

## Arabic Education in the Literature of the Independence Current within the Algerian National Movement, 1946–1954

Guenfoud youssouf

Djilali Bounaama University of Khemis Miliana - Algeria

Email: [youcefg2022@gmail.com](mailto:youcefg2022@gmail.com)

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### Abstract:

The independence current was among the most prominent components of the Algerian national movement, which attached considerable importance to Arabic education despite colonial efforts to erase the cultural identity of Algerian society. This current recognition of the scale of responsibility incumbent upon it in confronting the policy of cultural assimilation and in working to curb the deterioration that had affected both the cultural and educational spheres. Following the events of 8 May 1945, it intensified its activity in this field by establishing national schools and funding student missions to the Mashriq and the Maghreb to form elites deeply imbued with national identity. The purpose of these initiatives was not merely to disseminate education; rather, it extended to addressing the consequences of colonial policy. These schools were thus characterised by a distinctly national ethos that reinforced the values of belonging and anti-colonial resistance while adopting an educational organisation closely resembling that of the schools of the Association of Algerian Muslim Ulama.

**Keywords:** independence current; Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties; party; Arabic education; schools; colonial administration.

### Introduction:

From the arrival of the French coloniser in Algeria, the colonial administration's educational policy focused on erasing and distorting national culture by curtailing Arabic education, considering it a stronghold of nationalism and a source of danger to it. It also sought to spread French education among the population by promulgating a series of regulations, laws, and decrees to make it a field for its colonial experiments, after which it realised that the army alone could not achieve the prescribed aims. The purpose was to transform Algerian society into a French society and attach it directly to France while undermining the ideas of Algerians and causing them to doubt their Arab identity and Islam.

Since the occupation administration aimed to eliminate what remained among Algerians of the foundations of their existence and to strike at their most cherished civilisational constants, efforts within the Algerian national movement necessarily had to intensify to refute what was being planned against free Arabic education and to protect it. In this way, it was aided by Algerians' widespread refusal to embrace French education, which left the colonial authorities isolated from the Algerian people.

This difficult cultural situation led the independence movement, represented by the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties, to consider effective means to confront it. It thus realised the necessity of establishing Arabic schools to defend the constants and foundations of the nation, foremost among them Arabic education, to which the revolutionary current attached particular importance throughout all its historical stages.

### **1. The Nature of Arabic Education in the Algerian National Movement:**

In Algeria, a free educational system spread that relied on free schools, kuttabs, zawiyas, and mosques preserved Arabic and Islamic culture and contributed to safeguarding cultural identity. This study focuses on Arabic education as a national endeavour that requires sacrifice to highlight the role of the national movement, schools, and national figures in its dissemination.

In this context, Mohamed Bachir El Ibrahimi says, “The school is the paradise of this world, and prison is its hell ... A nation that does not build schools will have prisons built for it; a nation that does not make life will have death made for it; and a nation that does not do for itself what benefits it and makes it happy, others will do for it what harms it and makes it miserable ...”<sup>1</sup>

As for Ahmed Toufik El Madani, he states that free Arabic education is education separate from official French education and that in the past, it comprised three stages:<sup>2</sup>

**In the first stage**, at the level of the kuttabs spread throughout towns and villages, instruction was limited to reading, writing, and the memorisation of manageable portions of the Holy Qur'an.

**The second stage** is secondary education, which is provided in mosques and zawiyas under the supervision of learned and knowledgeable shaykhs for the teaching of the Qur'an, Hadith, and Arabic.

**The third stage involves the** progression to major Islamic universities, such as al-Qarawiyyin University in Fez, al-Zaytuna in Tunis, and al-Azhar in Egypt, to complete one's studies and specialise in the religious sciences and Arabic language.

Abou al-Kacem Saadallah defines free Arabic schools as educational institutions that emerged from approximately 1920 to disseminate Arabic and Islamic education in towns and rural areas, preserving the Holy Qur'an and teaching other subjects, thereby contributing to the preservation of religious and cultural identity and to the spread of Arabic education in Algeria.<sup>3</sup> From the earliest years of the occupation, the French colonial administration sought to create alternatives to free Arabic education, which had been one of the fundamental pillars of Algerian cultural identity. These alternatives fell within the framework of an educational policy aimed at dismantling the resistance of the Algerian people and making the French language an instrument for integrating Algerians into the French entity, far removed from their roots and

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<sup>1</sup> Mohamed al-Bashir al-Ibrahimi, “The Literary Report of the Association,” *al-Basa'ir*, second series, nos. 172–173 (Algiers, 15 October 1951), 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ahmed Tawfiq al-Madani, *The Book of Algeria*, 2nd ed. (Algiers: National Book Institution, 1984), 183–85.

