

The Separating Religion Issue from the State in Algeria during the Colonial Period: A Reading of What El-Basa'ir Newspaper and the Archival Documents Reported about the Hajj Ritual

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Abstract---This Study Examines the Issue of the Separation of Religion and State in Algeria during the French Colonial Era, Focusing on the Hajj Ritual as a Model of Religious and Political Interference. The Study relies on El-Basa'ir Newspaper as its Primary Media Source, in addition to the Official Archival Documents Issued by the Algerian General Government. The Study reviews the French Laws Separating Religion and the State, including the Laws of (1905/1907 CE). It also Discusses the Contradictions in the Application of these Laws in the Colonial Algeria, particularly with regard to Freedom of Religious Education, the Independence of Mosques, and the Sharia Law. It also Explains how these Laws were Part of the Colonial Policy to Control the Religious Affairs of Algerians and Empty Secularism of its Original Content when it Came to the Colonies. At the Level of the Hajj Ritual; The Study Reveals the Complex Organization of Voyages, whether by Land, Sea, or Air, including the Administrative Requirements, Medical Facilities, Transportation Companies, and Travel Costs. The Archival Documents and Newspapers also Demonstrate how the French Colonialism Used the Hajj Ritual as a Means of Surveillance and Preventing any Encounter that might Enhance National Awareness among the Algerians. Meanwhile; The Association of Muslim Scholars attempted to Provide the Appropriate Conditions for Pilgrims and Defend their Rights. The Study also Highlights the Role of El-Basa'ir Newspaper in Covering the Hajj and the Celebrations Associated with the Pilgrims' Return, including Holding Parties in Clubs and Schools, Honoring Pilgrims, and Publishing Poetry and Verses that Express the Spirit of Hajj and Adherence to Religion. The Study Demonstrates how this Media Coverage Formed a Bridge between the Reform Movement and the Algerian Public, and Contributed to Strengthening Religious and

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Cultural Identity Under the Colonial Control. In Summary; The Study Provides a Comprehensive Reading of how the Colonial Policy and the French Laws interacted with the Islamic Religion in Algeria, and how the Reform Movement Monitored these Interactions through the Press and Associations, with the Hajj Ritual being a Tangible Example of this Political and Religious Overlap.

Keywords---Separation of Religion from the State, the Hajj Pilgrimage, Association of Muslim Scholars, El-Basa'ir, Archival Documents.

Introduction

The Issue of Separating Religion from the State is One of the Fundamental Issues that Influenced the Political and Religious History of Algeria during the French Colonial Era. The Colonial Administration sought to Introduce and Apply French Secular Laws to the Colonies, including Algeria. Meanwhile; The State attempted to Impose Control over the Religious Affairs and Regulate Islamic Rituals, including the Hajj Pilgrimage, which is One of the Most Important Pillars of Islam and an Indicator of the Nation's Spiritual and Social Cohesion.

For its Part; The Association of Algerian Muslim Scholars played a Pivotal Role in Defending Religious Freedom, the Independence of Mosques, and the Teaching of the Holy Qur'an and the Arabic Language, through its Interaction with French Laws and the Colonial Administration, in addition to its Media Activity through the El-Basa'ir Newspaper. El-Basa'ir Conveyed News of the Hajj Pilgrimage, Documented the Suffering of Pilgrims, and Highlighted the Association's Efforts in Organizing Voyages and Protecting the Rights of Muslims, making it an Important Source for Understanding the Intersection of Politics and Religion in Algeria during the Colonial Period.

The Study also Draws on the Official Archival Documents of the Algerian General Government, which Specify the Organizational and Administrative Conditions for Hajj, and the Procedures Followed by Land, Air and Sea Transport Companies, this is to Highlight Colonial Censorship and the Limited Freedom of Muslims to Practice their Religious Rituals.

The Issue:

Under the French Laws Separating Religion from the State, and how they were Applied to the Colonial Algeria; **To What Extent did the Colonial Interference in the Organization of the Hajj Ritual Affect the Freedom to Practice Religion among Algerians? And What is the Role of the Association of Muslim Scholars and El-Basa'ir Newspaper in Confronting these Interventions and Protecting the Rights of Pilgrims?**

To Answer this Issue; We Adopted the Following Action Plan:

First: Identifying the Primary Sources Used in the Research.

1. The Archival Documents.
2. El-Basa'ir Newspaper.
 - A. An Introduction to El-Basa'ir Newspaper and its Reformist Role.
 - B. The Importance of Journalistic Work for the Association's Members.

Second: The Concept of the Law of Separation of Religion from the State.

1. Law (1905 CE).
2. Law (1907 CE).

Third: Depicting the Hajj Ritual in El-Basa'ir Newspaper and the Archival Documents between the Religious Dimension and the Colonial Organization.

Fourth: El-Basa'ir's Position Opposing the Colonial Administration's Policies in Organizing the Hajj Ritual.

Fifth: El-Basa'ir's Coverage of the Association of Scholars' Celebrations of the Return of the Algerian Pilgrims.

The Presentation:

First: Identifying the Primary Sources Used in the Research:

1. The Archival Documents:

An Important Collection of the Archival Documents Preserved within the Overseas Archives Service was Reviewed (Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer – ANOM), Located in (Aix-en-Provence) in France. Copies of these Documents were Obtained thanks to Professor Dr. Hamri Laila, who Provided a Number of the Archival Boxes Belonging to the “General Government of Algeria”. In Particular; Box Number: (11CAB/7) Contains Administrative Materials and Official Reports Issued by the French Colonial Authorities Concerning “the Organization of the Hajj Pilgrimage, the Monitoring of the Religious Activity, and the Colonial Policy towards Islam during the 1950s”. Among the Most Prominent of these Documents are the Following:

- **The First Document:**

(ANOM, Boîte 11CAB/7, Gouvernement Général de l'Algérie, “Conditions d'agrément et cahier des charges pour l'organisation par voie terrestre en 1955”, 07 juin 1954).

(ANOM, Box 11CAB/7, General Government of Algeria, “Conditions of Approval and Specifications for the Organization by Land in 1955”, June 7, 1954).

