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Aspects of Governor-General Jules Carde's Policy in Algeria (1930–1935)

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Abstract

The governorship of Jules Carde (1930–1935) stands out as one of the most repressive periods in the history of colonial Algeria, marked by arbitrariness and repression directed against the Algerian population and the leadership of the national movement alike. Carde worked to consolidate the ideology of *l'Algérie française* (French Algeria), reinforcing settler privileges and acting as a pliant instrument in their hands. His policies deepened the impoverishment of the Algerian population across all sectors, condemning them to destitution, famine, and illiteracy. However, despite these harms, Carde's administration widened the gulf between Algerians and the colonial state, thereby accelerating the growth of national consciousness.

Keywords: Jules Carde; Governor-General; repressive policy; Michel Circulars; Constantine uprising of 1934.

Introduction

Following the fall of Algiers to French forces in 1830, Algeria was administered by a military Commander-in-Chief for the first three years of the occupation. To consolidate its colonial hold, the Metropolitan Government issued a decree in July 1834 annexing Algeria to France under the authority of a military Governor-General. Successive military officials governed the territory, treating it as a testing ground for their political and military designs, until military rule was abolished and replaced by civilian government in 1870.

Algeria was thereafter placed under the authority of a senior civilian official (the civilian Governor-General of the three Algerian departments) who reported to the French Minister of the Interior and operated under the unrelenting pressure of the settlers and their representatives.

The policies of successive civilian Governors-General towards Muslim Algerians varied considerably. A minority pursued a reformist approach, attending to the concerns of the indigenous population (as they put it) to safeguard the colony. The majority, however, adopted an openly repressive and arbitrary stance, placing the Governor-General's administration at the service of settlers' greed, their racial prejudices, and their unbounded ambitions. The governorship of Jules Carde (1930–1935) exemplified this latter pattern. Taking his governorship as a case in point, the present study investigates the extent to which extent did

Jules Carde's policies contribute to entrenching the colonial presence in Algeria? What were the repercussions of his administration on the conditions of Algerians during this period? And how did the national movement respond to his repressive stance?

1. Who Was Jules Carde (1930–1935)?

Governor-General Jules Gaston Henri Carde was born in the Algerian city of Batna in 1874.[1] He came from a military family and spent the greater part of his career as a senior colonial administrator, having completed his military service in Constantine between 1885 and 1886. He began his administrative career in 1892, when he was appointed as a clerk in the Prefecture of Algiers, and was promoted to the rank of drafting clerk in 1897.[2]

Carde's colonial career commenced in 1900 in Madagascar, under the orders of General Gallieni. In 1907, he was appointed chief of staff to the Governor of Martinique. Subsequently, he held the same position under the Governor-General of French Equatorial Africa (AEF), having previously served as the Ivory Coast's Secretary-General.[3]

His appointments continued in rapid succession: he was named Governor of the Colonies, served as Lieutenant-Governor in Middle Congo, and then became Secretary-General of French West Africa (AOF). In March 1919, Carde was appointed France's Commissioner in Cameroon, succeeding Lucien Fourneau.[4]

Carde was appointed Governor-General of Algeria on 3 October 1930 and assumed his duties upon his arrival in Algiers aboard the vessel *Le Duc d'Aumale* on 17 November 1930. He remained at the head of the Governor-General's administration until 12 September 1935.[5]

2. The Historical Context of Carde's Appointment as Governor-General

Carde's appointment coincided with a highly sensitive historical juncture: the French celebrations of the centenary of the occupation in 1930. These provocative festivities, designed to reaffirm the thesis of *l'Algérie française*, were attended by a large assembly led by the President of the French Republic, Gaston Doumergue. Through six months of military parades, art exhibitions, and other spectacles, the French state sought to broadcast the success of its colonial enterprise. Preparations had taken no fewer than two years, marked by an excessive display of imperial grandeur that cost the French treasury approximately one hundred million francs.[6]

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[1]Nkot, Fabien. *Dictionnaire de la politique au Cameroun*, 2nd ed., revised and expanded. France: Presses Université Laval, 2018.
[2]Ibid.
[3]Ibid.
[4]Ibid.
[5]ANOM, Aix-en-Provence, GG3R1 A617, Gouvernement Général de l'Algérie, Cabinet Militaire 1917–1962, 2012, 5.
[6]Qanāt al-Bilād al-Jazā'iriyya [El Bilad TV]. *Awḍāʿ al-Jazā'ir fī al-dhikrā al-mi'awiyya li-l-iḥtilāl al-faransī, 5 jūwiliyā 1930* [Conditions in Algeria on the Centenary of French Colonisation, 5 July 1930]. Presented by a panel of Algerian historians. Algeria, 19 August 2023.

