



The Causes of the Social Transformation of Nomads in Algeria

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ABSTRACT

Our research aims to analyze the dynamics of the conceptions and practices of the space of nomadic tribes in Algeria. The starting hypothesis favored the a priori distinction of a nomadic spatiality, marked by an ephemeral habitat made up of tents with seasonal mobility, linked to pastoralism and caravan activity and without fixed territorial ties - opposing a semi-nomadic or sedentary marked by permanent permanent housing, linked to irrigated gardening and access to services. As well as the brutal transformation of a nomadic way of life towards a sedentary way of life offers the example of a relationship to space and a complex, plural and moving territorial dynamic, prohibiting sharp distinctions. However, there is certainly a progressive trend towards sedentarization.

Keywords: *Causes; social; transformation; nomads; Algeria.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The term nomadic territory seems to be contradictory. Nevertheless, some geographers and ethnologists have used it to signify a certain territorialization of nomadic tribes [1].

The distinction between nomads and semi-nomads, or between semi-nomads and sedentary people is not easy to make. The nomads themselves are those of the great South. We will call, semi-nomadic, the populations of the Hauts-Plaines who combine pastoral activity with agricultural activity and the Auresqui, although having their own villages, move once a year with their herds.

Some anthropologists [2] attempted a classification of Algerian nomadism: Saharan nomads who do not come out of the desert, Saharan nomads with Tellian summering, nomads with separate summer and winter camps, nomads seeking pasture in a restricted course of 20 to 25 Km and finally the quasi-sedentary moving to smoke the ground and to flee the parasites.

However, we find that some researchers such as Jean Gallais in 1976 and Paul Pandolfi in 1998 claim that the concept of nomadism is strongly linked to the vast territory, particularly among the Tuaregs, although it is relative and changing according to the climatic, political and cultural context. economic. Moreover, nomadic territoriality has very often been characterized and defined in terms of mobility and flexibility. Certain ethnologists were precursors of this approach, one quotes for example, André Bourgeot who treated this question in 1986 by integrating the concept of territory in his study on the nomadic Tuaregs of Ahaggar in the South of Algeria [3].

For a long time, nomadism has therefore been associated with the themes of the territory as well as those of mobility and flexibility.[4]. Moreover, we realize that the notion of fluidity often replaces that of flexibility, surely too connoted economically today.

Our research aims to analyze the dynamics of the conceptions and practices of the space of nomadic tribes in Algeria. The starting hypothesis favored the a priori distinction of a nomadic

spatiality, marked by an ephemeral habitat made up of tents with seasonal mobility, linked to pastoralism and caravan activity and without fixed territorial ties - opposing a semi-nomadic or sedentary marked by permanent permanent housing, linked to irrigated gardening and access to services.

The brutal transformation from a nomadic way of life to a sedentary way of life offers an example of a relationship to space and a complex, plural and changing territorial dynamic, prohibiting sharp distinctions. However, there is certainly a progressive trend towards sedentarization, linked in particular to the development of irrigated gardening, the decline of pastoralism and caravan activity, the accumulated effects of actions linked to the development project, decentralization, the creation of modern services. How to study the causes and effects of this sedentarization, especially since the nomads seem to have only a very weak awareness of the territorial changes that have occurred or, at least, do they in no way experience it as a break with a past? who would be a nomad? To understand this apparent paradox, In our opinion, it is appropriate to come back more generally to this detailed opposition between nomadism and sedentarity. This study will end by transferring the concept of nomadism to our own civilized society, in order to highlight the horizon of their transformations and the advent of a new condition, often qualified as hyper mobility and postmodernity.

The question of knowing whether such and such a nomadic population will become sedentary comes down to that of knowing to what extent nomadism is for it the result of historical factors, and to what extent it is imposed by geographical conditions and by the very nature of the country.

We know that it was not the Arabs who introduced nomadic life into North Africa from the traditional and almost ineradicable error of believing that all Berbers are sedentary and all Arabs nomads. The testimonies of antiquity rather vague and difficult to interpret them in order to understand the opposition between nomads and sedentary people, this forced us to study the historical evolution of the nomadic space in the first place and the causes of its transformation into second place.

¹-Bernus, E. (1982). "Nomadic territories. Approach of a geographer", *Pastoral production and society*, n° 11, Paris, *Maison des Sciences de l'Homme*, p. 84-90.

2. THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF THE NOMADIC SPACE

During periods of calm and prosperity such as the three centuries of Roman domination, there was certainly a decline in nomadism and agriculture gained ground.

But from the 4th century and 5th century, the natives returned to their former state of anarchy; the incessant wars detached from the soil the populations which had been imperfectly fixed during the preceding period. The devastation increased notably when in the eleventh century the Arabs rushed over North Africa like a swarm of locusts [5].

The Hilalians were fatal not so much by the troubles that accompanied their arrival as by their way of life and their habits: it was their sheep, their camels, their goats that ruined the country. [6]

It is unclear whether many Berbers became nomads following the Arab invasion. Ibn Khaldoun shows us the Houara, for example, adopting the mode of existence of the invaders^a. [7] But when we reflect on the extraordinary density of the population in certain mountainous massifs such as Kabylie and even in certain parts of the Sahara which are hardly suitable, such as the Mzab, we are led to think that nomadism has mainly gained on the surface and that the sedentary people have often withdrawn in front of him rather than going into a pastoral state. Much more we see natives renouncing the nomadic life because they now feel too weak to move such were it seems the Béni Rached of Djebel Amour Whatever the vegetation and agriculture necessarily set back the time of the Arab invasion and during the centuries that followed.

Nomadism in Algeria seems well imposed by geographical conditions. It is not a level of evolution of humanity. Nomadism is not backward compared to the sedentary; he lives in conditions different from those of the latter.

