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Keywords	Creative writing, literary reform, Ben Badis, revolution, association	
Abstract	<p>An indisputable truth remains that Algeria has traversed various epochs and circumstances. Nevertheless, the arduous conditions and harsh factors during the period of French colonization failed to prevent the nation's scholars from substantiating national identity under the Islamic banner. Because armed resistance alone could not constitute the sole means of confronting oppression and colonial subjugation, the association's scholars resorted to intellectual resistance, which aimed fundamentally at preserving the tenets of the Islamic nation. Among the most prominent Algerian scholars who confronted French expansion through intellectual resistance, particularly regarding the Arabic language, was Ben Badis (1941), who demonstrated remarkable innovation in literary reform and labored ceaselessly for the advancement of Arabic. Through this article—titled “Creative Writings at the Association before the Algerian Revolution: Ben Badis's Innovation in Literary Reform as a Model”—I endeavor to elucidate these Badisian creative literary works, adopting a foundational perspective toward the objectives of the Algerian association.</p>	
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### Topics Addressed:

- The terminological dimension (reform: concept and characteristics)
- Reformist objectives of the Association of Muslim Scholars
- Definition of Ben Badis and his contributions
- Manifestations of the reformist project in Ben Badis's work
- Ben Badis's contributions to Arabic education

- Badisian innovation in literary reform

**Introduction:**

History continues to document Algerian resistance against the French campaign and the victories it achieved despite scarcity of resources and means. Algerian association endured a period of suffering, hardship, and deprivation at the economic, educational, and other societal levels. It suffered under the oppression and obstinacy of French colonialism, which actively combated the constituents of Algerian Arab-Islamic identity.

Though France believed it had eliminated this identity through its firm grip over all Algerian territory and assumed its colonial project had succeeded in making Algeria French, the emergence of the Association of Muslim Scholars under the presidency of Abd al-Hamid Ben Badis (established in 1931) proved to be a significant impediment to French designs.

The association's scholars resorted to intellectual resistance aimed at preserving Islamic principles. Ben Badis emerged as one of the most prominent figures undertaking reform through his writings, particularly in the domain of literary reform.

In light of the foregoing, the following central question emerges: What constitutes Badisian innovation in literary reform? *How did Ben Badis's contributions manifest in literary reform?*

The significance of this topic lies in its connection to national identity, as it concerns a precious component of our heritage.

**Research Objectives:**

- To demonstrate the association's role in intellectual reform
- To examine a scholar who held preeminent standing in reviving Arab heritage
- To clarify Ben Badis's contributions to intellectual and literary reform

**Reasons for Topic Selection:**

Several considerations prompted investigation of this topic. First, the study concerns fundamental aspects of ancient Algerian civilization. Second, Muslim generations, particularly those engaged in Algerian historical studies, have the right to attend to their nation's history and benefit from this wealth. Thus, I selected this topic to draw researchers' attention and encourage scholarly engagement.

**Research Methodology:**

The methodology employed herein is primarily historical, tracing the history of the Algerian Association of Muslim Scholars. Additionally, the descriptive method has been utilized to characterize the phenomenon of literary reform in Ben Badis's work.

**Research Challenges:**

Like all researchers investigating such matters, I encountered significant obstacles. The foremost difficulty concerns the scarcity of scholarly studies on this particular topic. Additionally, temporal constraints limited comprehensive exploration and deeper engagement with the subject matter.

**Previous Studies and This Work's Distinction:**

While studies have previously addressed reformist dimensions, this article's distinctive contribution lies in specifically delimiting literary reform within the Association of Muslim Scholars and elucidating how Badisian reform and his intellectual and literary innovation confronted French colonialism, as well as determining the association's impact and role in education and reform.

Regarding sources and references, I have consulted a diverse body of sources and references spanning both classical and contemporary works. The research comprises four principal sections, concluded with a conclusion summarizing the principal findings achieved.