While the colonial authorities intended these celebrations to intimidate the Algerian population and extinguish their national spirit by projecting an image of allegedly invincible French grandeur, the outcome proved entirely counterproductive. The centenary festivities contributed significantly to Algerians' national awakening, accelerating demands for independence and the search for effective means to confront the colonial apparatus.[7]

Several historians have taken a broadly positive view of these unintended consequences. Charles-Robert Agéron argued that the provocative centenary festivities constituted the true starting point of Algerian nationalism. Prior to 1930, the Algerian elite had aspired to nothing beyond obtaining French citizenship. The centenary crystallised the independence demands of Messali Hadj's movement. It prompted the Ulema to found their Association, which committed itself to defending the Algerian identity threatened by the colonial policy of cultural disfigurement. Through its publications, the Association regarded this moment as the birth of Algerian nationalist sentiment, most notably through *Kitāb al-Jazā'ir* [The Book of Algeria] by the Algerian activist Ahmed Tawfiq al-Madani.[8]

The celebrations also played a formative role for Algerian youth, who gained exposure to new forms of political action, such as the Algerian Muslim Scouts. By the late 1920s, the Governor-General's administration had already become the focal point of political conflicts intensified by the preparations for the centenary.[9]

3. Carde's Policy towards the Algerian National Movement

A committed advocate of *l'Algérie française*, Carde had been appointed Governor-General on the strength of his extensive experience administering African colonies. His policy was designed to suppress all nationalist movements, and his administrative decisions consistently accommodated the settlers' intransigence and limitless demands.

3.1. The Federation of Algerian Muslim Elected Representatives

During Carde's tenure, Ferhat Abbas, the party leader, still maintained an assimilationist stance. In an article published in his 1931 book *Le Jeune Algérien*, Abbas wrote: "Algeria is French territory, and we are French with our own Muslim personal status; we hope that it will be transformed from a colony into a department".[10] The Governor-General nevertheless rejected Abbas's demands in 1933, as well as those of his delegation, who had

[7]al-Nūrī, Ḥammū Muḥammad ʿIsā. *Dawr al-Mīzābiyyīn fī tārīkh al-Jazā'ir qadīman wa-ḥadīthan* [The Role of the Mozabites in the History of Algeria, Past and Present]. Vol. 4. Constantine: Dār al-Baʿth, 2013, 43.

[8]Agéron, Charles-Robert. *Tārīkh al-Jazā'ir al-muʿāṣira* [Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine]. Translated by ʿIsā ʿAṣfūr. Lebanon: Manshūrāt ʿUwaydāt, 1982, 140.

[9]Cantier, Jacques. "Les gouverneurs Viollette et Bordes et la politique algérienne de la France à la fin des années vingt." *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer*, France, 1997, 25–49.

[10]Būʿazīz, Yaḥyā. *Siyāsat al-tasalluṭ al-istiʿmārī wa-l-ḥaraka al-waṭaniyya al-jazā'iriyya min 1830 ilā 1954* [Colonial Domination Policy and the Algerian National Movement from 1830 to 1954]. Algeria: Dār al-Baṣā'ir, 2009, 125.

come to advocate for the reformist Viollette Bill.[11] Carde's obstinate opposition prompted Algerian elected representatives to form a committee that was dispatched to Paris in June 1933; however, it was not received by the French government.[12]

In the aftermath of the massacres produced by the Constantine events of 1934, the colonial authorities launched a wave of arrests on 6 August 1934 that included Ferhat Abbas, president of the Federation of Algerian Muslim Elected Representatives, and Dr Bendjelloul.[13]

The political turbulence generated by the Michel Circulars drove Dr Bendjelloul to seek solutions from the Metropolitan Government. In early 1935, he proposed leading a delegation to Paris to apprise the authorities of the volatile situation in Algeria. The French Minister of the Interior, René, rejected this proposal, shattering Bendjelloul's remaining illusions regarding colonial intentions and leading him to voice sharp criticism of French administration.[14] Ferhat Abbas publicly voiced his dissatisfaction with Carde's policies, particularly amid the deepening economic and social crisis. On 18 January 1935, he wrote: "Anything but the status quo" , thereby articulating the prevailing sentiment of Algerian public opinion.[15]