Among the anthropologists, we quote F. Aubin who defined nomadism by three elements: [8]

Human unity, the existence of a herd, periodic movement along a fixed route. We will try to take up these three elements by referring to the former Algerian nomads.

The moving group forms a relatively homogeneous micro-society which is represented either by an entire tribe such as (the larbaa, the Saïd Atba, etc.), or a highly individualized fraction of a tribe such as (Oueled Sidi M'hamed, Oueled Sidi Amar of the Oueled Nail) . The tribe in the Maghreb constitutes a human unit and has a hierarchy [9].

It is precisely the raising of sheep that imposes the displacement. The herd is the main resource. It allows the production of meat, wool and leather; indirectly, it allows the acquisition, by the exchange of complementary cereals.

The herd occupies a fundamental place in the life of the nomad. In the absence of artificial fodder, movements are intended to provide the herd with the necessary subsistence items. It should not be believed that nomads roam the steppes. They periodically head for pastures that are replenished and water points that they know. The nomads do not walk haphazardly, they follow clearly determined paths, as the abundance of pastures is relative to the seasons and the state of the sky, their movements resemble those of bison, storks and swallows. [10]

However, during colonization, movement will be made difficult for Algerian nomads following the closure of the usual rangelands. This element will have decisive consequences on the other two, namely the herd and the human unit.

The destruction of the balance of rural society in the North will be felt in the lives of the nomads. The nomadic route will inevitably change and this will have negative consequences directly on the herd and indirectly on the level of the transhumant group. The importance of the nomadization route is such that any unfavorable modification for the nomad is equivalent to asphyxiation, which will result in a sedentarization in disastrous conditions.

At the edge of Tell, those who have been dispossessed will fall back on the lands of the summer rangeland of the nomads of the High Plateaux.

Individual property then sets itself up as a barrier on the usual rangelands.

In many cases, this has resulted in fights between nomads and private landowners, between nomads and settlers. The administration intervened "manu militari" and, according to its

legislation, that of private property, considered the nomad as being in breach, and therefore liable to punishment. It imposed regulations: the obligation to be accompanied by army auxiliaries when approaching the Tell, the obligation to transhum without arms, to inform in advance (4 to 6 months) of the places of encampment during the "achabat », do not enter the Tell before the lifting of the last harvests.

In addition, legally, the nomads are dispossessed of their rights of enjoyment on the land of range, by the erroneous theory known as bare - property which raged from the foundation of the law of 1851 in the Tell. Inspired by this same theory, the circular of general government of 31/01/1893 does not recognize any right of enjoyment for nomads on the lands they roam. These lands, considered vacant, revert to public authority. However, this recognizes nomads, exceptionally, a right of use. It is according to this right that the Administration is authorized to regulate their movements. The main objective of the 1893 government circular is not to regulate travel, but to lay down the conditions for extending the application of land expropriation laws,[11]

The main objective of the Administration remains the extension of colonization. However, the expropriated lands did not lend themselves to agriculture. A colonist settled in the South, expressed himself thus: "it is criminal to install colonists in these regions where nothing comes, where a good harvest is the exception". Another said: "We strip the ground under the pretext of clearing, we destroy the plants which constitute the pastures and nothing comes in its place. » [12].

Even supporters of colonization recognize that what was done to the nomads is regrettable to say the least. Captain L. Lehuraux spoke thus at the podium of the congress of rural colonization (Algiers on May 26/29, 1930), held on the sidelines of the celebration of the centenary of the occupation [13]: "It is regrettable that, during the constitution of the *senatus-consulte*, important communal areas were not reserved for the nomads in a region where they had come from time immemorial. This situation is the source of the difficulties which arise today, which prevent the living in good harmony of two

²- L. Lehuraux / *The transhumance of nomads from the southern territories to the Hauts-Plateaux, in congress of rural colonization, Algiers 1939, p 445.*

³L. Lehuraux / *Ibidem*.

branches of agricultural activity which complement each other so naturally".

This situation led to a regression of nomadism without the nomads experiencing a happy evolution. Some reduce travel distances, others settle down in catastrophic conditions (thatched huts, wasteland, unfavorable climatic conditions), and still others go individually to the North to offer as sharecroppers.

The consequences on social life were profound. The bonds within the tribe were relaxed, the tribe itself tended to be only a formal reference, even to disappear. The fractions of tribes became isolated and themselves united with more and more difficulty the families which became individualized little by little.

An important phenomenon appears: the professional shepherd. The herd is entrusted to a shepherd who ensures the transhumance. The group settles near a water point and tries to extract from the earth what nature has refused them. Nomadism ceased as long as the transhumance of livestock ceased. It is the division of the tent they say, there are now in the same tribe and sometimes in the same family, shepherds, farmers, traders [14].

Through this sentence, one is tempted to believe that colonization replaced nomadism with a social state of backwardness, the social division of labor, like that of advanced capitalist societies. It is not so. It would perhaps be more accurate to speak of the division of tasks which ensure survival. Colonial publicists sugarcoat reality by speaking of merchant entrepreneurs.

3. THE CAUSES Of Social TRANSFORMATION Of NOMADISM

Nomadism, in general, has two aspects: pastoral nomadism and commercial nomadism. These tribes of the desert, in addition to the sheep that they grazed, moved from one Oasis to another, large quantities of goods that they sold. The development of roads, railways and tracks will deal them a great blow, for where they present themselves they will find the products which they offer for exchange. The exchange will take place, but under unfavorable conditions.

⁴- A. Bernard and Lacroix / *The evolution of nomadism in Algeria, Paris-Algiers 1906, p 136.*

From this distinction between pastoral and commercial nomad, we have tried to deal with the spatial and social transformation of nomadism in Algeria.

