

The REVOLUTION OF THE RELIGIOUS ASSOCIATIONS AND EDUCATION 1945-1962



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Abstract: The Algerian Revolution, which began on November 1, 1954, is regarded as one of the most pivotal Arab revolutions of the 20th century. It emerged as a symbol of freedom, not only for Algeria but also for the broader Arab and Third World struggles for independence. The revolution, fueled by limited resources, quickly gained momentum and led to Algeria's independence on July 5, 1962. Central to its success was the determination of its leaders and the unwavering support of the Algerian people in resisting French colonial rule, which sought to erase Algeria's cultural, linguistic, and religious identity. The revolution was deeply influenced by Islamic beliefs and Arab heritage, positioning the struggle for independence as both a national and religious cause. The revolutionaries' ethical principles, grounded in self-sacrifice and a commitment to their land and faith, shaped the course of the conflict and were vital to the achievement of independence. This raises questions about the role of religious and spiritual factors in the revolution and how they influenced its strategies, decisions, and ultimate success.

key words: RELIGIOUS; ALGERIA; ASSOCIATIONS; EDUCATION; IDENTITY

Introduction:

The Algerian revolution is considered one of the greatest Arab revolutions of the twentieth century. This revolution emerged from the heart of the Algerian Maghreb to become a symbol of freedom for all Arabs and all those fighting for independence in the third world. The

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Algerian revolution began on November 1, 1954, with modest and simple resources. In a few short months, the Algerian people rallied behind it, leading to the declaration of independence on July 5, 1962. The greatness of the November revolution is attributed, first and foremost, to the men who ignited its spark and were determined to liberate the country from colonial rule. They relentlessly tried, using various political and military means, to spread destruction, devastation, and plunder the resources and wealth of this ancient people. They also sought to erase the components of our civilization and our intellectual and scientific heritage, and to undermine our national identity by opposing the Islamic religion and the Arabic language, while promoting their Christian religion and Western culture. However, the Algerian revolution resisted France and fulfilled the words of the Algerian revolution poet, Mufdi Zakaria: "We swore by the blood to live, Algeria." This was to protect the Algerian people from the nightmare of French colonization, defending their land and honor, and raising the slogan "The revolution is for the people and by the people."

The Islamic revolution's authority was further enhanced by the Islamic belief that gave rise to an Arab-Islamic civilization, turning the Algerian people into a popular epic led by a devoted and sincere leadership. It made the liberation of the country a religious cause, with work towards it considered a form of worship, and self-sacrifice a guiding principle.

This matter has sparked sub-queries, such as: To what extent did religious factors influence the Algerian revolution? How did religion shape the undertakings of the revolution? Which spiritual and religious beliefs affected the trajectory of the revolution? What ethical guidelines were upheld by the revolutionaries? And what were the spiritual facets of the Algerian revolution?

The Rise of the Algerian Cultural Awareness

The role of religious conviction was pivotal in fostering awareness among the Algerian people during the colonial period. Islam played a crucial role in building national consciousness, bolstering nationalistic sentiments, and resisting colonial oppression. Religious conviction helped disseminate ethical and social values that motivated the Algerian people to uphold their dignity and rights, empowering them to vehemently oppose colonial tyranny. Islamic principles inspired resilience and endurance in the face of challenges and hardships. Within the national movement context, mosques and religious institutions served

as hubs for awareness-raising and organizing resistance against colonial injustice. Sermons and religious teachings were instrumental in promoting nationalistic fervor and supporting the struggle for freedom and independence. Moreover, religious conviction inspired Algerians to engage in collective action and sacrifice for the national cause. Religious values effectively encouraged active participation in the struggle to achieve freedom and justice. In summary, religious conviction played a significant role in shaping national awareness among the Algerian people, strengthening nationalistic spirit, and resisting colonialism. Islamic values contributed to fostering resilience and determination among the people in facing challenges and achieving independence.

"The Role of Religious impulse in Achieving Awareness

Among the Algerian People":

Preface on the first requirement and the issues to be addressed, Preface on the first requirement and the issues to be addressed. The Algerian invasion in the year 1830 AD marked the climax of a prolonged struggle and remarkable resilience of the Algerian people against incessant invasions, which consistently targeted Islam in the Arab Maghreb, particularly in Algeria. Facing the full force of the Arab Maghreb, Algeria encountered various forms of Crusader wars, enduring the most significant impact in terms of invasions and demonstrating astonishing and enduring resilience. Algeria stood alone in facing multiple European and especially Spanish invasions. The French invasion of Algeria since that time was not a random event, but rather a deliberate and planned endeavor since the French Revolution in 1789¹ AD. The history of colonial penetration into Algerian society reveals the deliberate French colonial policy aimed at erasing Algerian identity and stripping Algerians of the values that shaped their identity over the centuries. All of this has fueled the ambitions of France and other European countries to expand at the expense of Algeria, even though their intention of aggression has been long-standing and the desire for colonization was not sudden, rather a religious and economic one, primarily². The Algerian resistance has been a platform for intellectual development, diversity, and multiple perspectives since the first French soldier set foot on Algerian soil until the year 1951, despite the Islamic dimension always being a significant factor. Since the arrival of the first French soldier in Algeria, the Algerian resistance has been a place where ideas grow and different views emerge, with a strong Islamic influence, it also underwent the law of growth and deepening, from simple Sufi ethical concepts to profound,

innovative philosophical, social, and political ideas that contribute to faith and profound awareness.

