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The Status of the Arabic Language in the Renaissance Project of the Algerian Muslim Scholars Association from 1931 to 1962.

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Abstract:

This research paper aims to shed light on the circumstances and events that surrounded the reality of the Arabic language at the beginning of the occupation, as well as the colonial policy pursued to combat it. It also examines the reactions of the Association of Muslim Scholars in the face of these challenges, highlighting its strategies and mechanisms in preserving the Arabic language and its sciences, promoting its use, and enhancing its development. The paper also assesses the extent to which this language policy contributed to maintaining the status of the Arabic language within Algerian society.

Key words : Algeria , France , Arabi language , Renaissance , Ibn Badis

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1. INTRODUCTION

In modern history, Algeria endured the profound impact of French colonization, which aimed not only at territorial control but also the eradication of Algerian identity in all its dimensions, including religion, history, language, and culture. The French administration sought to replace Arabic Islamic culture with French culture, suppressing the Arabic language through measures like dismantling educational and religious institutions and persecuting scholars. Despite these challenges, scholars like Sheikh Imam Abd al-Hamid Ibn Badis and others worked diligently to preserve Arabic and promote it, even under limited resources and oppressive colonial policies.

Research Problem:

How did the Algerian Muslim Scholars Association contribute, under the French colonial policies aimed at erasing the Arab-Islamic identity, to protecting the Arabic language, preserving its status, and promoting it within its renaissance project during the period from 1931 to 1962?

Significance of the Study:

The significance of this study can be identified across several scientific, historical, and cultural aspects, as follows:

- Contributing to the documentation of a pivotal stage in modern Algerian history by highlighting the status of the Arabic language under French colonization and the role of the Algerian Muslim Scholars Association in preserving it during the period from 1931 to 1962.
- Deepening the academic understanding of language and identity issues in the colonial context, enriching the field of linguistic and historical studies related to reformist and renaissance movements in the Arab world.
- Highlighting the status of the Arabic language as a fundamental component of Algerian identity and demonstrating the contribution of reformist efforts to preserving the cultural and civilizational foundations of Algerian society.

- Revealing the methods and mechanisms employed by the Algerian Muslim Scholars Association to defend and promote the Arabic language, providing insights for comparative studies of similar experiences in other colonial contexts.
- Assisting in understanding contemporary challenges facing the Arabic language by connecting them to their historical roots and drawing on the reformist experience of the Association to develop future strategies for advancing the Arabic language in Algeria and the Arab world.

Study Methodology:

This paper employs a the Historical, Descriptive, and Analytical Method to examine the early colonial period's impact on the Arabic language, colonial suppression tactics, and the responses of the Algerian Muslim Scholars Association. It delves into the association's strategies to safeguard Arabic, enhance its use, and advance its sciences, and evaluates the role of these efforts in maintaining the language's prominence in Algerian society.

Structure of the Study:

In order to study the subject in depth, it has been divided into:

1. Introduction
2. French colonial policy toward the Arabic language
3. The status of the Arab community in the reform project of the association and its leaders
4. The role of the Association of Scholars in the advancement of Arabic

4.1. Schools:
4.2. Mosque education:
4.3. Scientific and educational missions
4.4. Clubs and Associations
4.5. The press

5. The Arabic language at the heart of the association's political activity.
6. Conclusion

2. French colonial policy toward the Arabic language

The situation surrounding the Arabic language is intrinsically linked to the broader challenges faced under the dominion of French colonialism, which exerted its influence over all aspects of Algerian society. It is not an exaggeration to assert that the Arabic language, along with the Islamic religion, bore the brunt of the targeted assault orchestrated by the leaders of French colonialism from its very inception.

Prior to this colonial treachery, it is important to acknowledge that the Arabic language held a position of purity and reverence among the Algerian populace, as well as within the rung authorities during the Turkish era. This fact is substantiated by the testimony of the French themselves and can be observed in the prevalence of education systems in advanced European nations.(Toumiyat, 2017, p. 29) This is witnessed by ***Eugen Lomb***, who stated that: "There is no doubt that education in Algeria during the year 1830 was more widespread and better than it is in the present time. There were more than two thousand schools for education of different degrees, as well as hundreds of mosques."(Al-Tamar, 1983, pp. 261-262)