3.1 The Commercial Factor

Among the factors that have stopped spatial and temporal mobility among nomads is their commercial activity that has led to the principle of stability and fixation in a limited territory.

This factor affected two types of nomads: the Tuareg nomads and the nomads of the steppes and the high plains.

3.1.1 The tuareg nomads:

The lifeblood of the Tuareg economy before the colonization of Africa was caravan transport which made the link between the Mediterranean and the south of the Sahara on the one hand and between the Atlantic and the Middle East on the other. In fact, nomadic and sedentary activities were closely complementary, integrated into the same economic system. The Tuareg confederal model made it possible to apprehend as a whole the nomadic and sedentary groups whose social and micro-cultural diversity was considered a real asset for the community. The colonial administration, on the contrary, erected them into radically distinct entities (in the census grids, for example), whether in the "racial", "ethnic" or cultural mode, while the passages from the nomadic state to the sedentary state, and vice versa, are common. This context favored the establishment of a new type of boundary between nomads and sedentary people, coming under the modern Western representation of the "good use" of the soil and also classifications specific to 19th century scientific raciology (whites, blacks). Nomadism is a multi-dimensional reality in the Sahara. From an economic point of view, it is a model of resource management, adapted to the fragile ecology of the desert environments where the Tuaregs live. It is associated with a transport economy that involves mobility skills over huge spaces and in an extreme environment. pertaining to the modern Western representation of the "proper use" of the soil and also classifications specific to 19th century scientific raciology (whites, blacks). Nomadism is a multi-dimensional reality in the Sahara. From an economic point of view, it is a model of resource management, adapted to the fragile ecology of the desert environments where the Tuaregs live. It is associated with a transport

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Certain tribes of Tuareg nomads have long benefited from this cross-border economic relationship relating to the exchange of goods, which allows them economic self-sufficiency. The latter pushed the majority of well-to-do nomadic tribes to settle in a limited territory, by building solid houses instead of tents in order to integrate into sedentary life. We have identified this spatial and social transformation among the Tuaregs of Tassili N'Ajjer where there is a majority of nomadic populations are grouped in various Oases resuming the life of semi nomadism by exercising the activity of pastoralism and gardening such as the oasis of Ihrir and Djanet. While the nobles of these tribes preferred sedentarity, basing on their commercial activities until the creation of their own city called Illizi.

Regarding nomadism among the Tuaregs of Ahaggar, was transformed into sedentary and semi-nomadic [15]. The noble nomads with their wealth and their slaves tried to settle permanently in a very effective place for their commercial activity and over time they built their own city. We also note that some Tuareg nomads of Ahaggar, and through caravan trade, they settled in the Oasis of Touat [16], their wealth allowed them to appropriate cultivable areas within the oases, which changed their social status and became sedentary. While the other tribes have chosen a semi-nomadic life, they are found in deserted regions such as Ain M'guel, Ain Salah, In guezam, Bourdj Badji Mokhtar, carrying out their pastoral activity based on camels and a breed of goats called " Eddeman".

⁵ -Vallet, M (1960) / "Cycle of migration of the Hoggar tribes in the Adrar des Ifoghas", *Bull. de Liaison Sahara.*, 11, no. 40: 347-351.

⁶ -Bisson.J (1988) / *The nomad, the Oasis and the city, URBAMA notebooks, N°20, Tours, p 287-288.*

3.1.2 The semi-nomads of the high steppe plains

Between the unevenly watered Tell and the Sahara, the desert itself, spread out immense steppes, forming the high plateaus. Their soils, unable to meet the needs of man, are covered with a discontinuous and sparse vegetal carpet, which can serve as meadows for flocks of sheep during a fairly short period of the year. The rains are very irregular, barely allowing the annual reconstitution of this vegetation cover. Nature has itself set the limits beyond which the land is not plowed, these are the regions where the rains are too rare for the harvest to present any certainty. [17]

Under these conditions, and to make up for the shortfalls in cereal harvests, man has recourse to an activity (pastoral industry). But the quantitative weakness of the pastures then imposes the incessant displacement. This is why on the Hauts-Plateaux, we speak of semi-nomadism and not of nomadism.

The semi-nomad is not exclusively a shepherd, he is a farmer and a shepherd by force of circumstance.

The semi-nomads of the South Oranese steppes, Ouled Sidi M'hamed, and Ouled Amar being part of the Ouled Nail of the North go in autumn to cultivate cereals around Hodna, steppes of eastern Algeria. In the spring, they return to their territories where they expect to find a ready harvest. This is the case for many other fractions of tribes living in the districts of Aflou, Barika, Saida, Chellala ... forced by year of drought to go up to Telle in the West reaching Sidi Bel Abbès and, at the East Bordj Bou-Arreridj and Souk-Ahras.

Migrations, the amplitude and frequency of which, it is true, tend to decrease until their slow disappearance are imposed by geographical conditions beyond the control of individuals.

The semi-nomadic is a farmer in search of fixation, of a sedentary lifestyle. The relative importance of the herds of sheep that he raises to cope with the deficiency of the harvests, designates him as mainly a pastor.

The Ouled Djellal administration report, quoted by Bernard and Lacroix [18] express this situation well: "The irregularity of the rains always makes the benefits that a harvest can give too uncertain, the crops without which nomads cannot become sedentary, are always impossible in the vicinity of water points and too often cause setbacks when practiced elsewhere. Thus, it is the wisdom resulting from a long experience, which pushes our populations to place all their experiences in the breeding of flocks of sheep. It is the climatic conditions at the time of sowing that decide the greater or lesser importance given each year to the crops. »

Consequently, the semi-nomadism of the steppes cannot be explained either by blind attachment to traditions, or by a so-called social state of backwardness, but by the non-viability of any agricultural enterprise.

