Sheikh Muhammad Al-Abid Al-Jalali (1890–1967) From Intellectual Struggle to Armed Struggle

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Abstract:

Although national historical writings often highlight the heroes of armed struggle, the contributions of scholars and thinkers to the national liberation movement still require further research and historiography, especially when it comes to figures who combined intellectual struggle with field revolutionary work. Among these is Sheik Muhammad Al-Abid Al-Jalali, who dedicated his pen to confronting the French colonial distortion projects and then actually joined the ranks of the National Liberation Army

key words: Algeria; French occupation; revolutionary work; Sheik Mohamed Abed Al-Jilali

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Introduction:

The educated elite in Algeria realized that the battle against colonialism was not just a military struggle, but a civilizational struggle targeting the identity, language, religion, and collective memory of the Algerian people. In this context, many writers, scholars, and thinkers took it upon themselves to defend the national character thru writing, education, oratory, and political awareness. They thus formed an intellectual and cultural front that confronted the colonial project, which sought to erase Algeria's civilizational components. For them, the pen was a tool of resistance parallel to the rifle, awakening consciousness and paving the way for the glorious revolution.

Some of these intellectuals have transitioned from their intellectual positions to direct struggle, engaging in the armed revolution, utilizing their spiritual and scientific stature to mobilize and incite the masses to reject the occupation. Among these prominent figures who embodied this integration of ideas and struggle, was Sheik Muhammad Al-Abid Al-Jalali, as he is considered one of the key figures of the prominent figures in modern Algerian history, where he combined educational and literary work with national struggle, the Sheik lived in a colonial context where Algeria was suffering under French occupation. He engaged early in the battle of awareness, using his pen to confront the policies of ignorance and cultural erasure practiced by the colonial administration. The Sheik did not limit himself to education, writing, and intellectual guidance; he moved to the field of action, joining the ranks of the National Liberation Army, contributing to the armed struggle for the restoration of national sovereignty.

This research paper seeks to shed light on the struggle of Sheik Muhammad Al-Abid Al-Jalali, through an examination of his reformist ideology and intellectual efforts, followed by a review of his actual participation in the liberation revolution, highlighting the interplay of cultural and political dimensions in his national project.

In light of that, we raise the following question:

- How Did Sheik Muhammad Al-Abid Al-Jalali contribute to the national liberation struggle through his intellectual and armed field struggle within the Algerian revolution?

To cover the material of our research paper, we pose a series of sub-questions, which are:

- What is the historical and intellectual context that contributed to shaping Sheik Muhammad Al-Abid Al-Jalali's consciousness?

- How did the Sheik use his pen and scientific stature in confronting colonialism?
- What is the nature of the transition from intellectual struggle to engaging in armed action?
- What is the position of Sheik Muhammad Al-Abid Al-Jalali in today's Algerian national memory? and has he received his due in history and academic research?

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What is the historical and intellectual context that contributed to shaping the awareness of Sheik Muhammad al-Abid al-Jalali?

How did the Sheik use his pen and scientific standing in confronting colonialism?What is the nature of the transition from intellectual struggle to engaging in armed action?

What is the position of Sheik Muhammad al-Abid al-Jalali in today's Algerian national memory? Has he received his due in history and academic research?

1.Birth and upbringing:

He is Muhammad bin al-Abid Abdullah bin al-Sayyih bin al-Sayy Yusuf bin al-Samati, known in educational circles in the country as Muhammad bin al-Abid al-Jalali, and he was known by his pen name "Rashid" **(Nouihad, 1980, p. 115)** Muhammad bin al-Abid was born in 1890 AD, corresponding to 1308 AH, in the town of Ouled Jalal. He lived and grew up in a distinguished family steeped in knowledge and ethics.

1.1 His Upbringing:

Mohammed Ben Al-Abid Al-Jilali was born into a family known for their expertise in the fields of knowledge and struggle since the Ottoman era. The Sheik learned the Quran from his father, Sheik Al-Abid Al-Samati, who was an imam, poet, and writer in the town of Ouled Jalal. He also had extensive knowledge of religious sciences and Sharia rulings and volunteered as an imam in his birthplace.

The Sheik refused the French authorities' proposal to formalize his position in the job he was already occupying. Therefore, he moved between the mosques and zawiyas of the town, in addition to the Zawiya of El-Hamel in Bousaada and the mosque of the town of Ourlal in Biskra.**(smaati, 2010, p. 10)**

2.His studies and formation:

2.1 - His enrollment in the Green Mosque in Constantine:

The Sheik set off to the circles of knowledge in the land and cradle of civilization, Constantine, in 1920. From his first visit, Muhammad bin al-Abid al-Jilali was captivated by the city of Constantine, and its historical and civilizational landmarks fascinated him.