Mosques served as expansive venues and esteemed institutions that fostered education. They provided a nurturing environment where young individuals received instruction on the fundamental principles of the Noble Qur'an and the intricacies of the Arabic language. It is noteworthy that these mosques and religious centers benefited from regular subsidies derived from charitable endowment properties. However, a considerable number of these educational establishments

and places of worship suffered ruin and destruction as a consequence of the relentless French campaign waged against Algeria. Within a mere decade, from 1830 to 1840, the school count significantly dwindled, particularly due to the depletion of their financial resources and funding streams, which primarily relied on endowment properties and confinement. (Allah A. A.-Q., The Cultural History of Algeria,Part 3 1830-1945, 1998, pp. 22-38)

The French did not hesitate long before they began eradicating the fields of education, culture, journalism, literature, history, and the Arabic language in order to eliminate Arab nationalism and the Islamic character. This strategy is aimed at the foundations of the Algerian identity. It is the result of the French realizing that science is a cutting sword, and if the Algerian is armed with it, he can resist it.(Tamar, 1983, p. 262)

The policy of France, which was executed through the strategy of ignorance to eradicate the Algerian personality as well as obliterate the national identity by fighting the Arabic language and eliminating free education, additionally manifested in its battle against the Arabic language. Practical steps included:

- Destruction of all copies of the Quran.
- Prohibiting the study of Arabic at primary and secondary institutions.

- The suspension and quarantine of classes in mosques, the majority of which were demolished.(Al-Madani, This is Algeria, n.d, p. 140)

The French administration's attempts to establish French schools, primarily for the elite, faced resistance from centenarians who feared the empowerment of the general populace. This opposition led to the suppression of educational opportunities for Algerians, hindering the French administration's expansion efforts.

Additionally, on the other side, we found that France devoted extreme caution to educating its colonial settler kids through the establishment of schools for their benefit that encompassed all educational levels, i.e. primary, secondary, and higher, wherein European communities had been. This is in contrast to the long-term disregard for the educational needs of the Algerian people. (Allah A. a.-Q., 2007, pp. 83-87)Moreover, it was The aim of spreading the French language is to turn it into a national language in Algeria for the people, and to French the conscience and tongues of the Algerians, (Abdel-Qader Faudel, 2012, pp. 93-94)"....there is no bond that connects our glorious past with our dear present and happy future except this strong rope: the Arabic language, the language of religion, the language of sex, the language of nationalism, the language of instilled patriotism ..."(Shaiban, 2009, p. 30)

Occasionally, albeit selectively, the teaching of the Arabic language was permitted, but only to the extent that it served French interests. For instance, schools were established to teach Arabic to

adults, primarily due to its importance in the military and for facilitating communication with the local population, thereby bolstering the settlement process. This observation leads us to comprehend that French education primarily aimed to meet the needs of the settlers in Algeria, and secondarily, to cultivate a French Algerian elite who would further the objectives of the French colonial project. Within this context, notable figures emerged, including translator officers like ***Ben Daoud***, judges, and teachers such as ***Moftah***, who served in the ranks of the centenarians' militia in the city of ***Sour al-Ghazlan*** during the Moqrani revolution. These examples highlight the underlying, albeit concealed, objectives associated with the teaching of the Arabic language. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that the scope and duration of such efforts, as well as the individuals affected by the educational process, were limited.(-zubair, 1988, p. 29)

The colonial administration employed various measures to impede the progress of Arabic education. One notable example is documented in a report authored by General "***Docroux***" and intended for presentation to ***Napoleon III.*** Titled "A report on the necessary measures for ensuring stability in Algeria," the report contains the following statement: "...we must obstruct any development of Islamic schools and centers... In simpler terms, our aim is to deprive the Algerian people of both material and moral resources..."(-Zubair, 1988, p. 31)

Unfair laws, such as the one made on December 24, 1904, which is accepted by the military officer in military districts or the laborer, had an impact on free Arab education. This judgment legalized this education and stipulated the following terms:

- It is required to teach the Qur'an only.
- Not explaining the verses of the Qur'an, especially those related to jihad.
- Preventing the teaching of history and geography for the Islamic and Arab world.
- Loyalty to the French administration.
- Not receiving school-age students during French schools.