This Document is Preserved in the French National Overseas Archives and Originates from the General Administration of the Colonial Government in Algeria. It includes; The Accreditation Requirements and the Terms and Conditions for Organizing Hajj Pilgrimages by Land in (1955 CE), and was Drafted on (June 07, 1954 CE). The Document Highlights how the French Authorities Established Meticulous Regulatory and Administrative Procedures for the Pilgrimage, including Specifying Transport Companies, Travel Routes, and Licensing Requirements, in addition to its Supervisory and Political Dimensions. Through this; France sought to Control the Religious Movement and Direct it to Serve its Colonial Policies, as Part of an Attempt to Separate Religious Practice from its Political and National Dimensions. This Document Serves as Tangible Evidence of the Colonial State's Intervention in the Religious Affairs, making it a Key Source for Analyzing France's Policy towards Islam in Algeria, particularly from the Perspective of the Separation of Religion from the State. It also helps the Researcher Understand how the Organization of the Hajj Pilgrimage was transformed into a Political and Security Tool in the Hands of the Colonial Administration.

- **The Second Document:**

(ANOM, Boîte 11CAB/7, Gouvernement Général de l'Algérie, “Décision du Gouvernement Général de l'Algérie”).

(ANOM, Box 11CAB/7, General Government of Algeria, “Decision of the General Government of Algeria”).

It is an Official Administrative Decision Concerning the Regulation of Islamic Rituals, including the Hajj Pilgrimage, Zakat, and the Management of the Endowments. The Document Reveals the Colonial Administration's Approach towards Framing the Islamic Religion within a French Legal and Administrative Framework Subject to the Authority of the State. This is a Clear Attempt to Make the Religion a Purely Administrative Matter, Separate from the Algerian Society.

- **The Third Document:**

(ANOM, Boîte 11CAB/7, Gouvernement Général de l'Algérie, “Bulletin des Questions Islamiques”, Avril 1955, Sommaire, p.49).

(ANOM, Box 11CAB/7, General Government of Algeria, “Bulletin of Islamic Questions”, April 1955, Summary, p.49).

It is an Internal Bulletin Published by the Colonial Administration Under the Title (Bulletin des Questions Islamiques - Bulletin of Islamic Questions). Page (49) includes a General Summary of the Issue's Topics, which include Reports and Articles on “the Islamic Affairs in Algeria”. These Topics include Issues such as the Hajj Pilgrimage, Imams, Religious Education, and the Religious Reform in North Africa. This Bulletin Highlights the French Administration's Interest in Closely Monitoring the

Transformations within the Algerian Religious Sphere, and its Attempt to Redefine Islam as a Domain Subject to the Civil Authority.

- **The Fourth Document:**

(ANOM, Boîte 11CAB/7, “Bulletin des Questions Islamiques”, Avril 1955, p.53).

(ANOM, Box 11CAB/7, “Bulletin of Islamic Questions”, April 1955, p.53).

This Page Deals with the Organization of the Hajj Pilgrimages and the Observations of the French Administration regarding the Need for Direct Supervision of the Algerian pilgrims. This Highlights the Hajj Pilgrimage as an Indicator of the Religious and Political Ties between Algeria and the Orient. The Authorities also Expressed Concern about the Spread of Arab and Islamic Reformist thought among the Returning Pilgrims.

2. El-Basa'ir Newspaper:

A. An Introduction to El-Basa'ir Newspaper and its Reformist Role:

“El-Basa'ir” is Considered the Largest Newspaper of the Association of Muslim Scholars, due to its High Quality and Wide Circulation, which No Other Arabic Newspaper in Algeria had Achieved. It Printed approximately Four Thousand Copies, a Number rarely Reached by any Other Newspaper Under those Circumstances. It Continued Publication in Two Series:

1) The First Series (1935-1939 CE):

Its Director and Editor-in-Chief was “Sheikh Al-Tayeb EL-OKBI” during the First Two Years. In (1937 CE); “Sheikh Mubarak Al-Mili” was appointed by the Administrative Council of the Association of Muslim Scholars as Director and Editor of El-Basa'ir Newspaper, Succeeding Sheikh EL-OKBI. “Sheikh EL-OKBI” had Served as its Director Until (1939 CE), for a Period of Two Years. The First Issue of El-Basa'ir Newspaper was Published on (December 27, 1935 CE). Its Publication Continued Until the Declaration of World War II in (August 1939 CE). At that time; The Association of Scholars Decided to Suspend its Newspapers and Meetings Voluntarily, so as not to be Subjected to Pressure and Blackmail. This Stance taken by the Association of Muslim Scholars was particularly Harsh on the French Colonial Authorities, who wanted to Exploit the Association and its Press against the Axis Powers on the One Hand, and to Encourage the Algerian People to Support them in their War on the Other Hand, in Exchange for a False Promise of Granting Algeria its Independence.¹

2) The Second Series (1947-1956 CE):

After the End of World War II; The Association Resumed its Activities Under the Presidency of “the Scholar Sheikh Al-Bashir Al-Ibrahimi”, and Revived its Newspaper in (1947 CE). It was Initially Published Every Friday, but this Only Lasted for a Short time, as it Soon Began to be Published on Mondays. It Continued in this way Until (1956 CE), after its Editors were Displaced due to the War of Liberation and the Brutality of the Colonialism.² The Political Circumstances and Rapidly Unfolding Social Developments Led to a Shift in Perceptions of Algerian Reality, moving it from One Stage to another. The Newspaper of the Association of Algerian Muslim Scholars had to Engage with these Developments, express its Opinion on them, and take Positions, especially regarding those Events that were Closely or Distantly related to the Algerian Identity in terms of the Arabism and Islam.³

B. The Importance of Journalistic Work for the Association's Members:

Sheikh Abdul Hamid Ben Badis Understood that his Educational and Reformist Movement would not Succeed Unless it Connected with the People, and that the Quickest Way to Reach these People, both in Constantine and beyond, was through the Press.⁴ He recognized its Importance in Raising Public Awareness, believing that the Press was a Powerful Tool and Weapon to be Used in Fighting Injustice, Defending Freedom, Truth, and Peace, and as an Effective Means of Disseminating Knowledge and Science. Before Embarking on any other of his Reformist Activities, Abdul Hamid bin Badis began to think about Establishing a Printing Press, and Journalism was the Starting Point of his Reformist Work.