<sup>3</sup> Abou al-Kacem Saadallah, *The Cultural History of Algeria (1830–1954)*, vol. 3, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1998), 238–39.

cultural identity.<sup>4</sup> Cultural domination thus became more harmful and more deeply ingrained than political and military control. The French succeeded in forming a small, domesticated group that followed the French model,<sup>5</sup> adopted Western ideas and culture, and educated its children in French schools.<sup>6</sup>

In the face of this, Arabic education was subjected to severe campaigns of persecution and arbitrariness, as the occupation administration pursued both education and teachers because France's policy in Algeria was based on its fear that Muslim youth might remain attached to their religion, language, and history. For this reason, it harassed free Arabic-language education.<sup>7</sup> However, this did not prevent Algerians from continuing their cultural activity. Free Arabic education played a major role in awakening Algerians' national consciousness as a factor in building and supporting the entity of the Algerian personality.<sup>8</sup> Free Arabic education supported Arab nationalism and national resistance. It advanced in its organisation and curricula under the supervision of the Association of Algerian Muslim Ulama while preserving the Islamic Algerian personality.<sup>9</sup>

Although the 1947 Constitution stipulated the expansion of education in Arabic and its recognition as an official language, this was not implemented in practice. Nevertheless, pupils flocked to both French schools and free Arabic schools, which astonished the French because of their eagerness to study for long hours each day.<sup>10</sup>

## **2. Arabic Education in the Literature of the Independence Current within the Algerian National Movement (1946–1954):**

The independence current within the national movement was regarded as one of the most prominent political formations that defended the rights of the Algerian people, without distinguishing between political, social, and cultural rights. It also contributed effectively to the cultural and educational spheres, as many party members showed a genuine interest in cultural affairs.

The party made the spread of Arabic education and made it compulsory for all natives one of its principal concerns in its demands throughout the various stages.<sup>11</sup> The party used education to advance the national movement and urged Algerians to defend their identity and foundations while rejecting the policy of assimilation and naturalisation that threatened the Algerian personality.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 280.

<sup>5</sup> Ahmed Taleb El Ibrahimy, "The False Deliverances," *The Young Muslim*, no. 27 (Algiers, 26 February 1954).

<sup>6</sup> Ali Merad, "Our Intellectuals," *The Young Muslim*, no. 5 (Algiers, 12 September 1952).

<sup>7</sup> Ahmed Taleb El Ibrahimy, "The False Deliverances," cited above.

<sup>8</sup> al-Zoubir Ben Rahhal, *Imam Ibn Badis, Pioneer of the Scientific and Intellectual Renaissance, 1889–1940* (Algiers: Dar al-Huda, 1997), 20.

<sup>9</sup> Ahmed Tawfiq al-Madani, *The Book of Algeria*, 187.

<sup>10</sup> Abou al-Kacem Saadallah, *The Algerian National Movement*, vol. 3, 4th ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1992), 298.

<sup>11</sup> Ahmed al-Khatib, *The Algerian People's Party: Its Historical and National Roots and Its Political and Social Activity*, vol. 1 (Algiers: National Book Institution, 1986), 233.

After the First World War, the independence movement focused on the cultural sphere to confront colonial policy, calling for the preservation of national cultural foundations, foremost the Arabic language and the Islamic religion.<sup>12</sup>

### 2.1 Characteristics of the Schools of the Independence Current

From its establishment, the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties launched a campaign to combat illiteracy by founding Arabic schools inspired by Islam and national traditions while unifying curricula and selecting competent teachers to serve the national cause.<sup>13</sup>

This concern with education was translated into reality. During the party's Congress in 1947, it was decided to establish free Arabic schools, and a committee entrusted with this task was appointed, namely, the "Committee for Islamic Affairs,"<sup>14</sup> which was directly attached to the party's central committee and chaired by Ahmed Bouda.<sup>15</sup> Its members included Mhammed Farhat, Mohamed Mezghenna, Belkacem Bedoui, Abdelhamid Mehri, Hussein Belmilili, and Abderrahman Alagoun, among others.<sup>16</sup>

