

**IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

**MASTER THESIS**

**THE SUFI *TARIQAHS* AND THEIR STANCES ON  
FRENCH COLONIALISM IN NORTH AFRICA:  
TUNISIA AND ALGERIA AS A CASE STUDY**

**ABDELRAHMAN SALEH**

**THESIS SUPERVISOR  
ASST. PROF. VAHDETTİN IŞIK**

**İSTANBUL, 2023**

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**by**

**ABDELRAHMAN SALEH**

**A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in  
Religious Studies**

**THESIS SUPERVISOR  
ASST. PROF. VAHDETTİN IŞIK**

**İSTANBUL, 2023**

APPROVAL PAGE

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that, in our opinion, it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of master of arts in Religious Studies.

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ÖZ

KUZEY AFRİKA'DA SUFİ TARIKATLARI VE FRANSIZ SÖMÜRGEÇİLİĞİNE  
İLİŞKİN DURUŞLARI: ÖRNEK OLARAK TUNUS VE CEZAYİR

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İslami fetih dalgasının Endülüs'e doğru boyuta ulaşması ve Abbasi Halifeliği'nin etkisinin azalmasından sonra, Mağrip'in farklı emirliklere ve krallıklara bölünmesi başladı, bu da Batı'yı MS 1095'ten 1291'e kadar Haçlı Seferleri bağlamında hedef almaya teşvik etti ve daha sonra MS on beşinci yüzyıldan itibaren İspanya'nın iki krallığının ortaya çıkmasıyla hedeflemeyi artırdı. MS on sekizinci yüzyıldan bu yana bilimsel ve teknik devrimden sonra zirveye ulaştı. Bir yandan büyüyen bu Hristiyan dış tehdidi ve devletin ordularıyla bu tehditle yüzleşememesi karşısında, Arap Mağrip toplumları kendilerini çeşitli toplumsal çerçeveleri aracılığıyla, özünde kabileler ve Sufi tarikatları olan bu sömürgecilikle doğrudan ilgilenmeye çağrılmış buldular.

Bu çalışma, Cezayir ve Tunus'taki en önemli Sufi Tarikatlarının, Fransız sömürgeçiliği konusundaki tutumlarını izleyerek, sömürgeçiliğin bu yollarının tepkilerini kontrol eden faktörleri açıklamaya çalışarak, farklı konularına yol açan, böylece zaman zaman sömürgeçiliğe direnip diğer zamanlarda da desteklemelerine yol açan faktörleri açıklamaya çalışarak ışık tutmaktadır. Bu Sufi Tarikatlar sömürgeçiliğe karşı tutumlarını sadece dinî ve doktrinel yönüne dayandırmamış, ekonomik, siyasî ve sosyal yönleri de büyük rol oynamışlardır. Sömürgecilik aynı zamanda Tarikatların sosyal ve politik çıkarlarını koruma ihtiyacını, kendisine karşı tutumunu değiştirmesi için üzerinde bir baskı aracı oluşturmak için kullandı ve araştırmanın açıklığa kavuşturmaya çalıştığı şey budur.

Çalışma, MS on ikinci yüzyıldan bu yana Mağrip'te Sufi Tarikatların yayılmasının başlangıcını kısaca tartıştı ve o zamanki siyasi ve sosyal duruma atıfta bulunarak, bu Tarikaların sosyal ve politik bağlamlarında anlaşılmasını ve daha sonra konularının yorumlanmasını kolaylaştırdı.

Çalışma aynı zamanda en önemli Sufi Tarikatlarını ve fikirlerinin mahiyetini ve sahip oldukları takipçi ve vakıf sayısını da sınırlamış ve bu yolların iştirakleri tarafından tutulan en önemli fikir ve inançları kısaca sunmuş ve bu yolların kurucuları hakkında konuşmaya bir bölüm ayırmıştır. Çalışma ayrıca, bazılarının Fransız sömürgeciliği ile aktif bir rolü olduğu için ana yollardan dallanan en önemli yollardan bahsetmeyi de ihmal etmedi.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Fransız Sömürgecilik, Kuzey Afrika, Sosyo-Ekonomi, Sufi Tarikatlar.

## ABSTRACT

### THE SUFI *TARIQAHS* AND THEIR STANCES ON FRENCH COLONIALISM IN NORTH AFRICA: TUNISIA AND ALGERIA AS A CASE STUDY

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After the expansion of Islamic conquests and the decline of the Abbasid Caliphate, different emirates and kingdoms emerged in the Maghreb. This region became a target for Crusades from 1095 to 1291 AD and later faced increased targeting with the emergence of Spanish kingdoms in the 15<sup>th</sup> century AD. As external threats grew, societies in Arab Maghreb found themselves compelled to confront this colonialism directly through various social frameworks, including tribes and Sufi *Tariqahs* at their core.

The present study investigates the attitudes of Sufi *Tariqahs* in Algeria and Tunisia toward French colonialism. It delves into the diverse factors impacting their responses, resulting in resistance and support. The findings reveal that the *Tariqahs*' stances were shaped not only by religious and doctrinal considerations but also by economic, political, and social factors. Additionally, the colonial powers exploited the *Tariqahs*' desire to safeguard their social and political interests, manipulating them as a means of coercion to alter their attitudes toward colonialism. This research seeks to provide greater insight into these complexities.

The study discusses the emergence of Sufi *Tariqahs* in the Maghreb since the 12<sup>th</sup> century AD. It referred to the political and social situation of that time, which facilitated the understanding of these *Tariqahs* in their social and political context. It

also provided an overview of the most essential Sufi *Tariqahs*, their ideas, beliefs, followers, and endowments. The study briefly presents the founders of these *Tariqahs* and their teachings. Additionally, it mentions the critical branches of these *Tariqahs*, some of which played an active role in French colonialism.

**Keywords:** French Colonialism, North Africa, Socio-Economic, Sufi Tariqahs.



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I am deeply grateful for my parents, who guided me on the path of knowledge and constantly encouraged me to keep progressing in this field, urging me to never stop after any achievement. I can never fully express my gratitude toward them. I would also like to thank the rest of my family for their unwavering support throughout my MA journey. Their belief in me has been crucial in reaching this stage, especially my older sister Dr. Tasneem, who has been a remarkable role model of perseverance, diligence, and academic accomplishment.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ÖZ</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENT</b> .....	<b>viii</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	<b>ix</b>
<b>CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1. Background.....	1
1.2. Problem Statement.....	2
1.3. Purpose of the Thesis.....	2
1.4. The Importance of the Research .....	3
1.4.1. What Distinguishes the Research .....	4
1.5. Research Questions.....	5
1.6. Methodology.....	6
1.7. Research Challenges .....	7
1.8. Literature Review .....	7
1.9. Research Plan.....	12
<b>CHAPTER II SUFI <i>TARIQAHS</i> IN TUNISIA</b> .....	<b>13</b>
2.1. Introduction: Overview.....	13
2.2. The Main Tariqahs in Tunisia.....	19
2.3. The Qadiri Tariqah .....	20
2.3.1. The First Phase .....	23
2.3.2. Second Phase .....	23
2.4. The Tijani Tariqah .....	25
2.4.1. Affiliated Tariqahs.....	26
2.5. Shadhili <i>Tariqah</i> .....	27
2.6. The Shābi <i>Tariqah</i> .....	28
2.6.1. The Shabiyya from Sufi State to Political State .....	29
<b>CHAPTER III SUFI <i>TARIQAHS</i> IN TUNISIA AND THE ISSUE OF COLONIALISM</b> .....	<b>32</b>
3.1. Stances of Sufi <i>Tariqahs</i> Toward the Entry of French Colonialism in the Tunisian Province .....	35
3.1.1. Loyal Tariqahs .....	35
3.1.2. Tariqahs that Resisted French Colonialism .....	39

3.2. Sufi <i>Tariqahs</i> and French Colonial Policies in Tunisia.....	40
3.3. The Stance of the Sufi <i>Tariqahs</i> Toward French Colonial Policy.....	41
3.3.1. The Sufi <i>Tariqahs</i> Loyal to French Colonial Power.....	42
3.3.2. Role of the Tijani <i>Tariqahs</i> in Executing Colonial Policies.....	42
3.3.3. Contribution of the Qadiri <i>Tariqah</i> to Executing Colonial Policies.....	44
3.4. Conclusion .....	47
<b>CHAPTER IV SUFI <i>TARIQAHS</i> AND COLONIAL RESISTANCE IN ALGERIA .....</b>	<b>48</b>
4.1. Introduction: Overview.....	48
4.2. <i>Tariqah</i> Resistance to the Spanish Occupation .....	51
4.3. The Relationship Between Sufi <i>Tariqahs</i> and the Ottoman Protectorate..	51
4.3.1. Stage of Contentment .....	52
4.3.2. Rejection of Ottoman Protection .....	58
<b>CHAPTER V SUFI <i>TARIQAHS</i> IN THE FACE OF COLONIALISM .....</b>	<b>61</b>
5.1. Sufi Resistance: Loyalty to the Order Versus Loyalty to the Homeland ..	61
5.2. The Role of French Intelligence in Manipulating Anti-Colonial Sufi <i>Tariqah</i> Resistance .....	66
5.2.1. The Qadiriyya Resistance and Espionage Infiltration .....	66
5.2.2. The Military Resistance of the Qadiriyya <i>Tariqah</i> .....	69
5.2.3. Resistance of the Qadiri Ibn Nasser ibn Shahrah .....	72
5.2.4. The Shadhiliyya's Anti-Colonial Military Resistance.....	74
5.2.5. The Rahmaniyya <i>Tariqah</i> 's Bitter Confrontation with Colonialism.....	77
5.2.6. The Most Important Revolutions.....	78
5.2.7. Loyalty to Colonization by Undermining Asceticism and Planting Women	85
<b>CHAPTER VI CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>CURRICULUM VITAE.....</b>	<b>101</b>

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background

Sufi *Tariqahs* have spread throughout the Maghreb region since the 12th century AD. Gradually, they became a significant portion of those positions, if not an integral part of the social fabric, and served as a platform for expressing their positions as the Islamic sphere began to disintegrate. In parallel, after the first wave of Islamic conquests reached its limit in the west (Al-Andalus) and the central authority weakened (due to the decline of the Abbasid Caliphate), the Maghreb region gradually fragmented, resulting in the establishment of different emirates and kingdoms. This drew the interest of Western powers, who began to focus on the region during the Crusades from 1095 to 1291 CE. The targeting increased significantly in the 15<sup>th</sup> century with the rise of Spain and Portugal after significant geographical discoveries. Additionally, it escalated further following advancements in science and technology since the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

In response to the growing Christian threat and the failure of official powers to address it, Maghrebian communities directly addressed this challenge through various social structures, such as tribes and Sufi *Tariqahs*. The Sufi *Tariqahs* have seamlessly woven themselves into the social fabric of Maghreb, serving a dual purpose of religious devotion and social organization. Their influence is felt across urban and rural areas, creating connections beyond traditional affiliations and tribal boundaries. Interestingly, the Sufi *Tariqahs* do not acknowledge national borders. Instead, they serve as a regional unifying force, promoting territorial unity in Maghreb.

This thesis delves into the reactions of different *Tariqahs* toward the European invasion. It's fascinating to note that their responses were diverse and even conflicting. This diversity wasn't limited to the *Tariqahs* alone but also existed within them, spanning tribes, regions, sheiks, and varying timeframes. The thesis seeks to examine this diversity and its importance.

## **1.2. Problem Statement**

The variations in attitudes toward French colonialism among the different *Tariqahs* are quite evident. This diversity is evident not only between different *Tariqahs* but also within them. It can be challenging to closely monitor these situations and keep track of the exact changes. Much of the research in this area tends to portray *Tariqah* situations either in an overly positive or negative manner. As a result, it falls on researchers to uphold their responsibility of striving for a comprehensive understanding that strikes a balance between these extremes.

The absence of autobiographies within these *Tariqahs* is a notable issue, as there was little interest from disciples or students in accurately documenting and recording events. This contrasts the actions of colonizers who did so for their purposes. Consequently, we observe a disparity between the intellectual output of Arab and European societies, with colonialism itself and orientalists representing the latter. A further complication arises whereby researchers' conclusions are often based on sources that align with colonial perspectives and interests in this region. The researcher has tried to reconcile such biased sources with others used in the study.

Therefore, the thesis aims to investigate the social context of these *Tariqahs*, particularly in Tunisia and Algeria, where Sufi *Tariqahs* were widely spread. The researcher also intends to explore these *Tariqahs*' military and political involvement in opposing colonialism. This study seeks to comprehend the origins of Sufi *Tariqahs*, their resistance against colonial rule, and evolving stances toward occupation.

## **1.3. Purpose of the Thesis**

This study attempts to showcase religion's crucial role in Arab-Islamic cultures in all its diverse forms. It sheds light on how Sufi *Tariqahs* utilize religion as a tool to resist colonialism while also uncovering how colonizers exploit religion and religious leaders to sway certain *Tariqahs* and advance their own objectives.

The study provides an in-depth analysis of the role played by French colonialism in the fight against *Tariqahs* and how it affected popular resistance. It also highlights how

the French administration took advantage of the *Tariqahs* in its expansionist policy in Algeria and Tunisia. The study delves into the historical context of the *Tariqahs*, their significance in North African society, and the impact of colonialism on their practices and beliefs.

The research provides a comprehensive understanding of the role played by Sufi *Tariqahs* in social and political life, particularly in situations where political parties were not yet established or in the absence of a state and its system. It sheds light on the positive aspects of these *Tariqahs* and the practices of their members, which were previously stigmatized by colonialism as backward, ignorant, and absurd. The research also enumerates the most critical positions these *Tariqahs* took toward colonialism and highlights the significant convergence in the ideas and positions of Sufi sects across different geographical locations.

#### **1.4. The Importance of the Research**

This research holds immense significance as it delves into the prevalent phenomenon of Sufism and Sufi *Tariqahs* in Maghreb society. These have ingrained themselves in the social fabric and have been instrumental in the transportation of ideas and beliefs within the society. The French administration acknowledged this reality and leveraged it to gain entry into its Maghreb colonies. Through the study of Sufi *Tariqahs*, they could manipulate and utilize them to infiltrate and gain control over the colonies.

The European West was particularly interested in the religious aspect of social life. As a result, orientalist studies emerged early on, with France leading the way. The occupation administration assigned a group of anthropological researchers to investigate the reality of popular religiosity in the Arab Maghreb. At the same time, the military, also under French influence, encouraged the study of Sufi *Tariqahs* by assigning Arab officers to do so.

The research's significance is highlighted through a comparative approach, which will be further elaborated on in the literary review section. This subject was broadened to encompass Tunisia and Algeria to bridge the gap in numerous studies that solely

concentrate on a particular geographic region. This methodology addresses the dearth of research examining the same topic in a restricted regional context.

The research has addressed an important gap related to the stances of Sufi *Tariqahs* on colonialism. Most previous studies have focused on one or two *Tariqahs* as examples. However, my research has taken a more comprehensive approach by examining the main *Tariqahs* and their branches. This provides a more precise and more comprehensive view of the nature of the stances taken by these *Tariqahs*.

Most research conducted after the decolonization of certain countries focused solely on the role of the state, political parties, or social movements in the liberation issue. This research neglected to mention the role of certain Sufi *Tariqahs* in resisting colonialism. Therefore, it is important to highlight these *Tariqahs*' political and military efforts in resisting colonialism, particularly since these movements took place before the emergence of political parties and national liberation fronts and in the absence of the state.

This research makes a valuable academic contribution by highlighting the economic dimension. It provides a comprehensive overview of the endowments and properties of the *Tariqahs* and sheds light on how colonialism leveraged them to coerce the sheiks of these *Tariqahs*, to dominate them, and to alter their positions.

#### **1.4.1. What Distinguishes the Research**

The research work required me to rely on documents from the Tunisia treasury and the writings of specialist researchers in sociology and Sufism studies, particularly in the Maghreb region. For instance, I read the works of Latifa al-Akhdar on Tariqi Sufism, Lajili Tlili's doctoral thesis on the *Tariqahs* in Tunisia, which we shall refer to later in the literary review section, and the articles of Muhammad Toumi on Sufi *Tariqahs* in Tunisia. To enhance the research, I also read some articles published in the African journal on the subject. Additionally, I had several personal meetings with sheiks and members of these *Tariqahs* through Zoom meetings. I also relied on various complementary references such as printed books, research, published and unpublished theses, and articles in many periodicals. Moreover, I surveyed many local and foreign

Arabic, English, and French newspapers in different periods that directly relate to critical events.

I have come across several books and research papers on Algeria that delve into the Sufi *Tariqahs* and their various roles during the French occupation. Particularly noteworthy are two main references on the Qadiriyyah and Tijani *Tariqahs* by Professor Abdul Baqi Muftah, who aptly called them “lights on the two *Tariqahs*”. Other significant sources of information on the *Tariqahs* include the writings of Ibn Arabi in his book “The Meccan Conquests” and “Al-Kanash”, a text on the Tijani *Tariqah* compiled and prepared by Muhammad Al-Kabir between Ahmed bin Muhammad Al-Kabir Al-Tijani at the Rabat Press in 2009.

Throughout my reading, I have delved into a multitude of literature dedicated to the Qadiriyya *Tariqah*. Among them, “The Visitor’s Masterpiece in the History of Algeria,” “Prince Abdelkader” by Muhammad Al-Amir bin Abdul Qadir, and “The Life of Al-Zamir Abdul Qadir” by Churchill have all been particularly insightful. Furthermore, I have also perused a significant number of letters penned by the prince himself, which were thoughtfully compiled by Dr. Abdelhamid Zouzou and published in a historical magazine in 1983, commemorating the centennial anniversary of Prince Abdelkader’s passing.

