

Rejection of Cultural Subordination The historic All Saints' Day of 1954 and the start of the Algerian War led by the National Liberation Front (FLN in French) represented the final stage in the development of Algerian nationalism. What is more, they equated Arabization with Islamization for, to them, religion held the greatest influence over ideas: 'The revival of Arabic is both put in competition with French and used as a barrier erected against "foreign influences"' (Harbi, 1984: 117–118). The Ulemas undervalued the people's culture, the peasants' traditional rural Islamic faith and, consequently, their modes of expression that they fought violently at times. The Arabic expressions they used to refer to the common man show their contempt: *Salafat al'amma* (despicable masses), *Al-ra'iyya* (imitators), *Al-suqa* (people of the marketplace), *Al-ca'alik* (people of the street). On the back of this, the Ulemas had suspect attitudes towards Berber-speaking populations' faith and languages. In the 1930s, after reading the writings of a single Francophile Berberophone intellectual, Tewfik El Madani, a Ulema leader who will become the first Minister of Religious Affairs after independence, had alarmist declarations about an alleged campaign of de-islamization in Kabylia. He unjustly discredited the entire Kabyle community. Furthermore, in 1948, the Ulemas demanded that the colonial authorities close down the Kabyle radio station. They also wrote in the organ of their party that the Kabyles would only really become Algerian when they 'ceased to whisper their jargon (the Kabyle language) which grates on our ears' (Ouerdane, 2003: 80). The religio-conservatives' rejection of languages other than Literary Arabic proceeds from the deep influence of Pan-Islamic and Pan-Arab ideologies. Their ideas came from Arab linguistic nationalism born in the Middle East with which they had close ties. In fact, they remained docile followers of Middle Eastern political and cultural leaders and their directives (Ageron, 1969: 88; Bessis, 1978: 473, 475). The principal founding father of Arab linguistic nationalism was Sati Al-Husri (1880–1963). Educated in the West, Al-Husri's ideas can be described as 'acculturationist', an imitative adaptation of Western culture. He promoted Literary Arabic as the most important index among the various affiliative You sent bonds which exist in the Arabic-speaking world. He openly declared his preference for the national romantic vision which holds that those who speak the same language have a common culture and should be united within one nation. His uncompromising pronouncement, borrowed from the Prophetic tradition, states: 'Every Arabic-speaking people is an Arab people. Every individual belonging to one of these Arabic-speaking peoples is an Arab' (Tibi, 1981: 163). Al-Husri thus turned linguistic identity into an ethnic one. At the same time he fought the local idioms, such as the varieties of Arabic, considered to have a divisive role in Arab life. In April 1947, the founding Congress of the Arab Resurrection Party Ba'th set up a Constitution which extended Al-Husri's concept of an Arab 'nation' – a Pan-Arab community as 'one nation from the Atlantic to the Gulf' (Article 7). Article 10 equated Arab nationalism with the Arabic language. The Ba'th leadership also took up Al-Husri's belief on the divisiveness of ethno-regional, or even national, linguistic sentiments. They believed that non-Arabic-speaking communities in North Africa (Berbers) and in the Middle East (Christians and Kurds) would be automatically merged into the 'Arab nation'. The curt tone of Articles 11 and 15 in the Ba'th Constitution described as illegal any 'schismatic' ethno-regional community which rejected the Pan-Arab nationalist ideal. Al-Husri's equating ethnicity with linguistic identity would have far-reaching effects on peoples' representations in the Maghreb in general and in Algeria in particular (Carre, 1996: 57–58; Sharabi,