This strengthened his determination to seek knowledge, so he got to know some students of knowledge and accompanied them to attend the first lesson of the scholar Ibn-Badis. He felt a sense of awe as he saw the seriousness and diligence on the faces of the students, and he followed every word his teacher uttered. The sheik recounts that he was listening to a new perspective on a topic he thought was settled and not subject to debate: "Fate and Destiny." He was amazed by the good presentation and how the imam elaborated on the scholars' opinions, highlighting the points of contention and disagreement among them. At that moment, Muhammad bin Al-Abid, the new student, firmly believed that the evidence for this settled matter was incorrect, based on the intellectual foundation he had brought from his hometown. Ideas rushed and information accumulated in his mind as if he were hearing the topic for the first time, a new door to knowledge and learning opened before him, and he realized he had found the right path he had been searching for. He committed to attending Sheik Abdul Hamid Ibn-Badis's lessons and persevered in them, the latter noticed his eagerness for knowledge and learning, so he provided him with everything that would enlighten his mind and cultivate in him a sense of responsibility towards knowledge, and he appointed him to work with him. When the Free Islamic Education School was founded in Constantine, he chose him to be among its teaching staff. **(Ikram, 2013, p. 22).**

3.His educational activity:

Sheik Muhammad bin al-Abid al-Jilali embarked on his educational and teaching journey driven by a steadfast determination and a deep belief in the mission he carried, which was to spread knowledge and instill national values among the youth. He chose to dedicate his efforts to the service of education and teaching during a critical historical period, when attempts by the French colonial administration to erase the civilizational identity of Algerian society increased, targeting its cultural and religious components. In this context, the Sheik fulfilled his mission as a national duty and intellectual responsibility, directing his educational discourse toward building a resistant awareness among the nation's youth, encouraging them to cling to their identity and engage in the national liberation project, starting from:

3.1. The School of El-Eulmma:

The educational journey of Mohamed Ben Abdel-Jilali began in 1925 when Ibn Badis sent him to the town of El-Hamma in the Sétif province to teach at its free school. However, he did not stay there long, refusing to work in a school where employees held French government positions, He saw this as a lack of patriotism among these employees and informed his teacher of his dissatisfaction with the assigned position, Ibn-Badis recalled him before the end of the school year and assigned him to teach the primary stage at the Constantine School, He succeeded in his mission, as some believe that teaching children is a degradation of value, In recognition of this achievement, Ibn-Badis titled him the "Ideal Teacher,"

and Al Ibrahimi said about him (....he had in educating children and instilling a love for knowledge in their hearts psychological methods that were unique to him), He started from a practical plan based on two main elements: the child and values, The first of these values was to instill in the child "Algeria and Islam." **(Rahmoni, 2025).**

His dedication, noble goal, and love for his country led him to explore human experiences in the educational and psychological fields, such as relying on methods that aid understanding and evoke emotions to attract children and instill these values in them. He rejected all punitive measures practiced by teachers. It was never mentioned that he punished a student; rather, the students themselves were happy when they found Sheik Mohammed bin Al-Abed as their teacher in class. When they faced difficulties with other teachers, they would turn to him for help, and he would not hesitate to assist them **(Ikram, 2013, pp. 194,195).**

In addition to teaching children, he was interested in music, melodies, and anthems, and he fought against anything that insulted the symbols of the nation and worked on shaping the men of tomorrow. His years of service in the school extended for about 13 years from 1930 to 1943, during which the Sheik left a profound impact on his students, as noted by the author of "Witness to the Century." The scholar Malik Bennabi, during his studies under the guidance of Muhammad al-Abid at the Ibn-Badis Institute in Constantine, said: "... "If it weren't for the lessons of Sheik Mouloud Ben Mouhoub in monotheism and the biography of the Prophet, and those of Sheik Ben Al-Abed in jurisprudence, these were a strong reminder that brought my spirit back to the right path." **(Miyad, 2019, p. 8).**

Then Sheik Ibn-Badis sent him to the Al-Eulma School for the second time, and upon his arrival, the townspeople welcomed him warmly, However, his stay did not last long, as the French colonial authorities grew tired of the school and its teachers, so they decided to close it, Muhammad Ibn Al-Abid then returned directly to Constantine to continue his educational duties alongside a group of scholars, including Sheik Mubarak Al-Mili and Al-Fadhil Al-Wartilani**(Laryas, 2014, p. 350)** and others, such as: Sharif Al-Sayighi, Abdul Ali Al-Akhdari, Muhammad Al-Said Al-Zamushi, Abdul Majid Hirsh, Hamza Boukousha, Belkacem Al-Zaghdani, Al-Jalali Al-Fassi, Issa Al-Darraji, and Muhammad Al-Milliani (Nabi, 1984), until Sheik Ibn-Badis completed the construction of a school in Biskra for education and teaching, where "Ibn Al-Abid" became the director **(smaati, 2010, p. 27).**