I have come across several studies that explore this phenomenon. Some of these studies discuss this stage of the region’s history, while others focus on specific *Tariqahs* in the region. Notable examples include Professor Abu Kassem Saadallah’s study “The Cultural History of Algeria,” Latifa Al-Akhdar’s “Tariqi Islam in Tunisia,” and Ahmed Nazir’s “Sufi Religious *Tariqahs* and the French Occupation of Algeria.”

## **1.5. Research Questions**

This research raises many questions, perhaps the most prominent of which are:

- To what extent have Sufi *Tariqahs* influenced Maghreb’s social, political, and cultural life?
- How did Sufi *Tariqahs* in the Maghreb region interact with European colonialism?

- What factors influenced their responses, causing them to sometimes align and diverge? Did their stance on colonialism stem from religious beliefs and intellectual references, or was it a reflection of the political orientations of their leaders?
- Alternatively, was it a position that reflected the social interests of the *Tariqahs*? Or was it a combination of all these factors?

## 1.6. Methodology

My area of study centers on the diverse perspectives of Sufi *Tariqahs* toward Western colonialism. This intricate matter encompasses the historical context of these viewpoints and the corresponding practices. To delve into this subject, I utilized a comparative approach incorporating various methodologies. This approach forms my research's building blocks, enabling me to gather historical data and cross-reference findings with other relevant studies. In doing so, I strive to develop an impartial method for evaluating Sufi *Tariqahs*'s stances and disprove any baseless assertions.

In conducting socio-religious historo-political research, employing various complementary methods to enhance the fundamental approach is imperative. This is due to the intricate interplay of social, political, cultural, and economic dynamics within the phenomenon under investigation. Disregarding a systemic approach would be unsuitable in this context. Similarly, employing a descriptive historical method is crucial for documenting historical events, particularly when examining the emergence and proliferation of Sufi *Tariqahs* in the Maghreb countries.

It was also essential to utilize statistical techniques for quantifying the presence of *Tariqahs* and their followers within the prominent Sufi orders, along with documenting the number of *Zawiyas* and some of their associated properties, employing a deductive approach aided in uncovering the underlying reasons and motivations guiding the stances adopted by Sufi *Tariqahs* toward French colonialism. This method also facilitated an understanding of the challenges that compelled French colonial forces to seek comprehension of these *Tariqahs* as part of efforts to exert influence and control over them.

## 1.7. Research Challenges

The abundance of Sufi *Tariqahs* poses a significant challenge due to their proliferation. It may not be necessary for a master's level work to comprehensively catalog all the *Tariqahs* and analyze their stance on European colonialism. Instead, focusing on the major *Tariqahs* and some of their offshoots is more feasible. Documenting these *Tariqahs'* various stances is an extensive, arduous, and intricate task. To address this issue effectively, one can concentrate on positions that range from resistance and “jihad” to collaboration with colonial powers.

One challenge was the scarcity of Arab literature discussing the resistance of Sufi *Tariqahs* against French colonialism. Most analyses from this period were authored by individuals from the colonizing power, relying heavily on historical documents and French archives for information. To address this obstacle, I turned to various Arab and non-Arab sources expressing diverse perspectives on *Tariqahs*, considering the writers' orientations and backgrounds.

The primary challenge was the limited documentation of events by the *Tariqah* leaders and the absence of archival records related to key *Tariqahs* such as the Qadiriyya and Tijani. Few members of these *Tariqahs* attempted to document or date these events, thus I had to depend on external accounts in my research, including biographies and translations from their associates.

## 1.8. Literature Review

As the study explores Sufi *Tariqahs* in the Maghreb region, with a particular focus on Tunisia and Algeria and their perspectives on French colonialism, it is crucial that I conduct a comprehensive review of the existing literature on this subject. This entails engaging with works that offer positive and negative evaluations of the Sufi *Tariqahs'* viewpoints while examining their intellectual and doctrinal underpinnings. It is imperative that no stone is left unturned in the pursuit of a well-rounded understanding of this complex topic.

Algeria's rich cultural history has been extensively chronicled in literary works, and one of the most notable publications on the topic is the "Cultural History of Algeria". This remarkable book is widely recognized as an encyclopedia of Algeria's historical and cultural events, consisting of ten comprehensive parts. Chapter two of part four is particularly devoted to the Sufi *Tariqahs* in Algeria, examining the major *Tariqahs* and their various branches. This chapter encompasses over 20 *Tariqahs* and their engagement with politics, including their subjugation to occupation. Our research aimed to widen the scope of our study to include Tunisia, focusing on the most influential *Tariqahs* and their branches that had ties to colonialism. Our research also highlighted the economic dimension and the use of occupation as a means of subduing these *Tariqahs* and their followers.

"The Historical Truth of Islamic Sufism" is a noteworthy reference book when studying the Tunisian case. Its author delves into the philosophical aspects of Sufism and provides a historical overview of the origin and spread of Sufi *Tariqahs*. The book's second section provides insights into the phenomenon of asceticism and Sufism in Africa and Tunisia, detailing the emergence of Sufism, the proliferation of *Tariqahs*, and the diverse approaches and ideas of the sheiks.

The author delves into the negative aspects surrounding Sufi *Tariqahs* in Tunisia and their relationship with French colonialism. Colonial powers' exploitation of these *Tariqahs* to further their interests, even following Tunisia's independence, is discussed. These *Tariqahs* were utilized to divert public attention away from issues. They aimed to instill the idea of trust and submission to colonialism, which became a mantra for every disciple. However, some reformers could convert the disciples, and they became part of the liberation resistance. Later, they joined new popular groups that focused on the development and liberation of the region, distancing themselves from the *Tariqahs*.

Upon completing our analysis of the book, it became apparent that it solely highlighted the negative aspects of the Sufi *Tariqahs* phenomenon. We also observed a flaw in the connection between colonialism's ability to control the Sufi *Tariqahs* and the manifestation of this control. While this is a contributing factor, it is not the sole reason. In our research, we aimed to address this gap by focusing on the positive aspects of these *Tariqahs* in Tunisia and Algeria. While we acknowledged the negative side, we

refrained from sweeping generalizations about the entire Tunisian case. We effectively demonstrated how these anti-colonial methods and their elders were pivotal in inspiring young people to resist colonialism and liberate their country from its grasp.

One significant academic work that addressed the topic of *Tariqahs* through colonial literature is a master's thesis titled "Sufi *Tariqahs* in French Colonial Writings, with a Focus on the Tijani *Tariqah*". The research centered on examining the Tijani *Tariqah* exclusively based on analyses of colonial writings and broadened its geographic coverage to encompass Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco.

Our research has focused on studying all the major *Tariqahs* rather than limiting ourselves to just one. This has allowed us to comprehensively understand the reality of these *Tariqahs* and draw clear comparisons between them. In addition, we have diversified our sources by including both Arab and foreign sources and studying the Tijaniya *Tariqah* through the writings of French colonialism.

The research by Ahmed Darkoush, titled "The Influence of Sufi *Tariqahs* Qadiriyyah and Tijaniya on Colonialism in Algeria and Tunisia (1080-1939 AD)," is a significant contribution to this study area. In this research, interviews with the sheiks of these *Tariqahs* were used to focus on their religious and ideological stances toward colonialism. My work has drawn from this study, particularly the insightful interviews with the sheiks of the Qadiriyyah and Tijani *Tariqahs*. However, I have also addressed limitations in discussing both main branches and other important offshoots. Moreover, my work expands beyond focusing solely on intellectual and doctrinal aspects by delving into the political, social, and economic dimensions.

The researcher Qara Fatima conducted a study titled "The Position of Tunisian Sufi *Tariqahs* under French protection from 1881-1939 AD: Qadiriyyah and Tijaniya *Tariqah*". The study focuses on the position of Sufi *Tariqahs* in Tunisia under French protection, specifically the Qadiriyyah and Tijaniya *Tariqahs*. The scope of the study was limited to two models for easier comparison, and it also focused on one or two *Tariqahs* to provide a better understanding of the aspects of comparison.

The research of Dr. Al-Tlili Al-Ajili on “Sufi *Tariqahs* and French colonialism in Tunisia 1881/1939 AD” is one of the most significant studies in this area. It examines the Sufi *Tariqahs* from various perspectives, categorizing them into pro-colonial and anti-colonial groups. Our study reveals the limitations of this research by incorporating insights from the Algerian case, allowing for a comparative analysis between Tunisian and Algerian cases. This contributes significantly to understanding the stances of these *Tariqahs* and identifying their similarities and differences under French colonization.

Among the literature analyzing Sufi *Tariqahs* in Tunisia is a book discussing “Tariqi Islam: The Evolution of Sufi *Tariqahs*’ Relationship with France.” In this work, the author explores the philosophical aspects of the Sufi phenomenon and highlights the transformation of *Zawiya*’s role from solely performing devotional rituals to becoming an exclusive social and cultural institution representing Sufism. This shift has led to a new cultural identity within Islamic culture, independent from philosophical mysticism and official religion, thus becoming a fundamental element of Maghreb identity.

The author has explored the negative attitudes of certain *Tariqahs* toward colonialism, as well as their cooperation with the colonizers. The author attributes this collaboration to the colonizers’ shrewdness and examines these *Tariqahs*’ beliefs and values. However, my study addresses this gap in the book by collecting and analyzing the various stances taken by these *Tariqahs* - whether they supported, resisted, or appeased colonialism. Consequently, my study concludes that the Sufi situation is not a monolithic one that can be confined to the stance of one *Tariqah* or one region. Instead, the beliefs and ideas followed by each *Tariqah* varied, resulting in different attitudes toward colonialism.

In “The Sufi *Tariqahs*: their origin, beliefs and effects,” Dr. Abdullah explores the beliefs and ideas of seven Sufi *Tariqahs*. The focus of the research is to bring attention to the negative impact these *Tariqahs* can have on the Muslim faith. Within the book, Dr. Abdullah highlights how members of these *Tariqahs* can spread ignorance, superstition, and polytheism. Additionally, he addresses their lack of involvement in general Muslim issues, such as their reluctance to participate in the jihad against the Tatars and Crusades. Furthermore, Dr. Abdullah notes the close relationship between

these *Tariqahs* and Western colonialism. He holds these *Tariqahs* responsible for the colonization of Islamic countries. These points can be found on page 158 of the book.

Upon examining this research work, I discovered a significant flaw in how it dealt with the Sufi issue. It cannot be reduced to a single position and judged accordingly. My research studied multiple cases to address this deficiency and explained why each *Tariqah* adopted a particular trend.

One of the shortcomings of the previous research regarding this case is that the researcher took a generalized approach, passing judgment on all *Tariqahs* without studying each case separately or attempting to understand these *Tariqahs* in their unique geographical, social, and political context. The previous researcher erred when addressing the issue of *Tariqahs* by focusing solely on their doctrinal and intellectual side and using fatwas from scholars and sheiks to express opinions against the Sufi *Tariqahs*. In my own research, I have approached this issue differently by diversifying my sources and studying a wider variety of *Tariqahs* across a broader geographical scope. I also studied the social, political, and economic aspects of each case to better understand the positions of these *Tariqahs*. This allowed me to come up with a more objective conclusion when judging these *Tariqahs*.

Previous studies have often limited their scope to specific geographic areas or periods or have focused on only a few *Tariqahs*, exploring singular aspects of their positions. Some studies have even presented biased views of the *Tariqahs*, emphasizing only one aspect of their doctrines, social structures, or political leanings. Our research offers a more comprehensive examination. We investigate the significant Sufi *Tariqahs* in Tunisia and Algeria, exploring their varying positions on colonialism from intellectual, doctrinal, social, political, and economic perspectives. Our objective is to present a fair and accurate representation of their views without glorification or underestimation. We strive to maintain a neutral stance in studying these *Tariqahs* and their positions on French colonialism.

## 1.9. Research Plan

This research is divided into six chapters as follows:

Chapter One: Introduction

Chapter Two: Discusses the emergence of Sufi *Tariqahs* and their expansion in the Maghreb region, with a particular focus on Tunisia. The chapter elaborates on the social and political conditions of the country during that time and how Sufism evolved into a significant social movement. Furthermore, it delves into the crucial Sufi *Tariqahs* in the area, their respective offshoots, and the essential milestones in their history, including their fundamental structures..

Chapter Three: Discusses the Tunisian case starting from the imposition of protection on Tunisia in 1881. It highlights the relationship between the French colonizers and Tunisia's most important Sufi *Tariqahs*. The text indicates the diverse positions of these *Tariqahs* toward the colonizers. It tries to clarify the reasons for their differing positions, ranging from supporting the occupation, confronting it, or even appeasing and reconciling with it. The chapter also shows the *Tariqahs*' views on colonialism in the economic and social fields. It concludes by explaining the social and political situation created by the *Tariqahs* and the French occupation's view of them. The chapter also highlights the French occupation's need to develop mechanisms for the *Tariqahs*.

Chapter Four: Discusses the history of Algeria preceding the French occupation in 1830 AD. It places particular emphasis on the most prominent Sufi *Tariqahs* in Algeria. Although we do not specifically explore the role of *Tariqahs* during the French occupation, the chapter does offer valuable insights into their status during the Spanish occupation and the Ottoman Protectorate.

Chapter Five: Discusses the confrontation between Sufi *Tariqahs* in Algeria and French colonialism. It highlights the differences in opinions among these *Tariqahs* and the various methods employed by colonialism to subjugate them. The chapter concludes by examining the current situation of these *Tariqahs*, shedding light on their positive contributions in the face of colonialism.

Chapter Six: Conclusion.

## CHAPTER II

### SUFI *TARIQAHS* IN TUNISIA

#### 2.1. Introduction: Overview

Throughout the Hafsid era and beyond, Sufism has flourished within Maghrebi society, with Tunisia embracing this movement. Operating alongside fiqh and Shariah institutions, Sufism is a spiritual and religious force. A wealth of historical texts, hagiographies, and biographies of Sufi Awliya and exemplary individuals evidences this.<sup>1</sup>

The rise of the Almohads in modern-day Morocco and their expansion eastward to control all of North Africa coincided with the popularization of a new Sufism form that integrated North Africans' cultural reality. The spread of this new content in Sufism was influenced by various social, economic, and political factors, which interacted to create a different collective imagination as well as new economic, cultural, and political realities. The seventh century after hijra marked a significant shift in Sufism's history when Sufi sheiks began embodying the "tangible sacred"<sup>2</sup> and the preferred medium, turning them into a reverence and veneration focus. Reaching this level of solemnity and closeness to God in the eyes of the people made the *Wali* a holder of blessings and a source of positive influence against the power of evil.<sup>3</sup>

Al-Badisi's "Al-Maqsid" highlights the significant expansion of *Zawiyas* in rural areas and tribal communities during the 14th century AD.<sup>4</sup> The Sufi sheiks in these regions held a prominent position, revered for their deep religious knowledge, devout lifestyle based on the Quran, and perceived closeness to Allah through answered prayers. They

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<sup>1</sup> Abu Al-Hasan Al-Hawari, "Manaqib Abi Said Al-Baji," Edited by Ahmed Al-Bukhari Al-Shatwi, Tunisia 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Omar Al-Riyahi, "Ta'tir Al-Nawahi" with the tarjama Al-Sheikh Ibrahim Al-Riyahi, Tunisia 1320 AH, Part 1, p.36

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ismail Al-Badisi, "Al-Maqsad Al-Sharif wa Al-Manza Al-Latif," Critically edited by Al-Sayyid Said Ahmed Urab, The National Library in *Ribat*, Morocco, 1982, p.65.

attracted many students, disciples (*murids*), and visitors from near and far, leading to an urgent need for accommodations and support services due to prevalent violence among tribes within or between themselves. During this period of African history, political power was either absent or distant from the centers of conflict. Hence, the Wali, or the Sheik's representative, was able to expand his influence. This led to the emergence of *Zawiyas* in the inner countryside, providing different services to the delegations of the Sheik's students and *Murids*. They began to request the Sheik to pray for them and spread his blessings to them. The Sheik's memory became highly revered, and stories of his miracles or *karamat* began circulating. These stories quickly spread among the public and became part of their collective imagination. As such, the public believed the Sheik's blessings would continue even after his passing. Legend has it that he healed many sick people and that his intervention would bring rain and other blessings.<sup>5</sup>

The Sufi *Tariqah*, also known as popular Sufism or popular religiosity, extended its influence to encompass a broad spectrum of social groups within Maghrebi society. This shaped its cognitive and doctrinal framework and led to specific changes in social connections that became indebted to Sufi *Tariqahs* and believed in the spiritual leaders' blessings along with the *Tariqah's* initial founder. Consequently, "la société Maraboutique"<sup>6</sup> emerged as Sufism embodied a reality that both political and religious institutions were compelled to acknowledge and attempted to align with the Maliki school of jurisprudence and cultural structures within society.

In his dissertation titled "Ibn Arafa and the Maliki Madhab in Africa during the Eighth Century Hijra," Saad Gharab discusses how the societal culture during that time led to a situation where religious sciences, based on repetition and rumination, became traditional sciences with rigid resources unable to meet society's needs. This stagnation was coupled with scholars becoming introverted within their inherited groups, growing increasingly distant from society and its evolving dynamics, leading people to seek spiritual solace in *Zawiyas*.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> "Manaqib Mubarak Al-Ajmi Al-Humairi," Manuscript in the National Library of Tunisia, No.1855.