3.2. The Étoile Nord-Africaine (North African Star, ENA)

The colonial authorities dissolved the ENA in 1929 on charges of incitement to revolt. The nationalist movement nevertheless continued its activities clandestinely until 1933,[16] when the party was reconstituted under the name "the Glorious Étoile Nord-Africaine".[17] On 28 May 1933, the ENA held a congress in Paris during which its political programme, internal statutes, and immediate demands were ratified.[18]

Messali Hadj and his associates gained their broadest popular following through their commitment to reviving Algeria's Arab-Islamic identity and their break with the French Communist Party, which afforded them intellectual and political autonomy.[19]

In 1934, Messali Hadj and the Association of Algerian Muslim Ulema (AAMU) reached a rapprochement. They stood together against the circulars and policies of the French

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[11]Labbāz, al-Ṭayyib. "Al-Ḥaraka al-waṭaniyya al-jazā'iriyya 1919–1944: nash'atuhā wa-ahamm ittijāhātihā" [The Algerian National Movement 1919–1944: Its Origins and Main Tendencies]. *Āfāq al-ʿUlūm*, University of Djelfa, vol. 6, no. 3 (2021): 18.

[12]Būqarīwa, Lamyā'. "Mashrūʿ Mūrīs Fiyūlīt: mu'āmara siyāsiyya wa-ijtimāʿiyya ḍidd al-Jazā'ir" [The Maurice Viollette Bill: A Political and Social Conspiracy against Algeria]. *ʿUlūm al-Insān wa-l-Mujtamaʿ*, University of Batna, vol. 1, no. 4 (3 December 2012): 317.

[13]Qaddāsh, Maḥfūḍ, and Muḥammad Qanānash. *Najm Shimāl Ifrīqiyā 1926–1937* [Étoile Nord-Africaine 1926–1937]. Translated by Ūdhāyniya Khalīl. Algeria: Dīwān al-Maṭbūʿāt al-Jāmiʿiyya, 2013, 132.

[14]Saʿd Allāh, Abū al-Qāsim. *Al-Ḥaraka al-waṭaniyya al-jazā'iriyya 1930–1945* [The Algerian National Movement 1930–1945]. Vol. 3, 4th ed. Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1992, 70.

[15]Agéron, op. cit., 680.

[16]Saʿd Allāh, op. cit., vol. 3, 126.

[17]Labbāz, op. cit., 18.

[18]Ibid., 116–117.

[19]Būḥūsh, ʿAmmār. *Al-Tārīkh al-siyāsī li-l-Jazā'ir min al-bidāya wa-li-ghāyat 1962* [The Political History of Algeria from Its Beginnings to 1962]. Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1997, 287.

authorities, which had produced acute economic crises, violent political persecution, and a deterioration of living and educational standards through the spread of destitution and illiteracy. Capturing the severity of the crisis, Messali Hadj declared: "Our families and our brothers are dying of hunger and cold" [authors' translation].[20]

As the crisis deepened, the ENA intensified its activities following the Constantine events of 1934, convening meetings and issuing communiqués and articles in both the French and Algerian press. On 19 August of that year, a mass rally was held in Paris, attended by some 3,500 people. ENA leaders addressed the gathering, denouncing what they called “French imperialist interference” and characterising the bloody Constantine events as “a premeditated farce” .[21] They also described the events as a deliberate affront to Muslims and to the Prophet (peace be upon him) by some Jews. Although there was no direct coordination, the ENA expressed its solidarity with the AAMU in 1934 by protesting against the obstacles placed before Sheikh Tayeb al-Okbi to prevent him from teaching in mosques. This protest took the form of a large gathering of approximately seven thousand Algerian workers, who also condemned the hostile Michel Circulars.[22]

The French authorities, under Carde’s leadership, quickly retaliated by arresting the party’s leaders on the pretext of reconstituting a previously dissolved organisation. The court sentenced Messali Hadj to six months’ imprisonment and a fine of 2,000 francs, alongside several other party leaders and activists.[23] The sentence was reduced on appeal in January and was ultimately annulled by the ruling of 6 April 1935.[24]

While in prison, Messali Hadj resolved on 6 February 1935 to establish a new party called the "National Union of North African Muslims," reflecting the nationalist movement's determination to persist despite the pressure and political harassment it faced from Governor-General Carde. Following his release in May 1935,[25] Messali Hadj and the ENA participated in the activities of the Popular Front, including the parade organised on 14 July to mark the French national holiday, during which the ENA flag was raised[26] amid a massive gathering of more than seven thousand Algerian workers who chanted slogans denouncing the enemy’s policy and demanding freedom and independence: “Grant freedom to North Africa,” “Down with the exceptional laws,” “Long live freedom” .[27]