Further evidence of the deliberate measures taken to suppress the Arabic language can be found in several official decrees and decisions. Notably, ***the Marshall Decree*** of 1933, the October 1938 Decree, and the "***Chouton***" decision of March 1938. However, the most significant and alarming decision, which explicitly targeted the Arabic language, was the March 8, 1938 decision issued by the French Minister of Education. (Bouaziz, The Policy of Colonial Domination and the Algerrian National Movement from 1830-1954, p. 79)

The colonial administration aimed to hamper Arabic language education by imposing strict requirements on Arabic teachers, mandating French proficiency before employment. They also refused to implement the 1947 constitution, further hindering Arabic language progress.

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Furthermore, French primary education inspectors, displaying a remarkable lack of sensitivity, issued an appeal on March 5, 1945, calling for the abolition of compulsory Arabic language instruction at the primary level. Similarly, the decision of October 15, 1949, barred the teaching of classical Arabic in public schools and government-run mosques. (Bouaziz, p. 79)

The French administration's efforts to diminish the influence of the Arabic language extended beyond the educational realm and permeated the administrative and social fabric of Algerian society. It implemented a new administrative structure that superseded the previous system, effectively replacing it with a French-oriented framework. Furthermore, a comprehensive French educational system was adopted, resulting in the pervasive presence of French language and culture. Reflecting this policy, cities, villages, streets, squares, commercial establishments, and official institutions were assigned names that predominantly honored French personalities, scholars, thinkers, and military figures, while Arabic and Islamic names were conspicuously excluded. Consequently, Algerians began to experience a profound sense of detachment, feeling as if they were in a foreign country rather than their own homeland. The oppressive rule of the French regime permeated daily life, leaving no aspect, whether trivial or significant, untouched by its tyranny.(Rabih, 1984, p. 188)

Algerians were subsequently required to pay taxes for what they learn as a result of the French colonial policy's penetration and

exaggeration of its arbitrary measures. (Al-Madani, Hayat Kifah, 2009, pp. 294 - 297)Furthermore, the restrictions that Arab education was subjected to were monitored even by foreigners, as the Egyptian thinker ***Muhammad Farid*** (1868-1919) referred to this new reality because of the occupation during his visit to Algeria in 1902 by saying : "... Education in Algeria is very bad, even if the situation continued in this way, so that French was replaced in all transactions, and perhaps Arabic would be studied altogether with the passage of time, the corners of knowledge were abandoned and the houses of books were ruined, and the home became a breeding ground for ignorance and the ignorant...".(Al-Jundi, 1965, p. 133)

The people protested in opposition to these deplorable circumstances and French policy, and France responded with a series of military actions that resulted in the deaths of thousands of people, including professors and students. Numerous of them were forced by circumstances to migrate from Algeria to neighboring nations like Tunisia, Morocco, and even the Levant .(Allah A. a.-Q., 1830 - 1945, p. 58)

3. The status of the Arab community in the reform project of the association and its leaders

The profound dedication shown by the leaders and eminent figures of the Association of Muslim Scholars towards the Arabic language and its various branches is not surprising when we consider their scholarly journey, which was marked by diligence, ingenuity, and a deep understanding of the language's intricacies in speech,

writing, and discourse. For instance, ***Sheikh Abd al-Hamid Ibn Badis***, who studied at the prestigious Zaytuna Mosque, attested to the profound influence of the esteemed sheikhs under whom he received instruction, including Professor ***Ibn Ashour and al-Nakhli.*** Reflecting on the subjects he studied, he remarked, "I had close contact with them for two full years, and their profound impact on my intellectual development cannot be overstated. Although my connection with Professor Ibn Ashour began a year before obtaining the certificate, it was my subsequent close association with Professor Al-Nakhli that left an indelible mark on me. I cannot forget the lessons I read from Diwan Al-Hassam under the guidance of Professor Ashour, as he nurtured my appreciation for literature and the eloquence of the Arabs. Through his teachings, he reignited within me a sense of the glory of Arabism and instilled a profound pride in both its cultural heritage and the Islamic faith, which I hold dear."(Tomiyat, 2017, p. 74)

Within the context of the Algerian Muslim Scholars Association's tireless efforts to safeguard the components of the Algerian identity, it is evident that their work rested upon three foundational pillars, which could only thrive collectively: Islam, Arabism, and the Arab world. As our focus pertains to the Arabic language, it is worth noting Imam Abd al-Hamid Ibn Badis' reflections on this subject, as expressed through his editorship of various newspapers and publications issued by the association. Notable examples include ***al-Muntaqd, al-Shihab, al-Basir, Sunnah, Sharia,***

and the Right Path, all of which consistently addressed themes related to "***Islam***," "***Arabism***," and the "***Algerianism***." The Arabic language held a significant position within these writings and publications.