Speaking of semi-nomadic populations, Captain Lehuraux writes: "In fact, their migrations, imposed by immutable laws of the climate, are not only for them a tradition to which they are attached, but a vital necessity. If they have remained in the primitive cycle of the pastoral state, it is because the country is too irremediably desert for them to be able to settle by reclaiming the soil" [19].

When we know that almost all the mountain dwellers in Algeria are sedentary, the semi-nomadism of the Chaouia populations seems somewhat paradoxical. In general, the semi-nomadism inhabits the sub-desert steppes and at the limit the plains with low rainfall, and this resulting from particular geographical conditions, while the sedentary inhabits the mountains, the valleys and the plains radiating around the mountains.

The semi-nomadism of the populations of the Aurès is explained by the poverty of the soils which are incapable of meeting the needs of men and herds. But it should not be thought that all the inhabitants of the massif are or were nomads. The slopes of the northern Aurès are covered with forests, holm oaks, large clearings of dry cultivation and pastures sufficiently provided, the inhabitants of these slopes do not nomadize, their fields of cereals and their orchards sufficient for their needs.

But this is not the case of the southern slope, facing south. This slope sees the desert advancing towards it. Exposed to hot southerly

⁷- A. Bernard and N. Lacroix / *The evolution of nomadism in Algeria, Paris-Algiers 1906, p177.*

winds, it is not very favorable for agricultural activity. Despite this, its occupants try some cereal crops and maintain fig trees, apricot trees and date palms. However, the harvests are not encouraging and the prolonged annual movements are justified by the search for the necessary supplement.

But each time the populations find what they need on the spot, they do not nomadise. This is how the Ouled Abdi and the Ouled Daoud, who occupy a relatively rich part of the southern slope, do not move, unless there is a particularly cold and snowy year when they send their herds south, accompanied by a few members of the tribe and shepherds.

Therefore, the causes of the annual displacements are to be found in the weakness of the resources of the southern villages. In the survey of the rural habitation of the natives of Algeria [20] ordered by the general government in 1911, the report of the military friend of Tkout explains: "the region is too poor as a whole to allow its inhabitants to lead a sedentary life like the Kabyle populations. The harvest from the small orchard he cultivates at the foot of the village is not enough for Chaouia de l'Aurès. To this he must add the product of a few parcels of land situated in certain more fertile regions of the North".

Semi-nomadism is therefore imposed by geographical conditions, like the steppe Hauts-Plateaux.

The Auresians live in villages perched on crests and summits which are difficult to approach. This is to take shelter from a possible assailant on the one hand and on the other hand from the flooding of the wadis. The houses built in solid, are staged one taking on the other. Overlooking the village, the "guelaa", collective attic, contains all the imperishable goods and provisions of each inhabitant of the village. The steep path leading to it is so narrow that two people can only pass one after the other. For a large part of the year, the villages are deserted and the goods and provisions that are difficult to transport during transhumance are stored in the "guelaa" supervised by a guard in charge of the "Djemaa" of the small community.

Before the first snowfall, and as for their herds, the inhabitants of the heights leave their villages and invest the surrounding plateaus where all the land for cultivation and grazing is collectively

owned. Some of the land is located in the north, that is to say in the south of Constantine, the others are in the south on the sub-Saharan steppes. At the start of the summer season, after the cereal and date palm harvests, the Chaouia herders will return to their villages around which the pastures will have been reconstituted and the tree crops will have matured.

Combining the ways of life of the populations of the Tellian mountains and the pre-Saharan steppes, the Auresian populations only obey this particularity of their mountains to be located between the Tell and the Sahara. Until the French colonization, these populations will have found in the agro-pastoral system a means to their needs.

The extension of colonization to the North alienating the land on the one hand, the repression of the natives towards the South on the other hand, will little by little deprive the Auresians of the lands on which they wintered. They then nomadize on the immediate edges of their mountains and on the valleys which they dispute bitterly, before settling on the collective lands. The new sedentary people will erect gourbis, abandoning the tent, to demonstrate their right of ownership to the land and their desire not to move around. Those who remained in the villages tried to settle down, but without much success. Semi-nomadism gives way to transhumance by force of circumstance.

The very terms "nomadic" and "sedentary" seem to have lost their meaning in these mountains. Which makes G.Tillion say [21]: "These terms of sedentary and nomads must be understood in Chaouia country in a relative sense: we call "nomads" the populations where the whole family follows the herd in these movements; "sedentary", those where the herd is entrusted to a shepherd, so that the nomads have fields and the sedentary graze".

There are two other mountains, smaller than the Aurès in size, where people live in the same way as the chaouis. These are the Ouled Nail and the Amour located in the South-East of Oran. They live in villages called "Ksour" only part of the year. The rest of the time, they live in tents which they pitch on the land they sow, at the foot of their mountains. Since colonization, they have undergone the same evolution as the Chaouias.

3.1.3 The geographical factor

Space is an essential principle of the strategy of life and the enjoyment of space, for a given

society, constitutes a necessity for its existence. However, this purpose is above all of a sociopolitical order because it allows man to discover himself, to express himself through his production of space; that is to say that space is above all a social product. The organization of space can therefore only be the image of man to himself, the projection of his ideas, his way of optimizing the various spatial constraints in order to overcome the endogenous contradictions of the system. ; "space is the support on which the history of society has unfolded and is inscribed; it is also a continuous creation, a production of this society which [22].

Any human settlement on the natural substrate takes place in many forms of organization, relationships and even complementarity. The first form of human settlement is occasional and corresponds to points or places where social groups form and settle. For the sake of identity, defense or even organization, these points of human settlement are surrounded by surfaces that can be described as territories of maneuvers or security allowing social groups to survive, to move, even to defend themselves or organize their space. In the final phase, these groups create interference through the production of lines in space which are in fact paths of interdependence corresponding to flows or paths of communication and exchange; vs'

The nomads of Algeria have known spatial interaction for a long time, this is what reflected the colors of the tents which expressed the identity of the different nomadic tribes during spatial and social mobility. Each member of the tribe resorts to his group by learning to know the color of the tent.

