



The Media Publications During the Algerian Liberation Revolution

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Abstract:

Revolutionary media is a means of resistance , and played an active role in introducing the Algerian cause , and changing the views and attitudes of many of those who were deceived by the fake French propaganda , on this basis the leaders of the Algerian revolution saw the need to pay special attention to the revolutionary media that serves it through the issuance of publications , bulletins and statements , establishing newspapers and radios ,and taking care of image ,so that the work would be to publicize the issue of the Algerian revolution internationally with the aim of independence and national sovereignty .

Keywords: issuance. Independence. Sovereignty. Algerian.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Algerian revolution employed diverse methods and varied communication strategies, all aimed at elucidating the Algerian cause and presenting it to the world, emphasizing its credibility. To achieve this goal, various media channels were utilized, including newspapers, journals, and audio-visual mediums such as radio and cinema. However, like any other means of communication, these faced a myriad of challenges and difficulties that only strengthened their resolve.

Media during the Liberation Revolution: The media adopted by the revolutionary movement proved to be the optimal means for conveying the message of the Algerian people through the official spokesperson of the revolution, the National Liberation Front (FLN). Several methods were employed:

1 Publications, Charters, and Statements:

1-1-Publication:

It is a paper that contains a topic or news distributed to people for free to inform them of a specific event. This paper, called a publication, represents a regular sheet written on one or both sides, depending on the length or brevity of the topic. If it exceeds one sheet and becomes two or more, it is then considered a newsletter (Boumali, 2009).

The content of publications is written in a simple language and a straightforward style to reach the general public. The purpose is to inform the public, appealing to their emotions to gain their approval and support for a fundamental idea or to explain a matter with political or military significance.

The leaders of the revolution attached great importance to the field of media and propaganda through publications. Brochures were used to disseminate decisions to the people. These brochures were distributed by militants throughout Algeria simultaneously. Distribution often occurred in crowded streets and squares when people were most likely to be present. Night-time distribution was common when surveillance was strict during the day (Boukerioua, 2011).

The press that emerged at the beginning of the revolution took the form of brochures, forming a method of political and moral influence on the masses. The analysis and comments in these publications always started from the principle that the mobilization of the masses around the revolution is the only means to enable the revolution to achieve victory. The public became convinced of the necessity of gathering and utilizing energy to defeat the enemy under the banner of victory and martyrdom (Boukerioua, 2011).

Various types of publications were issued during that time, such as:

1-1-1- Provincial Publications:

During the revolution, military regions issued newspapers. The first military region to do so was the Aurès military region, which published a newspaper called "Al-Watan" in 1955. It was written in French, printed, and contained the most important news of the region, responses to Western press propaganda, and international news.

1-1-2- Ministry of Information Publications:

The Ministry of Information in the Provisional Government of the Algerian Revolution issued a bi-monthly political newsletter in both Arabic and French, containing 12 pages. It included an editorial and comments, titled "Sawt Al-Jazair" (The Voice of Algeria) from Tunisia. This newsletter was issued in 1960 and then stopped. It was distributed on a limited scale, and

there were other publications issued by the Ministry of Information on some political occasions to clarify aspects of the liberation war or respond to French propaganda.

1-1-3- Publications of Popular Organizations:

Examples include "The Algerian Worker" for workers and "The Algerian Youth" for young people. These publications played a significant role in responding to colonial propaganda, familiarizing people with events in the provinces, and responding to foreign press news.

These publications to some extent succeeded in spreading awareness, reinforcing the idea of rallying around the revolution, and isolating the colonial administration from the Algerian people, hindering its influence (Bachichi, 2009).