In a significant diplomatic manoeuvre, Messali Hadj joined the delegation sent by the Popular Front to Geneva on 5 September 1935 to protest before the League of Nations against

[20]Saʿd Allāh, op. cit., vol. 3, 129.
[21]Saʿd Allāh, op. cit., vol. 3, 30.
[22]Zūzū, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd. *Al-Dawr al-siyāsī li-l-hijra ilā Faransā bayna al-ḥarbayn 1914–1939: Najm Shimāl Ifrīqiyā wa-Ḥizb al-Shaʿb* [The Political Role of Emigration to France between the Two Wars 1914–1939: The Étoile Nord-Africaine and the Parti du Peuple]. Algeria: ʿĀlam al-Maʿrifa, 2011, 159.
[23]Būḥūsh, op. cit., 288.
[24]Agéron, op. cit., 572.
[25]Būḥūsh, op. cit., 288.
[26]Ibid.
[27]Zūzū, op. cit., 156.

the Italian invasion of Abyssinia.[28] This participation alarmed the French authorities, who feared the internationalisation of the nationalist movement. Carde initiated consultations with Paris to assess the situation and explore ways to contain this rising national tide. In December 1935, the authorities dissolved the ENA once more, citing non-compliance with the laws governing associations.[29]

3.3. Carde's Policy towards the Association of Algerian Muslim Ulema

The AAMU represented a source of profound anxiety for the French administration, which subjected it to a series of arbitrary decisions and coercive measures.[30] Governor-General Carde issued strict directives to intensify the surveillance of the Association's educational activities, its teachers, its mosques, and its clubs.[31] In a dispatch dated 15 March 1932, the Secretary-General of the Governor-General's administration informed the Sub-Prefect of Constantine that the Association had begun expanding its activities across various Algerian regions to combat heterodox practices and superstitions, and instructed him to monitor its work. In a separate communication, Carde specifically called for surveillance of Ben Badis's activities in western Algeria and al-Ibrahimi's in the east.[32] Al-Ibrahimi himself confirmed the extent of this harassment, stating: "The French police submitted reports to the administration on every one of my activities" .[33]

Carde regarded the AAMU as a grave threat to French interests, given its pivotal role in safeguarding the Arabic language, its pursuit of national unity among Muslim Algerians, and its alleged adoption of Wahhabi doctrines.[34]

To restore public order (characterised, in the colonial administration's assessment, by the spread of chaos and unrest), Carde delegated Mirante, Director of the Bureau of Indigenous Affairs,[35] to systematically obstruct the Association's applications to open free schools (independent schools not run by the colonial state), resorting either to bureaucratic delays or deliberate procrastination.[36]

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[28]Ibid.
[29]Saʿd Allāh, op. cit., vol. 3, 135.
[30]Ballāḥ, Bashīr. *Tārīkh al-Jazā'ir al-muʿāṣir 1830–1989* [Contemporary History of Algeria 1830–1989]. Vol. 1. Algeria: Dār al-Maʿrifa, 2006, 374.
[31]Ibid.
[32]al-Maṭbaqānī, Māzin Ḥāmid Ṣalāḥ. *Jamʿiyyat al-ʿUlamā' al-Muslimīn al-Jazā'iriyyīn wa-dawruhā fī al-ḥaraka al-waṭaniyya al-jazā'iriyya 1931–1939* [The AAMU and Its Role in the Algerian National Movement 1931–1939]. Saudi Arabia: Dār al-Maʿrifa, 2011, 194.
[33]Ibid., 195.
[34]Masʿūdī, Amīna, and Jīlālī Tikrān. "Siyāsat al-ḥākim al-ʿāmm Jūl Hinrī Kārd ittijāh jamʿiyyat al-ʿUlamā' wa-jamāʿat al-nukhba fī al-Jazā'ir bayna 1930–1935" [Governor-General Jules Carde's Policy towards the Association of Ulema and the Elite in Algeria, 1930–1935]. *Al-Akādīmiyya li-l-Dirāsāt al-Ijtimāʿiyya wa-l-Insāniyya*, University of Chlef, no. 20 (2018): 188.
[35]Mirante was the Director of the Bureau of Indigenous Affairs and Secretary-General of the Prefecture of Algiers, who issued administrative instructions to monitor and obstruct the activities of the Ulema. See: Saʿd Allāh, *Al-Ḥaraka al-waṭaniyya*, vol. 3, op. cit., 22.
[36]al-Maṭbaqānī, op. cit., 197.