Sheikh Imam Ibn Badis consistently endeavored to strengthen Arabism and considered the Arabic language as its essential vehicle. He regarded it as the second pillar of the Algerian identity. Language and culture stood as formidable barriers between France and its ambitions to impose Frenchness and Westernization upon the proud Muslim Algerian population, and the strong link that connects Algeria's past, present, and future,and Sheikh AL –Bashir AL-Ibrahimi(Adel, 1980, pp. 13 - 14) mentioned: Two noble objectives of scholars were to restore the honor of the Islamic faith and to revitalize the Arabic language(-Ibrahimi, 1997, p. 133), and the basic principles of the association were summed up in its simple, clear and profound motto, which Sheikh Ibn Badis used to mention on various occasions, which is: " Islam is our religion - and Arabic is our language - and Algeria is our homeland ".(Saadi, 2011, p. 89)

Sheikh Ibn Badis expressed in Al-Basir newspaper that Arabism, Islam, knowledge, and virtue are the fundamental foundations of our revival and the pillars of the Algerian Muslim Scholars Association, which serves as the wellspring of our vitality and the emblem of our renaissance. Similarly, Al-Ibrahimi's stance on the Arabic language aligned with Ibn Badis' views. He too emphasized the significance of language, stating that it is the most crucial element

of a human society. He emphasized that no nation can forfeit its language without risking its very existence, as the loss of language entails the loss of other essential elements.(-Ibrahimi, 1997, p. 134)

The association's strong commitment to the Arabic language is evident in their dedicated efforts to preserve it and promote its use in the daily lives of Algerians.

4. The role of the Association of Scholars in the advancement of Arabic

The establishment of the Association of Algerian Muslim Scholars occurred during a critical period characterized by the centenary of Algeria's occupation and France's persistence in pursuing a policy rooted in superiority and dominance. This era coincided with the rise of political consciousness, which manifested through the emergence of intellectual and political movements like the North African Star in 1926 and the Union of Muslim Representatives Algerians in 1927. Against this backdrop, the association was founded on May 5, 1931, driven by a sense of patriotic duty towards the homeland and the nation. Its primary focus centered on educational and instructional endeavors, reflecting its commitment to serving the community through educational initiatives, (Stora, 2004, pp. 78 - 79)moreover, the Arabic language was one of the axes of its struggle, and one of the tools for strengthening national identity in the face of the policies of Frenchness, integration and alienation, and in This

research paper will try to highlight the efforts made by the association for the advancement and development of the Arabic language.

In the face of the oppressive French colonial policies that hindered Arabic education and despite limited resources, the Association of Scholars refused to succumb to these circumstances. Since its establishment in 1931, the association steadfastly resisted factors that could lead to weakness and demoralization. It held onto threads of hope in the Almighty and relied on the support of benevolent individuals within the community. Drawing inspiration from the experiences of their fellow brothers and sisters, the association took it upon themselves to mobilize and educate the masses. They utilized the available means of the time, including the press, schools, mosques, clubs, and community centers, in order to disseminate knowledge and promote education. (-Alawi, pp. 114 - 115)In this regard, Imam Ibn Badis stated: ".... there is no despair or despair, and steadfastness is the secret of success, and the determination of men demolishes mountains, so come back and unite and strive to find help from God and from the nation voluntarily and from the government approval and permission, as well as seek after reward, and God is with the workers and the doers of good…"(Al-Siddiq, 1921)

Driven by unwavering determination, the Association of Muslim Scholars and its members embarked on an endeavor to fortify the foundations of intellectual and scholarly activities. They established clubs, opened schools for free Arabic education, and

dispatched scientific missions to the esteemed Al-Zaytouna Mosque. However, their actions were cautious and guided by the desire to benefit the community, avert harm, and avoid provoking the ire of the French administration. Their objective was to obtain official authorization for the establishment of schools dedicated to Arabic and religious education. In pursuit of this noble civilizational aspiration, a cohort of enlightened leaders, deputies, notables, and representatives worked within the administration, pooling their efforts to advance Algeria and uplift its people.(Al-Shihab, 1937, p. 237) The association's efforts to promote the Arabic language can be summarized in the following fields:

