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*L. Kirillova***BUILDING THE NATION: SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN ALGERIA, 1962–1978**

Since the middle of the 1950s, the Socialist countries led by the Soviet Union had made significant contribution to the economic advancement of the developing countries. Under the umbrella of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), Soviet aid programs extended on many African countries, including Algeria. Founded by the Soviet Bloc in 1949, the CMEA was a response to the Marshall Plan. Within the confines of the Cold War, this international governmental organization aimed to promote the socialist economic integration not only of its members but also the emerging nations beyond the Iron Curtain. In case of Algeria, the massive construction projects sponsored by the CMEA turned into the crucial platforms of the new nation building. Erection of industrial enterprises projected economic, political, social, and cultural development of Algeria. This article presents the construction works in Algeria as the crucial sites for spreading Soviet influence in North Africa. In addition, it demonstrates the role of youth from Algeria and the Soviet Bloc in the establishment of these country-wide projects and the formation of Algerian nationhood.

*Keywords:* Cold War, CMEA, Friendship projects, Évian Accords, Houari Boumédiène, Soviet-Algerian cooperation, Komsomol.

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On March 27, 1964, the Central Committee of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League (Soviet youth organization) sent 50,000 badges to the Youth of the National Liberation Front of Algeria (Algerian youth organization) via airmail service [1]. Several months later, the first Soviet student construction brigade arrived to Algeria with the task to participate in rebuilding of one of the regions in the newly independent country [2]. It is no coincidence that Soviet government strived to establish its influence in the region by means of the students – young people had always been the triggering part of any society when it came to activism and the completion of state tasks. In the case of Soviet-Algerian relations, the youth from both countries were engaged in their governments' strategies to gain economic and political benefits from these interactions. This article presents the construction works in Algeria as the crucial economic sites for spreading Soviet influence in North Africa. In addition, it demonstrates the role of youth from Algeria and the Soviet Bloc in the establishment of these country-wide projects and the formation of Algerian nationhood.

The chronological scope of the article is determined by the date of Algerian independence and the establishment of diplomatic relations between Algeria and the USSR in 1962 and the death of the President of Algeria Houari Boumédiène in 1978. The years of Boumédiène's rule were the most fruitful in the history of Soviet-Algerian relations.

**Methodology and Historiography**

The discussion of economic relationships and the role of youth in nationhood formation fits within the themes of Soviet-Algerian relations, Soviet propaganda and Soviet internationalism in Africa, the history of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), and the Cold War in the Third World.

Among the authors who contributed to the study of Soviet policy towards Algeria are A.A. Shvedov and A.B. Podtserob. Shvedov's monograph *Nezavisimaya Afrika* (Independent Africa) is a unique publication in which the author analyzes the formation and development of modern foreign policy of the Maghreb countries, above all Algeria [3]. In another study *Sovetsko-alzhirskie otnosheniya* (Soviet-Algerian relations), Shvedov and Podtserob describe the history of the origin, formation, and development of diplomatic, economic, and political relations between the two states [4]. Even though the authors mention the role of the CMEA in Algeria, they do not focus on these "Friendship Projects" in details. Moreover, the authors pay little attention to the youth component in the development of the newly emerged nation through the projection of those constructions – the main focus of this article.

Economic assistance of the socialist bloc in Algeria inextricably relates to the broad historiography of the CMEA. Numerous studies have been conducted on economic, social, political, and cultural aspects of international relations under the umbrella of the CMEA. Majority of the monographs, however, focus exclusively on the CMEA member-states and only briefly mention the involvement of the Council in the massive

construction projects in the developing world, such as rebuilding the infrastructure of the regions, erecting power plants and factories, and founding education institutions. *COMECON and the Emerging Nations* is one of the studies that presents a substantial discussion of intra-CMEA trade and more detailed description of the country-based case-studies of aid to the developing nations [5]. *CMEA Countries and Developing States* written by A. Ol'shanyi and L. Zevin is an authoritative account of two Soviet specialists on the developing world [6]. The authors cover various aspects of economic cooperation between the CMEA and developing states and finish with an attack on Western critics of CMEA influence in the developing world. While there are not many book accounts on the history of the CMEA in the Third World, various scholars published articles on this topic. Thus, N. Stefanov's article published in *Development and Peace* stresses the advantages for the Third World countries of having trade relations with stable economies of the CMEA [7]. Highly valuable for the present study is Christopher Coker's article on CMEA involvement in central planning in African socialist states and Council's attempts to exploit Africa's raw materials to resolve East European fuel problems [8]. Despite the interest of some scholars in this topic, there is no separate detailed research on Soviet-Algerian relations under the aegis of the CMEA. The present article attempts to fill this gap in the existing historiography.