If the independence current had, since its establishment, called for the Arabic language to be made official and compulsory in the education of Algerian children at all levels, it is unsurprising that the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties took an interest in spreading Arabic education and establishing schools. It founded numerous schools and sent several student missions, at its own expense, to al-Zaytuna, al-Qarawiyyin, and certain universities in the Arab East.<sup>17</sup>

At the beginning of the 1950s, the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties expanded its educational activity by establishing schools for the training and education of young people, instilling the values of the Arabic language and the Islamic religion, and raising their awareness to defend the constants and foundations of the nation.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> The party's principal demands in the cultural sphere were the Arabisation of education and the restoration of mosques to their usual religious and cultural activity. See Mahfoud Kaddache, *History of Algerian Nationalism*, vol. 2 (Algiers: S.N.E.D., 1980), 730.

<sup>13</sup> *al-Manar*, "Our Objectives in Education and Instruction," no. 13 (Algiers, 4 January 1952), 4.

<sup>14</sup> The Central Committee for Islamic Affairs, affiliated with the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties, was headed by Ahmed Bouda. Its task was to appoint teachers and general inspectors for the party's schools and to supervise and oversee these schools. See Abdelkader Djilali Belloufa, *The Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties in the Prefecture of Oran (1939–1954): Emerging from the Tunnel*, 1st ed. (Algiers: Dar al-Almaiyya for Publishing and Distribution, 2011), 239.

<sup>15</sup> Ahmed Bouda (1907–1992): born in Boumerdès, he joined the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties in 1932, then the North African Star in 1937, and rose through the ranks of the independence current. He served as agent for the party newspaper in 1939, participated in the party's first congress in 1947, and was appointed a member of the Central Committee and its director in Ain Defla in 1948. He was active in defending the Arabic language and the Muslim Scouts. See Yahia Bouaziz, *The Mutual Accusations between Messali Hadj, the Central Committee, and the National Liberation Front (1946–1962)* (Algiers: Dar al-Basa'ir, 2009), 33–34.

<sup>16</sup> Abdelkader Djilali Belloufa, *The Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties in the Prefecture of Oran (1939–1954): Emerging from the Tunnel*, 237.

<sup>17</sup> Rabah Turki, *National Education and National Personality* (Algiers: National Book Institution, 1975), 244.

<sup>18</sup> Mohamed al-Amin Belghith, *Contemporary History of Algeria: Studies and Documents*, 3rd ed. (Algiers: Dar Madani for Printing, Publishing, and Distribution, 2009), 249–50.

The number of schools established by the party exceeded fifty during the 1950s,<sup>19</sup> while some researchers have referred to seventy schools. Approximately 750 teachers<sup>20</sup> served successively in them. Most of these schools were concentrated in western Algeria rather than in the north, center, or south.

The schools of the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties were national in orientation. They were financed by party funds and administered by its committees, as activists collected substantial sums to support them, such as 450,000 francs for al-Taqaddum School in Maghnia and 90,000 francs for al-Majd School in several regions in 1952.<sup>21</sup>

The primary programme in the party's schools lasted four years. It included subjects such as religion, the Arabic language, mathematics, civic education, history and geography, drawing, anthems, handwriting, and sport, with an average of thirty-two hours per week.<sup>22</sup>

The schools of the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties resembled those of the Association of Algerian Muslim Ulama in terms of organisation and curricula. The principal difference lies in the duration of the primary stage and the number of weekly periods: six years and thirty periods in the Association's schools and four years and thirty-two hours in the schools of the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties.<sup>23</sup>

## 2.2 Table Showing the Content of the Programmes of the Schools of the Independence Current:<sup>24</sup>

| Subject                   | Number of Hours in the First Year | Number of Hours in the Second Year | Number of Hours in the Third Year | Number of Hours in the Fourth Year |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Religion                  | 06                                | 05                                 | 05                                | 05                                 |
| Arabic Language           | 12                                | 09                                 | 08                                | 07                                 |
| Mathematics               | 06                                | 06                                 | 05                                | 05                                 |
| History and Geography     | 01                                | 02                                 | 04                                | 04                                 |
| Health                    | 02                                | 02                                 | 02                                | 02                                 |
| Moral and Civic Education | 00                                | 00                                 | 00                                | 01                                 |
| Arabic Handwriting        | 00                                | 03                                 | 02                                | 02                                 |
| Drawing                   | 00                                | 00                                 | 01                                | 01                                 |
| Manual Work               | 02                                | 02                                 | 02                                | 02                                 |

<sup>19</sup> Abdelrahman Ben Brahim Ben al-Agoun, *National and Political Struggle through the Memoirs of a Contemporary (1936–1945)*, vol. 2 (Algiers: National Book Institution, 1984), 198.