Despite the Obstacles placed in his way by the Colonial Authorities and the Financial and Administrative Harassment he faced; He Insisted on Continuing the Newspaper. Whenever a Newspaper or Magazine was shut down, he would Strive to Publish another, and so on; He never abandoned Journalistic Work. Furthermore; Abdul Hamid Ben Badis had a Strong Belief in and Commitment to Journalism, and a Keen Interest in what was Published in the International Press. He regularly Read the Arab Newspapers, commented on them, and quoted from them what he Considered Consistent with his Own Ideas. He also Read the French Newspapers and Discussed their Coverage of the Algerian Issues.⁵

Anyone who Examines the Journalistic Works of Abdul Hamid Ben Badis and his Statements about Journalism and Journalists Can Discover Important Intellectual Aspects. Ibn Badis was among the First to Establish Opinion Journalism, or what some Call Directed or Committed Journalism, in addition to his Emphasis on Journalistic Integrity as an Effective Means of Shaping the Public Opinion in the Press, along with Clarity of Thought, Simplicity of Expression, and Respect for the Reader. These are Characteristics without which Journalism Cannot Succeed.⁶

The Importance of the Media Work to the Association Members Can be Clearly Seen in an Article by Farhat bin Al-Darraj, Published in El-Basa'ir Newspaper, Entitled "The Association of Muslim Scholars and its Need for a Newspaper". In it; He Discussed the Significance of Media Work for the Association of Muslim Scholars, stating: "...It is Self-Evident that Associations in this Era are, by their Very Nature, in Dire Need of a Newspaper or Newspapers to Announce their Plans and Objectives, and to Refute anything that might Diminish their Value or Tarnish their Reputation. Therefore; The Association of Muslim Scholars, and Every Fair-Minded Thinker with them, Realized that it Could not Fulfill its Mission properly Except by Establishing a Newspaper that would Serve as a Link between it and the Nation, to Publish its Endeavors and what it Deems appropriate for the Nation's Well-Being, in terms of Moral and Intellectual Development, and to Disseminate any Publications that may be Necessary –and if the Association of Muslim Scholars had a Newspaper, it would be Spared the Need for Most of the Publications it Issues from time to time– and to Defend itself against the Slander and Malicious Rumors Spread by those who are always Present in every time and place".⁷

Sheikh Abdul Hamid bin Badis said: "...And We Persevered in Pursuing our Intended Goal, dedicating Ten Years to Teaching in order to Cultivate a Generation of Scholars, without Mixing it with any other work. When the Ten Years were Complete, and its Results became Evident, praise be to Allah; We Considered it our Duty to Undertake a Public Call to Pure Islam, Sound Knowledge Based on the Holy Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunnah, and the Righteous Guidance of the Early Generations of the Muslim Community, while Rejecting Innovations, Deviations, and Corrupt Customs. Therefore; It was Necessary for us to Establish a Press to Convey our Message to the People, and thus the Critic (Al-Muntaqid) and the Meteor (Al-Shihab) Newspapers were Founded, and the Writers and Thinkers of the Country rose up in those Newspapers to Support this Call in the Best Possible Way...".⁸

Sheikh Al-Tayeb El-OKBI Considers it to be: "An Honorable Profession, and a Craft whose Status is So Elevated and whose Importance is So Great that it should not be Practiced by Common People, or the Masses of Nations and the Simple Folk". This is the same thing that Muhammad Sa'eed Al-Zahiri mentioned,⁹ saying: "I Believe that Journalism is a Very Honorable Profession, and that there is No Better Way to Benefit the Nation, and that there is Nothing Like the Pens of Writers to Elevate the Status of Nations".

As for Muhammad Al-Amin Al-Amoudi; In the Inaugural Issue of the French-Language Newspaper "Al-Difa'a - The Defense", he Emphasized the Importance of the Press and the Objectives it sought to Achieve, stating: "This Newspaper aims to Contribute to the Material and Moral Advancement of the Algerian People. This Task will not be Easy, and we must Endure Considerable Difficulties, especially since we know that the French Administrative apparatus has Personally Targeted Muslim

Reformists...All those Deprived of a Voice will Find in this Newspaper a Free Platform to Express their Ideas in Journalistic Form, even if we do not Agree with them...We are Advocates of Understanding and Harbor no Preconceived Notions. We will do Everything in our Power to Establish Good Neighborly Relations with others on this Blessed Land without Discrimination Based on Race or Religion”.¹⁰

Therefore; It Can be said that El-Basa'ir Newspaper, the Mouthpiece of the Association of Algerian Muslim Scholars, represented a Prominent Intellectual and Reformist Platform in Defending the Sanctity of Religion and its Independence from the Dominance of the Colonial Administration. It Portrayed the Religious Issue as the Essence of National Identity and the Source of Strength for the Algerian Society, emphasizing that Islam is Not Merely a Set of Rituals, but a Comprehensive Civilizational Project Linked to Freedom, Justice, and Education. Its articles also Exposed Colonial Manipulation in Organizing the Hajj Pilgrimage, and France's Attempts to turn it into a Means of Control, calling for the Liberation of the Rituals from Politicization and Foreign Administration, and restoring them to their Original Spiritual and Moral Meaning. Thus; El-Basa'ir Newspaper Contributed to Shaping Collective Awareness about the Relationship between Religion and Politics, presenting a Reformist and National Discourse that Confronted the Policy of Separating Religion from the State Imposed by the Colonialism Under the Guise of Administrative and Civil Organization, and this is what we will Explore in the Remaining Sections of the Study.

Second: The Concept of the Law of Separation of Religion from the State:

1. Law (1905 CE):

The Law of Separating of Religion from the State was Enacted on (December 9, 1905 CE), emphasizing the Necessity of Separating the Church from the State and Keeping the Religious Affairs Outside the Sphere of the Civil Government. Although the Application of this Law was Not Originally Directed at Colonized Algeria; Article (43) Stipulated that a Subsequent Decree would be Issued Clarifying how the Provisions of this Chapter would be Applied in Algeria and the Other Colonies.¹¹

In this Context; It is Known that the Law of (1905 CE), along with Subsequent Legislation Concerning the Separation of Christianity (Catholic and Protestant) from the State, addressed Religious Affairs within the Framework of the Church as a Social, Moral, and Religious Institution Independent of Politics. The Association and the Reformist Movement in General Advocated this Principle, as their Main Demand was the Reform of Religion within the Framework of the French State.

