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**Arabization in Algeria: Language Ideology in Elite Discourse, 1962-  
1991**

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**Arabization in Algeria:  
Language Ideology in Elite Discourse, 1962-1991**

by

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Camille Alexandra Bossut, M.A.

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*Ta'rib*, or Arabization, translates simply to “making Arab that which is not.” For the elite of independent Algeria, Arabization signified the policy of substituting Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) for French in politics, education, and public administration. Many elite also intended for MSA to replace Colloquial Arabic and Berber, the first languages of most Algerians, as the languages of daily communication. Yet six decades of Arabization did not eliminate the use of Colloquial Arabic, Tamazight, or French, with the former two dominating daily communication and French still commonly used in education, government, and business. Continued debate over if and how the Algerian government should pursue Arabization has led many scholars to interpret linguistic variation in Algeria as a conflict in which Modern Standard Arabic, Colloquial Arabic, Tamazight, and French all compete for official legitimacy.

This thesis examines the ideological foundations of Arabization in elite discourse from independence to the beginning of the Algerian civil war in 1991. Drawing on a range of primary source material including state-sponsored cultural reviews, autobiographies, and literary fiction, I analyze competing perspectives on Arabization in the works of leading Algerian writers, intellectuals, and political officials responsible for formulating and implementing language policy since independence. I seek to address the following question: what new explanations can be found for why Arabization formed and continues to form a central—and often controversial—dimension of official language policy in Algeria?

This study complements current research on Arabization in the following ways. One, I expand the meaning of the term “Arabization” to designate not only a policy but an ideology intended to transform Algerians’ social, cultural, and political ethos. Two, I explore the relationship between perceived linguistic competency and socioeconomic mobility, a critique commonly leveled against the regime throughout Chadli Benjedid’s presidency and the civil war. This thesis will ultimately illuminate how Arabization created new relationships of domination and political control that continue to shape debates on language in contemporary Algeria.

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## **A Note on the Translation and Transliteration of Arabic and French Names, Places, and Terms**

All translations from Arabic and French to English are my own. When needed, I have provided the definitions found in *The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. The term *tarbiya* has been left in the original Arabic to distinguish it from *ta'lim*, which most closely approximates “education” in English.

All transliterations of Arabic names, places, and terms have been formatted according to the International Journal of Middle East Studies Transliteration System for Arabic. Exceptions have been made for alternative spellings commonly found in either French or English (Mostefa Lacheraf, for example, is used instead of Muṣṭafa al-Ashraf). Anglicized spellings are given when possible (“Arabization” rather than “Arabisation” is used throughout).

## Introduction

### **Darija, A “*Langue de Rue*”**

In July 2015, the Algerian ministry of education announced it would begin teaching Algerian Colloquial Arabic, or *Darija*, in primary schools. As a result of the proposal, students and teachers in first and second grade classrooms would be required to transition from Modern Standard Arabic to Darija as the primary language of instruction starting fall 2015.

The proposal was one of many put forth during the National Conference on the Evaluation and Application of Educational Reform (la Conférence Nationale sur l'Évaluation de la Mise en Oeuvre de la Réforme de l'École) that took place in Algiers on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of July 2015.<sup>1</sup> Nouria Benghabrit-Remaoun, the current minister of national education, intended for the proposal to address “the reality” (al-wāqa‘) that students “lack mastery of their first language.” Because the grammatically complex Modern Standard Arabic (hereafter referred to as MSA) traditionally taught in schools exceeds the learning capacity of young children, she argued, students fall behind academically from an early age.<sup>2</sup> Learning to express themselves in their native tongue would thus help students learn MSA with greater ease from the third grade onward.

The proposal received mixed reviews ranging from reluctant acceptance to outright condemnation. In a television program conducted by *Ennahar TV*, one

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<sup>1</sup> Nourhane S., “La Darija Fait son Entrée dans le Cycle Fondamental,” *Algérie-Focus*, July 28, 2015, <http://www.algerie-focus.com/2015/07/education-nationale-la-darija-fait-son-entree-dans-le-cycle-fondamental/>.

<sup>2</sup> “Benghabrit on Film: Darija Official in Pre-School and the First and Second Grades.” Youtube video, 6:47. Posted August 4, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nydZnFTUIVo>.

respondent critical of the policy dismissed Darija as a “street language” (*langue de rue*), claiming it had no place in the formal education system. Several individuals saw the proposal as unnecessary on the basis that children already developed full comprehension and usage of their dialects at home. Still others cited religious motivations for opposing the proposal. One respondent expressed concern that his children would not learn how to read and understand the Qur’an: “The Qur’an is written in *fusha* [Classical Arabic]. How will they understand it, by learning *Darija*? They won’t understand anything.”<sup>3</sup> Another father asserted that schools should continue teaching MSA only because he wanted his sons to have the best possible academic and professional future.

Those neutral or mildly favorable toward the proposal agreed with Benghrabit-Remaoun that learning Darija first would make students more likely to develop competency in MSA later on. “Darija is the language they [children] understand,” one respondent explained. “I prefer Darija because the best tongue is your mother tongue. At home, we speak to each other in Darija and so it is difficult for them to understand *qul*, *qal* (“to say”), etc.”<sup>4</sup>

The controversy surrounding this initiative reflects a decades-long absence of consensus in Algeria over which language or languages should be granted official legitimacy and which should not. In accordance with Article 5 of the constitution of 1963, Arabic remains Algeria’s national and official language with Tamazight recently adopted

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<sup>3</sup> Concerning this individual’s response, it is important to keep in mind that the Modern Standard Arabic taught in schools closely resembles the Arabic of the Qur’an.

<sup>4</sup> These responses were solicited by *Ennahar TV*, a private Algerian television channel. The full program can be found at: “al-Ta’līm bi al-Dārija li Talāmīdh al-Ibtidā’iyy fii al-Dukhūl al-Madrasīyy al-Qādim.” Youtube video, 9:08. Posted July 29, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1J2NBNuiRU>.

in January 2016 as “an” official language.<sup>5</sup> Contemporary researchers will find evidence of linguistic plurality gaining acceptance among certain members of the elite and the broader population. Extensive print material in official documents, newspapers, and broadcasts continues to be produced in MSA, French, or both with bilingual publications still common. Colloquial Arabic and Tamazight are also finding new outlets for expression in television, music, and online forums. For example, the official website of *Algérie Presse Service*, the government’s premier media channel, now offers users the option of browsing their website in Arabic, French, English, and three different scripts of Tamazight.<sup>6</sup>

This gradual opening towards linguistic plurality has not always been the case for the Algerian cultural and political elite. Since Algeria obtained independence from France in 1962, the ruling elite has claimed to pursue Arabization, a set of measures formulated with the aim of replacing French, Colloquial Arabic, and Tamazight with Modern Standard Arabic as the sole medium of oral and written communication. At independence, few members of the elite outwardly opposed Arabization. They saw it as an important symbolic gesture marking Algeria’s break from its colonial past as well as a necessary step in aligning Algeria with the Arab revolutionary world. Algeria’s violent colonial history, the elite’s deeply held beliefs in linguistic purity and authenticity, and frantic attempts to consolidate political power all provided the political leadership with strong impetus to pursue linguistic change on a revolutionary scale.

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<sup>5</sup> “Avant Projet de Révision et de la Constitution,” *Algérie Presse Service*, last modified 28 December, 2015, <http://www.aps.dz/images/doc/PROJET-DE%20REVISION-DE-LA-CONSTITUTION-28-DECEMBRE-2015.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> *Algérie Presse Service* is published online at: <http://www.aps.dz>.

In this thesis, I explore the ideological underpinnings of Arabization in Algeria from independence to the beginning of the civil war in 1991. I draw on a range of primary source material including newspaper articles, literary fiction, autobiographies, and state-published journals such as *al-Thaqāfa* (“Culture”) and *al-Aṣṣalah* (“Authenticity”) to assess how and why Arabization has continued to spark fierce debate over language and national identity.

This thesis is divided into three parts. In Part I, I explore Arabization’s relationship to the broader “cultural revolution,” an ideological program designed to rid Algerians of the psychological vestiges of colonialism by using the Arabic language and Islam to reconnect them with their so-called cultural authenticity. I address the importance of Arabization in revealing the “true personality” of Algeria as many political officials such as then-president Houari Boumediène would refer to it at the time. “Without the recuperation of this essential and important element that is the national language,” Boumediène argued, “our efforts will remain in vain, our personality incomplete, and our body without a soul.”<sup>7</sup> Part II will address the unique role of Arabization in the national education system, the institution that provided the most direct line of access between the regime and ordinary citizens. National education provides unique insight into how Arabization was implemented as much of the information available on Arabization exists in the form of policy changes made to the education system. In Part III, I analyze elite ambivalence in implementing Arabization as a major

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<sup>7</sup> Hind Amel Mostari, “A Sociolinguistic Perspective on Arabisation and Language Use in Algeria,” *Language Problems & Language Planning* 28 (2004): 26.

contributing factor to the breakdown of consensus within the political leadership following the rise to power of president Chadli Benjedid in 1979.

### **Historical Background**

Following independence in 1962, the nascent Algerian state found itself in shambles after seven years of warfare and 132 years of repressive colonial rule. In response, the new political leadership adopted a broad set of measures designed to develop Algeria as rapidly as possible into a modern nation state. In line with Abdelhamid Ben Badis' famous slogan, "Islam is my religion; Arabic is my language; Algeria is my fatherland,"<sup>8</sup> the leadership undertook the process of Arabization (ta' rīb) in which Arabic was designated Algeria's sole official language and was to replace French in business, government, and education.

Throughout the independence war (1954-1962), the National Liberation Front (Front de Libération Nationale, FLN) outlined their plans to officiate Arabic following independence. The November 1 proclamation (1954), considered the first official document published by the FLN, called for the recognition of an Algerian nationalism distinct from French Algeria, an entity in denial of the "history, geography, language, religion, and mores of the Algerian people."<sup>9</sup> Although the term Arabization did not appear in this early document, it nonetheless provided an initial plan for the displacement of French should the FLN win the war.

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<sup>8</sup> Abdelhamid Ben Badis quoted in Mohamed Benrabah, *Language Conflict in Algeria* (Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2013): 43.

<sup>9</sup> Mohammed Harbi and Gilbert Meynier, *Le FLN: Documents et Histoire, 1954-1962* (Paris: Librarie Arthème Fayard, 2004): 36-38.

As Gilbert Meynier has shown, actual language use among the wartime FLN was variable and flexible, adapting to wartime needs and “bending to the mysteries of the bureaucracy.”<sup>10</sup> With the exception of outspoken proponents of Arabization such as Ahmed Tawfiq al-Madani and Abdelhamid Mehri, the majority of combatants were not concerned with questions of language and culture during the war itself.<sup>11</sup> For their part, many among the francophone elite considered the question of Arabic to be a religious issue and would not make Arabization a serious priority despite much rhetoric to the contrary.<sup>12</sup> For some militants, however, Arabization did form an important ideological dimension of the war. In one 1961 directive, FLN commandant Si Mohammed outlined the importance of Arabic in the national liberation struggle as follows:

Language is an element of reconciliation between men. Above the diversity of local languages and dialects, the nation, in order to be unified and organized, must possess a national language. Our national language is Arabic. It is the language of our religion, culture, and historical past.<sup>13</sup>

Si Mohammed’s emphasis on using Arabic to achieve political unity marked how many members of the *arabisant* elite would justify the importance of Arabization in the ensuing years. Though Arabization may not have been a central tenant of the wartime FLN’s platform, Si Mohammed’s explanation indicates that some combatants were considering the place of language long before independence.

The Algerian Constitution of 1963 is worth exploring in detail because it provides the first piece of evidence regarding formal calls for the institutionalization of Arabic

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<sup>10</sup> Gilbert Meynier, *Histoire Intérieure du FLN* (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 2002): 502.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 507.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 507-508.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 500.



after the war. Articles four and five designate Islam the religion of the state and Arabic the official language.<sup>14</sup> While this version of the constitution did not stipulate what kind of Arabic characterized the “official” language, it is safe to say “Arabic” denoted strictly Modern Standard Arabic<sup>15</sup> for reasons I will discuss later on in this thesis. It was less clear how the leadership would ensure the erasure of French. In fact, Article 73 allowed for the continued use of French until Arabization could be realized:

The provisions of this constitution notwithstanding, the actual achievement of Arabization on the territory of the Republic must take place in the shortest possible time; however, the French language may be used provisionally with the Arabic language.

Article 73 raises several questions regarding the future of Arabization in Algeria: What might “the actual achievement of Arabization” entail? What length of time constitutes the “shortest possible time?” Five years? Twenty years? How “provisionally” might the French language be used? The lack of clarity underscored in Article 73 is crucial for understanding the development of Arabization in Algeria because it reflects the ambivalence of the senior leadership regarding its desirability and possibility for implementation from the onset, an ambivalence that has continued to frame the political leadership’s approach through today.

As first president of Algeria, Ahmed Ben Bella’s leadership was integral in making Arabization a formal policy goal and defining its objectives. On October 5, 1962, two weeks after his victory in the September 20<sup>th</sup> National Assembly elections, Ben Bella

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<sup>14</sup> “The Algerian Constitution,” *Middle East Journal* 17, no. 4 (1963): 446.

<sup>15</sup> In the source material presented in this thesis, Modern Standard Arabic is also commonly referred to as Classical Arabic, Literary Arabic, Formal Arabic, or *Fuṣḥa*. The term Modern Standard Arabic is retained to distinguish the official bureaucratic Arabic of the Algerian government from Qur’anic Arabic.

announced that Arabic would be taught alongside French in elementary schools. He justified the initiative in a meeting with Algerian instructors less than one year later during which he insisted on the urgency of promoting Arabic, “the basis of Arab-Islamic culture,” through Arabization programs that would allow “[Algerians] to reconcile [their country] which has been depersonalized, with its history and its past, that is to say, with itself...”<sup>16</sup> This notion of reconciling the country with an Arab-Islamic past or “the Algerian” (often used in the masculine singular) with his “true personality” came to characterize how proponents of Arabization explained its importance in the ensuing decades.

For the largely French-educated and non-Arabophone elite of the new independent government, however, Arabizing Algeria proved a daunting task.<sup>17</sup> Aware of the challenge of transitioning from French to Arabic too quickly, Ben Bella echoed the stipulation set forth in Article 73 at the same teachers’ meeting discussed in the previous paragraph: “Having said this, I do not at all fail to recognize the importance of the French language, which is a factor of enrichment for us.”<sup>18</sup> Ben Bella himself doubted the efficacy and possibility of successfully implementing the upcoming programs, warning that it might not be possible to replace French with Arabic in all political and economic sectors.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet, “The Swinging Pendulum: Linguistic Controversy in Post-Colonial Algeria,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 32 (1996): 269.

<sup>17</sup> Amel Mostari, “A Sociolinguistic Perspective on Language Use in Algeria,” 27.

<sup>18</sup> John Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: the Origins and Development of a Nation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005): 224.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

The actual implementation of Arabization was achieved first and foremost through public schooling. Between 1962 and 1971, the national education system continued to follow the model set in place by the French colonial school.<sup>20</sup> This model, as Ruedy describes, was “designed to provide basic verbal and quantitative skills for the majority while offering opportunities for the very talented to climb higher up a sharply pitched educational pyramid.”<sup>21</sup> Between 1962-1978, students were required to take a final examination at the end of the primary cycle whose failure rates ranged between 48 and 75 percent.<sup>22</sup> Language competency in MSA, but especially French, played a central role in determining success rates, where students possessing oral and written competency in French found themselves far more likely to achieve social mobility and economic success.<sup>23</sup>

By 1970, however, the Ministry of Education and the Direction of Planning adopted several educational reforms aimed to promote student retention in public schools and combat “the profound dependence” of Algeria’s education system on the French model.<sup>24</sup> According to Mohamed Benrabah, these educational reforms had three objectives: the democratization of education to enforce universal schooling, the promotion of science and technology, and the implementation of Arabization.<sup>25</sup> French was thereafter taught as a foreign language beginning in the fourth grade, a policy that

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<sup>20</sup> Saada, El Hadi. “Difficulté d’Acquisition des Langues Scolaires et Crise d’Identité chez les Élèves en Fin d’Études Primaires en Algérie,” doctoral dissertation, Université de Genève, 1983: 109.

<sup>21</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 227.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 227.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 226.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>25</sup> Mohamed Benrabah, “Language Maintenance and Spread: French in Algeria,” *International Journal of Francophone Studies* 10 (2007): 199.

lasted through the 1990s.<sup>26</sup> El Hadi Saada has described the amendments set forth in 1971 as “reform without rupture” in the sense that the associated Quadrennial Plan, whose aim was to establish a more rigorous curriculum, distance Algerian schooling from the French pedagogical tradition, and lower the costs imposed by mass schooling, never fully resolved the education system’s associated “losses” (déperditions) of illiteracy and semi-lingualism which left the schools in veritable disorder.<sup>27</sup>

### **Towards a Theoretical Understanding of Arabization: Arabization as Ideology**

To establish a sound theoretical basis for the following study, it is first necessary to address how Arabization is defined in existing scholarship. Mohamed Benrabah understands Arabization to mean “the language policy implemented to displace French altogether” and to promote Arabic monolingualism in place of Arabic-French bilingualism.<sup>28</sup> He views Arabization as an important objective of the “cultural revolution” whose aim was to “link Algeria to the rest of the Arab (revolutionary) world.”<sup>29</sup> According to Benrabah, Arabization as a formal policy implemented in education and state institutions has succeeded in certain domains and “failed” in others.<sup>30</sup> His studies are particularly useful for identifying where and when certain languages are used, explaining that Arabic is used predominantly in the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and the Ministry of Education while French, “the language of higher social status

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 194.

<sup>27</sup> Saada, “Difficulté d’Acquisition des Langues Scolaires,” 110-113.