<sup>20</sup> Abdelkader Djilali Belloufa, *The Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties in the Prefecture of Oran (1939–1954): Emerging from the Tunnel*, 238.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 239.

<sup>22</sup> Rabah Turki, *National Education and National Personality*, 285.

<sup>23</sup> Rabah Debbi, *French Educational Policy in Algeria and the Role of the Association of Muslim Scholars in Responding to It, 1830–1962* (PhD diss. in Educational Sciences, University of Algiers 2, Algeria, 2010–2011), 180.

<sup>24</sup> Rabah Turki, *National Education and National Personality*, 284–85.

|                   |           |           |           |           |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Anthems           | 01        | 01        | 01        | 01        |
| Physical Exercise | 02        | 02        | 02        | 02        |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>32</b> | <b>32</b> | <b>32</b> | <b>32</b> |

The table shows that the independent current allocated the most hours to the Arabic language and religious education, followed by mathematics, history, and geography. These subjects constituted the foundations of the national personality. It also appears that competition between the independence and reformist currents was intense in education during the years preceding the outbreak of the Liberation Revolution. Formation in the schools of the independence current was primarily political, and the party recruited enthusiastic activists, most of whom were poor young people, workers, and artisans in the towns.<sup>25</sup>

The schools of the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties focused on teaching Arabic and Islamic religion and on instilling patriotism among young people through the study of Algerian history, the raising of the flag, the recitation of the anthem, and the staging of educational plays against colonialism.<sup>26</sup>

The schools of the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties placed particular emphasis on history to cultivate a virtuous citizen, form a social personality, and instill self-confidence and the ability to confront future challenges.<sup>27</sup> The schools urged teachers to foster a critical spirit among pupils and to avoid dry conclusions so that pupils could analyse historical events from several angles and arrive at objective truths.<sup>28</sup>

The movement attached great importance to the selection of teachers, considering them role models for pupils and a cornerstone of educational success, and it worked to support them and resolve the problems they faced.<sup>29</sup>

### 2.3 Examples of Schools of the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties:

#### 2.3.1 Schools in Western Algeria:

**a. The Educational School (Ecole Educatrice):** It was established in Mostaganem and was a school affiliated with the Islamic Literary Club under the administration of Ben Smaïl Boumediene.<sup>30</sup> The school comprised several branches, and among its most prominent teachers was Zarrouki Cheikh Ould Djilali, whom the colonial authorities imprisoned on 27 September 1952 for four years, together with a fine, on the charge of opening a school without a licence, along with Mostafa Cheikh and Ben Chellaghem Charef.<sup>31</sup>

**b. al-Nasr School:** This school was established at the beginning of October 1950 in the city of Sidi Bel Abbès on the initiative of certain party activists, such as Maârrouf Boumediene, Tayeb

<sup>25</sup> Rabah Debbi, *French Educational Policy in Algeria and the Role of the Association of Muslim Scholars in Responding to It, 1830–1962*, 180.

<sup>26</sup> Abdelkader Djilali Belloufa, *The Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties in the Prefecture of Oran (1939–1954): Emerging from the Tunnel*, 240.

<sup>27</sup> *al-Manar*, “Our Objectives in Teaching History,” no. 15 (Algiers, 1 February 1952), 2.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *al-Manar*, “The Duty of the Teacher,” no. 18 (Algiers, 14 March 1952), 2.

<sup>30</sup> Abdelkader Djilali Belloufa, *The Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties in the Prefecture of Oran (1939–1954): Emerging from the Tunnel*, 238.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 243.

