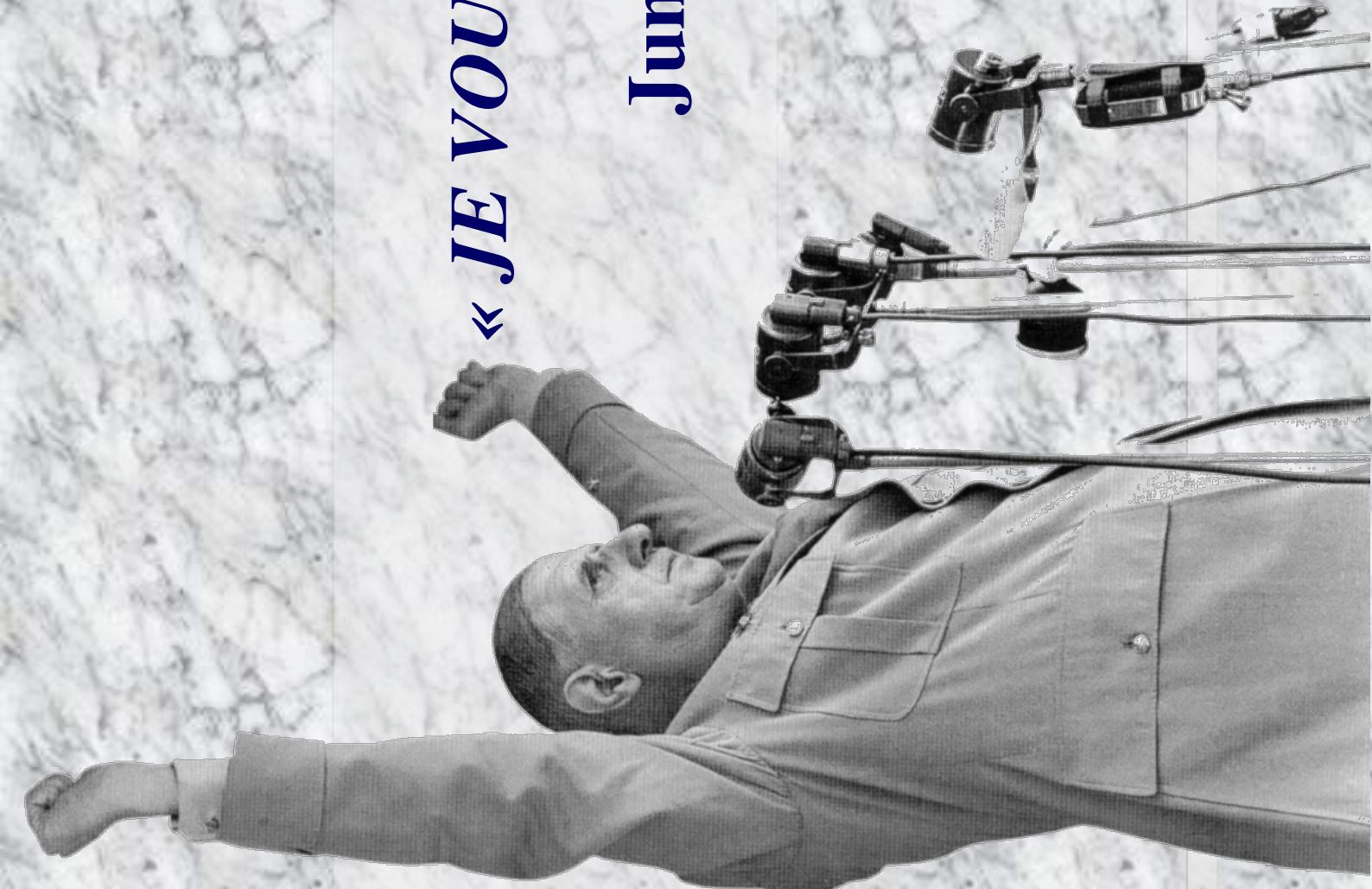


« JE VOUS AI COMPRISE ! »
Charles de Gaulle,
June 1958 – May 1968

Martin Shipway
Imagining France
1 & 8 December 2014



Gaullian myths: (i) power

- n In the position in which God has placed you, be yourself, Ma'am! That is to say, someone in relation to whom, by virtue of your legitimacy, everything in your kingdom is ordered, in whom the people perceive the nation [*la patrie*] and who, by her presence and her dignity, upholds national unity.
Charles de Gaulle, *Mémoires d'espoir*, vol. 1, *Le Renouveau, 1958-1962* (Paris: 1970), p.248
- n « *Au nom de la légitimité nationale...»...
29 January 1960
in uniform, to ‘mark the fact that I am
General de Gaulle as well as Head of State’*
- n La décision:
de Gaulle to Sékou Touré (Aug '58):
the French Republic no longer, as in the
past, ‘prefers scheming to decision
making’ ...