1-2The Soummam Conference Covenant:

The Soummam Conference brought forth numerous solutions to the challenges facing the Algerian revolution in the field of media and propaganda. It delved into its political approach and decisions, particularly addressing the aspect of Algerian propaganda that suffered from the lack of coordination among media entities speaking on behalf of the revolution. The third section of the political agenda of the covenant, titled "Media and Propaganda," outlined the following directives:

- ❖ **Prompt and Clear Response to All Lies and Condemnation of Provocative Actions:**
 - Emphasizing the need for swift and unequivocal responses to all falsehoods and the condemnation of provocative actions aimed at discrediting the Algerian cause.
- ❖ **Dissemination of Events:**
 - Advocating for the rapid dissemination of events, with the initiation of media efforts immediately upon completion of a fedayeen's military operation for the benefit of the revolution.
- ❖ **Assignment of Political Leaders as Media Figures and Supervisors:**
 - Calling for the assignment of political leaders to assume the roles of media figures and supervisors, overseeing all matters related to propaganda, news, and direction. This underscores the integration of political and media responsibilities.
- ❖ **Provision of Printing Machines and Paper for National Documents and Local Publications:**
 - Ensuring the availability of printing machines and paper for reproducing national documents and local publications. This highlights the importance of maintaining a steady flow of printed material to support the dissemination of information.
- ❖ **Installation of the National Liberation Front (FLN) in an Organized Manner Across the Country:**
 - Advocating for the organized installation of the FLN in various locations, including cities, villages, regions, factories, universities, and schools. The goal is to elevate the thinking of leaders in alignment with the global reputation that Algeria has earned in its pursuit of freedom and independence.

The Covenant of the Soummam Conference played a pivotal role in addressing the challenges in media and propaganda during the Algerian revolution. Additionally, it laid down a comprehensive approach to ensure effective communication and coordination, reflecting the commitment of the revolutionaries to advance their cause through strategic and organized means.

1-3 The statement of November 1st, 1954:

The November 1, 1954 statement stands as the first significant media initiative widely distributed to announce the birth of the revolution. It successfully penetrated colonial media, addressing the Algerian people and militants in the language of the liberation struggle, resonating strongly with the populace. The statement explicitly conveyed the revolutionary program, clarified the validity of its principles, and elucidated the essence of the struggle for national liberation in North Africa.

The statement sought to achieve several objectives, including:

- Attainment of national independence.
- Construction of a sovereign Algerian state.
- Respect for all fundamental freedoms without racial or religious discrimination.
- Internationalization of the Algerian issue.

2 Newspapers and Journals:

The media landscape in Algeria before the revolution was primarily limited to written press as a tool to connect Algerians. Newspapers were issued either in Arabic or French (Cherif, 2004). Newspapers played a role in colonial propaganda by covering the events of the liberation revolution. The French colonial administration employed various methods to maintain its continuous control over the people. Here are some newspapers and journals that had an impact on covering the events of the Algerian revolution:

2-1. Al Chaab Newspaper:

Published in Arabic, it was a bi-monthly newspaper edited by Mefdi Zakaria and Mohamed Kennache in Algiers. It ceased publication after only two issues due to the imprisonment of its political director (Messaoudi Hadj) and its editor-in-chief (Mefdi Zakaria), along with four members of its administrative team (Dellou, 2014).

2-2. El Chabab Journal:

Issued by the National Liberation Front (FLN) in 1959, it worked on reinforcing general periodic publications with semi-monthly political releases from April 1959. Before that, starting November 1956, it distributed political brochures, leaflets, and informational postcards (Cherif, 2004).

2-3. El Mudjahid Newspaper:

The newspaper officially recorded its first issue under the name of the revolution, stating, "From today onwards, Al Mujahid is issued as the newspaper of the Algerian revolution and its sole voice." It emerged in mid-June 1956 from the heart of Algiers, specifically from the Kasbah neighborhood. It played a crucial role as the authentic torchbearer of revolutionary journalism in Algeria. Supervised by key figures in the leadership, namely the martyrs Arabi Ben Mhidi, Didouche Mourad, and AbaneRamdane. The true transformation in the life of Al Mujahid occurred after transitioning from clandestine to public life post the Battle of Algiers. It embraced its true identity as the central and sole voice of the revolution, in line with the outcomes of the Soumam Conference in August 1956 (Hamdi, 2009).