The political resistance against French colonization followed a pattern of discontent due to the neglect of Algerian social life, mistreatment of Algerians, land and property seizures, school closures, and the suppression of intellectual gatherings.³ This resistance method involved voicing complaints, public outcry, and revealing the shortcomings of French rule in Algeria. The political resistance gained momentum, French authorities dismissed any threats within Algeria, prompting this political movement to shift its activities to Paris. The efforts of the political resistance party in the summer of 1833 resulted in the collapse of the French government and the establishment of the African Investigation Committee, which dashed the hopes of those advocating cooperation with the French. This group was led by Ben Othman Khodja.⁴

The military style of resistance can be divided into two categories: popular and religious resistance, which were supported by religious associations. This style adopted principles of jihad, defending the land, honor, and the nation. It was upheld by various leaders and tribal chiefs⁵. Through a series of armed popular resistances, such as the resistance led by Emir Abdelkader (1847-1830)⁶, which lasted for more than 49 years, and the resistance of Emir El-Kader (1848-1830)⁷ and Emir Abd El-Kader (1871), as well as the resistance of Sheikh Mokrani and Sheikh El Haddad in 1871, and the Bouamama Revolution (1904-1881), among others.

The zawiyas (religious schools) were one of the crucial focal points that the French colonization was preoccupied with due to the significant role these institutions played before and during the liberation revolution. They served as centers where Islamic teachings were imparted, with their imams serving as important figures against colonialism.

The most important role of these zawiyas was the preservation and teaching of the Quran to Muslim children. Despite the pivotal role played by these zawiyas, colonization did not hesitate to destroy the majority of them, closing down others and converting them into military barracks under the French army's control. Moreover, their leaders were subjected to various forms of torture, and some were executed. However, this did not deter their activities, as they were aware of the danger posed by these institutions and their significance. Many revolutions and popular uprisings during that time originated from zawiyas.⁸ It is noteworthy that most of the revolutions against French presence in Algeria during the

nineteenth century were inspired, organized, and executed with the inspiration from some of these zawiyas. Emir Abdelkader himself was affiliated with one of them, the Qadiriyya, while Sheikh El Haddad, the spiritual leader of the 1871 revolution, was the head of the Algerian Sufi order, the Rahmaniyya.⁹

The armed struggle of the Algerian people in the nineteenth century was a prolonged ordeal, lasting nearly 70 years. It came at a high cost to the population, with many losing their lives, others being displaced, and the rest stripped of their belongings and wealth, eroding their national and patriotic pride¹⁰, as well as their religious and ideological values. At the start of the twentieth century, Algerians sought to transition from armed resistance to a new approach in their struggle, embracing political resistance.

The resistance, which endured from 1835 until the 1920s, was predominantly rooted in religious motives, while nationalist resistance began to emerge in the 1920s, coinciding with the establishment of the North African Star. It's notable that the Algerian nationalist movement heavily leaned on religion throughout the colonial era, whether through the enduring jihad movement or in political activism. Algerians have taken pride in their Arab identity throughout the ages, embracing their Islamic civilization as a protective shield against the challenges that threatened their national character¹¹. They preserved the Arabic language and the Islamic faith, considering Islam as a fortress and a protective shield for the Algerian people, essential components of Algerian identity and national unity. Islam played a vital and effective role in instilling revolutionary spirit among Algerian fighters, igniting in them the flame of faith in freedom and independence.

The texts and principles of the revolution hold significant importance for Islam, as it serves to affirm the Arab-Islamic identity of Algerian society. It also serves as a driving force for independence and the dismantling of the colonial system. Thus, Islam became a rallying point and an ideological framework for the society, transcending mere ideological aspects to encompass political dimensions. Consequently, religion became one of the most important elements within the framework of the November 1954 revolution.¹²

The pivotal document that heralded the beginning of the November 1st, 1954 revolution is the statement which initiated the address directly to the people, employing a style and language easily comprehensible by all.¹³ It proclaimed the uprising against colonialism and the emergence of

the National Liberation Front (FLN) to lead it. Commencing with the phrase "O Algerian People," it served as the initial bullet aimed at the colonizer who, despite his schemes and plans, failed to eradicate the identity and break the will of the populace. It also conveyed a sincere call from the nation's sons to their compatriots, emphasizing their preservation of religion, language, and customs.