<sup>28</sup> Benrabah, “Language Maintenance and Spread,” 199.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

and prestige,” still dominates higher education and ministries where Arabization is incomplete or “partial.”<sup>31</sup>

Gilbert Grandguillaume has highlighted important differences between academic disciplines in regards to how Arabization is defined and understood. For linguists, Arabization denotes simply the substitution of French for Arabic in all domains. Similarly, sociolinguists tend to highlight the “dispossession” among French speakers at the hands of the Arabophone elite, viewing language choice as a kind of zero-sum game. For anthropologists, however, Arabization centers above all on questions of cultural authenticity where speakers perceive language choice as an expression of an identity or mindset. Grandguillaume draws on all three approaches to discern the “double substitution” of Arabization: the adoption of Arabic in place of French, “the language of cultural alienation,” and the erasure of dialects to minimize linguistic diversity and assure civic loyalty to the state.<sup>32</sup> Grandguillaume’s study marks an important contribution in understanding Arabization as a process designed to marginalize Colloquial Arabic and Tamazight in addition to French.

Algerian sociologist Khaoula Taleb Ibrahimi moves toward understanding Arabization as a “concept” made up of various “components” (composantes).<sup>33</sup> According to Taleb Ibrahimi, Arabization translates literally as “to make Arab that which is not.”<sup>34</sup> While the term’s classical meaning signified the transfer of Greek, Persian, and

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 195.

<sup>32</sup> Gilbert Grandguillaume, “Arabisation et Langues Maternelles dans le Contexte National au Maghreb,” *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 87 (1991): 49-50.

<sup>33</sup> Khaoula Taleb Ibrahimi, *Les Algériens et Leur(s) Langue(s)* (Algiers: Les Éditions El Hikma, 1995): 252-253.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 249.

Indian works into Arabic, Arabization in the 20<sup>th</sup> century became understood as “a way of affirming Arab identity (the language being perceived as a fundamental attribute of the Arab personality, the defining trait of Arabism):”<sup>35</sup>

After North African countries achieved independence, Arabization took on a significance that transcended the strictly technical aspect described below. In expanding this aspect into a general Arabization-translation that permits the Arabic language to definitively re-take its place in society and to liberate all aspects of daily and communal life from the foreign language (that of the former colonizer), Arabization became a synonym for revitalization (ressourcement), a return to authenticity, a recuperation of the Arab identity that could not be realized without the restoration of the Arabic language...[it became] the fundamental condition for reconciling [Algeria] with itself.<sup>36</sup>

Arabization in this sense meant both a linguistic policy and a cultural, social, and political identification with Arabism, a “process” and an “objective” “founded on the concept of the state, defined essentially by its geographic, political, but especially cultural and linguistic unity.”<sup>37</sup>

All of these different meanings point to the possibility of developing new methodological frameworks for analyzing Arabization’s multifaceted dimensions. As this paper will show, Arabization incorporated political, economic, social, and religious objectives that are often difficult to separate from one another. For this reason, I propose to examine Arabization within the framework of ideology. In other words, I evaluate Arabization as a set of deeply held beliefs about what is desirable, necessary, or ethical regarding the Arabic language and its perceived rightful place in Algerian politics, culture, and society. This approach moves beyond analyzing Arabization as a series of

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 252.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 255.

policy measures or a “return” to the past toward an interpretation where, as Kristen Brustad explains, actual language usage is less important than “the maintenance of the ideal.”<sup>38</sup>

One way to interpret Arabization as an ideology is to consider MSA as a language whose speakers believe it to exist in an ideal form. James Milroy argues that participants in a standard language culture commonly hold the view that when two or more linguistic variants exist, only one is correct and the evaluation of correctness does not require justification—it is “common sense” among speakers that the “correct” view is also the “responsible,” “decent,” and “moral” view.<sup>39</sup> Those who believe their language to exist in a standardized form also tend to entrust various authorities (grammarians, teachers, schools, etc) with safeguarding the standard use from decay or corruption:

The canonical form of the language is a precious inheritance that has been built up over generations, not by the millions of native speakers, but by a select few who have lavished loving care upon it, polishing, refining, and enriching it until it has become a fine instrument of expression...

Milroy’s analysis is useful for understanding Arabization because it sheds light on the Algerian educated elite’s perceived role in protecting MSA from both foreign influence and the perceived non-standard usages of Algerians themselves. Standard language ideology also alludes to a kind of sacredness associated with the perceived canonical language, characteristics often affiliated with MSA and its adherence to a strict grammatical and lexical code. While debates regarding suitable pedagogical methods for

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<sup>38</sup> Kristen Brustad, “Standard Language Ideology and the Construction of Modern Standard Arabic” (paper presented at the Workshop on Language, Literary and the Social Construction of Authority).

<sup>39</sup> James Milroy, “Language Ideologies and the Consequences of Standardization,” *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 5, no. 4 (2001): 535-536.

teaching Arabic in public schools have continued to take place, overt critiques challenging MSA as the correct or ideal register of Arabic are almost nonexistent in elite discourse. When they are, as the proposal to teach Darija in public schools demonstrated, they are fiercely denounced and accused of corrupting the purity and sanctity of the Arabic language.

The concept of language as symbolic power as understood by Pierre Bourdieu will factor heavily into my analysis of Arabization in this thesis as his work provides unique ways of thinking about language as a form of social capital. In his analysis of language as an “economy of linguistic exchange” (*économie des échanges linguistiques*), Bourdieu offers a useful method for interpreting the institutionalization of Arabic as an “official language” and its status as the language of legitimacy, state power, and economic domination.

Analyzing Arabization through the lens of Bourdieu’s work will complement existing research in several ways. His work explores the relationship between the official language and linguistic legitimacy, a central concept shaping the debate surrounding Arabization in Algeria today. “To speak *of* language, without further specification,” he writes, “is to tacitly accept the *official* definition of the *official* language of a unified political entity.”<sup>40</sup> Made obligatory in official spaces such as the school, public administration, and political institutions, the official language is deeply embedded in the formation of the state which provides it with “the institutional conditions necessary for its

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 27.



codification and imposition.”<sup>41</sup> The official language becomes the “dominant” language not in terms of its number of speakers, but by nature of its symbolic affiliation with the state and other institutions of power. Education plays an especially important role here. For the dominant language to reproduce itself, the school must be seen as the principle line of access to political and economic power.<sup>42</sup>

Finally, Bourdieu offers valuable insight into how linguistic domination produces and reproduces social and economic inequalities. These inequalities, Bourdieu and Luc Boltanski argue, come to the fore in the education market (*le marché scolaire*) and the labor market (*le marché du travail*) where competency in the dominant language provides access to social and material benefits.<sup>43</sup> Linguistic capital awards those who develop competency in the dominant language with a “profit of distinction” from non-speakers, those who know only the *patois* of the common people. As Bourdieu describes:

All symbolic domination supposes on the part of those who submit to it a form of complicity that is not passive submission to an exterior constraint, nor free adherence to its values. The recognition of legitimacy of the official language has nothing to do with an intentionally expressed, deliberated, and revocable belief, nor an intentional act of accepting a “norm”; it is embedded, rather, in the practical state of dispositions imperceptibly implanted, across a long and slow process of acquisition, by the sanctions of the linguistic market and which find themselves thus fitted, outside of all cynical calculation and all perceived conscious restraint, to material and symbolic profit where the laws of formation of prices characteristic of a certain market objectively allow those holding it to possess a certain linguistic capital.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 26-27.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>43</sup> Pierre Bourdieu and Luc Boltanski, “La Fétichisme de la Langue,” *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 1 (1975): 12.

<sup>44</sup> Bourdieu, *Ce que Parler Veut Dire*, 36.

Bourdieu's work thus provides useful theoretical grounding for analyzing Arabization as a policy articulated and implemented exclusively by the Algerian elite. His work also promises to shed light on how and why linguistic competency plays a major role in shaping contemporary class distinctions and social inequalities. Reading Arabization through the lens of symbolic domination will allow for a more nuanced understanding of the motivations—and hesitations—of the elite responsible for implementing Arabization since the early 1960s.

### **A Note on Sources**

This thesis makes use of a variety of sources to provide a fuller picture of how the Algerian elite conceived of Arabization. I have selected primary source material from authors based both inside and outside of Algeria. Finally, it was my aim to collect sources published in both Arabic and French, as many of the elites surveyed in this thesis often wrote in both languages throughout their careers.

The two bi-monthly periodicals cited frequently throughout this paper, *al-Thaqāfa* and *al-Aṣāla*, consist of collections of essays written by various intellectuals from Algeria as well as the broader Middle East and North Africa. Both journals were reviewed and published primarily by the Ministry of Information and Culture. They were also published exclusively in Arabic, with the exception of citations, and articles originally published in French were translated into Arabic by the edition's editor. This author was unable to determine the exact publication date ranges for either journal and is not aware of their current publication status.

The information presented in the following print sources show the extent to which a large portion of elite debate surrounding Algeria's language question took place in critical essays, periodicals, autobiographies, and creative fiction, all of which formed a lively and often contentious discourse on Arabization that has persisted in many ways. While a comprehensive history and analysis of language in Algeria is beyond the scope of this particular essay, I hope that the ideas presented here will spark further research on Algeria and its rich linguistic landscape.

## **Chapter I: Language as Culture, Culture as Language: Recovering Algeria's "True Personality" Under Ben Bella & Boumediène, 1962-1978**

Our thoughts focus on the organization of groups, our relationships with the outside; friction is inevitable, given the population's mistrust towards us, due to our poor titles of revolutionaries who left the ranks in the last quarter hour, almost as the prophet Lacoste had predicted, even if he did not know that Arab-Muslim Algeria would overtake French Algeria to pacify Berbers (la Berbérie).<sup>45</sup>

-Kateb Yacine, *Le Polygone Étoilé* (1966)

### **Arabization & Algeria's Cultural Revolution**

This chapter explores how and why Arabization became a major goal of the broader cultural revolution after independence in 1962. Drawing on the works of Ahmed Ben Bella, Ahmed Taleb Ibrahim, Houari Boumediène, and other members of the elite active during the national transition period,<sup>46</sup> I examine how the elite sought to reshape national culture as a way of transforming Algerian society into one politically, religiously, and linguistically uniform "personality" (shakṣiyya).

Part of what made Arabization a salient feature of the FLN's political philosophy in the early years of independence was its instrumental role in the cultural revolution, a continued struggle of the liberation war. The cultural revolution aimed to formulate a distinct new national identity in order to counter the process of deculturation which the elite believed to be a collective psychological deficiency brought on by colonial rule. As Benrabah succinctly summarizes:

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<sup>45</sup> Kateb Yacine, *Le Polygone Étoilé* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1966): 99.

<sup>46</sup> Benrabah describes this period as the time during which the Arabic language was most assertively implemented in education and government. See Mohamed Benrabah, "Language-in-Education Planning in Algeria: Historical Development and Current Issues," *Language Policy* 6 (2007): 225.

The regime's Arabization drive was intended to accompany a 'Cultural Revolution'—revive the Arabo-Islamic culture and identity and 'go back to' to [typography error in original] what ideologues believed to be the 'essence' of Algeria, that is an Arabic-speaking country—and to link Algeria to the rest of the Arab (revolutionary) world, regarded then as the cultural counter-weight to the imperialist West, headed by France.<sup>47</sup>

In this context, Arabic was to become the primary vessel for transmitting a set of values intended to transform Algerians into legitimate members of the emerging Arab, Islamic, and national socialist state. Arabization was doubtless a powerful symbolic gesture of Algeria's break with its colonial past, but there was also more at stake. How did Algeria's ruling elite envision the role of language in culture, and what might this relationship reveal about the political debates that took shape in the first two decades of statehood?

A detailed exploration of Algerian national culture is needed here because while existing scholarship recognizes the cultural revolution as an important justification for pursuing Arabization, less attention has been paid to disagreement among the elite regarding the goals of this revolution and the place of language within it. Indeed, Gilbert Meynier has shown how the FLN at independence never fully dealt with the "problem of culture" for fear of provoking further political divisions.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, this discussion on national culture will show how Arabization represented the creation of a new national identity rather than a return to the past. This discussion will ultimately show how the elite used the question of Arabization to mask ongoing political and ideological debates during this time.

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<sup>47</sup> Benrabah, "Language Maintenance and Spread," 199.

<sup>48</sup> Meynier has argued that throughout the independence war, the FLN avoided dealing head-on with questions of culture by allowing the continued running of Qur'anic schools and ignoring the Berber question altogether. See Meynier, *Histoire Intérieure du F.L.N.*, 690.

## **Abdelhamid Ben Badis, the AUMA, & Challenges to French Cultural Assimilation**

It is impossible to understand the cultural revolution without first acknowledging the historical influence of Muslim theologian and intellectual Abdelhamid Ben Badis (1889-1940), the founder and long-time leader of the Association of Algerian Muslim ‘Ulamā’ (Association Des Uléma Musulmans Algériens, Jam‘iyyat al-‘Ulamā’ al-Muslimīn al-Jazā’ iriyyīn). Ben Badis created the AUMA with the goal of providing Islamic education and Arabic language instruction to Algerians as an alternative option to the French colonial education system. Condemning the assimilationist discourse set forth by the French colonial administration, the AUMA was especially influential in formulating a unique cultural ideology to accompany their slogan “Islam is our religion, Algeria our country, Arabic our language.”<sup>49</sup>

Under Ben Badis, the AUMA sought to challenge what they perceived to be the religious, cultural, and linguistic threat of direct French rule as well as less direct forms of French cultural influence promoted by Messali Hadj, Ferhat Abbas, and other *évolués*, the emerging technocratic and French-educated Algerian elite. Emphasizing the importance of religious purity and ethics, the ‘Ulamā’ advocated for a “return” to Islamic norms and principles.<sup>50</sup> In February 1936, Ben Badis responded to Ferhat Abbas’ defense of Algeria as part of metropolitan France with the following statement:<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Kashani-Sabet, “The Swinging Pendulum,” 267.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> In the early years of his political career, Ferhat Abbas (1899-1985), a chemist from Sétif, is known for having supported Algeria remaining a part of metropolitan France. He is credited with publishing the following text in 1936: “If I had discovered the Algerian nation, I should be a nationalist, and I should not blush for my crime. However, I will not die for the Algerian fatherland because this fatherland does not

We ourselves have examined the pages of history and the current situation. And we have found that the Algerian and Muslim nation has been formed and exists in the same way as all other nations of the earth. This community has its history, illustrated by the highest actions; it has its religious and linguistic unity, it has its own cultures, its traditions, and its characteristics... Moreover, this Algerian Muslim nation is not France. It cannot be France. It does not want to be France. It could not even be France if it wanted it. It is a nation very remote from France by its language, its customs, its race and its religion and it does not want to integrate into France.<sup>52</sup>

Unlike Messali Hadj and other nationalist *évolués*, whose focused primarily on ending colonial rule, the AUMA's platform under Ben Badis centered more on the threat of French cultural hegemony which they perceived as foreign to the history, language, and norms of Algeria. These 'Ulamā' often clashed with more militant nationalists over the use of violence to achieve independence. In fact, the AUMA fell out of favor during the 1940s with younger students, even those educated in religious institutions, as their elders were sometimes deemed too moderate relative to the bolder calls to action set forth by Messali Hadj and his PPA (Parti du Peuple Algérien, *ḥizb al-sha'b al-jazā' iriyy*).<sup>53</sup>

Nonetheless, the cultural ideology developed by the AUMA had a lasting impact on shaping linguistic debates in Algeria. James McDougall has highlighted the role the AUMA played in amassing "the cultural authority to define the 'true religion' in Algeria"

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exist. I haven't found it. I have sought it in history, I have questioned the living and the dead; I have been to cemeteries... all in vain." He eventually retracted the statement and become a supporter of the nationalist cause. Ferhat Abbas quoted in Tanya Matthews, *War in Algeria: Background for Crisis* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1961): 20-21.

<sup>52</sup> Abdelhamid Ben Badis quoted in Saliha Belmessous, *Assimilation & Empire: Uniformity in French & British Colonies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013): 186.

<sup>53</sup> James McDougall, "Dream of Exile, Promise of Home: Language, Education, and Arabism in Algeria," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43 (2011): 254-257.

between 1931 and 1956-1957 when the association ceased formally operating.<sup>54</sup> The ideology of the ‘Ulamā’ filled a void left by the colonial administration because it provided educational opportunities to Algerians excluded from colonial schools. The limited number of Algerians who did enroll in colonial schools often came from families of local notables or those working in the colonial administration.<sup>55</sup> Harsh socioeconomic circumstances and France’s aggressive assimilationist rhetoric encouraged many Algerians to seek alternative sources of knowledge:

In comparison with the disastrous, expropriated and miserable conditions of what Tawfiq al-Madani called ‘the very many children who live, ignorant and abandoned of all morality in the streets’ of the cities of French Algeria, the notion east of ‘urūba (Arabism), ‘arabiyya (the Arabic language) and original Islam was a place of escape, of morality and improvement, of purity and purification.<sup>56</sup>

As McDougall shows here, the AUMA shaped its cultural program by promoting a universalist “Arabism” as the solution to Algeria’s perceived moral paucity.

While members of the AUMA doubtless held varying opinions on specific issues, we can discern several currents that ran central to their cultural platform. One, as McDougall described, their educational philosophy centered first and foremost on the defense of Islam and the Arabic language.<sup>57</sup> After independence, many former members

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<sup>54</sup> James McDougall, *History and the Culture of Nationalism in Algeria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 13-14.

<sup>55</sup> In line with the Islamic reformist movement of his time, Abdelhamid Ben Badis (1890-1940) is credited with establishing a unique brand of religious schools that provided Arabic language instruction to many of Algeria’s future elites. Following his death in 1940, Sheikh Bashir Ibrahim assumed the leadership of the AUMA and its numerous *medersas* (madāris), overseeing 90 schools by 1947 and 181 by 1954. The outbreak of war in 1954 led to a dramatic reduction in the number of schools available, with few of them in operation by 1957. See Charlotte Courrege, “L’École Musulmane Algérienne de Ibn Bâdis dans les Années 1930, de l’Alphabétisation de Tous comme Enjeu Politique,” *Revue des Mondes Musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 136 (2014).