3.2. The School of Education and Instruction in Biskra:

After the death of Sheik Ibn Badis, Sheik Al-Bashir Al-Ibrahimi appointed Muhammad Ibn Al-Abid Al-Jilali to a greater and more significant task, He was directed to become the director of the School of Education and Instruction in Biskra, Everyone under his supervision attested to his competence and success, Ibn Al-Abid was a teacher and assistant during

the day, and a guiding mentor for adults in the educational classes, In developing educational methods, the Sheik saw the importance of Islamic scouting in educating the youth, so he established a branch of Islamic scouting in the school, naming it "fawj al rajaa" **(Tounci, 2024, p. 34),** and he actively engaged with his students.

The school teachers loved Ibn al-Abid in this school due to his agreement and steadfast belief in his goals and ideas **(Ikram, 2013, p. 194).** However, his joining the ranks of the People's Party and announcing his support for the Democratic Liberties Movement led to a conflict between him and the association's members, who accused him of denial. His response was: "… "Indeed, I am a son of the association and I do not deny its merits as long as I live, but a mother should not stifle her child's ideas." This response led to a decision to demote him from the rank of principal to the rank of teacher at the same school **(smaati, 2010, p. 28).**

3.3. Ain Mellila School:

Mohamed Ben El Abed worked in this school with activity and vitality from late November 1949 until 1954, alongside some of his companions from the reformist movement, which was managed by Sheik Mohamed El Eid El Khalifa. He left the teaching sections of this school to answer the call of jihad, joining the ranks of the fighters in the mountains after the outbreak of the blessed revolution. The fighter "IssaKachida" wrote about him **(Khechida, 2010, p. 6)**: "... Sheik "Ibn Al-Abid" was a pious and respected man who worked as a teacher in one of the schools in Ain M'lila. Boudaoud, Ben Boulaid, and Ben Mehidi visited him every time they passed thru the area, and they held him in great respect. He joined the mountains despite being advised to stay at home and support the revolution in other ways. However, he insisted on carrying the rifle to expel the colonizer. After independence, he returned to manage the Ain M'lila school for three years until he could no longer bear the difficulties of administrative work, and the educational journey and activities of "Mohamed Ben Al-Abid Al-Jilali" came to an end in 1965. What kept him from performing his educational mission, which he had carried out for more than a quarter of a century, was illness and sickness **(Ikram, 2013, p. 196).**

The array of ideas and proposals carried by the educational thought of Sheik Muhammad bin al-Abid al-Jilali makes us recognize the educational role he played in shaping individuals through his attempts to reform the Algerian school despite the difficulties and obstacles imposed by the French administration. The Sheikh's efforts were not limited to the educational field alone but extended to other areas, including poetry and journalism.

4.Struggle through Poetry:

Sheik Muhammad bin Al-Abid Al-Jilali's efforts were not limited to education and upbringing within institutions and schools; they extended to employing other means for reform and guidance, foremost among them poetry, The Sheik realized early on that the

measured word does not only serve an aesthetic function but also possesses a great ability to influence collective consciousness, especially in the hearts of the youth, Therefore, he adopted poetry as an educational and activist platform through which he addressed societal issues, instilled religious and national values, and contributed to building the child's and student's character on the foundations of morality and belonging. From this perspective, his poetic activity is considered a natural extension of his reformist project and another facet of his cultural and intellectual struggle.

The collection of school hymns by Sheik Muhammad bin Al-Abid Al-Jilali is a poetic work directed toward the sons and daughters of Algerian schools, consisting of eleven hymns. This collection was printed in 1358 AH/1939 AD in Tunisia and is considered one of the first printed collections dedicated to children in Arabic in Algeria. It can even be regarded as the first printed collection for children in Arabic in Algeria, as no sources indicate that any collection aimed at children was printed before it. The collection came in sixteen pages, and its eleven hymns were distributed as follows: Hymn of the Children, Hymn of the Boy, Hymn of the Girl, Hymn of the Era of Discord, Hymn of the School Opening for Girls, Hymn of the Opening, The Mission Story, Day of Muhammad (peace be upon him), Pride of Youth, Night of the Chosen One, Conversation Between Four Girls. **(Rahmoni, 2025).**

