

Religious Educational Institutions and Their Roles in the Cultural Struggle of the Algerian National Movement, 1946–1954

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Soumission : 04/01/2026 Acceptation : 29/05/2026 Published: 11-06-2026

Abstract

During the period 1946–1954, religious educational institutions in Algeria, represented by mosques, *zawāyā*, and Qur'ānic schools, played a prominent role in confronting colonial policies aimed at spreading ignorance and enforcing cultural containment. They did so through the teaching of the Holy Qur'ān and the Arabic language, and through the consolidation of religious and national values. These institutions also contributed to the dissemination of free Arabic education and the protection of Arab–Islamic identity, thereby helping preserve the national character and supporting Algerian resistance in its struggle against colonialism.

Keywords: Association of Algerian Muslim 'Ulamā'; mosques; *zawāyā*; Qur'ānic schools; independence movement; colonial administration.

Introduction

During the colonial period, mosques, *zawāyā*, and Qur'ānic schools served as cultural, social, and religious spaces in shaping the character of Algerian society within the framework of the Islamic values and principles that distinguished it, as well as centers of spiritual and scholarly influence. They thus served as one of the means of eradicating illiteracy and teaching the Arabic sciences.¹ These institutions also represented an impregnable fortress for Algerians, having played a considerable role in educating the younger generation according to the principles of Islam and becoming a safe refuge for the population following the intensification of missionary campaigns against Islam. In this regard, Aḥmad Tawfīq al-Madanī states: “Some Sufi orders in our country possess a historical merit that even the obstinate cannot deny . . . namely, that they were able to preserve Islam . . . and to disseminate knowledge in the hearts of men.”²

1. Mosque Education in Algeria after 1946

The free mosques supervised by the Association of Algerian Muslim 'Ulamā' were a fundamental means of disseminating religious and cultural identity, as they served an educational and religious role, including prayer, the memorization of the Qur'ān, the teaching of the Islamic

¹ Mahmoud Fettouh, “Dawr Ulama al-Zawaya wa-l-Katatib al-Quraniyya fi Talim al-Ulum al-Arabiyya bi-Mintaqat al-Wansharis: Zawiyat Sidi Ali al-Hajj al-Addawiyya al-Shadhiliyya Namudhajan,” *Majallat al-Talimiyya* 8, no. 2 (May 2018): 380.

² Ahmed Tawfik Madani, *Jughrafiyat al-Qatr al-Jazairi*, 2nd ed. (Cairo: Dar al-Maarif, 1963), 239–40.

sciences, and addressing social issues. The Association also contributed to the establishment of mosques across the country's regions and relied on people's donations and assistance for their continued operation.^{3 4}

After the promulgation of the general amnesty law in 1946 and the release of several leaders of the national movement, it was decided to revive Shaykh Ibn Bādīs's approach by returning to mosque education, which preserved its aims and content as he had formulated them in the 1930s. Shaykh al-Ibrāhīmī regarded it as the basis for preserving Islam and ensuring its continuity.⁵ It was offered throughout the year, and the Association of 'Ulamā' appointed free teachers for it.⁶ Shaykh Aḥmad Ḥamānī affirms in an article in the second series of *al-Baṣā'ir* that the function of the mosque in Islam was not confined to worship and the performance of religious rites but also included education in its broad sense.⁷

1.1 The Green Mosque in Constantine

The Green Mosque in Constantine is one of the three surviving historic mosques. It was founded by Bey Ḥusayn Bey in 1743 and is distinguished by its green color, from which its name is derived; a historical inscription at the entrance to the prayer hall attests to this.⁸

Mosque education at the Green Mosque after 1946 continued Ibn Bādīs's approach to disseminating knowledge and the Arabic language and reviving authentic Islam based on the Qur'ān and the Sunna, making it one of the most prominent educational centers of the time.^{9 10}