Carde escalated these measures by issuing the Michel Circulars, promulgated on 12 February 1933. These directives instructed prefects, administrators, police chiefs, and municipal mayors to monitor the AAMU's meetings and lectures.[37] They also mandated the surveillance of Quranic schools. They explicitly prohibited any scholar from preaching in official mosques unless he was a state-appointed religious functionary and required his prior approval.[38] The circulars further stipulated that failure to comply with these directives would result in severe sanctions from the Governor-General's administration.[39] Michel subsequently issued a third circular on 24 February 1933,[40] ordering the dissolution of the Islamic religious association chaired by Ahmed Ben Siam,[41] who had refused to comply with Michel's order to bar Sheikh Tayeb al-Okbi and other members of the Association from preaching in mosques.[42]

Carde's policies drew sharp condemnation from Ben Badis, as evidenced by his statement delivered at the Progress Club (Nādī al-Taraqqī) on 10 February 1933: "They are shutting the mosques in the face of the scholars of religion, and closing our schools to prevent us from teaching" .[43] The Association's press was likewise targeted by the repressive measures that Carde imposed.[44] Its newspapers were confiscated and suspended one after another.[45]

The Constantine events of 1934 further entrenched Carde's repressive and discriminatory policy towards the AAMU and its members. Despite Ben Badis's critical role in quelling the unrest and restoring order, Carde maintained his hostility towards the Association. In the aftermath, the colonial authorities declared a state of maximum alert, and Carde summoned the elected representatives and notables, including Sheikh Abdelhamid Ben Badis, specifically requesting that he address the agitated crowds. Ben Badis replied: "What can I do? I am a single, unarmed individual". Those accompanying him urged, "This is your moment: go out and speak to the people; we are with you. The people love you and listen to you." Ben Badis complied. He addressed the population in various neighbourhoods and public places, calling for restraint and the preservation of order. Describing his role in extinguishing the

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[37]Ballāḥ, op. cit., 374.

[38]Būzāhir, Ḥusayn. *Al-ʿAdāla al-qamʿiyya fī al-Jazā'ir al-mustaʿmara 1830–1962* [Repressive Justice in Colonial Algeria 1830–1962]. Translated by Būjalla ʿAbd al-Majīd. Algeria: Dār Hūma, 2011, 94.

[39]Masʿūdī and Tikrān, op. cit., 189.

[40]al-Maṭbaqānī, op. cit., 198.

[41]The French appointed Ahmed Ben Siam as agha of Miliana at the end of the resistance under Emir Abdelkader. A member of a wealthy and educated family, he served as chairman of the charitable bureau and later of the charitable association in Algiers. See: Saʿd Allāh, Abū al-Qāsim. *Tārīkh al-Jazā'ir al-thaqāfī 1830–1954* [The Cultural History of Algeria 1830–1954]. Vol. 7. Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1998, 474.

[42]Agéron, op. cit., 557.

[43]Agéron, op. cit., 557.

[44]For further details on the suppression of the AAMU's press, see: Nāṣir, Muḥammad. *Al-Ṣuḥuf al-ʿarabiyya al-jazā'iriyya min 1847 ilā 1954* [The Arab Press in Algeria from 1847 to 1954]. Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2007, 198–227.

[45]The AAMU newspapers suspended during this period included: *al-Sunna al-Nabawiyya* (1933), *al-Sharīʿa* (1933), and *al-Ṣirāṭ al-Sawī* (1934). See: *al-Shihāb*, vol. 5, no. 10, Constantine (16 April 1934): 218.

unrest, Ben Badis stated: "I stood as a speaker in each of the main streets, at more than a dozen stops, delivering speeches calling for calm and composure, reminding Muslims of the ethics of Islam. The Muslims gathered around us at every stop, showing willingness to listen and to comply. Those speeches achieved their purpose: security was restored, and tranquillity returned, praise be to God" [authors' translation].