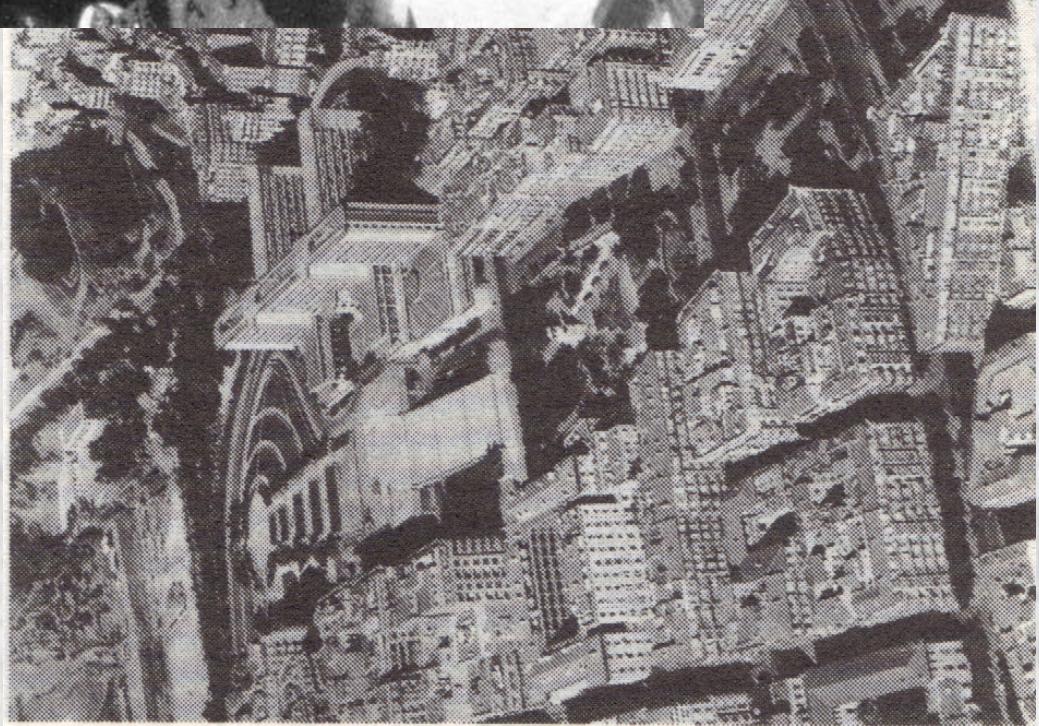
ina.fr

<http://www.ina.fr/video/CAF88024568/discours-de-gaulle-video.html>

Gaullian myths: (ii) empire

- n L'homme de Brazzaville:
 - Vol.3 of *War Memoirs* published 1956 give his own version of the myth
 - ‘It was at Brazzaville that France, through my voice, set our African territories along the road which has led them to self-determination [*la libre disposition d'eux-mêmes*] (24 Aug. 1958)
 - Admiral Philippe de Gaulle: there was no myth
- n Pronouncements on Algeria (before 1958):
 - many and varied, not to say mutually contradictory
 - But in terms of policy: ‘no policy other than that which aims to substitute association for domination in French North Africa can be held to be valid or worthy of France’ (30 June 1955)
- n Not a ‘man of empire’?
- n Despises the pieds noirs...
- n Will find ‘the most French solution’ ... (4 June 1958)

De Gaulle, the army and 'le treize mai'