This spatio-social mobility has been minimized since the French conquest, which has changed the way of life of the Algerian nomadic society which will soon lead to the phenomenon of social transformation, which is tangible today.

3.1.4 Colonial period

In this passage, we will treat the geographical factor as a cause of social transformation among the Tuareg nomads and then among the nomads of the high steppes of Algeria during colonialism.

A. Space and social transformation among Tuareg nomads

The Tuareg populations extend across the Sahel to the Algerian counter-times, and from Timbuktu

to the Libyan desert. At the beginning of the 20th century, the French occupation became effective with the taking of Timbuktu in 1894 and In Salah 1899, after the defeat of Tit in 1902, Ahagar was occupied by the French settler. The conquest of Tuareg territory ended in 1906 with the capture of Agadez. As a result, the great Tuareg mountain cradles are divided by the new exogenous borders:

- The Hoggar massif is attached to Algeria.
- The Tassili is divided between Libya and Algeria.
- Adrar returns to French Sudan (Mali).
- Air is attached to Niger.

When the French arrived on the ground, the Tuaregs were organized into independent confederations, led by an amenokal [23].

The leader has moral and political authority, but has no coercive power. He is chosen by the nobles according to criteria of courage and wisdom. Tuareg society as a whole was based on a very complex socio-political organization:

- The political organization is pyramidal, going from the nobility to the captives.
- To this is added the social organization in concentric circles, expanding from the tent to Temoust (the world).

This mode of organization will be destroyed by colonization, causing lasting crises in these societies, by shrinking the pastures that the nomads used to abound, and by depriving the men of their weapon which the French colonialist considered a threat. for his safety in the region. Thus the authority of the amenokals does not come from the vote of the nobles, but from the colonial recognition towards the most faithful elements. By breaking the traditional Tuareg organization, French colonization gave way to an ethno-political territorialization which pitted the populations against each other (sedentary against nomad, Tuareg against Arab).

Finally, we can deduce that French colonialism played a major role in the social transformation of the Tuareg nomads, by forcing them to integrate into sedentarism.

B- Among the nomads of the Hauts Steppes

After 1830, colonization gradually affected the Tell zone and then, later, the Steppe, leading to a

reduction in the surface areas of the rangelands, because the settlers' farms were established more and more in the south of the Tell zone. By occupying the lands of the tribes with whom the nomads had agreements for the use of stubble and some rangelands, the settlers ended up destabilizing the achaba process.

This movement of the achaba, essential in the traditional organization of nomadism, was the subject of legislation introduced by colonization. Indeed, in 1923, the achaba was supervised by each commune before being regulated with firmness, in 1927. "The tribes had to obtain the authorization to move and the settlers had to go through the administrative channel to rent their stubbles"[24]. Due to the reduction in stubble areas and the development of viticulture in the Tellian zone, particularly in Oranie, the achaba became increasingly difficult and thus gradually withered away.

The colonization of the South also had its repercussions on nomadism since it led to the restriction of routes on the southern foothills of the Tell. This amputation of rangeland has caused a decrease in fodder reserves, which has triggered overexploitation of steppe rangelands; as a result, these have begun to degrade since they have experienced exploitation at least twice as intensive [25] (Boukhobza, 1982). Spatial complementarity was thus severely affected, as well as economic complementarity.

Indeed, the consequences of the spatial destructuring of nomadism on the pastoral economy were quickly felt. The nomads found it increasingly difficult to obtain grain supplies in the Tell, as well as to sell their products to their Saharan customers. In addition, the introduction of the railway (in 1887 in Aïn-Sefra), then of the automobile, gradually enabled the various commercial players to do without the services of the nomads, the main transporters in the region in the past.

From the beginning of the colonization of the Steppe, there was a lot of resistance, the most striking having undoubtedly been that of the Ouled Sidi-Cheikh. Their revolt (1864-1907), which introduced doubt into the quiet domination of the Tell zone, also caused a certain disorganization in the migratory currents. Despite the maintenance of a transport and supply function for the North with dates and other products from the South, the *raison d'être* of these great movements had disappeared. By

finding products on the markets that they themselves transported before, the nomads understood that traditional commercial practices no longer had a place in this new economy established by colonization.

In addition to this economic aspect, the disintegration and the bursting of the social organization of the nomads were deliberately sought by the colonizer who, by promulgating land laws especially for the Steppe (Warnier law or Petit sénatus-consulte of 1873) [26], led to the division of land arch [27] and allowed individual enjoyment. Alongside these land laws, a whole administrative organization was put in place, replacing the previous traditional organization.

Alongside this economic and social destructuring experienced by pastoral life, all that remained for many nomads was to flee this life and go and gather around the small towns and villages created in the Steppe to other uses, such as the livestock trade. This movement of sedentarization of misery affected the individuals who had the least resistance to this crisis; periods of drought have only accentuated the phenomenon.

The tendencies towards the overexploitation of rangelands and the search for individual profit were reinforced during the War of Liberation. This also had consequences on the disorganization of traditional migratory flows. The accentuation of the military operations carried out by the Algerian combatants led the colonial authorities to build, all along the Moroccan border, in 1957, a very wide mined and electrified dam. These no-go areas have rendered almost a third of the region's courses unusable. A year later, a policy of regrouping the nomads was applied, following the observation of their complicity with the mujahideen. The estimated number of nomads regrouped was of the order of 33,000. This action involved the fixing of herds, The decrease in livestock was accompanied by an increase in the population of the cities of the Steppe, fed largely by the settled nomads who had lost almost everything. Small towns and steppe towns swelled and slums appeared.