4.1. *Schools:*

From its inception, the association and its members recognized the immense significance of education in their struggle against colonialism and the eradication of ignorance. They viewed schools as powerful tools to confront the colonizers and as essential components for awakening the people. Ibn Badis and his fellow scholars regarded education as a formidable weapon in their battle against colonial forces and considered it a cornerstone for societal progress. Reflecting this sentiment, Sheikh Muhammad Al-Bashir Al-Ibrahimi eloquently stated, "Schools are the paradise of the world, and the absence of schools equates to the construction of prisons." (Amamra T. R., 2009, p. 76)Consequently, whilst it was founded, the association has worked to build and construct schools or rent them, and has equipped them

with modern means, in an effort to forego traditional methods and in the hope of enticing young people to attend its schools in order to learn the Arabic language and the Islamic religion. Here, we point out that the association has worked to build and construct schools or rent them, and that they have been equipped with modern means. The most significant institution built: was the Islamic Education and Education Association, formed in 1931 by Imam Abd al-Hamid Ibn Badis(Taheri, 2010, p. 15), the Dar al-Hadith School in Tlemcen under the supervision of Sheikh al-Bashir al-Ibrahimi, the Islamic Youth School in the capital under the supervision of Sheikh al-Tayyib al-Uqabi(Balah, 2006, pp. 424 - 425), and the Ibn Badis Institute in Constantine, and The total of what the association established until the outbreak of the November 1, 1954 revolution, amounted to about 150 schools that were able to accommodate 50,000 children, in which they received lessons in the Arabic language and its principles and branches such as grammar, morphology and rhetoric, in addition to the origins of the Islamic religion and Algerian and Islamic history.(Taheri, 2010, p. 16)

To ensure effective oversight, the association employed the expertise of graduates from Al-Zaytouna Mosque in Tunisia, with their numbers reaching approximately 900 teachers in the later stages. These teachers played a crucial role in the association's efforts. They were entrusted with the responsibility of developing programs and curricula, thereby unifying the educational approach across the association's schools.(Al-Madani, Hayat Kifah, 2009, pp. 276 - 277)

After World War II and the passing of Sheikh Ibn Badis in 1940, the Algerian Muslim Scholars Association experienced a revival under Sheikh Muhammad al-Bashir al-Ibrahimi's leadership. To address the growing demand for education, the association established specialized committees, including the Education Committee, which supervised the association's schools to ensure they aligned with its objectives and ideals.

- Instilling a love for the Arabic language in the hearts of learners and making them taste the characteristics of expression and realize its secrets.
- Adopting linguistic texts as a living source for educating generations, expanding their horizons, refining their tastes, and refining their feelings.
- Upgrading the methods of teaching the Arabic language and developing the contents of the curricula.
- Enabling learners to see their history and understand their heritage and culture of their nation.(Fadil, 2023)

This association also worked on:

- Developing a cohesive and standardized curriculum for free Arabic education throughout the country.
- Establishing a selection of prescribed books to be used in the educational process.

- Implementing a system of categorizing teachers into different grades based on their competence, cultural background, and experience.
- Overseeing examinations and competitions for teacher recruitment within the association.
- Designing comprehensive programs for each subject of study to ensure a well-rounded education.
- Establishing regulations regarding the validity of school certificates and the transfer of students between academic years.
- Appointing inspectors to monitor and evaluate the performance of teachers, facilitating teacher transfers, overseeing promotions, salary matters, and handling other administrative procedures relevant to this sector.(Ramadan, 1984, pp. 366 - 367)

The association's resolute commitment to advancing Arabic education under occupation is evident through their dedicated and professional efforts to nurture a knowledgeable generation proficient in their language. Their establishment of educational institutions posed a significant challenge to colonialism, making them a source of pride and hope for the Algerian people in the face of adversity.

