

The Role of the Eastern Press in Supporting the Algerian Revolution: Al-Azhar Magazine as a Model (1954–1962)

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Abstract

This study analyses the media discourse of Eastern Arab journalism toward the Algerian Revolution through Al-Azhar Magazine. It aims to examine how the Algerian issue was addressed and to identify the forms of support provided at informational, political, religious, and diplomatic levels. Using a descriptive-analytical approach, the study shows that the magazine closely followed the revolution, reported its developments, and exposed French colonial practices. It also highlighted regional and international support, including Maghrebi, Arab, Islamic, and Afro-Asian solidarity within the broader context of decolonization. The study emphasizes the importance of diplomatic efforts in internationalizing the Algerian issue and placing it on the United Nations agenda, reflecting its transformation into an international cause linked to self-determination. It concludes that the magazine's discourse, combining religious and nationalist dimensions, contributed to mobilizing public opinion and strengthening the legitimacy of the Algerian Revolution.

Keywords: *Algerian Revolution, Al-Azhar Magazine, Media Discourse, Internationalization, Diplomatic Efforts, Decolonization, Self-Determination.*

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Introduction

The 20th century witnessed a remarkable rise in liberation movements, particularly in Africa and Asia. These movements emerged as a reaction against colonialism, which imposed political, military, economic, and cultural hegemony on colonized peoples. In this context, the Algerian Revolution stands out as one of the most prominent liberation movements, distinguished by its comprehensive approach to struggle, combining armed resistance, diplomacy, and media outreach.

The Algerian Revolution garnered widespread attention both regionally and internationally. The media, especially the Arab press, played a pivotal role in reporting its events, raising awareness of its cause, and garnering support. Within this framework, Al-Azhar Magazine emerged as a prominent media outlet published by Al-Azhar University, a prestigious institution with a long-standing academic standing in the Arab and Islamic world. Its religious and intellectual influence made its media discourse a significant reference point in shaping public opinion and supporting the Algerian Revolution, thereby strengthening solidarity with its liberation project. This study aims to reveal the nature of the media coverage of the Algerian Revolution in Al-Azhar magazine by tracking its news and developments and highlighting the manifestations of Arab, Islamic, and international support through its articles. It also examines the magazine's role in internationalizing the Algerian cause. The study relies on monitoring published articles, analyzing their content, and classifying them according to thematic axes to allow for a scholarly analysis of the magazine's role in supporting the revolution.

The importance of this topic lies in revealing the role played by Al-Azhar magazine in relation to the Algerian Revolution, as well as demonstrating the importance and effectiveness of the media's role in supporting liberation movements.

Based on this, this study addresses the following question: How did Al-Azhar magazine contribute to supporting the Algerian Revolution, both in terms of media coverage and intellectual discourse? And what were the manifestations of this support as reflected in its articles?

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To answer this question, a research plan will be adopted that analyzes Al-Azhar magazine's media discourse through key axes reflecting the various dimensions of the topic.

News of the Revolution, its Repercussions, and the French Reaction to It:

Al-Azhar magazine demonstrated its support for the Algerian Revolution and took the initiative to promote it from its very beginning. This is evidenced by its early coverage of the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution. In its issue dated November 12, 1954, an article titled "The Algerian Revolution" referred to the outbreak of a revolution in Algeria, describing it as violent and a surprise to the French colonial authorities. The article stated that the revolution encompassed several regions of the country. The magazine also provided some details of the events of the night of November 1, 1954, including the explosion of 30 bombs in Algiers alone and 43 bombs in Constantine. It also covered the attacks by revolutionaries on some French camps housing Algerian officers and soldiers, noting that some of them had joined the revolution. (Al-Azhar Magazine, p. 349.)

On another front, the magazine addressed the initial reactions of the colonial administration to the early events of the revolution. These included the rapid deployment of a paratrooper battalion from France to Algeria and the reinforcement of French police forces with approximately 600 officers. Three ships loaded with weapons and equipment were also sent to Algeria, and curfews were imposed in several volatile areas, particularly between Biskra and Batna. The magazine reported on the French Minister of War's urgent visit to Algeria and his admission that France needed time and armed forces to restore order in the country.

It seems that the initial events of the Algerian revolution took the colonial administration by surprise, to the point of disorientation. The administration promptly banned the celebration of the Prophet's birthday, which fell after November 1, 1954. Al-Azhar magazine attributed this to the colonial administration's fear that these celebrations might escalate into acts of resistance against French colonialism. On the military front, the magazine reported that French forces had launched a large-scale campaign against the mountainous regions believed to be rebel strongholds, whose numbers were estimated by the colonial administration at around 3,000 mujahideen. Based on this, the French army estimated that the fighting would not end for at least three months.

