | 3.42  | (218) |
| Children born alive                        | 3.15 | ( 64) | 4.46  | (215) |
| <i>Age group: from 30 years to 39</i>      |      |       |       |       |
| Living children                            | 4.12 | (218) | 5.53  | (190) |
| Children born alive                        | 5.12 | (216) | 6.52  | (190) |
| <i>Age group: from 40 and over</i>         |      |       |       |       |
| Living children                            | 6.06 | (190) | 6.41  | ( 70) |
| Children born alive                        | 7.11 | (190) | 7.71  | ( 70) |
| <i>All age groups</i>                      |      |       |       |       |
| Living children                            | 4.66 | (473) | 4.70  | (480) |
| Children born alive                        | 5.66 | (471) | 5.77  | (477) |

We expected to find a difference of average number of children for men and women of each age group, as there is a relatively large difference of the age at marriage between men and women. The

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difference of the average number of living children and of children born alive for men and women of each age group together is not significant (4.66 for men and 4.70 for women for the average number of living children and 5.66 and 5.77 for the average number of born alive).

In each age group for both sexes, except for men under 30, the number of children born alive is one or more higher than the number of living children. The discrepancy between the number of living children and the number of children born alive can be considered as high, since it shows a theoretical situation where every family of each age group has lost at least one child, which is very far above the mortality rate for families living in developed countries.

The high mortality of children in North African families can be separated thus:

a) the mortality of children who die during their first year (infant mortality);

b) the mortality of children who die after they are a year old.

The second fact can be attributed either to the lack of health of young children, to the insufficiency of medical care or to the loss of lives in Algeria during the War of Independence (1954-1962). It is estimated that about 1 million Algerian people (men, women, children) died during this War.

The first fact (infant mortality) has been studied in Algeria. The Algerian census revealed that the infant mortality rate in Algeria was one of the highest in the world. However, the stay in France has decreased the average number of children who die less than 1 year after birth, as table 2 indicates.

*Table 2. Average number of children who died before they were one year old, in Algeria and in France, by sex*

| Sex             | Algeria | France | Total |
|-----------------|---------|--------|-------|
| Women (N = 479) | 0.31    | 0.13   | 0.44  |
| Men (N = 472)   | 0.34    | 0.16   | 0.50  |

Algerian women reported the death of an average number of 0.31 children under 1 year in Algeria and 0.13 children under 1 year in France, the average numbers being about the same for men. This seems to indicate that the loss of children by infant mortality decreases more than 50% when Algerian families leave Algeria to live in France. This is a consequence of the change of medical care for Algerian women in France. In Algeria, it is very rare that Algerian

women from rural countries visit a doctor before, during or after the birth of a child. In the Algerian villages, people generally were born and died without visiting a physician. In France, each married woman, whose salaried husband is affiliated with Social Security, receives almost the entire refund of medical expenses.

The Social Security System in France includes low cost care for illness or pregnancies. Furthermore, expectant mothers who want to receive the prenatal and postnatal allowances from Social Security have to attend 3 medical visits before the birth. They receive free of charge all the care that they need. This free care is extended to the child after the birth. Algerian young children whose fathers are salaried receive all the care that they need with little expense to their parents.

This can explain why the average number of children who die less than one year after birth is more than 50% lower in France than in Algeria for North African families, although the conditions of hygiene in the shacks and the furnished hotels are worse than in Algeria.

*Comparison of the number of children in North African families in the Paris area and in Tunisian urban centers*

Table 3 indicates the average number of pregnancies, of children born alive and of living children for North African families, living either in the Paris area or in ten urban centers in Tunisia. The data for Tunisia have been borrowed from the survey of Jean Morsa, done in 1964.<sup>1</sup>

The comparison between the fertility of Tunisian and Algerian women living in the Paris area shows the following facts:

a) *Women from 30 to 39.* Algerian women from 30 to 39 have had the same number of pregnancies as Tunisian women (7.1). However, they give birth to more living children than Tunisian women (6.52 and 5.90). Furthermore, among the children born alive in France and

1. Jean Morsa: 'The Tunisian survey: A preliminary analysis', in Berelson *et al.*, *Family Planning and Population Programs*, University of Chicago Press, 1966. Morsa's data concern the families living in ten urban centers of Tunisia. Although he used a non-national sample for his preliminary report, the comparisons which are made below with N.A. families living in the Paris area will give an indication to the reader.

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*Table 3. Average number of pregnancies, of children born alive and of living children in Paris and in Tunisia for North African women by age groups*

|                                 | <u>Paris area (1966)</u> | <u>Tunisia (1964)</u> |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Women less than 30 years</i> |                          |                       |
| Pregnancies                     | 4.85                     | 3.50                  |
| Born alive                      | 4.46                     | 2.70                  |
| Living children                 | 3.42                     | 2.30                  |
| <i>Women from 30 to 39</i>      |                          |                       |
| Pregnancies                     | 7.16                     | 7.10                  |
| Born alive                      | 6.52                     | 5.90                  |
| Living children                 | 5.53                     | 4.70                  |
| <i>Women 40 and over</i>        |                          |                       |
| Pregnancies                     | 8.80                     | —                     |
| Born alive                      | 7.71                     | —                     |
| Living children                 | 6.41                     | —                     |

in Tunisia, more Algerian children than Tunisian survived till the time of the survey, in spite of the Algerian War which took the lives of many children (5.53 and 4.70). This indicates that if the potential of fertility of Algerian women from 30 to 39 is the same as the potential of fertility of Tunisian women, the better conditions of health for Algerian women in the Paris milieu permit them to give birth more often than in Tunisia to living children and to keep them living longer. Another interpretation could be that Tunisian women have more voluntary abortions than Algerian women, but there is no proof of this second hypothesis.

The difference between children born alive and living children is lower for Algerian than for Tunisian women: 0.99 for Algerian women in the Paris area and 1.10 for Tunisian women. It seems that it is mainly the improvement of health conditions which is responsible for the greater average number of children born alive and still living among Algerian families in Paris than in Tunisian families, although the number of average pregnancies has been the same for North African women from 30 to 39 in the Paris area and in Tunisia.

b) *Women less than 30*. The comparison of fertility history of North African women under 30 in the Paris area and in Tunisia offers a slightly different picture from the preceding one (when the average