Through these actions, Abdelhamid Ben Badis demonstrated courageous humanitarian conduct: he assembled the Muslim population. He persuaded them to exercise reason, resisting Jewish provocations, while also engaging with the colonial authorities to explain the causes of the aggression and the intransigence of the Jewish community.[46] Despite Ben Badis's honourable intervention, Carde ultimately accused the AAMU and described its members as those responsible for the 1934 events and for inciting the Algerian masses.[47]

The AAMU confronted Carde's accusations with unity and popular solidarity, which strengthened its position. It worked to enlighten the Algerian people about Carde's policies, policies aimed at fragmenting their unity, thereby defying his hostile stance after he had held the Association responsible for the Constantine events while simultaneously exonerating the Jewish community. In his own reports, Carde acknowledged that the root cause of the events lay in the extreme poverty that characterised Algerians' lives.[48]

4. Conditions of Algerians under Governor-General Jules Carde (1930–1935)

Carde maintained a highly dynamic political presence through his numerous tours and visits across Algeria,[49] including the Algerian Sahara.[50] During his tenure, the transport sector expanded,[51] and factories, industrial workshops, and various public facilities and infrastructure were built. The colonial press in Algeria enthusiastically promoted these developments, portraying Carde as the ideal instrument for bringing French civilisation to Algeria, while contemptuously disregarding the suffering of Algerians under his rule. His efforts to develop the colony's infrastructure served the French economy and the expansion of settler activity.

4.1. Economic Conditions

Algeria experienced dire living conditions during Carde's governorship. Destitution, deprivation, and rampant unemployment became the defining features of Algerian existence.[52] These conditions resulted directly from Carde's political directives, imposed across every

[46]Agéron, op. cit., 160.
[47]al-Maṭbaqānī, op. cit., 209.
[48]Agéron, Charles-Robert. "Une émeute anti-juive à Constantine, août 1934." *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, Paris, 1973.
[49]Journal *L'Écho d'Alger*, "Le voyage gubernatorial au Sahara," no. 8123, Algiers, 5 January 1932, 2.
[50]Léhuraux, Léon. *Le Sahara, ses oasis: illustration de Léon Carrée*. Preface by Jules Carde. Algiers: Éditions Baconnier, 1934, 7.
[51]Journal *L'Écho d'Alger*, "Mme Jules Carde a baptisé le quadrimoteur Ville d'Alger," no. 8715, Algiers, 15 June 1934.
[52]Bin ʿAwn, Muḥammad al-Ḥākim. "Al-Azma al-iqtiṣādiyya fī al-ṣaḥāfa al-yaqẓāniyya 1929–1933: al-Shaykh Ibrāhīm Abū al-Yaqẓān unmūdhajan" [The Economic Crisis in Abū al-Yaqẓān's Press 1929–1933]. *al-Iḥyā'*, vol. 21, no. 2 (24 October 2021): 693.

economic sector (agriculture, industry, and commerce), together with a crushing tax burden that exhausted the population.[53] The situation was compounded by the global economic depression, which cast a heavy shadow over the country.[54]

Traders and artisans saw their activities decline sharply due to asymmetric competition with foreign goods flooding the local market. Work came to a halt for many, and large numbers wandered the streets without employment. The Constantine-based newspaper *Ṣawt al-Ahālī* [The Voice of the People] described this situation in its issue of 25 January 1934: "A formidable army of four million hungry people roaming the land, their bodies foul-smelling, walking barefoot through mud and snow, sleeping on the ground, casting corpses onto the roads and leaving behind terrifying epidemics" .[55]

Abū al-Yaqẓān characterised this condition as "the plague of unemployment," writing: "The plague of unemployment grows ever worse even among the most active and industrious of nations" .[56] He attributed the phenomenon to the collapse of economic activity, the rise of overproduction, and the displacement of human labour by machinery. As he put it: "Every advance in civilisation causes unemployment, magnifies it, and renders it menacing" .[57]

Against this bleak backdrop, the unemployment rate rose sharply between 1930 and 1932. Approximately 5,000 workers were laid off from lead and zinc mines, further aggravating the economic and social crisis and deepening the suffering of Algeria's poorest classes.[58]

4.2. Cultural Conditions

Governor-General Carde vigorously pursued a policy aimed at eradicating Algerian identity by imposing French. Algerians were denied access to education, and special schools with curricula designed to serve colonial objectives were established for them, with instruction conducted exclusively in French. Algerians were thus presented with a binary choice: accept Frenchification or remain in ignorance.[59]

Within this framework, Carde issued the notorious Michel Circular of 8 March 1933, intended to combat the teaching of religion and Arabic. Contextualising this directive (a direct reaction to the Islamic revival that Muslim Algeria had begun to experience), Abdelhamid Ben Badis stated: "Those who speak on behalf of the government in their circulars and broadcasts

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[53]Agéron, Charles-Robert. *De l'Algérie «française» à l'Algérie algérienne*. Paris: Éditions Bouchène, 2005, 359.