The importance of this diwan lies in its inclusion in reformative efforts aimed at educating the youth on religious and moral values, and reinforcing linguistic and national identity through simplified poetic discourse that is easy to circulate within the school and educational environment**(Asatida, 2002, p. 6)**, and most of these verses range between six and fourteen lines **(Asatida, 2002, p. 7)**, which carries a strong connotation in the Sheikh's attempt to direct his poetry toward the youth as an educational and formative means. He adopted the educational anthem as a path and a sharp sword against the Westernization that began to infiltrate various social circles **(Ikram, 2013, p. 198).**

As we mentioned earlier, the Sheik recognized the importance of words, especially educational anthems with meaningful lyrics and melodious tunes, and their impact on the youth and their role in building national identity. He noticed the invasion of French anthems into schools, cities, villages, and even homes. Therefore, he took the initiative to compose a collection of school anthems in the early thirties to challenge the French anthems. These anthems were compiled into a special book titled: "School Anthems for Algerian Schoolchildren" **(smaati, 2010, p. 31)**

Some sources recall his story with the schoolgirls who studied with him. They were playing in the schoolyard with a rope and singing a part of a French song titled "JAIME LA GALETTE." The girls did not pronounce it well, so he realized how deeply these songs had penetrated the world of our innocent child. The sheik was affected and became furious.

He called them to the classroom and reprimanded them for this act, saying: "Don't you know that you are studying in an Arabic Islamic school? This song is nothing but an insult and a disgrace to Algerian girls." One of them replied: "... "Sir, we don't have another song in Arabic to sing instead of the French song." Then Sheik Mohamed Ben El Abed El Djilali realized that it was impossible to do without the French anthem as long as there was no alternative. So he decided to create a national Arabic anthem for them, composed by the artist "Abdelkader Ben Toumi," titled "Arina El Ghazal." **(Masmoudi, 2010, p. 78)**.

It can be inferred from this educational project that the reformist sheik was early to recognize the profound impact of the anthem in shaping collective consciousness within Algerian society, particularly among the youth. From this standpoint, he worked on creating diverse anthems that consider the differences among the targeted groups, aiming to fill the spiritual and educational void that colonial anthems attempted to exploit, and to replace it with an anthem discourse based on education, guidance, and value-building. These anthems primarily targeted the sons and daughters of Algerian schools, serving as an educational tool that nurtured religious and national belonging, and enhanced the spirit of pride in identity. Thus, the Sheik provided a refined educational alternative, which children made a tool for cultural resistance against French anthems. His anthems quickly spread in educational and social circles, entered homes, and contributed to the consolidation of the national language and culture among the emerging generation, carrying with it educational, spiritual, and national dimensions.

5.His journalistic activity:

After World War I, the law of February 4, 1919, was enacted, which allowed for a relative margin of political and media openness, contributing to the growing role of the press as a means of expressing the demands and hopes of the locals. In the year 1919, the newspaper "Al-Najah" was published in the city of Constantine **(Boulasal, 2004, p. 237)**, owned by Abdel Hafid El-Hachimi El-Toulki, Sheik Mohamed Ben El-Abed El-Jilali and Abdelhamid Ibn-Badis participated in its establishment and writing, but they later separated from it after noticing the deviation of its editorial line, as it gradually turned into a tool serving the colonial administration in Algeria.

In the context of this transformation, Ibn-Badis turnedtoestablishing a journalistic platform that reflected his reformist vision and expressed the aspirations of the national elite, Thus, in 1925, the newspaper "Al-Montaqid" was published **(Taalbi, 2011, p. 80)**, serving as a platform for the ideas of a conscious groupof young Algerians.

The newspaper addressed the deteriorating socialconditions and the prevailing internal political issues of the time, and it made religious reform its main goal. It was published in the city of Constantine. Ibn-Badis described it by saying: "the voice of the rising youth in Algeria **(Nacer, 2002, p. 44)**".

In thiscontext, Sheik Muhammad bin al-Abid al-Jilali engaged in journalistic in journalistic activities alongside Imam AbdulHamid Ben Badis, and thenewspaper "Al-Montaqid" was the first journalistic endeavour published by Ben, After its cessation, the weekly "Al-Shihab" appeared in 1925, and Ibn Al-Abid continued in both newspapers as a writer and advocate for the reformist principles expressed by themovement through its slogan: "The truth above everyone and the homeland above everything" **(Moufdi, 2003, p. 48)** , and his mentor tasked him with touring some regions of the country to serve the goals of "Al-Montaqid" and then "Al-Shihab" during the years 1925-1926, where he recorded his observations during those trips in a column titled "Stops," in which he criticized a number of social ills and outdated customs prevalent in society, calling for attention to them and working to reform them. He was also known for his inclination to criticize condemned situations and negative phenomena in various aspects of public life.