<sup>6</sup> T. Bachrouche. Le seint et le prince. P47-137

<sup>7</sup> Saad Gharaba, "Ibn Arafah wa Al-Madhab Al-Maliki bi-Afrika fi Al-Qarn Al-Thamin Al-Hijri," University Publication Center, Tunisia, 1993, p.60.

The perceived lack of progress in the fiqh and Shariah institutions may have contributed to the emergence of alternatives found in *Tariqah* Sufism. This movement aligned with people's desire for simple religious practices and fervent beliefs, where righteous awliya or murabitun acted as intermediaries to Allah, providing guardianship during difficult times. In an era marked by despotism, pandemics, disasters, tribal conflicts, and ideological divisions that led to societal fragmentation and governmental neglect, individuals sought solace in the blessings of the Awliya.<sup>8</sup>

Originally a form of spiritual religiosity, *Tariqah* Sufism evolved into a more organized structure with a clear principle of *Murids* following the sheik and founder. The followers are encouraged to interpret the spiritual meanings of the Awliya. Ahmad Zaruq's work, "The Explanation of the Fundamentals of the Zaruqi *Tariqah*," provides a comprehensive understanding of the *Tariqah* and its principles and their complex relationship.<sup>9</sup> *Tariqahs* relied on emulating the noble Prophet in his words, deeds, and states. According to Al-Kharubi, *Tariqah* is "the path in which people's conduct and lives are oriented toward Allah's noble presence, and its followers must emulate the Messenger in his speech, actions, and state during everyday life and worship. His spoken words that require emulation include supplications in the morning, evening, before sleep, and upon waking up, as well as during meals or entering/exiting a house. As for his deeds, such as prayers and ablutions, those who adhered to imitating him were on the right path. These consist of his sayings/actions related to spiritual practices. Daily life activities such as attire like him, wearing a turban or sandals; mounting/dismounting similar to him should also be copied". It is a common misconception that only the actions and sayings related to worship should be imitated from the *Murid salik*, not those of daily life. However, this is not true. The degree to which a *Murid salik* imitates the actions of the Murshid in everyday life is directly proportional to their spiritual growth. It is essential to follow certain practices like putting on your pants while sitting down, a turban while standing up, eating with your right hand, clipping your nails, using prayer beads with your right hand, and ending

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<sup>8</sup> Muhammad Al-Hadi Al-Sharif, "Tarikh Tunis min 'Asur ma qabl al-Ta'rikh ila Al-Istiqlal," Translated by Muhammad Al-Shawish and Muhammad Ajina, Dar Al-Siras for Publishing, Tunisia, 1982, p.223.

<sup>9</sup> See Ibn Baba Al-Shinqiti Al-Alawi Al-Tijani, "Maniyya Al-Murid fi Al-Tariqah Al-Tijaniyya, Al-Sa'ada Library, Tunisia, n.d., p.5.

with your thumb. You should not overlook these practices and must give them due importance:

This is just what relates to daily life, there is no principle of following in it” as that closes the door to great blessings, and whoever imitates (the Prophet) in his sayings, actions and states then he is the perfect Sufi.<sup>10</sup>

Sufi *Tariqah*'s primary focus is to emulate the actions and non-actions of the Prophet to revitalize Islam's foundational past. This involves projecting a spirit of blessings and saintly miracles without necessarily requiring deep knowledge of fiqh and its associated principles, as evidenced by the *arif*, who is recognized in Sufi terms through their internal state and discernment beyond others' capabilities. The occurrence of miracles further serves to validate their truthfulness and righteousness.<sup>11</sup> Sufis gained increasing esteem as the Wali's persona acquired supernatural attributes in popular belief, including miracles, intercession, instant transportation (*tayy al-ard*), dream interpretation, prophecy of future events, and healing the sick. The demand for exaggerated Sufi hagiographies grew with the rise of *Tariqahs* in the Arab Maghreb countries. In a manuscript by Abi Tahir Al-Farisi on the virtues of Sayidi Mahriz bin Khalaf (d. 413 AH), he said:

From his virtues, may Allah be pleased with him, that he was the best of believes and the most knowledgeable of scholars and to keep his company was the best of the pious, scholars and readers of the Quran kept his company. Allah Almighty granted him the love of the poor and destitute, and he would cry often and his duas would be answered.<sup>12</sup>

This manuscript explores the distinction between worship and knowledge, esteeming the worshiper as superior in status to the knowledgeable person. Mahriz is referred to as “The Ethical One,” highlighting an ethical education space that prioritizes upright conduct and heeding advice over pursuing knowledge limited by Sufism to studying the Quran and Sunnah, following righteous predecessors, and reflecting on their teachings.

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<sup>10</sup> Muhammad Al-Kharubi, “Sharh Al-*Tariqah* li-Abi Al-Abbas Ahmed Al-Barnasi Al-Shahir bi-Zaruq,” Manuscript in National Library of Tunisia, No.449, p.9-39.

<sup>11</sup> See Ali Zaur, “Al-Karama Al-Sufiyya wa Al-Astura wa Al-Hilm,” Dar Al-Andalus, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Lebanon, 1984.

<sup>12</sup> Abu Tahir Al-Farasi, “Manaqib Mahriz Bin Khalaf,” Critically Edited by Roji Idris, University of Algeria Publications, 1959, p.181.

Whoever the political establishment specified as the populace revered righteous saints, as the *Awliya* gained religious sanctity, financial support, and protection from the political authorities. This contributed to people's voluntary acceptance without compulsion to give their charity and *zakat* to *Zawiyas*, contributing to the *Zawiya* developing to compete with the *Madrasa* in Shariah and ethical education. Indeed, *Zawiyas* made some *Madrasas* disappear due to people's preference for their children to join the *Zawiya* rather than the more organized *Madrasa*. This confirms this qualitative shift in *Zawiyas*, which became qualified to play an advanced role on the political and social levels. For example, in Tunisia, The Hafsid palace worked to court the major Sufis and support their activities. It gave them a portion of the region's land and real estate for their affiliated *Zawiyas* and excused them from paying taxes. The Sufi sheiks accepted this generosity, declared their obedience, loyalty, and support for security in the country, and supplicated for the Hafsid Sultan's continued power and well-being.<sup>13</sup> This warm relationship was apparent between the spiritual Sultan of Sayyid Obaid Al-Ghyani who was buried in Karaouine, and the Sultan of the time in Abi Faris Abdulaziz (d. 837 AH) with harmony between the political and spiritual establishment. The Hafsid Sultan Othman was keen to present support for Sayyid Ahmed bin 'Arus despite the jurists' opposition due to his known refusal of the traditional fiqh establishment.

The Sufis were able to convert the populace to appreciate the value of their work and continual practice of worship and supplications and create a nucleus of religious schools to gather *Murids* to receive cultural, spiritual, and religious formation, in addition to practicing spiritual practices, which led Sufism to be in confrontation with the traditional fiqh establishment. The jurists were irritated that the two came to the point of hitting each other with their sandals.<sup>14</sup> Al-Shatibi, in his "Al-Muwafaqat," was perhaps the first of the jurists in the Islamic West to confirm the importance of practicing religiosity and seeking Shariah knowledge, as he says:

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<sup>13</sup> See Lutfi Isa, "Akhbar Al-Manaqib," p.33.

<sup>14</sup> See Muhammad Miftah, "Al-Tiyar Al-Sufi wa Al-Mujtama' fi Al-Qarn Al-Thamin Hijriyan," Makbat Al-Rashad, 1997. See also what Ibn Ajiba (d.1224) recorded in his book "Al-Fatuhah Al-Ilahiyya."

Every issue upon which worship is not built, then diving into it does not indicate its good status... I mean by worship the worship of the heart and worship of the limbs as they are demanded by the Shariah. The most beneficial path of knowledge that leads to the aim of achieving (knowledge) is to take it from the people who have already perfectly attained it.<sup>15</sup>

Al-Shatibi places great importance on the practical application of knowledge in Islam, recognizing its profound impact on one's spiritual well-being. This inspired him to refine the traditional stance on Sufism, which he referred to as "The Higher Values." These values proved invaluable in enabling Sufis to flourish within their communities by steadfastly adhering to Shariah principles, such as refraining from combining prayers while on a journey. Al-Shatibi regarded such concessions as excessive and unduly burdensome for the faithful, in direct opposition to the teachings of the Prophet. Al-Shatibi, in his book "Al-Itisam," exonerated Sufis from the accusation of innovation, and instead regarded Sufism as "a true fiqh" that has clear principles in the Quran and Sunnah. According to him, the intricate details of the ethical branches, both internal and external, cannot be labeled as innovation because they all return to the foundations of Shariah. Sufism's emphasis on nurturing the self and treating its ailments is a form of fiqh. Even though it differs in specifics, its basic principles are rooted in fiqh. The specifics and generalities are merely additional, while their essence remains the same.<sup>16</sup>

Ibn Khaldun shares Al-Shatibi's perspective that Sufism is one of the Shariah sciences. He acknowledges the ethical objectives of early Sufi leaders. He maintains that Sufism's basis is rooted in knowledge-seeking endeavors that strive for unwavering states or positions leading to a spirituality founded on experiential knowledge. In Ibn Khaldun's view, Sufism's moral validity is contingent upon humanity's highest objective of ethical conduct, which yields psychological, spiritual, and character-building outcomes through practical application. He posits that the internal aspect forms the cornerstone of integrity and righteousness, or conversely, moral degradation in all actions.<sup>17</sup> Abdurrahman Ibn Khaldun believed that a person's moral character is essential for performing good deeds. The Shariah emphasizes that faith is the most important deed, and it distinguishes it from the characteristics of hypocrisy. This is

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<sup>15</sup> Shatibi, *Al-Muwafaqat*, 1/46.

<sup>16</sup> Al-Shatibi, "Al-I'tisam," Intro. by Muhammad Rashid Rida, *Dar Al-Ma'rifa*, Beirut, p.207.

<sup>17</sup> See Ibn Khaldun, "Shifa' Al-Sa'il li-Tahdhib Al-Masa'il," p.26.

what warrants Allah's emphasis that "deeds are by their intentions and Allah does not look at your forms but rather looks at your deeds."<sup>18</sup>

Abdulmejid Al-Saghir agrees, saying, "Many behaviors, social duties, values, forms of thinking, and religiosity have roots in the Sufi *Tariqahs* established in North African countries since the 7<sup>th</sup> century hijra. By adhering to the Sufi customs observed by Imam Al-Shatibi in his book *Al-Itisam*, these customs remain prevalent within various family environments in Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria, particularly during religious events."<sup>19</sup>

The Sufi movements had strong connections with the history of North Africa, particularly the Arab West. It is widely known that the Sunnah knowledge environment in North Africa significantly impacted Sufi thought, and Sufism, along with the Maliki madhhab, moved away from religious radicalism. Rather, *Tariqahs* made a positive contribution on the political level during a time of weak central power. It expressed the unwavering spirit of popular movements aligned against the general European, specifically Iberian, invasion. Alal Al-Fasi tried to correct the Salafi conception of Sufism, emphasizing that *Tariqah* Sufism had a constructive influence by stating, "North African Sufism, in addition to Maliki fiqh, has an effective role in directing ideas and policies that have spread in North Africa, as fiqh and Sufism are two essential elements in conditioning and managing North African society."<sup>20</sup>

## **2.2. The Main Tariqahs in Tunisia**

Following the leader (*Wali al-amr*) was a significant aspect among the Sufis, where the sheik of the *Tariqah* represented spiritual and temporal power without adequate power in the inner countryside. This provided a platform for Sufi *Tariqahs* to enhance their influence on the general public and enter political realms, such as maintaining security, resolving disputes, and guiding people in their joys and sorrows. Sufism emphasized Islamic values and principles and called for adhering to Islamic ethics and etiquette. The *Zawiyas* (religious schools) provided education and moral guidance to

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Abdulmajid Al-Saghir, p.380.

<sup>20</sup> Alala Al-Fasi, "Al-Tasawwuf fi Al-Maghrib," *Ribat*, 2001, p.46.

the Murids (disciples), taking care of their practical affairs and fulfilling their needs as much as possible. This focus on the practical aspects of their lives is what distinguished *Tariqah* Sufism from other Sufi groups, and the Sufi establishment had a significant impact on Tunisian society during the Hafsid dynasty. Lisan Al-Din Al-Khatib (d.776) mentions that “The *Wali*’s power swept the social field. It powerfully influenced society and politics to the point that the *Wali* was appealed to during crises.”<sup>21</sup> This is what qualified him to play a large social role. The book “Ibtisam Al-Gharus fi Manaqib Ahmed bin Arus” reported Al-Rashidi saying: “Do you not see that are still in every country and every era *awliya* to whom the contemporary kings are humbled, and to whom they submit and comply.”<sup>22</sup> This motivated some researchers to describe Tunisian society as a two-pronged society: the *awliya* and the *fuqaha*.<sup>23</sup> Sufism in Tunisian society can also be described as having two wings: the Qadiri *Tariqah* and the Tijani *Tariqah*.

### 2.3. The Qadiri Tariqah

The Qadiri *Tariqah* is a Sufi order named after the pious saint Abdulqadir Al-Jilani, known for his many works on Sufism, experiential knowledge, and poetry. He was born in Gilan, and his full name was Muhyi Al-Din Abu Muhammad Abdulqadir Al-Jilani Al-Hasan Al-Husayni. He was a descendant of Ali ibn Abi Talib. Al-Jilani was also referred to as Al-Kilani. The sources on Imam Abdulqadir Al-Jilani agree that he had many names, but he is most commonly associated with Gilan, the place of his birth. He was also known by his nickname of “Abi Abdullah’s grandson,” “Baz Allah Al-Ashhab,” and “Al-Ghawth Al-A‘zam.”<sup>24</sup>

Al-Jilani was born in 1077 AD/470 AH and died in 1166 AD/561 AH into a family renowned for its piety and knowledge. His grandfather, Abu Abdullah Al-Sufi, was a respected ascetic, and his mother, Umm Al-Kheir Fatima, was known for her

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<sup>21</sup> Lisan Al-Din Ibn Al-Khatib, “Al-Ihata fi Akhbar Gharnata,” Critically Edition by Abdullah Adnan, Maktabat Al-Hanaji, Cairo, n.d., p.91.

<sup>22</sup> Umar bin Ali Al-Rashidi, “Ibtisam Al-Gharus,” Al-Matba Al-Rasmiyya, Tunisia 1886, p.68.

<sup>23</sup> Nilli Salama Al-Amri, “Al-Wilaya wa al-Mujtama’,” Dar Al-Farabi, Beirut 2006, p.431.

<sup>24</sup> Sakina Isamy “The Qadiriyya *Tariqah* in the Tunisian Jarid, from Origin to Decline (1843-1954)”. Algerian Journal of Mediterranean Historical Research and Studies, 2017 MG. 3, p. 5, p.p. 126-162.<https://www.asjp.cerist.dz/en/downArticle/265/3/1/78257>

devoutness as a descendant of the Prophet through her father, Abdullah.<sup>25</sup> Al-Jilani began his early education in Gilan, where he excelled in Quranic recitation. Stories of his saintly miracles from childhood abound - one such tale recounts that during Ramadan, he refrained from nursing at his mother's breast until after the Maghrib Adhan.

Al-Jilani journeyed from Iran to Baghdad before he reached the age of 20, coinciding with the year when Imam Al-Ghazali (d. 505) ceased teaching at the renowned Nizamiyya Madrasa in Baghdad and chose a path of asceticism, embarking on his well-known journey during which he composed "Ihya Ulum Al-Din." In Baghdad and its environs, "Al-Jilani navigated the extended journey from creation to the creator, from this life to the next life, from the earth to the heaven, and in Baghdad the tree of his blessed sainthood blossomed."<sup>26</sup> He received education in fiqh, Shariah sciences, Usul, literature, and Arabic studies from Abi Zakariya Al-Tabrizi. While he delved into Ilm Al-Kalam and its fundamental beliefs, he declined to align with the various mutakalimun schools. Instead, he prioritized seeking direct knowledge of the divine self through Dhikr, reflection, and travel. His inclination is reflected in his definition of Sufism: "Know my son... that Sufism is of eight characteristics. The first is generosity. The second contentment. Third patience. Fourth, following the subtle signs. Fifth Estrangement. Sixth, wearing rough clothing. Seventh traveling. Eighth poverty."<sup>27</sup> Poverty, or "faqr," for Sufis, signifies a lack of Allah's love and prioritizing other things above it. Al-Sheik Al-Jilani is renowned as one of the leading Malamati adherents, a faction within Sufism that advocated self-blame and its displacement in favor of nurturing the love for Allah, viewing this as an essential step toward understanding Allah and comprehending the true nature of existence. This is confirmed by Muhyi Al-Din's saying in "Al-Futuhāt Al-Makkiya" when he touches on the Malamatis, "And of those that achieved (the status of knowing Allah) through the Malamati *Tariqah* from Sheiks was Abdulqadir Al-Jilani."<sup>28</sup> Al-Sheik Al-Jilani has a

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<sup>25</sup> See "Manaqib Awliya Tunisia," Collective Authorship, Manuscript in National Library of Tunisia, no.18551.

<sup>26</sup> Shams Al-Dīn Al-Dhahabi, "Siyar A'lam Al-Nubala", Muassasah Al-Risalah, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Beirut 1985, 20/439-451.