This article also relates to the broader aspects of the Cold War politics in the Third World. The most recent study on Algeria in the Cold War, written by M. L. Ghetas, presents Algeria as a crucial actor in international relations in the second half of the twentieth century [9]. The author praises Boumédiène's Presidency as it allowed Algerian government to negotiate a position for itself between the U.S. and the Soviet Bloc, winning financial assistance and political support from both. This study provides a useful Cold War-related context for this work and challenges the traditional interpretation of African countries as voiceless pawns in the hands of the Super Powers.

This project also speaks to the themes of Soviet propaganda in the Third World and Soviet internationalism. Mark W. Hopkins' *Mass Media in the Soviet Union* and Edward Taborsky's *Communist Penetration of the Third World* are the fundamental studies in the field of Soviet propaganda that analyze the Khrushchev's "thaw press" and journalism, Soviet censorship and party machinery, but also radio and television audiences [10]. More importantly, these accounts elaborate on communist cultural diplomacy that promoted an image of the USSR as a tolerant, race-less country mainly through media, such as major news agencies, radio Moscow and other broadcasting networks [11]. Various cultural exchange agreements, friendship societies and language clubs, festivals and fairs were all part of cultural diplomacy [12]. The concept of cultural diplomacy is especially useful for this study because it intends to examine the influence of socialist students on Algerian youth via cultural programs and educational forums in Algerian cities where the "Friendship Projects" have been conducted.

Due to the scarcity of primary sources relating to direct voices of Soviet and Algerian youth, this project mainly focuses on the governmental initiatives within the CMEA and the effects of these decisions on the development of Algeria. In addition, the primary sources from the Russian National Archive of Socio Political History reveal the Soviet state goals directed at Soviet students who came to the construction sites in Algeria and engaged with Algerian young people. Thus, based on the availability of sources, this article employs traditional qualitative top-down approach, which allows to analyze government decisions and their aftermath in the considered area.

### **Placing Algeria in the Soviet Sphere of Influence**

The Cold War arrived in Africa only in the mid-to-late 1950s, when the superpower conflict became intertwined with the national liberation movements that swept across the continent and freed the peoples from Europe's colonial rule. After the change in leadership in both the USA and the USSR in 1953, the superstates applied new strategies toward newly liberated African countries. American Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy hoped that emerging nations would become smaller and less significant protégés of the United States; while Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev saw decolonization as a great opportunity to confront capitalism in the Third World [13. P. 189]. Anything that Moscow did to accelerate the decolonization processes immediately weakened the European imperial powers. Emerging African nations, grateful for Soviet support in their liberation, voted with the USSR in the General Assembly of the United Nations, which angered the United States and its allies that typically enjoyed numerical majority. Moreover, the new nations occupied strategically valuable geographical locations which benefitted economic relations of these countries. Thus, Africa emerged as a crucial theater of Cold War struggle.

Since the beginning of the Independence War against the French colonial rule (1954–1962), the USSR provided Algeria with all-round support. It included defending Algeria in various international forums; providing financial, material, and military assistance; and organizing numerous international solidarity campaigns in the name of Algerians who struggled for freedom. Various Soviet humanitarian organizations also contributed to Algeria's War of Independence. Thus, Soviet Red Cross Society admitted a large group of injured Algerian soldiers for treatment in 1959–1960. Together with Soviet Committee of Solidarity of Asian and African countries, this organization arranged several fundraisers, as well as collected clothing, food, and medicine for Algerian refugees in Tunisia. The All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions and the Committee of the Soviet Youth Organizations were also much involved in the processes of the Algerian Revolution and the development of this country after achieving its independence in 1962 [4. P. 41]. In order to strengthen its political support for Algeria, the USSR called for the consideration of the Algerian question during the 1957–1959 United Nations General Assembly meetings, supporting the proposal of a group of Afro-Asian countries [14]. The Soviet government also sponsored military and technical assistance to Algeria between 1956 and 1958 via the intermediary of the Syrian and Egyptian governments [15]. Notably, major assistance came from the Soviet Society of the Red Cross, and Soviet Labor Unions [16]. Moreover, during and after the war, groups of Algerian orphans, whose parents died in that period, were placed to the Soviet pioneer camps, including the All-Union camp "Artek." In August of 1964, for instance, forty Algerian kids were invited to "Artek" and thirty kids were sent to pioneer camps of two southern regions of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic [17].