On the other hand, he took on an organizational and media role by collecting subscriptions and introducing the books and periodicals that arrived at the magazine, in addition to publishing some of his narrative writings, which sometimes had a political dimension. The newspaper continued to be published until it was ceased in 1939 due to the outbreak of World War II **(Mourtad, 1983, pp. 198,199)** Ibn al-Abid contributed a significant number of articles to various national reformist newspapers, For example, he wrote in:

- **Al-Sadiq:** owned by Muhammad bin Bakir, and among the articles he wrote was one criticizing the deputies of the Algerian people, issue (53), March 20, 1922.

-**Lisān al-Dīn 1923**, by its authors Mustafa Ben Khaf and Abdul Aziz Hassan.

-**Al-Farooq Newspaper in 1924**, owned by Omar Ben Qaddour Algiers, alongside some articles in various newspapers (such as Al-Najah, Al-Sirat Al-Sawi, Al-Manar....) **(Saad Alah, 2015, p. 176).**

-**Al-Shihab Magazine:** Sheik Muhammad bin Al-Abid Al-Jilali accompanied the stages of the reformist renaissance from its early beginnings and contributed to its intellectual activity through his work in "Al-Shihab" magazine, particularly in the fields of editing and follow-up. With the increasing volume of books, magazines, and newspapers that Sheik Abdul Hamid Ibn-Badis received from various parts of the world, and the reading, commenting, and presenting that this required for the reader, Ben Badis found himself burdened with the daily teaching duties for hundreds of students, which limited his ability to carry out this task regularly. In this context, Ibn Badis found no one more worthy of taking on this role than his student, Muhammad bin al-Abid al-Jilali. He entrusted him with this task and explained it by saying: "Our lessons often fell short of fulfilling the written duties, including those offered to the youth in the form of books, newspapers, and magazines. Today, thank God, I have taken on this duty by assigning it to my son and friend, the free

thinker, Sheik Muhammad bin al-Abid al-Jilali. He graciously accepted what I entrusted to him, and his writings will be an example of freedom, literature, and sincerity." **(Masmoudi, 2010, p. 124).**

We also find seven short stories published in the newspaper Al-Shihab, including "On the Train, January 1935," "The Stolen Happiness, May 1935," "The Hunter in the Trap, June 1935," and "I Help You in Destruction, You Help Me in Construction, June 1935." He is also considered a pioneer of the short story in Algeria.

Anyone who reflects on the path of Sheik Muhammad bin al-Abid al-Jilali will find that he is one of the figures whose presence gradually contributed to building the Algerian national renaissance across multiple fields. He combined scientific and educational activities with reformist and missionary work. He also made a notable contribution in the journalistic field through writing, editing, and critiquing social phenomena. His presence was not limited to religious and intellectual guidance; it extended to supporting national awareness and nurturing the spirit of resistance among the youth. With the evolution of political circumstances and the rise of liberation awareness, this reformist path gradually transitioned to a more decisive phase, culminating in the Sheikh's later joining of the liberation revolution and his engagement in its ranks.

6. The joining of Mohamed Ben El Abed El Jilali to the revolution.

The disappointment of Sheik Muhammad bin al-Abid al-Jilali was immense following the discovery of the "Special Organization" in 1950, and the subsequent crackdown and widespread arrests among its activists. This event marked a decisive turning point in the development of secret national work, revealing the imminent confrontation with colonialism and confirming the limitations of relying solely on public political struggle to achieve the national goal. However, the man's dedication and deep political awareness made him realize that the stage of revolutionary resolution was near, and he was one of the few who had a visionary outlook on how the situation would unfold. Unlike some national leaders who only realized the truth of this option on the eve of the outbreak of the liberation revolution, it is understood from testimonies circulated in this context that Ibn Al-Abid was aware of some aspects of the preparations without disclosing the details, adhering to the necessities of secrecy and organizational discipline. In this regard, researcher Atiqa Smati based on the account of the late Mohamed Tayeb Allawi indicates that the Sheik was aware of some threads of the revolutionary work before its outbreak, but he preferred to remain reserved and not disclose it **(smaati, 2010, p. 116).**

It is said that Sheik Ibn Al-Abid was concerned about the future of the revolution. In September 1954, one of his students invited some of his classmates, along with a group of friends, to a lunch at his home in the city of Constantine, in honor of their teacher, Sheik

Ibn Al-Abid, who had promised to attend. This promise had a significant impact on the commitment of the invitees, and none of them were absent.