**First: The Terminological Dimension (Reform)****1.1 The Term "Reform" (Concept and Characteristics):**

**Linguistically**, reform (*al-islah*) signifies the opposite of corruption (*al-fassad*). The reformed entity represents rectification, as in rectifying an animal through kind treatment. Peace (*al-solh*) constitutes a settlement between parties, synonymous with tranquility (ibn Manzur, 2004, p.267).

**Terminologically**, reform constitutes an authentic Islamic concept appearing in the Qur'anic text. As Bashir Balah states, "Reform is an Islamic term with authentic origins appearing in the Glorious Qur'an as a fundamental value, with the root (solh= conciliation) recurring 180 times" (Bellah, 2013, p.15). Its most sublime manifestation appears in God's saying: "I desire only reform to the extent I am able, and my success depends only upon God; in Him I place my trust and to Him I turn" (Qur'an 11:88).

Farid Hadji, in his work "*Al-Islah wa Aliyatuhu* [Reform and Its Mechanisms] at Ibn al-Enabi and Khair al-Din al-Tunisi during the 19th Century", states: "Reform signifies rectifying what has become distorted in the practice of

religious and worldly affairs among Muslims, and returning them to their original foundation, which has not been corrupted by extraneous additions and innovations..." (Hadji, p.110).

### 1.2 Forms of Reform in Algeria:

Reform in Algeria extends beyond the association itself; the concept predates and exceeds the association's scope. However, the term became descriptive of the association because its function consisted in rectifying what French destruction had corrupted—intellectually, doctrinally, politically, and socially. Historically, reform was not confined to the association alone but existed considerably before its establishment.

Factors facilitating the spread of the reformist movement throughout the Arab world, particularly in Algeria, included the establishment of the Islamic University, which emerged in the late nineteenth century, with its ideas becoming clearer at the twentieth century's outset through the emergence of *al-Urwah al-Wuthqa* (The Firmest Bond) magazine, which exerted clear influence on certain Algerian scholars inclined toward reform.

These scholars confronted Sufi orders that the French administration had successfully transformed from revolutionary centers opposing occupation into lodges cooperating with the colonial administration.

Other newspapers played roles in establishing foundations for the reformist movement, including *al-Muayyad* (1889-1913), *al-Jaza'ir* (founded by Mohammed Racim in 1908, suppressed after two issues, and resumed in 1911), *al-Maghrib* (1903), *al-Faruq* (issued by Mohammed Ben Kaddour), and *al-Rashidi* (issued in Jijel in 1912), among others (Saadi, 2011, p.683).

### Second: The Reformist Objectives of the Association of Muslim Scholars

The objectives of the Algerian Association of Muslim Scholars directly corresponded to the circumstances of Algerian association under French colonial control and emerged as counteraction to French policies imposed upon the Algerian people.

From this perspective, the association was established with militant objectives seeking to achieve independence. Ben Badis states: "Muslims advance according to their faith in God and His Messenger only when they possess strength and maintain an organized group that deliberates, consults, and mobilizes, bound together in action to secure benefits and prevent harm through coordinated effort based on rational thought and firm resolve" (Ben Badis, 1982, p.228).

Many scholars have written extensively on the association's objectives, with varying perspectives. Some limited them to Arabic education, combating superstitions, and purifying Islam from accumulated corruptions over centuries. Others linked them to political activity, anti-colonial opposition, and the concept of forming an Algerian state. One association member summarized the 1935 objectives as follows: "Reviving Islam, reviving the Qur'an and Sunnah, reviving the Arabic language and its literature, reviving Islamic history and the deeds of its leaders" (Saadallah, 1998, p.18).

### Principles of Reform in the Association of Muslim Scholars:

The direct connection between the Algerian Association of Muslim Scholars and social reality distinguished it from other Islamic reformist movements in its methodology and in the methods and means it adopted for change. This movement combined religious and patriotic dimensions, concentrating on practical implementation rather than theoretical work.

To effect change and construction, the association, as the official representative of religious reformist movement in Algeria, established foundational principles.