Larbi, Ben Aouda Abdeldaim, and Ali Bouait. <sup>32</sup> The school was designed to meet the needs of the population and to address overcrowding in the schools of the Association of Algerian Muslims, Ulama. It also contributed to the dissemination of the party's principles. Its administration was supervised by Hamma Lechraf, and teaching there was undertaken by Habib Ben Aïssa and El Hadj Ben Ziane. <sup>33</sup> The al-Nasr School opened two classes for instruction, benefiting from the support of the Talabiyya and Education School, established in 1944 through collective contributions, particularly from members of the Algerian Muslim Scouts. After independence, the school was named Segal Bel Abbès in honour of Segal Bel Abbès, who contributed to its establishment. <sup>34</sup>

**c. al-Taqaddum School:** It was established in Maghnia on 27 September 1951 through a private initiative undertaken by certain benefactors and with the support of the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties. Its construction lasted three years. <sup>35</sup> One hundred people attended its inauguration, headed by Mohamed Zebbouri, the party's Inspector General of Free Schools, together with certain members of the Association of Algerian Muslim Ulama. This school undertook the task of protecting children from the dangers of the streets, cafés, and other unsuitable places. <sup>36</sup>

The school consisted of five classes. Its director was Draou Mohamed, a militant in the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties in Maghnia. <sup>37</sup> Among its teachers were Mohamed Messaif, <sup>38</sup> Cheikh Othmane, Nacer Djeloul, and Si El Aid. <sup>39</sup> This school was regarded as a center of national influence and carried out a national project aimed at confronting the official French educational system. It thus formed a new generation of students who carried the banner of resistance to colonial policy. <sup>40</sup>

The school contributed to the spread of national consciousness, particularly in demanding the release of Messali Hadj, which angered the French authorities. They charged its director,

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 238–39.

<sup>33</sup> Jamal Makhloufi, *Colonial Cultural Policy in Algeria during the Period 1900–1954* (PhD diss., Department of History, Ahmed Ben Bella University of Oran 1, Algeria, 2018–2019), 265.

<sup>34</sup> Abdelkader Djilali Belloufa, *The Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties in the Prefecture of Oran (1939–1954): Emerging from the Tunnel*, 243.

<sup>35</sup> *al-Manar*, “At al-Taqaddum School in the City of Maghnia: How Long Will This Arbitrariness Continue?” no. 10 (Algiers, 24 October 1952), 2.

<sup>36</sup> *al-Manar*, “At al-Taqaddum School in the City of Maghnia: How Long Will This Arbitrariness Continue?” cited above, 2.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Mohamed Messaif (1924–1987): born in Douar Jbala, in the municipality of Nedroma, in Tlemcen, he memorised the Qur'an and then joined the Maghnia School of Free Education, affiliated with the Association of Algerian Muslim Scholars, approximately 1943, where he studied Arabic, Algerian and Islamic history, and arithmetic. After independence, he became a symbol of Arabisation. He joined the University of Algiers in 1965, obtained a doctorate in criticism in 1972, and was appointed director of the Institute of Arabic Language and Literature at the University of Algiers. He died on 19 January 1987. Among his most prominent works are *Chapters in Algerian Literary Criticism*, *On Revolution and Arabisation*, *Studies in Criticism and Literature*, and *The Algerian Short Story*. For a detailed account, see Rabah Khaddoussi, *Encyclopaedia of Algerian Scholars and Men of Letters* (Algiers: Dar al-Hadara, 2002), 258.

<sup>39</sup> Mohamed Mekkaoui, *The Independence and Reformist Currents in the Province of Tlemcen (1926–1954)* (PhD diss. in History, Department of History, Abou Bekr Belkaid University, Tlemcen, Algeria, 2018–2019), 287.

<sup>40</sup> Abdelkader Djilali Belloufa, *The Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties in the Prefecture of Oran (1939–1954): Emerging from the Tunnel*, 238–39.