Since 1940, following the death of Shaykh Ibn Bādīs, the Association of Algerian Muslim 'Ulamā' continued mosque education and entrusted it to Shaykh al-'Arabī al-Tabsī, who supervised it with his assistants despite colonial harassment and a temporary transfer to Tébessa. He contributed to the formation of a generation of students, hundreds of whom enrolled at the Zaytūna Mosque-University, while others joined al-Qarawīyyīn and Cairo.¹¹

Under Shaykh al-Tabsī, education at the mosque experienced considerable development and became a scholarly center that attracted students from various regions of Algeria. A generation of scholars graduated from it and contributed to the educational renaissance. Eight teachers also

³ Yahia Bouaziz, "al-Muassasat al-Diniyya bi-l-Jazair khilal al-Qarnayn al-Tasi Ashar wa-l-Ishrin," *Majallat al-Lughā al-Arabiyya* 8, no. 2 (October 1, 2006): 97.

⁴ Rabah Turki, *al-Talim al-Qawmi wa-l-Shakhsiyya al-Wataniyya* (Algiers: al-Muassasa al-Wataniyya li-l-Kitāb, 1975), 227.

⁵ Mohamed El Bachir El Ibrahimi, "Ihya al-Talim al-Masjidi bi-Madinat Qusantina," *al-Basair*, no. 7, September 19, 1947, 1.

⁶ Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi, *Athar al-Imam Mohamed El Bachir El Ibrahimi*, vol. 2, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1997), 170–71.

⁷ Ahmed Hamani, "Min Ayna Jita? Min al-Jami," *al-Basair*, no. 206, November 3, 1952, 2.

⁸ *al-Shihab* 14, pt. 4 (June–July 1928): 303–4.

⁹ Abdelmadjid Ben Adda, *al-Khitab al-Nahdawi fi al-Jazair, 1925–1954* (PhD diss., University of Algiers, 2004–5), 132.

¹⁰ Mahfoud Kaddache, *L'Algérie des Algériens: Histoire d'Algérie, 1830–1954* (Paris: Éditions Rocher Noir, 1998), 178–82.

¹¹ Mohamed El Bachir El Ibrahimi, "Ihya al-Talim al-Masjidi," 1.

taught there, among them Ḥamza Būkūsha, while among its most prominent students were Shaykh al-Bashīr ibn Aḥmad, ‘Umar Dardūr, and Belkacem al-Zaghdānī.^{12 13 14 15}

1.2 The Central Mosque in Algiers

It was inaugurated in Saint-Eugène, now Bologhine, in January 1949, in the presence of several reformist leaders. Speeches were delivered highlighting the role of mosques in the renaissance of the Islamic community, while denouncing the policy of French colonialism in seizing mosques and its negative impact.¹⁶

1.3 Mosque Education at Dār al-Ḥadīth

After the Association of ‘Ulamā’ revived mosque education from 1947 onwards, the Education Committee worked to appoint teachers in various mosques. Several teachers were appointed at the Dār al-Ḥadīth Mosque in 1947, and another teacher joined them in 1948. In 1950, the Association distributed shaykhs to preach in mosques affiliated with branches of the Dār al-Ḥadīth schools in several regions, to organize and expand educational and preaching activities.¹⁷

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Mosque education was provided to adults and the general public to acquaint them with the principles of Islam and to offer religious and historical lessons. It also included organizing religious celebrations, such as the two Eids, Laylat al-Qadr, and Ramadan lessons. Educational activity at the Dār al-Ḥadīth Mosque continued until 1956, under the successive supervision of Shaykh al-Ibrāhīmī and then Shaykh al-‘Arabī al-Tabṣī, with field monitoring of the lessons, particularly during the period of Shaykh al-Sa‘īd al-Zamūshī between 1953 and 1956.¹⁹

1.4 The Mosque of the Town of Guerrara in Beni M’zab

From the 1940s onwards, the mosques of Beni M’zab, especially the Mosque of Guerrara, were transformed into educational and reformist centers. Shaykh Bayyūḍ contributed to strengthening religious education and reforming society, making Guerrara a prominent center of reform in Algeria.^{20 21}

After 1946, despite the revival of mosque education, it did not attain the level of organization and effectiveness it had possessed under Shaykh Ibn Bādīs, owing to the slow pace of its development and its dispersal due to harassment by French colonialism, which controlled religious affairs until 1947. Official religious institutions also remained subject to the colonial

¹² Among the most prominent of these developments was the introduction of the “examination,” one of the new measures introduced for the first time in 1937. See al-Basair, “Siyar al-Talim al-Islami fi al-Jazair,” first series, no. 69, May 28, 1937, 1.