De Gaulle's first Algerian visit, 4 June 1958

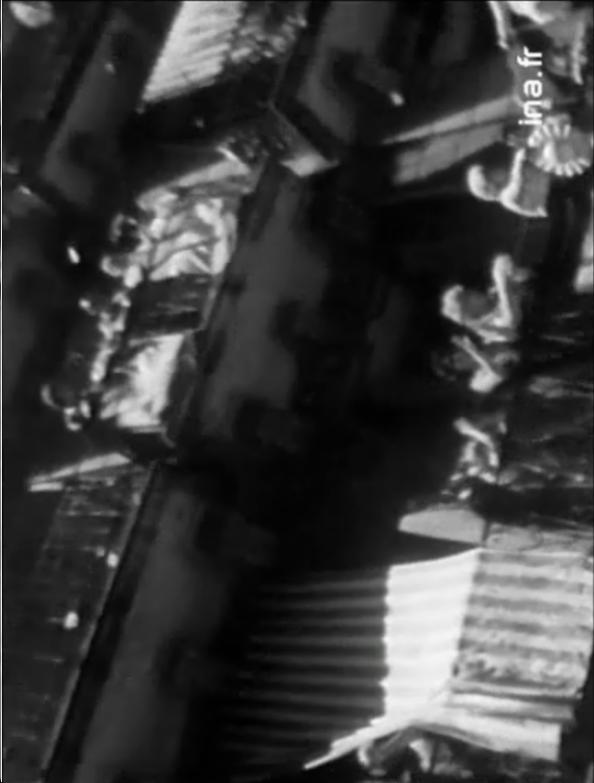
- n Appointed Président du Conseil (PM) on 1 June
 - ‘Am I, at the age of 67, going to start the career of a dictator?’
 - Full powers in Algeria
 - A new Constitution
- n Spends three days in Algeria
 - « *Vive l’Algérie française* » (Mostaghanem, 6 June)

Le 4 juin 1958

n Two sources:

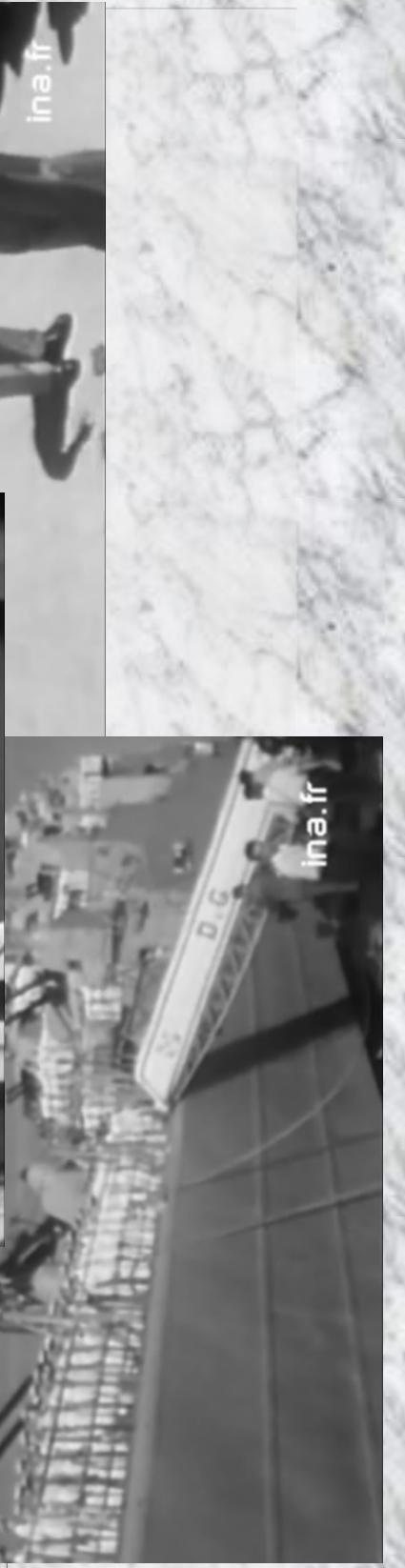
- Official newsreel: INA (<http://www.ina.fr/histoire-et-conflits/decolonisation/video/CAF88024184/le-voyage-a-alger-du-general-de-gaulle.fr.html>)
- Bernard Stora's 2006 TV mini-series, *Le grand Charles*
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=et3rYFqZCn8>