It Should be Noted that; The Religious Reform was Not Only Necessary to Confront the Colonial Administration –in terms of Freedom of Education, Giving Lessons in Mosques, and the Independence of the Sharia Judiciary in Applying the Islamic Personal Status System– But it was also Essential to Confront the Sufi and Tariqa Orders that had Transformed Islamic Life into Outdated Traditions and Repetitive Rituals, Dating Back to Eras of Decline and Backwardness. This is what the Colonial Experience Summarized in the Concept of “the Algerian Islam”. Thus: The Issue of Separating Religion from the State Embodied the Core of the Issue that the Reform Movement Attempted to address.¹²

This Law Falls within the Framework of the French Legislation that sought to Regulate the Affairs of the Islamic Religion in Algeria. This was done by Classifying Places of Worship and Mosques, and Establishing an Official Religious Function, or what is Known as the “the Islamic Clergy”. On the Other Hand; The Law Called for the Separation of State and Religion, Guaranteeing Freedom of Belief and Expression, and Limiting State Interference in Religious Affairs. It also Stipulated the Necessity of Secularizing all State Institutions, including Educational Institutions, to Ensure the Independence of Politics from Religious Practices.¹³ However; The Principle of Secularism was Completely Emptied of its Original Meaning when it Came to Colonial Interests, especially in Algeria. The French

Administration sought to Control Religious Affairs in the Service of its Colonial Project, thus; Disregarding the Fundamental Principles of the Separation of State and Religion.¹⁴

2. Law (1907 CE):

A Supplementary Law to the Previous Law Separating Religion and the State was Issued on (September 27, 1907 CE), to include Algeria and the Rest of the Colonies. Article Two of the Law Stipulated that: "The French State does not Represent, Finance, or Support any Religion". However; This Law Contains a Clear Contradiction, as its Eleventh Article allowed the Governor-General, if he deemed it appropriate, to Grant Compensation to Clergymen for a Period of Ten Years. This Paragraph is Completely Contradictory to the Spirit of the Legal Text, but it Served as a Tool that Enabled the Colonial Administration to Interfere in the Affairs of the Islamic Religion and Exercise Control over Religious Institutions in Algeria.¹⁵

The Opinions regarding this Law Varied. On (April 10, 1908 CE), Governor-General "Jonnart" received a Petition Signed by Ten Algerian Notables, expressing the Algerians' Concern and Fear about the Implementation of this Decree and Demanding that France Fulfill its Obligations Stipulated in the Treaty of Occupation. Some have argued that the Law will Lead to the Cessation of State Funding for Religious Institutions, emphasizing the Need to Return the Endowments to Mosques. However; The Reality was Different; This Law Marked the Beginning of the Establishment of Algerian Religious Associations Starting in (1908 CE), which Aimed to Find an Acceptable Formula for its Implementation. In Contrast; Representatives of Official Islam Formed a United Front Rejecting its application, influenced by the Directives of the Colonial Administration on the one hand, and Fearing for their Material Privileges on the other.¹⁶

Thus; The Law Separating Religion from the State Represents an Explicit Framework that Affirms that the Algerian Muslim Nation has Complete Freedom to Learn its Religion and its Arabic Language. From this Perspective; The Quranic Schools in Algeria, which were Established for the Purpose of Teaching the Holy Qur'an, are Entitled to have the Provisions of this Law Applied to them, while being Exempted from the Requirement of Obtaining the Official License. El-Basa'ir Newspaper Published Some Articles of this Law, highlighting its Content and its Importance in Guaranteeing Freedom of Religion and Cultural Education. These Included:¹⁷

- **Article (1):** The French Republic is Committed to Upholding Freedom of Belief and Freedom of Religion, which Affirms the Principle of the Separation of Religion from the State.
- **Article (18):** Religious Associations are Permitted to Manage Religious Affairs, reflecting the Freedom of these Associations to Administer the Islamic Religion without External Interference.
- **Article (29):** It is Prohibited to Give Religious Lessons to Children Aged between Six and Thirteen Years during the Official School Hours, which means that Religious Education Can be Given to Adults at any time, and to Children Outside of the Official School Hours.
- **Article (30):** Anyone who Threatens or Intimidates People with the Intention of Preventing them from Practicing their Religious Rites Shall be Punished with a Fine ranging from (16 to 200 Francs), or with Imprisonment from Six Days to Two Months, which Ensures the Protection of Individuals from Harassment in the Practice of their Religious Rites.
- **Article (31):** Anyone who Obstructs or Interrupts People while they are Performing their Religious Rituals Shall be Punished with the Same Penalty, in order to Reinforce the Freedom of Religious Practice.
- **Article (42):** Any Law that Contradicts the Provisions of this Law Shall be Considered Null and Void, thus Affirming the Principle of Separation of Religion from the State, and the Protection of Religious Freedom.

It is Noteworthy that the Articles of the Law Separating Religion from the State Affirm Freedom of Belief and Freedom of Religion, the Independence of Religious Associations in Managing their Affairs,

and the Protection of Individuals while Practicing their Rituals. Article (29) also Defines the Limits of Religious Education for Children in Public Schools, while Preserving the Right to Religious Education for Adults and for Children at other times. Article (42) Stipulates that this Law takes Precedence over any Conflicting Provisions. However; The Actual Implementation in Algeria during the Colonial Period was Limited. The French Administration interfered in Religious Affairs, transforming the Law from a Principle that Protected Religious Freedom into a Tool for Controlling Islamic Institutions, thus Stripping it of its Original Content.

Third: Depicting the Hajj Ritual in El-Basa'ir Newspaper and the Archival Documents between the Religious Dimension and the Colonial Organization:

The Hajj Pilgrimage is One of the Most Prominent Areas where religious meanings Intersected with Political Stakes during the Colonial Era in Algeria. This Religious Obligation, with its Spiritual Symbolism and Representation of Islamic Unity, constituted a Sensitive Area for the French Authorities, who sought to Subject it to Strict Control and Administrative Regulation. All of this is an Attempt to Separate Religious Practice from its National and Political Dimensions. In Contrast; El-Basa'ir Newspaper Paid Considerable Attention to Covering Hajj-Related Issues, focusing on the Spiritual, Organizational, and Social Aspects that Highlight the Religious Awareness of Algerians and their Ability to Self-Organize despite the Imposed Restrictions.

In this Context; The Archival Documents Preserved in the Overseas Archives (ANOM) Complement the Press Coverage, together Offering a Multidimensional Image of the Hajj Pilgrimage, combining Reformist Media Coverage with Colonial Administrative Control, thus Allowing for a Deeper Understanding of how Religion was Represented as a Social and Political Issue in Algeria during the 1950s.

Accordingly; The Association's Publications did not Conceal their Interest in the Hajj Ritual, addressing the Organization of this Ritual from Multiple Aspects, particularly Transportation and Logistical Preparations for the Pilgrims. It Indicated that the Pilgrims were being transported on a Ship Called "Mendoza", belonging to the French Shipping Company, and Under the Supervision of the French Islamic Association for the Transportation of North African Pilgrims. Advertisements Issued by this Company Confirmed that the Ship Provided Several Essential Services, including Food, Prayer Rooms, a Radio for Listening to the News, and the Distribution of Two Newspapers in Arabic and French for Daily News Updates. The Ship also Provided Comprehensive Medical Care, including Three Doctors, and Offered Free Medication to Ensure the Comfort and Safety of the Pilgrims throughout the Voyage.