[54]The Constantine-based newspaper *al-Najāḥ* (1919–1956) devoted considerable attention to the economic and social plight of Algerians, expressing dismay at their suffering and calling on the colonial administration to enact reforms. See, for example: "Aḍrār al-Umma" [The Nation's Harms], no. 1508, Constantine, 1 December 1933, 1.

[55]Rājiʿī, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. "Al-ʿAmal al-niqābī fī al-Jazā'ir khilāl fatrat mā bayna al-ḥarbayn 1919–1939: maḥaṭṭāt wa-mawāqif" [Trade Unionism in Algeria during the Interwar Period 1919–1939]. *Al-Majalla al-Tārīkhiyya al-Jazā'iriyya*, University of Constantine 2, no. 4 (September 2017): 169.

[56]Bin ʿAwn, op. cit., 693.

[57]Ibid.

[58]Agéron, op. cit., 669.

[59]Fūḍīl, ʿAbd al-Qādir, and Muḥammad al-Ṣāliḥ Ramaḍān. *Imām al-Jazā'ir ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Ibn Bādīs* [The Imam of Algeria: Abdelhamid Ibn Badis]. Algeria: Dār al-Umma, 2007, 122.

claim that it was we who told the nation that the purpose of the circular of 8 March was to oppose the teaching of religion and the Arabic language" [authors' translation].[60]

Sheikh al-Ibrahimi's educational activities in Tlemcen in 1934 alarmed Carde, who instructed the Prefect of Oran to prepare a detailed report on the nature and extent of al-Ibrahimi's influence. French propaganda subsequently framed al-Ibrahimi as a potential threat, particularly after the Ulema who had gathered around him in Tlemcen formed a centre for disseminating explicitly nationalist ideas.[61]

The AAMU faced obstacles from the colonial administration, which prohibited teaching in mosques in the implementation of Carde's directives. The administration sought to constrain the Ulema by imposing prohibitive conditions for the establishment of schools.[62] Refusing to submit to these restrictions, Sheikh Mahmoud Chokri Kitani led a delegation to the Governor-General on 3 March 1933 to protest against the administration's decision. They explained that non-official scholars performed an essential role in educating the public, enjoining good conduct, cautioning against vice, and reminding society of its religious and civic duties. Carde, however, categorically reaffirmed his position, insisting that only state-appointed religious functionaries would be permitted to preach in mosques.[63]

5. Reactions to Carde's Policy in Algeria

Carde's policies and his oppressive regulations provoked widespread Algerian condemnation, triggering a wave of vigorous protests. The AAMU regarded these measures as a flagrant challenge to "the dignity of our national religion and an insult to our Islamic identity" .[64] On 24 February 1933, major demonstrations erupted at the prefecture building, amplified by the advocacy of the newspaper *al-Najāḥ*,[65] which published reports on the ban imposed on Sheikh Tayeb al-Okbi and other scholars from preaching in mosques[66] unless they obtained the prefect's authorisation. This agitation culminated in demonstrations before the New Mosque (*al-Jāmiʿ al-Jadīd*) on 3 March 1933. Cavalry and police intervened to suppress the protests and arrested numerous demonstrators.[67] The French administration continued to shut down Quranic schools, including the mosque of Tlemcen and several schools in the Oran region.[68]

These actions fuelled escalating popular protests,[69] which invoked France's repressive record, regarding it as having strengthened the Islamic identity of the Algerian people. Ferhat

[60]Ṭālibī, ʿAmmār. *Al-Imām ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd bin Bādīs wa-āthāruh* [Imam Abdelhamid Ben Badis and His Legacy]. Vol. 3, pt. 2. Algeria: Dār Kurdāda, 2013, 258.
[61]Saʿd Allāh, Abū al-Qāsim. *Abḥāth wa-ārāʾ fī tārīkh al-Jazāʾir* [Studies and Perspectives on the History of Algeria]. Vol. 3. Algeria: ʿĀlam al-Maʿrifa, 2009, 57.
[62]Ṣaghīrī, Aḥmad. "Al-Siyāsa al-taʿlīmiyya fī al-Jazāʾir" [Education Policy in Algeria]. *Muntadā al-Ustādh*, vol. 2, no. 1 (1 May 2006): 97.
[63]al-Maṭbaqānī, op. cit., 198.
[64]Būʿazīz, op. cit., 119.
[65]al-Maṭbaqānī, op. cit., 199.
[66]Fūḍīl and Ramaḍān, op. cit., 122.
[67]al-Maṭbaqānī, op. cit., 199–200.
[68]Agéron, op. cit., 557.
[69]Ibid.