Soviet assistance broadened Algeria's base of support in its struggle against France and consequently included North African independent countries into the Soviet sphere of influence. Already in 1960, Algeria's Secretary General noted positive signs of improvements in his country's relationships with the socialist block, acknowledging political, material, and technical support from the Soviet Union that "could allow the Algerian revolution to confront the Atlantic coalition" [18]. Since the western bloc supported France in its fight to keep Algeria as a colony, Algerian provisional government decided to lean toward the socialist camp. Increased material aid from Eastern Europe in 1961 and recognition of Algerian provisional government finalized political and diplomatic ties between these two parts of the world [19].

After the signing of the Évian Accords on March 18, 1962 which proclaimed a formal ceasefire between France and Algeria and formalized Algerian independence, a newly established sovereign state fully turned to the Soviet Union with the goal to eliminate the consequences of colonialism and the eight-year war. One of the first tasks was to demine the borders – this was the largest demining operation in the country which was carried out by Soviet sappers. During the war, the French battalion of sappers on the Algerian border with Morocco and Tunisia mined a strip of three to fifteen kilometers, where each kilometer of territory included up to twenty thousand mines. In the period between 1963 and 1965, over 100 Soviet sappers neutralized about 1.5 million mines, cleared more than 800 kilometers of mine-explosive stripes and cleared 120 thousand hectares of land at no expense [20. P. 399]. Such cooperation continued with economic, political, and cultural treaties. From 1962 to 1986, more than 180 treaties, agreements, protocols, cooperation plans, and other similar documents were signed between the Soviet Union and Algeria; most of them were issued until 1978 [4. P. 78–79]. Undoubtedly, Algerian socialist orientation contributed to the expansion and strengthening of these bilateral relations. The slogan of building socialism was the most common one in the countries of the Third World at that time [21].

As for the Soviet society itself, there was a great interest in Algeria at that time. Soviet public eagerly watched newly created films about this country and read poems and novels of renowned Algerian authors. In particular, the memories of freedom fighters of Algeria were translated into Russian and circulated around the country. For instance, Soviet people had access to such pieces of literature as Henri Alleg's *La question* (1958) and *Prisonniers de guerre* (1961), excerpts from *Le camp* (1961) and the collection *La gangrene* (1962) by Abdelhamid Benzine, Mohammed Dib's novels *La grande maison* (1952), *L'incendie* (1954), and *Un Été africain* (1959), novels and poems of Malek Haddad's and many other works. The Soviet state also organized numerous protests around the country in support of Algerian independence. This well-planned propaganda campaign and the wide promotion of Algerian history and culture in the media played into the hands of Soviet government that had spent millions of rubles in support of Algerian economy.

Immediately after the war, France still maintained an important position in Algerian economic and foreign relations; however, such ties were broken in the early Boumediène years (1965–1978), when Algerian government implemented nationalization policy. The already existing trade relations, the lack of special-

ized Algerian administration and personnel, and French military presence ensured the continuation of former colony's influence in the region after the Evian Accords. Nationalization of industrial and energy enterprises, from which France owned petroleum extraction, resulted in pulling out of French presence from Algeria and the establishment of new trade relations with other partners, including the socialist countries.

### **Soviet Economic Assistance through the CMEA**

Since the middle of the 1950s, the Socialist countries led by the Soviet Union had made significant contribution to the economic advancement of the developing countries. Under the umbrella of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), Soviet aid programs extended to many African countries, including Algeria [22]. Founded by the Soviet Bloc in 1949, the CMEA was a response to the Marshall Plan [23]. According to the Charter of the CMEA, the purpose of the Council was to “facilitate... the planned development of the national economy, acceleration of economic and technical progress in these countries, a rise in the level of industrialization in countries with less developed industries...” [24. P. 4]. Within the confines of the Cold War, however, this international governmental organization aimed to promote the socialist economic integration not only of its members but also the emerging nations beyond the Iron Curtain. In case of Algeria, the massive construction projects sponsored by the CMEA turned into the crucial platforms of the new nation building. Erection of industrial enterprises projected economic, political, social, and cultural development of Algeria.