All of this was in addition to the Transportation; The Newspapers also Focused on Organizing the Pilgrims Upon their Arrival in the Holy Mecca, in terms of Providing the Necessary Facilities to Perform the Rituals Smoothly, and Providing Religious Guides to Direct the Pilgrims to the Holy Places and help them Perform their Rituals Correctly. The Newspaper also Highlighted the Role of Local Associations and Organizations in Algeria in Facilitating Administrative Procedures before Travel, such as Registering Pilgrims, Issuing Legal Documents, and Ensuring the Safety of their Money and Belongings during the Voyage.

Through this Media Focus, El-Basa'ir Newspaper Demonstrated that the Hajj Pilgrimage was Not Merely a Religious Obligation, but also a Platform for Civil and Social Organization, reflecting the Ability of Islamic Associations to Manage the Affairs of the Pilgrims in Cooperation with Official Authorities, while Preserving the Religious Spirit of the Ritual and Confronting any Potential Colonial Interference.¹⁸ It was Customary for Algerian Doctors to Accompany the Hajj Pilgrimage Mission, as Confirmed by an Archival Document Containing an Administrative Instruction that Outlines the Organization of this Medical Mission and Emphasizes the Role of Local Doctors in Providing Healthcare to the Pilgrims throughout the Voyage. This was in addition to Three Doctors on Board the

Ship, and the Provision of Free Medication. This Document bears the Signature of the Secretary General of the French Government in Algeria and is Dated (June 13, 1955 CE). The Document Specifies the Medical Delegation Accompanying the Pilgrims that Year, Listing the Names of the Doctors Assigned to Provide Healthcare to the Pilgrims and Organize Medical Services during the Voyage.¹⁹

The Document Identified the Members of the Medical Delegation Accompanying the Pilgrims in (1955 CE), as Follows:

- Dr. Khaleli Abdul Aziz, from Taher Hospital in Constantine.
- Technical Staff from Public Health: Ben Mouaffaq Abdullah (Constantine), and Saidi Noureddine (Algiers).
- Nurses: Ms. Ben Zaouia Yamina, from Mostaganem Hospital in Oran Governorate.

These Doctors and Nurses were Responsible for Providing Comprehensive Healthcare to the Pilgrims and Ensuring their Safety throughout the Hajj Voyage. This Reflects the Meticulous Organization and Medical Attention that Accompanied the Hajj Pilgrimage during that Period.

The Pilgrimage was also Carried out by Air, with Flights Departing Directly from Algiers to Jeddah, and the Return Flight taking place in the Same Way. In Some Cases; The Cost of the Flight reached (170,000 Francs). As for Flights that included Travel from Algiers to Jeddah, then to Medina and Back, they Cost Approximately (190,000 Francs). This Air Traffic Management System Highlights the Progress and Attention Given to Facilitating the Travel of Pilgrims and Ensuring their Comfort during the Performance of the Ritual.²⁰

As for Overland Pilgrimage; The French Administration Always Complained that Traveling by Land to Perform the Hajj was Accompanied by Many Obstacles and Problems, which were sometimes due to the Negligence of Transportation Companies. These Difficulties included Frequent Delays and Complicated Procedures in Both Libya and Egypt. In addition to the Difficult Living Conditions and the Resulting Extra Expenses, this has made Land Travel Less Safe and Comfortable Compared to Sea or Air Travel.²¹ Among the Companies Responsible for Air Transport, "TAI Company" stood out, as it Handled the Transportation of Pilgrims, as Indicated in the Archival Document. The Document Indicated that the Company was Responsible for Transporting Pilgrims between (July 5 and 14, 1955 CE), Following the Breakdown of the Ship 'L'Athos 2', reflecting the Role of Air Transport as a Necessary Alternative to Ensure the Continuation of Hajj Voyages Under Safe and Efficient Organizational Conditions.²²

El-Basa'ir Newspaper Published in Detail all the Procedures and Conditions related to the Hajj Pilgrimage. The Pilgrims Obtained their Travel Tickets and Instructions from the Association's Representatives in Algiers, Oran, Constantine, and Annaba, as well as from Morocco and Tunisia. The Newspaper Highlighted that those Wishing to Travel Aboard the Ship were Required to Comply with Several Strict and Complex Conditions, including: Submitting a Leave Request from the Labor Supervisor with a Stamped Envelope worth Four Francs, attaching a Certificate of Good Conduct, a Copy of their Criminal Record, and a Certificate from the Village Headman Confirming that the Pilgrim's Family would not be Harmed by his Absence. All of this is in addition to a Medical Certificate from a Certified Doctor or Health Authority Proving that the Pilgrim was Vaccinated at Least Ten Days before the Voyage. It was also Required to Obtain Final Approval from the Governor-General, along with Depositing a Sum of Two Thousand Francs, documented by a "Cheque" or a Credit Letter, which would be Refunded Upon Arrival in Jeddah.

This Coverage Confirms that El-Basa'ir Newspaper Played a Pivotal Role in Informing Readers about the Hajj Pilgrimage, monitoring its organization, and exposing the Obstructive Measures Imposed by the Colonial Administration. This Reflects the Newspaper's Interest in the Religious and Social Affairs of the Algerian Society.²³ It is worth noting that War Veterans sometimes Performed the Hajj

Pilgrimage at the State's Expense, which Highlights the French Authorities' Attention to Certain Social Groups. Furthermore; El-Basa'ir Newspaper was Keen to Document these Practices and Highlight them as Part of its Coverage of Everything Related to the Hajj and its Organization in Algeria during the Colonial Period.²⁴ This is Consistent with what is Stated in an Archival Document bearing the Signature of the Secretary General of the General Government in Algeria, which Confirms the Accuracy of the Information regarding State Allocations for Some Pilgrims. It also demonstrates the French Administration's Keenness to Officially Organize the Hajj for Certain Social Groups. The Historical Document, dated (June 7, 1954 CE), Details the Conditions Stipulated by the Algerian Government for all Transportation Companies Involved in Organizing the Hajj Pilgrimage. The Document Clarifies the Procedures and Standards that must be Followed to Ensure a Smooth and Safe Voyage.²⁵ The Document included Several Mandatory Regulatory Requirements for Transportation Companies Participating in the Hajj Voyages, Most Notably:

- **Notifying the Administration in Advance:** The Carrier is Required to Inform the Administration at Least (15 Days) before the Voyage about the Regulatory Conditions of the Voyage and the Terms of the Signed Contract.
- **Securing and Registering Pilgrims' Data:** Commitment to Securing all Registered and Paying Pilgrims from Algiers to Jeddah, and Preparing a Special Register Containing Information on Each Pilgrim, including: (Name - Address - Passport Number - Health Record).
- **Compensation in Case of Failure:** If the Organizer Fails to Carry out the Overseas Voyage, the Pilgrim must be Compensated for the Amounts Paid.
- **The Organizer is also Required to:**
 - ✓ Deposit One-Third of the Voyage's Value with the Public Accountant, or Provide a Guarantee from a Bank Recognized by the General Government.
 - ✓ If No Disputes arise; The Funds will be Returned to the Organizer One Month after their Return.
 - ✓ However; In the Event of Disputes; The Competent Courts will be the Final Authority for Resolving the Conflicts.

These Conditions Highlight the General Government's Keenness to Regulate the Hajj Pilgrimage Voyages in a Precise and Legal Manner, Protect the Rights of Pilgrims, and Ensure their Safety. All of this comes with Establishing Clear Mechanisms for Compensation and Resolving Potential Disputes.

The Coverage Provided by El-Basa'ir Newspaper, along with the Archival Documents, demonstrates the Level of Precision and Organization Required in Managing the Hajj Pilgrimage Voyages during the Colonial Era. The Newspaper Highlighted the Burdensome Procedures and Complex Conditions that Pilgrims had to Comply with, whether in terms of Tickets, Administrative and Medical Requirements, or Financial Insurance, which Reflects the French Administration's Interference in the Affairs and Organization of the Hajj Pilgrimage. At the same time; The Archival Documents Confirm the Legal and Regulatory Controls Imposed on Transportation Companies to Ensure the Safety of Pilgrims and Protect their Financial Rights, while Establishing Clear Mechanisms for Compensation in the Event of Voyage Failure or Disputes.

This Combination of the Journalistic Coverage and the Archival Sources highlight the Role of El-Basa'ir Newspaper as a Reliable Media Source in Monitoring the Religious and Social Affairs of the Algerian Society, while also Providing a Critical Analysis of the Actions of the Colonial Administration. This Reflects the Newspaper's Awareness of the Importance of the Hajj Pilgrimage as a Religious, Social, and Strategic Issue in the Context of Colonial Rule.

Fourth: El-Basa'ir's Position Opposing the Colonial Administration's Policies in Organizing the Hajj Ritual:

Frequently; The French Government Promoted the Hajj Pilgrimage Campaigns through Various Advertising Methods, Using Promotional Incentives to Encourage Pilgrims to Register and Travel. This Reflects the Administration's Interest in Controlling the Organization of the Hajj Pilgrimage and Attracting Pilgrims within the Framework Defined by the Colonial State. As for the Shipping Companies and the Facilities Provided to the Pilgrims; The Documents showed that Passports were Easily Granted to Everyone who Requested them, with the Administration Only Requiring the Standard Legal Documents and a Round-Trip Ship Ticket. Each Pilgrim was also required to Provide a Sum of No Less than (6500 Francs) as Spending Money for the Hijaz, to Ensure Coverage of Basic Expenses while Performing the Ritual.²⁶

However; Reality reflected a Different Image from what the Advertising Campaign had announced. Sheikh Al-Tayeb El-OKBI pointed out in El-Basa'ir Newspaper that the Widespread Promotion of Travelling on the Ship "Mendoza" was nothing more than an Empty Marketing Ploy. El-OKBI stated that when the Ship arrived from the Port of Oran on (January 27, 1937 CE), it was Carrying (772 Pilgrims) in Unsatisfactory Conditions. The Comfort Facilities were non-existent, and the Means of Rescue from Drowning or Fire were almost Completely Lacking. Some even Called the Ship "Al-Manduba, the Delegate" instead of "Mendoza" to Express its Deplorable Condition.

The Sheikh added that the Number of Pilgrims Waiting at "Algiers Port" is more than Double the Number of Pilgrims from Oran, in addition to the Pilgrims Coming from Annaba, Constantine, and Tunisia. Upon Boarding the Ship; The Pilgrims were Subjected to Beatings with Sticks by the Police, along with Insults and Humiliation, amidst Extremely Cramped Conditions inside the Vessel. The Number of Pilgrims on Board the Ship that Year was approximately (2682 Pilgrims).

This Mistreatment Provoked the Indignation of the Association of Muslim Scholars, which Protested to the French Government against this Situation, demanding the Right of Pilgrims to Choose their Means of Travel and whichever Ship they wished, warning that Forcing Pilgrims to Travel Under these Circumstances would Render the Pilgrimage Forbidden and its Performance Impermissible.²⁷ Al-Bashir Al-Ibrahimi pointed out that while Hajj Pilgrimage is a Purely Islamic Ritual, the French Colonial Power viewed it as a Tool for Enslaving Muslim Nations, as they Controlled its Organization and Manipulated it for their Own Purposes. In addition to the Religious and Natural Requirements of Capability, the Colonial Authorities added Arbitrary Conditions that burdened the Algerians and contradicted the Spirit of the Islamic Sharia Law. This reflects the Nature of Colonial Intervention in Religious Affairs and its Attempt to Impose Arbitrary Restrictions on the Practice of Religious Rituals.²⁸

For this Reason; The Association of Muslim Scholars has Repeatedly Called for Improving the Conditions of Pilgrims, a Demand that was Clearly reported by El-Basa'ir Newspaper. On (January 28, 1937 CE), Sheikh Abdul Hamid Ben Badis sent a Telegram to the Governor-General in Paris, requesting that a Second ship be Sent to transport the Remaining Pilgrims in Constantine. In the Same Context; Sheikh Al-Tayeb El-OKBI sent Telegrams to Léon Blum, the Prime Minister, Dormoy, the Minister of the Interior, Viollette, the Minister of State, and others, to Draw Attention to the Mistreatment that Pilgrims were Subjected to at the Hands of the Police, emphasizing the Need for the Authorities to Intervene to Improve Travel Conditions and Secure the Rights of the Pilgrims.²⁹