As part of the French army's response to crush the revolution in its infancy, it began to tighten its grip on the Algerian revolutionaries by depriving them of popular support. In an article dated November 27, 1954, entitled "France and the Algerian Revolution," Al-Azhar magazine reported that French aircraft had dropped approximately 50,000 warning leaflets over the revolutionary areas in the Aurès Mountains. These leaflets called on the Algerian population to stay away from the areas where the revolutionaries were present and gave them until November 18, 1954, to comply. The magazine stated that the colonial authorities believed these leaflets would intimidate the population and drive them to flee, thus isolating the revolutionaries and weakening their resolve. However, the colonial administration and its agents did not observe any effect of these leaflets on the population. This prompted the French army command to repeat the operation by dropping more leaflets and extending the deadline to November 26, 1954, threatening harsh measures for those who did not comply. In this context, the magazine mentions the colonial administration's claim that it had provided tents for eighty Algerian families who were provided with shelter, but the rebels continued their attacks on French positions in hit-and-run battles.

The magazine also reported on an admission by the French leadership describing the rebel offensive in Algeria as exceptionally well-organized. It stated that the rebels attacked French forces in 25 cities and villages in northern Algeria, targeting French police stations, army barracks, and railway stations. This offensive enjoyed significant popular support, particularly in the Philippeville region (Skikda), which witnessed fierce fighting. The magazine also criticized the inaction of both America and Europe in the face of colonial barbarity in this part of the Islamic world. (The magazine did not mention whether the crossing of the Morice Line was done across the eastern or western borders because it was completed at that stage. As for the Challe Line, work on it began at the end of 1958 and it was parallel to the Morice Line on the eastern borders.)

The magazine discussed one of the plans France used to suppress the revolution: the Morice Line. This line, constructed along the eastern and western borders, was intended to isolate Algeria from its neighbors, Tunisia and Morocco. Despite the difficulties it presented, the revolutionaries managed to breach it. As part of its coverage of revolutionary activity, Al-Azhar magazine addressed this success, noting the French leadership's admission that hundreds of Algerian revolutionaries had managed to cross the heavily fortified and electrified Morice Line, a line the French had believed to be impenetrable.

The magazine stated that the French believed it to be impenetrable. Al-Azhar magazine closely followed the developments in Algeria during the early months of the revolution, as well as the French reactions to the growing revolutionary tide. It wrote that the French leadership's assessments on the ground were incorrect, stating that French officials had begun preparing for a protracted war in North Africa, comparing it to the seven-year war in Indochina that ended with France's defeat at the famous Battle of Dien Bien in May 1954. The magazine also noted that French officials had observed similarities between the war in Indochina and the nature of the battles and attacks launched by the revolutionaries in Algeria. This prompted the French Prime Minister to send the largest possible number of French troops to Algeria to crush the revolution, as the magazine put it. It also mentioned an announcement by the French Interior Minister that the number of French troops in Algeria at that time was estimated at 140,000, in addition to 10,000 reservists stationed in Algeria, whom the French government had immediately called to arms. Furthermore, the French Ministry of Defense began withdrawing approximately 50,000 troops from Indochina. 10,000 soldiers per week are being sent directly to Algeria, and this operation is being carried out in complete secrecy. (Al-Azhar Magazine, Volume 26, Parts 19 and 20, June 21, 1955, p. 1161.)

The French treasury incurred enormous financial costs to finance the French army's military operations against the Algerian Revolution. Al-Azhar magazine reported on a French newspaper, L'Echo, stating that the war budget in Algeria reached £1.284 billion in 1956, and headlined the report "The Price of Aggression."

Al-Azhar magazine further reported that French reactions to the revolution had taken on a regional and international dimension. The Tripartite Aggression against Egypt in October 1956 was considered one of the most significant reactions. France's participation in this aggression constituted a military act against the Algerian Revolution, aimed at punishing and taking revenge on Egypt for its support of the revolution. Regarding this aggression, the magazine reported that Radio Moscow broadcast a warning from the Soviet leadership, specifically addressed to France and Israel, condemning the extremist stance of these two countries. Instead of contributing to a peaceful resolution of the Middle East conflict, they were creating the conditions for new and dangerous military adventures. (Al-Azhar Magazine, Volume 28, Part 9, April 1, 1957, p. 893.)