Le 4 juin 1958



Le 4 juin 1958

n A long day of ceremonial



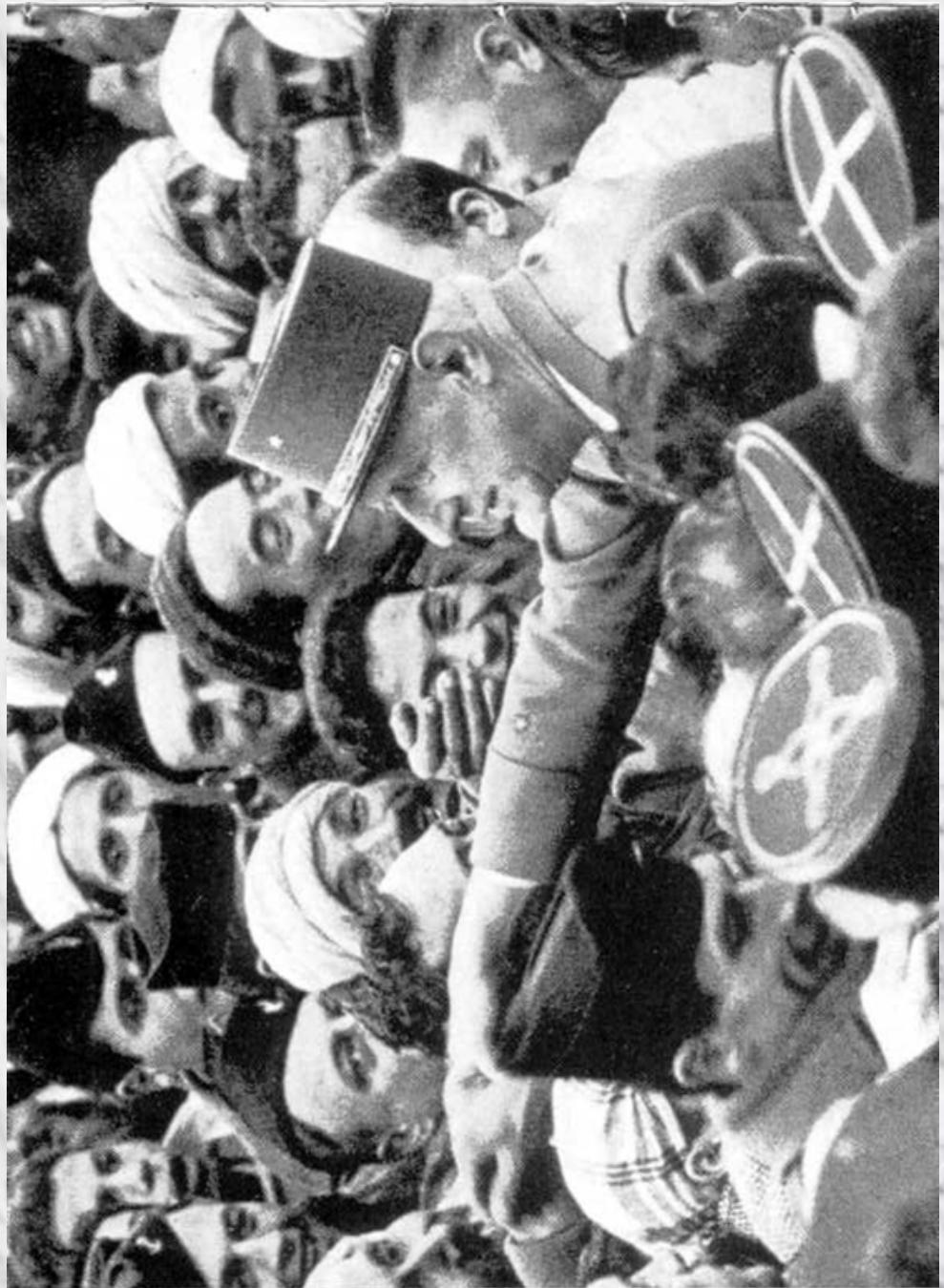
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Le 4 juin 1958

- n Where are the Algerians?



Le 4 juin 1958 et le mythe gaullien

- n ‘What did he say? Nothing. Did he make the slightest promise? Not at all. Did he make any commitments for the future? He avoided doing so. And yet, in a few words (and what words!), he succeeded in calming a population that was gripped with dizziness, he brought the army to obedience, he restored the authority of the state, and confirmed the legitimacy of his own accession to power.’
- n ‘Our anti-colonialists can say what they like until they’re blue in the face, France will not grant independence to Algeria out of the goodness of her heart, or in some ideological spasm. She will do it out of egotism.’

So what did he say?