Mohamed Draou, with incitement, and the school was permanently closed in 1956.<sup>41</sup> Some of its pupils were arrested, including Mohamed Hamdoun (10 years old), Mostafa Idris (15 years old), Benhadi Ramadan (11 years old), and two other pupils aged 5 and 6.<sup>42</sup> The remaining pupils were transferred to the Reform School in Maghnia.<sup>43</sup>

**d. al-Hayat School:** The school was established in July 1950 in Oran under the administration of Sheikh Zebouri Mohamed, and its programs focused on the teaching of patriotism. It organised plays such as *The Truth Must Be Told* to reveal the reality of poverty and ignorance under colonialism.<sup>44</sup>

**e. al-Majd School:** This school was inaugurated on 22 March 1952 on Baudens Street in Oran.<sup>45</sup>

**f. al-Falah School:** It was inaugurated on 30 December 1950 in Oran, in the presence of approximately 500 people. Among its most prominent teachers of the Arabic language was Mr Azzawi Abdelrahman from the city of Tlemcen.<sup>46</sup>

**g. The Education and Instruction School, al-Hamri:** The school was established in December 1950 in Oran on Tiaret Street, and it organised cultural activities in the lux cinema hall, such as plays and the commemoration of the Prophet's Birthday, in the presence of members from the party's other schools.<sup>47</sup>

In addition to the schools established in Oran, there were other schools, such as the Hope Association, Happiness, al-Khayala, and the Mosque Association. These competed with the schools of the Association of Algerian Muslim Ulama in programs, timetables, and textbooks.<sup>48</sup> The only difference lies in the duration of the study and the number of weekly instructional periods, as previously noted.

**h. Douar al-Masaada School:** The school was established during the 1940s near El Maleh in Ain Temouchent, and it was a center of national influence. It focused on forming a generation of students capable of confronting French colonialism.<sup>49</sup>

**i. The Idrisiyya School:** The school was established in Tlemcen in March 1954, and approximately 250 people attended its inauguration. During the ceremony, 450,000 francs were collected to support the construction of a school for the independence current in Bouira.<sup>50</sup>

The Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties (1946–1949) sought to attract teachers to the free schools to spread national propaganda, as occurred in the schools of al-Masamda in

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<sup>41</sup> Collective Authors, *Men of Letters, Intellectuals, and Activists in Algeria, 1830–1954* (Algiers: O.P.U., 1998), 72.

<sup>42</sup> *al-Manar*, "At al-Taqaddum School in the City of Maghnia: How Long Will This Arbitrariness Continue?" cited above, 2.

<sup>43</sup> Mohamed al-Amin Belghith, *Contemporary History of Algeria: Studies and Documents*, 252.

<sup>44</sup> Abdelkader Djilali Belloufa, *The Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties in the Prefecture of Oran (1939–1954): Emerging from the Tunnel*, 240–41.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> Abdelkader Djilali Belloufa, *The Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties in the Prefecture of Oran (1939–1954): Emerging from the Tunnel*, 243.

<sup>48</sup> Rabah Turki, *National Education and National Personality*, 284.

<sup>49</sup> Abdelkader Djilali Belloufa, *The Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties in the Prefecture of Oran (1939–1954): Emerging from the Tunnel*, 239.

<sup>50</sup> Aziz Khaythar, *Issues in the National Movement through the Bulletin al-Qadaya al-Islamiyya, 1954–1956* (Algiers: Dar al-Khalil al-Ilmiyya, 2013), 251.

Maghnia and al-Btayem, under the supervision of shaykhs who were sympathetic to the movement.<sup>51</sup>

### 2.3.2 Schools in Central Algeria:

The Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties, which struggled for the independence of Algeria, had several schools in central Algeria, including eleven schools in Algiers alone.<sup>52</sup>

\*Al-Rashad School: It had three teachers.

\*Al-Murshida School: It was established in the Martyrs' Quarter, and two teachers taught there.

\*Al-Irshad School: At the time of its establishment, it had five teachers.

\*Al-Nasiha School: It had one teacher.

In addition to the Islamic Youth School, al-Salam School, al-Sabah School, al-Rahmaniyya School, al-Annasser School, al-Muhafizin School, and al-Hisn al-Jamil School.