See Muhammad Farid Wajdi, "Da'irat Ma'rif Al-Qarn Al-'ishrin," Dar Al-Ma'rifa, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed, Beirut 1971, 3/281.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibn Arabi, "Al-Futuhāt Al-Makkiya" Dar Al-Kotob Al-Ilmiyah 1<sup>st</sup> ed, Beirut 1999, 5/50.

cohesive philosophy in the reality of the self, rectifying it, and advancing in the stages of knowing and attaining certainty of Allah. The self has seven stations; the first is “Al-Nafs Al-Ammara,” the self that commands evil and directs it to Allah in this world (al-shahada). The second is “Al-Nafs Al-Lawamma,” or the blaming self and its world is that of the Barzakh. The Third is “Al-Nafs Al-Mulhima”, the inspired self, and directing on God and its world is that of “Al-La Hallaj.” The fourth is that of “Al-Nafs Al-Mutimina,” the contented self, and its secret is with God, and its world is that of “The Muhammadan Reality.” The fifth is “Al-Nafs Al-Radiyya”; its secret is in God, and its world is divinity. The Sixth is “Al-Nafs Al-Mardiyya”; its secret is of God, and its world is that of this world. The seventh is “Al-Nafs Al-Kamila,” the perfect self, whose path is through God is multiplicity in unity and unity in multiplicity.”<sup>29</sup>

Al-Jilani defines the Sufi as one “Who makes his desire God and leaves the temporal life behind him.” He has a collection of *awrad* and supplications that his students and *Murids* of the Qadiri representatives repeat, such as “Hizb Al-Ashraq,” “Hizb Al-Tashahud,” “Hizb al-Ibtihal” which is called the morning wurd, and “Hizb Al-Siryaniyya” and it is called the Dhuhr wurd. This “Fawatih al-Basa’ir” hizb is called the Asr wurd, “Hizb Al-Fathiyya” is called the Maghrib wurd, and “Hizb Al-Tamjid” is called the Isha wurd, as well as “Hizb Al-Nur wa Qada’ Al-Jawa’ih,” “Hizb Al-Wasila” and “Hizb Al-Mawadda wa Al-Taskhir.” As for Sheik Abdulqadir Al-Jilani’s works, the most prominent are “Al-Ghunya li-Talibi Al-Haq,” “Al-Fath Al-Rabbani,” “Al-Fayudat Al-Rabanniyya,” “Sir Al-Asrar,” and “Futuh Al-Ghayb.” Sheik Al-Jilani wrote texts containing deep philosophy on understanding the truth of the Muhammadan Self, such as “Salat Al-Kibrit Al-Ahmar,” a prayer upon the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) presented eloquently.<sup>30</sup>

The entry and spread of the Qadiri *Tariqah* in Tunisia can be understood from two important perspectives. Firstly, the principles of the Qadiri *Tariqah* were spread during the Almohad and Hafsid eras. Secondly, the Qadiri *Tariqah* emerged in organized

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See Abu Al-Alaa Afifi, “Al-Malamatiyya wa Al-Sufiyya, wa Ahl Al-Futuwwa,” Manshorat Al-Jamal, Beirut 2015, p.22.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Shams Al-Dīn Al-Dhahabi, “Siyar A’lam Al-Nubala”, Muassasah Al-Risalah, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Beirut 1985, 20/439-451.

See Muhammad Farid Wajdi, “Da’irat Ma’rif Al-Qarn Al-’ishrin,” Dar Al-Ma’rifa, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Beirut 1971, 3/281.

spiritual and social spaces called *Zawiyas*, where the *Murids* and sheiks associated with these *Zawiyas* gained prominence.

### 2.3.1. The First Phase

The initial phase was characterized by the group that formed around Al-Ghawth Abi Madin (d. 594), who received the teachings of the Sufi *Tariqah* from Abdulqadir Al-Jilani and was given authorization, thus initially continuing the tradition of Al-Jilani and affirming his *Tariqah's* principles. Among this group were notable figures such as Sayyid Abd Al-Aziz Al-Mahdawi (d. 621 AH), Abu Yusuf Ya'qub Al-Dihmani (d. 621), Abu Ali Al-Nafti (d. 610), Al-Tahir Al-Mazughi al-Safi (d. 646), Abu Muhammad Salih bin Muhammad bin Abdulkhaliq at-Tunisi, and Abu Abdullah Muhammad al-Dabbagh, known as the father of the author of "Ma'lim al-Iman fi Ma'rifa Salaha al-Qayarwan" and "Shawariq Anwar al-Qulub." This influence extended to the renowned Sufi Imam Abi-Al-Hasan a-Shadhili (d. 656).<sup>31</sup>

The *Ahzab* and *Awrad* of Al-Shadhili show that Sheik Abdulqadir Al-Jilani is considered a significant figure in the unity of Allah. This is explained by the truth of existence and the Muhammadan Self, which is connected to cosmic truth (*al-kulliya*). The tradition of supplicating for Sheik Abdulqadir Al-Jilani during the Shadhili supplications and awrad proves Al-Jilani's importance in perfecting the Shadhili *Tariqah*. Before Al-Shadhili and Abi Madin, knowledge of Al-Ghazali's "Ihya Ulum Al-Din" and the influence of Sufi literature present in it was also acknowledged.

### 2.3.2. Second Phase

The organized emergence of the Qadiri *Tariqah* in Tunisia began in its own spiritual spaces (*Zawiyas* and graves) at a relatively late period, as some studies attribute the establishment of the first Qadiri *Zawiya* in Tunisia to Sayyid Ahmed Al-Talili (d. 1763) in Firyanah.<sup>32</sup> This is contrary to the opinion of Al-Bihli Al-Nayyal in "The True

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<sup>31</sup> See for example, Ibn Al-Sibagh Al-Hamdi, "*Dhikr Masha'ikh Al-Sharf*," manuscript in the National Library of Tunisia, no. 18221.

<sup>32</sup> Lutfi Eesa, "Maghrib Al-Mutasawiffa: Al-Ini'kisat Al-Siyasiyya wa Al-Hirak Al-Ijtima'i min al-Qarn 10 ila Al-Qarn 17 Miladi," University Publication center, Tunisia, 2005, p.191.

History of Sufism in Islam” and Al-Talibi Al-Ajili in “Sufi *Tariqahs* and French Occupation in Tunisia (1881-1939),” who both considered the first Qadiri *Zawiya* to have been established by Muhammad Al-Manzili (d. 1832) in Manzil Bu Zalfah, with support from Hamudu Pasha who was of his first followers. The Qadiri *Tariqah* has been widely spread among the people of Tunisia for a long time. The news of this *Tariqah* and its virtues was quickly spread by its followers. When Sheik Ahmed Al-Talibi established the *Zawiya* in Feryana, Sheik Abu Al-Hasan Al-Shayib, one of Sheik Abdulqadir’s admirers, headed to the Hijaz to perform the Hajj. He hoped to learn the Qadiri *Tariqah* from Imam Abi Abdullah, the sheik of the *Tariqah* and its chain at the time. Later, Sheik Ali Al-Shayib started building a *Zawiya* for the *Tariqah* in Manzil Bu Zalfa, but he passed away before its completion. One of his most prominent Murids, Imam Muhammad Al-Manzili (d. 1248), completed the construction. The *Zawiya* became a center for teaching the Quran and the Arabic language. It still stands today and holds circles of Zikr and reading Qadiri *Awrad*.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, several Qadiri *Zawiyas* emerged in Tunisia’s capital. One of the most prominent was *Zawiya Al-Diwan*, established by Muhammad Al-Mizuni in 1267 AH. Other notable *Zawiyas* in the capital included the *Zawiya* of Bab Souika, led by Sheik Bubakr Al-Qadiri (d. 1930 AD). In the same period, the *Zawiya* of Nefta was established, from which the *Zawiyas* of Gafsa, Tozuer, and Sidi Bouzeid branched out.

Among the most notable figures of the *Zawiya* of Nefta was Sheik Sayyid Ibrahim bin Ahmed Al-Sharif (d. 1875), one of the “ghawths” and had extensive experiential knowledge of the Qadiri *Tariqah*. After his death, his son Sayyid Muhammad Al-Arabi Al-Sharif (d. 1855 AD) assumed the sheikhood of the *Tariqah* and was known for his piety and vast knowledge. Later, Sayyid Abu Al-Qasim Al-Sharif emerged, followed by Sayyid Muhammad Al-Jilani Al-Sharif (d.1977), who was highly respected and revered by the people. He was buried in the graveyard of Sidi Bouzeid. Today, the *Tariqah*’s sheikhood is held by Sayyid Hammah Al-Makki in the *Zawiya* of Nefta.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> See Kamal Imran, “Al-Zawiya *Zahira* *Thaqafiyya*,” within “*Jama’i Zawahir Hadariyya fi Tunis Al-Qarn Al-‘Ishrin*” edited by Abdulmajid Al-Sharafi, Publication of the College of Arts Manuba, 1996, p.83.

Notably, the *Tariqah* has gained a wide following in Tunisia, with its number of *Murids* surpassing those of other *Tariqahs* it originated from. As of 1925, the Qadiri *Tariqah* had 117,681 *Murids*, and 109 *Zawiyas*, with Bizerte having six, Grombalia having 14, Sousse having 11, El Kaf having 4, Thale having 7, Sfax having 5, Gafsa having 2, Gabès having 4, and Djerba having 1.<sup>34</sup>

#### 2.4. The Tijani Tariqah

The Tijani *Tariqah* is a Sufi *Tariqah* that emerged in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century after its founder, Sheik Ahmed Al-Tijani, passed away in 1230 AH/1814 AD. The *Tariqah* was first introduced to Tunisia by Sheik Ibrahim Al-Riyahi (d.1830). The mother *Zawiya* of the Tijani *Tariqah* in Tunisia is called Sayyid Ibrahim Al-Riyahi, which is located in the medina of the Tunisian capital on the street that bears his name.

Ahmed Al-Tijani, the founder of the *Tariqah*, is believed to have been born in 1737 AD (1150 AH) and is said to be descended from the Prophet's family. On his return journey from Hajj in 1186 AH, he stopped in Egypt, where he met Shaikh Mahmud Al-Kurdi. Al-Kurdi believed that Ahmed Al-Tijani was one of those loved by Allah and asked him for the rank of the highest *Qutb*, the highest position in the Sufi ladder, which Ahmed Al-Tijani gave him. According to biographies edited by his *Murids*, he achieved an opening in the gnostic sciences and divine secrets when he met the Prophet Muhammad while awake. Ahmed Al-Tijani is believed to have dictated to the Prophet the *Tariqah's awrad*, such as the *istighfar* (seeking Allah's forgiveness) and *Salat* (sending prayers) on the Prophet. He also dictated the text of the *Salat* on the Prophet, which has philosophical meanings and realities connected to the creation of the cosmos and ways of knowing it and knowing its reality. The *Salat* is called the *Salat "the Essence of Perfection"*. The Tijani *Tariqah* has other *awrad* on tawhid and ahzab in seeking Allah's forgiveness and praising Him, similar to the Qadiri *Tariqah*.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> See Ahmed Al-Azmi, "Dawr Al-*Tariqah* Al-Tijaniyya fi Tamtin Al-Rawabit wa Al-Silat bayn Buldan Al-Magharib," within "Shabakat Al-Tawasul fi Al-Magharib wa Al-Alim Al-Mutawasiti," Matba'at Al-Najah Al-Jadida, Casablanca, 2008, p.101

Upon the death of Ahmed Al-Tijani, spiritual leadership was entrusted to Ali Al-Tamanisi, who hailed from Tamacine in Algeria, through a will. Sheik Ahmed Al-Tijani's Sufi beliefs and concepts were documented in the book "Jawahir Al-Ma'ani," which he endorsed to Al-Sheik Ali Hazarim bin Al-Arabi at his residence. Within this work lies an intellectual and philosophical depth akin to Ibn Al Arabi's doctrines on existence, ultimate reality, human nature, and deliverance. The decisive factor that led Sheik Ibrahim Al-Riyahi to join this *Tariqah* is his encounter with Ali Hizarim, the author of "Jawahir Al-Ma'ani." Sheik Ibrahim Al-Riyahi, a follower of the Rahmani *Tariqah*, chose to embrace Sufism in the tradition of Sheik Ahmed Al-Tijani instead. His mission to Morocco, with authorization from Hamouda Pasha resulted in a meeting with Sheik Ahmed Al-Tijani. In 1239 AH/1822 AD, Sheik Ali Al-Tamanasi visited him and adopted many principles of this *Tariqah*.

Additionally, Sheik Ibrahim Al-Riyahi authored a work titled "Mubarad Al-Sawarim wa Al-Asina fi Al-Rad 'Ala man Akhraj Sayyid Ahmed Al-Tijani min Da'ira Ahl Ala Sunna" to validate the authenticity of the Tijani *Tariqah*.<sup>36</sup> The book authored by Ibrahim Al-Riyahi's grandson was entitled "Ta'tir Al-Nawahi bi-Tarjama Al-'Allama Ibrahim Al-Riyahi,"<sup>37</sup> with many chapters discussing Sheik Ibrahim Al-Riyahi's connection to the Tijani *Tariqah* and its founding sheik. He only joined after setting a condition to fulfill all the desires documented by his grandson in "Ta'tir Al-Nawahi."<sup>38</sup>

#### **2.4.1. Affiliated Tariqahs**

The Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya Sufi orders have given rise to various *Tariqahs*, each of which has established *Zawiyas* to welcome new followers. However, not all *Zawiyas* are associated with a particular *Tariqah*. Some *Zawiyas* focus on memorizing the Quran and serving the poor without being tied to any Sufi structure. On the other hand, established *Tariqahs* have their own regulations and internal management for their sheiks and *Murids*. In the Tunisian Province, we can recognize the "Shadhili *Tariqah*" and the "Madini *Tariqah*" as two of the most significant *Tariqahs*.

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, p.110.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

## 2.5. Shadhili *Tariqah*

The Shadhili *Tariqah* originated from the Qadiri *Tariqah*. It is named after Sheik Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili Ali bin Abdullah Al-Khamsi Al-Ghimari (d. 656/1259), a Abdulsalam bin Mashish student. Sheik Al-Shadhili was named after his stay in Shadhila, on the outskirts of Tunis, while on his journey to the Haram to perform Hajj. He was born in the tribe of Al-Akhmas in Ghomara in North Morocco, and his place of birth is well-known.

The Shadhili *Tariqah* derives its legitimacy from its adherence to the Quran and Sunnah. It emphasizes the harmonization of knowledge and Sufism, also known as harmonizing the Shariah and the Haqiqah, or between the external and internal wisdom. Its founder made it clear that adhering to a *Tariqah* does not mean monasticism or distancing oneself from the necessities of life. Therefore, it is considered a moderate *Tariqah* that advocates for a balance between the two extremes in everything, whether related to the present or the hereafter. This is “being patient with commands, certain of guidance, making things easy and simple, renouncing obscure philosophical symbols and infamous mystical statements, and calling to jihad in Allah’s way...”<sup>39</sup> The Shadhili Sufi order engages in Zikr, which involves reciting phrases such as “La Ilah Illa Allah” (There is no God but Allah) and sending prayers to the Prophet. However, the founder of the order did not require members to have a sheik or engage in isolation, Ribat, or Zawiya practices. The Shadhili order traces its lineage back to Imam Abu Al-Qasim Al-Junayd, who is known as the founder of the Sufi *Tariqah* in Sunni Islam. Therefore, the Shadhili order is seen as a revival of the Junaydi *Tariqah*. One of the most significant links in the chain after Junayd is Abu Madin Al-Ghawth, connected to Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili through three chains.<sup>40</sup>

The Shadhili *Tariqah* is recognized for its moderate approach, derived from the teachings of the Prophet (PBUH). It gained popularity in Arab North Africa and various parts of the Muslim world. The Shadhili *Tariqah* was a link between different Sufi *Tariqahs*, with as many as nineteen *Tariqahs* being counted later. The Jazulis, the

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<sup>39</sup> Abd Al-Qadir Habib Allah Al-Sanadi, “Al-Tasawwuf fi Mizan Al-Bahth wa Al-Tahqiq,” Maktabat Ibn Al-Qayyim, Madinah, 1410 AH/1990 AD, p.135.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

Isawiyya, Zarouqiyya, and the Shabiyya were among the most prominent. However, the Ottomans broke up the Shabiyya due to their opposition to the Ottoman presence in Tunisia. Later, the Shadhili *Tariqah* resumed its activities through a newspaper called “Bayt Al-Shariah.”<sup>41</sup>

## 2.6. The Shābi *Tariqah*

The Sufi movement in Tunisia did not form one group, as it also did not express the same curricula and stances toward the political establishment in the region. We can divide the Sufi movement in Tunisia into two main divisions: The first is the moderate social Sufi movement represented by the Shadhili *Tariqah* and the *Tariqahs* that branched off from it, such as the Ghiryani and the Qishashi *Tariqahs*. The second is represented in the radical political Sufi movement led by the Shābiyya. These two oscillated between truce and conflict due to their very different stances toward the political establishment and as a result of interacting with the changing social and geo-strategic realities in Tunisia. The Shābi *Tariqah* represented a model for entering into political practice.

