

**La doublure en politique coloniale française : à propos du  
personnage du tirailleur dans *Désert* de Jean-Marie Gustave Le**

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*Abstract:* This study explores the notion of shallow figure in colonial politics and its instrumentalisation to reach certain purposes. It investigates the semiological status and the function of the infantryman in the French occupying army such as described in *Désert* of Jean-Marie Le Clézio. As a symbolic figure of mercenaries omnipresent in the armed conflicts of the XX<sup>th</sup> century as well as in Africa and in Europe, the infantryman remains nevertheless a political hero forgotten in contemporary literature.

*Keywords:* Infantryman, shallow figure, colonial politics, semiological status/function, mercenaries.