One of the features of the trade relations between the CMEA members and developing countries was the expansion of the commodity circulation volume. Typical of the trade of these two groups of states in the 1970s was a steady growth of their trade as a whole, including exports and imports. The Soviet Union accounted for sixty percent of the total volume of commodity circulation between the socialist and developing countries. During the 1970s, for instance, Soviet trade with Asian, African, and Latin American countries grew 3.8-fold, with exports increasing 3.4-fold, and imports, 4.4-fold. In the period between 1960 and 1981 the average annual growth rate of the commodity circulation between the CMEA members and developing countries was more than fourteen percent, being one of the most dynamic indices in world trade [6. P. 17]. This resulted in a significant strengthening of the positions of the developing countries within the system of the foreign trade relations between the socialist block countries.

Soviet assistance to Algeria through the CMEA was directed primarily to the development of industry and the exploration and training of national personnel. After the government's announcement of the decision to nationalize all mining enterprises owned by foreign private companies in May of 1966, many foreign engineers and specialists left Algeria. In response to Algeria's requests, the CMEA countries sent their qualified specialists to the nationalized mines of the country. The aid was given through credits for the acquisition of construction materials, machinery, and equipment needed for establishing industrial enterprises. Technical support was usually supplied through loans with an annual interest of 2.5 percent [5. P. 76]. These credits attracted Algerian government as the repayment was typically made either in export commodities or with goods produced by the enterprises established with socialist aid. By 1973, the USSR and other socialist countries had provided Algeria with loans for the development of industry, transport, and agriculture in the amount of 1103 million dollars [4. P. 115]. Such approach contributed to the success of the socialist countries in expanding their political and economic influence in the region.

During the period covered in this article, the CMEA assisted Algeria with exploration of large deposits of mercury, barite, zinc, lead, and other minerals. The most important project of the Soviet-Algerian cooperation was the construction of facilities for the steel smelting complex in Al-Hajar with an annual capacity of 410,000 tons of steel, which had turned into one of the biggest metallurgical enterprises in Africa. Around 50,000 workers took part in the project under the guidance of Soviet experts. This complex laid the foundations for the broad industrialization of the country and opened new perspectives for the accelerated development of other sectors of the economy. As early as 1972, a steel-smelting shop was commissioned in Al-Hajar complex, which made it possible to increase steel production in the country in more than ten times [25. P. 238]. The steel was mainly used for the production of large diameter pipes applied in the construction of oil and gas pipelines in Algeria [26. P. 53]. Moreover, the CMEA sponsored the construction of the mining and metallurgical enterprise “Ismail” which created the opportunity for Algeria to become one of the world's leading exporters of mercury (317 tons per day) [26. P. 53]. In a similar way, the combined heat and power plant “Annaba-III” was built under the aegis of the CMEA that provided electricity to a developing industrial area in the east of the country. The window glass manufactory erected in the city of Oran also satisfied Algerian demands in this product

[25. P. 238]. The CMEA likewise sponsored the construction of the lead-zinc mill in the city of El Abed (2,000 tons per day) [26. P. 53].

Algeria was much interested in the Soviet agricultural assistance that was evident in the radical restructuring of crop growing and increasing the area of agricultural land due to the development of irrigation and water supply. The beginning of the Soviet-Algerian cooperation in the agricultural sphere was laid when Soviet student construction brigades were sent to Algeria to participate in the reconstruction of the villages in Kabylie destroyed by the French. In April 1964, for instance, the first brigade, which consisted of 100 Soviet students of construction and engineering majors, was sent to that region for six months to assist local state in rebuilding the agricultural collective [2]. In 1964, the USSR delivered 250 tractors to Algeria, in which the country was in dire need. At the same time, the Soviet Union built a school for training specialists for agriculture. On June 18, 1965, a protocol was signed between the governments of the USSR and Algeria, which allowed for the provision of technical assistance to Algeria in the development of agricultural production [4. P. 121]. Thus, the CMEA assisted Algerian government in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of about thirty processing enterprises of the public sector and built four irrigation dams. The Council also carried out a large amount of exploration and production work in dry regions of the Sahara which occupies eighty percent of the country's territory. In about four years of work in the most difficult conditions of the Sahara, Soviet hydrogeologists had identified additional twenty-five percent of water reserves [27. P. 56]. The water obtained from the construction of dams and drilling of wells provided irrigation of more than 7,000 hectares of arid lands and palm plantations, as well as ensured a stable supply of water to the population of a number of southern regions [25. P. 238].