Ben Badis articulated these principles, stating: "Arabism, Islam, knowledge, and virtue constitute the pillars of our renaissance and of the Association of Muslim Scholars of Algeria, which represents the source of our life and symbol of our advancement. Since its inception, this association has provided us understanding of religion, taught us language, illuminated us through knowledge, embellished us with elevated Islamic morality, preserved our nationality and ethnicity, and connected us to authentic Islamic patriotism" (Torki, 2004, p.358).

The association concentrated its entire reformist trajectory on these three principles, representing "organized defense of Islam and Arabism in Algeria, and the association's work for Islam and Arabism constituted the solid foundation of nationalism and the correct interpretation of patriotism and the practical explanation of what constitutes a nation" (Torki, p.358).

These principles manifest as follows:

#### A) Islam as Religion:

Islam represents the foundation of civilized societies since antiquity. It therefore constitutes the fundamental basis upon which any change in the present and future must be constructed. This derives from Ben Badis's insistence on adopting religion as the ideology and methodology underlying the reformist movement, as expressed in his statement: "Islam is the foundation upon which all work for Algeria must be built" (UCA, 1993, p.65).

**B) Arabic as Language:**

Language constitutes the second pillar of Algerian identity, which the Association of Muslim Scholars undertook to revive and protect, as it represents the strong bond connecting the Algerian people to their religion, history, and culture, and linking them to different parts of the Arab world.

The association considered it “the language of religion, the language of ethnicity, the language of nationalism and rooted patriotism. It alone represents the bond between us and our past, and it alone serves as the measure by which we gauge our spirits against those of our ancestors” (Torki, p.331).

Torki Rabah states: “When the association links Algeria to the Arabic language, it seeks to connect it to deeply rooted civilizational origins and lead it toward a better future. This objective appears particularly in Imam Ben Badis's statement: “Algeria's Arabism is one of history and civilization, possessing glorious epochs and deep-rooted states. The Algerian nation's affairs cannot prosper except through it” (Torki, p.279).

**C) Algeria as Homeland:**

Ben Badis stated in correcting concepts of patriotism: “Patriotism is not merely represented in land, landmarks, mountains, forests, and nature alone, but alongside all this, it constitutes history, civilization, values, memories, hopes, and aspirations” (Torki, p.283).

This terminology had not previously been used by Algerians in this natural and social sense except with the emergence of the reformist movement, particularly through Ben Badis via the newspaper *al-Muntaqid*, whose motto was “The nation above all else”, and similarly in the newspaper *al-Shihab*, which published numerous articles demonstrating strong adherence to this principle (Torki, p.28).

**The Relationship Between Literary and Reformist Discourse:**

If we examine the relationship between literary and reformist discourse, we find that a comprehensive relationship exists, insofar as literary discourse lacks specific content like reformist or political discourse.

Brahim Sahraoui, in analyzing literary discourse, states: “Literary discourse does not specialize in defined content like political or mathematical discourse, for all subjects and contents constituting the meaningful factors of language can potentially form material for its content” (Sahraoui, p.15).

Sahraoui further states: “Literary discourse represents the practice of language, whether spoken or written, constrained by technical rules and conditions varying according to types and literary arts, and also constrained by aesthetic values upon which each nation relies according to its civilization and culture. Literary discourse analysis accordingly consists of extracting these technical conditions—that is, the 'literariness' components—in a discourse through multiple levels that together constitute the two aspects of the literary effect: form and content” (Sahraoui, p.219).

**Third: Definition of Ben Badis and His Contributions**

**Abdelhamid Ben Badis (1889-1941)** was born in Constantine as Abdelhamid Ben Mohammed al-Moustafa Ben al-Makki Ben Mohammed Kuhul Ben al-Hadj Ali al-Nouri Ben Mohammed Ben Mohammed Ben Abderrahman Ben Barakat Ben Abderrahman Ben Badis al-Sanhadj.

**His mother** was Zouhira Bent Mohammed Ben Abdeldjalil Ben Djelloul, from a family renowned in Constantine for at least four centuries. The “*Ben Djelloul*” family belonged to the famous “*Beni Maa*” tribe in the Aurès mountains (Talbi, pp.72-73).