¹³ Mohamed El Bachir El Ibrahimi, “Ihya al-Talim al-Masjidi,” 1.

¹⁴ al-Shihab 14, pt. 4 (June–July 1928): 303–4.

¹⁵ al-Basair, “Bayan al-Haraka al-Ilmiyya bi-l-Jami al-Akhdar wa-Nafaqatiha,” no. 47, December 11, 1936, 381.

¹⁶ Baaziz Ben Omar, “Tadshin al-Masjid al-Jami bi-Madinat Saint-Eugène,” al-Basair, no. 65, January 31, 1949, 2.

¹⁷ al-Basair, “al-Muallimun wa-l-Madaris,” no. 10, October 13, 1947, 7.

¹⁸ Mohamed El Bachir El Ibrahimi, “al-Waz fi Ramadan,” al-Basair, no. 122, June 5, 1950, 2.

¹⁹ Mohamed El Bachir El Ibrahimi, “Ihya al-Talim al-Masjidi,” 2.

²⁰ Ben Adda, al-Khitab al-Nahdawi, 129.

²¹ Mohamed Ali Debbouz, Alam al-Islah fi al-Jazair, 1921–1975, vol. 3, 1st ed. (Algiers: Matbaat al-Baath, 1974), 98–99.

administration; in 1952, their employees numbered approximately 573, alongside 174 official mosques, a small number in relation to the size of the population, reflecting the limited concern of the colonial authorities for Muslims' religious affairs.²²

1.5 The French Position on Mosque Education

The colonial administration tightened its restrictions on mosques by demolishing some, converting others into churches and barracks, and closing a number of them, while pursuing and exiling imams and shaykhs of *zawāyā* and imposing strict surveillance upon them. The reformist 'ulamā' nevertheless continued their activity. During the 1940s, the Association of 'Ulamā' established more than 90 mosques in a single year, attracting many students to study using the traditional method in the major Islamic congregational mosques.^{23 24} The men of the Association of 'Ulamā' continued to reject colonial measures and sought to recover the right to teach in mosques through complaints and petitions. In 1949, the president of the Association submitted a complaint to the French authorities protesting against the obstruction of mosques and the prohibition of religious education, affirming that hundreds of thousands of young people had been deprived of learning their religion. The deterioration of Qur'ānic education continued until 1954, negatively affecting the cultural and social condition of Algerians.^{25 26}

2. The Educational Activity of the Zawāyā between 1946 and 1954

Despite the decline in the role of some *zawāyā* owing to their conciliatory stance towards colonialism, active *zawāyā* after the Second World War continued to teach and help memorize the Qur'ān, which aroused the concern of the French authorities. These *zawāyā* served as fortresses of national identity and helped preserve the Arabic-Islamic language and culture, especially in rural and mountainous areas. They also helped form generations educated and resistant to ignorance and cultural colonialism.^{27 28}

Thanks to the efforts of the *zawāyā*, Arab-Islamic education continued, and demand for it spread despite its relatively limited level. Professor Ba'azīz ibn 'Umar praised their educational role, considering them schools and institutes for the preservation of the Qur'ān and its sciences, and

²² Article 56 of the Algerian Statute of September 20, 1947, stipulated the independence of the Islamic faith from the state. This law, however, was not implemented even after the outbreak of the War of Liberation because of the many obstacles imposed by the colons and governors-general, who greatly feared the independence of the Islamic religion. See Abou El Kacem Saadallah, *Tarikh al-Jazair al-Thaqafi*, vol. 4, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1998), 398.