The Association's Publications illustrated how the Association of Muslim Scholars Strived to Provide Suitable Conditions for Pilgrims. The Association would Send an Official Representative, in the form of a Preacher, to Accompany the Pilgrims, providing Religious Guidance and Spiritual Support, and Ensuring that the Pilgrimage Rituals were Performed in a Proper Atmosphere, Free from any Interference or Harassment that might Infringe upon the Freedom of Religious Practice.³⁰ The Pilgrims

received the Necessary Care Until they reached the Holy Sites, where the Saudi Government was making Great Efforts to Improve the Means of Performing the Hajj Ritual. Among these Measures; A Hospital was Established and Several Health Centers were Created to Provide the Necessary Medical Care to Pilgrims and Ensure their Safety while Performing the Rituals, reflecting the Saudi Authorities' Commitment to Ensuring the Proper Organization of the Hajj and Preserving the Health of the Pilgrims.³¹ In addition to Medical Care; The Logistical Services were Widely Available, with Camels, Cars, and Airplanes provided to Facilitate the Movement of Pilgrims between the Various Holy Sites. There were also Men Specifically assigned to Accompany and Guide the Pilgrims wherever they traveled, to Ensure that the Rituals were Performed Smoothly and in a Highly Organized Manner, reflecting the Efforts made to Ensure the Comfort and Safety of the Pilgrims.³²

The Extensive Intervention of the Colonial Administration in the Hajj Pilgrimage was not Primarily aimed at Organizing and Facilitating the Performance of the Rituals, as France Claimed, but rather the Real Objective was to Monitor the Pilgrims and Prevent them from any Contact or Interaction with other Pilgrims, which might Increase their National Awareness and Strengthen the Spirit of Resistance against the Colonialism. The Administration viewed the Hajj Pilgrimage as an Opportunity for Muslims from Different Regions to gather, exchange News and Ideas, and Share Opinions, which Could Pose a Threat to its Policies in Algeria and Endanger its Continued Existence. Therefore; The Task of the Official Observers appointed by the French Administration was to Ensure that the Algerian Pilgrims remained Isolated from these Interactions and Influences. This Objective reflects what the Governor-General of Algeria, de Guédon, stated in the Late 19th Century, saying: "These are the Pilgrims Returning Less Obedient to Us", which highlights the Administration's Concern about the Repercussions of the Hajj Pilgrimage on the National and Religious Consciousness of Algerians.³³

Fifth: El-Basa'ir's Coverage of the Association of Scholars' Celebrations of the Return of the Algerian Pilgrims:

The Association of Algerian Muslim Scholars was Keen to Make the Return of the Pilgrims an Occasion to Celebrate and Acknowledge the Efforts Made, as well as to Appreciate the Performance of the Religious Ritual Under Difficult Circumstances, and to Highlight the Association's Role in Organizing the Hajj Pilgrimage, monitoring the Pilgrims, and Protecting them from the Colonial Interference. The Association's Newspapers, particularly El-Basa'ir Newspaper, covered these Celebrations in Detail, highlighting the Social and Religious Rituals Accompanying the Return and the Provision of Moral and Spiritual Support to the Pilgrims.

Despite the Difficult Circumstances Faced by the Algerian Pilgrims; These Conditions did not Prevent the Association of Muslim Scholars and the Men of the Reform Movement from Celebrating their Arrival. This Celebration was Symbolic, Religious, and Social all at Once. This reflects the Association's Interest in the Spiritual Aspect of the Pilgrimage and its Keenness to Honor the Pilgrims after Performing the Ritual. It is worth noting that; This Type of Celebration Originated in the City of Constantine, and then Gradually Spread to other Regions of Algeria, becoming an Annual Tradition that reflects the Spirit of Religious and Social Solidarity.

It was the Association's Custom to Hold the Celebration for the Pilgrims at the "Union Club" but due to the Limited Space, in (1936 CE) they decided to Move the Celebration to the Grand Mosque, after Obtaining Permission from the Secretary General of the Labor Department. The Aim of these Celebrations was to Reduce the Numerous Visits to the Homes of the Pilgrims, and to Avoid the Extravagance and Wastefulness that the Association of Scholars had Prohibited, while Encouraging People to Limit Visits to the Pilgrims to Immediate Relatives Only.

El-Basa'ir Newspaper Covered this Event in Detail in an Article by Sheikh Abdul Hamid bin Badis Under the Title "The Celebration of the Association for Islamic Education and Teaching for the

Pilgrims". The Newspaper highlighted the Religious and Social Rituals Associated with the Return, as well as the Efforts made by the Association in Receiving the Pilgrims, accompanying them with Preachers, and Providing Religious Advice and Spiritual Guidance. El-Basa'ir Newspaper also Focused on the Symbolic Aspect of the Celebration as an Opportunity to Affirm the Value of the Social and Religious Solidarity, and to Enhance the National and Religious Awareness among the Algerians, highlighting the Vital Role of the Association in Protecting Pilgrims from any Exploitative Interventions or Administrative Harassment during their Voyage.³⁴

For Example; El-Basa'ir Newspaper Published Details of the Tribute Paid to the Pilgrims by the Islamic Education and Training Association in Constantine in (1936 CE). The Association decided to Hold the Celebration on Friday after the Asr Prayer at the Grand Mosque, so that the Occasion would be an Opportunity for Pilgrims and Delegations to gather in the Sacred House of Allah, reflecting the Unity and the Religious and Social Cohesion of the Nation. However; The French Government refused to Allow this Celebration to take place, which highlights the Colonial Administration's Attempts to Restrict any Gatherings that would Foster National and Religious Awareness among the Algerians. Sheikh Abdul Hamid bin Badis affirms in his article: "The Gathering of People in the Mosque and their Waiting for the Pilgrims is Nothing but Evidence of the Unity and Solidarity of this Nation, and the Purpose of this is to Show the Government the Extent of the Nation's Attachment to its Mosques and its Desire to Maintain them and Uphold its Religious Affairs". This illustrates the Symbolic and Political Role of these Celebrations in Strengthening Religious and National Identity, and the Association's Keenness to Highlight Adherence to Religious Practice and Religious Freedom in the Face of the Colonial Restrictions.³⁵

El-Basa'ir Newspaper also mentioned that Celebrating the Return of the Pilgrims to their Homeland and Offering Congratulations to them and their Families was a Common Tradition among Muslims in the East and West. It was Not Surprising that People from all Social Classes Expressed their Joy at the Arrival of the Happy Pilgrims, with Young and Old Alike going out to Meet and Welcome them. This reflects the Social and Religious Dimension of this Occasion and the Role of Pilgrims in Uniting the Islamic Community and Strengthening Social Ties.³⁶