**His Scientific Stature:**

Cheikh Mohammed El-BaChir El-Ibrahimi said of him: “Builder of the scientific and intellectual renaissance in Algeria, founder of its foundations upon the rock of truth, and leader guiding its transformative currents toward elevated aims; imam of the Salafi movement and originator of *al-Shihab* magazine, mirror of reform and sword of reformers; educator of two complete generations in Qur'anic guidance and Prophetic tradition, and in correct thinking; reviver of dormant knowledge through his living lessons; interpreter of God's word in the Salafi manner through sessions spanning a quarter century; sower of seeds of correct patriotism and teacher of its principles; master of eloquence and champion of the pulpits”.

The leading professor Abdelhamid Ben Badis, first president of the Algerian Association of Muslim Scholars, and first founder of knowledge and literature clubs and education and training societies. His historical glory suffices in that he revived a nation beset by events and foreigners, restored a religion encumbered with innovations and heresies, awakened a language consumed by foreign jargon, illuminated a history obscured by forgetfulness, recovered a glory lost by unworthy heirs, and restored virtues killed by Western vices (El-Ibrahimi, p.552).

Cheikh Mohammed El-BaChir also stated: "Cheikh Abdelhamid Ben Badis, the most learned scholar of North Africa—and I do not exaggerate—and builder of the scientific, literary, social, and political renaissance of Algeria" (El-Ibrahimi, p.278).

Cheikh Tayeb el-Oqbi said: "The exceptional reformer whom Algeria has not produced an equal to in ages" (El-Ibrahimi, p.223).

Cheikh Larbi Tebessi said: "Men are not recorded in humanity's register by their genealogies, appearances, or wealth, but rather by the beliefs they implanted in people's souls... Rather, they are recorded through the deeds of those who rescued humanity from social chaos into social order that humanity inherited from them. Rather, genius is recorded through those who protected humanity when it was subjected to humiliation and aggression by the racism pharaohs and despots of material force. Rather, the principles are recorded by which humanity finds refuge when catastrophes sweep over it with their scourges and burning flames..."

Cheikh Larbi added that "Abdelhamid Ben Badis merits commemoration by the Islamic Arab Algerian nation and merits recognition as among those whom history has recorded for efforts qualifying him for association with personalities acknowledged for their merits. Abdelhamid offered his nation great things in our land that constitute the foundation of this movement and seeds of its multiple dimensions" (NO, 1952).

The poet Mohammed Laïd Al-Khalifa praised him in verses upon completing the Qur'an's interpretation, of which we cite (Laid, 2010, p.146):

*Your pen in writing is sharper than a gazelle's,  
and more decisive than any ruling, no matter how unsheathed.  
Your study of interpretation is sweeter than fruit,  
more beautiful than a verdant garden, and more dazzling.  
You have completed the Book of God  
with the thoroughness of a discerning scholar, for whom the difficult is easily resolved.  
How much successful understanding you have of the Quran,  
and how much eloquent speech you have of it!*

### His Legacy:

What distinguished Ben Badis from others, and which prompted such praise, is that he did not compose numerous books, justifying this by stating: "Teaching men occupied us rather than writing books".

What he left behind were great men who engaged the learned world and filled it with knowledge—and books distinguished by authenticity and innovation. He left enduring works testifying to his knowledge, leaving hearts lamenting what was lost of his words, as much knowledge and content perished.