<sup>56</sup> McDougall, *History and the Culture of Nationalism in Algeria*, 57.

<sup>57</sup> Courrege, “L’École Musulmane Algérienne.”



of the AUMA such as Ahmed Tawfiq Al-Madani and Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi were assigned to key posts in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Religious Affairs where they were granted political power to shape intellectual debates on culture and language. They brought with them an educational experience firmly rooted in the tradition of Ben Badis and his successor, Sheikh Bashir Ibrahimi. The AUMA were also responsible for making Arabic a language of instruction for those who attended their schools. Many of the Arabophone elite had learned Arabic at AUMA schools from an early age and had pursued higher education at Zeitouna University (Tunis), Al-Azhar (Cairo), and other Arab universities throughout Egypt, Iraq, and Syria.<sup>58</sup>

Most importantly, the AUMA created a new class of *arabisant* intellectuals prepared to challenge their secular nationalist adversaries. After independence, these AUMA-educated elite came together as an identifiable Arabophone cultural and religious intelligentsia. Commonly referred to in Arabic as *al-mu'arrabīn*, this group of intellectuals, writers, and politicians congregated around the use of Arabic as a tool of expression, a vision centered on the notion of Arab-Islamic civilization, and a kind of “rationality” (*al-a'ql al-bayāni*) rooted in language and religion.<sup>59</sup> Staunch supporters of Arabization, they took on a symbolic role distinct from the *francisants*, who came together as their own bureaucratic and technocratic elite.

Despite their differences, these two currents closely resembled one another in regards to how they viewed themselves as responsible for social, economic, and cultural

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<sup>58</sup> Taleb Ibrahimi, *Les Algériens et Leur(s) Langue(s)*, 294.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 292.

direction “from above.”<sup>60</sup> Both members of the ‘Ulamā’ and the technocratic elite “saw themselves as invested with a mission to direct, develop, and lead their ‘ignorant’ and ‘backward’ brothers once independence was achieved.”<sup>61</sup> The tendency of both ideological currents to view the appropriate political direction of Algeria in “absolutes”<sup>62</sup>—and to see themselves as the sole legitimate authorities in determining those absolutes—made it such that language became a proxy for broader struggles over political supremacy in the ensuing decades.

### **“We Feel Arab, But Our Metric System is Not Arab”: Ahmed Ben Bella on Arabization, 1963-1965**

The individual responsible for institutionalizing Arabization was Algeria’s first president Ahmed Ben Bella (1918-2012), a former FLN combatant during the liberation war. Born in 1918 in Maghnia, Ben Bella came from a family of *fellaḥīn* who tended a farm not far from the town center. A contemporary of Hocine Aït Ahmed and Mohamed Khider, Ben Bella made a name for himself in military matters and quickly rose up the ranks of the FLN to become one of its leading spokespersons.<sup>63</sup> After being freed from six years of captivity during the independence war, Ben Bella quickly affirmed his commitment to Arabism. In a famous speech he delivered in Tunis in 1962, Ben Bella stated “We are Arabs, Arabs, Arabs!”<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> McDougall, “Dream of Exile, Promise of Home,” 260.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 260.

<sup>62</sup> Taleb Ibrahimi, *Les Algériens et Leur(s) Langue(s)*, 300.

<sup>63</sup> Achour Cheurfi, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique de l’Algérie* (Algiers: Éditions ANEP, 2004): 194.

<sup>64</sup> McDougall, “Dream of Exile, Promise of Home,” 251.

Ben Bella was formally elected president in 1963 and spent his first months in office working to silence his opponents. By the time his five-man Political Bureau drafted the 1963 constitution, he had effectively consolidated his own power to become head of state, head of government, secretary-general of the FLN, and had established support among the armed forces.<sup>65</sup> He also quietly sidelined members of the 'Ulamā' from his new government by assigning them to posts where they would only be responsible for treating language, culture, and religion. Only one, Ahmed Tawfiq al-Madani, was permitted to serve as minister of religious affairs.<sup>66</sup>

By the end of the war, it was clear that the francophone ruling elite intended to maintain the use of French even if they did not always express it publicly.<sup>67</sup> During his two years as president, Ben Bella affirmed his commitment to Arabization meanwhile tacitly according French an ambiguous status until Arabization could be realized. On Algeria's one-year anniversary of independence on July 5, 1963, Ben Bella outlined the importance of Arabization as such:

I was pleasantly surprised to see our young brothers and sisters expressing themselves in our language with eloquence. It is a miracle, for it has only been one year since we were deprived of the classical usage of our language.<sup>68</sup>

For I myself have difficulty expressing myself in this language. Many times it has happened, when our Arab brothers come to visit, that I must tell them that even though we do not know this language perfectly, it did not prevent us from feeling Arab at the bottom of our hearts.

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<sup>65</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 200.

<sup>66</sup> Meynier, *Histoire Intérieure du FLN*, 671.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 690.

<sup>68</sup> Here, Ben Bella refers to the classification of Arabic as a foreign language under French colonialism beginning in 1938. See Taleb Ibrahim, *Les Algériens et Leur(s) Langue(s)*, 43.

Arabization is necessary, for there is no socialism without Arabization. Our Arabism is not racism. For us, who battled against racism, Arabism can only be a way of life and thought (une mode de vie et de pensée). There is no future for this country without Arabism. It was, in fact, the goal of our Revolution.<sup>69</sup>

The notion of Arabic as a language of “feeling” arose commonly in Ben Bella’s discussions on language. The underlying implication here is that even though Ben Bella himself had bypassed becoming Arabized, Arabization was necessary to ensure that other Algerians would be able to develop a deep emotional connection with Arabism. This speech also hints at another political concern among the ruling elite taking place in the wake of independence. Ben Bella’s refusal that Arabism constitutes a form of “racism” speaks to underlying uneasiness regarding opposition among some Berberophones toward rapid Arabization.<sup>70</sup> Wary that Arabization would cause a political crisis with them, Ben Bella advocated a gradual program for Arabization and allowed Berbers to continue learning French.<sup>71</sup>

One way to explain Ben Bella’s emphasis on Arabism as a “way of life and thought” is by considering the fact that he firmly believed in the importance of what he called “a sole form of political thought” (une seule pensée politique).<sup>72</sup> This uniformity of thought, he reasoned, allowed the FLN to bridge differences and rally around a common

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<sup>69</sup> *Les Discours du Président Ben Bella* (Algiers: Ministère de l’Orientation Nationale, 1964): 116-117.

<sup>70</sup> Kashani-Sabet, “The Swinging Pendulum,” 269.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 269.

<sup>72</sup> On January 17<sup>th</sup>, 1963, Ben Bella stated the following at the Congress of the General Union of Algerian Workers (Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens): “We established a program that became the charter of all Algerian militants. In this program, the fundamental option is: a sole form of political thought...[this] sole form of political thought brought us to form a political framework in conformity with the spirit that animated the National Liberation Front.” See *Les Discours du Président Ben Bella*, 8.

objective during the independence war. For Ben Bella, the fusion between culture and language might also then secure the uniformity of thought at the national level.

Despite his frequent insistence on Arabism, however, Ben Bella remained undecided regarding the use of French and how to best develop a modern character for the new Algeria. Just one year following his famous “We are Arabs!” speech, he backtracked on this statement somewhat and reassured Algeria’s appreciation for the French language. On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1963, he explained the following to an international journalist:

Elevating the level of culture is conditioned by the problem of language. I was misunderstood when I declared three times: ‘We are Arabs.’ Certain individuals were offended, and meanwhile it’s not about the color of one’s skin, blood, or race, it is a way of thinking, a philosophy. The problem of language is central. Socialism, too, is a culture. As long as we do not speak our language, a dimension of our socialism will be missing.

We feel Arab, but our metric system is not Arab. French is an excellent vehicle and our French friends know the degree of respect we accord this vehicle.<sup>73</sup>

Ben Bella’s comparison of French to a “metric system” reveals that while he viewed Arabic as an important cultural possession, French should remain the de facto “vehicle” of modernity. Arabic may be the language in which one could “feel” Algerian, but this did not preclude the use of French as the “vehicle” of modernity. In this excerpt, he sent a strong message to his contemporaries. While Arab identity had an important place in Algeria, it could not serve as the basis for the modern bureaucratic state he hoped to build.

Perhaps more importantly, in this speech it seems that Ben Bella uses “the problem of language” as a proxy for discussing conflicting views on society, culture, and,

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 152.

most importantly, politics. We see this in the way he uses the term “culture” loosely, implying it might mean language, philosophy, or even socialism. In line with the intellectual climate at the time, Ben Bella’s speech reflects the overall lack of consensus regarding the nature of legitimate national culture in Algeria. This speech appears to be more about how to ensure the emergence of a “sole form of political thought” than about language use itself.

### **Remedying the *Complexe***

Under both Ben Bella and Boumediène, the political leadership’s first objective in the cultural domain was to counter the deep process of depersonalization that had taken place under colonial rule. In a broad sense, “depersonalization” referred to what many Algerian elite believed to be the absence of a genuine Algerian culture following a colonial occupation that sought to establish French culture in its stead. The most influential figure in shaping this process was Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi (1932—), a politician and intellectual who became Algeria’s first minister of education under Boumediène in 1965 before transitioning to the role of minister of information and culture in 1970. Son of Sheikh Bashir Ibrahimi, Taleb Ibrahimi published numerous essays on politics, culture, and language throughout his career. One of the most outspoken proponents of Arabization, he saw Arabic as the key to realizing a new cultural world in Algeria that could one day even rival foreign cultures.

In his original work *De la Décolonisation à la Révolution Culturelle* (1973), Taleb Ibrahimi outlines his vision for the “cultural revolution” and the necessary steps to achieve it. First published in French, the work provides extensive detail into the political

philosophy that guided his term as minister. Let us first see how he defines this cultural revolution:

The Algerian must thus seize the richness of his past and he cannot do this without knowledge of Arabic. In this way, revived, sure of himself, rid of his complexes [ses complexes], he rises again to the surface to live with his time, to edify a culture enriched with all the acquisitions of the modern world, all the meanwhile defining his purpose by his history.<sup>74</sup>

For Taleb Ibrahimi, the psychological vestiges of colonialism were the primary obstacles limiting Algeria's national transformation. Intrinsicly connected with these psychological vestiges was language, the key for Ibrahimi to freeing Algerians from their *complexe*.

To understand what Taleb Ibrahimi means by the word *complexe*, it is useful to turn to Franz Fanon who developed the concept of the colonized subject's "psycho-affective equilibrium," quite literally the colonization of the mind brought on by colonial rule. This condition, Fanon argued, can only be remedied through national sovereignty and the colonized intellectual's reclamation of his past.<sup>75</sup> In this sense, we can interpret Ibrahimi's use of the term *complexe* to mean a distorted or insufficient sense of self which the elite were responsible for correcting.

Fanon is also useful for understanding Taleb Ibrahimi's work because they both share an understanding of revolution as requiring continued struggle against the colonial power after independence. Fanon saw revolution as a process that shaped the

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<sup>74</sup> Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi, *De la Décolonisation à la Révolution Culturelle* (Algiers: Société Nationale d'Édition et de Diffusion, 1973): 16.

<sup>75</sup> Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004): 148.

revolutionary's "consciousness." By undertaking the act of liberating the nation, the revolutionary himself was also liberated:

We must not expect the nation to produce new men. We must not expect men to change imperceptibly as the revolution constantly innovates. It is true both processes are important, but it is the consciousness that needs help. If the revolution in practice is meant to be totally liberating and exceptionally productive, everything must be accounted for. The revolutionary feels a particularly strong need to totalize events, to handle everything, to settle everything, to assume responsibility for everything.<sup>76</sup>

In Fanon's understanding of national consciousness, revolutionaries first able to obtain this consciousness have the moral imperative to "assume responsibility for everything" on behalf their compatriots. This line of thinking effectively establishes a kind of universal consciousness as the goal towards which newly independent countries should strive. As we will see, Taleb Ibrahimi saw the Arabic language as the primary vehicle for connecting Algerians with their own universal identity.

Taleb Ibrahimi's notion that the elite has a responsibility to correct the Algerian's *complexe* also suggests that he viewed modernization as a surgical process requiring the removal of any and all vestiges of colonialism to make room for what was righteous, i.e. Arab, Islamic, and anti-colonial. The idea here is that Algeria should turn in on itself to develop its own culture before re-opening itself to foreign cultures on better terms. As the above example suggests, the cultural isolation necessary to allow the Algerian "personality" to develop was not intended to remain so indefinitely. Once Algeria became self-assured in its own cultural authenticity, it could start to "welcome" other cultures:

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 229.



A Middle Eastern writer, Naguib Baladi, advises us to be ‘welcoming’ [acceuillants]. But, he adds, before welcoming it is necessary to have a self [un chez-soi]. Which brings us to say that we can enrich ourselves through contact with others on the condition that we remain ourselves. Thus, our culture, by which I mean our education above all else, must be Algerian, founded on the Arabic language (profoundly rooted in the country) all the meanwhile remaining open to foreign cultures.<sup>77</sup>

For Taleb Ibrahimi, looking inward to develop Algeria’s true self was a means to an end of integrating fully among foreign nations and their cultures. Like Fanon, Taleb Ibrahimi strongly condemned imitating the culture of the former colonial power, advocating the need for pursuing a unique *chez-soi* rid of colonial *complexes*. While Fanon advised newly independent countries against trying to “catch up” with Europe, he too envisioned detachment from Europe as a new path for humanity whose ultimate aim was “to walk in the company of man, every man, night and day, for all times.”<sup>78</sup> Like Fanon, Taleb Ibrahimi clearly saw the achievement of this consciousness as a process that would allow Algerians to re-engage with others on equal footing.

It is also important to stress that Taleb Ibrahimi saw his own role as protecting Algerians from cultural imperialism. He illustrates this most clearly in his introduction to the October-November issue of *Al-Thaqāfa* (1977). Published just four years after *De la Décolonisation à la Révolution Culturelle*, Taleb Ibrahimi stressed the ruling elite’s responsibility in combating cultural imperialism and reaffirming the goals of the cultural revolution:

The battle, then, is not easy because cultural imperialism is covert, takes many forms, and is even tolerated depending on the circumstances. We can distinguish, in short, at least three forms of cultural imperialism. In

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<sup>77</sup> Taleb Ibrahimi, *De la Décolonisation à la Révolution Culturelle*, 16.

<sup>78</sup> Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 238.

each one of these forms, we note that the responsibility for combating it in the third world rests in part on the collective citizenry, but on ruling men (*rijāl al-qiyāda*) to the largest degree.<sup>79</sup>

As this quote demonstrates, Taleb Ibrahimi believed that political participation in discussions on culture and language should be limited to the elite alone. He implies here that authentic Algerian culture should reflect the policies and ideology of the elite, the *rijāl al-qiyāda* who, having transcended their own depersonalization, were the only individuals capable of providing Algerians with the necessary leadership to connect them to their so-called personality. Despite the populist rhetoric associated with his cultural revolution, Taleb Ibrahimi's approach excludes ordinary Algerians from participation as well as other elite who might not agree with him.

### ***Tarbiya & State Surveillance***

Under president Houari Boumediène, Algeria saw the most ambitious and far-reaching implementation of socio-cultural projects designed to achieve a broader, top-down transformation of Algerian society. After ousting Ahmed Ben Bella in June 1965, Boumediène began reshaping political institutions “at the base supervised from above.”<sup>80</sup> Having appointed Taleb Ibrahimi to the important post of minister of national education in 1965, Boumediène's active support for rapid Arabization provided a renewed sense of legitimacy for former AUMA members and their supporters.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi, “al-Imbriyālīa al-Thaqāfīa: al-Summ fī al-Dasam,” *al-Thaqāfa* 41 (1977): 10.

<sup>80</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 209.

<sup>81</sup> Fawzi Abdelrazak, “Arabization in Algeria,” *MELA Notes* 26 (1982): 30.

Outwardly at least, Boumediène adopted an uncompromising approach towards Arabization that more closely matched the aspirations of the *arabisant* elite. He named 1971 the “Year of Arabization” in which he arranged a series of conferences and publications dedicated to expanding existing Arabization programs and reminding political officials of their obligation to learn Arabic.<sup>82</sup> During this same year, the regime held the “Conference for the Reform of Higher Education” at which Mohammed-Seddik Benyahia outlined “the introduction of intensive instruction of the national language for all students forced to pursue their studies in a foreign language.” This measure aimed to “form personnel capable of communicating in the national language by using the technical terminology relative to their professional activities.”<sup>83</sup> Two years later in 1973, the National Commission for Arabization was created to make the Arabic language “efficient” and suitable for the development of science and technology.<sup>84</sup> Another important development during the Boumediène era was the first national conference on Arabization that took place on May 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, 1975. This conference, which Boumediène opened himself, proposed a “rational and scientific” vision of Arabization that clarified and reinforced the status of Arabic within government institutions.<sup>85</sup> Not long after, the Algiers Charter of 1976 came into force which outlined the role of the “revolutionary power” in “speeding up” the process of transforming Arabic into one language used for work, education, and culture.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Taleb Ibrahim, *Les Algériens et Leur(s) Langue(s)*, 261.

<sup>83</sup> Mohammed-Seddik Benyahia quoted in Taleb Ibrahim, *Les Algériens et Leur(s) Langue(s)*, 261.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 262-263.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 266.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 268.

To understand the changes taking place regarding Arabization during the 1970s, it is useful to assess the work of Muḥammad al-Tāhir Faḍlā' (1918-2005), a former AUMA member and student of Ben Badis.<sup>87</sup> A prominent intellectual and playwright known for composing plays in Literary Arabic, Faḍlā' also published several articles on the topics of culture and education such as his 1977 article “al-Thaqāfa wa Dawruhā fī al-Tarbiya wa al-Ta‘līm” (Culture and its Role in *Tarbiya* and Education). Faḍlā'’s article is worth examining in detail because he instructs the state as to what kind of culture should be promoted and how it should be implemented.