The essence and importance of the statement lie in the pursuit of independence and the reconstruction of a sovereign, democratic, and socially just Algerian state within the framework of Islamic principles. Thus, the leadership of the original revolution reverted to its source, Islam, from which it derived its laws, legislation, and values, ensuring the importance of all fundamental rights without racial or religious bias. This principle is also grounded in Islamic teachings.¹⁴

The leaders of the National Liberation Front emphasized in the statement that they do not align with factions vying for power and that their movement prioritizes national interests above all else. The statement also emphasized the need to unify national ranks against colonialism and political purification by rebuilding the national movement to its true essence and eliminating all the corruption that had been a significant factor in stagnation. It called for the mobilization and organization of all peaceful energies within the Algerian people to dismantle the colonial system. Moreover, the statement had external goals and dimensions, such as internationalizing the Algerian cause while working towards African unity within its natural Arab-Islamic framework. It advocated for Maghreb solidarity, as endorsed by the national movement, anticipating diplomatic support from Arab and Muslim nations and emphasizing active engagement within the United Nations Charter. The statement reveals that the National Liberation Front (FLN) continued its relentless efforts to rally the Algerian people around the call of November 1st and to enlist them in the ranks of the liberation army, comprising various segments of society, including workers, farmers, and students.

The Front worked to accommodate all national currents without exception, aiming to gather and organize all popular energies and other national entities not affiliated with the People's Party. This was done with the objective of freeing Algeria from colonialism under one unified banner.¹⁵

The underlying purpose of this, as per the statement, is to highlight the role of Islamic faith as one of the fundamental driving forces behind the Algerian liberation revolution. Naturally, Islam provided the Algerian

revolution with the strongest weapon lacking in the units of the French colonial army - the high morale and resilience to endure hardships and withstand adversity. This statement confirms the establishment of a democratic and socially sovereign Algerian state within the framework of Islamic principles. It also outlines armed struggle as the means to achieve its goals, relying on national forces. The alignment of the Algerian people around the leadership of the National Liberation Front helped solidify the revolutionary principles outlined in the statement and achieve political and military victories both domestically and internationally, among the other goals outlined in the statement is the guarantee of all basic freedoms without discrimination based on race or religion, reaffirming the moderation of the National Liberation Front¹⁶. By acknowledging religious freedom within Algerian society, the statement reflects the Islamic principles that advocate for freedom of belief, as stated in the Quran: "There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion" (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:256).

In this way, the revolution has linked the religious and national dimensions, intertwining jihad in the path of God with the struggle for national liberation, and fostering the spirit of tolerance and peaceful coexistence among different religions. the utilization of cultural and religious factors in shaping national consciousness and resistance against colonialism. History, geography, religion, and customs are employed as tools to strengthen national identity and promote social solidarity.

Emphasizing the role of Islamic creed indicates the significance of religion in resistance movements, reflecting Islam's prominent role as a cultural and social foundation for peoples. The affirmation of these cultural and religious values aims to build a strong national identity and defend independence and national dignity.

The quote "Algeria is Arab in its affiliation" confirms the Arab identity of the Algerian people, linked to the cultural and religious values that constitute an integral part of their national identity.¹⁷ and continues to be influenced by these whiles being open to other religions, beliefs, and cultures. The statement emphasized the importance of achieving Arab unity within the Islamic framework, and highlighted the long struggle, while affirming that victory will be achieved by harnessing all energies and natural resources. The statement also addressed negotiations with the French authorities to minimize loss of life, called for the release of political prisoners, an end to the persecution of Algerian freedom fighters, protection of people, properties, and French interests, and the

right of Algerians to choose their nationality and determine future relations with France on the basis of equality and independence. One of the fundamental principles emphasized in the statement is the exclusive implementation of Islamic rule, as it is a principle agreed upon by the leadership of the revolution and its people, serving as a tool to mobilize the masses. Any violation of Islamic principles would inevitably dismantle everything the revolution has built and deprive it of support, especially given its socially conservative and deeply religious rural base. In conclusion, we can say that the first statement of November 1954 is the foundational document of the Algerian Revolution and the National Liberation Front's positions and goals. It clarifies the circumstances and motivations behind the Algerian revolution and outlines the stated goals and methods of struggle. There was a clear determination to achieve the goal of national independence through legitimate means. Despite the criticisms leveled against this statement, it documented the ideas and directions crucial to this new movement. This solidified the National Liberation Front's position as a liberation movement with clear goals, strategies, and principles, while also empowering the people to contribute to achieving independence and realizing aspirations.¹⁸

Promoting Algerian Cohesion: The Soummam Charter's Influence the National Unity:

It has become imperative for the leaders of the revolution, as a commitment to the promise they made and in response to the significant changes witnessed in the national landscape, particularly following the uprising of August 20, 1955¹⁹, and the new insights, gained during almost a decade of struggle, to assess the overall situation. Consequently, a meeting known as the "Soummam Congress" was convened on August 20, 1956. This represented a new organizational phase in the Algerian liberation movement.²⁰ The Congress examined the political and military status quo and resolved to sustain the armed struggle until national sovereignty is recognized in all internal and external arenas, affirming the National Liberation Front as the sole representative of the Algerian people. This conference heralded a new era with fresh ideas and leadership ready to confront and employ force to secure Algeria's freedom and independence. Thanks to it, the National Liberation Front (FLN) became the sole national political force rallying the people to liberate Algeria from French occupation.