Among his works, he himself grieved over this, stating: "Had the students possessed some share of motivation and divine favor, these lessons would not have been lost and would have been published as they were, gaining both goods" (El-Ibrahimi, p.195). Nevertheless, God willed otherwise. Among his works are:

- **His Tafsir titled *Majalis al-Tadhkir min Kalam al-Hakim al-Khabir*** (Sessions of Remembrance from the Speech of the All-Wise, the All-Knowing), published in 1963 and subsequently reprinted multiple times
- **From Prophetic Guidance** (*Min al-Hadi al-Nabawi*), comprising sessions of remembrance from the traditions of the Herald and the Warner, published in 1965
- **The Exemplars of the Pious and Their Women** (*Rijal al-Salaf wa Nisa'uhu*), a biographical work introducing numerous companions, published in 1965
- **The Foundations of Doctrine and the Doctrine of Monotheism from the Qur'an and Sunnah** (*Qawaid al-Aqaid wa Aqidat al-Tawhid min al-Qur'an wa al-Sunnah*), published in 1965 and reprinted multiple times
- **A substantial collection of political and social articles**, compiled and published alongside the above in a volume titled *Majmu' Khutub wa Maqalat Ben Badis* (Collected Sermons and Articles of Ben Badis), published in 1966 (El-Ibrahimi, p.14)
- **Principles of Foundations** (*Mabadi' al-Usul*), printed with careful attention by Ammar Talbi, including his writings on terminology
- **Reply to a Question Concerning a Poor Treatise** (*Risalat Jawab Su'al 'an Sua' Maqal*), a response to Ibn Aliyawah al-Mustaghanimmi, endorsed by ten major scholars from Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco (Talbi, p.152)
- **Islamic Doctrines from Qur'anic Verses and Prophetic Traditions**
- **Three treatises recently published** with verification by Lahcene Ben Aldjia



- **A collection of authentic traditions** regarding the emergence of the awaited Imam at the end of time (Lahcene, 2015, p.17)
- **Refutation of the Deniers of the Eulogy** (*Al-Tafil li-Munkar al-Tabi*), responding to criticism following his eulogy of Cheikh al-Tayeb
- **A juridical opinion** on selling mortgaged property in cases of necessity
- **Verification and introduction to *Al-Awasim min al-Qawasim*** (The Protections Against Disasters) by Boubakr Ben Larbi, published during his lifetime in 1926

#### **Fourth: Forms of Ben Badis's Reformist Project**

The slogan carried by Ben Badis and the Association of Muslim Scholars—"Algeria our homeland, Islam our religion, Arabic our language"—constituted a direct response to the French colonial project.

Ben Badis stated: "Do not forget that nations possess an emotional dimension that cannot be extracted or dominated... it is religion and the language expressing the truths of that religion" (Chemlal, 2020, p.11).

Indeed, his life's recommendations revolved around this slogan (Islam, Arabism, and the Qur'an). He stated: "I ask you one thing alone: that you die upon Islam and the Qur'an, the language of Islam and the Qur'an".

The association combated the racism fostered by colonialism and wielded as one of its most destructive weapons for severing national ties. It established Algeria's Arab ancestry, which France had repeatedly attempted to erase.

El-Ibrahimi stated: "The Association of Scholars arrived amid life's harshness... and breathed Arab spirit into those lineages, rendering them pure, and poured Arabic eloquence's secret into those tongues, rendering them eloquent, and set pens to reveal those treasures, which appeared radiant and white, time adding only freshness to them" (El-Ibrahimi, p.60).

Thus, the association's slogan expressed a project adopted by Abd al-Hamid Ben Badis, who believed that knowledge's light constituted the sole means of eliminating France's policy of obscurantism since its first steps on Algerian soil and represented the safe refuge enabling the reform of Algerian faith and minds, which colonialism had weakened, thereby reforming association in its entirety. Consequently, he engaged in:

##### **1. Religious Reform:**

Ben Badis derived the foundations and principles of his reformist religious methodology from the Glorious Qur'an, stating: "No salvation awaits us from this bewilderment we suffer and the multiform torture we endure except through return to the Qur'an, its knowledge and guidance, and the construction of doctrines, judgments, and morality upon it" (Ben Badis, p.75).

##### **2. Moral Reform:**

Ben Badis was deeply committed to reforming Algerian morality and reviving Islamic moral spirit anew, as colonialism's winds had swept it away and distanced Algerians from the authentic morality they once took pride in and which distinguished their personality from that of the French colonizer.