For Faḍlā', culture has a unique relationship to “civilization” (al-ḥaḍāra). At the beginning of his article, he is primarily interested in exploring whether civilization or culture must come first. Let us see how he defines these terms in his own words:

Finally, the concept of culture emerged from the term ‘civilization’ (al-ḥaḍāra)—a figment of knowing a cause by its effect, or knowing a noun by its adjective. Therefore, civilization is the result of what happens after the fusion of culture (al-inṣihār fī al-thaqāfa).<sup>88</sup>

In this passage, Faḍlā' explains that “civilization” must come after “the fusion of culture.”

While he does not explicitly state what he means by this “fusion of culture,” we can interpret this expression as referring to some kind of unity or homogeneity of thought.

Not unlike the reasoning behind Ben Bella’s and Taleb Ibrahimī’s works, Faḍlā' also sees

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<sup>87</sup> This author was not able to find formal biographical information for Muḥammad al-Tāhir Faḍlā'. The information cited here was taken from his obituary published online on March 15, 2015 in Mohammad Shamāniyy, “Rā'id al-Masraḥ al-'Arabiyy al-Faṣīḥ fī al-Jazā'ir,” *al-Hayāt* (2015), url: <http://www.elhayatonline.net/article18073.html>.

<sup>88</sup> Muḥammad al-Tahir Faḍlā', “al-Thaqāfa w Dawruhā fī al-Tarbiya wa al-Ta‘līm,” *al-Thaqāfa* (Algiers: Wizārat al-Thaqāfa wa al-I'lām, 1977): 76.

cultural unification as a precursor to political unification, or as Boumediène described, the “soul” to the Algerian “body.”<sup>89</sup>

Like many former AUMA members, Faḍlā’ advocated for adherence to a purist and reformist Islam as an integral part of Algerians’ so-called authentic character. Later in his article, he advocates for an understanding of culture through the Qur’an, ultimately arguing that it allows for the integration of “spiritual” and “material” elements:

Let us take, then, culture in its ancient meaning, that is uprightedness (al-istiḳāma). From this base, we can move towards spiritual and material horizons together. Without clarifying this or that, we can favor and limit, giving each thing its due. This will ultimately not harm anyone (lā ḍarar wa lā ḍarār).<sup>90</sup>

Faḍlā’'s use of the terms “emphasizing” and “limiting” as opposed to “clarifying”—in other words, stating explicitly whether a thing is permissible or not permissible—sheds important insight on the approach the state should take to monitor and produce culture. He implies here that the state should take caution when deciding whether or not to outright ban certain aspects of culture in fear of provoking too strong a reaction among the population. This becomes clear later in the essay when he explains that closing cinemas and theatres “will never fix the problem, and the people—especially the youth—will not avoid this intellectual and spiritual nourishment....” Moving forward, he outlines the following solution:

What will correct the problem is opening the *right* theater and the *right* cinema, one that educates and primes, prevents and convinces. What we say in the theater or cinema, we will also say elsewhere: in books, in

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<sup>89</sup> Houari Boumediène quoted in Mostari, “A Sociolinguistic Perspective on Arabisation,” 26.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 78.

newspapers, in journals and publications, in televised broadcasts, and in the cultural and media arts (*funūn al-thaqāfa wa al-i'lām*).<sup>91</sup>

As Faḍlā' states, disseminating national culture will require the authorities to remain discrete in their efforts to control all forms of media and communication. From this claim arises an important question—what does Faḍlā' mean by “the problem?” The problem is that the regime and its intelligentsia, including Faḍlā' himself, feared criticism from those expecting a more popular and democratic approach to governance in line with the goals of the revolution. Given the authoritarian nature of the regime at the time of Faḍlā'’s writing, it makes sense that the regime would seek more obscure methods of control so as to not make public any thinking or behavior that might provoke dissent. What is also interesting here is that Faḍlā' clearly viewed “the youth” (*al-shabāb*) as posing an especially dangerous challenge to the regime. Why might that be? With an ever-larger number of students enrolling in public schools, the young Algerian population was clearly in the process of obtaining the same literacy, technical know-how, and *savoir-faire* of the elite that, as former members of the wartime FLN knew all too well, could be used against the regime itself if not properly monitored.

### **Beyond State Education: *Tarbiya*, Morality, & Self-Censorship**

One way in which the elite hoped to shape culture was through the emphasis on morality as a central component of education. Before proceeding, it is worth noting that while the two Arabic words *tarbiya* and *ta'līm* often translate to “education” in both English and French, the word *tarbiya* can also be translated as cultivation, refinement, or

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<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

culture. Depending on the context, *tarbiya* can also be used to refer to a religious moral upbringing.<sup>92</sup> In his 1977 article titled “al-Jānib al-Akhlāqiyy min al-Tarbiya al-Islāmiyya,” Dr. Turkih Rabih (1932-2014), a supporter of Islamic education and long-time professor at the University of Algiers, distinguishes the term *tarbiya* from *ta’līm* to emphasize the importance of morality and piety in education, ultimately showing how the state can use morality as a tool of “self-censorship.”

Rabih calls for the Algerian regime to consider education as *tarbiya* because he believes it has the potential to combine both abstract and material components. “*Tarbiya* for Arabs and Islamic education,” he writes, “combines abstract and material factors together in the personality of the individual, who works to build it in accordance with the philosophy of the educational Qur’an...”<sup>93</sup> For Rabih, education should not be limited to the development of technical and vocational skills but should transform the individual as a whole: “the significance of the word *tarbiya* for Arabs informs the meaning of politics, leadership, development, reform, and refinement as we say.”<sup>94</sup>

This moral dimension should be taught in state education, Rabih argues, because it is also the primary objective of Islamic education. In the following quote, Rabih prioritizes the development of the citizen’s ethical framework over the development of technical skills “no matter what the subject of the lesson”:

The moral education intended by the Islamic ‘Ulamā’ means that it is the spirit of Islamic education because the first and superior goal of Islamic education is the refinement of morality and education of the soul.

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<sup>92</sup> It is worth noting that in contemporary Algeria, the Ministry of National Education is known in Arabic as *Wizārat al-Tarbiya al-Waṭaniyya*, not *al-ta’līm*.

<sup>93</sup> Faḍlā’, “al-Thaqāfa wa Dawruhā fī al-Tarbiya wa al-Ta’līm,” 37.

<sup>94</sup> Turkih Rabih, “al-Jānib al-Akhlāqiyy min al-Tarbiya al-Islāmiyya,” *al-Thaqāfa* 41 (al-Jazā’ir: Wizārat al-Thaqāfa wa al-I’lām, 1977): 36.

Therefore, each lesson should be an expression of a lesson in morals no matter what the subject of the lesson, because honorable morals are the underpinning of Islamic education and its spirit.<sup>95</sup>

In this example, Rabih highlights the importance of *tarbiya* for religious reasons. Yet are the benefits of teaching *tarbiya* over *ta'lim* truly limited to religious objectives alone?

The most telling aspect of Rabih's article emerges towards the end where he outlines the connection between *tarbiya* and censorship. *Tarbiya* is necessary for the state because drawing clear ethical boundaries might serve to minimize the state's need to enforce right and wrong:

Islamic education, then, begins from within the individual in order to make the Muslim work with God on the basis of his feelings. He serves God as if he sees him, and from here, he does not need an external surveillant to direct him here or there because the surveillant already exists within himself. Therefore, he does not steal not because he fears prison or arrest, nor does he betray his country, because he fears God and because his conscience does not permit him to commit any sin even a small one.<sup>96</sup>

The idea that the citizen could serve as his or her own "surveillant" illuminates how education, religion, and language became entangled in a comprehensive state-produced value system whereby citizens were expected to abide by the rules set in place by the political leadership. Brand has described how since the 1960s, the Algerian political leadership instrumentalized an "Arab-Islamic essence of the people" in attempt to bridge political divisions and ensure regime stability.<sup>97</sup> This process was designed to work such that a "homogenous" cultural-religious identity rooted in Islamic terms would ensure continued support for socialist development. In a similar sense, we see that many elite

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>97</sup> Laurie A. Brand, *Official Stories: Politics and National Narratives in Egypt and Algeria* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014): 150-151.



such as Taleb Ibrahimi, Faḍlā', and Rabih argued for an Arabo-Islamic identity to ensure national unity. They thus understood the purpose of education to be the transmission of a new culture that incorporated religion, language, and ethics to secure citizens' conformity to the authority of the state.

### **Early Challenges to Arabization: Mostefa Lacheraf**

Hesitations about Arabization began to be articulated more frequently in the later years of Boumediène's presidency, especially under Mostefa Lacheraf's term as Minister of National Education (1977-1979). A prominent intellectual and writer who became minister of primary and secondary education in 1977, Lacheraf distanced himself from the active Arabization policy set in place by Taleb Ibrahimi. He believed that the government should continue favoring Arabic-French bilingualism until Arabic could be "reformed" to suit modern times.<sup>98</sup> His 1977 article "Mushkilāt al-Tarbiya wa al-Ta'lim," which was originally published in French and translated into Arabic by Dr. Hanafi Benaissa, offers critical commentary on the relationship between language and culture.

In this article, Lacheraf addresses "the question of education" (mas'alat al-t'alīm)" with specific attention paid to the role of Arabization. His overall critique is that rapid implementation of the revolution's goals (mabādi' al-thawra) resulted in the Algerian people's "confusion (al-ḥayra) between the culture being pursued and the desired education system."<sup>99</sup> While he does not specify what he means by the "desired education system," we can infer that his critique targets those elites who framed national culture as

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<sup>98</sup> Benrabah, "Language-in-Education Planning," 231.

<sup>99</sup> Mostefa Lacheraf, "Mushkilāt al-Tarbiya wa al-Ta'lim," trans. Hanafi Benaissa, *al-Thaqāfa* 41 (1977): 17.

a return to origins as did Taleb Ibrahimi, Faḍlā', and Rabih. Because Algeria faced unique difficulties relative to other Arab states, Lacheraf argued, the elite was responsible for undertaking Arabic's "reform" (al-iṣlāh) and "renewal" (al-tajdīd) in order to make it suit Algeria's particular linguistic needs.<sup>100</sup> Let us see how Lacheraf foresees the consequences of pursuing Arabization:

The desire that one's personality can be completed by using Literary Arabic, his national language, reveals many issues: that he always hopes there will come a day when the corrupt state of many peoples, having been barred from a culture that would allow them to complete elements of their national personality (shakḥiyyatiha al-waṭaniyya), will be corrected. This desire is what has made some adopt perspectives marked by haste, unrest, and improvisation... Concerning Algeria, which has suffered from backwardness, and given that this backwardness cannot be remedied except through serious, precise work and avoiding falling into negligence and illusion, this aim to complete the elements of the personality has led to severe distress. Perhaps it goes without saying that those who have worked in this field did not feel this distress because of their excitement and lack of patience. In other words, this excitement has led, at least for now, to not feel the sense of genuine isolation we have reached because of obsolete, rigid, and lifeless values. All of this [has taken place] because of the sister countries (al-aqtār al-shaqīqa), who wanted the best for us, but who in reality, cannot help us in an objective way.<sup>101</sup>

Here, Lacheraf achieves two things. One, he critiques defenders of Arabization not by attacking the value of the Arabic language, but by accusing Arabization of being misguided in its attempts to create an artificial personality for Algeria. Lacheraf's distinction is unique for the debates surrounding language at this time, which often conflated the two terms so that critiques of Arabization as a policy were interpreted as rejections of Arabic as a language. Two, he draws attention to the state of frustration and confusion that had resulted from using Arabic to realize "the national personality," an

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 19.

ideal that Lacheraf subtly dismisses. At the end of the article, he poses a critical question not commonly posed by the elite during this time: “Does education necessarily arise out of culture?” (hal al-tarbiya nāshi’ a bi al-ḍurūra ‘an al-thaqāfa?).<sup>102</sup> By destabilizing common ideological debates circulating at that time, Lacheraf asks his contemporaries to re-evaluate Arabization’s fundamental objective of revealing the Algerian personality.

### **Conclusion**

McDougall has argued that the Algerian elite’s claims of authenticity did not precede modernity, but were produced by modernity: “...an artifact painstakingly created, a doctrine elaborated out of the differences and divisions opened up in the social world, in political order and cultural hierarchy, in conceptions of civilization and science...”<sup>103</sup> Claims of a return to Algerian authenticity undoubtedly provided major impetus for pursuing Arabization as a linguistic policy. Yet as the works surveyed in this chapter suggest, much more was at stake than the mere substitution of Arabic for French in schools and government institutions. More than the pursuit of language planification, Arabization served as a struggle for the “mental structures” of Algerians as Bourdieu has explained:

The conflict [over linguistic legitimacy] between the French of the revolutionary intelligentsia and idioms or dialects (patois) is a conflict over symbolic power that has at stake the formation and the reformation of mental structures. In brief, it is not solely about communicating, but to make known a new discourse of authority, with its new political vocabulary, its terms of address and reference, its metaphors, euphemisms, and the representation of the social world it conveys. And, because [linguistic legitimacy] is linked to the new interests of new social groups,

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>103</sup> McDougall, *History and Culture of Nationalism in Algeria*, 236.

it becomes incomprehensible among local speakers shaped by usages linked to the specific interests of peasant groups.<sup>104</sup>

While Bourdieu used the case of France in his own analysis, we can draw a parallel between how members of the Algerian elite across the ideological spectrum strove for linguistic unification as means to achieving political unification. In this sense, Arabization should not be understood simply as a way of expanding communication among Algerians, who, of course, could already communicate through their own spoken languages. Rather, as Bourdieu states, Arabization, “as a conflict over symbolic power,” aimed to establish a “new discourse of authority,” one that would ensure Algerians’ compliance with the goals and policies of the state.

Thus Arabization, far from being a way of reviving and restoring pre-colonial Arab-Islamic values, was a politically-motivated policy that capitalized on the cultural and religious authority of MSA to establish new channels of control and domination. The cultural revolution was meant to embody these aims. In making Arabization a tenant of national culture, the leadership transformed its own political authority into a kind of sacred authority where social and religious values became political objects of post-independence ideological struggles. Like Kateb Yacine elegantly stated in his novel *Le Polygone Étoilé*, just as “Arab-Muslim” Algeria sought to “pacify” Berbers,<sup>105</sup> so too did proponents of Arabization use language to shape and control the way individuals were to behave and think in the new Algerian nation.

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<sup>104</sup> Bourdieu, *Ce Que Parler Veut Dire*, 31.

<sup>105</sup> Yacine, *Le Polygone Étoilé*, 99.

## Chapter II : Éducation à l'Algérienne?, 1962-1978

The place of the Arabic language in the city we are building must be eminent. We must reconcile our country, that has been depersonalized, with its history and its past, that means, with itself...because we are in the process of giving a new shape to our country, because our country currently lives a socialist rhythm, your role is even greater. I call on you all, all teachers to participate effectively in all of the campaigns undertaken by the Political Bureau and the Government.

For this, your congress must form a team capable of translating via educational policy the goals of our revolutionary objectives.<sup>106</sup>

-Ahmed Ben Bella, July 3<sup>rd</sup> 1963

### Introduction

This section examines elite discourse surrounding Arabization in the national education system under presidents Ahmed Ben Bella (1963-1965) and Houari Boumediène (1965-1978). My aim here is to analyze how the education system served as a laboratory for competing economic and ideological interests around language and national identity. I find that the political leadership's often ambivalent approach to language policy reflected contradictory economic, political, and ideological interests at work from independence onward. The education system is the ideal institution in which to analyze Arabization because it provided the regime an opportunity to shape youth in the image of the virtuous citizen—one who read, wrote, and spoke Literary Arabic.

As Khaoula Taleb Ibrahimy has noted, education systems possess a certain symbolic value that makes them the ideal method for transmitting, reproducing, and imposing linguistic norms.<sup>107</sup> Because the education system allows the Algerian government to determine what kind of knowledge is transmitted to students and how, it is important to examine the political leadership's views on education during this time period.

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<sup>106</sup> *Les Discours du Président Ben Bella*, 110.

<sup>107</sup> Taleb Ibrahimy, *Les Algériens et Leur(s) Langue(s)*, 175.

The following questions thus emerge: How did the political leadership's own experiences in French colonial schools or in the *medersas* and *zawiyas* inform education policy after independence? Which aspects of national education were open to discussion at independence and which were not? Given that the 1963 constitution stipulated that Arabic was the sole national and official language of Algeria,<sup>108</sup> why did French continue to play an integral role in schools and universities? Finally, how did the regime make use of national education to shape new forms of political domination or maintain existing ones?

### ***Éducation à la Française: Mohammed Harbi's Une Vie Debout***

To understand the place of language in education after 1962, it is necessary to revisit the legacy of French colonial schooling. Despite changes made to the academic curriculum after independence, the political leadership largely maintained the educational model and pedagogical methods left in place by the colonial regime. While debates still take place regarding the content of school curriculum, the expectation that the state was responsible for providing free public education drew wide support among the population from independence onward with school enrollments more than tripling between 1962-1963 (832,143) and 1977-1978 (3,687, 652).<sup>109</sup> What ideological underpinnings did the political leadership possess from their own educational experiences that might explain how and why Arabization took on a central role in national education after independence?

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<sup>108</sup> See Article 5, Algerian Constitution of 10 September 1963.

<sup>109</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 227.

While a detailed history of the colonial education system is beyond the scope of this project, it is worth discussing what the colonial school was designed to achieve and how it came to gain a degree of acceptance in Algerian society. Fanny Colonna has provided invaluable insight into how local teachers were recruited and trained during the colonial period. In the 1890s, the regime opted to bring free schooling “to the families’ doors” in as many cities and villages as possible so that “no obstacle could impose itself between [the colonial regime’s teaching] and the universality of Muslim youth” (*mettre si bien notre éducation à la portée des familles qu’aucun obstacle ne s’interpose entre notre enseignement et l’universalité de la jeunesse musulmane*).<sup>110</sup> Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, most Algerians saw French colonial schools only as an instrument to obtain material betterment and they did not attract large numbers of local students.<sup>111</sup> While the colonial regime provided some schooling to a minority of Algerian (predominantly male) students, it did not embark on mass education campaigns for most Algerians despite its so-called civilizing mission.