The Soummam Charter is considered the second milestone of the revolution after the first November Statement. This conference was a

historic gathering that brought together the revolutionary leadership planners a year after the significant operation in eastern Algeria. The gathering took place in the Kabylie region at Soummam Valley in a simple building²¹, attended by senior leaders from all regions of Algeria.²² Here, the stages of the revolution were determined, its principles and objectives clarified, and the necessary frameworks for its progression established. From this conference emerged the High Executive Committee of the National Liberation Army, the declaration of the political and military program of the FLN, and it was made clear that the FLN was the sole representative of the Algerian people.

This conference held significant importance in the history of the liberation movement. It convened the leaders of the interior on August 20, 1956, precisely at 8:00 AM on a Tuesday²³. The meeting commenced as scheduled, with leaders and representatives from various regions of Algeria in attendance. The presidency was assumed by the martyr Ahmed Ben Mahidi, representing the Fifth Wilaya, while the secretariat was entrusted to the martyr Abane Ramdane, representing the National Liberation Front. Also present were Krim Belkacem, representing the Third Region, Omar Aouamran, representing the Fourth Wilaya, and Zighoud Youcef, representing the Second Region.

The absence of the foreign delegation from the conference remained a mystery known only to them.²⁴ Ali Ben M'hidi, tasked with external communication due to his position as deputy to Mohamed Boudiaf, chaired the conference, which lasted approximately 11 days²⁵. The delegation from the first wilaya was missing because of the martyrdom of Mustafa Ben Boulaid on March 25, 1956²⁶. Ali Ben M'hidi and Zighoud Youcef's presence helped maintain balance during the conference. The choice of the Soummam Valley area was strategic, as it symbolized military control by the Liberation Army. Despite French claims of control, the residents' allegiance to the revolution was evident from the outset, as evidenced by the conference's secrecy²⁷.

The Liberation Army leaders aimed to demonstrate strength and unity against the enemy from the conference's outset²⁸. Through this conference, the Liberation Army achieved structural and hierarchical unity. Consequently, the Algerian revolution was set on the path to success and stability, guided by the leadership of the conference attendees.

The selection of the timing for this conference can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, August 20 coincides with the first anniversary of

the comprehensive attack launched by the Algerian people in northern Constantine alongside their valiant fighters from the National Liberation Army against French military barracks and their allies. Additionally, during this period in 1956, the United Nations General Assembly was approaching its regular session, with the Algerian cause being on its agenda. Furthermore, August 20 marks the second anniversary of the exile of Sultan Mohammed Al-Khames Al-Maghribi to the island of Madagascar in 1953, a gesture that demonstrated Algerians' solidarity with their Maghreb brothers and support for their just causes.²⁹

The choice of this date holds significant symbolism, particularly in commemorating the attacks of August 20, 1955, in northern Constantine.³⁰

The conference convened in the Soummam Valley in 1956 was based on a new agenda set forth by both the National Liberation Army (ALN) and the National Liberation Front (FLN)³¹. It aimed to outline a plan for both military and political groundwork, initiating a new phase of revolutionary action. The foundational principles included prioritizing political over military considerations, prioritizing internal affairs over external ones, rejecting individual authority, and adhering to the principle of collective leadership. This conference, held in the Soummam Valley in 1956, is based on a program jointly developed by the National Liberation Army (ALN) and the National Liberation Front (FLN). It aims to crystallize a plan for shaping both the military and political landscapes in a new phase of revolutionary action, grounded in the following principles:

- Priority of the political over the military.
- Priority of internal affairs over external ones.
- Rejection of individual authority.
- Adherence to the principle of collective leadership. Clarity of purpose: National independence.
- Unity of the people without discrimination.
- National movement, made by all.
- Elimination of personality cult and leadership.
- Combating opponents of independence and countering extremist slogans.
- Strategic necessity and dedication of all resources to the armed struggle front.
- The revolution is organized, not sporadic, rebellious, or chaotic

uprising.

- Dissolution of political parties.
- National struggle to dismantle the colonial system, not a religious or racial war.
- Establishment of an Algerian state in the form of a democratic social republic.
- Alignment of revolutionary action with domestic law.
- Organized enlistment of all national and foreign energies united for peace and opposition to colonial thought and imperialism.³²

Algerian People's Struggle and the Significance of Mosques":

"Jihad" refers to the struggle in Islam, whether it's a personal striving for improvement or a collective effort for the betterment of both spiritual and worldly matters. It encompasses various means, including armed combat, against any threat to Islam, whether it's in terms of belief, nation, or territory. It also involves preventing the spread of discord within the Muslim community and exerting effort in fighting against non-believers who oppose Islam, oppress others, or engage in aggression. Additionally, it means working for the public good, as stated by the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him: "Strive against the polytheists with your wealth, your lives, and your tongues." The concept of jihad in Islam is not limited to warfare; it includes both peace and war. Therefore, inviting others to Islam through speech and writing is also considered a form of jihad. Throughout history, jihad has been recognized among Arabs as one of the most virtuous acts that bring one closer to their Lord. It preserves the faith, spreads Islam, repels aggression, alleviates oppression, establishes God's law on Earth, promotes justice, enhances prosperity, and safeguards the honor of the nation. The Algerian revolution stands out as one of the revolutions that left its mark through its jihadist character in its revolutionary course and the Islamic factor of raising the banner of jihad. It embodied values like nationalism, sacrifice, and martyrdom for the liberation of the homeland from colonialism, rather than aggression or sectarian warfare between Islam and Christianity, as some might claim.³³