The repercussions of the Algerian Revolution were so profound that they compelled the French administration to reassess its policies in Algeria and adopt a different approach that took into account the turbulent situation there. Al-Azhar magazine reported that French Foreign Minister Christian Pineau delivered a speech explaining the necessity of amending the French constitution to allow for a federal structure that would align with developments in Algeria and the French overseas colonies. The minister warned: "We will undoubtedly find ourselves compelled to amend the constitution, which, as it stands in 1946, failed to consider all potential developments. We are faced with two dangers: the danger of pursuing a policy of entrenchment, which could perpetuate the misery and chaos in Algeria, and the danger of a policy based on force, disregarding global developments and the aspirations of the Algerian people to manage their own affairs."

In its coverage of revolutionary activity in Algeria, Al-Azhar magazine published an article entitled "Statistics on the Algerian Jihad," which presented some statistical data. Among these was the increase in the number of Algerian National Liberation Army (ALN) fighters from 3,000 to 25,000 within three years, with an additional 20,000 civilians dedicating half their time to supporting the ALN. Regarding armament, the magazine noted its initial weakness, both in quantity and quality, at the beginning of the revolution,

which began with only a few hundred hunting rifles. The revolutionaries then acquired modern weapons, a tenth of which were seized from the French. They received 1,500 weapons monthly via Tunisia and 500 via Morocco. As for casualties, the magazine stated that the losses of the revolutionaries and their French enemies were evenly matched, reaching 40,000 on each side during the first three years of the revolution. As for financial support, the National Liberation Army received \$25,000 annually from Algerian capitalists, \$300,000 from workers, and aid from Arab countries amounted to approximately \$65 million annually. Peasants also provided the National Liberation Army with 75,000 head of livestock. The magazine indicated that these statistics were obtained by Leonald Rand, Newsweek's correspondent in Algeria. (Al-Azhar Magazine, Volume 29, Part 3, September 25, 1957, p. 286.)

Maghreb Support for the Algerian Revolution:

The idea of a joint Maghreb struggle was a significant one for national movements in the Maghreb in their fight against colonialism, given that the region was under the same colonial power (France). Al-Azhar magazine addressed this idea in a commentary titled "The Algerian Revolution," which included a declaration by the secret leadership of the Algerian revolutionary army that they were in close contact with the revolutionary leadership in Morocco and that they were striving to liberate all of North Africa.

In the same context, the Tangier Conference is considered one of the crucial milestones in the history of the Maghreb struggle. Al-Azhar magazine wrote about it, describing it as the North African Unity Conference. It noted the participation of political parties for the first time in North Africa, namely the Moroccan Istiqlal Party, the Tunisian Neo-Destour Party, and the Algerian National Liberation Front. The magazine quoted an article in the English newspaper The Sunday Times about this conference, which described it as an important turning point in the history of North Africa because it aimed to develop a detailed plan to establish a federal union of the three countries: Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. Al-Azhar magazine also indicated that the conference members discussed how to strengthen the struggle for Algerian independence, which required extending military and financial support through both Morocco and Tunisia. It stated that a recommendation was made to establish a national government for Algeria and a consultative council for Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria. The conference also issued a warning to the West against aiding France and considered the Algerian National Liberation Front as the sole representative body of the Algerian people. The Maghreb Conference also included the issuance of an official statement, read by Mr. Allal al-Fassi, leader of the Moroccan Istiqlal Party, at a press conference attended by approximately 200 journalists and photographers from across the country. The magazine explained that the conference's resolutions would be presented to the Moroccan and Tunisian governments for approval, and that both governments would endorse these resolutions since the Istiqlal Party and the Constitutional Party were in power in their respective countries. (Al-Azhar Magazine, Volume 29, Part 10, April 20, 1958, pp. 974-975.)

Arab and Islamic Solidarity with the Algerian Revolution:

Al-Azhar magazine's coverage of the Algerian revolution and related issues represents one manifestation of Arab and Islamic support for Algeria in its struggle against French colonialism. However, the magazine addressed many other aspects of this support. In an article titled "The North African Question," the magazine quoted Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser's remarks to a Paris Press correspondent, in which he stated: "The time has come for Egypt and France to understand each other regarding the problems of North Africa. Whatever the differences, we have an unavoidable role in Africa. We must eliminate the fear felt by the peoples of North Africa, and we must direct the greater part of our efforts toward this matter. It is our duty to prepare agreements that will become a new turning point in relations with North Africa." President Abdel Nasser also asked: "Why don't you adopt a solution similar to the one Britain reached for the problem of India?" Al-Azhar magazine raised a very important issue concerning the support France receives from NATO countries. In an article titled "Killing Moroccans with American Weapons," the magazine referred to a statement made by Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser to the American ambassador. Nasser expressed Egypt's concern about the developments in the Maghreb region and France's use of violence and the killing of unarmed people demanding their freedom, referring to the Algerian people. The Egyptian president stated that the use of NATO-supplied French forces and NATO weapons to kill Arab citizens in North Africa constituted an act of aggression against all Arabs, not just France, but

all NATO member states that allowed this aggression. He requested that the ambassador convey the Egyptian position to the American government.