According to historical sources, it is widely agreed that the Shābi *Tariqah* was founded by the Sufi Sheik Ahmad bin Makhluf Al-Shābi in the second half of the fifteenth century AH. It is said that this *Tariqah* separated from the Qadiri Shadhili *Tariqah*. The political circumstances of the Hafsid rule in Tunisia provided a favorable environment for the emergence of Sufi *Tariqahs*, and the government was openly supportive of the establishment of *Zawiyas* and the religious and educational activities of these *Tariqahs*.

Sheik Ahmed bin Makhluf Al-Shābi was able to take advantage of this supportive environment to expand his *Tariqah* and establish it in various regions of the country. His *Tariqah* was particularly successful in Kairouan, where several Qadiri *Tariqahs* were already active. The wide spread of the Shābi *Tariqah* in Kairouan, with its historical significance, allowed it to become one of the most important *Tariqahs* in Tunisia during that period. Its popularity also extended to Algeria, where the sheik of

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<sup>41</sup> See Ali Al-Shabi, “Masadir Jadida li-Dirasat Tarikh Al-Shabiyya,” Moroccan Historical Journal, No. 13/14, January 1979, p.55-81.

the *Tariqah* spread it to Tébessa, Constantine, and Annaba from the cities bordering Tunisia. Sheik Ahmed bin Makhluḥ Al-Shabi worked to establish the philosophical and intellectual foundations of the Shabi *Tariqah* and defined its scholarly methodology and sources until it became a Sufi school known in society for its distinctive approach and ethical and spiritual behavior. Sheik Ibn Arafa Al-Shabi's son completed his father's work by developing the *Tariqah* and transforming it from a social spiritual Sufism to a political movement with a spiritual dimension. After receiving the *Tariqah* from his father, Ibn Araba Al-Shabi worked to establish a political movement with a Sufi reference that would serve as an alternative to the Hafsid rule, which had begun to decline in Tunisia at the end of the fifteenth century.

Sheik Ibn Araba followed in his father Sheik Ahmed's footsteps in combining Sufi ethical dimensions with Shariah teachings to achieve the highest level of spiritual realities. However, Sheik Ibn Arafa Al-Shabi had a different view than his father regarding politics. He believed in establishing a state representing the *Tariqah's* ideas and spreading virtues and ethics based on Islamic Shariah. The adverse political climate in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century led Sheik Ibn Arafa Al-Shabi to become involved in politics and take a stance against the Hafsid dynasty. The Hafsid dynasty had allied with the Spanish occupation, which had taken over several Tunisian cities and posed a threat to the country's security and Islamic principles. As a result, the Shabiyya *Tariqah* had a tense relationship with the Hafsid dynasty.<sup>42</sup>

### **2.6.1. The Shabiyya from Sufi State to Political State**

Amid politically charged circumstances, Sheik Ibn Arafa Al-Shabi reflected on creating a political organization that would embody the *Tariqah's* ideas and values. This organization would be equipped to combat any domestic and foreign unfavorable agendas. The Sheik posited that establishing a modest proto-state would be a foundation for developing a political initiative that could substitute for the collapsing Hafsid dynasty. The dynasty had given in to internal and external pressures and had even acquiesced to the Spanish crusader occupation.<sup>43</sup> The Shabiyya *Tariqah*

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Muhammad Al-Arusi Al-Matawi, "Al-Sulta Al-Hafsiyya: Tarikhuha Al-Siyasi wa Dawruha fi Al-Maghrib Al-Islami," Dar Al-Gharb Al-Islami, 1986, p.681.

underwent a significant transformation, shifting from a Sufi establishment to a political government. This led to a change from social and spiritual activism to political activism, focusing on the foundations of the Shabiyya state. The sheik of the *Tariqah* capitalized on the enthusiasm of his followers in Kairouan and the tribes surrounding the city. He worked to create a protective belt for these tribes to defend against any external threats to the emerging state.

One of the biggest challenges faced by the founders of the Shabiyya state was the lack of resources in the city of Kairouan. However, they chose to expand toward the West, Algeria, and the South while keeping their eyes on the East, where coastal cities were rich in resources from the sea. Sheik Ibn Arafa gained the support of large tribes such as Hanansha, Al-Hamam, and Warghama, which encouraged him to declare the Shabiyya state in 1535 after his victory against the Hafsid army in the battle of “Batin Al-Qarn.” The Hafsid Sultan fled to Tunis as a result.

Under the founding sheik’s leadership, the emerging state achieved relative stability despite the continuous Hafsid campaigns. However, after his death, the state saw a decline. His successor and nephew, Muhammad bin Abi Al-Tayyib Al-Shabi, lacked the political sophistication in conflict management that his uncle possessed. His arrogance and harshness toward the people pushed the tribes to break up, allowing the Ottomans to advance toward the city of Kairouan under the leadership of Darghtuh Pasha from the South. At the same time, the Hafsid Sultan blockaded them from the North.

This led him to make a deadly mistake by allying with the Spanish when the Spanish armies were retreating in the face of Ottoman power. Ibn Abi Al-Tayyib worked to present aid to the Spanish forces, who were but a memory and were blockaded on all sides by the Ottomans. This action had significant repercussions on the continuity of the Shabiyya *Tariqah*, which was able to establish a state because it declared war against the Spanish and their aid by the Hafsids. However, it declined because of its alliance with the Spanish occupation.<sup>44</sup> In 1557, the residents of Kairouan were pushed by one of the sheiks of the Ghiryani *Tariqah* to seek help from Darghuth Pasha to end

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<sup>44</sup> Muhammad Al-Hadi Al-Sharif, “Tarikh Tunis min ‘Asur ma qabl al-Ta’rikh ila Al-Istiqlal,” Dar Al-Siras For Publishing, Tunisia, 1980, p.66.

the Shabiyya adventure. The Ottoman army then advanced to Kairouan and defeated the Shabiyya state greatly. The residents welcomed the Ottoman army as liberators, ending the Shabiyya *Tariqah*. On the ruins of the Shabiyya state grew the Ghiryani *Tariqah*, which had incited the people to ally with the Muslim Turks to end the alliance with the Spanish and their allies among the Hafsids. The Hafsids were defeated at the region's borders.<sup>45</sup>



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<sup>45</sup> See “Ahmed bin Abi Al-Diyaf, “Ithaf Ahl Al-Zaman fi Muluk Tunis wa ‘Ahd Al-Aman,” Al-Dar Al-Arabiyya lil-Kitab, Tunisia, 1999, 2/18.

## CHAPTER III

### SUFI *TARIQAHS* IN TUNISIA AND THE ISSUE OF COLONIALISM

The emergence of the Sufi movement was intricately intertwined with the complex historical context of the region, which underwent several social and political transformations. The Tunis issue, in particular, played a pivotal role in shaping the movement's religious, intellectual, and political vision. Consequently, Sufism was compelled to participate in political affairs and shape public opinion aligned with its principles. This ushered in a shift in *Tariqah* ideology, which prioritized politics, an area previously overlooked. All in all, the historical context significantly influenced the Sufi movement and its involvement in politics.

Sufism gained popularity in Tunisia and other North African countries as a response to the spread of materialism and leisure, which led to a departure from pure religious practices. It also arose from the pressing need to protect Muslim territories from invasions. Establishing Ribats like Monastir, Sousse, Qasr Al-Toub, among others in Tunisia, exemplified this trend. However, prominent figures in Sufism played a significant role in promoting asceticism while defending frontiers and imparting knowledge for the benefit of society. Notable individuals included Abu Said Al-Baji - an ascetic and legal expert; Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili; Mahriz bin Khalaf, known as "the Sultan of Tunis"; Ahmed bin Arus wa Barawi Al-Fahal; Abdussalem Al-Asmar; and Al-Sayyida Al-Manubiyya. Many locations have been named after prominent Sufi figures, such as the city of Sidi Bouzid, which is in honor of the righteous Wali Bouzeid Al-Sharif.

Another example is the city of Sidi Bou Seid, named after Abu Said Al-Baji, who played a significant role in protecting Tunis from pirates and invaders by monitoring the sea within a defensive line that extended to the top of the mountain from Bizerte. Other notable individuals like Sayyid Alwan, Sayyid Ali bin Nasr-Allah, Sayyid Umar

Buhjala, Sayyid Makhluf, Sayyid Salam, and others were honored with place names due to their contributions. Abi Ali Al-Nefti is recognized for defending the Maliki madhhab in southern Tunisia against Ismaili Shia influence and was subsequently named Abi Ali Al-Sunni. Likewise, Sayyid Mahdhab Al-Sharif was the leader of a brigade of *Murabitun* between Gabès and Sfax, most of whom were from his *Murids*. The scholar Sayyid Ali Al-Nuri, who combined both fiqh and Sufism, was a mujahid to the point that in the 17<sup>th</sup> century AD, he established a navy fleet to confront the pirates of the time and protect the city of Sfax. The Sufi *Tariqahs* were directly aided by the revolution of Ali bin Khalia Al-Nafati against the French occupation. Many Sufis supported the resistance movement and participated on the battlefield. The *Zawiyas* represented a sanctuary for resistance, such as the *Zawiya* of Sayyid Abdullah Bujlayda in Tataouine, which was a gathering place for the tribes to hold reconciliation meetings and break up conflicts as well as other roles that the Sufi *Zawiyas* took in Tunisia. It is widely known in Tunisia that Husayn bin Ali, the founder of the Husainid dynasty, which continued until the formation of the national state under Habib bin Bourgiba, sought refuge in the Al-Sayyida Al-Manubiyya *Zawiya* in El-Gorjani. This occurred after chaos had erupted following the murder of Ibrahim Al-Sharif, and people urged him to relinquish power. He fled to the *Zawiya* to gain the support of its inhabitants and win over their hearts.<sup>46</sup>

The *Zawiya* of Umm Al-Zain Al-Jamaliyya served as an excellent example of how to serve people. Even the Bey did not dare to storm it, thanks to the righteous saint Umm Al-Zayn's status and the people's love for her. Hammuda Pasha Bey recognized the significance of her status and built the *Zawiya* for her as a sign of respect and official recognition.<sup>47</sup>

When speaking about Sufism in Tunisia, it is impossible to ignore the relationship between Zaytuna and several Sufi *Zawiyas*. Students who wished to study at Zaytuna would first attend the *Zawiyas* in the south, such as *Zawiya* Al-Ghawth in Douz or *Zawiya* Al-(Nawayyil) near Douz. They would then progress to study at *Zawiya* Sayyid Al-Mauludi, which specialized in fiqh, Quran memorization, and self-

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<sup>46</sup> See Wazir Al-Siraj's "Al-Hulal Al-Sundusiyya fi Al-Akhbar Al-Tunsiyya," Critical Edition by Muhammad Al-Habibi Al-Hayla, Al-Dar Al-Tunisiyya lil-Kitab, 1970, p.231.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

purification. Once students had advanced through these *Zawiyas*, they would move on to study at Zaytuna. These *Zawiyas* were beacons of knowledge about Shariah law and ethical formation.

In Western Tunisia, *Zawiyas* include *Zawiya Sayyid Ali bin Aun* and *Zawiya Sayyid Ahmed Al-Talili*. The latter played a significant role in knowledge and reforming people, along with his grandfather, *Talil bin Nasr Al-Othmani*. In summary, the *Zawiyas* were vital to people's lives, providing education and security to those in need. This was particularly important in light of the decline of central power and the widespread conflict between different arms of the state, leading to the collapse of one state before another could be established.

During the colonial period, the policy toward Sufi *Tariqahs* resulted in the transformation of the sheiks of *Zawiyas* into employees. The colonial administration was responsible for their ethical formation and followed the model established by the Husainid Beys in their dealings with *Zawiyas*. As a result, this broad group was recognized legally and placed under an official responsible for them, known as "Sheik Mashayikh Al-*Tariqah*." The new colonial administration employed various methods to contain the population. At times, they used incentives to persuade the people to comply, while at other times, they used force. This approach was designed to enable the administration to use *Tariqahs*, or Islamic brotherhoods, in the future to appease the people and ensure their obedience. It also aimed to make managing the natural resources of the coastal areas more accessible for the French administration.

This policy was implemented in two distinct phases: The first was to neutralize these *Tariqah* institutions and gain their friendship through a carrot-and-stick approach, drowning them in administrative issues and distracting them with interests. The second tried to employ these institutions to resist the emerging national consciousness, which became a severe threat to the colonial entity at the beginning of the thirties in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, the Sufi *Tariqahs'* stance in dealing with the colonial administration varied widely, as some were loyal and chose appeasement while others decided to struggle and resist.

### 3.1. Stances of Sufi *Tariqahs* Toward the Entry of French Colonialism in the Tunisian Province

#### 3.1.1. Loyal *Tariqahs*

According to historical sources, during the French occupation, the colonial administration aimed to create favorable conditions to govern public affairs. To achieve this, they sought to gain the support of the Sufi *Tariqahs*, who held significant influence among the people and could ensure the colony's continuity. As a result, some of the loyal *Tariqah* sheiks were given advantages and even empowered by the authorities, allowing them unlimited influence. The best example of this model was Zawiya El Kaf in the Northwest, where the Wali acted as a proxy for colonialism and obeyed all of its commands. It spread between his followers that the sheik was "in an impenetrable place, which was reflected in his solid relationship with the government that enabled him to replace and move employees..."<sup>48</sup>

The colonial powers were known to support sheiks loyal to them, as was evident in the case of the sheik of the Tijani Zawiya in Bou 'Arada. He sought the assistance of the French Chamber of Agriculture President, Vice-President of the High Commission of the Eyelet, and the French Residents-General to confirm his sheikhood. French newspapers also helped him in this regard. These sheiks betrayed the philosophy for which the *Tariqah* had been established and worked to ensure their positions by pleasing the colonial authorities. They tried manipulating texts to manufacture a narrative to appease the colonial authorities. They propagated the idea that the real jihad was the jihad of the self and that demonstrating against the ruler was self-destructive, which is not what the Shariah teaches.

Sheik Muhammad Jamil Ghazi narrates from one of the Sufi sheiks who claims that Dawud bin Salih claimed:

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<sup>48</sup> Sada El Kaf, Jarida Al-Sawab," No.361, Year 17, July 29, 1921, p.3

Abu Salama Abdulrahman said to me ‘My nephew, do you know why the verse “O you who believe. Believe, be patient, persevere and stand on guard (*Ribat*)” (Al-I Imran 200). I said no. He said: O my nephew, at the time of the Prophet (PBUH) it was not an invasion for which he would have to ride out on his horse, rather it is to wait for the next prayer after a prayer, as *Ribat* is the jihad of the self, and the *murabit* is the *murabit* who makes jihad against his ego.<sup>49</sup>

Some Sufis commented about the Quranic verse “Make jihad in (the cause) of Allah as he deserves” (Al-Hajj 78) that its meaning is the jihad against the ego and desire, which is the great jihad according to the narration in Bukhari that “Allah’s Messenger (PBUH) said when returning from one of his raids: we have returned from the smaller jihad to the greater jihad.” Some Sufi sheiks commented, “One of the righteous wrote to a brother of his who called him to a raid, so he wrote, ‘ My brother, all of the frontiers are gathered for me in one house, and the door is locked.’ So his brother wrote to him: “If everyone stuck to what you did, the affairs of the Muslims would be ruined, and the disbelievers would prevail. So the Sufi brother replied: My brother if the people stuck to what I am on and said Allah Akbar in their *Zawiyas*, then the walls of Constantinople would fall.”<sup>50</sup> A poet who witnessed the entrance of the Franks to Jerusalem described it by saying:

Disbelief has oppressed Islam,  
aggressing against the religion as it wails,  
How many mosques they turned into churches,  
a cross hung on their mihrabs,  
the stench of pig blood on their breath,  
and the burned smell of Qurans

However, the fake Sufis saw it as God’s will and resigned themselves to fate, spending their time in mosques engaged in Zikr. One poet criticized this idle behavior:

O worshiper in the Harmayn if you saw us,  
You would you know that your worship is play,  
If your cheek is moist with tears,  
Our necks are flowing with blood

The Sufis sought to justify their support for calls to wage jihad against either oppressive rulers within their nation or invading occupiers. In response, one of their sheiks made the following statement, “We took a covenant for us to order our brothers

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<sup>49</sup> “‘Awarif Al-Afadil ‘ala Hamish Al-ihya’”, 2/55.

<sup>50</sup> Muhammad Jamil Ghazi and Said Abd Al-Adhim, “Al-Sufiyya wa Al-Wajh Al-Akhar, Al-Sufiyya Tariq Al-Hawiyya,” Dar Al-Iman for Printing and Publication, Beirut, 2007.

to go with the time and its people however they may be, and not disdain ever whoever Allah raised above them, even if he had authority in the affairs of this world. All that is etiquette with Allah Almighty who raised them (in station), as he did not raise anyone except for a wisdom that he knows.”<sup>51</sup>

Zaki Mubarak mentions that ‘Urabi’s defeat was because the Sufis busied the troops with *Zikr* throughout the night until they were tired, so the English entered the battle at fajr without any resistance.<sup>52</sup> Zaki Mubarak mentions that “There many *Tariqahs* that persisted on their deviations from the right path, so they were even more submissive to the colonialists than the pagan Africans... the chief Phillippe Gundas while speaking about the French colonialists: “Our administrative governors and troops in Africa were forced to organize a call to Islamic religious *Tariqahs* because they were more submissive to French rule, and were more understanding and organized than the pagan cults known as Balido and Hagon or some of the senior negro soothsayers and magicians.”<sup>53</sup>

“This group is made up of some youth who were taught in French schools, and colonialism broke every connection they had to Arabness, and were added to some of the followers of Sufi *Tariqahs* who popularized deviations and innovations, and the spirit of defeat and negativity against resisting, so the colonizers used them as spies.”<sup>54</sup> “The Sufis say, ‘If Allah gave power over a people to an oppressor, then it is not for anyone to resist Allah’s will or complain about it.”<sup>55</sup>

The Europeans were aware of Sufism’s beliefs, and they exploited them in their works. Mustafa Kamil Pasha, an Egyptian national leader, recounted a strange story in his book “The Eastern Question” about the fall of Karaouine in Tunisia. According to the story, a French man accepted Islam and changed his name to Ahmad Al-Hadi. He worked hard to study the Shariah and became highly knowledgeable. He was appointed as an Imam to a large mosque in Karaouine. When the French troops

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<sup>51</sup> Al-Sharani, “Al-Tasawwuf Al-Islami,” 2/301, p.292.