This destructuring of nomadism was fatal to the social and economic organization of pastoral populations. Individualistic strategies led to social inequalities that stratified the nomadic population by giving rise to differentiated groups of herders: the large herders were able to reconstitute their wealth quickly, in the aftermath of independence,

while the small were ruined by losing most or all of their livestock; they then sought to compensate for their losses by clearing land and developing cereal crops.

Thus, stifling of nomadism, suppression of the achaba, administrative and military control of the populations, rupture of solidarity relations within the tribe, development of the market, monetization of exchanges, marketing of livestock in the cities... constitute the essential means used by colonization to challenge the ancestral way of life [28].

3.1.5 During independence

Nomadism represented a form of adaptation to an open and fragile environment. For the pastoral population, it was more than a simple activity; it is all daily life, rules and traditions that were marked by this model of socio-spatial organization. During colonization, this represented an obstacle for the colonial power, which sought to control this population in perpetual movement; the only solution to establish its power was to deconstruct this way of life by forcing the nomads to settle. After independence and with another vision, the Algerian State continued on the same path and with the same objective. The number of nomads has therefore continued to decline, but nomadism has not completely disappeared (61.1% of the total population in 1966, 9.6% in 2008).

A- The marginalization of the Tuareg nomads

The Tuaregs today belong to five different states created in the 1960s at the end of the "decolonization" process: Libya, Algeria, Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta) [29]. These recent political formations, built on the Western model of the nation-state, have produced territorialities of a new type. In each of these state spaces, the desert areas frequented by nomads occupy the periphery. All of them are located hundreds, even thousands, of kilometers from the new centers of power, on the most remote borders of modern capitals, whether they are Mediterranean like Tripoli and Algiers, or Sahelian like Bamako, Niamey and Ouagadougou. This is why the modern states appear in the Sahara as veritable "minority factories", relegated to the margins of the new centralities – sedentary and urban – and moreover separated from their former poles of

attraction. An initial observation emerges: in less than five decades, [30]. It has virtually disappeared in Algeria and Libya, where a systematic policy of sedentarization was carried out in the 1970s and 1980s. It is in sharp degradation and decline in the Sahelian states, where the nomads were nevertheless, in the 1960s, the most numerous and the richest among the Tuaregs and more widely among the Saharan populations. This setback is directly dependent on the serious crises that have affected and are still affecting these regions: some, often referred to as a natural fatality, are climatic and ecological (drought of 1974 and 1984), but they are closely linked to others, political and military, as well as economic and social. Because nomadic Tuareg lands today represent a major challenge for the world economy: their subsoil conceals very significant mineral resources (oil, gas, uranium, etc.) which arouse the greed and rivalry of the great international economic powers, provoking underground struggles which take various forms at the local level and have resulted in a total destabilization of the region. The interaction of these factors endangered the Tuaregs, precipitating into misery and exile thousands of families who found refuge sometimes by crossing the border towards other Tuareg regions, sometimes in foreign places (big cities sub-Saharan, Saudi Arabia, etc...). On the surface, nomadic life seems to have changed little. In the camps, daily life is punctuated by pastoral tasks. The regular relocation of tents continues although within a limited range (from 800 or 900 kilometers per year to less than 100 kilometers). On the other hand, small livestock have supplanted camel or cattle herds among poor families. Breeding tasks, once entrusted in part to the "poor" and the young, are now taken on by all members of society. Caravans have become an individual rather than a collective enterprise. But beyond these surface transformations, a radical fundamental change compromises the very existence of nomadism, which can no longer subsist locally because of the territorial dispossession of the inhabitants of the desert and the fragmentation of their space. No right to land and resources is legally recognized, neither to the Tuaregs in particular, nor to the nomads in general. None of the old instances of arbitration and management can be exercised legitimately. No construction of the territory can extend beyond the borders and the micro-States that they delimit. In this context, even pastoral development projects promoted by NGOs, far from supporting the nomadic way of life, are

hastening its disappearance, by thinking of development only from small ecological niches disconnected from the whole. The virtual framework of nomadic mobility has thus not only shrunk, it has frozen and no longer allows one to be "nomadic" in the full sense of the term. It prepares the predictable revolts of the landless nomads of tomorrow, despoiled of their territory, their property.

B- The situation of the nomads of the High Steppes

After independence, the State took over certain actions of the colonial power, but with a desire for development and integration into the national space. Nomadism was the target of the new State, anxious to apply its economic and social policy throughout the national territory without taking into account regional differences. This policy applied to an Algerian population considered a priori as homogeneous.

During the first decade of independence, the whole country was in a difficult economic situation. Decolonization, especially the impact of the War of Liberation and the departure of settlers, left all the economic sectors of the country in crisis. Nomadism has been severely affected by more than a century of colonization and by the War of Liberation. The process of impoverishment and proletarianization, having affected a good part of the nomads, led them to take refuge in the towns of the Steppe, El-Bayad, El Msila, Djelfa, which were then small towns.

The world of nomads had above all known the ruptures of the colonial period, but from 1971, the agrarian revolution tried to impose a real societal and economic upheaval.