In a gesture reflecting the widespread solidarity the Algerian revolution enjoyed throughout the Arab and Islamic world, Al-Azhar magazine published an article titled "Absentee Prayer for the Souls of the Martyrs of Algeria and Morocco," reporting that absentee prayers were held in all mosques across Egypt for the souls of the Algerian and Moroccan martyrs. This took place on Friday, the 15th of Muharram, 1375 AH. In Cairo, the capital, the prayer was held at Al-Azhar Mosque, with a massive turnout. The Egyptian Minister of Religious Endowments, Sheikh Ahmed Hassan Al-Baqouri, led the Friday prayer and the absentee prayer. The Kuwaiti Minister of Education, Prince Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, was also present. Al-Azhar magazine indicated that the number of attendees for the absentee prayer was estimated at around two hundred thousand, according to what it quoted from Al-Gomhouria newspaper. Absentee prayers were also held in several other Islamic countries. In the realm of Arab solidarity with the Algerian Revolution, the Algerian cause was also present in the meetings held by some Arab states from time to time. Al-Azhar magazine addressed the meeting held in the Lebanese capital, Beirut, on November 13th and 14th, 1956, at the invitation of the Lebanese president. Representatives from Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Egypt, and Yemen were gathered to discuss the situation arising from the tripartite aggression launched by Britain, France, and the Zionist entity against Egypt and the Gaza Strip. The aim was to agree on what should be done to support Egypt and work towards the common Arab interest. The attendees agreed on several resolutions, including supporting the demands of the Algerian people in their struggle and revolution until they achieved their freedom and sovereignty.

Al-Azhar magazine also mentioned another meeting held in Cairo between February 25th and 27th, 1957, which included representatives from Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, and Egypt. This was the fourth in a series of meetings held periodically to study international positions and discuss issues concerning the Arab nation. The attendees unanimously agreed on the necessity of providing absolute support to the Algerian revolutionaries, praising their struggle, and backing their liberation policies stemming from their belief in the nation's right to a free and independent state. Al-Azhar magazine published the text of the speech delivered by the esteemed scholar Sheikh Hassanein Muhammad Makhoul during the celebration held under his auspices at the headquarters of the General Center of the Muslim Youth Associations on November 3, 1958, commemorating the fourth anniversary of the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution. Sheikh Bashir al-Ibrahimi and Ahmed Tawfiq al-Madani also addressed the gathering. Sheikh Makhoul stated, "On this blessed night, we send our warmest greetings and best wishes to our mujahideen brothers and the leaders of the blessed revolution in Algeria. We extend our most heartfelt salutations to the men of its free government and congratulate Algeria, the Arab world, and the Islamic world on the establishment of this legitimate and free government, comprised of the finest mujahideen sons of Algeria." He referred to the formation of the Provisional Government in September 1958 as a major political and diplomatic victory. Sheikh Makhoul offered special congratulations to Sheikh Bashir al-Ibrahimi, saying, "We congratulate our dear friend, the great scholar and mujahid, Sheikh Muhammad Bashir al-Ibrahimi, the leading scholar of Algeria, on the promising signs of success in liberating Algeria from the yoke of colonialism." In his speech, Sheikh Makhoul described the Algerian people as a persevering nation. By nature, he is brave in his war. (Al-Azhar Magazine, Volume 30, Part 6, December 1958, p. 443.)

Sheikh Makhoul stated that Algeria has fulfilled its duty and will continue to do so completely, even at the cost of precious blood. He cited as evidence its continued struggle despite the enemy's annihilation of nearly a million of its citizens. The Sheikh emphasized that solidarity, cooperation, and support for the Algerian revolution are paramount. He asserted that all Muslims, regardless of their country, are obligated to assist Algeria in its revolution against its oppressive enemy, affirming that this is the Islamic ruling regarding the Algerian revolution. He cited the authentic hadith stating that whoever equips a warrior has participated in the battle. This equipping, he explained, involves providing sufficient weapons, offering counsel and advice, encouraging action through all available means, and boycotting and besieging the enemy by all possible methods.