The traditional area of the Soviet-Algerian cooperation was the oil and gas industry, which not only served the energy and petro-chemistry needs, but also provided the USSR with the bulk of foreign exchange earnings. With this in mind, under the CMEA, the Soviet government supplied the Algerian oil company "Sonatrach" with twenty-two powerful drilling rigs, machinery and equipment for building oil and gas pipelines, and equipment for an integrated research laboratory to strengthen and expand the activities of the enterprise. A big group of qualified Soviet oil experts carried out a number of scientific studies, prepared recommendations and work programs aimed at increasing oil production in the country. In particular, the experts had made arrangements for the development of the largest oilfield in Algeria (Hassi Messaoud), designed the plan for reservoir engineering of the Rhourde El Baguel oilfield, and prepared the program for further development of the oil industry in the country [25. P. 239]. In 1977, about a quarter of all the oil extracted in Algeria was produced in wells drilled with the help of Soviet equipment and with the participation of Soviet specialists. Only in 1977, such work provided an increase in oil production of at least five million tons. A significant part of Algerian oil was transported in Soviet tankers that were first delivered to this country in 1971, when foreign companies tried to organize a boycott of Algerian oil in response to Colonel Houari Boumediene's measures to control its oil resources [28. P. 80].

Soviet export to Algeria mainly came in the form of machinery and certain raw materials (i.e., asbestos, timber), while Algeria supplied the USSR with its traditional goods, such as wine, cork, fruit juices, and medicines. In 1968, both countries signed an agreement under which the USSR was to purchase 110 million gallons a year of Algerian wine for seven years, and half a million tons of oil for two years, in return for extensive capital and technical aid [5. P. 91]. Between 1962 and 1977, Soviet export to Algeria increased from 0.7 to 123.4 million rubles with the import being raised from 0.1 to 39.4. That means the balance of trade was in favor of the USSR. At the same time, there was a big jump in Algerian exports in 1975 when the Soviet Union purchased 983,000 tons of oil for 66 million rubles, increasing the overall trade turnover cost for that year to a historical record of 247 million rubles [26. P. 77].

It is important to note that the Soviet Union was not the only CMEA member state that was engaged in economic assistance of Algeria. Other socialist countries also established trade relations with this newly emerged nation [29]. Thus, Bulgaria and the GDR sponsored the construction of a large textile factory, a tannery, and a window frame factory; they also carried out various hydrogeological works across the country. East Germany also assisted Algeria in the construction of a steel reinforcing mill, as well as foundry and pumping plants. Czechoslovakia supplied the country with equipment for a shoe factory and "Skikda" heat power plant, and sent several shortwave and longwave radio transmitters. Poland assisted Algeria in the construction of plants for the production of phosphate fertilizers and caustic soda. Hungary supplied equipment for the factory of panels for residential buildings and cooperated in the construction of canneries, mills, and a bread-making plant. Cuban and Romanian experts assisted Algeria in the field of housing construction, as well as in the construction of roads, ports, and industrial enterprises [25. P. 239].

American desire to influence Algeria politically and economically also became a serious challenge for the development of Soviet-Algerian relations. In an effort to gain political and economic positions in Algeria, the United States in the early years of Algeria's independence took on obligations to supply Algeria with necessary goods "without any conditions." The Americans presented this assistance as a supplement to what France had to provide Algeria in accordance with the Evian agreements. During the first five years of independence, the U.S. government provided Algeria with subsidies in the amount of \$100 million, and non-governmental funds of the U.S. allocated \$90,000 to Algeria for the construction of two national schools for the training of administrative workers. Justifying the U.S. policy in Algeria before the French, American press sought to present it as a struggle against the strengthening of Soviet-Algerian cooperation. Similar to the USSR, the main object of U.S. interests in Algeria was the extraction of oil and gas. In December 1968, the Algerian state-owned company "Sonatrach" signed an agreement with the American company "Getty Petroleum" on the joint development and exploration of the Rhourd el Baguel field. "Getty Petroleum" agreed to invest \$16,3 million in exploration for five years and give "Sonatrach" a free loan of \$9,5 million a year. Although Algeria broke off diplomatic relations with the United States in June 1967, trade between the two countries did not stop. In 1968, Algeria imported goods from the USA by 70 % more than in 1967, and its exports to America increased in the same amount [27. P. 15].