Religion served as the foundation upon which he relied, stating: "The Glorious Qur'an clarified corrupted morality and mentioned its evil consequences and miserable outcomes, and similarly clarified correct morality and its tremendous benefits" (Ben Badis, p.187).

##### **3. Social Reform:**

Ben Badis viewed social reform as stemming from individual reform, particularly the reform of souls, stating: "No one capable of benefiting others can neglect their own soul's concerns. A person's attention to their soul—intellectually, spiritually, and physically—is necessary for them to have beneficial influence on others at varying degrees of proximity or distance. The same applies to every people; they cannot benefit humanity while remaining negligent and scattered, guided by no knowledge, supported by no morality, united by no sense of self, identity, or bonds. Rather, the human community benefits only from peoples who have gained self-awareness, examining their past, present, and future, taking firm principles from the past, reforming themselves in the present, and extending their hands to build the future" (Ben Badis, p.17).

##### **4. Reestablishing Homeland's Worth:**

Reforming the concept of homeland in Algerian minds constituted Ben Badis's first step, as the colonizer had largely succeeded in confusing Algerian understanding. Ben Badis sought to correct the patriotic concept, stating: "Patriotism is not merely represented in land, landmarks, mountains, forests, and nature alone, but alongside all this, it constitutes history, civilization, values, memories, hopes, and aspirations. This terminology had not previously been used by Algerians in this natural and social sense except with the emergence of the reformist movement, particularly through Ben Badis via *al-Muntaqid*, whose motto was 'The nation above all else,' and similarly in *al-Shihab*, which published numerous articles demonstrating strong adherence to this principle" (Ben Badis, pp.283-23).

### 5. Arabic Language Reform:

It is well-known that Ben Badis restored the Arabic language to Algerian lands and what is termed literary reform, which I shall discuss at length in this research with God's will.

From this, it becomes evident that the association's contributions to reviving Algerian association's image centered on one objective: establishing the doctrinal dimension upon which God created Arabs—the Islamic faith. The association also strived to achieve patriotism's principle in Algerian hearts, understanding that homeland is not merely mountains and earth and fortresses, but possesses a meaning connected to doctrinal and faith-based dimensions. The moral system similarly has foundations in reform, as Ben Badis elucidated (Torki, p.28).

#### Fifth: Badisian Innovation in Literary Reform

##### Ben Badis's Contributions to Arabic Education:

The French colonizer attempted to obliterate Algerian identity through various means—intellectual and practical. The colonizer's ultimate aim was implanting French principles in Algerian souls through force or other methods.

During that period, Algeria suffered from life's difficulties at economic, cultural, political, and economic levels, weakening the Algerian movement's capacity to confront colonialism. Nevertheless, movements did not fail in confrontation despite limited resources. Intellectual movement constituted the foundational basis for halting colonial expansion.

Many association members and others composed creative writings constituting a revolution. Ben Badis's work in reforming the educational system, particularly in the literary domain, continues, and I shall elucidate his contributions to enriching literary study through his compositions.

##### Literary Study Through Badisian Interpretation (*Majalis al-Tadhkir*):

This tafsir ranks among those emphasizing linguistic study. Though Ben Badis was known for his passionate defense of language, concern for it, and commitment to its preservation, he did not compose an independent book addressing linguistic questions comprehensively.

However, through his work *Majalis al-Tadhkir*, we observe his concern with language and its levels, which I shall illustrate here with certain features of linguistic study in Badisian interpretation.

##### Levels of Linguistic Study in Badisian Interpretation:

###### 1. The Phonetic Level:

Upon examining Ben Badis's educational journey at al-Zaytunah and identifying the general figures from whom he studied, and upon observing the nature of sources in which he was certified, we recognize that he was traditionalist.

Ben Badis remained faithful to phonetic study and its branches, addressing phonetic issues in the tafsir according to how readers had previously treated them. For example, the Qur'anic verse "They bring you no example without Our bringing you the truth and the best explanation" (al-Furqan 25:33). He stated: "Tanween represents variation and exaltation, meaning a type of revelation that is exalted" (Ben Badis, 1932, p.149).