The Celebrations for the Pilgrims were also held in Schools. For Example; The Celebration in (1937 CE) was held at the School of Education in Constantine at Nine O'clock in the Evening. The school was equipped with Lighting and Furnished Appropriately to Receive the Pilgrims. Sheikh Abdul Hamid bin Badis attended the Ceremony and Spoke about his Visit to the Tomb of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be Upon Him), highlighting the Religious and Spiritual Values of the Hajj Pilgrimage. At the End of the Ceremony; The Attendees shook hands with all the Pilgrims, and the Event Concluded at 10:30 PM, reflecting the Commitment to Providing Symbolic and Social Recognition to the Pilgrims and Strengthening Religious and Community Ties.³⁷

One Indication of the Association of Muslim Scholars' Keenness to Spread its Reformist Message among the General Public is what El-Basa'ir Newspaper reported about the Celebration held in the City of Mila, where the Residents were gathered to Welcome the Pilgrims Returning from Mecca in the Year (1938 CE). The Pilgrims were received at One of the Clubs, where the Religious Hymns were Chanted, and an Explanation was given of the Difference between the Previous Celebrations, which Followed the Traditional Sufi and Tariqa Orders Style, and Focused on the Social and Customary Aspects, and the Celebrations Organized according to the Reformist Approach, which seeks to Instill Correct Religious Values and the Reformist Spirit in Society, reflecting the Association's Role in Guiding Society towards Practicing Religious Rituals according to the Authentic Teachings of Islam.³⁸ For Example; During the Hajj Season of (1928 CE), a Reception was held for Pilgrims at the Algerian Club Promotion on (July 25th), from 12:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Approximately Seventy Pilgrims attended, most of them from the Desert Region of the Oran Province, and they were Led by El-Hadj Boualem from the Famous Family of Ouled Sidi Cheikh. The Club's Manager "Mohammed Sultan", hosted a Lunch

for them, as an Expression of his Keenness to Honor the Pilgrims, reinforce the Spirit of the Social and Religious Solidarity, and Acknowledge their Efforts in Performing the Hajj Ritual.³⁹

In addition to the Reform-Oriented Celebrations; The Newspapers of the Association of Muslim Scholars, foremost among them "El-Basa'ir Newspaper", contributed to Celebrating the Arrival of the Pilgrims on their Various Pages, through the Writings of their Poets and Writers. The Poets would Compose Verses Celebrating the Arrival of the Pilgrims and Send them Poems that were Published in the Newspapers, serving as a Means to Reinforce the Spiritual and Social Dimensions of the Hajj Pilgrimage, as well as Encouraging Society to take pride in this Ritual. Among these Works is a Poem by the Poet "Muhammad Al-Eid", entitled "Greet the Gathering Like the Adornment of the Gardens on my Behalf", which is a Long Poem of Forty-Eight Verses, some of which are as Follows:⁴⁰

**Almighty Blessed You with the Pilgrimage to the Sacred House, a Blessing more Generous
than any other,
So Welcome, and a Warm Welcome to the Pilgrims!
Almighty Blessed You with the Pilgrimage to the Sacred House, making its Corner
A Place of Standing for those who draw near to Him through the Pilgrimage
Almighty Blessed You with the Pilgrimage to the Sacred House, Spreading His Shade as a
Sanctuary
For those who Feared Destruction when they Sinned
You went and You returned Victorious, having attained a Noble Feast,
While Most People Fall Short of their Aspirations**

Thus; It is Clear from what El-Basa'ir Newspaper Reported that the Association of Algerian Muslim Scholars transformed the Return of the Pilgrims into a Religious, Social, and National Occasion all at Once, through which it highlighted the Reformist Spirit of the Association, as well as its Keenness to Revive Islamic Rituals Under Colonial Control. El-Basa'ir Provided Accurate Coverage of these Celebrations, highlighting the Symbolic and Religious Aspects of Honoring the Pilgrims. It also Considered this a Means of Strengthening Social Unity and Religious Awareness among Algerians. It also Revealed the Colonial Administration's Suppression of these Gatherings, due to their Nationalistic Implications, which embodied the Unity of the People around the Values of Islam and its Educational and Reformist Institutions. The Articles and Poems published in the Newspaper also show that the Society's Celebrations were Not Merely Formal Rituals, but rather Educational and Spiritual Platforms that sought to Instill Authentic Islamic Values, emphasize Freedom of Religious Practice, and Reject the Colonial Domination.

Conclusion:

This Study; Through an Analysis of French Laws, Archival Documents, and the Newspaper El-Basa'ir, highlights that the Issue of Separating Religion from the State in Algeria during the Colonial Period was Not Merely a Legal and Administrative Measure, but rather a Systematic Policy Aimed at Reshaping the Relationship between Religion and Society in a way that Served the Colonial Interests. France sought to Impose its Secular Model on Algerian Islam, but in a Selective Manner that Stripped the Principle of Secularism of its True Meaning based on Religious Freedom, turning it into a Means of Domination and Control over Islamic Rituals and Practices; Foremost among them the Hajj Pilgrimage.

The Analysis of the Archival Documents has Revealed that the Organization of the Hajj Pilgrimage was Not Purely a Religious Act, but rather a Political Practice Framed by the Control and Surveillance, governed by the Strict Administrative Instructions that transformed the Religious Obligation into a Sphere of Control and Guidance. In Contrast; El-Basa'ir Newspaper represented a Free Reformist Voice, through which the Association of Muslim Scholars Expressed its Rejection of the Colonial Politicization of Religious Rituals, and defended the Right of Algerians to Practice their Religion and

the Independence of their Religious Institutions, Considering the Hajj Pilgrimage a Symbol of National Unity and a Means of Consolidating Religious and National Awareness.

Accordingly; It Can be said that the Political and Religious Interplay in Algeria during the Colonial Period was Not Merely a Conflict over Legislation, but rather a Conflict over Identity, Memory, and Symbolic Power. While the French Administration Attempted to Separate Religion from the State, in order to Alienate the Algerian People from their Own Identity, the Reformist Movement, through its Journalistic and Religious Discourse, succeeded in transforming this Separation into a Resistance Consciousness that reconnected what Colonialism had tried to Separate: Religion with the Nation, and Faith with Freedom.

Thus; The Study Concludes that the Hajj Pilgrimage, as Observed through Historical Accounts and Revealed by Archival Documents, was Not Merely a Religious Ritual, but rather a Space for a Symbolic Struggle between Colonialism and Algerian Society, and One of the Voices of Collective Consciousness that Paved the Way for the Liberation Movement and the Building of a National State based on Unity of Religion, Identity, and Sovereignty.

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