Despite American economic influence, the expansion of Algerian-American relations was constrained by the socio-economic transformations carried out by the Algerian government. In particular, the active anti-imperialist position of the Algerian leadership on major international issues limited the number of agreements between the two countries. Nevertheless, the American policy regarding Algeria (similar to the Soviet position) proceeded from the fact that Algeria was one of the richest countries in North Africa that played a large political role and occupied an important strategic position.

### **Role of the Youth in the Process of Nation-Building**

The problem of training skilled workers played a significant role in the overall complex of Soviet-Algerian relations. The USSR provided Algeria with assistance mainly in the development of vocational training and higher education, focusing on instructing technical personnel. The Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation between the two countries determined the conditions and amounts of such assistance on October 4, 1963. By 1965, Soviet-Algerian cooperation in the field of personnel training and public education was already quite widespread. The Soviet side began to assist Algeria in organizing and equipping vocational schools for training over 4,000 workers for industry and agriculture and sent 130 Soviet teachers and technicians to Algeria, as well as a group of professors to work at the University of Algiers [4. P. 123]. A major event in the Soviet-Algerian cooperation in this field was the opening of the Institute of Oil and Gas and the Technical School in Boumerdès on September 15, 1964 where 625 Algerian students began their studies [4. P. 123]. By November 1966, the Soviet Union had fully completed equipping the institute and handed it over to Algeria in a solemn reception. Representatives of the Algerian government, who spoke at the ceremony, emphasized that this "generous gift... would be an important contribution to the industrial, scientific, and cultural advancement of Algeria, it would help the Algerian people to take over the natural resources and further strengthen the Algerian-Soviet cooperation" [4. P. 123]. The Institute, later called the African Center for Oil, Gas and Textiles, quickly became a leading higher education institution for training personnel not only in Algeria, but also in other African countries. In the 1969/1970 academic year, 1,400 students from Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, the People's Republic of Congo, Guinea, Mali and other African countries were enrolled in it. This institute became the first higher education institution in Africa to train oil specialists [4. P. 123].

The Soviet Union paid special attention to the integration of Algerian youth in the processes of nation building, as well as their adherence to communist ideology. With allowance for this, the Soviet Union assisted Algerian government with opening numerous learning and training institutions for all sectors of the national economy, as well as promoting student exchange programs. Thus, in July–August 1966, in the course of the Soviet-Algerian negotiations on trade and economic issues held in Moscow, both countries signed an agreement on the establishment of a center for vocational training of personnel for the metallurgical and mining industry in Algeria. In addition, Algerian students could receive special scholarships to study in Soviet universities and colleges in the field of metallurgy and mining. For example, in the early 1970s, about 650 Algerians were already studying in the USSR. In addition, many Soviet teachers worked in the higher and secondary institutions of Algeria, numbering 1,000 people by 1975 [28. P. 93].

In 1968, another step was taken towards expanding cooperation between the two states – an agreement to create an institute for 700 students and a technical school for 500 students to train metallurgists, miners, and mechanic engineers in Annaba, and a higher veterinary school for 200 people in Algiers [4. P. 124]. In 1968, the Mining and Metallurgical Institute was opened in Annaba, and in the 1970s, the Soviet Union began the construction of the Polytechnic Institute of Light Industry and the Hydromelioration Institute in the city of Boumerdès. The USSR also created and expanded twenty-eight training centers for educating skilled workers in all sectors of the national economy of Algeria [25. P. 239]. In 1975, the Soviet Union assisted Algeria in founding the Institute of Industrial Chemistry and the Institute of Applied Mathematics. Under the Soviet guidance, three largest universities in Algeria opened postgraduate studies – this happened for the first time in practice of cooperation between the USSR and developing nations [28. P. 93]. Promotion of graduate trainings in higher educational institutions allowed Algeria to prepare its own qualified teachers who could replace Soviet specialists working in Algerian universities. Therefore, the creation of a network of educational institutions not only provided an opportunity to train personnel for the country's national development with maximum consideration of its needs, but also created conditions for the successful involvement of Algerian youth in the sphere of advanced industrial production.