From 1975, the Steppe was in turn affected by this reform of agrarian structures: abolition of absentee farming, limitation of livestock, creation of livestock cooperatives, equipping the Steppe with economic and social infrastructure. With these landmark actions, nomadism as a way of life would be shaken vigorously. But the application of the Pastoral Code, [31] which represents an action plan in accordance with the principles of the agrarian revolution, has not been put into regular and strict practice. The nomads hijacked the law, especially when it came to limiting livestock. At that time, nomadism was still practiced by a good part of the steppe population. In 1966, just over half of the total population (61.1%) maintained the nomadic way

of life. In some municipalities, the rate even exceeded 75%. This continuity of nomadism, despite the successive waves of drought during the 1970s and 1980s, was ensured thanks to the assistance and support of the State which provided, during these periods, very large quantities cattle feed at very low prices. This operation, designed to limit livestock losses, partially contributed to the degradation of the rangelands since it contributed to the increase in the livestock load. During the 1980s, the Steppe experienced significant administrative transformations: the creation of new wilayas in Algeria located in the steppe and the doubling of the number of municipalities. This aspect was essential for the steppe population, long attached to the old wilayas, the northern part of which had benefited from the majority of productive investments. These administrative promotions have enabled the establishment of a certain number of administrative, educational, sanitary, etc. equipment, essential for the nomads. Employment opportunities emerged as droughts persisted and the state increasingly withdrew.

After the process of liberalization of the agricultural sector, during the 1980s and 1990s, and under the impact of structural reforms and price policy (1994-1999), the material and social conditions of smallholders (who form the immense majority in the Algerian countryside) have apparently deteriorated [32] This led the State to draw up the National Agricultural Development Program (PNDA) from 2000. This program represents, in a way, a return of the State, in particular for the reconstruction of the agricultural territory, after a period of disengagement which lasted more than a decade. In the Steppe, the launch of the PNDA, accompanied by its special fund used to finance development operations, was so important in the eyes of the pastoral population that it led to a craze for access to agricultural land ownership. . This device has caused the multiplication of development operations in a steppe environment which is not ready, neither on the physical nor on the human level, to accept all these programs [33].

For the nomads, this development policy has aroused much desire, in particular a more or less disguised race to acquire land in the context of home ownership. But it seems to us that access to the territory through the search for access to land ownership on Arch lands is indicative of the evolution of production systems; this underlines the importance of the issues identified around the

development of agriculture in the steppe environment.

C- The Tellian Mountains

The wettest regions are the mountainous regions. The mountain may have been a refuge from successive invasions of North Africa, but it also has a refuge from aridity.

Geographers teach us that the climate of North Africa is explained by the relief. The water vapors coming from the Mediterranean Sea, pushed by the sea winds, cool either because they meet the Atlas mountain ranges, or because they come into contact with air masses at a fairly low temperature. this encounter causes condensation, resulting in rain and snow. But these water vapors, when they do not flow into the Mediterranean, do not exceed or very rarely exceed the mountain ranges above which they cool. It is therefore the mountains near the sea facing north that are the watered places.

The Eastern Tellian Atlas being more mountainous than the Western Atlas, Eastern Algeria will be wetter than Western Algeria [34].

The Kabyle coastal chains, advancing towards the sea, constitute the region where the annual height of the rains reaches the maximum in Algeria. Precipitation is abundant as, on the one hand, one moves away from the sea towards the south, and on the other hand, as one directs towards the West. In these directions, the annual rains are insufficient even for cereal crops, unless there is an artificial irrigation system.

Contrary to the mountainous solid masses, certainly unevenly watered according to their position compared to the sea, the High interior plains know dry and hot summers, cold winters and a rainfall as irregular as insufficient which does not allow any culture.

The sedentary way of life has chosen the mountains as their chosen terrain for reasons of rainfall.

Before the upheavals of the colonial era, the sedentary populations lived in the Monts du Djurdjura and their eastern extensions to the Monts de l'Edough, the Atlas Mitidjien, the massif of Miliana, the Monts de Tlemcen and the massif of Trara (Algerian border -Moroccan).

In these mountains, the wealth of the inhabitants is constituted by the trees and the orchards

which are surrounded with care. The plots of land are on such steep slopes and the individuals are so closely packed that there is no room for the breeding of sheep, which requires fairly large pastures.

The development of irrigation canals and their maintenance, therefore a permanent and sustained effort, hence the fixed dwelling. According to Bernard's survey of the rural dwelling of the natives in Algeria, he concluded that "The gardener is obliged to stay near his orchards, permanently or at least to have a fixed establishment and a store there. . If we are willing to examine the geographical distribution of houses from this point of view, we will see that there is absolute coincidence, no house without orchards and no orchards without houses; and this is true throughout northern Algeria, in Tunisia and Morocco, as in Algeria"[35].

The mountains of Djurdjura shelter a very large population on a relatively small surface and the human density per km² is higher in Algeria. Dwellings are most often grouped into villages and hamlets of varying size.

The larger ones are called "tiddar" and the smaller ones "ikhlidjen". A "kharouba" includes several "tiddar". Despite the fixity on the ground, the Kabyle populations, like the rest of Algeria, were organized into tribes whose fractions lived in a village, a hamlet or several hamlets. Social life is more intense than elsewhere because cohabitation in a small space inevitably provokes oppositions of interests that the group must master, hence the existence of "Djemaa", above local conflicts.

In the Aurès, the same "Djemaa" exist, but they are less effective than in Kabylie. The cause is to be found in the movements of the inhabitants of the Aurès because the "Djemaa" has less control over people who are dispersed for a large part of the year.

According to the researcher G. Marcy: "the vitality of the council of notables is above all linked to the sufficiency of its administrative jurisdiction" [36].

The Kabylia of Djurdjura has approximately three types of settlement, depending on the topography and the location of water courses and sources [37].

We will note few differences with the villages and hamlets of the other mountains of Algeria.

Dwellings spring up everywhere on the flat land near a water source or stretch parallel to the crops along the wadis. In the Chenoua [38], we find the fig tree and the carob tree, the cultivation of barley on the cuts when possible and the breeding of small livestock. It is the same in the mountains of Trara. [39] The weekly markets made it possible to obtain complementary products.