After exchanging greetings, the sheik surprised the attendees by asking each one of them direct questions, inquiring, "Are you married?" And all those who were asked the question answered in the affirmative. As soon as the sheik heard those answers, he stood up and headed toward the door, saying, "How will you face the revolution if it breaks out tomorrow?" Each one of you will excuse himself by saying he has a wife and children. He seemed determined to leave the house, were it not for the intervention of the hostone of his students_who tried to dissuade him from that, even threatening the guests with deprivation of lunch if the Sheik left, At that moment, the attendees hurried to calm him down, sincerely assuring him: "Rest assured, our master, if the revolution happens, we will not lag behind and we will not retreat," At that point, the sheik calmed down and his worries subsided, reassured by their stance and readiness for the future of the revolution **(smaati, 2010, p. 65).**

Sheik Ibn Al-Abid, despite his advanced age, was among the first to hasten to join the Algerian revolution following its outbreak. His age, which had reached sixty-four years, was not an obstacle to achieving his dream of participating in the national struggle. The news of his joining the mountains was confirmed by several reliable sources, including the virtuous sheik and dean of national gatherings, the late Zouhair Zahri, who said about him:"Ben El Abed, Mohamed Zahi Mili, and Ibrahim Mazhoudi were among those who joined the revolution, choosing to do so with sincerity and dedication." **(smaati, 2010, p. 66)**

Aissa Kachida, the author of the book "Engineers of the Revolution," refers to the status of Sheik Ibn Al-Abid and his educational and national role, saying about him: "..." Sheik Ibn Al-Abid was a pure and respectable man, who worked as a teacher in one of the schools overseen by the People's Party (Movement for the Victory of Democratic Liberties) in the city of Ain M'lila, Each of Boudiaf, Ben Boulaid, and Ben Mehidi would visit him whenever they passed through the area, as they held him in great respect and always mentioned him in their discussions while preparing their monthly reports directed to the party.

The Sheik joined the mountains despite the advice of the leaders of the Liberation Army in the region, who urged him to stay at home and contribute to the revolution through other means, such as religious guidance and moral support. However, he insisted on climbing the mountains and carrying arms, believing in the necessity of direct participation in the struggle to liberate the homeland from colonialism. **(Khechida, 2010, p. 127).**

His students strove hard to dissuade him from joining the mountains, out of pity for him and respect for his old age. However, the strength of his resolve and the firmness of his conviction became clear when he reprimanded them for their misunderstanding of the meaning of revolution. He used to assure them, as he taught them, that the revolution does not recognize age; if it did, it would be old. The homeland, in his view, gathers all its

children without exception, and each individual must contribute to the realization of the dream of freedom and independence.

7.The arrest of Mohamed Ben El Abid El Jilali and his death.

7.1 His joining the revolution:

Sheik Ibn Al-Abid joined the battalion of the Mujahid leader Hajjaj, and he was an exemplary, proactive, and dedicated soldier. The members of the battalion mentioned his continuous initiatives in performing the assigned tasks. He even outpaced the youth, competing with them in various tasks, setting the finest examples of loyalty and love for the homeland, and embodying true conviction in the ideas he believed in. Thus, his status transformed from a teacher and educator to a fighter enduring hardships in the pursuit of freedom. However, his military life did not last long, as the Sheik was captured along with three of his comrades following an ambush set by the enemy for the group near the village of Bezda in Kheroub, Constantine, in December 1955. **(smaati, 2010, p. 88).**

7.2 His arrest and imprisonment:

The Sheik and his companions were subjected to various forms of torture at the hands of the French army, The French officer overseeing the torture believed that the weakest point in this battalion was the elderly Sheik, thinking that he could easily extract secrets from the group in his own way. However, the Sheik proved otherwise; he faced the brutal forms of torture without caring for their threats and held on to patience and faith. They could not extract even the slightest secret of the revolution he embraced. They intensified the torture until the guard broke his teeth. "Issa Kachida" recalls this: "... He withstood them with his disfigured jaw, and retaliated against them with unwavering steadfastness and certainty **(Khechida, 2010, p. 128)**.

The executioners asked him, "What if we release you? Will you return to your family, your home, and your peaceful life, away from this toil and madness, and distance yourself from these lawbreakers?"