In addition to educating Algerian youth in institutions of secondary and higher education, Soviet government also promoted the creation of summer camps for Soviet youth who would travel to the construction sites in Algeria and assist Algerian young workers in building their “Friendship Projects.” Aside from economic help, Soviet youth conducted political and cultural work, making local youth to lean toward communist ideology. Thus, whenever Soviet young communists arrived in Algeria, they were instructed to bring pro-Soviet propaganda materials [30]. For instance, the construction brigade that worked for five months in Kabylie in 1965 brought with them propaganda literature, cultural and sport equipment “with the aim to conduct political and mass-cultural work among the participants of the construction project and among local Algerian people” [31]. Soviet students also participated as observers in the Congress of the National Unions of Students of Algeria and Tunisia and were invited to the Congress of the General Union of Muslim Students of Algeria [32]. Friendship Days between Soviet and Algerian youth, which included theatrical performances and political discussions, were also quite common [33]. Undoubtedly, these interrelations affected the political development of Algerian youth, as well as their role in the formation of the newly established nation.

Student construction brigades in Algeria continued the Soviet tradition of construction teams and, in many ways, became their prototypes. Similar to traditional brigades in the USSR, students in Algerian brigades were also engaged in such typical political and cultural activities, as celebrating national holidays and holding a collective birthday party for the students, gathering around the bonfire and singing student songs. The big emphasis was put on cultural and education work in the brigades. Concerts, lectures, and meeting were quite common in such units. As part of the state goal to politically engage international students into the communist agenda, there was constant access to communist newspapers from around the world, including Soviet newspapers *Pravda*, *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, *Izvestiia*, and *Za rubezhom*, American *Daily Worker*, and French newspaper *L'Humanité*. Moreover, the students were involved in a variety of political activities, including students' involvement in the propaganda team, agitating for socialism and giving lectures about their home countries [34].

## Conclusion

After the declaration of independence in 1962, Algeria occupied one of the leading positions among the Third World countries and demonstrated its determination in solving urgent regional and international problems. The political course of Algeria was based on the principles of positive neutrality, non-alignment with military blocs, and its support for national liberation movements. Algerian government placed great importance to the development of its relations with the socialist states, especially the Soviet Union. Thus, since the beginning of the 1960s, a wide and relatively stable system of economic cooperation was established between Algeria and the USSR.

The 1960s–1970s was the time when Algeria constructed its political and economic independence. This circumstance firmly affected Algerian diplomacy and foreign policy, which, on the one hand, aggravated its relations with France and other European states, and, on the other hand, brought Algeria closer to the Soviet Union. This partnership covered virtually all of the spheres of Algerian society; the major focus, however, was placed on economy. The Soviet Union assisted Algeria in constructing over one hundred objects in

various areas of the national development, and majority of them still constitute the basis for modern-day Algerian economy.

Considering the context of the Cold War, North African region occupied a crucial position on the world map (both in terms of geography and raw materials) and, therefore, the Soviet Union was especially interested in influencing newly established independent Algeria. Utilizing Soviet youth as a source to achieve its goals, Soviet state officials invented a perfect formula of success: young people from the USSR could simultaneously work as engineers and propaganda agitators on Algerian construction sites. By doing so, these young communists influenced the minds and hearts of Algerian youth who continuously sent solidarity telegrams and letters of support to the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Youth Organization. Soviet indoctrination campaign seemed to work at least in part.

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**СТРОИТЕЛЬСТВО НАЦИИ: СОЦИАЛИСТИЧЕСКИЕ СТРОЙКИ В АЛЖИРЕ, 1962–1978**

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С середины 1950-х годов социалистические страны во главе с Советским Союзом внесли значительный вклад в экономический прогресс развивающихся стран. Под эгидой Совета Экономической Взаимопомощи (СЭВ) советские программы финансовой помощи распространились на многие африканские страны, включая Алжир. Основанный Советским блоком в 1949 году, СЭВ стал ответом на план Маршалла. В рамках холодной войны эта международная правительственная организация стремилась содействовать социалистической экономической интеграции не только своих членов, но и развивающихся стран за пределами «железного занавеса». В случае с Алжиром масштабные строительные проекты, спонсируемые СЭВ, превратились в важнейшие платформы формирования новой нации. Возведение промышленных предприятий способствовало экономическому, политическому, социальному и культурному развитию Алжира. В этой статье строительные работы в Алжире представлены как важнейшие площадки для распространения советского влияния в Северной Африке. Кроме того, она демонстрирует роль молодежи из Алжира и Советского блока в реализации этих общенациональных проектов и формировании алжирской государственности.

*Ключевые слова:* Холодная война, СЭВ, стройки дружбы, Эвианские соглашения, Хуари Бумедьен, Советско-Алжирские отношения, Комсомол.

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