²³ Djamel Makhoulfi, *al-Siyasa al-Thaqafiyya al-Istimariyya fi al-Jazair khilal al-Fatra 1900–1954* (PhD diss., Ahmed Ben Bella University, Oran 1, 2018–19), 253.

²⁴ Turki, *al-Talim al-Qawmi*, 228.

²⁵ Mohamed El Bachir El Ibrahimi, "al-Waz fi Ramadan," 1.

²⁶ Larbi Tebessi, "La Situation de l'Islam en Algérie: Histoire d'un siècle de persécutions," *Le Jeune Musulman*, no. 27, February 26, 1954.

²⁷ Abou El Kacem Saadallah, *Tarikh al-Jazair al-Thaqafi*, vol. 3, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1998), 173.

²⁸ Bouaziz, "al-Muassasat al-Diniyya," 106.

affirming that the *zawāyā* of Kabylia had great merit in preserving Islam and safeguarding its standing in the region.²⁹

Information from after 1946 indicates that the role of *zawāyā* in towns declined relative to rural *zawāyā*, and that their activity became confined to certain regions, such as Kabylia, the south, and some eastern and western areas, where they came to resemble repositories of books and manuscripts. They preserved this heritage thanks to the concern of the shaykhs, but a large part of it found its way to the West or was lost during the phase of resistance and the War of Liberation.^{30 31}

Despite the scarcity of sources on the role of the *zawāyā* in the national movement, they contributed to cultural and national life, as evidenced by the testimony of Hocine Aït Ahmed about a disciple of the ‘Alawiyya *zāwiya* who sheltered him and Ahmed Ben Bella in 1950 after the dissolution of the Special Organization. This disciple also allocated a section for teaching the Qur’ān to approximately forty unschooled children, and it was also used as a safe place where some militants hid away from colonial surveillance.^{32 33}

2.1 Examples of *Zawāyā* Active in Education in Algeria after 1946

2.1.1 The Bensharqiyya *Zāwiya*

The Bensharqiyya *Zāwiya* was founded around 1869 near El Attaf in Aïn Defla. Between 1930 and 1956, it was known for its religious, educational, and social activity under the supervision of shaykhs from the founder’s family and others. It adopted a two-stage educational system and hosted students from various regions of the country, thereby contributing to the dissemination of education and to cultural resistance against colonialism. Its activity, however, declined with the outbreak of the Revolution and ended with its closure in 1956 after a French raid.³⁴

2.1.2 The Hāmel *Zāwiya*

Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Belkacem al-Hāmelī founded his *zāwiya* in 1849 near Bou Saâda, where he undertook teaching with the assistance of several shaykhs who devoted themselves to knowledge and authorship. Its educational program included various religious and linguistic sciences, such as Qur’ānic exegesis, jurisprudence, Hadith, *tawḥīd*, Prophetic biography, doctrine, logic, literature, and history.^{35 36}

After the Second World War, the Hāmel *Zāwiya* faced difficulties in preserving its standing owing to the emergence of political parties and divergent positions among some of its shaykhs, despite its continued defense of Islam and the Arabic language, and its resistance to

²⁹ Salah Muayyad al-Uqbi, *al-Turuq al-Sufiyya wa-l-Zawaya bi-l-Jazair: Tarikhuha wa-Nashatuha*, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dar al-Buraq, 2002), 311.

³⁰ Saadallah, *Tarikh al-Jazair al-Thaqafi*, vol. 3, 180.

³¹ Bouaziz, “*al-Muassasat al-Diniyya*,” 107–8.

³² Hocine Ait Ahmed, *Mémoires d’un combattant: L’esprit d’indépendance, 1942–1952* (Paris: Éditions Sylvie Messinger, 1983), 195.

³³ Ait Ahmed, *Mémoires d’un combattant*, 195.

³⁴ Djamel Makhoulfi, *al-Talim al-Arabi al-Hurr fi Hawd al-Chlef* (MA thesis, University of Oran, 2008–9), 64.