Algerian leaders interpreted jihad as defense against the French enemy and for the homeland, Algerian society, and Algerian morals, which are part of Islamic societal values outlined in Islamic law. Jihad is seen as the fight for God, an exaggerated effort to combat enemies and exhaust their resources, using action, speech, and strategic thinking to defeat them, turning their fire into ash, their buildings into ruins, their

bodies into debris, and their wealth into spoils. This is done with sincere intentions for God, and the Algerian fighter is nurtured on the teachings of jihad, believing in the rewards and dignity promised by God, especially when witnessing the humiliation and oppression suffered by their people at the hands of the enemy. God calls upon believers to engage in jihad, enticing them with rewards and virtue, and warning them against sitting idle and its consequences. The manifestations of Islamic jihad were also evident when volunteers joined the liberation army. Upon their arrival, they would express their purpose, saying, "I have come for the jihad," eagerly racing towards it. The Front and the Liberation Army framed the liberation war as an Islamic jihad against the French. Consequently, popular support grew, depicting the war led by the Liberation Army as a form of Islamic jihad. One of the indicators of this was the response of women upon receiving news of their husbands' or sons' martyrdom. They would dress in white and rejoice at their martyrdom, responding to inquiries about their remaining family with, "God remains with us." With the adoption of the call for Islamic jihad by the Front on the Algerian level and gaining support, adhering to the mechanisms of the Qarmatian Charitable Association, the armed force became the main entity fighting its French enemy. However, the material strength possessed by the Algerian fighter was manipulated by the colonizer to weaken him and prevent him from rebuilding it, except in remote areas away from his sight. Thus, all that remained for him was the spiritual strength that the colonizer could not reach to break, embodied in: faith in God, jihad, sacrifice, and martyrdom – a strength deeply ingrained in his heart, soul, and mind. Furthermore, the concept of jihad also influenced the ethical principles of Algerian revolutionaries in combat. Discussing the Algerian liberation revolution inevitably leads to a discussion of jihad, which Algerian revolutionaries embraced as a legitimate means to fight the French enemy. This was aimed at unifying their voice and standing together as one body against their enemy. Thus, jihad became a fundamental principle on which the leaders of the Algerian revolution relied to confront their adversaries, particularly following the pivotal Soummam conference on August 20, 1956. Engaging in jihad for both God and country became the most potent tool for Algerian revolutionaries to ignite fervor, stimulate resistance, and cultivate resilience among the populace. The notion of "jihad" and the rallying cry of "Allahu Akbar" fostered a readiness for martyrdom, establishing "jihad" as the emblem of the Algerian revolution and the

cornerstone of its tactics. Through the lens of jihad, Algeria reclaimed its independence and revitalized its Islamic identity, drawing from a historical backdrop where religiously driven jihad, imbued with divine fervor, played a significant role, as seen in the Algerian revolution.³⁴ The Algerian youth, operating under the auspices of the National Liberation Front (FLN), emerged as a driving force within the liberation movement, which prominently espoused the concept of jihad. Through their adherence to the ethical precepts embedded within jihad, they effectively galvanized the Algerian populace towards a collective mission: the establishment of an Islamic nation and state. This envisioned society aimed to embody principles of justice, fraternity, equality, and profound solidarity among all segments of society, all of which were to be guided by the overarching framework of Islam and its noble teachings. Indeed, faith served as the fundamental cornerstone upon which the concept and execution of jihad were predicated, providing a resilient and unyielding foundation upon which the armed struggle for liberation unfolded and extended across the breadth of Algerian territory.³⁵ Therefore, the statement of November 1, 1954 AH (approximately November 1971 AD), came to reaffirm this distinction, stating: "Establishing the sovereign Algerian democratic socialist state within the framework of Islamic principles cannot be achieved except through jihad, which is considered one of the most important pillars of the Islamic religion." Although the statement did not explicitly call for jihad, it was the Algerian people who infused the revolution with this religious dimension of jihad. The National Liberation Front (FLN) articulated the concept of jihad among Algerians through the newspaper "El Moudjahid."³⁶ It defined jihad as the struggle against injustice and tyranny, defending individuals and communities from having their rights usurped. Above all, it emphasized a comprehensive determination to strive for excellence in all areas. Thus, the FLN broadened the understanding of jihad. This illustrates the integration of nationalist principles with religious values among Algerian revolutionaries, where religious conviction played a significant role in the liberation process. This religious sentiment motivated Algerians to join the revolution and sacrifice for it, believing that defending their land was also defending Islam. Their victory over the invading oppressors was seen as a triumph for the entire Islamic community. The same people known for their strong adherence to their religion and language responded to the victorious liberation revolution, demonstrating their readiness to sacrifice everything they possessed, even