###### 2. Morphological Study:

Ben Badis lacked appropriate space demonstrating his position on the dispute known to Arab tradition, yet he practiced what he adopted during the exegetical process, in morphological treatment of the word found during explanation of vocabulary, and sometimes during his analysis of construction.

Qur'anic example: "They bring you no example without Our bringing you the truth and the better explanation" (al-Furqan 33). He stated: "Because the revelation of the complete statement is more powerful than the revelation of details" (Ben Badis, 1931, p.802).

###### 3. The Lexical Level:

This level dominates the tafsir extensively, and we would not exaggerate in saying it constitutes lexical exegesis, as it mentions the Qur'anic word and reveals its conditions and meanings from the perspective of its linguistic denotation. For example, Ben Badis addresses the Qur'anic word "*al-Furqan*" (the Criterion).

Qur'anic example: "Blessed is He who sent down the Criterion" (al-Furqan 1). He stated: "The Criterion: its origin is a verb form *farraqa* meaning: to distinguish..."

###### 4. The Syntactic Level:

This level appeared in his tafsir somewhat shyly, as he endeavored to derive what relationships exist between Qur'anic verse elements and employ them in close weaving between meaning and grammar through multiple formations, since it is undisputed that there exists comprehensive and integrative knowledge interaction between lexicon and grammar. He addresses verses in Qur'anic order under the heading "*Words and Constructions*", treating both lexical and grammatical aspects simultaneously.

Qur'anic example: "And He assembled for Solomon his hosts of jinn, humans, and birds, and they were mustered in ranks" (al-Naml 27:17). Under the heading "*Words and Constructions*".

Ben Badis states: “*Yuwaza'un* means they refrain from departing from order in marching; thus their front prevents the rear from lagging, and the rear from falling behind the front, and they are prevented from departing from formations rightward or leftward, for *waza'ahu* means “he restrained him from it.” He then adds grammatical authority to the denotation, continuing: “In the conjunction of the second statement with the letter *fa*, there is indication of the speed of organization after assembly, and the agent of “*assembled*” is the helpers doing the assembling, and the agent of “*restrained*” is the officers organizing”.

This example illustrates that Badisian tafsir combined lexicon and grammar in an integrative system, which is precisely literary reform.

#### **Summary:**

From the foregoing, we may conclude that Ben Badis was among scholars who held preeminent standing in enriching literary study. He was characterized as a fundamentalist, reformist, and literary scholar who struggled for the language and Algerian Islamic association, as language constitutes the foundation of religion and source of happiness.

Though he did not compose books specifically on Arabic literature, he concerned himself with literary study during the exegetical process in his work *Majalis al-Tathkir*, which scholars have undertaken to verify, study, and benefit from this treasure.

#### **Sixth: Badisian Innovation in Literary Reform**

Ben Badis believed that education constituted the first effort in resisting occupation and thus labored to spread education, restore Islam to its original sources, and combat falsehood and superstitions while opposing all Sufi orders.

Upon returning from pilgrimage, Ben Badis began his reformist efforts by delivering lessons in Qur'anic interpretation at the Green Mosque in Constantine, captivating listeners with his eloquent speech.

The educational and training dimensions constitute among Ben Badis's most prominent contributions, extending not only to adults but also to children. He aimed at spreading morality and patriotic spirit, particularly the Arabic language.

As mentioned, the association was established on three foundations: religion, morality, and homeland, with Arabic encompassing all three. Ben Badis emphasized the importance of Arabic language care, stating: “Algeria's Arabism is one of history and civilization, possessing glorious epochs and deep-rooted states. The Algerian nation's affairs cannot prosper except through it”.

Ben Badis recognized from the outset that his reformist project would not succeed unless he restored Arabic's worth and ensured its preservation, thus combating France's linguistic policy pursued for a century.