³⁵ Saadallah, *Tarikh al-Jazair al-Thaqafi*, vol. 4, 161.

³⁶ Abou El Kacem Saadallah, *Tarikh al-Jazair al-Thaqafi*, vol. 10, special ed. (Algiers: Dar al-Basair, 2007), 218–22.

Christianisation. The *zāwiya* is also an important scholarly library containing manuscripts, books, and letters belonging to scholars and leaders of the national movement; however, a large part of it was looted and destroyed during colonial raids.^{37 38}

2.1.3 The *Zawāyā* of Greater Kabylia

The Kabylia region was renowned for its numerous educational *zawāyā*, known locally as “*al-ma‘mara*”.³⁹ Their establishment was not confined to members of Sufi orders or marabouts; rather, some notables from other social groups also founded *zawāyā* to disseminate knowledge and preserve religion and the Qur’ān.⁴⁰

Among the most prominent *zawāyā* of Greater Zwawa that championed Islam in the period after 1946, *al-Baṣā’ir* counted more than thirty *zawāyā*.⁴¹ These included the *Zāwiya* of Sīdī Maṣṣūr in Azeffoun, the *Zāwiya* of Awlād Boukhalfa in Tizi Ouzou, the *Zāwiya* of Sīdī Saḥnūn in Mekla, the *Zāwiya* of Aīt El Hadj, the *Zāwiya* of Sīdī al-Ḥajj ibn Ziyān, and the *Zāwiya* of Beni Bouyahia in Larbaâ Nath Irathen, the *Zāwiya* of Sīdī ‘Alī ibn Yaḥyā in Draâ El Mizan, the *Zāwiya* of Shaykh Amokrane Aīt Zellal, and the *Zāwiya* of Sīdī ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Yelloulī in Azazga, among others. These *zawāyā* were known for their strictness and rigor in applying rules.⁴²

Alongside their educational role, some *zawāyā* contributed to the dissemination of political awareness and national sentiment among students. Shaykh Arzeki al-Sharfāwī invited certain figures of the national movement, such as Hocine Aīt Ahmed, Ali Lameche, and Ouali Bennai, to deliver lectures at the Tizi Ouzou *Zāwiya* on resistance and liberation. This led to students’ engagement and readiness to support the national movement and disseminate liberationist thought across various regions of the country.⁴³

2.1.4 The *Zāwiya* of Shaykh Muḥammad ibn al-Kabīr in Adrar

This *zāwiya* was founded in the 1950s in the city of Adrar, where Shaykh Muḥammad ibn al-Kabīr supervised it with a group of local teachers. It received students from various regions of the country. It adopted an educational system that began with memorization of the Qur’ān and then proceeded to the study of religious and linguistic sciences, such as grammar, jurisprudence,

³⁷ Saadallah, *Tarikh al-Jazair al-Thaqafi*, vol. 10, 218–22.

³⁸ Al-Uqbi, *al-Turuq al-Sufiyya wa-l-Zawaya bi-l-Jazair*, 383.

³⁹ Al-maamara was a cultural institution closely resembling Qur’ānic schools. It was widespread in rural Algeria and its mountain villages, especially in the Kabylia region in eastern Algeria. Pupils and students came to it from nearby and distant areas, and sometimes even from outside the country, devoting themselves primarily to the memorisation, tajwid, and recitation of the Holy Qur’an, as well as to some other religious and linguistic sciences. They administered the maamarat collectively with regard to cleaning, maintenance, cooking, obtaining food and water, and tending the institution’s animals, rotating these duties regularly and democratically according to long-established customs. See Bouaziz, “*al-Muassasat al-Diniyya*,” 109–11.

⁴⁰ Saadallah, *Tarikh al-Jazair al-Thaqafi*, vol. 3, 180.

⁴¹ al-Basair, “*Zawawa al-Kubra Tatamassak bi-Urwat al-Islam al-Wuthqa wa-Tatlub al-Ruju ila al-Asl*,” no. 59, December 6, 1948, 3.