1966: 96; Vermeren, 2004: 20). In 1994, Maghreban scholar Abdallah Bounfour described Ba'th ideology as expansionist. He also considered Pan-Arab pronouncements on cultural unity and the rejection of multilingualism as a return to the basics of Arab-Islamic imperial ideology which idealized the primacy of the 'Unique [God] against multiplicity' (Bounfour, 1994: ?). In fact, Pan-Arab linguistic culture is not only imperialist but founded on undemocratic principles. For example, Ba'th partisans simply adopted Al-Husri's rejection of civil liberties, a thought inspired by totalitarian doctrines. The extent of his disposition towards totalitarianism is indicated in the following intransigent declaration: 'I say continuously and without hesitation: "Patriotism and nationalism above and before all else, even above and before freedom"'. In 1958 and 1959, combatant FLN leaders, often of rural origin and illiterate, carried out a murderous purge of some 3000 young French-language students and intellectuals who had joined the Revolution (Assous, 1985: 105; Harbi, 1984: 91; Horne, 1987: 110, 323). (Collot & Henry, 1978: 66) In July 1939, Abbas created the Algerian Popular Union with its programme calling for, among other things, the 'teaching of the Arabic language'. Ben Badis was the descendant of a rich family, and he became a scholar at the religious al-Zaituna University in Tunisia. In his opinion, the regeneration of Algeria required a return to the first principles of Islam. The Ulema's programme was both religious and cultural. It considered education as a means of achieving *Islah*, and the Association set up a network of free schools across the country to provide education in Arabic. These learning institutions valued the revival of Islamic cultural identity, Pan-Arab ideals, and the teaching of Arabic. Ben Badis' famous creed was: 'Islam is my religion, Arabic is my language, Algeria is my fatherland.' For example, Article 3 of the rules and regulations of the Association banned any debating of political issues. As Director General of Education in both Iraq and Syria, Al Husri introduced, in 1923 and 1944, respectively, educational policies that were focused inward. To achieve 'cultural independence', he eliminated the study of foreign languages in primary schools. You sent Moving back to the Algerian brands of nationalism, namely the independence-oriented and revolutionary movement, it was embodied by the *Etoile Nord-Africaine*. After his conscription into the French army during WWI, Messali settled as a migrant worker in the slums surrounding Paris. He then joined the French Communist Party which would support the founding of the *Etoile*. His ideals were a mix of populist socialism coupled with nationalist and religious doctrines based on traditional rural Islamic dogma. Messali believed that 'The Muslim Algerian people have a glorious historical past, a religion and a language totally different from those of France' (Stora, 1991: 85). (The introduction of the capitalist system in French Algeria, and the detribalization of the country's generations-long tribal structure proved dehumanizing tools for the local populations.) Both groups of Kabyle migrants coalesced traditional village and tribal allegiances into a wider regional loyalty. As to Messali, he decided against linguistic-cultural pluralism and in favour of centralized Jacobinism and Unitarianism. In effect, he overestimated Algeria's linguistic-cultural homogeneity and ignored the reality. If the 1949 crisis ended in favour of Messali's partisans, it had far-reaching consequences for pre- and post-independence Algeria. The 'Berberist crisis' caused wounds that would not heal (Harbi, 1980: 33; 1993: 59-64; Meynier, 2002: 94; Ouerdane, 2003: 85). With the exception of introductory courses in calculus, geography and the French language (for children not registered in colonial schools), the Association neglected the You sent teaching of scientific disciplines but allowed

pupils and students to acquire written and oral competence in Literary Arabic. Demands related to language and education included: the creation of a faculty of Arabic language and literature at Algiers University, similar to the ones in Morocco and Tunisia; the development of Muslim universities for Muslim professors to teach Arabic language and literature; the teaching of Arabic should be made compulsory at all levels. With the support of Colonel Houari Boumediene, Chief of the General Staff of the military forces stationed in Morocco and Tunisia, Ahmed Ben Bella, recently released from his six years' captivity during the liberation struggle and soon-to-be the first Head of State, repudiated the leadership that had successfully ended the War of Independence. And he knowingly subjected history to the demands of his pan-Arab ideology by employing a judiciously selected history syllabus while at the same time acknowledging that such practices characterized modern dictatorships (Cleveland, 1971: 63, 79, 131, 147, 170). In the Manifesto of the Algerian People, which emerged in 1943, he made a number of demands, among which the following pertain