Ben Badis stated: “Any attempt to compel Algerians to abandon their ethnicity, language, religion, history, or any of their constituents represents a doomed attempt, destined for failure”.

France failed to eradicate Arabic from Algerian hearts or eliminate Islamic faith despite repeated and continuous attempts through incentives and through violence and discrimination. Language constitutes the means of communication between Algeria's young and old and represents the fundamental constituent of any nation.

A nation that does not respect its language, religion, and history is not counted among nations and is viewed only with contempt. All reform depends fundamentally on concern for language and education.

Language, from his perspective, serves as the primary means of communicating and understanding and spreading reformist ideas, constituting the basis for developing curricula in religious institutions. Educational reform depends upon its reform (Derouich, 1995, p.6).

Therefore, he rejected the educational method France imposed, which restricted itself to teaching foreign languages while neglecting Algerians' original language, and he worked to establish Arabic schools (Derouich, p.9).

Alongside attending to language, he engaged himself in religious reform, as Muslim reformation depends upon understanding and knowledge of Islam. Islamic doctrine suffered distortion from certain Sufi leaders conspiring with France to realize its designs for money and power, encouraging people toward idleness and sluggishness while falsifying concepts of religion, work, and worship.

Yet Ben Badis held a different view. His objective was not “merely an internal attempt to correct doctrine aiming for the hereafter without connection to this world, for he bears responsibility for linking work as a supreme value to correct religious principles as processes of remembrance, reflection, knowledge, and teaching according to God's commands calling for knowledge, action, and contemplation”.

Ben Badis called upon the Algerian people to unite around the Arabic language and exercise reason in reflecting upon language, as it claims first connection and final connection with prophethood.



He seized every opportunity for Arabic education and revived this heritage anew, reforming literature by establishing forums, lectures, meetings, lessons, and sermons while utilizing media to spread his reformist and liberationist ideas, without forgetting the association's role in this. The association worked "toward liberating minds from illusions and delusions in religion and worldly affairs, liberating souls from deifying inclinations and persons, and since liberating minds constitutes the foundation and origin of liberating bodies, it is impossible for a body to become free while carrying an enslaved mind".

### Conclusion:

From the foregoing, I can address the fundamental problem presented in my research, represented as follows:

- Ben Badis's conception of reform does not differ from others'; it seeks to rectify deviations, encompassing all corruption contradicting Islamic conduct and human nature.
- The association played a role in substantiating Algerian identity and rebuilding hope in the Algerian people's souls, combating colonial expansion through intellectual weaponry.
- The associations and its leader Sheikh Abd al-Hamid Ben Badis's efforts bore fruit in improving Algerian association's image through actions and functions and through achievements with long-term results.
- Ben Badis confined the power he sought to create among a weak people's children to knowledge, civilization, and morality rather than material force and ignorance. Therefore, he spent night and day engaged in teaching.
- Motivations for reform from Ben Badis's perspective manifest in critiquing French policy, with reform incomplete except through knowledge's power, morality, and the Qur'an.
- Badisian innovation in literary reform possessed multiple manifestations, yet it transcended reform's bounds in the literary domain because language, from his perspective, serves as knowledge's cradle and theological understanding's foundation, representing Islamic doctrine.

### Ethical Considerations

This study is based on qualitative historical and literary analysis of publicly available texts, archival materials, and published works related to the Association of Algerian Muslim Scholars and the writings of 'Abd al-Hamid Ben Badis. No human participants, interviews, surveys, or personal data were involved. Therefore, ethical approval was not required. The research adheres to principles of academic integrity, objectivity, and responsible scholarship, ensuring accurate citation, faithful representation of sources, and contextualized interpretation of historical materials.

### Author Contributions

Dr. Mohamed Ansri contributed to the conceptualization of the study, historical and textual analysis, interpretation of Ben Badis's literary reform project, and drafting of the manuscript.

Dr. Bouhnik Mohammed El-hadi contributed to the theoretical framing, methodological refinement, critical review of the arguments, and revision of the manuscript.

Both authors reviewed and approved the final version of the article.

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### Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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