This statement was included in a letter received by the magazine's mailing list, titled: "When Will This Bond Be Realized?" In his letter, the author, who went by the name Al-Samman, mentioned that some newspapers

had reported that the Saudi King, Saud bin Abdul Aziz, had called in his address to the pilgrims for the establishment of an Islamic association to unite Muslims and support the struggle of the Algerian people, as well as the Palestinian cause. He stated that the Palestinian and Algerian causes were a test of Islamic faith and a measure of the strength of its bonds, as some Muslims had contributed to these causes, while others had expressed their readiness to contribute to them. (Al-Azhar Magazine, Volume 33, Part 2, July 1961, pp. 225-226.)

At a meeting of the Supreme Council of Al-Azhar, chaired by the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, the French aggression against Algeria was discussed. The Council condemned France's actions against the Algerian people and their leaders, describing them as a people who rose up to demand their rights and repel the humiliation of colonialism. The Council warned that French leaders should not forget that they could not gain the friendship of the Algerian people unless they allowed this proud Arab nation to achieve its rights, declare its independence, and implement its constitution. France was free to choose its own path.

As part of Arab solidarity with the Algerian revolution, the government of the United Arab Republic exempted nine Algerian students enrolled in the Police Academy from tuition fees for the duration of their studies. The training of these students was considered a vital support for the Algerian police force during the revolution. Al-Azhar magazine published articles from time to time by famous figures that included explicit support for the Algerian revolution. Among these figures was Professor Ahmed Hassan Al-Zayyat, who published an article entitled "The People Who Defied Fate and Destiny," which he began by saying: "Show me, if you can, with evidence or information, among those who remain or those who have passed on, a people other than the brave and free Algerian people, upon whom the infidel French colonialism persisted with oppression, torture, destruction, and the theft of independence for 30 and 100 years, yet the pride of Arabism remained in their heads, the zeal of Islam remained in their souls, and the sword of conquest remained in their hands, so they did not weaken for what befell them in the cause of their homeland and their religion." Al-Zayyat addressed the incident of the leaders' plane being hijacked in October 1956, saying: When God willed that the tragedy of Algeria should reach its final chapter, the folly and recklessness of the French Prime Minister, Guy Mollet, led him to kidnap the leaders of the Algerian revolution, Ahmed Ben Bella and his companions, on their way to Tunisia. The Algerians rose up like a hurricane and threw themselves into the fire of revolution. Guy Mollet, and after him De Gaulle, were forced to bring three-quarters of a million French soldiers, supported by NATO with weapons, equipment, and money, to fight 10 million Algerians. But Lacoste only encountered 10,000 unarmed revolutionaries. So what was the fate of the massive army armed with iron and fire? Death snatched it from every side, and defeats overtook it everywhere, until some of them said, "These devils cannot be the same people we have known here for a century and a third." The writer then pointed out that the French, their suspicions turning towards Gamal Abdel Nasser, then turned their shifty eyes to the sea and air and saw a ship carrying weapons to Algeria, so they seized it. Then they spotted a plane carrying heroes and shot it down. Then they said, "We have won the battle. We know where the weapons are coming from and we have captured those who are using them. There will be no more weapons and no more attacks." Al-Zayyat then referred to what the French did, describing them as being overly cautious, as they transferred Ahmed Ben Bella and his four brothers to France, whom he described as descendants of Emir Abdelkader. The writer noted the popular solidarity that swept the Arab world with the kidnapped men, and he directed his reproach at the world, describing its conscience as dead because of its six-year silence between a state that wanted to grow fat and act recklessly and a nation that wanted security and to live. He mentioned that the French had killed a million innocent young Arabs there, and the Western world remained a spectator to the scenes of destruction and carnage in Algiers. Al-Zayyat compared this to what happened in Palestine, asking: "Was the world's conscience alive when it agreed to let colonialism leave?" A million Arabs from their homes and wealth, only to give it to the enemy of God and the enemy of humanity, Israel? He concludes by saying that the world's conscience apologized in Palestine and was then buried in Algeria, leaving the mujahideen with nothing but the spirit of God, the support of the free, and the pride of the Arabs.

A million Arabs from their homes and wealth, only to give it to the enemy of God and the enemy of humanity, Israel? Al-Azhar magazine published an article by another prominent figure who expressed support for the Algerian revolution: Grand Imam Mahmoud Shaltout. His article, titled "The Algerians'