Abbas articulated this political frustration: "If we have no right to choose the directors of our religious ceremonies, then all we can do is close the mosques" .[70]

The Algerian elected representatives and notables of Algiers resolved to form a delegation to travel to Paris in May 1933, to discuss Algeria's economic and social conditions with French officials and to protest the closure of schools and mosques. The French Minister of the Interior, however, refused to receive the Algerian delegation.[71]

Despite this refusal, the reformists joined the ranks of the masses, focusing on organising popular demonstrations to broadcast their rejection of prevailing conditions, particularly the economic and political crisis. The colonial authorities, for their part, sought to exploit these protests to tighten their grip on the country. This strategy was starkly illustrated at the reception organised by Governor-General Carde upon his return from Paris in July 1933, during which he declared: "This spirit of rebellion, these popular disturbances, these insubordinate movements that have erupted in certain Algerian cities: they all have a single cause, the Association of Algerian Muslim Ulema" .[72]

Algerians did not hesitate to employ boycotts and mass resignations as instruments of protest. The AAMU condemned the French Minister of the Interior's refusal to receive the delegation[73] and called upon Muslim elected representatives to resign collectively from their positions. Approximately 2,000 resignations were submitted, of which 1,600 came from the Department of Constantine alone.[74]

The AAMU also launched additional protest campaigns, including a boycott of tobacco products from the Job company and of sporting events.[75] It dispatched telegrams to the Governor-General, the Minister of the Interior, the Prime Minister, the President of the Chamber of Deputies, and the President of the Senate, demanding freedom to preach and to provide religious instruction in mosques.[76] Financial Delegate Coppi held Governor-General Carde personally responsible for the unrest in Algeria, attributing it to the suffering of the Algerian people under discriminatory policies and the destitution inflicted on them by the repressive colonial administration.[77]

Attempting to contain the political fallout, Carde urged the elected representatives to withdraw their resignations, promising a series of reforms that included improving the social conditions of Algerians, revising the Forest Code, distributing subsidies to farmers, reopening the mosques to reformist scholars, guaranteeing freedom of education, and revoking the

[70]Agéron, op. cit., 588.
[71]al-Maṭbaqānī, op. cit., 202.
[72]Murād, ʿAlī. *Al-Ḥaraka al-iṣlāḥiyya al-islāmiyya fī al-Jazā'ir min 1925 ilā 1940* [Le mouvement réformiste islamique en Algérie de 1925 à 1940]. Translated by Muḥammad Yaḥyātan. Algeria: Dār al-Ḥikma, 2007, 195.
[73]Kaddache, Mahfoud. *Histoire du nationalisme algérien 1919–1939*. Tome 1. Paris: Méditerranée, 2003, 264.
[74]Murād, op. cit., 182–183.
[75]al-Maṭbaqānī, op. cit., 206.
[76]Ibid., 183–184.
[77]Fūḍīl and Ramaḍān, op. cit., 160.

arbitrary decision against Sheikh Tayeb al-Okbi.[78] Amid these promises (which proved to be hollow), the representative Hamoud Chikiken[79] summarised his position by stating: "I trust the word of the Governor, and whoever trusts me should follow me" .[80] Chikiken subsequently entered into direct negotiations with Carde in which they discussed religious matters, the obstacles confronting the AAMU, and, in particular, the case of Sheikh Tayeb al-Okbi and the harassment to which the French administration subjected the Association. Carde tactically cultivated Chikiken in a calculated effort to pacify the situation in Algeria.[81]

Conclusion

The 1930s constituted one of the worst periods of colonial presence in Algeria, marked by a profound deterioration in the living, educational, and security conditions of the Algerian population as a direct result of the repressive and arbitrary measures imposed by the occupation administration under the Governor-General. The governorship of Jules Carde (1930–1935) manifested this trajectory: he systematically targeted national activism by restricting its leading figures' activities, curtailing their movements, and confiscating their instruments of struggle. These efforts, however, only strengthened the nationalist movement's resolve and determination, ultimately preventing Carde from implementing his ideas and ideology.

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[78]Saʿd Allāh. *Al-Ḥaraka al-waṭaniyya*, vol. 3, op. cit., 45.

[79]Hamoud Chikiken was a Labour representative and deputy mayor of Algiers, and one of the delegates who travelled to Paris in 1933.

[80]Kaddache, op. cit., 265.

[81]J. *al-Sharīʿa*, no. 7, year 1, Constantine (28 August 1933).

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