After the First World War, the school had effectively “imposed itself as a social and economic necessity, a necessary weapon” and as such, many Algerians began demanding educational rights.<sup>112</sup> How and why did this happen? Colonna’s understanding of the school’s perceived neutrality provides the most useful framework for understanding how this development took place. Although the school was an institution put in place by and for the colonial regime, it gradually distanced itself from

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<sup>110</sup> Colonna, *Instituteurs Algériens*, 20.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

the colonial authorities by serving as an arbiter between the colonizers and Algerian society.<sup>113</sup> In this way, education empowered an increasing number of Algerians to use its material and intellectual tools against colonial occupation as the FLN would later do during the independence war.

One important characteristic of French colonial education that the Algerian government retained after independence was the teacher-student relationship that prioritized obedience, submission, and rote memorization of concepts and ideas. This is important to take into account concerning Arabization because French pedagogical methods defined not only what language was taught, but how: as correct French or as impure *patois* (dialect). Teachers were also recruited among the local population to promote French culture in addition to teaching basic reading, writing, and math.<sup>114</sup> In order to recruit local teachers, training colleges identified Algerians who were the “least far” (*les moins loin*), in geographic or ideological proximity to French colonial society.<sup>115</sup> Once hired, teachers were expected to transform students’ moral qualities in addition to their intellectual capabilities: “What is in question is not the general scholarly formation of subjects, but their moral qualities, their *habitus* in its entirety.”<sup>116</sup> This notion of the *habitus* is reminiscent of how the post-independence political leadership conceived of Arabization not only as a language policy, but as cultural program intended to develop “the Algerian personality,” an all-encompassing existence that should be brought fully in line with the state’s conception of national culture.

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 137.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 103.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 146.



In his autobiography, former FLN member Mohammed Harbi provides a detailed account of the contradictory values that the colonial school instilled in him from an early age. A well-known writer and historian, Harbi (1933—) was raised in an affluent family north of Constantine in El Arrouch. At fifteen, he joined the MTLD (Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratiques) under Messali Hadj, eventually serving as an advisor to Ben Bella and finding himself in prison for five years after opposing Boumediène's July coup.<sup>117</sup> Below, Harbi describes the educational segregation he witnessed as a child in the colonial school where he spent time in both the *section indigène* and the *section française*:

The primary school at El-Arrouch was comprised of two sections: one indigenous and the other French. In the French section, there were the French, certain sons of notables, and also Muslim girls since it was a mixed school. At the indigenous school, there were only Muslim boys. I spent three or four days in the French section which allowed me to see the difference. Everything was better: the classrooms, the tables, the materials. I only stayed there a few days because my great uncle gave my place to his son Ali, who was older than me: 'Mohammed is younger: let him go to the indigenous school and my son to the French school to catch up,' uncle Haouès said to my father.<sup>118</sup>

Harbi's account sheds light on the selective nature of the school and what kinds of students were encouraged to excel. In the case of El-Arrouch, it is not that children of Europeans and Algerians attended two different schools but rather that within one school, children were divided into two different sections based on race and class. This distinction is unsurprising given that in colonial Algeria, minimal elementary and occupational education was provided to the local population to ensure participation in the workforce,

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<sup>117</sup> Cheurfi, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique de l'Algérie*, 578.

<sup>118</sup> Mohammed Harbi, *Une Vie Debout* (Paris: La Découverte, 2001): 27.

not to promote the opportunities for socioeconomic advancement that Europeans enjoyed.<sup>119</sup>

While Harbi concludes that his experience in the school had a positive effect on his overall intellectual and professional development, he cautions readers not to generalize about the colonial school as it tended more towards “communitarianism” than “individualism.” In one instance, he recalls how native students were required to cultivate the school garden every Thursday while European children were not.<sup>120</sup> It is thus important to historicize the segregation of the school during the colonial period to better understand why education after independence was designed to provide advanced education for the few—children of the elite and students assigned to the bilingual track, often by chance—and basic competencies for the masses, primarily students assigned to the Arabized track.

Harbi also recounts how the colonial school instilled him with values contradictory to those of his parents. Describing the “rationality” of the school versus the “arbitrary nature of traditional norms and expectations,” Harbi concludes that the school and especially his teacher, Madame Chabbas, led him to develop a much different relationship with his own children than the one he had shared with his father:

The French school and my father’s attitude forced me to break off from the spirit of submission. I realize this today. I grew up in a patriarchal house where my father accepted unacceptable things because of his father. Yet he would never tell me that what he was doing was good; he would

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<sup>119</sup> Fanny Colonna, “Training the National Elites,” trans. Gabrielle Varro, *Historical Research* 3 (2008): 286.

<sup>120</sup> Harbi, *Une Vie Debout*, 31.

say, 'I cannot go against my father.' At school, everything had to have a rational justification, not an arbitrary one.<sup>121</sup>

This passage attests to how the colonial school managed to insert itself between children and their families, forcing students to choose between traditional family values and the values promoted by the French school. As I will demonstrate later in this chapter, the post-independence leadership adopted a similar approach in how they positioned themselves between students and the family.

Throughout the colonial period, however, educational opportunities and top-down attempts to transform students' habitus were not limited to the French colonial school alone. The pre-colonial Islamic educational establishments in Algeria never fully disappeared but became "trapped" in religious institutions often outside of towns and cities.<sup>122</sup> Education in the *zawayas* and Islamic universities across the Middle East and North Africa continually attracted Algerian students excluded from or unwilling to participate in colonial schooling. This development led to the emergence of the Reformist Movement led by Ben Badis, Bashir Ibrahimi, and other Arabophone notables in the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>123</sup>

Yet it would be a mistake to limit the way Arab-Islamic identity was articulated in the national movement to the work of the Reformist movement alone because the Francophone modernist elite in fact shared the same preoccupation with purity and conformity held by the AUMA. As Alain Messaoudi has shown, the division separating the education of the colonial schools versus traditional educational institutions was not

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>122</sup> Colonna, "Training the National Elites," 286.

<sup>123</sup> McDougall, "Dream of Exile, Promise of Home," 256.

always as distinct as one might think. He has emphasized how French *arabisants* and local Arabophone intellectuals in the *medersas* and *zawayas* often worked together to reconcile traditional cultural and religious norms with scientific progress.<sup>124</sup>

As Colonna has described, the French colonial school effected a *problématique obligée sur le savoir*<sup>125</sup> that influenced all Algerian nationalists, AUMA supporters and non-AUMA supporters alike, transforming not only the knowledge that was taught, but also challenging the very meaning of how knowledge was produced and why. What constituted legitimate knowledge? What was the correct form of modern knowledge, that produced by the French cultural tradition or the Islamist-revivalist approach produced by the Reformist movement? What did it mean to be cultured, to be an intellectual? These critical debates preoccupied the political leadership following independence and are impossible to separate from the accumulation of knowledge during the colonial era.

### **Mouloud Kassim Nait Belkacem and the Conceptual *Tanwīn***

As was discussed in chapter one, the political leadership that arose out of the FLN at independence conceived of Arabization as an all-encompassing project intended to replace French, Tamazight, and Colloquial Arabic in all domains. National education for young schoolchildren constituted one means of implementing this ambitious linguistic-cultural project. Yet Arabization could not be instituted without also equipping Algeria's overwhelmingly illiterate adult population with basic reading and writing skills. At the onset of the independence war in 1954, illiteracy rates stood as high as 86% for Algerian

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<sup>124</sup> Messaoudi, *Les Arabisants et la France Coloniale*, 512.

<sup>125</sup> Colonna, *Instituteurs Algériens*, 37.

men and 95% of Algerian women.<sup>126</sup> In face of these challenges, how was the elite to bring national culture to the masses?

Algerian politician and intellectual Mouloud Kassim Nait Belkacem's 1962 essay "Speak the Language of Your People" (Takallum Lughat Qawmak)<sup>127</sup> provides a blueprint of what kind of language was to be taught and how. Having represented the FLN in Germany and Scandinavia during the independence war, Belkacem (1927-1992) served as the political director for foreign affairs under Ben Bella before becoming political advisor to Boumediène beginning in 1967. A lifelong defender of Arabization, Belkacem's commitment to linguistic and religious affairs eventually led him to direct the High Council on the National Language (Haut Conseil de la Langue Nationale) two decades later (1983-1989).<sup>128</sup>

"Takallum Lughat Qawmak" first appeared in French in 1962 in the government-owned daily *El Moujahid*. It was later translated into Arabic by Hanafi Benaïssa and republished in *al-Aṣālah* in 1975. In the article, Belkacem focuses on two methods of disseminating national culture to the masses: broadcasting and the public school. Broadcasting, with "its cultural and instructive message for the people in various domains,"<sup>129</sup> would have an important role to play in realizing Arabization:

We must prioritize Literary Arabic over Dialectical Arabic in the dissemination of news and other means via *oral quotas* (ḥuṣṣus kalāmiyya)...until the general tendency is always to prioritize Literary Arabic, until it returns to being natural, and we dispense entirely of the

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<sup>126</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 126.

<sup>127</sup> Mouloud Kassim Nait Belkacem, "Takallum Lughat Qawmak," trans. Hanafi Benaïssa, *al-Aṣālah* 25 (1975). According to this edition of *al-Aṣālah*, Belkacem's text was originally published in French in *El Moujahid* on November 29<sup>th</sup>, 1962. This author was unable to locate the original French text.

<sup>128</sup> Cheurfi, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique de l'Algérie*, 878-879.

<sup>129</sup> Belkacem, "Takallum Lughat Qawmak," i.

colloquial, or it is itself erased. At least in its current sanitized form (shakliha al-qashtāliyy).<sup>130</sup>

In this passage, it is intriguing how Belkacem articulates Arabization as a “return” to its rightful place in spoken communication. His interpretation implies that there was a time when it was “natural” for Algerians to speak MSA in the form he presents here. It is not pertinent for this study whether or not Literary Arabic ever served as a language of spoken communication—this question has been debated elsewhere. What is key for Belkacem’s text is the ideal of MSA he upholds. As Kristen Brustad has argued, what matters is not whether Classical Arabic was ever used as a language of daily communication but that its defenders, such as Belkacem, perceive it to have been.<sup>131</sup> She has used the term “standard language ideology culture” to describe how the elite and especially *nahḍawiyy* language “reformers” in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries sharpened the boundaries between correct (MSA) and incorrect (Colloquial Arabic) language, effectively solidifying new forms of social and political control centered on notions of “standard” and “nonstandard” (or substandard) Arabic.<sup>132</sup> In assuming responsibility to rid Algeria of “sanitized” forms of Arabic, Belkacem reinforces his own authority to act as a kind of “language police” with the right and duty to determine legitimate language use.<sup>133</sup> This idea illustrates the extent to which Belkacem connected MSA to linguistic purity and conformity to an imagined norm, viewing Arabic not as a tool of expression but as representative of speakers’ socio-cultural-political affiliations.

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Brustad, “Standard Language Ideology and the Construction of Modern Standard Arabic.”

<sup>132</sup> Belkacem, “Takallum Lughat Qawmak,” i.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

As one might expect, the school was the primary institution responsible for ensuring that students—and teachers—depart from using such “sanitized” forms. Belkacem argued that teachers should impose MSA on children “even during gym time,”<sup>134</sup> explaining that because Algerian teachers had been forced to speak in French at all times in colonial schools, it was only natural that students should have this same requirement with MSA. He goes on to say that students should also be required to speak MSA with full vowelling, or *al-‘irāb*, at all times for, after all, “what is Arabic without vowelling?”<sup>135</sup> (*idha al-tanwīn m‘anāha al-‘irāb, wa ma hiyya al-‘arabiyya bidūn al-‘irāb?*). He then justifies his claim by citing MSA’s parallels with classical Greek and Latin:

Greek & Latin, the most revered classical languages, are not understood without the observance of grammar and precision; this is not restricted to classical languages, but can also be found in modern languages, some of which transcend classical languages in their submission to *tanwīn*.<sup>136</sup>

We can interpret Belkacem’s use of the term *tanwīn* here both literally, referring to a particular linguistic feature of MSA, and figuratively, as “the observation of grammar and precision.” This unconventional use of the word *tanwīn* merits special attention—why might “the observation of grammar and precision” form an important part of how the leadership conceived of Arabization’s role in the nation building process? More importantly, what political and intellectual developments were taking place in 1975 that motivated the editors of *Al-Aṣālah* to translate and re-publish Belkacem’s text thirteen years after it first appeared?

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid., v.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., vi.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

Bourdieu offers a useful framework for understanding the relationship of linguistic codification to political power, suggesting that the school teacher serves as both a master of speech (*maître à parler*) and master of thought (*maître à penser*) who teaches children to see and feel the same way.<sup>137</sup> One way of doing this is by teaching the “official” language—the standardized, written, and codified language—a form conceived by the center of political power and then disseminated through education.<sup>138</sup> In Belkacem’s view, if MSA was the language of the state, and if it could be taught in the most “standardized” way possible using *al-‘irāb*, the pinnacle of “grammar and precision,” than all speakers who use forms of language not compliant with his understanding of legitimate standard Arabic would be effectively excluded from Algeria’s new national identity. Although he eventually backtracks in stating that students should speak in MSA at least “until the Arabization of education is complete” (*illa ’an yattam ta’rīb al-ta’līm*), his expectation that MSA with full *‘irāb* become the de facto language of Algeria speaks to how and why Arabization became an salient ideal as well as a policy goal.

Beyond the standard rhetoric of Arabization’s necessity for revealing the Algerian personality, Belkacem clearly viewed the pursuit of uncompromising linguistic conformity through MSA as an important step to political unification. Perhaps more significantly, Belkacem’s text points to Arabization’s emphasis on grammar and precision as an important justification for its implementation. His argument points to what Mohammed Harbi has described as the “fetishism of the technical,” a mechanistic understanding of politics and society that, I would argue, also informs Belkacem’s

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<sup>137</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Ce Que Parler Veut Dire*, 32.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.



understanding of MSA as his emphasis on “grammar and precision” aptly shows.<sup>139</sup> Thus as Bourdieu has suggested, it is important to view the officialization of MSA as a linguistic fabrication born out of the elite’s attempt to unify Algeria politically<sup>140</sup> rather than the “revival” of a “natural” speech community that existed before French colonialism.

### **Education and the Ideal Algerian Family: Rachid Boudjedra’s *La Vie Quotidienne en Algérie***

The relationship between children and their families became of paramount importance to the education system after independence. By independence, more than a century of social, political, and economic transformations brought on by colonialism had put pressure on Algeria’s traditional patriarchal and patrilineal clan-based family structures. In building the new Algeria, the elite hoped to take an active role in child development by designing educational institutions that would allow them to mediate between children and their families. In his satirical *La Vie Quotidienne en Algérie* (1971), Rachid Boudjedra paints a picture of how traditional family values struggled to adjust to the ideological demands imposed by national schooling after independence.

Born in Aïn Baïda to an upper class family, writer and critic Rachid Boudjedra (1941—) served as a militant and correspondent for the FLN during the Liberation War. Having worked as an instructor at a *lycée* for girls in Blida, Boudjedra went to France (1969-1972) then Morocco (1972-1975) to rejoin the *Partie d’avant-garde socialiste*

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<sup>139</sup> Mohammed Harbi quoted in McDougall, “Dream of Exile, Promise of Home,” 255.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

before returning to Algeria to teach at the university level.<sup>141</sup> Shortly thereafter in 1977, he became an advisor to the ministry of information and culture and continued teaching all throughout the 1980s.

His work *La Vie Quotidienne en Algérie* details a fictional family composed of Si El Hadj Ammar, his wife Lalla Fatima, and their five children who seek socioeconomic advancement for their family in the new Algeria. Divided into chapters touching on dress, religious practice, and urban life, Boudjedra highlights what he believes to be the “ideal” middle-class Algerian family’s inability to recognize the contradictions between maintaining traditional values and pursuing economic advancement through sending their children (the boys, at least) to school.

In Boudjedra’s text, the public school’s social importance first becomes apparent through its comparison to the Qur’anic school. Si El Hadj Ammar and Lalla’s young son, Fouad, begins his education at a local *medersa* prior to entering the formal public education system. His father, who had feared that Fouad would have a foreign teacher (Egyptian, Syrian, or French), is relieved to find his son is assigned to a young female Algerian, who teaches Fouad Arabic for two years until he begins learning French,<sup>142</sup> mirroring the gradual Arabization taking place in the 1960s and 1970s.

Once he enters the public school, Fouad feels frightened, overwhelmed, and unable to make sense of the expected teacher-student relationship. Fouad’s hesitations towards the public school, however, do not last long. Having experienced frequent

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<sup>141</sup> Cheurfi, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique de l’Algérie*, 291.

<sup>142</sup> Rachid Boudjedra, *La Vie Quotidienne en Algérie* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1971): 136-137.

physical punishment at the hands of *taleb* Si Hadi at the Qur'anic school, it is not long before his public school teacher vastly supersedes Si Hadi's authority:

Fouad, who had much respect for his elderly blind teacher at the Qur'anic school, donned much prestige on his new instructor. His father does not cease to repeat to him that he must obey his teacher at the school even more than himself! For Fouad, she did not only appear as a kind of magician. She was also the one who possessed knowledge and for whom the entire community attributed real veneration. Many Algerian parents, completely illiterate, felt a great sense of gratitude towards the person who took charge of the future of their children.<sup>143</sup>

This passage highlights one important development about public schooling in the early years following independence. The fact that Fouad's father commands him to obey his teacher "even more than himself" shows the extent to which the social prestige accorded education served as a powerful tool in persuading Algerian parents to relinquish control of their children to teachers. This mirrors how the accumulation of knowledge transitioned from the family to the school, a state institution responsible for instilling national values and the basic competencies in reading, writing, and arithmetic needed to deepen the nation-building project.