Jihad in the Path of God: A Call from the Grand Imam Sheikh Mahmoud Shaltout to the Islamic World During Algeria Week," emphasized the importance of calling for peace, security, and stability so that love may prevail among all people. He then turned to the Algerian revolution, stating that six years had passed, and the seventh was beginning, marking a struggle between right and wrong. This struggle, he explained, was the struggle of Algeria, the freedom fighter, who had the right to live and thrive, against a group of people who claimed to be guardians of principles and advocates of rights, asserting that human rights should be their priority, even though these rights had been abandoned by them. Sheikh Shaltout addressed the global conscience, saying, "We address those who speak so much of mercy but do not practice what they preach, we address religious leaders of all denominations and sects, and we address all politicians, stirring within them the values of humanity so that they may take the positive path of decisive action." The oppression of the oppressors will cease, and Algeria will attain its right to life and freedom. For whose benefit are so many being killed in Algeria while the United Nations stands idly by? Sheikh Shaltout adds that Muslim Algeria will be a source of strength for Muslims because of what its sons offer to Islam and what they sacrifice for their rights and their lives. He also says, "As we commemorate this day, the 12th of Jumada al-Ula and the 1st of November, the anniversary of the Algerian struggle in the path of God, we also remember the following day: the struggling Palestine and our refugee brothers who were displaced from their land, left behind their possessions, their women widowed, and their children orphaned."

Al-Azhar magazine featured statements and pronouncements from prominent figures in Arab and Islamic scholarship affirming solidarity with the Algerian revolution. It published a statement by the writer and lawyer Abbas Taha, who asserted that history has not recorded a more glorious chapter than the struggle of the Maghreb peoples for their freedom. He argued that the penetration of French colonialism into Algeria paved the way for foreign ambitions in the Arab East, and that the Arabs of the East cannot rest easy as long as the Maghreb nations remain under colonial rule. Therefore, he concluded, the Maghreb independence movements have had a profound impact on all Arabs. The writer specifically addressed the stages of the Algerian people's struggle against French occupation and the continuation of the liberation movements in Algeria, emphasizing that they have not weakened or faltered. He noted that the best way for Algeria to achieve liberation is to unite with its sister Arab nations. The writer further stated that the liberation movement (Abbas Taha, the lawyer, a historical speech about the liberation of the Arabs in Algeria, Al-Azhar Magazine, Volume 29, Part 7, January 21, 1958, pp. 657-658.)

Afro-Asian Support for the Algerian Revolution:

In parallel with the armed struggle, the leadership of the Algerian Revolution embarked on a long battle in the political and diplomatic arena to enlighten global public opinion about the just demands of the Algerian Revolution and to gain international support. The Bandung Conference in Indonesia in April 1955 was one of the most important conferences that witnessed significant support for the Algerian Revolution, especially since it was held just a few months after the outbreak of the revolution. In its issue of April 23, 1955, corresponding to the first of Ramadan 1374 AH, Al-Azhar magazine covered the activities of this conference and the trip of Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser to Indonesia to participate in it, in an article entitled "To the Bandung Conference." It stated that on April 9, 1955, an Air India plane departed Cairo Airport carrying President Gamal Abdel Nasser at the head of the Egyptian delegation to the Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung, Indonesia. The delegation included some ministerial figures and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Abdel Khaleq Hassouna. In addition to a press and broadcasting delegation, the Egyptian delegation was received in Karachi, Pakistan, India, and Burma, arriving in Jakarta on April 16, 1955, and then on to Bandung. This conference was considered representative of colonized or formerly colonized nations.

African solidarity with the Algerian revolution was one of the most important pillars of external support, given the wave of liberation movements sweeping the African continent. In this context, Al-Azhar magazine addressed the idea of African solidarity in an article that opened with a quote from Thomas Hodgkin, published in the English newspaper New Statesman. Hodgkin stated that the idea of solidarity among African peoples first emerged at a conference held in Paris in 1919. However, the implementation of this idea was due to the efforts of Dr. Nkrumah and Mr. Habib Bourguiba after their meeting in March 1957 in Accra, the capital of Ghana, on the occasion of Ghana's independence. Al-Azhar magazine indicates

that the Bandung Conference helped convene the Accra conference in Ghana, which was characterized by its African identity. This might disturb Westerners who view Africa as divided into two parts: the Mediterranean coast, or Arab Africa, and Black Africa, or equatorial Africa, influenced by missionary activity. The Accra conference thus countered this divisive view. The West should declare that the Sahara Desert is not a dividing line between African peoples. A Ghanaian politician, when asked if he considered the Tunisian, Libyan, and Egyptian peoples to be African, replied in the affirmative.

Al-Azhar magazine concluded that there was no inclination to divide Africa into two parts, one Arab and Muslim, and the other Black and Christian. Rather, there was solidarity among all Africans in the fight against colonialism. This was confirmed by the Accra Conference's support for the Algerian cause. The issue was not an attempt by Arab states to gain the support of non-Arab states for Algeria; the entire idea revolved around African solidarity in the fight against colonialism.