El Mudjahid newspaper was initially named Between 'El Moukafih' (The Fighter) and the Algerian Mudjahid, it later adopted its final name. The first issue of El Mudjahid was released on June 15, 1956, as a booklet with 30 pages in French in Algiers, followed by an Arabic version at the beginning of 1957. Mohamed Yazid chaired the newspaper, and the editorial leadership circulated on its French version from July 1957 until September 1962, passing to Belkacem Ben

Yahia until December 1963, and finally to Mourad Bouryon until its discontinuation on August 31, 1964 (Chaouch, 2016).

3 Radio and Cinema:

3-1-Radio:

Algerian radio was born in the glow of the liberation revolution, precisely on December 16, 1956. The clandestine radio, "Voice of Free and Fighting Algeria," started broadcasting its programs using a mobile transmitter on a truck of the type "GMC." It represented a national radio with the tasks of awareness, enlightenment, defining the cause, and confronting colonial propaganda. The first phase of this radio began in late 1957, halted, and resumed broadcasting in the summer of 1959 with simple devices and limited resources.

3-1-1-Voice of Algeria from Tunisia:

This radio gained special importance, represented by the voice of "AissaMessaoudi," one of the prominent radio voices during the liberation battle. This voice successfully recruited thousands of Algerian youth into the ranks of the revolution and significantly influenced the Algerian masses, despite the daily broadcast duration not exceeding 30 minutes, rich with military information from the fierce battles across Algeria (Nour, 2005).

3-1-2-Voice of Algeria from Cairo:

Cairo deserves the top position on the list of Arab capitals supporting the Algerian revolution. It declared the outbreak of the revolution on November 1, similar to Algiers. Cairo was the first to raise the banner of the National Liberation Front (FLN) outside the country (Bachiche, 2019). The radio "Voice of the Arabs" in Cairo played a decisive and effective role in the liberation battle. The news of the Algerian revolution began airing on Cairo's radio in 1955 through programs like an Algerian program addressing the French, broadcast in French, and a daily political commentary presented in Arabic by "Adda Bengatat." The program, lasting fifteen minutes, was broadcast every evening.

3-1-3-Voice of Algeria from Benghazi:

This radio also broadcasted three times a week, with "AbderrahmaneCherif" and the Libyan "AbdelkaderAoufa" as active participants. Later, "LamineBouchichi" took charge of the Algerian office starting from May 1956 (Salami, 2016).

3-1-4-Voice of Algeria from Damascus:

The mujahid "Mohamed Al-Ghubairi" supervised this promotional space for the revolution under the title "Voice of the Rising Algeria." The Syrian officials agreed to grant him an hour of daily broadcast containing military news, political commentary, and news analysis. The program featured contributors like Mohamed Mahri, Mohamed Bouarroudj, and El HachemiKadouri. This program ceased airing in 1961 after Syria's separation from Egypt, as the new Syrian officials insisted on monitoring the media content, which the Algerian mission refused, leading to the suspension of the broadcast (Abdelli, 2015).

3-1-5-Voice of Algeria from Baghdad 1958:

Starting in 1958, the Algerian mission in Baghdad managed to present a radio program dedicated to the Algerian revolution, thanks to AbdelkrimKassem at the time (Marah, 2016).

3-1-6-Voice of Algeria from Radio Tripoli:

In 1958, Voice of Algeria launched from Libya to provide the Libyan people with news of the Algerian revolution. Dr. "LamineDabbaghine" inaugurated this radio, with "Rabah Mechhoud" delivering the opening speech, and "Mohamed Salah Seddik" being the sole

person in charge of editing and political commentary. "Hassan Yami" assisted with military news, and the radio aired three times a week, with each session lasting about half an hour (Nour, 2005).

3-2 Cinema

The birth of Algerian cinema dates back to 1956, coinciding with its emergence in sister countries Tunisia and Morocco, which hosted important bases of the National Liberation Front. The Algerian revolution sought, through its use of cinema, to demonstrate the justice and legitimacy of its cause to the international public opinion. This policy was led by "AbbanRamdan," who stated, "... In this context, we must limit the use of this new weapon: the camera, which replaces leaflets and statements" (Hilal, 2001).