Etienne Balibar has written extensively about how the relationship between the school and the family in nation-building serves as a kind of "tribalism" where the state seeks to substitute "one imaginary kinship for another."<sup>144</sup> Through this process, the state instills a new kind of political authority over its citizens that had formally remained under the control of the family. The former passage in Boudjedra's text exemplifies how

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid., 137.

<sup>144</sup> Etienne Balibar, "The Nation Form: History and Ideology," *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 13 (1990): 356.

through schooling, the state can produce new relationships of power and domination between state and citizen, often inserting itself between young citizens and their families.

Boudjedra also depicts the school as a place of privilege and favoritism. Fouad and his two brothers, Ali and Karim, are assigned to the bilingual track where they learn Arabic, French, and English. Ali, however, has friends in high schools where education “is completely Arabized and where French is studied as a modern foreign language,” not as a core part of the curriculum.<sup>145</sup> It is Fouad’s older brother Karim who becomes “the pride” (*la fierté*) of the Si Ammar family after having followed the bilingual track to become a chemist. Boudjedra explains this as the result of the high degree of favoritism in Algerian society for pursuing technical specialties.<sup>146</sup> This favoritism, Boudjedra argues, can only occur at the expense of devaluing other professions:

This bias for science can be explained by its earning potential and the depreciation of literary studies. It is about a phenomenon that expresses the degree of mutation of the Algerian mentality at the same time that traditionalism remains tenacious... Karim is aware of the ridiculousness of such a situation that, in the long term, could provoke a grave disequilibrium in the sense that this infatuation with the scientific disciplines does not allow for a rational planification linked to the real needs of the country. It is as such that the formation of professors is slow and that the teaching profession becomes much more rare.<sup>147</sup>

This passage implies that Karim, having been enrolled in the bilingual track by chance, was awarded the opportunity to pursue a scientific profession requiring competence in French, an opportunity that Ali’s friends in the Arabized track were no doubt excluded from.

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<sup>145</sup> Boudjedra, *La Vie Quotidienne en Algérie*, 140.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.* 140.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.* 140-141.

Indeed, Benrabah has noted that from the onset of Arabization under Ben Bella, the military and bureaucratic elite typically enrolled their own children in “unofficially bilingual” schools to ensure for them “good careers in modern business and technology” all the meanwhile promoting Arabized schools for the masses.<sup>148</sup> Given that Arabization was implemented gradually and unevenly, however, some students among the general population were assigned to the bilingual track at schools that had not yet been Arabized. The fact that Karim was able to pursue a scientific profession illustrates how, by means of good fortune, he was able to advance while many of his friends were not.

A response to the uneven economic and social development unfolding in Algeria during the first decade of independence, Boudjedra’s text indicates that by 1971, competency in French and the scientific professions were perceived as being hand-in-hand. Thus while the regime professed its commitment to Arabization, it is clear that the need to develop suitable technical expertise proved a serious impediment to the immediate Arabization of all educational institutions. It is impossible to understand this ambivalent and often contradictory approach without first considering the prestige accorded scientific disciplines as Boudjedra proposed in his work. Despite MSA’s value to the regime as the language of nationalism, by the early 1970s it had clearly not commanded the same degree of economic prestige accorded to French.

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<sup>148</sup> Benrabah, “Language-in-Education Planning in Algeria,” 232.

## Challenging the Autonomy of the Family: the Introduction of Preschool

In the years approaching the end of Boumediène's term at his death in 1978, it was becoming clear to the political leadership that the education system was not achieving its desired objectives. One attempt to remedy this dissatisfaction was the introduction of preschool in 1976. In his essay "al-Ta'lim al-Taḥḍīriyy fii al-Nizām al-Tarbawīyy," Dr. Turki Rabih (1932-2014)<sup>149</sup> outlines the regime's justification for the measure and highlights its potential benefits. He concludes that the state would be better equipped to achieve its educational goals by bringing children into the state education system as early as possible, ideally between the ages of four and six.

According to Rabih, the regime officially introduced preschool in the 16 April ordinance and was to be implemented during the academic year 1976-1977.<sup>150</sup> In addition to making education compulsory between the ages of six and sixteen, the ordinance set strict requirements for the development of preschool curriculum.<sup>151</sup> Khadija Bouzoubaa and Nouria Benghabrit-Remaoun have summarized the ordinance as follows:

According to the ordinance, the objective was to prepare children in kindergartens, nursery schools, playgroups and other structures for entry into basic education. By means of preparatory teaching provided exclusively in Arabic, this comprises teaching good practical habits,

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<sup>149</sup> Despite the numerous writings and publications authored by Dr. Turki Rabih, I was unable to find formal biographic information about his works and career. According to an obituary for Dr. Rabih published online by *Shamela*, he served as a faculty member in the educational sciences department at the University of Algiers for more than three decades prior to his death in 2014. Having completed his higher education in Egypt, he received his PhD in Education from Mansoura University (Gāma'at al-Mansoura) in 1973. See "al-Duktūr Turki Rabih 'Amāmara wa Juhūduhu al-'Almiyya wa al-Tarbawīyya: al-Ustadh al-Duktūr Mes' aūd Falsafīyy," *Shamela*, March 15, 2015, <http://www.shamela-dz.com/index.php/tarjama/tarjama/693-2015-03-15-20-38-41.html>.

<sup>150</sup> According to Rabih, the regime announced the introduction of preschool in an official decree dating April 16, 1976.

<sup>151</sup> Khadija Bouzoubaa and Nouria Benghabrit-Remaoun, "Pre-School Education in Morocco and Algeria," *Prospects* 34 (2004): 476.

promoting sound physical development, nurturing love for the country, an interest in effort and working in groups, and providing appropriate artistic education and elementary reading, writing and arithmetic skills.<sup>152</sup>

The objectives outlined by Bouzoubaa and Benghabrit-Remaoun closely mirror what Rabih had argued in his essay thirty years prior. In terms of its academic curriculum, preschool would be used to “prepare the child to enroll in elementary and preparatory school” (al-madrassa al-asāsiyya) by teaching the principles of “reading, writing, and calculation.”<sup>153</sup> It would also “aid the family in educating the child” by “working to make him flourish through appropriate physical activity; teaching his senses (tarbiyat ḥawwāsihi) to reveal his intellectual talents; to teach him good habits; and to prepare him for collective life.”<sup>154</sup> For Rabih, the introduction of preschool had broader objectives as well:

The fact is that interest in childhood goes back a long way when civil societies realized the practical importance (khuṭūra) in steering young people from an early age to associate them closely with furthering the state’s political, ideological, and scientific objectives. Economically, however, this care and attention did not culminate except for in the 20th century. Because of this, some connected it [developing the child from an early age] with the golden age for the child.<sup>155</sup>

Here, Rabih asserts that the regime’s motivations for instituting preschool were not limited to one factor alone—“political, ideological, and scientific objectives” were all intended to work together in the education of young Algerians. Yet elementary school (al-madrassa al-asāsiyya) was already intended to accomplish the objectives set out by preschool. Why, then, did the regime see interest in developing preschools?

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 476.

<sup>153</sup> Turki Rabih, “al-T‘alīm al-Taḥḍīriyy fī al-Niẓām al-Tarbawīyy” *Al-Thaqāfa*, no. 36 (1975-1976): 64.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 64.

Indeed, this interest in childhood and its psychological, intellectual, and physical life signifies the importance of the first five or six years of a child's life and their profound impact on the formation of his personality and world view. The early childhood stage, or preschool as the decree has described it, is the golden opportunity to direct the child's strength, to prepare him, and to place in him the bases of social education and sound morality...<sup>156</sup>

To understand what Rabih means by instilling “social education” and “sound morality” in children during the “golden age” of preschool, let us consider who would otherwise be responsible for early childhood development if the state only made elementary education available starting at the ages of six and seven. Bouzoubaa and Benghabrit-Remaoun have noted that in Algeria, the family works in conjunction with the street and mosques (kuttabs and Qur’anic schools) to provide a learning environment for children prior to elementary school.<sup>157</sup> The implementation of preschool, however, would effectively transfer the bulk of that responsibility to the regime. It is also noteworthy that the ordinance specified preschool would only be taught in Arabic. This meant that the education system could improve the chance that children would adopt MSA as their native language over dialectical Arabic, French, and Tamazight or any mix of the three—an aspiration that has still not yet come to pass.

### **Conclusion**

Under both Ben Bella and Boumediène, the political leadership pursued a rapid transformation of society while claiming to safeguard “traditional” Arabic-Islamic values. As I have demonstrated in this chapter, the education system was central in disseminating

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<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>157</sup> Bouzoubaa and Benghabrit-Remaoun, “Pre-School Education in Morocco and Algeria,” 475.



the so-called Arab-Islamic identity of Algeria that had been formulated by the elite. Despite the regime's populist rhetoric of defending Algerians' values, the case of the education system demonstrates how in practice, education demanded citizens' allegiance to the state over other forms of authority including social norms, non-state sanctioned religious institutions, and the family. Through the education system, language became a visible marker of whether or not Algerians were conforming to the sociocultural model set forth by the state.

Because Algerian society had come to see schooling as the main means of socioeconomic advancement in the early 1920s, the post-independence political leadership did not witness serious opposition to education in a broad sense. As the Boudjedra text demonstrated, many parents willingly entrusted public schools with the future of their children. That the regime designed public education to reflect their own nationalist ambitions is unsurprising. What is interesting, however, are the unique ways that education allowed the leadership to establish new forms of domination and maintain old ones, using language as a tool to enforce order and uphold conceptions of linguistic purity and conformity.

Thus in granting legitimacy only to their respective "standard" forms, both the Arabic educational model promoted by the Reformists and the model established in French schools during the colonial period worked in tandem to devalue other languages as well as variants of those same languages. Both currents led to a situation where whether consciously or subconsciously, modernists and reformists conceived of language as a hierarchy, attributing cultural prestige and social status to the form compliant with

their own ideological understandings and treating overlap with the spoken form as an intrusion or corruption. In this sense, the education system played an integral role in reproducing the same Manichean trope of linguistic purity-impurity that defined the colonial era in the French colonial school and the *medersas* alike.

### Chapter III: Arabization & Ambivalence: Elite Critiques of National Language & Culture, 1978-1991

Before Islam, it was the era of ignorance. The ancestors of the Arabs lived like your parents do today; they were Barbarians, they buried their daughters alive at birth. Then the Qur'an came, brought prayer, science, civilization. If you remain like your parents, you will be Barbarians and ignorant. So, say it...what are you?...Say it: Arabs and Muslims!<sup>158</sup>

—Mouloud Mammeri, *La Traversée* (1982)

#### Introduction

As the political, economic, and socio-cultural legacy of the Boumediène came to a close following his death in 1978, many of the questions that the revolutionary guard claimed to have settled in 1962 resurfaced as Algeria transitioned to new leadership under president Chadli Benjedid. Two decades of state monopoly over culture and language had not succeeded in unifying Algerians around the state's understanding of an Arabo-Islamic identity, nor had it effaced ideological divisions within the ruling elite itself. By the late 1970s, Algeria's linguistic landscape more closely resembled a multilingualism composed of two formal written languages, MSA and French, with Colloquial Arabic and Tamazight dominating day-to-day communication.<sup>159</sup>

In this chapter, I assess the political, economic, and social ramifications of Arabization under the leadership of president Benjedid. Building on the previous two chapters, I demonstrate how the regime's slow and uneven implementation of Arabization exacerbated the sense of frustration among the *arabisant* elite who came to

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<sup>158</sup> Mouloud Mammeri, *La Traversée* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1982): 87-88

<sup>159</sup> El Hadi Saada, "Difficulté d'Acquisition des Langues Scolaires," 8.

suspect that the senior leadership was not fully invested in achieving what they saw as a core goal of the revolution.

This chapter has two objectives. First, I move beyond the claim that Arabization somehow caused the rise in Islamic fundamentalism in the early 1980s. As the following sources suggest, many of the elite who began advocating for more militant means of achieving Arabization saw themselves as the vanguards of an objective the regime established at independence, not because MSA itself made them prone to adopt Islamist ideas. Most importantly, this chapter will highlight how contradictions between the education system and the economy further polarized debates on Arabization along socioeconomic lines. As Luis Martinez has shown in his brilliant ethnography of Algeria during the civil war, Arabization became a salient issue for many FIS (Front Islamique du Salut) supporters not because of the French language itself, but “the privileges French speakers had on the job market.”<sup>160</sup>

Another trope in current literature that I attempt to move beyond is the notion that populism and Islamic fundamentalism served as the only two points around which Algerian society was left to rally around after independence,<sup>161</sup> implying that the absence of one or both systems would lead to rapid social disintegration. In this chapter, I show how the elite’s efforts to transform questions of language into ideological binaries across the political spectrum did more to exploit existing social tensions and cleavages than to promote national solidarity and cohesion.

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<sup>160</sup> Luis Martinez, *The Algerian Civil War*, trans. Jonathan Derrick (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000): 52.

<sup>161</sup> John P. Entelis, *Algeria: The Revolution Institutionalized* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986): 69.

### **Political and Socioeconomic Change Under Benjedid**

Following Boumediène's death in 1978, two ideological camps came to the fore within the ruling elite. The first favored reinforcing the FLN's control of the bureaucracy and was composed of the officer corps, the UGTA (Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens), leftist students, some *arabisants*, and the PAGS (Parti de l'Avant Garde Socialiste).<sup>162</sup> Conversely, the technocratic elite, the bourgeoisie, and members of the liberal professions saw an opportunity to depart from the austere socialist policies enforced under Boumediène and supported increased privatization and economic liberalization.<sup>163</sup> In response to this impasse within the political leadership, the army appointed colonel Chadli Benjedid to the presidency in 1979.<sup>164</sup>

Born to a rural family close to Annaba, Chadli Benjedid (1929—) made a name for himself in the FLN's army division (Armée de Libération Nationale) from 1955 onwards. In 1964, he became chief of the second military region (Oran) where he served until 1979. Throughout his time in Oran, Benjedid remained "on the margins" of political developments, preferring to focus on local military matters.<sup>165</sup> Once elected, Benjedid pursued the progressive liberalization of the economy and a gradual opening of civil society until the 1986 collapse in oil prices and 1988 student riots led him to pass a referendum for moving towards political pluralism on February 23, 1989.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Brand, *Official Stories*, 153.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Cheurfi, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique de l'Algérie*, 204.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 205.

By the late 1970s, the regime had become increasingly aware of the higher chance of academic success for students placed in the bilingual track versus the Arabized track. As a result, socioeconomic advantages were increasingly distributed among linguistic lines with the Algiers-based *francisant* elite at the fore.<sup>167</sup> Even the army proved conscientious of this growing gap as the following remark published in *El Djeich* in August 1979 demonstrates:

In essence, the study reveals that approximately 96% of students in Arabized courses are older than the normal age [for that grade] and that two-thirds of these students come from families of the third socio-professional class (lower income). Meanwhile, the parents of students in the bilingual track belong to the first and second groups. It is worth noting that a large proportion of students (62%) studying the national language come from families with a very high rate of illiteracy, while the bilingual students come from contexts in which French is used much more within the family.<sup>168</sup>

Barred from more lucrative careers in business and technology, university students who had followed the Arabized track in secondary school often specialized in Islamic law or Arabic literature. This trend escalated throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s, resulting in an increasingly polarized political and social climate caught between reinstating a strong bilingual track for all students and calls from supporters of Arabization to complete the process and Arabize Algeria in full.

This widening socioeconomic gap led to serious opposition in the form of protests during the first years of Benjedid's presidency, two of which targeted the question of Arabization. The first protest occurred during the winter of 1979-1980 when Arabized high school and university students went on strike in criticism of what they saw as the

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<sup>167</sup> Benrabah, *Language Conflict in Algeria*, 67.

<sup>168</sup> "Bilan de l'Enseignement et Critères d'Évaluation," *El Djeich* (Algiers), Aug. 1979.

regime's weak implementation of Arabization.<sup>169</sup> Composed primarily of students from rural or recently urbanized backgrounds, the protesters criticized favoritism towards French speakers and lack of economic opportunity for monolingual Arabic speakers.<sup>170</sup> Fearing that Islamists would capitalize on the protests, Benjedid quickly Arabized the justice system and replaced Redha Malek and Mostefa Lacheraf, two secular leftists, with prominent *arabisants* Abdelhamid Mehri as minister of information and culture and Mohamed Cherif Kharroubi as minister of national education.<sup>171</sup> In August 1980, the Ministry of Higher Education ordered the complete Arabization of the social sciences and humanities at the university level.<sup>172</sup>

This *arabisant* protest was followed several months later in March-April 1980 by unrest in Kabylia where Berberophones across the region demonstrated against linguistic aggression towards Tamazight. The protesters called for the institutionalization of Berber as an official language as well as a language of instruction in schools and the media.<sup>173</sup> The regime responded with a violent crackdown, killing dozens and injuring hundreds more.<sup>174</sup> Often referred to as the Berber Spring (Printemps Berbère), this protest proved the most serious challenge to the Arabo-Islamism promoted by the regime since 1965.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> Brand, *Official Stories*, 154.

<sup>170</sup> Benrabah, *Language Conflict in Algeria*, 67.

<sup>171</sup> Brand, *Official Stories*, 154.

<sup>172</sup> Benrabah, *Language Conflict in Algeria*, 67.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*

## Re-Examining the Place of Colloquial Arabic

While instituting Colloquial Arabic as an official language never received serious consideration among the elite, a handful of prominent intellectuals nonetheless found it necessary to examine its place in Algerian society and its relationship to MSA. One of these intellectuals was Abdelmalek Mortad (1935—), a writer and long-time professor of literature at the University of Oran. Having received two doctorates from the University of Algiers and the Sorbonne, Mortad taught Arabic literature at the University of Oran beginning in 1970 before becoming vice rector in 1980. He was eventually appointed president of the High Council of the Arabic Language in 1998 where he was charged with implementing the law on the generalization of the Arabic language (*loi sur la généralisation de la langue arabe*).<sup>176</sup> First published by the *Société Nationale d'Édition et de Diffusion* (SNED) in 1981, his book *al-‘Aammiyya al-jazā’iriyya wa šilatuha bil-fuṣḥā* highlights critical debates surrounding the challenge of dialectical Arabic to the officialization of the literary register.