⁴² Al-Uqbi, *al-Turuq al-Sufiyya wa-l-Zawaya bi-l-Jazair*, 308.

⁴³ Ait Ahmed, *Mémoires d’un combattant*, 73.

and rhetoric, thereby making it an integrated scholarly center for the training of scholars and intellectuals.^{44 45}

2.2 The Position of the Occupation Administration towards the Activity of the Zawāyā, 1946–1954

After the colonial administration became aware of the strength of the zawāyā, it adopted a policy of containment, surveillance, and co-option. From 1947 onwards, it collected information on their activity and followers to weaken and disperse them, stirring up disagreement between them and the Association of ‘Ulamā’, and sowing discord within them. It also exploited these disputes to interfere in their affairs, as occurred at the Takkūkiyya Sanūsiyya Zāwiya in Mostaganem in 1949, thereby strengthening its influence and linking some religious leaders to it.^{46 47}

3. The Educational Activity of Qur’ānic Schools, 1946–1954

Qur’ānic schools were usually established beside mosques to teach the Qur’ān, reading, writing, and Qur’ānic orthography, and were supervised by Qur’ānic memorizers, whether students or shaykhs. Their role was not confined to memorization alone; it also included religious and moral education, such as doctrine, Hadith, and prayer, which the French administration sought to restrict, retaining only memorization.^{48 49} Qur’ānic schools were simple and limited in means, attended by children from poorer classes and supervised by shaykhs, and they focused primarily on memorizing the Qur’ān. Examples in the Casbah district included Barqīša, Sīdī Boukadour, Sīdī ibn ‘Alī, and others.⁵⁰

In any case, the system of Qur’ānic schools in Algeria developed in the late 1940s and early 1950s, devising simple traditional methods and means that helped children to:

- memorize the Holy Qur’ān and learn reading, writing, and basic knowledge;
- receive instruction in the rules of recitation and tajwīd in some Qur’ānic schools, and memorize scholarly didactic texts such as *al-Shāṭibiyya* and Ibn Mālik’s *Alfiyya*;
- combat illiteracy, disseminate religious education and Islamic upbringing, and preserve social customs and traditions;
- enable the children of the poor and middle classes to contribute to cultural resistance against colonial policy and Christianisation;

⁴⁴ Shaykh Mohamed Ben El Kebir (1911–2000) was born in 1911 in Ghmara near Adrar. He received his education in his homeland and later in Tamentit at the school of Shaykh Ahmed Didi. Known for his extensive learning, he devoted more than sixty years to the dissemination of knowledge until his death in 2000 at the age of eighty-nine. See Abdelhamid Bakri, *al-Nubdha fi Tarikh Tuwat wa-Alamiha* (Ain M’lila, Algeria: Dar al-Huda li-l-Tibaa wa-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzi, n.d.), 174.

⁴⁵ Al-Uqbi, *al-Turuq al-Sufiyya wa-l-Zawaya bi-l-Jazair*, 564.

⁴⁶ Archives de la Wilaya d’Oran, Algeria, A.W.O., B°4476, Direction des affaires musulmans, 5e bureau, no. 104 AMS, July 10, 1947.

⁴⁷ Mohamed Gharbi, *al-Awda al-Ijtima'iyya wa-l-Thaqafiyya fi Amalat Wahran, 1945–1962* (PhD diss., Djillali Liabes University, Sidi Bel Abbès, 2014–15), 302.

⁴⁸ Bouaziz, “*al-Muassasat al-Diniyya*,” 100.

⁴⁹ Abou El Kacem Saadallah, *al-Haraka al-Wataniyya al-Jazairiyya*, vol. 3, 4th ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1992), 47.

⁵⁰ Bouaziz, “*al-Muassasat al-Diniyya*,” 102.