In the context of African solidarity with the Algerian revolution, Professor Mahmoud Sharqawi, in his article entitled "Religion and Nationalism in the New Africa," addressed what he called the "New Africa," whose people are now emerging from slavery to freedom and from the humiliating subjugation and exploitation imposed by Western colonialism. The author refers to the liberation movements that have begun to sweep across the African continent and the independence of a number of countries. Within this framework, he discusses the role of the Algerian revolution in the liberation of several African countries from French colonialism. (Mahmoud Al-Sharqawi, Religion and Nationalism in the New Africa, Al-Azhar Magazine, Volume 32, Part 2, July 1960, p. 152.)

Western Support for the Algerian Revolution:

Al-Azhar magazine wrote that liberation movements had turned to armed struggle in their fight to rid themselves of colonial control, particularly against Western countries. It stated that there were direct military actions that Western countries had to confront, citing the Algerian revolution as a real-world example. The magazine noted that France was still reeling under the blows of the Maghreb, especially Algeria.

It appears that the principles upon which the Algerian Revolution was founded, as a humanitarian cause related to decolonization, found a receptive audience and support from some Western parties. Al-Azhar magazine addressed some of the forms of support provided by certain Western parties to the Algerian cause, including its publication of a news item entitled "Awakening of Conscience at Cambridge University in England." The article stated that, for the first time at this university and in the academic community of Britain, a human conscience had awakened towards the Algerians. Fifteen university societies, representing approximately 2,000 students, united to champion a humanitarian cause and support the fight against colonialism. These societies discussed the Algerian issue and the barbaric massacres perpetrated by France against the Algerian people in the name of 20th-century civilization, deeming it a shameful decline in humanity. They declared their belief that any solution to the Algerian problem must be based on the Algerian people's right to self-determination.

In the same vein, Al-Azhar magazine reported that the French newspapers L'Express and France Observateur published two articles by François Mauriac and Claude Bourdet, detailing the barbaric practices of the French police against Algerians. Mauriac quoted an eyewitness who said that one Algerian nationalist was beaten for over two hours with a salted whip, then placed in a barrel filled with cold, filthy water. The man's head was submerged in the dirty water until he suffocated, and then he was subjected to electric shocks. A tube of dirty water was also inserted into his mouth until he lost consciousness. Between periods of torture, the detainee was subjected to lengthy interrogations without being given any food. Mauriac added that hypocrites who rush to join human rights conferences, including those who read the French newspapers that published these details, still claim that these events do not violate the human rights they so readily proclaim! Western support for the Algerian revolution extended to France itself, where French parliamentary voices condemned the events in Algeria. Al-Azhar magazine published a brief article entitled "Algeria in the French Parliament," which discussed a speech by Pierre Fayet, a member of the French National Assembly. Fayet stated that the French government was using extremely harsh methods to suppress the Algerian revolution, and that newspapers had reported atrocities committed in Philippeville

(Skikda), Algeria, further exacerbating the situation. The magazine noted the absence of the Prime Minister from the session; instead, the Minister of the Interior attended in his place, as France still considered Algeria part of its territory. Only 150 out of 627 members were present, a consequence of the absence of right-wing and centrist parties, who were keen to avoid joining the leftists in their campaign against the government and their support for the Maghreb.

In the same vein of French leftist support for the Algerian revolution, Al-Azhar magazine noted the ongoing communication between leaders of the Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN) and socialist leaders in France. These leaders emphasized that stability and peace in Algeria could only be achieved by responding to the demands of the Algerian people and by France recognizing their right to freedom. Al-Azhar magazine quoted an unnamed Algerian leader in Paris as saying: "We are not fighting to build schools and hospitals or for agrarian reform, but rather we are fighting to win our right to live free."

As the years of the revolution progressed, the voices opposing the war in Algeria grew louder in France. Al-Azhar magazine published a report titled "Protest Signed by French Figures Against France's Barbarity in Algeria," in which 375 prominent French figures signed a protest addressed to their government for violating positive and humanitarian laws in Algeria. They cited the torture of mujahideen and detainees, arguing that France neither considered them enemy soldiers and therefore treated them with the guarantees provided by the Geneva Convention for soldiers of enemy states, nor did it consider them French citizens and recognize the rights granted to them by French laws. They also criticized their government for committing the crime of executing innocent hostages without trial, and for carrying out acts of brutality, looting, and widespread destruction in villages for the purpose of terrorizing or taking revenge, among other things that do not excuse barbarity and from which no civilized government can evade responsibility. Al-Azhar magazine also carried another news item in the same issue, titled "French Law Professor Protests France's Barbarity in Algeria." The article stated that Professor René Capitant, a law professor at the University of Paris and a leader of Free France during World War II, had sent a letter to René Bilières, the French Minister of Education, in which he wrote: "I have just learned from the radio news that Ali Boumendjel committed suicide in Algiers by throwing himself from a rooftop to escape the interrogation he was about to face. Ali Boumendjel was my student at the Faculty of Law in Algiers when I was the leader of the resistance movement in North Africa, and I was shocked by the news of his death under these circumstances. As long as my country's government orders or condones these actions, which it did not even resort to with German prisoners of war during the war, I will no longer feel capable of teaching at a French law school. Therefore, I will cease my lectures. Dismiss me if you wish or are able. I will gladly accept any action that helps to declare My protest is against these actions that could tarnish France's reputation." (Al-Azhar Magazine, Volume 28, Part 9, April 1, 1957, pp. 894-895.)