Mortad’s work consists of two parts. The second portion, which comprises the bulk of the text, serves as a kind of reference work instructing readers how Colloquial Arabic can be elevated to the level of MSA. Each colloquial word is then supplemented with an explanation of that word’s relationship to the elegant (*faṣīḥ*) form of that word. To clarify how the work is structured, let us take Mortad’s assessment of the word rooster (*dīk*). Assuring that both the usage and pronunciation are shared between Colloquial Arabic and MSA, Mortad simply writes: “correct pronunciation (*naṭaq ṣaḥīḥ*) and correct

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<sup>176</sup> Cheurfi, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique de l’Algérie*, 844.



usage in our dialect.”<sup>177</sup> In contrast, the colloquial Algerian Arabic word for “to rest” (rīḥ) does not measure up to Mortad’s understanding of literary elegance (al-faṣāḥa). Here, Mortad writes: “It means *istirāḥa*” in the “correct (ṣaḥīḥ),” “elegant” (faṣīḥ) use of the term.<sup>178</sup> Other explanations attempt to correct not only differences in pronunciation but lexical choice itself. Concerning the word *ḥurriya*, for example, Mortad reasons that during the independence war, many Algerians incorrectly used it to mean independence (*istiqlāl*). He then advises readers to spread the use of the correct word, *istiqlāl*, “until it becomes clearly understood to the Algerian people.”<sup>179</sup>

It is the work’s introduction, however, that sheds the most insight on Mortad’s ideological leanings. His introduction makes a case for why the study of colloquial Arabic merits scholarly attention, citing its importance to students of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) “so that they can understand all the roots of their language and what they contain concerning widespread colloquial dialects spoken on the street, markets, factories, and fields.”<sup>180</sup> He begins with the following questions:

What is the extent of our colloquial language with Literary Arabic (al-fuṣḥa)? What are the origins of our different Arabic dialects in Algeria? What is the origin of the differences in dialects between regions and between villages? Finally, what is the value of our colloquial dialect (lahjatina al-‘aammiyya) in relation to other colloquial Arabic dialects?<sup>181</sup>

One of the most striking features of Mortad’s introduction is his need to justify himself for why Colloquial Arabic constitutes a legitimate object of study, going as far as to

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>178</sup> Abdelmalek Mortad, “al-‘Aammiyya *al-jazā’iriyya wa ṣilatuha bil-fuṣḥā*,” (Algiers: Société Nationale d’Édition et de Diffusion, 1981): 59.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 150.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., 5-6.

apologize for any misunderstandings resulting from his work (fa 'asā 'an 'akūn qad 'adhartu).<sup>182</sup> In one attempt to evade criticism, he makes sure to state that his study has no concrete political or ideological objectives:

However, I would like make a comment regarding the release of this linguistic study. Research on one colloquial dialect does not necessarily mean calling for it, nor attempting to revive what disappeared from it. It also does not mean defending its use in writing—we want to assure (nu'thar) that this book does not dissociate itself from the use of elegant pronunciations used in Colloquial Arabic to bring it closer to Literary Arabic. Indeed, most of the Algerian colloquial pronunciations are elegant (faṣīḥ), but the public (al-'ama) corrupted it with their tongues, after which it began to distance itself from Literary Arabic in one way or another...<sup>183</sup>

The fact that Mortad feels compelled to affirm he is not “calling” for the formalization of Colloquial Arabic shows the extent to which all language forms not adhering to so-called standard MSA had been thoroughly devalued in elite discourse. It is also interesting that Mortad shifts the blame for the corruption of Colloquial Arabic onto Algerians themselves. The implication here is that in “correcting” spoken language by substituting *faṣīḥ* usages for non-*faṣīḥ* ones, the distinctions that characterize colloquial Arabic would effectively be erased and thus make room for all Colloquial Arabic to become MSA. This linguistic unification of all forms of Arabic into the one *faṣīḥ* form would, of course, mark the effective “completion” of Arabization.

Mortad's choice to measure features of Algerian colloquial Arabic against the so-called standard of MSA marks a convention of many Arab intellectuals and writers who viewed and continue to view Arabic as a language with a “high” (MSA) and a “low” (Colloquial Arabic) register. To this, it is worth exploring the term *faṣīḥ* in more detail

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

given that Mortad describes it as the standard against which Colloquial Arabic should be measured. Sociolinguist Georgine Ayoub has provided valuable insight into how the meaning of this term has evolved throughout Arabic's history. Whereas throughout the classical age *faṣāḥa* indicated clarity and mutual intelligibility, in the contemporary period it designates written Arabic only, "a harmonious and pure idiom" that excludes all other possibilities.<sup>184</sup> This framework is precisely how Mortad conceives of Algerian Arabic. Colloquial Arabic's commonalities with MSA lead him to believe that it is a form of Arabic, but its deviations from the standard of MSA make intellectuals such as Mortad responsible for correcting them to lift all speech to this pure, uncorrupted standard.

In order to understand why he frames his argument in this way, it is useful to turn to the work of Khaoula Taleb Ibrahim. She has described the tendency of intellectuals to attempt to erase differences between Colloquial Arabic and MSA, where the former is perceived as a deviation or corruption that ought to be corrected through the insertion of the "enshrined usage" of the word.<sup>185</sup> This sacredness of MSA is what encourages intellectuals such as Mortad to defend it against corruption or impurity for which the masses are responsible. Because the "public" holds responsibility for corrupting pure Arabic, for Mortad it is the responsibility of the elite to undertake "a campaign" of literary elegance to correct it:

The conflict then stems from the efforts of intellectuals and their loyalty to Arabic and its people. If they wanted to undertake a campaign of literary elegance (here, I do not say Arabizing for the Algerian public is already Arabized given their dialect, as we will see in the examples cited, and explain its origins and construe its meanings), I would say: if they

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<sup>184</sup> Georgine Ayoub, "Fasih," *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics* 2 (2006): 89.

<sup>185</sup> Taleb Ibrahim, *Les Algériens et Leur(s) Langue(s)*, 67.

sincerely undertook a kind of campaign and persisted in it, they would truly reach revolutionary results. If one of us, however, is unable to master his own needed personal work, then how can he work for the group and the general interest? God has cursed laziness, weakness, and complacency.<sup>186</sup>

In this example, Mortad makes two things clear. One, he critiques the hypocrisy of what is presumably the francophone ruling elite for not having undertaken their own “personal work,” the mastery of MSA. In using the phrase “they would truly reach revolutionary results,” he implies that the elite were not working sufficiently to fulfill the goals of Arabization.

Two, Mortad’s analysis is unique in claiming that “the Algerian public is already Arabized,” albeit in a second-rate and corrupt form. This is an unusual remark for supporters of Arabization at this time who saw the full adoption of MSA as a mother tongue as the prerequisite for being “Arab.” For Mortad, the responsibility of the ruling elite was not to make Algerians Arab, but to ensure all efforts were made to correct their spoken Arabic and raise it to the level of the literary register at which point the colloquial register. At this point, Colloquial Arabic would disappear and Algerians would possess MSA as their mother tongue.

Mortad’s text can thus be read as a mild critique of the state’s insistence on “Arabizing” Algerians in the sense that Arabization was required to make them Arab at all. As we have observed, however, he is careful to affirm his support for maintaining MSA as Algeria’s sole official language lest his text be interpreted as a challenge to state policy and proponents of Arabization. This text suggests that the death of Boumediène

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid., 11.

opened a limited degree of space in which the cultural elite—though not the public—could pose questions to linguistic matters and state policy towards it.

### **Bilingual Culture: the Writings of Mostefa Lacheraf**

Among the more enigmatic intellectuals invested in the question of Arabization was Mostefa Lacheraf (1917-2007), a writer and politician who worked as a longtime critic of Algerian nationalism after independence.<sup>187</sup> Appointed minister of primary and secondary education under Boumediène in April 1977, Lacheraf opposed accelerated Arabization and advocated for the maintenance of French in the school system “for as long as it would take to reform Arabic and ‘desacralise’ traditional culture.”<sup>188</sup> While Lacheraf resigned from his post as minister shortly after the death of Boumediène, he continued to write essays on questions of nationalism, culture, and language throughout the remainder of his career.

When writing his essay “La Culture Entre l’Idéologie Coloniale Dominante et l’Idéologie de Libération des Peuples” (1984), Lacheraf was serving as chief ambassador to the Algerian mission in Lima, Peru. In this essay, he critiques the emotional energy and “relentless search for a lost authenticity” fueling Algerian nationalism, a development he argues poses serious danger to Algerian culture and identity.<sup>189</sup> He sees nationalists as having internalized the chauvinism, ethnocentricity, racism, and “spirit of

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<sup>187</sup> Cheurfi, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique de l’Algérie*, 715.

<sup>188</sup> Benrabah, “Language-in-Education Planning in Algeria,” 231.

<sup>189</sup> Mostefa Lacheraf, “La Culture Entre L’Idéologie Coloniale Dominante et l’Idéologie de Libération des Peuples,” in *Écrits Didactiques sur la Culture, l’Histoire, et la Société en Algérie* (Algiers: Entreprise Algérienne de la Presse, 1988): 48.

utopian redemption” brought on by colonial alienation.<sup>190</sup> He compares them to colonial officials who attempted to construct a “Latin” history for Algerians, accusing them of pursuing the same policy of “assimilation” to their new dominant culture.<sup>191</sup>

According to Lacheraf, one way in which Arabizers participate in this same discourse of assimilation is by adopting the “myth” formerly perpetuated by colonial propaganda that the French colonial regime successfully embedded French in Algerian society. This was not true for Lacheraf given that 88% of the population was illiterate at independence.<sup>192</sup> He then sees the Algerian regime itself as the body responsible for spreading French after independence. “In an irony of sorts,” he writes, “in the span of only 21 years, Algerian children *twelve times* more numerous than during a century and a quarter of colonization learned French at the same time they learned their national language, Arabic.”<sup>193</sup> What might explain this development?

His critique of the ruling elite becomes clearer as his argument develops around the idea of re-Africanization (réafricanisation). Drawing on his experience in South America, Lacheraf presents examples from the writings of Angolan poet and intellectual Mário Pinto de Andrade. His understanding of re-Africanization aligns closely with Fanon’s understanding of national consciousness in postcolonial countries which he sees as “nothing but a crude, empty, fragile shell.”<sup>194</sup> The national bourgeoisie finds itself

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<sup>190</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 97.

unable to achieve social or economic progress despite its “magnificently worded declarations” which Lacheraf views as “totally void of content.”<sup>195</sup>

From this complete situation sparked by the manifold liberation initiative arises the search for and discovery of a new language in the same line with Portuguese, in which the urban masses participate as the sole revolutionary means of culture. Meanwhile, ‘the link with the country’s ancient cultures is not ruptured...and *it is l’assimilé who should die at the hands of colonial culture.*’ This honesty and uncompromising realization are not common, we can admit, in formerly colonized countries, who, by the force of things [par la force des choses], sluggishly accommodated themselves with colonial gains and the language of the colonizer without severing themselves from their spirit, nor readapting them to a new situation. Even when they were given the opportunity to re-conquer the use of their national language and recuperate their intellectual heritage, they did not introduce, for the most part, any new catalyst, any sense of creativity, any dynamic force susceptible to realize and spread this newfound culture with the people.<sup>196</sup>

Like Fanon, Lacheraf critiques the ruling elite for having introduced cultural and linguistic stagnation under the guise of defending national authenticity. The “traditional” culture the regime claims to protect does not reflect the real social practices of the country nor does it express the “coordinated crystallization of the people’s innermost aspirations.”<sup>197</sup> Rather, it disseminates an arcane interpretation of tradition that stifles the development of meaningful cohesion between the political system and citizens.

While remaining a staunch critic of colonization, Lacheraf interprets the self-awareness provoked by colonial occupation as a necessary step in Algerian history. As Kateb Yacine described it in 1966,<sup>198</sup> Lacheraf sees the French language as a *butin de*

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<sup>195</sup> Ibid., 109.

<sup>196</sup> Lacheraf, *Écrits Didactiques*, 62.

<sup>197</sup> Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 97.

<sup>198</sup> This famous description of Yacine is associated with the following quote: “Francophonie is a neocolonial political machine that only perpetuates our alienation, but the use of the French language does not mean we are agents of a foreign power, and I write in French to tell the French that I am not French,”

*guerre* (“spoils of war”) Algerians could use to create a future more in line with their social reality. In response to nationalist opportunists and demagogues, *francisants* and *arabisants* alike, Lacheraf wonders whether some parts of colonial culture might be salvaged from history:

Yet it is also possible to state that the imperial need to access a language, even foreign on the part of the colonized who are deprived of their national identity yet inheritors of an ancient cultural tradition to replace their own, forbidden or declassified, pushed them in a sense to adopt, consciously or unconsciously, a compromise in which they attempted to reconcile, when they could, snippets (bribes) of a universal character and neutral contributions embedded in the civilization of the colonizer.<sup>199</sup>

Through this quote, Lacheraf argues that colonized peoples can oppose their colonizers by turning their tools of domination against them. His understanding of a “universal character” serves as a subtle critique to the isolationist and exclusionary model of national culture promoted by the ruling elite since independence. Instead of “turning the page on French colonialism” by persisting in the search for a lost authenticity,<sup>200</sup> Lacheraf asks readers to reconcile “neutral” aspects of French colonial history, subtly calling for the maintenance of French as one of Algeria’s many possible tools of expression.

Certain of the fact that the nationalist identity produced by the elite had not worked to give ordinary citizens an identity of their own making, Lacheraf concludes that culture in neocolonial societies is effectively “bilingual.” Engaging Argentinean director

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Kateb Yacine quoted in Abdellah Baida, “Langue et Identité dans les Littératures Francophones du Maghreb,” *La Francopolyphonie: Langues et Identité* (Chişinău: Free International University of Moldova, 2007): 37.

<sup>199</sup> Lacheraf, *Écrits Didactiques*, 51.

<sup>200</sup> Benjamin Stora, *L’Histoire de l’Algérie Depuis l’Indépendance* (Paris: Éditions la Découverte, 1995): 51.



Ezequiel Solanas' film *La Hora de los Hornos* (The Hour of the Furnaces) (1968),

Lacheraf cites the following excerpt from Solanas' film:

...Culture becomes bilingual, not for reasons of using two languages, but through the contiguity of two cultural modes of thought, one national—that of the people—the other, foreign—that of the classes submissive to external influence...<sup>201</sup>

Lacheraf expands on Solanas' claim by saying that “peoples and individuals have an amazing capacity to create cultural consciousness when challenging a foreign occupier or a dictator.” Here, he warns against the danger of trying to “assimilate” Algerians to a “foreign” and artificial identity, whether European or Arabo-Islamic. As long as this tendency continued, Algerians would continue to live the culture of the “people” while the elite would remain foreign and disconnected from the social reality.

Lacheraf's critique eloquently captures one perspective on the disillusionment and pushback against the cultural and linguistic endeavors undertaken in the first two decades of independence. He is careful to state that he does not mean to critique the nationalist sentiment, which he views as legitimate, but rather opportunists and demagogues who take advantage of this sentiment to manufacture an “excessive” form of nationalism embedded with the “ideological chauvinism and superiority of the West.”<sup>202</sup> As in the remainder of the text, however, Lacheraf does not directly implicate the FLN or known members of the elite, choosing instead to use metaphors, analogies, other writers' works, and subtle phrases such as “we can admit, in formerly colonized countries” to allude to Algeria.

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<sup>201</sup> Lacheraf, *Écrits Didactiques*, 63-67.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

## **“We Should Prevail in Arabization Even if There are Problems, Challenges, and Limited Possibilities”**

As discussed in the first two chapters, University of Algiers professor Turki Rabih served as one of the most vocal proponents of Arabization under Ben Bella and Boumediène. In the 1980s, he continued to participate in linguistic debates surrounding Arabization albeit with little confidence it would be realized.

In his article “Algeria’s Efforts in the Arabization of General, Technical, and University Education” (1986), Rabih begins by reaffirming the importance of Arabization for Algeria’s revolutionary objectives. Yet in a departure from the optimistic tone found in his earlier essays, Rabih finds that given the current political climate, Arabization has little potential to succeed:

The independence of Algeria on July 5<sup>th</sup>, 1962 was a definitive announcement to bring to an end the injustice that the Arabic language and culture had lived under for 132 years. It was an entry into a new phase for the sovereignty and dignity of the national language and culture. Thus, the battle for Arabization was and still remains among the most important battles Algeria faced in the first years following independence. And we should prevail in it. Even if there are problems, challenges, and limited possibilities (*qilat al-imkāniyāt*).<sup>203</sup>

The fact that Rabih’s text analyzes the trajectory of Arabization in this way suggests that by 1986, supporters of Arabization had begun to recognize problems associated with Arabization and were seeking answers to what might have gone wrong in its implementation. At the beginning of his text, Rabih inquires as to what the principal questions regarding Arabization were during the period 1971-1974. He highlights the

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<sup>203</sup> Turki Rabih, “Juhūd al-Jazā’ir fī Ta’rīb al-Ta’līm al-‘ām wa al-Taqniyy wa al-Jama‘iyy,” *al-Thaqāfa* 91 (1986): 87-88.

regime's insistence on democratizing education as quickly as possible as a policy choice that had and would continue to have negative consequences for the fate of Arabization in Algeria: "There is no doubt that the democratization of education in this way will lead to a widespread process of Frenchification ('amaliyat faranasa) as long as the school is silenced by the French powers to become a tool for Frenchifying the Algerian people."<sup>204</sup> Here, he likely refers to how the maintenance of French in the education system had made it impossible for Arabized teaching staff to establish hegemony in the critical early years of independence.