- n His words were: ‘...apparently spontaneous in form, but at bottom calculated, designed to enthuse the crowd without carrying me further than I intended to go’, De Gaulle, *Mémoires d'espoir*, p. 51
- n Oh the irony:
 - ‘I can see that the road you have opened up in Algeria is one of renewal and brotherhood’
 - ‘you have wanted us to start from the beginning, that is to say with our institutions, and that is why I am here’
 - ‘the French army, coherent, ardent, disciplined, under the orders of its chiefs’
- n One concrete and substantial reform:
 - the single college
- n The beginnings of a new policy?
 - Towards a ‘paix des braves’?



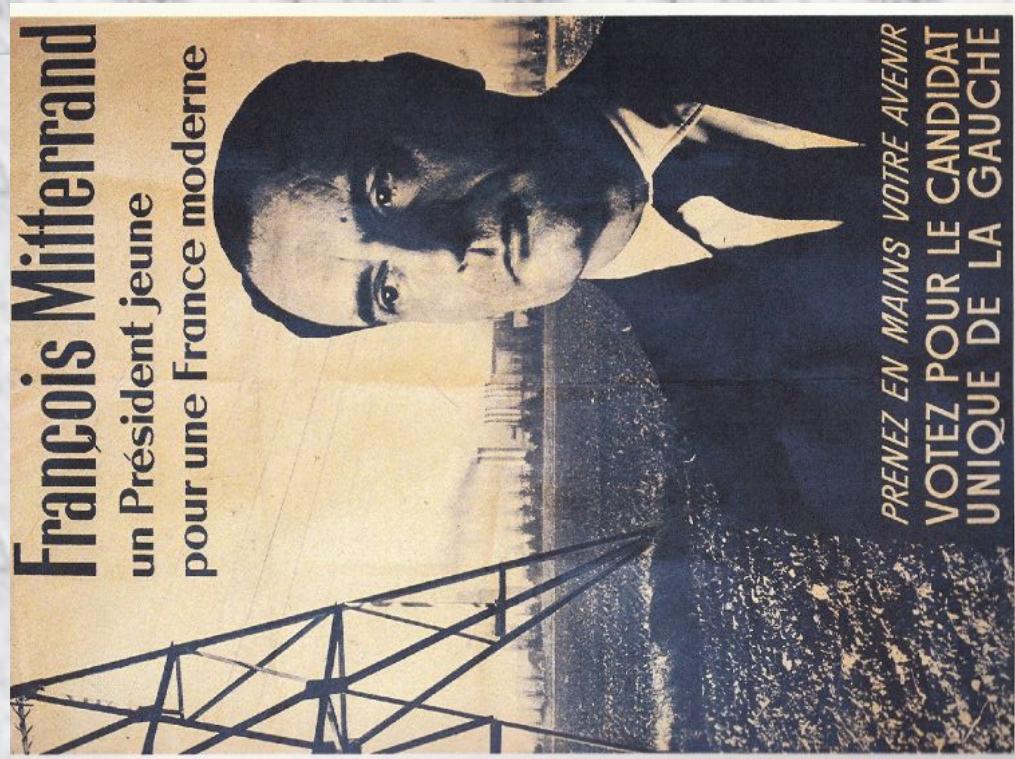
De Gaulle et Marianne en 1951, 1962



De Gaulle en 1965

CONFiance à DE GAULLE

...et le challenger





"La chienlit, non !"



...et en 1968



Le 4 juin 1958 et le mythe gaullien

- n ‘What did he say? Nothing. Did he make the slightest promise? Not at all. Did he make any commitments for the future? He avoided doing so. And yet, in a few words (and what words!), he succeeded in calming a population that was gripped with dizziness, he brought the army to obedience, he restored the authority of the state, and confirmed the legitimacy of his own accession to power.’
- n ‘Our anti-colonialists can say what they like until they’re blue in the face, France will not grant independence to Algeria out of the goodness of her heart, or in some ideological spasm. She will do it out of egotism.’
- n ‘As for me, who had known the fever of May ’68, my feeling was that this old chap had had his day. But on the evening I learnt of his death [in 1970], I said ‘Bloody hell!’. And I seemed so unhappy that it annoyed my girlfriend of the time who said: ‘So what’s it to you?’ And, poor idiot that I am, all I could find to say was: ‘De Gaulle! Don’t you realise? De Gaulle is dead! Blimey!’