4.2. Mosque education:

The association served as a stronghold in safeguarding the various elements of Algerian identity, including the Arabic language. Faced with strict censorship imposed by the colonial administration on

traditional mosques, which curtailed their original functions and hindered the ability of religious leaders to teach in state-controlled mosques, the association responded by establishing independent mosques. These mosques not only served as places of worship but also doubled as centers for adult education and enlightenment. They offered lessons on preaching, guidance, Quranic interpretation, and Hadith for the benefit of the elderly, sheikhs, and the general public. These mosques provided a safe haven for adults seeking to acquire knowledge and escape the specter of illiteracy. Additionally, the association welcomed young individuals eager to engage in scholarly lessons, fostering a nurturing environment for their intellectual growth.(Zarouqa A. a.-R., 1990, pp. 166 - 185)

Sheikh Ibn Badis' emphasis on utilizing mosques for educational purposes can be understood by drawing inspiration from the practices of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, who established mosques as centers for both worship and education. Given that mosques attract individuals from all social strata, they present a valuable opportunity to educate and enlighten the broader public. Notably, the Association of Muslim Scholars constructed several mosques, including the Green Mosque, Sidi Abdel Moamen Mosque, and the Great Mosque, among others. The Green Mosque alone accommodated 300 students, showcasing the association's commitment to providing educational opportunities. However, Sheikh Ibn Badis had even grander

ambitions, aspiring to establish a college dedicated to religious education and to graduate jurists who would serve as educators and guardians of the nation's faith.(Scholars, 2008, p. 136)

4.3. Scientific and educational missions:

In addition to their internal efforts, the association sought to enhance and expand education. Sheikh Ibn Badis dispatched missions consisting of his students and accomplished individuals to prestigious institutions such as Al-Zaytouna Mosque and Al-Qarawiyyin Mosque in Morocco, as well as Al-Azhar University in Egypt, Iraq, Syria, and Kuwait. These missions were intended to allow them to pursue higher studies and cultivate a generation empowered with both national and Islamic values. Sheikh Al-Bashir Al-Ibrahimi continued this endeavor and personally relocated to the Arab and Islamic Levant in 1953 to oversee these missions and coordinate with relevant authorities in those countries.These educational missions played a significant role in nurturing brilliant individuals who later returned to their homeland with university degrees. Many of them assumed positions within the party and the state, contributing to the advancement of the Arabization movement following independence. Notable figures, including Rabih Turki Amamra, Muhammad al-Rashiq Sisan, and others, emerged from this academic pursuit and provided vital support to the efforts of promoting the Arabic language and cultural identity in Algeria.(Al-Din, pp. 37 - 38) This is another aspect that shows the status of Arab education at the association .

4.4. Clubs and Associations:

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To discipline, educate, and train youth and workers through religious, scouting, sports, and artistic organizations and to educate them socially and nationally, the Association established a network of clubs in numerous Algerian cities and villages. The Association also believed that clubs should follow the same rules as schools. Or its functions complement those of the other(Ramadan, 1984, pp. 357 - 364), and the share of the Arabic language was present in it, as conversations, plays, poems and chants were held in the Arabic language. (Zarouqa A. a.-R., 1990, pp. 166 - 185)in addition to the association's tendency to establish clubs can be considered as a good reading of the reality of Algerian society, as there are groups that do not go to schools or mosques, but are caught up in the alleys and places of entertainment, so there is no better than the clubs that can accommodate this segment of youth to educate and discipline them. (Al-Din, p. 36)The association has been able to make these clubs centers for education, political awareness, and the dissemination of authentic Arab culture.(-Alawi, p. 115)

Among these initiatives, the Al-Tarqi Club, founded in the capital in 1926, held particular significance for its profound influence on political and social life. However, the clubs were not exempt from French interference, similar to what schools and mosques experienced. The French Minister of the Interior issued the Clubs Law on January 20, 1938, which prohibited the sale of alcoholic beverages within the clubs. The association interpreted this as an implicit order to shut

down the clubs, thereby undermining their vital activities aimed at nurturing and guiding the youth in an Arab and Islamic direction.(Amamra T. R., 2009, pp. 92 - 93)

4.5. The press:

The press played a crucial role in preserving, developing, and promoting the Arabic language, and it was one of the significant endeavors undertaken by the association. The press publications initially began with the Defense Journal before evolving into a vital medium for the association's ideas and educational initiatives. Since 1925, the press became an instrumental tool for disseminating the association's literary, intellectual, political, and artistic contributions in the Arabic language. The sheikhs of the association, alongside other contributors, utilized the pages of these newspapers to share their novels, poems, stories, thoughts, and articles covering a wide range of topics. The newspapers featured various columns and sections dedicated to these literary and intellectual works. One notable publication was Al-Najah newspaper, founded in 1919 prior to the establishment of the Association of Scholars, with Ibn Badis being one of its founders and editors.(Mutabagani, pp. 68-69)