At the end of his essay, Rabih concludes by asserting the need for Arabic to take over all educational domains, including science and technology. Rabih presents his argument as a kind of warning regarding the linguistic situation in Algeria, calling on supporters of Arabization to persevere despite its challenges and obstacles:

This, in short, is the situation of the Arabic language as the language of teaching and a tool for achievement in general, technical, and university education in Algeria, and the difficulties and problems the Arabization process faces simultaneously. As for the efforts to overcome it, we have included them with all objectivity and impartiality, so that the reader knows all the efforts made by Algeria in the domain of Arabization and making the Arabic language the language of education and instruction instead of French at the remaining educational levels.<sup>205</sup>

Like many of the *arabisant* elite committed to total Arabization, it appears that by the mid-1980s the nature of demands regarding Arabization had not changed drastically. What seems to have changed, however, is the sense of confidence that the regime was committed to achieving it. It is also noteworthy that unlike many of the articles surveyed

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<sup>204</sup> Ibid., 90.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid., 104.

thus far, which used discrete terms such as “bilingualism” or “foreign languages” to refer to French, Rabih openly admits that it is French itself that poses a challenge to the success of Arabic. Rabih views his own role as defending the continued relevance of Arabization and the need for it to be prioritized over short-term economic concerns. His article marks a shift in tone from the optimistic sentiments common among the *arabisant* elite in the earlier years of independence, showing the increasing sense of frustration that had accumulated by the late 1980s. As the following article by Hanafi Benaissa will show, some of the *arabisant* elite began calling for more drastic measures to ensure that the political leadership did not deviate from pursuing Arabization.

**“Refusing to Learn Can be a Good Thing if the Motivation Behind it Is to Defend the National Personality”: Reaffirming Arabization in the Works of Hanafi Benaissa**

We can observe that by the mid to late 1980s, an increasing number of elites across the ideological spectrum were critiquing the regime’s reluctance to implement Arabization. While some elites such as Mortad accused the governing elite of having failed to implement Arabization fully, others such as Hanafi Benaissa (1932-1999) went one step further by advocating “non-state” learning to compensate for the deficiencies of the state education system.

Benaissa is known primarily for his work as a translator, having worked with notable elites such Mostefa Lacheraf, Malek Haddad, and Ahmed Taleb Ibrahim. He received his doctorate in linguistics at the University of Damascus, where he specialized in translation, and taught for many years at the Institute for Psychology at the University

of Algiers.<sup>206</sup> A long-time translator and editor of numerous state publications including *Al-Thaqāfa* since the early 1970s, Benaissa intervenes in the debate surrounding Arabization in his own article, “The Child and the Dilemma of Linguistic Deficiency in the Arab World” (al-ṭifl wa mu‘ḍalat al-quṣūr al-lughawiyya fii al-‘alam al-‘arabi).<sup>207</sup>

In this article, Benaissa explores the reasons for weak language acquisition among children in Algeria. His main concern is students’ engagement with the Arabic language in the public school system, which he views as being teaching-centered rather than student-centered.<sup>208</sup> This approach, he argues, resulted in widespread “alienation” of the people from their own language, weakening the bond between the individual and society.<sup>209</sup> For this reason, speakers resort to “creativity” to express their ideas: “It is no wonder,” he writes, “that change (al-taghayyur) and distortion (al-tashwīh) get the best of his speech and writing.”<sup>210</sup>

In Benaissa’s view, this change and distortion of the literary register results in a cheapening of language. In refusing to adhere to the linguistic convention or standard, speakers’ language becomes “common” and thus empty. This point becomes most clear when he compares common speech to a “bank transaction:”

Perhaps it is useful to refer to the notion that linguistic conflicts resemble monetary conflicts. Thus today linguists have started to talk about ‘the transaction of the child in vocabulary’ (raṣīd al-ṭifl min al-mufradāt), as if this transaction resembled that of a person in a bank...and just as how in monetary inflation currency loses its value, making it cheap, so too does linguistic behavior (al-sulūk al-lughawiyy) devolve into chatting in

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<sup>206</sup> Cheurfi, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique de l’Algérie*, 185.

<sup>207</sup> Hanafi Benaissa, “Al-ṭifl wa mu‘ḍalat al-quṣūr al-lughawiyya fii al-‘alam al-‘arabi,” *Al-Thaqāfa* 98 (1987).

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*, 117.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*

speech, twittering of the tongues, and empty words in everything written and produced.<sup>211</sup>

The standard against which Benaissa holds Arabic speakers emerges most clearly in this example. For Benaissa, speakers should strive to use what is unique and rare—in other words, *faṣīḥ*—in all aspects of communication. To understand the importance of rarity in legitimate speech, it is useful to turn to Bourdieu and Boltanski who have argued that the possibility for amassing linguistic capital depends on the existence of a language or a register of a language “distinct” from popular forms.<sup>212</sup> Linguistic capital in the official language, like any other form of capital, relies on a distinct group of supporters to enforce and reproduce its legitimacy.<sup>213</sup> By denouncing non-standard MSA as “chattering” and “twittering,” Benaissa upholds his own legitimacy and authority.

Benaissa then lays out five approaches a speaker experiencing linguistic alienation may adopt. One of these approaches, “refusal” (*rafd*), is especially noteworthy. This response, which Benaissa indirectly endorses, requires the speaker to turn away from the authority of the state to uphold the authenticity of his language and nation:

Some might consider this approach to be bad. Yet the truth is that refusing to learn can be a good thing if the motivation behind it is to defend the national personality threatened by dissolution (*muhaddada bi al-dhubān*)...perhaps the secret is that language is in danger along with religious danger and is characterized in the name of the people in anything sacred. It is as if language, in the urgent conditions that threaten its demise, used in the name of the people and their feelings, deposited in the depths of the human soul, remains there until the opportunity is made available for it when the smog clears and the emergencies end...to become as it was: the language of interaction in all different facets of life. This affair reminds us of what countries do to invoke destructive wars, when they

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<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

<sup>212</sup> Bourdieu and Boltanski, “La Fétichisme de la Langue,” 14.

<sup>213</sup> Benaissa, “Al-ṭifl wa mu‘ḍalat al-quṣūr al-lughawiyya,” 121.

intentionally deposit their selves and their artistic legacy from national tradition into a safe place to protect them from robbery, looting, and disrepair. For what is more dear than language in the life of nations?<sup>214</sup>

It is in this passage that Benaïssa presents his most far-reaching critique of the regime's approach towards Arabization. In describing the Arabic language as being in a "state of emergency," Benaïssa calls on his supporters to turn away from the state education system in defense of authenticity and safeguarding the national personality. Here, it is clear that Benaïssa does not see the regime as a friend of Arabization but its enemy.

Because the state does not take sufficient initiative to implement Arabization, Algerians are justified in challenging its authority. Finally, he concludes:

It seems to me that keeping up with the times and confronting technical challenges requires realizing two demands: vowelling (al-*'irāb*) and Arabization (al-ta'*rīb*). These are two necessary twins, one cannot come without the other. For vowelling is the movement from the interior to the exterior while Arabization is the movement from the exterior into the interior. As such, one will realize a kind of harmonious linguistic adaptation (al-takayyuf al-lughawiyy al-munsajam). Thus both state and non-state education can aid the learner in Arabizing himself until he realizes the Arab nature of his personality, formed through vowelling (al-*'irāb min dhātihī*) and the communication of his ideas and projects to others. For projects and ideas, if they are kept secret, are ruled by nothingness...<sup>215</sup>

Here, Benaïssa backtracks slightly to say that both state and non-state education can work together to help Algerians connect with their true character. In using vowelling to describe "movement from the interior to the exterior," Benaïssa implies that Algerians can conduct their own work outside of state institutions to become fully Arabized. Such an effort may work in tandem with the state, who deploys some level of "Arabization" to

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<sup>214</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., 130.

shape learners in a top-down fashion. Once both processes are completed, Algerians will find themselves fully able to express their “ideas and projects.” Benaïssa’s argument would likely not have been formulated the same way a decade or more earlier under the leadership of Ben Bella and Boumediène when most proponents of Arabization felt confident that the state would Arabize Algeria in full. His article thus reflects the tendency of supporters of Arabization at this time to explore channels outside the state to realize their overarching objective: the use of MSA as “the language of interaction in all different facets of life.”

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have sought to demonstrate how the *arabisant* elite gradually lost faith in the regime’s willingness to complete the process of Arabization. As this perception grew, the francophone ruling elite began to be seen as enemies of the FLN’s revolutionary goals. In this way, I have sought to show that the Arabophone leadership, many of whom would later galvanize Arabized students and graduates around the question of Arabization in the 1990s, were not distinct Islamist “enemies” of the state but the product of state discourse of Arabization set initially by Ben Bella and furthered by Boumediène.

While promoting Arabization at the level of rhetoric, the elite continued to follow an “ambivalent” approach towards language in the school system. Having formally erased the term bilingualism from the school curriculum, French was taught as a “foreign language” despite its widespread use as a language of instruction. This process resulted in an “unequal scholarly bilingualism” where students identified Arabic as the language of



literature and philosophy while French remained the property of scientific and mathematical disciplines.<sup>216</sup>

Thus by the late 1980s, the hegemony of francophone students and intellectuals among the political leadership indicated to many proponents of Arabization that the “national language” at the level of discourse did not align with the economic and political priorities of the state, the majority of which continued to operate in French exclusively or bilingual Arabic-French contexts. In this sense, the trajectory of the language question in Algeria had as much to do with the reproduction of social inequalities as it did with religious and linguistic ideology. As the 1980s came to a close, it was clear that the regime could and would not satisfy the demands of proponents of monolingual Arabic speakers that ran counter to the actual political and economic development model in place since 1962.

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<sup>216</sup> Saada, “Difficulté d’Acquisition des Langues Scolaires,” 51-52.

## Conclusion

In 1926, Sir William Willcocks, a British civil engineer who had worked on the first Aswan Dam project, published his famous article “Syria, Egypt, North Africa and Malta Speak Punic, not Arabic,” in which he made the following remarks on the languages of the Middle East and North Africa:

The indolence of Europe is responsible for the fact that though the language of Persia has had Arabic imposed on it and is still called Persian, and though the language of Northern India has had Persian imposed on it and is called Hindustani, yet the language of Syria is not called Syrian, the language of Egypt is not called Egyptian, the language of Algiers is not called Algerian and the language of Morocco is not called Moroccan... If Europe tried, for its own selfish ends, to keep these Mediterranean countries backward, could it find any better way than to encourage them to despise their own living spoken language and to laud to the skies their artificial literary language?<sup>217</sup>

Leaving aside the generalizations and paternalism found throughout the article, Willcocks nonetheless made several key observations about commonly-held language attitudes among the Arab literary class as well as European scholars and officials’ attempts to force the diverse spoken languages of this region into their own conceptions of an “artificial” Literary Arabic. In Algeria and other Arabic-speaking countries, this disdain for the “living spoken language” has come to characterize the ideology behind many Arabic teachers’ approach towards their and their students’ mother tongues, treating them as “incorrect forms, faults that teaching ought to correct.”<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> Sir William Willcocks, “Syria, Egypt, North Africa and Malta Speak Punic, not Arabic,” *Bulletin de l’Institut d’Égypte* (Cairo: Imprimerie de l’Institut Français, 1926): 4-5.

<sup>218</sup> Mostari, “A Sociolinguistic Perspective on Arabisation,” 34.

This collection of attitudes comprises one thing both the *arabisant* and the *francisant* elite in Algeria have shared in common since independence: a disdain for the languages of daily communication. As mentioned at the beginning of this thesis, neither spoken Arabic nor Tamazight attracted serious attention among the elite to become the language of government and business. It is not that they were considered and then rejected—rather, they were hardly mentioned at all, as though they did not exist. Those who did broach the subject, such as Abdelmalek Mortad in his work *al-‘Aammiyya al-Jaza’iriyya*, did so hesitantly and with fear of pushback from critics.

Continued pressure from proponents of Arabization to “complete” the process has led to a situation where the ruling elite periodically grant them concessions without genuine intention or ability to implement them. One example of this process was the Law on the Generalization of the Use of the Arabic Language (*qānūn ta‘mīm isti‘māl al-lugha al-‘arabiyya*) which aimed to Arabize the remaining francophone state institutions, move towards the complete Arabization of university education by 1997, and punish offenders for noncompliance.<sup>219</sup> In response to the sweeping victory of the FIS in the June 1990 local elections, president Chadli Benjedid passed the law as a symbolic gesture to appease their continued demands for the Arabization of universities and the job market.

Yet concerns for Arabization among the ruling elite fell away as the political crisis of 1991 developed into a violent conflict between the regime and insurgents. During much of the war, few individuals took serious steps towards the law’s implementation. As Aḥmad Nāshif has explained, concerns over the economy and

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<sup>219</sup> Aḥmad Nāshif, *Ta‘rīb al-Ta‘līm fī al-Jazā’ir bayn al-ṭarḥ al-ma‘rifīyy wa al-ṭarḥ al-idīyulūjīyy* (Algiers: Kounouz El-Hikma, 2011): 62.

reshuffling of political officials between 1993 and 2008 led Arabization to be placed on the back burner, with the leadership continuing to delay its implementation in spite of continued political pressure to do so.<sup>220</sup>

To date, the language question in Algeria has continued to center on whether or not schools should continue to favor Arabic monolingualism or formally adopt Arabic-French bilingualism.<sup>221</sup> French remains the dominant language of higher education and business and the preferred foreign language among young Algerian students. It remains to be seen, however, whether French may see increased competition in the future from other foreign languages such as English and Chinese.

This thesis has also examined the role of language in the reproduction of socioeconomic inequalities through Bourdieu's conception of language as a form of social and economic capital. As I discussed in chapter two, the majority of the Francophone elite bypassed existing Arabization laws by ensuring their children were assigned to the bilingual track. These children were placed in private schools such as the Cheikh Bouamama (formerly the Lycée Descartes), where French remained the dominant language of instruction, and attended the University of Algiers as well as universities in Europe and the United States. Some scholars have even argued that Arabization served the ruling elite's tendency towards "elite enclosure" whereby they minimized competition for their own children in limiting the vast majority of Algerian students to the monolingual Arabized track.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> Ibid., 62-63.

<sup>221</sup> Benrabah, "Language-in-Education Planning," 227.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid., 232.

It has been argued elsewhere that Arabization in Algeria resulted in an Islamization process, especially in the public schools. This argument often follows a line of argumentation that presents the Arabic language as somehow responsible for the violence committed by Islamist extremists in the 1990s. Indeed, Martinez has made a strong case for how supporters of the FIS in the early 1990s often cited the need to combat “French-speakers” and “communists” as the true enemies of Algeria.<sup>223</sup> Yet as was discussed in chapter three, unemployed college graduates who followed the Arabized track more commonly lauded the lack of economic opportunity associated with Arabic than the use of French.<sup>224</sup> My proposal in this thesis has been to place the polarizing ideology constructed around language at the center of linguistic “conflict,” not the languages themselves.

As this thesis has sought to show, it is not multilingualism that poses a challenge to national identity, but the tendency of elites engaged in debates on language to view potential steps forward in absolutes. The *arabisant* elite are largely responsible for blocking reforms of the education system that would make Arabic more accessible to Algerian students and make bilingualism a formal option. In 2002 for example, some *arabisant* elite and their supporters issued a *fatwa* against proposed educational reforms, accusing proponents of bilingualism of being enemies of Islam and forcing Westernization on Algeria.<sup>225</sup> In a 2014 interview, Khaoula Taleb Ibrahimi described her perspective on the role some *arabisant* elite play in contemporary linguistic debates:

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<sup>223</sup> Martinez, *The Algerian Civil War*, 54.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>225</sup> Benrabah, “Language-in-Education Planning,” 227.

As soon as we enter into discourse on language, as soon as we enter into ideological representations, in the first sense of the word ‘ideology,’ meaning ‘what one makes as an idea,’ we see consensus break down immediately. This is often linked to positions of power.

As a language specialist, I call on those who are determined to show that they are the defenders of the Arabic language to say: it is not by adopting this position that you promote the Arabic language. What did you do when you were minister of national education? What steps did you put in place to make sure that it becomes a real living language?<sup>226</sup>

Taleb Ibrahimi makes an important distinction between what it means to support the Arabic language versus what it means to support the ideology the elite have developed around the Arabic language. These *arabisant* elite insist on students learning a kind of Arabic whose aim is the memorization of grammatical rules and literary conventions, not improved competency in written and oral expression. Moreover, they insist on accusing those who do not abide by their strict set of linguistic, cultural, and religious preferences as being anti-national, a tendency that runs counter to the historical and present diversity of Algeria.

On a similar note, the so-called modernist Francophone elite hold the bulk of responsibility for promoting the notion that to be “modern” was to be educated in French and French ways of life while at the level of discourse articulating national identity such that to be Algerian meant being a monolingual (Literary) Arabic speaker and an unquestioning believer in the “Arabo-Islamic” identity established by the state. Choosing to write in MSA, studying French in school, and speaking in Colloquial Arabic or Tamazight do not conflict on their own. When taken to symbolize the “essence” of an

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<sup>226</sup> Khaoula Taleb Ibrahimi, interview by Mustapha Benfodil, “Khaoula Taleb Ibrahimi: On Est Toujours à se Demander: C’est Quoi Être Algérien?” *El Watan*, September 7, 2014.

individual or a nation, however, all three elements can, as what happened in the 1990s, convene to become “the strategic axis of a veritable trench war” around which language choice poses real-life consequences to perceived non-conformers.<sup>227</sup>

While I believe this study contributes to the current literature on Arabization in several ways, it is not intended to be a complete project or to propose any kind of “solution” to Algeria’s language question, if such a solution does exist. Its main purpose has been to explore the theoretical underpinnings of Arabization to better understand why and how language in Algeria continues to polarize the ruling elite and ordinary Algerians alike. An important objective of this thesis has been to show that what was at stake with Arabization was not a struggle over language for its own sake or the need to ensure communication between diverse linguistic groups. Rather, it was a competition for an all-encompassing uniformity of thought that promised tremendous rewards in terms of political legitimacy for the victors.

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<sup>227</sup> Omar Carlier, “Civil War, Private Violence, and Cultural Socialization,” in *Algeria in Others’ Languages*, ed. Anne-Emmanuelle Berger (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2002): 89.

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