The concept of guidance distinguished the first three schools in the capital, as they made the younger generation aware of colonial practices and welcomed activists of the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties to discuss national issues, such as the al-Rashad School, which hosted the foundation of the Revolutionary Committee for Unity and Action (CRUA) in March 1954.<sup>53</sup>

The al-Rashad School in the capital was a center for aligning the aims of the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties with those of the national movement's organisations. It hosted a meeting in September 1951 to coordinate with the Association of Algerian Muslim Ulama, to incorporate approximately fifty schools of the movement into the Association's schools and to have the movement's ulama participate in their administration.<sup>54</sup>

### 2.3.3 Schools in Eastern Algeria:

**Al-Mustaqbal School as a Model:** The school was established in 1948 in Skikda by Sheikh Ali al-Said, a pupil of Ibn Badis, and was administered by members of the party for 7 years before ceasing operations in 1955 because of the attacks of 20 August 1955.<sup>55</sup>

Members of the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties defended Arabic education in the Algerian Assembly, most notably Ahmed Bouda in 1948, when he discussed issues related to Arabic despite the colonial administration's disregard for, or interruption of, his interventions.<sup>56</sup>

The movement proposed that Algerians be educated according to French curricula, with equality with Europeans, while developing education in accordance with Islamic customs, beginning with Qur'anic schools and extending to the establishment of institutes of higher

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<sup>51</sup> Mohamed Sabbagh, *Memoirs of the Mujahid Mohamed Sabbagh*, vol. 1 (Algiers: Dar al-Quds al-Arabi Publications, Oran, 2016), 27–32.

<sup>52</sup> Rabah Turki, *National Education and National Personality*, 250–51.

<sup>53</sup> Ahmed Mehsas, *The Revolutionary Movement in Algeria from the First World War to the Armed Revolution*, trans. al-Hajj Masoud Masoud and Mohamed Abbas (Algiers: Dar al-Qasba for Publishing, 2003), 375.

<sup>54</sup> Rabah Debbi, *French Educational Policy in Algeria and the Role of the Association of Muslim Scholars in Responding to It, 1830–1962*, 181–82.

<sup>55</sup> Mohamed al-Hassan Fodhala, *The Pioneering Course of Free Arabic Education in Algeria*, vol. 2, 1st ed. (Algiers: Dar al-Umma Printing, Publishing, and Distribution Company, 1999), 146.

<sup>56</sup> *Official Gazette of Algeria*, “Debates of the Algerian Assembly, 1948–1956,” debates, extraordinary session, January–February 1950, 80–88.

Islamic studies.<sup>57</sup> At the beginning of 1950, the movement defined Algeria's educational approach in accordance with the foundations of Algerian society, which rested on customs, traditions, and Arab-Islamic culture.<sup>58</sup>

The second congress of the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties (4–6 April 1953) defined educational demands that included the dissemination of Arab-Islamic national culture, the strengthening of industrial education, and the elimination of illiteracy.<sup>59</sup>

The leaders of the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties took a close interest in the schools. They regarded them as the foundation of political struggle and Arabisation in confronting the Westernisation policy imposed by the occupation.<sup>60</sup> The party crisis in 1953, together with French harassment and police raids, led to the deterioration of the schools and the loss of many of their documents during the revolutionary period.<sup>61</sup>

### Conclusion:

The independence movement played a substantial role in engaging with and taking an interest in Arabic education for Algerians during the colonial period, particularly through the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties. In accordance with the principles and ideologies it followed, this current realised that it bore a great responsibility, namely, to work to remove the near-total dissolution of society within French culture and to alleviate the injustice and deterioration affecting the cultural condition of Algerians. The Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties, therefore, worked to establish many national schools affiliated with it and sent several student missions, at its own expense, to al-Zaytuna, al-Qarawiyyin, and certain universities in the Arab East.

The establishment of schools was not, for the party's activists, an end in itself but a means of eliminating the cultural and educational problems arising from colonial practices. These schools were founded from party funds and were national in orientation; they taught children the principles of patriotism and opposition to France despite all colonial pressures. Thus, the institutions of free education, notwithstanding their simplicity and limited material means, succeeded in consolidating the spirit of patriotism and preparing future generations by instilling a culture of preserving the foundations of national identity and personality.

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<sup>57</sup> Salwa Lehlali, *The Cultural Question in the Literature of the Algerian National Movement (1919–1954)* (PhD diss. in Modern and Contemporary History, Department of History, University of Algiers 02, Algeria, 2016–2017), 208.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 209.

<sup>59</sup> Yahia Bouaziz, *The Political Ideologies of the Algerian National Movement through Three Algerian Documents* (Algiers: University Publications Office, n.d.), 99.

<sup>60</sup> Ahmed Mehsas, *The Revolutionary Movement in Algeria from the First World War to the Armed Revolution*, 419.

<sup>61</sup> Rabah Turki, *National Education and National Personality*, 250.

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