<sup>52</sup> Zaki Mubarak, “Al-Tasawwuf Al-Islami fi Al-Adab wa Al-Akhlaq,” Matbat Al-Risala, Cairo, 1938, p.69.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, p.68.

<sup>54</sup> See “Al-Sufiyya min Raka’iz Al-Isti’mar,” <http://www.saaaid.net/feraq/sufyah/3.htm>

<sup>55</sup> Umar Farukh, “Al-Tasawwuf fi Al-Islam,” Maktaba Munamiyya, Lebanon: Beirut, 1947, p.123.

approached the city, its people prepared to defend it. They asked Al-Hadi to consult the mausoleum in the masjid. Al-Hadi entered the mausoleum and came out, saying, “The Sheik advises you to surrender because the country’s fall is inevitable.” The people listened to him, and on October 26, 1881, the French securely entered Kairouan.<sup>56</sup>

Umar Faroukh remarks:

With his saying: because of that we should not be surprised if we see the colonialists are not stingy with their wealth or support with prestige to Sufi *Tariqahs*, and every High Commissioner or Viceroy, must present the Sheik of the *Tariqah* at every place, and the colonialist may even indulge in flattering them by participating in circles of *Dhikr*!<sup>57</sup>

During the colonial period, the *Tariqah* Tijaniyya, a religious movement, had followers in Tunisia and Algeria who were more interested in pleasing their aides and agents than in the religion itself. However, the movement’s presence in France is not due to colonialism but rather to a French woman who married a sheik while working as a spy. After her husband passed away, she married his brother, who inherited the *Tariqah*. The followers of the *Tariqah* referred to her as “the wife of the two Sayyids” and believed that the soil she walked on had healing powers. Interestingly, she was a Catholic but greatly interested in the *Tariqah*. France even awarded her the “Badge of the East” for her efforts to enlist *Murids*, or followers, as warriors to support France’s cause.<sup>58</sup>

The Syrian writer Muhamad Fahr Shafqa said:

We see it as our duty of serving the truth and history to mention that the French government at the Mandate period in Syria, tried to spread the Tijani *Tariqah*, and hired some sheiks for this duty, so it presented to them wealth and places to establish a generation inclined to France; but the Mujahids of Arab North Africa drew the attention of the sincere to the danger of the Tijani *Tariqah*, and that it is French and colonial under the cover of religion, so all of Damascus gathered in a uproar to refuse this *Tariqah*, and its sheiks from the new agents.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Zaki Mubarak, “Al-Tasawwuf Al-Islami fi Al-Adab wa Al-Akhlaq,” Matbat Al-Risala, Cairo, 1938, p.107.

<sup>59</sup> Muhammad Jamil Ghazi and Said Abd Al-Adhim, “Al-Sufiyya wa Al-Wajh Al-Akhar, Al-Sufiyya Tariq Al-Hawiyya,” Dar Al-Iman for Printing and Publication, Beirut, 2007, p.164.

### 3.1.2. *Tariqahs* that Resisted French Colonialism

The Sufi *Tariqahs* were not separate from the political events happening in Tunisia. Therefore, they were influenced by those events and found themselves obliged to engage in political practices because of the limitations that affected Tunisian society, which represented the basic foundation of Sufi *Tariqahs*. These *Tariqahs* were required to amend some of their beliefs, which they held at the beginning of their emergence, including their rejection of participating in political work and their preference to stay away from political power and authority. Therefore, it can be said that the important role that these Sufi *Tariqahs* played since the end of the fifteenth century is fundamentally linked to their response toward external threats to Tunisia and its stability. The Spanish crusader expansion in Tunisia was one of the largest external threats that urged Sufi *Tariqahs* to stand beside the Hafsid dynasty for its resistance and defense of the nation and what it held sacred.<sup>60</sup> Despite their different tendencies, the *Tariqahs* played an important role in achieving political security and stability. They cooperated with the political establishment and monitored the Tunisian coasts to prevent external threats. The Ribats were an essential institution established to express the political action of Sufi *Tariqahs*. They contributed to protecting the country from dangers lurking against it. The fake Sufis established their Ribats in coastal Tunisian cities such as Gabès, Sfax, Sousse, Monastir, and Bizerte. Despite marginal differences between the *Zawiyas* and Ribats, the primary duty of these Ribats was military mobilization to act as a barrier against external aggression. The Ottomans worked to consolidate their relationship with these Ribat *Tariqahs* to stop Spanish aggression. The Spanish aggression did not end with Andalus, so commissions were established to eliminate all Muslims. The Andalusians migrated to North Africa to join their Muslim brethren and defend their nation against invaders. However, the Sufis refused to comply when the Hafsid dynasty changed their stance on the Spanish occupation due to internal conflicts. Instead, they focused on driving out the Spanish from Algeria in 1518. The Sufi *Tariqah* sheiks then requested help from the Ottoman armies to bring about a change in the political situation in Tunisia.

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<sup>60</sup> Ibrahim Harakat, "Al-Tayarat Al-Siyasiyya wa Al-Fikriyya bi-ALMaghrib khilal Qarnayn wa Nisf qabl Al-Himaya," Dar Al-Rashad Al-Haditha, Casablanca, Morocco, 1994, p.46.

How Sufi Tariqahs engaged with French colonialism in Tunisia was similar to how they had engaged with Spanish colonialism before. Some *Tariqahs* were loyal to the colonizers, while others resisted them. Among the *Tariqahs* that resisted colonialism was the Rahmaniyya *Tariqah* in Awlad ‘Aun, which maintained its independence and encouraged its followers to resist colonialism. The *Tariqah* obstructed consultations related to damming Wadi Bu Zoufa to irrigate the Siliana plain, which the colonizers wanted to use for their benefit. The followers of the Qadiri *Tariqah*, who represented the region’s symbol, Sayyid Abdullah Bujladya in Tataouine in the country’s far south, led the Wadarna revolt from 1915 to 1916. The colonizers lost many lives and equipment during this revolt despite the failed attempts by the Tijani *Tariqah* to pacify the revolting tribes. Sheik Sad Bil-jaj Nasir Al-Qadi, the representative of the Tijaniyya in the region, gathered his followers and encouraged them not to resist France. During the colonial period, the Sheik of the Tijani *Tariqah* in Algeria, Al-Bashir bin Muhammad bin Si Al-Aid, sent a representative to Tataouine to calm down the situation and encourage people to remain neutral toward France. However, the revolting tribes did not listen to these calls. They were inspired by the Sanusi tribe in Libya, led by the mujahid Khalifa bin Askar, and the Ramani and Qadiri *Tariqahs*, who also supported the revolt. These confrontations occurred when France was involved in several wars, making the situation even more delicate. Eventually, the southern region was placed under direct military control.<sup>61</sup>

### **3.2. Sufi *Tariqahs* and French Colonial Policies in Tunisia**

France had various reasons for colonizing Tunisia, including the claim that the situation on the Tunisian-Algerian border was unbearable, which increased the burden of the French Governor-General in Algeria. They also claimed that the Tunisian tribes on the borders committed repeated violations, did not subject themselves to Tunisian power or pay taxes, and were rebel groups who lived in the mountain reefs and jungles, armed with whatever equipment they could seize.

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<sup>61</sup> See Al-Talili Al-Ajili, “Al-Turuq Al-Sufiyya wa Al-Isti‘mar Al-Fransi bi-Albilad Al-Tunisiyya bayn 1881-1917,” Publications of the College of Arts Manuba, 1992, p.164

The colonial power faced a problem in organizing a military campaign, as it did not have a colonial army and did not want to rely on unreliable Algerian volunteers. It managed to organize 17000 fighters on the Tunisian-Algerian borders in three military formations, with a powerful naval fleet in the port of La Goulette.

Despite the protests of Bey Muhammad Al-Sadiq and his request for aid from the Ottoman fleet and European nations, his hopes were turned down. On May 12, 1881, he was forced to sign a humiliating protection treaty, which took only four hours. France tried to obfuscate the situation with the term “protection” to not draw protests from Western nations in its attempt to change international law. It also did not want to shock public perception by changing its country’s status to a colony like that of neighboring Algeria. France claimed cooperation with the Bey in a temporary agreement that would end after a month with the passing of the justifications for its presence on Tunisian soil. However, the Treaty of Bardo was merely colonialism in the guise of protection.<sup>62</sup>

In light of Bey’s passivity and his decision to pursue negotiations and peace, state institutions crumbled under the onslaught of organized armies advancing on the capital from all directions. Only the Sufi *Tariqahs* remained a widely supported organized force capable of mobilizing resistance against the new colonial power. Nevertheless, most of the *Tariqah* leaders followed the path of the Bey by swiftly offering their support and loyalty to ease French protection to prevent further bloodshed among their followers.

### **3.3. The Stance of the Sufi *Tariqahs* Toward French Colonial Policy**

Upon the arrival of French armies in Tunisia, the Sufi *Tariqahs* emerged as significant popular organizations with broad social support. They were capable of mobilizing residents and resisting colonial forces. Recognizing this, the French authorities attempted to control the *Tariqah* sheiks through various means. While some *Zawiyas* in the Northwest accepted these attempts, others, mostly in the south, rejected them and stood against colonial power. The failure of the Wardana revolt in 1915 eventually

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<sup>62</sup> Shawish Hisabi, “Fard Al-Himaya Al-Fransiyya ala Tunis wa radd Al-Fi’l Al-Tunisi 1881-1882,” *Journal of Historical Studies*, No.2, University of Algiers, Mahad Al-Tarikh, 1993, p.94.

led to their subjugation by the colonial forces.<sup>63</sup> The stances of the Sufi *Tariqahs* toward French colonialism of Tunisia can be divided into two classes: content loyal *Tariqahs* and revolting resisting *Tariqahs*.

### **3.3.1. The Sufi *Tariqahs* Loyal to French Colonial Power**

Despite the different affiliations with the *Tariqah* among Tunisian tribes in other regions, the general mindset remained connected to the Ottoman Caliphate as a symbol of Muslim unity in the face of Christian European attacks. Therefore, the Sufi *Tariqahs*, especially the Tijani *Tariqah*, could not justify their submissive stance toward the blatant entry of the Tunisian Province despite the wishes of its people and ruler.

As a result, the tribal and popular stance agreed to resist without referring to the submissive *Tariqahs*, which colonizers were betting on and saw as a tool to stand against the call for Islamic unity from the Sanusi *Tariqah*. The tribes were aided by Muhammad Al-Saghir Al-Tijani's visit to Tunisia in 1885 to reassure the French Resident-General of the unconditional loyalty of the Tijani *Tariqah* and the rest of the *Zawiyas* in Tunisia, following the example of the *Zawiya* in Algeria.

After that, there was a campaign to sack the sheiks of *Zawiyas* who expressed their discomfort with colonization or refused to cooperate. This aided the execution of colonial policies in Tunisia without noticeable resistance, excluding the central and southern regions, where the tribes mobilized far away from the *Zawiyas*.

### **3.3.2. Role of the Tijani *Tariqahs* in Executing Colonial Policies**

During the French colonial period, some Sufi *Tariqahs* were known to exaggerate their loyalty and service to the colonizers whenever it was needed. Among them, the Tijani *Tariqah* was perhaps the most active recruiting for the colonizers. They justified their position by citing God's destiny, which allowed the colonizers to access society and try to win its love by offering pretexts such as protecting borders with Algeria,

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<sup>63</sup> See Al-Talili Al-Ajili, "Al-Turuq Al-Sufiyya wa Al-Isti'mar Al-Fransi bi-Albilad Al-Tunisiyya bayn 1881-1917," Publications of the College of Arts Manuba, 2009, p.107-112.

disciplining rebellious tribes, eliminating pirates in the Mediterranean, and freeing people from slavery and ignorance. Despite some apprehensive acceptance, these justifications were exaggerated. The Sheik of the Tijaniyya, Sayyid Muhammad Al-Saghir Al-Tijani, wrote a letter to Amir Abdulqadir Al-Jazairi, which contained these exaggerated pretexts and submission to the idea of destiny. The introduction of the letter clearly states this.

Our concern is to remain religiously calm, and not busy ourselves except with the affairs of the sky. We have no power or influence to resist the legions of French troops... If Allah's destiny which was brought by the French to the countries of Islam was to leave and return back beyond the sea, then he has no need for the hands of man to this sacred action... the calmness of religious life which we live and retreat for its sake is what makes me lead my followers and protect their lives outside of the temporary conflicts whose ends and consequences are unknowable.<sup>64</sup>

The French viewed the Tijani sheiks as logically the most likely to understand the new situation, and they knew how to prevent their followers from bloodshed. It is possible that the Tijani sheiks embraced the colonizer and justified their actions as a way to seek revenge against the Ottoman Turks who had mistreated them and failed to protect their dignity. This can be inferred from a letter written by Sheik Ali Al-Tijani to his followers, in which he stated that Allah had given Algeria and Tunisia to the French and that he would preserve their presence. He urged his followers to remain peaceful and not resort to violence. According to him, Allah had saved them from their oppressors who only followed the law of force. He advised them to allow others to do as they please and to follow the "Justice and Wisdom" path, which ultimately ends in good for all. He also emphasized that truth follows the truth and that everything from Allah must be respected.<sup>65</sup>

The Sheik of the Tijani *Tariqah* in Bu Arada, located in the governorate of Béja, was named Al-Manubi bin Al-Sheik Salih. He was known for serving the colonizers and providing them with any means to facilitate their invasion of the country. He even helped them take over the rights of his fellow Tunisian farmers. Al-Manubi admitted aiding the first occupiers in his region, known for being fertile and attractive to colonial ambitions. This region was called the Granary of Ancient Rome and was called Green

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<sup>64</sup> Ahmed Sakadrij, "Kashf Al-Hijab aman Talaqa ma Al-Sheikh Al-Tijani min Al-Ashab," 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Cairo, 1962, p.382.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

Tunisia by travelers. Al-Manubi mentions the occupiers he helped, including the famous Tan and Napoleon Nye, and a list of occupiers from different parts of Béja. Today, Béja is still an example in Tunisia for its fertile soil and abundant harvests. In a letter to the French Foreign Minister in Paris, Sayyid Al-Manubi clarified that he welcomed the French army at the beginning of the occupation and acted as their guide in the region. He also recommended them to the tribes and advised them to remain calm and comply with French power, making the duty of the French civil authorities easier.<sup>66</sup>

Sheik Al-Manubi played a crucial role in halting the anti-colonial movements initiated by the Free Constitutional Party. The party refused to accept the reforms enforced by the French Resident-General in Tunisia in 1922. Meanwhile, the colonial authorities worked to reward those sheiks who were loyal to them. They granted privileges to the sheiks of *Zawiyas*, who remained faithful to them, which included giving them vast powers and influence. The Qadiri Sheik in El Kaf was a perfect example of submission and loyalty to the French. He convinced his followers that he was invulnerable and had a strong relationship with the colonizer. He considered the colonizers as his friends and remained faithful to their company. In contrast, Sheik Al-Manubi was able to get close to men in the government who helped him transfer employees from one place to another and fire others through slander. He would even attack some citizens in his ranks or had declared their opposition to the colonizer.<sup>67</sup>

### **3.3.3. Contribution of the Qadiri *Tariqah* to Executing Colonial Policies**

The Qadiri *Tariqah's* *Zawiyas* in Tunisia and Algeria weren't sufficiently connected, leading to a fundamental difference in their political stances toward colonialism. The Qadiri *Zawiyas* in the Northwest on the borders with Algeria, particularly the *Zawiya* in El Kaf, supported the colonial forces that had infringed on the borders under the pretext of fear for their residents' safety and their properties being destroyed or seized.

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<sup>66</sup> A.G.T. Le cheikh El manoubi au ministre des affaires Etrangères a Paris, le 7/11 /1929, P2 , D156

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

Documents in the National Archive<sup>68</sup> make clear that the Qadiri *Tariqah* in El Kaf played an essential role in facilitating the French invasion of the city and the region's capacities in terms of mineral riches, such as iron mines, the minerals of Jérisa and thousands of hectares of fertile land. During the French occupation of Tunisia in 1881, a man named Sayyid Qadur played a significant role in facilitating the capture of El Kaf. In April of that year, Sayyid Qadur was in close contact with a consular aide named "Roa." He asked Roa how he could serve the French forces and maintain the good image he had built over the years. Later that day, Sayyid Qadur informed Roa that he was ready to meet Major-General Lojro, the leader of the French forces, to express his unconditional loyalty. Sayyid Qadur also agreed to convince the people in the governorate of El Kaf to abandon any resistance that could result in unnecessary bloodshed. He believed that the colonizers were destined to rule and could not be removed except through supplication and turning to Allah. Sayyid Qadur used his influence in the region to convince those resisting to abandon the idea of jihad. The leader of El Kaf and some of his nobles also played a submissive role, as they opened the gates of the city and the casbah where the general and his guard could reside.