Subsequently, various renowned newspapers and publications affiliated with the association emerged, gaining recognition over time. The first among them was Al-Muntaqid, which debuted on July 2, 1925. Prominent writers such as Mubarak Al-Maili, Al-Tayeb Al-Aqabi, Abi Al-Yaqzan, and others contributed to its content. Another significant publication was Al-Shihab newspaper, which continued its

publication until 1929. However, due to financial constraints, it transformed into a monthly magazine until 1939, when it ceased publication entirely. These newspapers and periodicals served as vital platforms for the association to convey its ideas, thoughts, and literary contributions to the wider community. (Zarouqa A. A.-R., p. 179) Furthermore, The Sunnah of the Prophet newspaper was introduced but discontinued in 1932, with only 17 issues published before it was halted by the colonial administration. In its place, the Muhammadan Sharia emerged as a weekly newspaper under the guidance of Ibn Badis. The editorial responsibilities were entrusted to Sheikh Al-Aqabi and Sheikh Al-Zahri.(Rahal, 2009, p. 58) The path and insights that were issued on the day of Eid al-Fitr, corresponding to December 27, 1935, also emerged from it.(Insights)

The newspapers affiliated with the Algerian Muslim Scholars Association served as powerful tools in safeguarding the identity of Algerian society. Through their writings and articles, they acted as steadfast pillars, denouncing the colonial practices that detrimentally impacted Islam, the Arabic language, and the association's institutions across all domains.(Amamra R. T., p. 95). It also formed mobile schools and a major tributary of the Arabic language, which maintained its existence and steadfast in the face of attempts to annihilate it, and this through daily and weekly publication, so those newspapers were another outlet for the Arabic language until

conditions improved and the occupation ended.(Zarouqa A. A.-R., p. 185)

The journalistic works of Imam Ibn Badis and his brothers Al-Ibrahimi, Al-Uqbi, Al-Maili, Al-Arabi Al-Tibsi, and Ahmed Tawfiq Al-Madani (Noureddine, 2016, p. 28) are also noteworthy and the general writers carried a linguistic richness from which the audience of readers benefited. Its introduction is to confirm the Arab-Islamic personality of the Algerians, and the Arabic language was one of these pillars that were targeted in this mighty work.(Mutabaqani, p. 80).

5. The Arabic language at the heart of the association's political activity

Ever since its establishment, the Association of Muslim Scholars has consistently emphasized the significance of the Arabic language in all its initiatives, demands, and petitions. Whether in communication with the French authorities, collaboration with the broader Algerian national movement, or responding to the reformist projects proposed by the colonial administration, the association, led by Sheikh Abd al-Hamid Ibn Badis, consistently raised concerns and made demands regarding the status of the Arabic language, the preservation of mosques, the development of religious education, and the organization of the Islamic judicial system. These focal points were at the core of the association's efforts to safeguard the cultural and linguistic heritage of Algeria and promote the values of Islam.(Claude Collot, The Mouvement National Algeria,Textes 1912-1954, 1981, p. 65)

One significant political event where the scholars advocated for the Arabic language was the Islamic Conference held on June 6, 1936, at the Al-Tarqi Club. This conference brought together various national forces representing different segments of society to discuss the aspirations and demands of the Algerian people. One of the primary demands put forth during this conference was the recognition of the Arabic language and the imperative to teach it as well as establish it as an official language in Algeria alongside French. The second demand focused on matters concerning religious affairs.(Claude Collot, 1981, p. 70)

The latter consisted of 18 members, and who traveled to Paris to present the demands of the Algerian nation. The delegation had interviews with the Former governor general and state minister Maurice Violet (Saeedouni, 2000, pp. 224-225)Two hours that the sheikh used to present demands related to the freedom of Arabic education in mosques and to remove the injustice that followed, and Ben Badis informed him of the size of the harassment that affects the Arabic language in its homes.(Al-Shihab, 1936, p. 308) The delegation also had an interview with the Minister of the Interior, "Raoul Obo" and the Minister of War, "Edouard Daladier." (Encyclopedique, 1961, p. 759)The delegation also visited the Prime Minister, "Leon Blum" on Friday, July 24, 1936, in the presence of "Maurice Violet" and "Gul Mok," the Secretary General of the Prime Minister's office. Ibn Badis expressed his fears of the consequences of

the government's rejection of the demands of the Algerian nation.(-Shihab, 1936, p. 309)