their lives, to support it. One of the most prominent factors that characterized the revolutionary movement was its emphasis on reforming public ethics and general behavior, along with its determination to purify society from corruption. The revolution also prioritized ensuring people's adherence to their religious duties, particularly prayer (salah), which is highly emphasized in Islam. The Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) regarded prayer as the essence that nourishes the mujahideen, imposing on them the obligation to perform religious duties, including salah. When communists or foreigners sought to join the FLN, representing their factions, the Front did not accept them unless they renounced their affiliations and entered as militants. This policy contradicted the spirit of Islamic jihad, as mujahideen were required to adhere to the duties prescribed by Sharia, including prayer. Some leaders criticized soldiers who neglected their prayers, labeling them as "incomplete mujahideen lacking faith." The military leadership also emphasized the importance of soldiers performing prayers. Additionally, a spirit of brotherhood between soldiers and civilians prevailed in Algerian villages and towns, fostering solidarity in both good times and bad. We can discern the religious spirit among the mujahideen through the speeches of some of them during battles, which overflowed with faith in Allah and confidence in His victory for the believers. Abbas Laghrour, may Allah grant him mercy, said in a speech on the night of November 1, 1956 (approximately: "Dear brothers in jihad, today we have reached the day of the great revolution that is destined to lead Algeria to independence. I know that we will face the enemy with empty hands, relying solely on our faith that fills our hearts. What we rely on in this historic night is igniting the explosive fuse of the revolution, and I am fully confident that the entire people will follow our path on this journey..." He continued, "Go forth and strike the enemy with strength and without mercy or hesitation, and return victorious, for Allah is with the mujahideen and with the just cause." Mosques are among the most important religious and cultural institutions, which cannot be absent from any city in the Islamic world. They serve as places for worship and education. As mentioned earlier, the mosque assumes several interconnected roles - spiritual, as well as educational, scientific, cultural, and social. Moreover, it serves as a venue for study, jurisprudence, consultation, and leadership of the state and guidance of society. The activities of the mosque have transformed it into a center attracting various ideological currents, with some mosques becoming recruitment grounds.

The issuance of fatwas and the evaluation of development policies and reforms, distant from the components of Algerian society, are seen as undermining the sincere Islamic nature of the community. The mosque holds the responsibility of performing worship rituals such as prayers, voluntary prayers, Quran recitation, and the remembrance of God. It serves as a beacon of guidance, illuminating the hearts of believers, and a platform for educating scholars, heroes, leaders, and intellectuals.³⁷

Examining France's policies in Algeria within this framework, it initially targeted mosques and the resistance to Islam and Arabic. Some mosques were closed, demolished, or converted into barracks and churches, with only a few remaining under direct supervision. However, preaching by scholars in these mosques was prohibited. The mosques played a crucial and distinct role in the Algerian liberation war, leaving a significant mark on guiding the revolution and shaping its course. Serving as focal points for jihad in the quest to liberate Algeria, they engaged extensively in spreading awareness and rallying support for the cause. Acting as vital communication channels, they captured the attention of the Algerian populace and educated them about the principles of jihad and the sacrifices required for the revolution's success. Furthermore, certain imams in liberated areas and in regions beyond government control continued their efforts. They disseminated authentic religious teachings, provided intellectual and military guidance to the people, and educated them on Quranic studies, the traditions of Prophet Muhammad, the Arabic language, as well as Islamic history and civilization. This contributed significantly to the ideological and cultural development of Algerian society. Thus, mosques played their role during the days of the liberation revolution, especially those located in villages and remote areas away from colonial control. These mosques witnessed numerous meetings between revolutionaries and the general population to communicate instructions and commands from the revolution's high command through the imams of rural mosques, who were paid by the revolution.

mosques were the most important tool for unifying the Algerians, they were also places where revolutionaries gathered from various regions of the country. However, colonial authorities did not overlook such gatherings, and whenever they suspected the significance of a particular location, they would destroy it. The struggle of the Algerian people and their connection to mosques are deeply intertwined. Mosques have historically served as more than just places of worship in Algeria;

they have been centers of community life, education, and resistance against colonial rule. During Algeria's struggle for independence, mosques played a significant role as not just places of prayer, but also as hubs for organizing and mobilizing the population against colonial oppression. Imams and religious leaders often used their positions to inspire and guide the people in their resistance efforts, preaching messages of unity, courage, and perseverance in the face of adversity. Moreover, mosques provided a space for revolutionaries to gather, plan, and strategize away from the prying eyes of colonial authorities. They served as focal points for community solidarity and resistance against injustice, with religious teachings often reinforcing the moral imperative of standing up against oppression.

The Algerian people's attachment to mosques during this period was not merely religious; it was deeply rooted in their collective identity and struggle for liberation. Mosques symbolized both spiritual sanctuaries and centers of resistance, embodying the resilience and determination of the Algerian people in their fight for freedom and dignity

The Revolution of the religious foundations:

After the events of May 8, 1945, the landscape of religious schools witnessed significant transformations. These events, which marked a turning point in Algeria's struggle for independence from French colonial rule, had profound implications for educational institutions, particularly those of a religious nature. With the growing demand for independence and the resurgence of Algerian national identity, religious schools began to evolve rapidly. They played a crucial role in fostering a sense of national unity and cultural pride among Algerians. Additionally, these schools became hubs for intellectual and ideological resistance against colonialism, emphasizing the importance of preserving Algerian heritage, language, and values. As a result, the post-1945 period saw a surge in the establishment and development of religious schools, reflecting the changing socio-political landscape of Algeria during its struggle for liberation.