During French colonialism, the Qadiri Zawiya in El Kaf was an example of how the resistance was demoralized. The resistance fighters wanted to defend their nation's dignity and capabilities. Still, they witnessed firsthand what the French troops did to their brothers in Algeria who had previously faced the same trial. Archive documents reveal that Sheik Ahmed Qaddur was an agricultural partner of Regaru, the Governor of the French government in the El Kaf region. Sheik Qaddur would betray his people by disclosing the locations and names of revolutionaries to the colonial forces, making it easier for them to eliminate the rebels.<sup>69</sup>

Sayyid Qaddur was essential in protecting Rowa from death threats by the Rahmaniyya in El Kaf. This was due to his strong relationship with Rowa, which we mentioned earlier. The Rahmaniyya considered Rowa an agent who needed to be eliminated to purify the Sufi *Tariqah* and Sayyid Qaddur's relationship with Rowa helped protect him. During the Russo-Turkish war of 1877, Sayyid Qaddur refused to participate in the subscription to volunteer for the war that the Bey had opened for the Sultan. The

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<sup>68</sup> A.G.T. Le cheikh El manoubi au ministre des affaires Etrangères a Paris, le 7/11 /1929, P2 , D156

<sup>69</sup> A.G.T. Note émanante du kef, datée du 16 /2/1929, P1,D102

High Porte at the time had declared a holy war and called for general mobilization in all regions of the Ottoman Empire. Sayyid Qaddur had a different opinion and supported the other side of the conflict, which would later be known as the First World War. The First World War ended in the division of the estates of the “Sick Man” and the declaration of the end of the Ottoman Caliphate.

It has come to light that Sheik Muhammad bin Shaban, who was the Sheik of Qadiri Sheiks and the Imam of the Bardo mosque at that time, was allegedly involved in collaboration with the French occupation. It has been reported that he was seen welcoming the French forces when they entered Tunisia.<sup>70</sup>

When the followers of the Shabiyya *Tariqah* lived in Djerid, they made significant efforts to maintain stability in the area. They dealt with anyone who opposed the French, ensuring peace in the region. One day, General Vilber I arrived at the head of a French force, causing many residents in the surrounding areas of Tozeur to flee in terror. However, the grandson of Bin Al-Hajj Ahmed, the sheik of the Shabiyya in the area, convinced them to return to their homes. He also played a mediating role with the French army to calm the situation, and as a result, he was appointed the head of the Shariah department. From then on, he made every effort to express his loyalty and friendship to France.<sup>71</sup>

Likewise, Imran Bin Abdessalem Al-Fitouri, the representative of the Salami *Tariqah* in Tunisia, played a significant role in aiding the Arabs fleeing to Ottoman Tripolitania during the French occupation of the country. He acted as a mediator for the colonial armed leadership to facilitate their return. Similarly, the *Zawiya* of Bab Menara has contributed to “calming down risks.” General Sion/San, the Assistant Military Attache, acknowledged the *Zawiya*’s efforts in maintaining peace and stability in the region during the open meal they held every Friday.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> A.G.T. Le cheikh El manoubi au ministre des affaires Etrangères a Paris, le 7/11 /1929, P2 , D156

<sup>71</sup> See Ali Chebbi, “New Sources for the Study of the History of Chebbiyya,” *Al-Maghribiyya Historical Journal*, Issue 13/14, January 1979, pp. 55-81.

<sup>72</sup> C.N.U.D.S.T. le cherif tidjani au ministre des affaires etrengeres a paris, le 14 /2/1930, tunisis 1917-1940, dossier n 2.

### 3.4. Conclusion

Evidently, the colonial policy toward the Sufi *Tariqahs* was not based on the country's reality and its experiences in Algeria. This colonial perspective, which overestimated its opponent, was constructed on the events in Algeria that made France fear the Sufi *Tariqahs*, especially the Qadiri *Tariqah*. Despite the passing of 60 years since the death of Abdulkader Al-Jazairi, who sparked a revolution that stunned the colonial armies, its effects were still felt at that time. In addition, the rise of some *Tariqahs* and their leadership to repeated insurgencies in Algeria made France apprehensive that Tunisian Sufi *Tariqahs* would follow suit. Therefore, even though some *Tariqahs* submitted to French colonialism and devoted their spiritual influence to serve it, like the Tijani *Tariqah*, some of them were behind many of the revolutions in the country during the colonial period, especially the Rahmani *Tariqah*, which branched off from the Qadiriyya.

The reality is that France remained in conflict with some of the Sufi *Tariqahs* on the borders between the two countries until shortly before its occupation of Tunisia. This led some of the Sufi leaders in Algeria to take refuge in Tunisia, where they established *Zawiyas*, such as Ibrahim bin Ahmed Al-Kabir, the founder of the Qadiri *Tariqah* in Nefta, who was known for his opposition to colonialism and not submitting to its policies. Similarly, Muhammad bin Azur established a *Zawiya* in the south of Tunisia, which forced France to pressure the Tunisian Province to abandon them. Through its experience in Algeria, the French occupation executed similar policies toward Tunisian Sufi *Tariqahs* by enabling loyalty and pressuring those who resisted. Charles Brosselard described the followers of *Tariqahs* as "armed militias for defense and spreading their creed... and they are prepared to launch with just a signal from their leader."<sup>73</sup> The colonial circles exaggerated the role of Sufi *Tariqahs* in resistance to their regional policies. They perceived every movement as a holy jihad directed toward disbelievers and polytheists. This led to a pragmatic approach to dealing with these *Tariqahs*, which included getting close to some of them and containing others who refused to co-exist with them and opposed their interests.

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<sup>73</sup> Brosselard, *les khouans et la constitution des ordres religieux musulmans en Algérie*, Alger, Imp,A,Bourget, 1859, p 19.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUFI *TARIQAHS* AND COLONIAL RESISTANCE IN ALGERIA

#### 4.1. Introduction: Overview

The debate surrounding Sufism's contribution to anti-colonial movements hinges on the perceived dichotomy between its "subjective" elements (such as personal growth and spirituality) and its transgressive and social dimensions essential for resistance and liberation. While certain Sufis view jihad as a transcendent concept removed from worldly matters, this approach appears at odds with the social function of Sufism.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> 'Abdul Raḥmān Badawī in his book "Tarikh Al-Tasawwuf Al-Islami" (Published by Wakalat al-Matbu'at: Kuwait. 1st edition. 1975] quotes Al-Munawi in his "Al-Kawakeb Al-Duriyya" discussing the meaning of Sufism in its various stages of spiritual ascent towards the divine truth through progressive and subsequent ranks. In the final stage of realization and union, Al-Hallaj said: "Whoever points to it (the divine truth) is a Sufi, and whoever is pointed away from it is a mere follower (Sufi)." The first use of the verb "pointing" (ashar) indicates the separation between the Sufi and divine essence, so the Sufi serves as a sign indicating the qualities attributed to the higher essence. However, this verb is substituted in the latter part of the expression with the signifier "عن," which may indicate that there is no longer a difference between the signifier and the signified and they have both merged into one. However, Al-Hallaj refers to in their relationship with the divine essence to be known through "taste" (dhawq), which is an experiential aspect of worship transcending sensory perception and even worldly understanding. Therefore, this definition remains inaccessible to those outside the realm of Sufism, since this experiential state of devotion is a unique condition that cannot be fully grasped or imagined from the outside. This has lead researchers who are not Sufis to rely on behavior, visible manifestations (of devotion), and accounts of Sufis themselves to extract the meaning of this experience of divine essence. In the religious sciences of Muslims, there is a field of knowledge referred to as "Sufi" or "Al-Mutasawwif" by its adherents, while others may use the term "Sadiqis" or "Mutasahibis"... Though they themselves may prefer to call themselves "Al-Fuqara" (the poor), a term later replaced with "Al-Darawish" (dervishes), due to the prevalence of foreign influence over the people. [Abdul Hamid Afendi Ihawi, "Al-Fiqh wal Tasawwuf", Al-Matabi'a Al-'Umumiyya, Egypt, 1901, pp. 41-42]. It should be noted that this position is not definitive, and in my opinion creates a vagueness and lack of clarity on the given definition of Sufism when incessantly repeating the phrase "it is said" to elaborate between the three interchangeable terms of "Sufis," "Mutasawwif," and "Fuqara" without explicitly highlighting or emphasizing one particular designation among these multiple terms. Moreover, within this linguistic framework, there is no attempt to make a clear distinction between the word "Sufism" based on either lexicographical or terminological differences. This is because terminological words are generally less influenced by context, except when they migrate from one context to another, causing them to lose some of their terminological significance in favor of the new context, but in this case, it still retains the essence of its original focal concept. This observation makes us settle on some opinion regarding the word Sufism, and what it is. A lexicon? Or a term? Despite the numerous differences regarding the meaning of the word "Sufism," it is not a dictionary term but instead falls under a specialized terminology of Sufism. The majority of opinions agree on the common use of this term, which is based on consensus among scholars to establish its significance in relation to a common meaning that signifies its spiritual and experiential contexts. The overruling view on Sufi's is such that they have a distinct perspective that differs from other schools of thought. They are neither Sunnis nor Shias, theologians or Mu'tazilites. What sets them apart is their devotion and behavior, which they claim is based on

The more Sufism moves away from what reduces it to its social functions, the closer it gets to its abstract and divine truth.

However, what appears to be a contradiction between the essential and referential highlights the social function of Sufism, especially regarding colonial resistance. Delving deeper into this issue per the objectives of this research, we further discuss the Sufi experience in Algeria, which is distinctive in its characteristics and offers valuable insights into Sufism and resistance as a whole. This unique experience also provides us with the opportunity to begin exploring “liberal Islamic Sufism” more broadly across different times and places. The Algerian resistance to colonialism is vast and profound, making its study a vital source of contemplation and inspiration.

It is worth remembering that the Sufi movement in Algeria is not, as one may think, a reaction to the Turkish Protectorate nor Spanish and French colonization. From a broader historical perspective, the emergence of Sufism in the Maghreb countries coincided with its emergence in the Mashriq (Middle East). A great deal of Murabitun (ascetics) and Sufis were present in Algeria even before the arrival of the Ottomans in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, and the Sufi movement flourished before the arrival of the Ottomans in Algeria across the Islamic world and specifically in the Western Islamic region. “It seems that the historical trajectory intertwined with the path of Sufism in its relationship with reality.”<sup>75</sup> Sufism in Algeria began as an abstract and theoretical inclination. Still, it was quickly influenced by protective and colonial forces threatening the country, leading to the emergence of physical manifestations of the

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following the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. This implicit theological and school inclusion within the framework of the Quran and Sunnah has led to various positions in support or strong criticism against them. This is because these positions and perspectives have been based on evaluating Sufism using the same standards they claim to be based on, i.e., the Islamic understanding of creed and its requirements according to Sharia. The emergence of Sufism was a response to the changes that occurred in Islam over time. “With the end of the era of the prophethood became distant, the heavenly revelation was cut off, the chosen light disappeared, and opinions differed and diverged, and each one carried an opinion unique in its opinion, and the drinking of knowledge was disturbed and tainted by the cravings of passion, and the foundations of the devout were shaken [...] the unique sect emerged with good deeds, commitment to Sunnism, with sincerity in determination, strength in religion, and renunciation of the world and its temptations.” This quote, attributed to As-Suhrawardi, supports Sufism and portrays them positively. However, when conveyed by Al-Zahrawi in his book “Al-Fiqh wal Tasawwuf,” he criticizes Sufi’s and considers them deviating from the religion and the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. He makes a few exceptions to this critique, including Al-Ghazali. However, we will see that these exceptions expand into other positions that are far more intricate and complex.

<sup>75</sup> Aboul-Kassem Saadallah, “ Tarikh al-Jaza’ir al-Thaqafi,” Vol. 1, Dar Al-Gharb Al-Islami, 1st edition, 1998: 450.

movement in the form of *Zawiyas* (Sufi lodges) and *Tariqahs* (Sufi *Tariqahs*). The objectives of this research fall within the practical framework of Sufism as a militant movement striving for resistance and liberation.

What justifies the emphasis on Sufi resistance against colonialism is the reality that led these *Tariqahs* to stand in and replace the functions of the Algerian state during the successive stages of Spanish colonization, Turkish protection, and French colonialism. Filling this void was not a fleeting formality nor an easy process. The militant mobilization of *Murids* (disciples) and followers made foreigners traveling through Algeria, both invaders (Spaniards and French) and protectors (Turks), pay special attention to these *Tariqahs*. This can be illustrated by the selective census conducted by Louis Rinn in 1884.

I) Total Statistics:

- Total number of Sufi *Tariqahs* in Algeria: 16.
- Total number of *Zawiya*'s: 355 important *Zawiya*'s.
- Total number of affiliated followers: 169,000.
- Total number of Muslims: 2,842,000.

II) Important *Tariqahs* and their followers:

- Rahmaniya: 96,915 followers.
- Tayyibiya: 16,045 followers.
- Qadiriya: 14,842 followers.
- Tijaniya: 11,182 followers.
- Shadhiliya/Darqawiya: 10,252 followers.<sup>76</sup>

This significant data affecting the economic and political realities bespeaks the nature of the relationship of these *Tariqahs* with every intruding regime occupying the country, the first among these being the Spanish occupation.

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<sup>76</sup> Aboul-Kassem Saadallah, "Tarikh al-Jaza'ir al-Thaqafi," Vol. 4: 292-293.

## 4.2. *Tariqah* Resistance to the Spanish Occupation

In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, North African countries experienced a dissolution celebrated by both Spain's rulers and its intellectuals. One Spanish writer expressed this sentiment: "The psychological state in the entire region [referring to the countries of North Africa] reached a level of collapse that suggests that God intended these countries to be within the reach of His Majesty."<sup>77</sup> Based on this, Spain and Portugal agreed to the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494, where they divided their spheres of influence. As a result, the Algerian coasts successively fell under Spanish control: 1505, Port of Algiers; 1507, City of Oran; 1509, Port of Oran; 1510, Béjaïa; 1511, Algiers.

By depriving them of trade in ports, Spanish colonization impoverished the local population and ultimately weakened political decision-making. When the state became extremely weak, it found some solace in popular resistance led by Sufi *Tariqahs*. "The Spanish occupation led to the emergence of popular resistance led by local leaders, including Sufi sheiks, religious scholars, and some local emir's who organized people to resist against the Spanish after the failure of the Zayyanid and Hafsid states to confront them. This historical responsibility requires acknowledgment of the significant role these Sufi leaders played in mobilizing the people in the name of religion to defend their country, impede Spanish influence in the interior regions, and confine them within their fortresses where they took refuge until the Ottoman Turks finally expelled them."<sup>78</sup>

## 4.3. The Relationship Between Sufi *Tariqahs* and the Ottoman Protectorate

The relationship between Sufi *Tariqahs* and the Ottoman Protectorate was complex and underwent two distinct stages. During the first stage, which lasted from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Sufi *Tariqahs* were largely content with Ottoman rule and enjoyed a degree of autonomy and support from the state. Sufi orders were able to establish themselves as important social and religious institutions, and their leaders enjoyed

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<sup>77</sup> Ali Muhammed Muhammed Al-Sallabi "Kifah al-Sha'b al-Jaza'iri 'Idd al-Ihtilal al-Faransi." Dar Al-Ma'arif in Lebanon, p. 115.

<sup>78</sup> Ali Muhammad Muhammad Al-Salabi, "The Struggle of the Algerian People Against French Occupation," p. 134.

close ties with the Ottoman elite. However, the second stage, which began in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and continued into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was marked by a growing disillusionment and rejection of Ottoman rule. This phase was largely influenced by the Spanish occupation of the Algerian coasts, destabilizing the region and leading to increased conflict between the various factions vying for power.

During this period, Sufi *Tariqahs* increasingly saw themselves as a bulwark against the corrupt and oppressive Ottoman state and began to engage in various forms of resistance, including armed rebellion. The decline of Ottoman power and the rise of colonialism in North Africa ultimately spelled the end of the Ottoman Protectorate and the traditional Sufi *Tariqah* system.

#### **4.3.1. Stage of Contentment**

Aboul-Kassem Saadallah indicates that the term “Sufi” is sometimes confused with another term entrenched in the literature of Islamic jihad against enemies, which is the term “Al-Murabit” (i.e., “the defender”). He writes,

The term Al-Murabit carries a distant historical and political meaning. It means ‘the fighter’ because it originally came from the word ‘*Ribat*,’ and *Ribats* are primarily established in the frontiers and dangerous places from which the enemies attack. Thus, *Ribats* were fortresses and strongholds to prevent external threats. *Murabit*’s were fighters who protected the frontiers and confronted the enemies before the arrival of the Ottomans. After the Ottomans took over the defense of the frontiers, the activities of the Al-Murabit’*s* were limited to acts of benevolence, teaching, reconciliation, and securing of roads.<sup>79</sup>

The division of labor between military and social tasks was evident in the roles assigned to different groups. The Ottomans were responsible for military duties, while the Sufi *Tariqahs* were responsible for social tasks. This was because the Sufi groups were better acquainted with the issues facing Algerian society. The Ottomans’ primary mission was to protect Algeria from Spanish attacks. Aboul-Kassem Saadallah was among the researchers who attempted to locate the Islamic roots of the term in the Quran and the Sunnah. Scholars cite the companion Ali’s statement that “being stationed (*Ribat*) for a day in the path of Allah is better than the world and everything

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<sup>79</sup> Aboul-Kassem Saadallah, *Tarikh al-Jaza’ir al-Thaqafi*, Vol. 4: 12.

in it” (Al-Shaykhan),<sup>80</sup> interpreting this hadith in the context of war. Thus, Al-Murabita are also referred to as the gathering in the frontiers to defend the borders of the Islamic state against the enemy.