to language and education: 'free and compulsory instruction for the children of both sexes', 'the recognition of Arabic as an official language in the same capacity as the French language' (Stora & Daoud, 1995: 92, 121). In May 1931, Sheikh Abdelhamid Ben Badis (1889–1940) founded a religious movement, as embodied by the Association of the Ulemas – 'Ulema' meaning 'Muslim elder'. The Berberist movement grew out of the triumph of colonial capitalism in Algeria in general and Kabylia in particular, and the ensuing migration of Kabyle workers to France and to urban centres in Algeria. The first conception of Algeria favoured Literary (Classical) Arabic over all other idioms, while the latter defended equality between Algeria's languages and cultures. Interestingly enough, the Berber Decree (Dahir) of 1930 introduced by France in French Morocco for divisive objectives unexpectedly strengthened Moroccans' nationalism and mobilized them to drive the French out. If Ben Badis opposed the assimilation called for by Ferhat Abbas (see Chapter 5), he nevertheless advocated the integration of the 'Algerian Muslim community within the great French family' (Stora, 1991: 75). The Ulemas mistook their own social position (religious, urban, bourgeois) for that of the entire country: they had a Jacobean definition of Algerian identity assimilated with towns and cities. On the other hand, there were secular Marxist nationalists – most of them of Kabyle origin – who rejected such a national conception as simplistic, racist and imperialist. First, as mentioned in the preceding section, colonials had no ruling elite (royals, aristocrats) to rally around and resist colonialists who knowingly deprived them of any leadership. Literary (Classical) Arabic aroused the type of strong symbolism associated with ancient languages to liberate dominated populations. This meeting in Libya and the societal project established at that time (the Tripoli Programme) turned out to be the first military Coup d'Etat to take place before the existence of independent Algeria was proclaimed (Horne, 1987: 385–387, 477–478; Ruedy, 1992: 190–194). Historian Monique Gadant wrote 'the Ulemas were a national movement which produced makers of ideology, but in politics, they were always, no pun intended, reformists' (Gadant, 1988: 28). Thanks to Messali, migrant Algerian nationalists living in France and the Levant amalgamated the two brands of nationalism, French Jacobinism and Pan-Arabism. After another ban, Messali founded, in 1946, a successor to the PPA called the Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Democratiques (MTLD). It was from the ranks of PPA/MTLD that the radicals of the FLN emerged to launch the war and free the country from colonial rule (Collot & Henry, 1978: 136; Meynier,

2002: 57–58; Vermeren, 2004: 92). There were, on the one hand, nationalists headed by Messali who supported an 'Arab–Islamic Algeria' founded on the ideology known as Arabo–Islamism. They believed that, in addition to the Arabic and Islamic constituent parts, Algerianness should also include Berber, Turkish and, why not – although not openly declared – French elements. It is probably this aspect which prevented the grassroots of the PPA/MTLD party in Kabylia from supporting the Kabyle mutineers during the 'Berberist crisis'. In the 1930s, a colonial piece of legislation enhanced this 'martyr' status: in August 1935, Literary Arabic was decreed a 'foreign language' by the French State Council. If all these parties merged in 1954 into a conglomeration to liberate the country, all those who created the FLN came from the independence-oriented party, with Reformists having almost no role in this endeavour. The Democratic Union of the Algerian Manifesto (UDMA in French) was founded in April 1946 by a group of liberals, the central figure being Ferhat Abbas (1899–1985). He accused the traditional Algerian rural brand of Islam, represented by the marabouts (holy men), as a corruption of the Muslim faith which served colonialism. Messali's association with Arslan strengthened his adherence to Pan–Arabism and Arab–Islamic ideology. Following the open insurrection of May 1945 in the northeast of the country, around the city of Setif, and the ensuing bloody massacre (Setif uprising), the colonial authorities tried to make up for the gross denial of justice of the 1935 decree. It was not until July 1961 that France admitted the mistake in the 1935 decree: Charles de Gaulle signed a decree to cancel it and impose the teaching of Arabic in the primary cycle (Benrabah, 1999: 58–59; Errihani, 2008: 26–27, 81–83; Mahe, 2001: 432; Meynier, 2002: 96). The national movement grew out of three separate strands each associated with a particular leader and defined as either reformist or independence-oriented. In this section, emphasis will be placed on the independence-oriented nationalist group and one Reformist ideology, the two nationalist brands that would influence language policy and planning in post-independent Algeria. The discussion begins with the presentation of the two major Reformist parties, their conception of the 'Algerian nation', and respective programmes in relation to the issue of language and identity. Abbas equated Franco–Algerian equality and assimilation with metropolitan France because he did not believe in a separate Algerian identity (see Chapter 5). The Etoile rejected assimilation and association (integration), and demanded Algeria's self-determination. As an expatriate, he lived six months in Switzerland (1935–1936) where he met Emir Chekib Arslan, a Pan–Arabist from the Lebanese aristocracy. In 1937, Messali recreated his political organization as Parti du Peuple Algerien (PPA) with roughly the same programme. In the meantime and prior to 1954, PPA/MTLD members were divided on the cultural and linguistic identity of the future 'Algerian nation'. Finally, despite their differences all three major nationalist strands shared a common denominator: the language demand stood out as an important element in all parties' programmes and manifestos. It is worth noting here that, during the war of liberation, a tragic episode prepared the future for linguistic cleansing in independent Algeria. The UDMA demanded, like the *pieds noirs*, an equal access to political and economic posts. Item 8 of its political programme adopted in May 1933 advocated 'Compulsory education in the Arabic language. All official documents must be published simultaneously in Arabic and French' (Collot & Henry, 1978: 39, 52). To these activists, the birth of Algeria coincides with the Arab conquest in the 7th century, and the spread of Islam. Article 57 of the Statute voted in 1947 read: 'The

teaching of Arabic will be provided at all levels in Algeria.'By 1954, this disposition was still not implemented because the Unions of French Teachers opposed it for they feared for the 'weakening of French culture'. He epitomized the westernized middle class and his social milieu oriented him towards bourgeois France. However, Abbas remained secular and attached to his Islamic faith and the Arabic language. He stated his demand for the study of Arabic in a 1936 editorial: This language [Arabic] is to the Muslim religion what the Church is to the Catholic religion. The Etoile emerged in France in 1926 and was presided over by Messali Hadj (1898–1974), the son of a shoe-maker. The conflict between the two factions led to the 'Berberist crisis' of April 1949, and the birth of the political concepts of 'Berberism' and 'Berberist'. A focus on Arabic and Islam to unify Algerians was simply unavoidable for at least three main reasons. Third, You sent France's imposition of assimilationism turned the Koranic idiom into a 'martyr' language. What is more, the struggle for power among individuals and clans intensified within the FLN when there was not a shade of doubt concerning the country's independence. It could not live without it. The belief of an illiterate Muslim is a web of indigestible superstitions. He believed in Islamic reformism (Islah) emanating from the Middle East. In 1927, the Etoile's political platform called, among other things, for 'access to education at all levels; the creation of schools in Arabic'. And that was how he came to share the Ulema's Jacobean definition of Algerian identity. In May and early June 1962, the fractured FLN met at Tripoli, in Libya. The French authorities dissolved the Etoile in 1929 and Messali spent several spells in prison or exile. They called for more secularism and for an 'Algerian Algeria'. And the link between this language and Islam reinforced its symbolic value. In fact, out of a total of 27,000 teachers, those of European descent represented 97%. Is it then necessary to declare our commitment to the teaching of the Arabic language, the basis of our belief? The creation of schools in Arabic. The latter came out into the open in the late 1920s. For us the Mosque is nothing. It stands as the cement of our faith. Access to education at all levels. The reading of the Sacred Book is everything. The second reason is related to the above.