Since the use of the camera was a recent development, the National Liberation Front had to innovate, lacking sophisticated means. French militants sympathetic to the Communist Party supported them, producing the first documentary films in the mountains. Notable figures include BrunehautFouthie, Pierre Clement, and Dr. Chollet WianLomasson, who not only created the first documentaries but also contributed to the training of Algerian technicians. These films served as living testimonials of the struggle (Bedjaoui, 2016).

Effectiveness of Revolutionary Media against Propaganda:

Many researchers analysing events related to battles and revolutions emphasize the importance of determining the principles and precise events related to various communication and media activities during the revolution. These practices ensure the embodiment of ideological, political, and religious ideas to persuade and influence individuals toward a particular cause (Chaouche, 2016).

After realizing the importance of the Algerian revolution and its reputation in the international public opinion, colonial authorities sought to create a misleading public opinion. France employed psychological and media warfare to suppress the voice of revolutionary media. The historian "Stefan Quezal" advocated for a psychological invasion alongside the material invasion. Following this idea, French authorities formed armies of experts in psychological and media warfare, using various methods to silence revolutionary media (Chaouche, 2016).

Among the methods used were daily pamphlets distributed;

- Depicting France as the greatest country and its army as the strongest in the world.
- A newsletter addressed to the leaders of the Liberation Army, particularly at the higher levels, informs them that the French army has achieved several victories over the Liberation Army (Blaise, 1990). The colonial authorities sought, through their media messages, to distort and mislead public opinion. France did not stop at this extent but worked to encircle and besiege the revolution's media, exploiting the policy of deprived areas and concentrations, aiming to isolate the people from the revolution. For this purpose, planes dropped leaflets instructing residents of these areas to join specific centers, successfully isolating many regions through intimidation (Boumali, 2009). To isolate the revolution from its external environment, especially the Arab world, French authorities sought to cut the support it received from its Arab brothers, especially Egypt. The Voice of Algeria radio station in Cairo was not spared from the enemy's pursuit. The French pressured the Egyptian government to stop programs broadcast from the Arab Voice radio station, but the Egyptian government did not yield to these threats (NaitBelkacem, 1984).

The French authorities also used media as a means of deception and interference with the revolution's media. They forged leaflets that resembled those of the Liberation Front, bearing the image of the Algerian flag and the seal of the Algerian army. The purpose behind these leaflets was to cast doubt on the authenticity of the original Liberation Front leaflets and sow doubt among the Algerian people. They aimed to create confusion about which leaflets were genuine and which were misleading. Among these leaflets was one distributed by the Governor-General, Robert Lacoste, in the name of the Front, warning the Algerian people about a leaflet that the Front had published calling for a strike on January 27, 1957 (Qalil, 1991).

In response to the propaganda policy pursued by France, some communication and media outlets, in their traditional and simple forms during the revolution, worked on diversifying the means and methods aimed at convincing the Algerian individual of the necessity to continue the legitimate struggle, to resist, and not to surrender. Among these methods were international media offices, conferences, and the radio (Voice of Algeria), as well as the newspaper "El-Moudjahid," magazines, and cinema, all characterized by their propagandistic nature aimed at countering the repeated ideas and statements of French propaganda. This propaganda presented ideological concepts based on fallacies and false ideas to influence both the Algerian and French individuals and to gain international and media support for the Algerian cause. This was achieved by following a strategy of open struggle in the media, both domestically and internationally, through:

- Preparing newsletters, reports, and publications, relying on newspapers like "El-Moudjahid" and "Resistance Algerian Newspaper" as the essential and central voice of the National Liberation Front.
- Establishing Radio Algeria, which constantly conveyed information about battles and broadcast revolutionary anthems to sustain resistance.
- The revolutionary media of the National Liberation Front relied on media figures who consistently aimed to interpret and explain events and present them to the Algerian individual in their realistic nature.
- Opening the National Liberation Front to various fronts to defend its key principles, including the internal front that focused on the Algerian population in cities and rural areas, and the Liberation Army in the mountains.
- Establishing news agencies, cinemas, and photographic images, organizing international conferences and seminars, and utilizing sessions of the United Nations, such as the 1955 session, to promote the internationalization of the Algerian cause on the organization's agenda (Chaouche, 2016).