The Sheik responded to his torturers with determination and steadfastness, without losing his strength or weakening his resolve, despite the severity and harshness of the torture on a man over sixty years old. He remained committed to the spirit of resistance and the insistence on continuing the struggle, saying: "I am ready to return to the battle again, alongside my brothers whom I left behind**(Ikram, 2013, p. 205)**"And when the soldiers and police were unable to extract confessions from him and grew weary of torturing him, they presented him and his companions to the investigating judge. He was tried by the colonial authorities in late 1955 in one of the courts of Constantine. When he was asked during his trial: "Why did you leave teaching, you who are a cultured teacher?" **(smaati, 2010, p. 68)**, the response of the Mujahid Sheik came in immortal verses, which included:

Algeria of honor, my peace, without the stinginess of my blood
This is my heart and my mouth, and my whole being has folded.
With us, Algeria will return as it once appeared to existence.

The sheik accepted the court's ruling with satisfaction, but the biggest surprise revealed itself in his stances during the dialogue that followed the verdict, where the great character of Muhammad bin al-Abid and his exceptional composure shone through. The judge asked him, "Any comments?" The Sheikh's response was decisive and strong, saying: "Listen, judge, who told you that France will stay here for ten years?" And be assured, sir, that Algeria will gain independence no matter what, because the end of the revolution, for the Muslim always, is victory." This statement had a profound impact throughout the hall, prompting the judge to hastily conclude the session to avoid hearing more of what he considered an insult to the dignity of colonialism.

After that, the case was transferred to the Court of Appeal in Algiers, where the Sheik once again stood before the French judiciary with the dignity of a believing fighter. He appeared before it on June 21, 1955, but the court upheld the previous verdict, sentencing him to ten years in prison. He spent the early years of his sentence in the Kedia Prison in Constantine. Under these circumstances, a number of Muslim lawyers volunteered to defend him and sought a pardon for him due to his old age. However, the Sheik refused to allow their pleadings to include any words that could be interpreted as a hint of surrender or appeasement, considering that his case was a struggle and jihad for freedom and independence. The lawyers found themselves unable to add anything to his defense in light of his firm stance. He was then transferred to Berrouaghia Prison, where he was released on December 14, 1961**(smaati, 2010, p. 70)** .

Many testimonies and stories from those who lived with the Sheik inside the prison have made him an example to be followed in resilience and active participation, despite the harsh conditions of detention. Once, the prisoners decided to go on a hunger strike in protest against the mistreatment and asked the Sheik not to participate due to his old age and inability to endure. However, he insisted on participating, challenging his physical weakness and embodying the most beautiful meanings of patience and perseverance. Issa Kashida mentions that the Sheikh's hunger strike lasted twelve days, a heroic stance that reflects the strength of his faith and his steadfastness to the principles of struggle even behind bars **(Ikram, 2013, p. 206)**.

Sheik Ibn Al-Abid distinguished himself in his prison with beautiful patience that lasted seven years, without his family being able to visit him due to the colonial authorities' ban. However, he remained steadfast, relying on God to endure the pains and torments of prison. With the dawn of independence, he left Berrouaghia Prison exhausted but strong in determination and will. Despite his relatives' desire for him to return to his hometown,

Ouled Djellal, he preferred to move between the capital, Ain M'lila, and Biskra, recalling his scientific and jihadist journey. He also participated, despite his illness, in the independence celebrations with the Al-Raja Scout Group of the Islamic Scouts, and a speech was delivered on his behalf by the late Mabrouk Fantasi **(Smati, 2010, p. 71)**.

Sheik Ibn Al-Abid refused to succumb to idleness or retirement. Despite his illness and his age exceeding seventy, his determination remained comparable to that of the youth. He believed that his mission did not end with the achievement of the freedom he had fought for. After performing the pilgrimage, he returned to the Al-Irfan School in Ain Melila, managing its administration. He continued in this role for three years, which marked the end of his teaching career, as illness and old age weighed heavily upon him, making him feel that the end of his life's mission was near.

7.3 His Death:

The wheel of life for Sheikh Muhammad bin al-Abid al-Jilali al-Semati came to a stop on Thursday, February 2, 1967, at the hospital in Biskra, after a long struggle with illness, accepting God's decree with a faithful heart. His frail body was worn out by the severe pains he endured, the suffering from imprisonment and torture, in addition to the heavy responsibilities he bore in the field of education and training, where he oversaw the preparation of many generations who graduated under his guidance, The Sheikh departed to be with his Lord after fulfilling his national and religious duties, and he was keen on preparing a generation to continue the mission and move the nation forward with a spirit of patriotism towards a better future. The funeral of the esteemed Sheikh took place in a grand procession from his father's house in the town, which was filled with mourners who came from all directions **(Ikram, 2013, p. 209)**,the Sheikh was also honoured officially, as the Ministry of Education participated with official delegations, and on behalf of Mr Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi, he was represented by Mohamed Salah Ramadan and Hamza Boukoussa, alongside an official delegation from the Endowments Administration.