Diplomatic Action and the Inclusion of the Algerian Question at the United Nations:

Armed struggle was not the only means employed by the Algerian revolutionaries. They also utilized political and diplomatic methods in their battle against French colonialism, achieving significant victories in this arena that served the revolution and clarified its positions and demands before global public opinion. This aspect received considerable attention and follow-up from Al-Azhar magazine, which published news of the United Nations General Assembly's decision to include a full discussion of the situation in Algeria on its agenda, despite the Steering Committee's recommendation to the contrary at its final session. This occurred despite the concerted efforts of France, Britain, the United States, and their allies to prevent the inclusion of this issue on the agenda. The Soviet bloc countries and some Latin American countries voted in favor of the Arab and Islamic states. When the vote resulted in a victory for the Arab and Islamic states, the French delegation withdrew from the session in protest. The head of the French delegation stated that France considered any decision taken by the United Nations on this matter null and void. Al-Azhar magazine described all the countries that defied France as... Its supporters were on the honor roll, totaling 28 countries, including 15 Asian and African countries, five communist countries, six Latin American countries, and two Balkan countries. Al-Azhar magazine also mentioned the names of the countries that supported colonialism and then returned to liberate Algeria. (Al-Azhar Magazine, Volume 27, Part 3, October 18, 1955, pp. 232-233.)

Al-Azhar magazine kept pace with the diplomatic battle of the Algerian revolution, publishing another article entitled "The Algerian Question at the United Nations General Assembly." This article reported on the inclusion of the Algerian question on the agenda of the UN General Assembly, stating that in mid-February 1957, the General Assembly unanimously approved, with 77 votes in favor, the draft resolution submitted by the Afro-Asian bloc and Latin American countries. This resolution described the situation in Algeria, which had caused immense suffering and significant loss of life. Therefore, the General Assembly expressed its hope for a just and democratic solution to the Algerian problem, one that would be consistent with the principles of the UN Charter. (Al-Azhar Magazine, Volume 28, Part 8, March 3, 1957, p. 799.)

Conclusion

This study concluded that Al-Azhar magazine played a significant role in supporting the Algerian Revolution. It disseminated news of the revolution and adopted a clear stance of support by analyzing events, exposing colonial practices, and promoting the legitimacy of the Algerian struggle. The forms of support were diverse, encompassing media, political, and religious aspects, with the magazine leveraging its position to influence Arab and Islamic public opinion.

The study demonstrated that Al-Azhar magazine contributed to highlighting the international dimension of the Algerian cause by tracking the positions of countries and organizations and shedding light on Arab, African, Asian, and even some Western support for the revolution. Furthermore, the magazine played a crucial role in mobilizing collective awareness by publishing articles expressing solidarity and calling for support for Algeria.

One of the most important findings is that the magazine's media discourse combined religious and national dimensions, portraying the Algerian Revolution as a just Islamic and Arab cause deserving of support and advocacy. This contributed to strengthening both popular and official solidarity with the revolution. The importance of this topic lies in the fact that it restores the role of the Arab press in the liberation struggle and reveals the contribution of the media in general to supporting just causes, as well as opening the door for more studies on the media dimensions of the Algerian revolution in the Arab press.

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 Al-Azhar Magazine, Volume 27, Part 1, August 19, 1955, p. 109.
 The magazine did not specify whether the crossing of the Morice Line occurred along the eastern or western border, as it was already completed at that time. Construction of the Challe Line, however, began at the end of 1958 and ran parallel to the Morice Line along the eastern border. Al-Azhar Magazine, Volume 30, Part 8, February 1959, p. 679.
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 Al-Azhar Magazine, Volume 28, Part 5, December 3, 1956, pp. 505-506. It included King Saud bin Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia, King Hussein I of Jordan, President Shukri al-Quwatli of Syria, and Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt.
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