- Protect Algerian children from the culture of the colonizer and confront the policy of Westernization and the attempt to efface Arab–Islamic identity.^{51 52}

Table 1. Distribution of Qur'ānic Schools across the Algerian Departments⁵³

Departments	1932–1933 Schools	1932–1933 Teachers	1932–1933 Pupils	1937–1938 Schools	1937–1938 Teachers	1937–1938 Pupils	1950–1951 Schools	1950–1951 Teachers	1950–1951 Pupils
Algiers	431	475	8,591	352	357	7,524	888	940	20,799
Oran	690	692	10,313	496	796	6,836	1,298	1,409	19,542
Constantine	801	821	10,624	1,573	1,597	24,063	3,002	3,007	41,096
The South	620	630	6,777	727	739	11,870	893	910	22,063
Total	2,542	2,618	36,305	3,189	3,189	50,293	6,266	6,266	103,500

Education in Qur'ānic schools was conducted under simple conditions and by traditional means, such as wooden tablets and reed pens, within modest spaces. It relied on gradual progression according to the child's age, from auditory memorization to writing and memorization with periodic revision under the supervision of the shaykh. Children were also encouraged by being rewarded when they memorized portions of the Qur'ān, with their tablets decorated in colored ink.^{54 55}

Qur'ānic schools declined because of colonial obstacles, especially in towns, which led to their contraction, thereby spreading ignorance and expanding the French school system. Despite this, the Association of 'Ulamā' succeeded in reviving them before the Revolution, and the number of children attending them in 1954 reached approximately 100,000. The independence movement also contributed, alongside the Association, to the establishment of Qur'ānic schools; by 1951, their number had reached approximately 98, producing pupils who had memorized the Qur'ān and mastered jurisprudence and grammar.^{56 57 58}

⁵¹ Bouaziz, "al-Muassasat al-Diniyya," 101.

⁵² Yahia Bouaziz, *Siyasat al-Tasallut al-Istimari wa-l-Haraka al-Wataniyya al-Jazairiyya* (Algiers: Diwan al-Matbuat al-Jamiyya, 2007), 41–42.

⁵³ Bouaziz, *Siyasat al-Tasallut al-Istimari*, 41–42.

⁵⁴ Youcef Dahmani, *al-Hayat al-Thaqafiyya wa-l-Ijtima'iyya Ibban Fatrat al-Ihtilal al-Faransi* (MA thesis, Abou Bekr Belkaid University, Tlemcen, 2015–16), 75.

⁵⁵ Ait Ahmed, *Mémoires d'un combattant*, 11.

⁵⁶ Saadallah, *al-Haraka al-Wataniyya al-Jazairiyya*, vol. 3, 52–53.

⁵⁷ Saadallah, *Tarikh al-Jazair al-Thaqafi*, vol. 3, 263.

⁵⁸ Abdelkader Djilali Beloufa, *Harakat al-Intisar li-l-Hurriyat al-Dimuqratiyya, 1939–1954: al-Khuruj min al-Nafaq*, 1st ed. (Algiers: Dar al-Almaiyya li-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzi, 2011), 163.

3.2 The Position of the Occupation Administration towards the Activity of Qur'ānic Schools

During the colonial period, Qur'ānic schools were subjected to harassment and strict measures that led to the closure of many of them, the pursuit of those in charge of them, and the confiscation of their endowments, because they opposed the policy of Francization, Christianisation, and the spread of ignorance. Despite this, they continued to fulfill their role until the Revolution, thanks to popular support, thereby serving as a means of cultural and religious resistance against colonialism.^{59 60}

Conclusion

The final phase of the Algerian national movement witnessed a sharp conflict with colonial policy, which imposed restrictions on education in mosques, free schools, and Qur'ānic schools, as the French administration sought to constrain these institutions and monitor their activity. In response, the national movement, both reformist and independence-oriented, confronted these measures, and religious institutions played an important role in teaching the Qur'ān and Arabic and preserving Islamic identity. This contributed to the spread of free Arabic education and to the formation of a generation of scholars and imams who supported the national resistance and preserved Algeria's cultural character.

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⁵⁹ Bouaziz, "al-Muassasat al-Diniyya," 115–16.

⁶⁰ Ait Ahmed, *Mémoires d'un combattant*, 58.

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