-Revolutionary Media's Global Position:

The media is characterized by several features and principles, and these principles are shared by revolutionary media with global media. Revolutionary media has gained a position challenging and competing for its place in the global media landscape. Despite the considerable material and human resources harnessed by colonial media, it failed to occupy any media space or gain support. Colonial media lost its carrier base for its messages.

Regarding the Algerian revolution's challenge to achieve its goal of convincing the world of the justness of its cause and exposing the ugly face of French colonization in Algeria, this made global media accept the propaganda that imposed itself on public opinion, convincing it of its justness. Consequently, revolutionary media gained prominence in global media by breaking down the notion that Algeria is an integral part of France and working diligently to

persuade the international public opinion that the Algerian people have their own identity, heritage, and the right to live a dignified life like other nations.

Considering that the fundamental issue in media is the understanding of the media and propaganda figure of the essence of the general principles that enable them to present acceptable media content, we see that Algerian media has embodied these qualities and principles, namely timeliness, objectivity, and truthfulness. Thus, we conclude that truthfulness is the common denominator between revolutionary media and global media. This differentiation from colonial media has widened the gap between them, clarifying its standing in the global public opinion (Hamdi, 2009).

-Difficulties and Challenges of Revolutionary Media:

Most Algerian newspapers worked on mobilizing the revolution, urging for independence, and presenting various news to motivate the Algerian people. Among these challenges were the following:

- Establishing Foundations for Connection between the People and the Revolution: Working on the mechanisms to link the people with the armed struggle because there is no revolution without the people, and no freedom without a revolution.
- Activating Internal Media Propaganda: The aim was to recruit and mobilize the masses to stand alongside the revolution, confront the French colonialists, and expel them from the homeland without retreat.
- Revealing the True Face of Colonialism: Exposing the heinous acts committed by colonial powers against the Algerian people, emphasizing the Algerian people's authenticity, identity, and religion, which cannot be French under any circumstances.
- Connecting the Revolution with the People: Keeping the public informed about the reality of the armed conflict with the enemy.
- Mobilizing the Popular Masses: Encouraging the general public to rally around the revolution for liberation and independence.
- Immunizing Algerian Citizens from Colonialist Media, Psychological, and Ideological Warfare: Protecting citizens from the influence of French media and psychological and ideological warfare.
- Confronting Enemy Media: Responding to and silencing the enemy's propaganda.

Revolutionary media and its established channels faced numerous obstacles and complexities during the liberation revolution, both internally and externally—materially and humanly. Some of these challenges included:

- Differences in global public opinion, especially in Europe and the West, which historically and ideologically leaned towards France. This made it difficult for revolutionary media to convey the Algerian perspective.
- Support from Western media for the French viewpoint, portraying negative aspects of the Algerian revolution. Revolutionary media had to be vigilant, ensuring the accuracy of data and scrutinizing information provided to Western agencies to prevent distortion.
- Managing media activities from outside the country, within sovereign states with their own laws and interests, posed a significant challenge for Algerian media. They had to operate under sensitive conditions to avoid clashes with systems differing from the policies of the Algerian revolution.

The early years of the Algerian revolution were marked by various material and technical difficulties, including a shortage of trained media professionals, lack of technological resources, dispersion of revolutionary apparatus between Algeria, Tunisia, Cairo, and Morocco, and communication challenges resulting in conflicting statements due to the lack of coordination among various media outlets operating under the banner of the revolution. Despite these challenges, revolutionary media had a significant impact in conveying the voice of the Algerian people and convincing the world of the justice of their cause.

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