The Al-Raja Scout Troop of the Islamic Scouts in Biskra took charge of the Sheikh's burial ceremony, led by Sheikh MabroukFentassi, a comrade in struggle and a student of the Sheikh educator, with the participation of the reformist teacher and scout Mohamed Salah Ramadan, alongside the virtuous Sheikh and educator teacher Naeem Naeemi. The sheikh's body was laid to rest in the Awlad Jalal cemetery near his ancestors and forefathers **(Ikram, 2013, p. 201)**.

May Allah have mercy on the esteemed Sheikh Muhammad bin Al-Abid Al-Jilali Al-Semati, may the prayers of those who lament him be weighed in his favor, and may He bless him with a place in His vast gardens.

Further, may God bless the soil that enveloped the body of a man who dedicated his life, along with a group of his peers, to liberating the nation from the filth and scourge of French colonialism.

Conclusion:

This study has allowed us to arrive at a number of conclusions, which we summarise as follows:

1. Sheikh Muhammad bin Al-Abid Al-Jilali Al-Semati is considered a unique figure in modern Algerian history, as he combined knowledge and education on one hand, and direct national struggle on the other, making him one of the personalities who unified thought and revolutionary action.

2. The experience of the Sheikh proved that resistance to occupation was not limited to armed struggle alone, but began with the battle of awareness through education, oratory, poetry, and journalism, which were tools that contributed to preserving national identity and reinforcing Islamic and linguistic belonging among the emerging generations. The Sheikh's experience proved that resistance to occupation was not limited to weapons alone, but began with the battle of awareness, through education, oratory, poetry, and journalism, which were tools that contributed to protecting national identity and reinforcing Islamic and linguistic belonging among the emerging generations.

3. Mohammed Al-Abed did not stop at his reformist role; he moved on to a more decisive phase by engaging in the liberation revolution, despite his advanced age, in a clear indication of his deep belief that national liberation is a collective responsibility that does not recognise age or circumstances. Mohamed Al-Abed did not content himself with his reformist role; he moved on to a more decisive phase by engaging in the liberation revolution, despite his advanced age, in a clear indication of his deep belief that national liberation is a collective responsibility that does not recognise age or circumstances.

4. The events surrounding his arrest, torture, and trial showed that the Sheikh represented a symbol of patience and steadfastness, as he faced brutal torture without revealing the secrets of the revolution, and continued his heroic stances even inside the prison, participating in hunger strikes and affirming his full commitment to the cause of independence. The events related to his arrest, torture, and trial showed that the Sheikh represented a symbol of patience and steadfastness, as he faced brutal torture without revealing the secrets of the revolution, and continued his heroic stances even inside the prison, participating in strikes with his comrades and affirming his full commitment to the cause of independence.

5. Despite the physical exhaustion he suffered after imprisonment and torture, the Sheikh continued to fulfil his educational mission after independence by overseeing the management of educational institutions, reflecting that his national project was not limited to the revolutionary phase only, but extended to building the Algerian individual after liberation. Despite the physical exhaustion, he suffered after imprisonment and torture, the Sheikh continued to fulfil his educational mission after independence by overseeing the management of educational institutions, reflecting that his national

project was not limited to the revolutionary phase but extended to building the Algerian individual after liberation.

6. This study reveals that Sheikh Muhammad bin al-Abid al-Jilali has not yet received the academic and media attention he deserves, making research into his biography and works a scientific necessity to document the role of scholars and educators in the course of the Algerian revolution. This study reveals that Sheikh Muhammad bin al-Abid al-Jilali has not yet received the academic and media attention he deserves, making the research into his biography and works a scientific necessity to document the role of scholars and educators in the course of the Algerian revolution.

7. The biography of Sheikh Muhammad bin Al-Abid Al-Jilali confirms that the Algerian revolution was the result of the harmony between the pen and the gun, between thought and jihad, and that the reformist scholars were an integral part of the national liberation project, with their contributions in education, awareness, and sacrifice until the last moment of their lives. The biography of Sheikh Muhammad bin Al-Abid Al-Jilali confirms that the Algerian revolution was the fruit of the harmony between the pen and the rifle, between thought and jihad, and that the reformist scholars were an integral part of the national liberation project, with their contributions of education, awareness, and sacrifice until the last moment of their lives.

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