The coastal plains, and to a lesser degree, the interior plains, were the preferred extension area for colonization. They lent themselves, indeed, to the speculative cultures, once solved the problems of irrigation. Thus the plain of Bône, the Sahel of Algiers, the plains of Oran, of Sidi Bel-abbés were the most striking centers of colonization and where extended vast domains provided with agricultural equipment and canals of adequate irrigation. On the other hand, the mountain did not attract colonization. The first and main reason is that the modern constitution, in view of a speculative culture, was not possible in consideration of the topography and the nature of the soil. The second reason is that the high human density of the mountains did not make it possible to tighten the populations even more. They should have been moved; but where ?

Also, the way of life of the mountain dwellers was not directly disturbed by colonization as was that of the semi-nomadic populations, forced to settle. Nevertheless, integrated into the monetary economy, if only to pay taxes at the outset, they were subject to market disturbances whose upward or downward price variations did not always benefit them.

But the most important phenomenon that will handicap mountain populations is the scarcity of agricultural resources, incapable of satisfying the food needs of an increasing number of people. In the plains, population growth spread across space, even if the newly occupied land was more or less difficult to cultivate. In the mountains, space was physically limited. The inhabitants had no other possibility than to overexploit the slopes and valleys with massive deforestation, the ecological balance, in the medium term, was threatened and the resources per individual did not cease to decrease. The difficulties were such that the mountain dwellers sought to ensure subsistence outside the mountain.

D- The Saharan Oases:

Among the populations of Algeria, the mountain dwellers are not the only sedentary people. In the

Saharan oases, large sedentary groups had been established. [40] But here too - as in the mountains - it is the tree that is the cause of the sedentary lifestyle.

In the Souf, within the cleared land to the vicinity of wetlands, palm trees are planted whose roots come into contact with groundwater, this method known as "Ghouts" [41] No other cultivation, apart from that of palm trees, is possible, and the water needs of men and animals are satisfied by a few rare wells. The irrigation technique used is a technique where the water is not visible [42]. The action would be limited to the planting of the tree, if it weren't for the storms of fine sand against which we must continually fight.

In a continuous way, the man fights against the silting up, deploying the palm groves which he surrounds with palisades. A daily and continuous work is required by this culture, under penalty of being forever destroyed. The man must be constantly present and must not move away. Hence the fixed form of the habitat, the agglomerations of the Souf, follow the gardens. The main center of the house is close to the main agglomeration, El-Oued [43].

In M'Zab, it is the same cause, the palm tree, which fixes the inhabitants.

Artesian wells are dug above ground water tables 40 or 50 meters deep [44] and their water not only makes it possible to water palm trees but to maintain, in palm groves, fig trees, beans, barley. Very subtle irrigation techniques have been developed through patient and meticulous work [45]

There again, this quantity of crystallized work, requiring daily and continuous maintenance, imposes the fixity of the habitat.

The houses in the south are built using a material that is like shepherd and cement. It is limestone mixed with earthy gypsum, called "temchent", which dries quickly and has a remarkable solidity. The houses, often on floors, have terraces but sometimes are surmounted by a dome, as is the general case in El Oued. The construction of the dome attests to an obvious architectural art.

During colonization, the agglomerations of the South did not stop receiving nomads forced to settle.

They often served as labor for the owners of date palms. But the resources of the Oases are not enough to support all the inhabitants and the latter seek the complement in the small trade in the cities of the North.

4. CONCLUSION

The Algerian situation is certainly not representative of nomadism in the Maghreb. But what is certain is that it represents the most likely prospect for nomadic societies in countries where nomadism is still very much alive (Morocco, Mauritania, Libya, even the nomadic societies of the Sahel). Nomadism is in essence a global organization. It cannot survive if one of its operating principles is called into question. However, the logic of the states of the contemporary Maghreb is part of the control and management of space and the social groups that live there. A number of factors, such as submission to the law and to market forces, the sometimes derisory demographic and economic weight represented by the nomads, the development of normative urban categories, participate in the permanent erosion of the nomadic society. And where nomadism is still active, it can be postulated that this is due to the delay in the formation of the new modern state. The certain disappearance of nomadism, in its first expression, namely the way of life which underlies it, nevertheless leaves a privileged place for a specific structuring of the cultural values which run through our whole society. And it is perhaps in this that we can say that the states of the Maghreb are far from having regulated their relations with the nomadic communities, as long as these values have not generated other ways of perceiving the world and to maintain relations of dependence, alliance or opposition. In view of these trends, the outlook seems relatively straightforward. Two hypotheses can be considered. Either the nomadic herders will be settled after an explicit re-establishment of their relations with what was their area of expression, while developing the conditions for a technical revolution in their activities and their relationship to the modern economy. Were they caught up in the destructive logic of the changes in urban life and the speculative movement of the market, until their total reduction to the condition of wage-earners? The reforms launched recently in the agricultural world allow us to hope for an approach aimed at safeguarding pastoral know-how, by reconciling man with the land and by giving the breeder the autonomy necessary to assume an active role in

the promoting the company. while developing the conditions for a technical revolution in their activities and their relationship to the modern economy. Were they caught up in the destructive logic of the changes in urban life and the speculative movement of the market, until their total reduction to the condition of wage-earners? The reforms launched recently in the agricultural world allow us to hope for an approach aimed at safeguarding pastoral know-how, by reconciling man with the land and by giving the breeder the autonomy necessary to assume an active role in the promoting the company. until their total reduction to the status of employees. The reforms launched recently in the agricultural world allow us to hope for an approach aimed at safeguarding pastoral know-how, by reconciling man with the land and by giving the breeder the autonomy necessary to assume an active role in the promoting the company. until their total reduction to the status of employees. The reforms launched recently in the agricultural world allow us to hope for an approach aimed at safeguarding pastoral know-how, by reconciling man with the land and by giving the breeder the autonomy necessary to assume an active role in the promoting the company.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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