Additionally, following a vote of no confidence in Parliament on June 21, 1937, the Popular Front government was overthrown (Franc, 1965, p. 309)the factions of the Algerian National Movement met again between July 9 and July 11, 1937, during which urgent demands were presented, mainly related to freedom of Arab education and the press, and the abolition of all exceptional laws. The conferees declared their adherence to the demands of the second conference as representing the minimum aspirations of the Algerians, and by the way, they demanded the deputies to collectively resign and mobilize the people to stand with them at this stage.(-Basir, 1938)

Despite the extraordinary efforts made by the delegation, the outcomes were disheartening and far from meeting their aspirations. In fact, decisions were issued that directly contradicted the desires of the delegation and the Algerian people. This included the decision made on January 13, 1938, which imposed a ban on cultural clubs in Algeria and hindered the progress of free Arab education. Another detrimental decision was issued on March 08, 1938, by Judge Camille Chotan, which led to the closure of unlicensed free schools, such as Dar Al-Hadith in Tlemcen and the Sidi Bel Abbas School, resulting in the expulsion of their teachers. Additionally, the French forces were heightened in Algeria, anticipating any potential disruptions from the people. These decisions not only hindered the advancement of Arabic education and cultural institutions but also demonstrated the

oppressive measures taken by the French administration to suppress the aspirations of the Algerian people.(Murad, 1967, p. 340)[1]

Despite the disappointment experienced by the Algerian delegation during their second visit to Paris and the confrontational attitude displayed by Daladier, who resorted to threats and emphasized the might of France, Sheikh Ibn Badis seized the moment and responded resolutely to these intimidations. He eloquently expressed, "…and he was adorned with a gift and an aura of majesty radiating greatness and dignity. There is no power or strength except through God, the Most High, the Supreme. The truth is on our side, and the truth is sublime and unmatched. Regardless of the circumstances, we will persist in our struggle." In the face of adversity, Sheikh Ibn Badis exemplified unwavering determination and faith, asserting that the righteous cause of the Algerian people would prevail despite any challenges they encountered.(Abbas, 2005, p. 157). Disappointment was the announcement of "Ibn Badis" that the Bloom Violet project had died and did not wait for its resurrection again, and with the emergence of indications of the beginning of World War II, the sheikh entered a new stage in his struggle, more intense with the French enemy, but death kidnapped him, and that prevented him from seeing another stage in his life. The struggle of the Scholars Association and its president, Abdul Hamid Ibn Badis.(-Aqoun, 1984, pp. 133 - 135).

6. CONCLUSION

Despite the severe impact of French colonialism and its aggressive policies that targeted various aspects of Algerian society, particularly the Arabic language, subjecting it to marginalization, harassment, and attempts at eradication both administratively and socially, the resilience and determination of the Algerian elite and benefactors remained unbroken. Foremost among them were the members of the Algerian Muslim Scholars Association, who spared no effort in defending the Arabic language and combating colonialism in its name. They created an enabling environment for its teaching and utilization in all spheres of life, ensuring its widespread usage across the country. These concerted efforts became instrumental in preserving the existence and continuity of the Arabic language, which in turn safeguarded the spirit of the Algerian identity deeply rooted in Arabism and Islam. As a result, the Association of Scholars can be credited with significant success in revitalizing the Arabic language within the Algerian context.

Through their immense efforts and dedication, the Algerian Muslim Scholars Association painted a vivid portrait that epitomizes the sacrifices made in a battle no less perilous than armed conflict. Perhaps Sheikh Ibn Badis encapsulated the achievements of the association for the advancement of the Arabic language with utmost sincerity, stating: "Arabism fought among you until it was presumed that its lineage had perished, and its expression had been distorted. Yet, after a century, your nights resound with its poetry, stirring emotions and sentiments. Your orators roar with its verses,

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demolishing fortresses and strongholds. Your writers, wielding their pens, shake the foundations, causing disruption and upheaval." These words poignantly convey the profound impact of the association's endeavors, reviving the essence of Arabism within the Algerian society and reaffirming the vitality of the Arabic language.

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