The Intersection of Faith and Resistance: Mosques and Zawiyas in the Algerian Liberation Movement:

Religious institutions emerged in Algeria since the first century of the Islamic calendar, which corresponds to the seventh century AD, with the arrival of Islam through the early conquerors. The mosque was the initial establishment, followed by others that contributed to its mission,

such as zawiyas, Quranic schools, and religious associations with social and educational purposes. These also include religious training institutions like universities, Islamic institutes, the Supreme Islamic Council, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and its provincial directorates. The zawiya was one of the crucial points of interest for the French colonialism because of their nationalist influence during the liberation movement. These institutions primarily focused on teaching Islamic principles, led by imams who played a key role in resisting colonization. One of their main tasks was preserving the Quran and ensuring that Muslim children memorized and understood. Despite their importance, colonial forces destroyed many zawiyas, closed others, and repurposed some as military bases. The leaders of these institutions endured various forms of torture, and some were executed. However, these actions did not halt their activities because colonial powers recognized their significance. Many revolutions and uprisings in the nineteenth century Algeria were inspired by zawiyas. For instance, Emir Abdelkader was associated with the Qadiriyya zawiyas, while Sheikh El Haddad, the spiritual leader of the 1871 Revolution, led the Rahmaniyya Sufi path in Algeria. These are informal religious institutions spread across the country. Due to the state's interest and support, they are almost considered official, estimated to be around 722 zawiyas. There are two types of zawiyas: those established for worship, Quran memorization, and religious education, and those whose leaders claim to possess knowledge of hidden religious secrets. This latter type tends towards superstition and the exploitation of people's money. The zawiyas have served educational and religious purposes by teaching the Quran, combating ignorance and illiteracy, and reducing social inequalities. The emergence of these institutes has, in a way, reduced the educational role of mosques, especially local ones, due to their lack of material and moral resources.

The zawiya the subject of a vigilant study against colonization, aiming to confront and preserve its impact in all intellectual, political, and jihadist dimensions. Despite this, a group of Algerians rose up in a courageous rebellion to defend their religion, dignity, and homeland. They marched against the enemy in various arenas, drumming up support for jihad at different levels and raising the banner of jihad.³⁸ Each advocate of jihad followed a Sufi approach, defending Islam and Muslims. Some paths aimed to maintain the spiritual status quo and preserve their beliefs in Sufism by avoiding direct involvement in political and governmental affairs, while still exerting spiritual influence

and controlling hearts and minds. Algerian society has recognized the spiritual significance of these corners, understanding that its fate is intertwined with theirs. The wings of the corners are only achieved when these institutions find their rightful place and are able to fully perform their role without interference. The sheikhs of the corners understood the intentions of the colonizers and confronted them in various forms, including attempts to hinder them. The main achievement of the zawiya was the preservation of the noble Quran and its memorization in the hearts of Muslim children. Despite their significant role, colonialism did not hesitate to destroy the majority of them, close others, and convert them into military barracks under the French army. Their members faced severe torture, and some were executed. However, their activities couldn't be halted, as they recognized the danger and importance of these institutions. Most of the revolutions and popular uprisings originated from the zawiya at that time.³⁹

The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Endowments, this ministry is the largest religious institution in Algeria, established immediately after the country gained independence. Its presence within the governmental structures post-independence has made it distinctive with various specialties, notably in the field of endowments, Islamic culture, religious guidance, as well as other important activities like Quranic education, training, and heritage preservation. It encompasses several directorates, including the Directorate of Pilgrimage and Umrah, the Directorate of Religious Guidance and Quranic Education, and the Directorate of Islamic Culture. The latter two focus on all aspects related to religious education and guidance in Algeria, The Supreme Islamic Council: The Supreme Islamic Council is the second largest religious institution at the national level. It was established in 1966 as an educational body for religious institutions before and after the French colonization. It operates as a subsidiary of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and focuses on three main areas: training, religious education, spreading the authentic Islamic culture, and participating internationally in exchanging information among different religions. The Mosque Foundation is an official religious institution with legal personality and financial independence, established by Executive Decree No. 92-81 on the 7th of Ramadan in the year 1881. Its primary objective is to enhance the impact of the mosque's message and unify its vision.⁴⁰ The Mosque Foundation is responsible for educational activities as mandated by the ministry, including:

- ❖ Promoting the Holy Quran and facilitating its memorization using various methods.
- ❖ Teaching children and illiterates, both men and women, the basics of the Holy Quran, including writing, reading, proper recitation, and understanding.
- ❖ -Educating on essential religious teachings and imparting relevant Prophetic Hadiths for guiding life and behavior.

