

Synopsis:

## WHAT LIVES!

4 photographic series by  
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France - 1996 / 2008

**1 - Those forgotten war veterans:** Thirty Moroccans who fought in the French army live in two residential Sonacotra homes (called ADOMA today) in Beauvais. Aged between seventy and eighty plus, they arrived in France from 1999 on. For most of them, it was the first time...

*What kind of life do these Moroccans have? They speak no or very little French. They just live there, isolated in a residential home in the middle of an anonymous neighborhood...*

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**2 - First pay-packet:** «I photographed those people who had accepted to participate in the project (around 20 people) and I noted down their souvenirs: the first workshop, the first pay. This first pay-packet which probably epitomized the beginning of adult life... »

*What kind of a life for these old or young people, women or men who wander aimlessly, with no home, no job?...*

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**3 - The pains of exile:** This work was commissioned by COMEDE (Medical Committee for exiles, Kremlin-Bicêtre) about people who were forced to flee their country. The testimonials were compiled by Jean-Louis Lévy, writer and doctor, at the origin of COMEDE.

*What kind of a life do those people, of all ages, all conditions now live, having fled violence in their country of origin? ...*

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**4 - Us... our bodies:** This work was part of a cultural project initiated by the Maison de Solidarité in Gennevilliers: The participants chose a photo which inspired them, not necessarily their own. This was the starting point for beginning the written work. Over the weeks, more and more photos of body fragments were made available, enabling the participants to write...

*What kind of a life do those bodies have, suffering from extreme poverty, from the anguish of illness for which no care will be provided? ...*

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*What kind of a life? Photography is ill-fitted to answer such questions; to describe the horror of rape; the hours spent being afraid, the infinitely long periods of misery, the years wasted through unemployment. Photographers are not allowed into torture rooms. Photographers cannot testify to violence committed to women as payment for their passage into Europe.*

*So, I chose to sit down beside these people, to take photos of them, to listen to them...*