Nurturing and guiding the youth through their formative stages, especially in the nursery, to ensure the continuity of religious values across generations

The French reforms in Algeria at the beginning of the twentieth century:

During the late 19th century, cultural conditions in Algeria were at the dawn of the 20th century, France pursued a new policy towards Algeria, seeking to engage with Algerians and improve relations. This shift occurred with the appointment of Jonar as the Governor-General in 1900. In his 1892 report, Jonar suggested revising the existing system in Algeria and advocated for granting certain rights to Algerian citizens. Additionally, he implemented a cultural policy aimed at integrating Algeria more closely, presenting it as a favored colony. This involved promoting Algerian traditions⁴¹, expanding Arabic language education, respecting Islamic law, reducing taxes and unfair laws, appointing numerous religious and judicial figures to key positions, establishing religious and educational institutions, printing presses to spread cultural heritage,⁴² and constructing impressive buildings in Islamic-Arabic architectural style, such as the Central Post Office building. It was severely impacted by French policies aimed at undermining Arab-Islamic culture. Despite this, there was an intellectual resurgence demanding reforms from French authorities to address the situation. France responded by enacting a series of laws claiming to promote reforms across political, social, and cultural spheres, ostensibly benefiting the colonizers and further tightening their control over disillusioned Algerians. This led to the migration of a layer of intellectuals to France and served as a positive tool for disseminating France's civilizational message. Its policy relied on approaching intellectuals and traditionalists and encouraging them to undertake traditional activities, such as organizing lessons in mosques and the like. Since Jonar's appointment as Governor-General in Algeria, he initiated this type of teaching and encouraged it. He issued a statement to all officials in the Algerian territory, urging people, especially those

interested in specific designated positions like teaching, to attend mosque lessons conducted by official employees. Jonar continued to promote this initiative even during his second term as governor, as evidenced by a resolution issued on May 6, 1905, on the eve of the Orientalist Conference in Algiers. The resolution aimed to regulate and expand this teaching method, placing supervision over the lessons in the hands of the directors of religious schools.⁴³ Additionally, Jonar worked on renewing the curriculum in French-Arabic schools, emphasizing French control over Algeria. He explicitly stated, "The French elementary school, which is considered the basis of our control in Algeria"⁴⁴. Priority was given to establishing mini-boarding schools. Since 1903, three schools for making traditional Algerian garments were opened in Mostaganem, Frenda, and Tiaret. Furthermore, two schools were established for construction in Fort National and Akbou. Significant efforts were also made to enhance the level of Arabic language teaching and to reorganize schools, as evidenced by a decree issued on March 18, 1905⁴⁵. In higher education, the University of Algiers (Central) was established in 1909. Jonar did not embrace these cultural and reformist initiatives primarily to uplift the Algerian populace but rather as a means to consolidate French dominion over them. The policy was oriented towards preserving Algeria's Arab-Islamic identity while tethering it to France. This approach garnered favor among Algerians, evidenced by the recruitment of certain Algerian intellectuals like Mouled Ben Mouloud, Judge Chaib Temmassani, and Abu Qasim Al-Hafnawi. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Algeria witnessed numerous French reforms as a result of the growing national and political consciousness among the intellectual elite in Algeria. This prompted French policymakers to consider issuing laws that served their interests as well as those of the settlers in Algeria. This elite addressed various aspects of the colonial issue, such as the problem of citizenship for Muslims and the associated challenges related to representation within administrative and religious institutions, as well as assimilation, and the exceptional punitive system applied to Muslim Algerians.⁴⁶

The objective of France with these reforms was to foster closer relations with the Algerians by granting them some rights, thus making them feel more at ease with the colonial administration and preventing any uprisings that might disrupt their settlement projects or compulsory conscription plans. The colonial authorities adopted this policy following a series of events in Algeria, notably the movement by a group of

scholars in the city of Constantine in 1891. These scholars demanded that the colonial government address social, cultural, and educational issues. They specifically called for the lifting of restrictions on Islamic education and the liberation of the Arabic language, which they considered to be effectively imprisoned⁴⁷. Additionally, they sought revisions to decisions concerning religious practices and advocated for granting citizens the freedom to practice their Algerian traditions rooted in Arab and Islamic heritage.⁴⁸

Many associations were established in Algeria following the law issued by France on July 1, 1901, which permitted the creation of associations and clubs. This law came into effect in Algeria starting in 1904⁴⁹. Among these associations and clubs, we can mention the following:

The Rashidiyya Association was founded in 1902 by an Algerian educator named Sarwi to assist former students who had studied in specialized French schools. It is considered one of the first associations to emerge in Algeria.⁵⁰ The Tawfiqiyya Association was established in 1908 and reorganized by the elite in 1911. It was led by Ibn al-Tuwaami, with Muhammad Swaleh as his deputy. The association aimed to bring together Algerians who wished to educate themselves, promote the spirit of the Renaissance, and introduce new ideas by organizing lectures and reading newspapers. In addition to these associations,⁵¹ there were clubs such as the Saleh Bey Club, established in 1908 in Constantine. This club aimed to educate and enlighten its members and elevate Algerian society.⁵²

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