It can be difficult to distinguish between a Murabit and a Sufi, as the differences are minor and can be easily confused. A Murabit may defend Islam without necessarily being a Sufi, while a Sufi may be a Murabit but not necessarily opposed to colonialism. When the Ottomans entered Algeria to offer protection against Spanish occupation, the Sufis and Al-Murabits saw it as a Muslim brotherhood. They focused on charitable works, leaving military resistance to the Ottoman soldiers and other Algerian believers. The Ottomans encouraged the Sufi Murabits to take on this charitable role for various reasons.

Sufi Tariqahs influenced Turkish military commanders in religious, spiritual, and military terms. The Bektashi Order played a significant role in inspiring and supporting these Ottoman commanders to engage in jihad. As a result, the commanders felt a sense of loyalty to their kin, Sufi *Tariqahs*, and showed it through their actions. There was a significant increase in the number of Sufi lodges called *Zawiyas* in Algeria. According to Rinn’s statistics, every region in Algeria had established a *Zawiya* or a branch of a *Zawiya*. The Ottoman Empire realized they couldn’t take control by force alone due to the overwhelming number of *Zawiyas* and their organized followers. Therefore, they adopted diplomatic policies of appeasement and shared interests. Although it’s impossible to list all the *Zawiyas* relevant to this context, the most famous ones will be mentioned, and the most important Sufi *Tariqahs* will be highlighted. The Qadiriyya-Shadhiliyya order was the most renowned and widespread in Algeria and around the Islamic world. The Qadiriyya order is often regarded as the mother of most Sufi *Tariqahs* and traces its origins back to the Sheik Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani.<sup>81</sup> From Baghdad, it was transferred to North Africa by Abu Madyan al-Tamimi

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<sup>80</sup> Mohamed Ahmed Dharniqa, *Safahat min Jihad al-Sufiyya wal Zuhad*, George Bourse Printing Press, Lebanon, 1st edition, 1994, p. 24.

<sup>81</sup> Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani, one of the greatest and best known Sufis, passed away in Iraq in 561 AH. His book, “Al-Fath al-Rabbani wa al-Fayd al-Rahmani,” expounds on Sufism and its relationship with resistance, which Malik Bennabi referred to as “colonizability,” and former Tunisian President Mohamed Moncef Marzouki called “internal colonization.” The book *Al-Fath al-Rabbani* consists of thirty-six chapters, lectures that the Sheikh delivered to his disciples and Muslims in general on Friday mornings and Tuesday evenings in Baghdad, as well as on Sunday mornings in Rabat. He lectured regularly for 40 years, and was attended by scholars, jurists, and other individuals, with his first lecture

around the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. The relationship between the Ottomans and the Qadiriyya order oscillated between periods of amity and discord. While the Ottomans initially and, in principle, supported the Qadiriyya order, at various points, they held policies that did not favor the order without giving justification. “We know that one of the Beys of Oran contributed to the construction of its mosque and perhaps to its endowments. However, their general animosity toward the leaders of Sufi *Tariqahs* also extended to the leader of the Qadiriyya order. The Bey, Hassan, detained Sheik Mohil-Din during his journey to Hajj and prevented him from completing it out of fear of his activities. The *Zawiya* had gained great importance, and people gathered there to bid farewell to the Hajj pilgrims.”<sup>82</sup>

Numerous instances of clashes exemplify the ongoing conflicts between two parties. The Qadiriyya order was responsible for the emergence of several other Sufi branches, such as the Shadhiliyya order, named after Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili, the Al-Azzawiyya order, named after Ibn Azzouz al-Burji in Biskra, the Bashtarziyya order, named after its founder in Constantine, and the Tijaniyya order, named after Ahmad Tijani, who passed away in 1230 AH. In the following chapters, we will provide detailed accounts of the military campaigns undertaken by these Qadiriyya branches. Furthermore, we will also shed light on other *Tariqahs*, such as the Rahmaniyya order, named after Abdulrahman al-Azahari, which are quite distinct from the Qadiriyya. The

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delivered in 521 AH, and the last in 561 AH. Abdul Qadir al-Jilani addressed the issue of resisting internal colonization in several instances through these lectures. In once such lecture, he declares: “How long will you, scholars and ascetics, engage in hypocrisy? How much hypocrisy must you display towards the kings and sultans until you partake of the world’s scraps, desires, and pleasures? You and most of the kings in this era are unfaithful and treacherous to what Allah, the Almighty, has mandated for His servants.” His statement directly addresses and effectively employs a rhetoric of admonition and warning. This statement does not stand in contradiction to some of the characteristics Sufis are known for such as seclusion, tactfulness, and pacifism. Rather, it appropriately adopts a revolutionary approach aimed at exposing the conspiratorial relationship between rulers and scholars who would seek to legitimize the ruler’s injustices towards their subjects. Evidently, Sheikh Abdul Qadir strongly opposed those who advocate for the necessity of obeying rulers, including the corrupt and unjust. What is specifically pertinent to us here is the Sheikh’s deep commitment to spiritual knowledge, which does not bar him from obeying the stipulations of the Sharia and its rulings on the relationship between rulers and subjects in the context of politics and governance. It appears there is no contradiction in this loyalty, which may appear contradictory to another group of Sufis, when we consider Sheikh al-Jilani’s understanding of the Sharia as an essential component of Sufism. Abu al-Fayd reports from the Sheikh that he used to call on his Qadiri followers to follow the Sunnah and Sharia. He would emphatically state: “Adhering to the Sharia is a means to attain happiness in this world and the hereafter. Beware of deviating from it, and do not stray from the legal consensus (ijma’) or the consensus of the people of Allah... The closest path to Allah Almighty is that which adheres to the law of servitude, holds fast to the principles of Sharia and its branches, and remaining steadfast on the righteous path.”

<sup>82</sup> Aboul-Kassem Saadallah, *Tarikh al-Jaza’ir al-Thaqafi*, Vol. 1: 515.

Rahmaniyya order, unlike the Qadiriyya, wielded less political influence and power but significantly contributed to military resistance. Since none of these *Tariqahs* pledged unwavering loyalty to the Ottomans, their relationships with the Ottoman Protectorate were constantly in flux, influenced by the ebbs and flows of war, peace, and economic power.

Thirdly, the Ottomans attempted to gain the support of the *Zawiyas* to weaken their military effectiveness and neutralize their combat capabilities to prevent any potential future threats. When the Ottoman efforts to manipulate and defuse this potential threat failed, they redirected this force against their common enemy, the Spanish occupiers. “Many *Zawiyas* were established in this region [southwest Algeria], with one of the most important being the Shadhiliyya. This approach played a key role in establishing the authority of Sufism. Due to their perceived threat, the Ottomans established contact with the Shadhili representatives and won over their loyalties. He merely welcomed their presence and allied with them to take up arms against their common enemies: the Spanish on the one hand, and the Tlemceni Zayyanid dynasty, which allied itself with the Spanish against the Ottomans, on the other.”<sup>83</sup> Moreover, this defensive effort was a responsibility shouldered between the Sufis of the East and their counterparts in the West: “The Murabitun (also known as the Veiled) rendered great services to Islam and Muslims, whether in the Islamic West or Al-Andalus, through their efforts in jihad. This was especially significant after Al-Andalus became fragmented, disintegrated, and declined in Islamic influence during the reigns of the Taifa kingdoms in Spain.”<sup>84</sup>

According to Mohammed Ahmed Dharnqia, there were two reasons for using spiritual da’wah (proselytizing) as a unifying framework by the Taifa Kings to overcome political schisms and resolve in-fighting and power struggles. The first reason was the positive public perception of the Ottomans since the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, as they stood with the Algerians against the Spanish occupation. The Algerian Sufis saw no deficits or contradictions in this relationship, as they considered it to stem from a deep understanding of Islam, which overcame narrow conceptions of solidarity and instead embraced the meaning of the Islamic Ummah. The second reason was the position of

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<sup>83</sup> Rached Bekai, Ta’athirat al-Turuq al-Sufiyah ‘ala al-Mujtama’ al-Jaza’iri, khilal al-’ahd al-’Uthmani, Majalat Al-Baith Al-Jazai’riyya, Issue 8, December 2011.

<sup>84</sup> Dharnqia , Safahat min Jihad al-Sufiyya: p. 24.

the Algerian Sufis on combat, which aligned with the practical interpretation of jihad as understood by the consensus of Sunni jurists and agreed upon by most Sufi leaders. Combat, in this context, embodied the necessity of jihad and meant the defense of the sanctity of Islam in the face of enemy aggression. Thus, this position was based on a creative perception of Sufism that was firmly rooted in the profound Islamic understanding of the concept of jihad while distancing itself from the interpretation of foreign occupation, which did not align with the Islamic concept of jihad.

“Some of them contented themselves with declaring that the foreign occupation of Islamic lands was a sign of the (Final) Hour. Others drew up plans which God had not ordained (Quran 53:23), and utilized incantations, amulets, spells, and talismans to fight against the colonial occupiers.”<sup>85</sup> During the Ottoman Empire, there were two different approaches to Sufi *Tariqahs*. One approach was weak and did not offer much support, while the other approach recognized the need for an alliance with the Sufi *Tariqahs* in confronting the Spanish. Bey Mohammed Al-Kabir was a historian who recruited students and recognized their loyalties and sacrifices in the initial conquest. In the Western region of Algeria, where the spread of Sufi *Tariqahs* and *Zawiyas* was well documented, Ibn Zarqa mentions that the Bey’s aim in recruiting men of knowledge was to seek their blessings and supplications. When a student was martyred in an attack on the Spanish, the Bey expressed great sorrow and sent a message to his fellow students-in-arms, “Suffice it for you to remain steadfast, recite the Quran, pursue knowledge, and now it is required of you to stay in your places and focus on your studies.”<sup>86</sup> The Sufi *Tariqahs*’ positions were adjusted over time according to the changing circumstances and loyalties. However, they always remained resolute in their determination to free Muslim Algeria from the influence of the Christian Other. Therefore, the Ottoman Turks’ strong or weak status was determined by their victories against the Spanish. “The period which began with the liberation of Jijel and ended with the complete liberation of Oran from Spanish occupation was characterized by the efforts of the Ottomans to free the sites that were occupied by or subject to Spanish

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<sup>85</sup> Dharnaqia, *Safahat min Jihad al-Sufiyya*: 22-23; See also Omar Faroukh: *Al-Tasawwuf fi Al-Islam*, Mania Library, Beirut, 1st edition, 1947. Although he dedicated a chapter titled ‘Sufism: Its Virtues and Vices,’ he did not perceive any virtues of Sufism related to anti-colonial resistance. See page 9 and beyond.

<sup>86</sup> Mohammed Bushnafi, *Dawr al-Talaba fi Tahreer Wahran al-Thani min al-Ihtilal al-Isbani ‘am 1791*, *Majalat ‘Usur Jadida*, Issue 1, 2011.

control, as well as their successes in expelling them from all coastal cities within their domain and in resisting Spanish raids and campaigns.”<sup>87</sup>

These successes drew great admiration from the Algerian people, intellectuals, and historians.

- i. The significance of the truce between the Sufi *Tariqahs* and the Ottoman Protectorate on the eve of French colonization concealed an uneasy status quo. It was a price the Ottomans were forced to pay to maintain their authority. No other agreement would have afforded them the same loyalty. Historical accounts narrate these stories of incessant political maneuvering between Ottomans and Sufi leaders. For example, Sheik Ahmed Al-Miliani, who belonged to the Qadiriyya-Shadhiliyya Sufi order, was highly respected by the Ottomans for his influence over his followers, and they could not take Tlemcen without seeking his assistance.
- ii. “When they were planning to capture Tlemcen, they also sought an ally and supporter, and who better than Al-Miliani and his order? Accounts make mention of Oruç Reis visiting Al-Miliani and secretly agreeing to terms, which included Al-Miliani and his follower’s public declaration of support in return for Arrouj’s assurances of safety.”<sup>88</sup>

In light of the above and consideration of the evolving dynamic between the Sufis and Ottomans, it can be concluded that their relationship was both complex and closely connected and was complexified beyond shared religious visions by new interests and changing historical circumstances. Therefore, the Sufi position on resistance became politically vested in anti-thesis. It seems that this vision crystallized in the stance of rejection or censure of the Ottoman Protectorate at the advent of the French occupation.

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<sup>87</sup> Emlik Meriem and Sabiha Mejri, ‘Alaqat al-Sultat al-’Uthmaniyyah bil-Turuq al-Sufiyyah fi al-Jaza’ir khilal al-’ahd al-’Uthmani (1518-1830). - Master’s Thesis in Algeria, 2021-2022: Page 15.

<sup>88</sup> Aboul-Kasem Saadallah, *Tarikh Al-Jazai’r Al-Thaqafi*, Vol. 4: 465.

### 4.3.2. Rejection of Ottoman Protection

At this stage, the Ottomans found themselves compelled to compromise with the Sufi *Tariqahs*, fearing the loss of their significant economic and spiritual sway. Historical accounts narrate details of the scope of power attained by some branches of the Qadiriyya-Shadhiliyya Sufi order, which forced a reluctant Ottoman authority to engage them on various shared economic and political points of interest. One such account relates to Abdul Qadir ibn Si Mohammed ibn Busmaha, born in Ottoman Algeria in 1545. He was known as ‘Al-Sheik’ due to his role within the Qadiriyya-Shadhiliyya order in the Arabaoua region of the Bani Amer province, where he established his own *Zawiyah* (Sufi lodge), and gained recognition among locals and his disciples.

The descendants of Sidi Al-Sheik established a hereditary authority (*mashikha*) and endowed it with spiritual and economic strength, making it independent from the Ottomans. They took pride in their distinct Shadhiliyya lineage, separate from the Ottomans, and their military power. “The strength of the descendants of Sidi Al-Sheik sometimes surpassed the power of the Turkish Beys who governed the Western province. As a result, the Ottomans could not impose their authority on them, but rather had to establish relationships based on mutual respect, without encountering resistance nor gaining support among them.”<sup>89</sup> This critical economic element explains the gradual increase of the Sufi uprisings against the Ottomans, which coincided with the decline of Ottoman prosperity and their inability to meet the financial demands of the *Zawiyah* and their followers. The economic deterioration of the Ottomans in their final days in Algeria was associated with objective reasons, mainly the excessive costs they incurred in suppressing revolutions.

“It is necessary to mention the phenomenon that the later period of the Ottomans in Algeria will witness, represented by the movements led by the Sufi *Tariqahs*, such as the Darqawis and Tijanis, against the Ottomans. These movements emerged at a time when the Spanish presence in Western Algeria was eliminated, and privateering, which was one of the economic foundations of the Ottoman regime, declined. These

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<sup>89</sup> Salah Abad, *Al-Jazai'r Khilal Al-Hukm Al-Turki, 1515-1830*, Dar Huma, Algeria, 2012: 141.

transformations will have an impact on the privileges enjoyed by religious men in general.”<sup>90</sup>

One example of the resistance of Sufi *Tariqahs* against the Ottomans is the conflict between the Turkish ruler and the representative of the Tijani order<sup>91</sup> in the region of Ain Madi in 1784. Muhammad al-Kabir led a campaign to Ain Madi to punish the city for refusing to continue paying the tax imposed on it by the Ottoman Sultan. However, the campaign failed, prompting the Bey of the West to launch another campaign the following year. The city put up fierce resistance, and the campaign was on the verge of failure until it received assistance from Algiers. When Muhammad al-Kabir managed to control Ain Madi, he imposed an annual tax of 188 riyals on the city. However, the city’s submission was short-lived, and it resisted in a manner the Ottomans could not expect. On the other hand, the Ottomans achieved some of their objectives, as their continuous and intensified campaigns forced the leader of the Tijani order, Sidi Ahmed Tijani, to permanently relocate to the city of Fes.<sup>92</sup>

In light of this, it can be concluded that the Ottoman Protectorate found itself in a very different situation at the advent of the 19th century than when it first entered Algeria in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. They were now in a political and economic situation that prevented them from maintaining their presence in Algeria. We have mentioned earlier the intermittent uprisings of some Sufi *Tariqahs* against Ottoman presence while also noting the allegiance of other *Tariqahs* to this Protectorate. This was determined mainly by the Ottoman’s ability to prioritize the economic interests first before the political interests of these *Tariqahs*. However, this balance between the Protectorate and the economy became unsustainable during this period for several reasons, the most important of which are:

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<sup>90</sup> Salah Abad, *Al-Jazai’r Khilal Al-Hukm Al-Turki: 1515-1830*, Dar Huma, Algeria, 2012: 179

<sup>91</sup> The founder of the Tijani order in the early 18th century was Ahmed bin Muhammad bin al-Mukhtar al-Tijani. Born in Ain Madi in southern Algeria, he had a passion for knowledge, which led him to seek education in Fes, then Mecca, Cairo, Tunis, Tlemcen, and finally back to Fes. He studied under many Sufi *Tariqahs*, such as the Qadiriyya and the Tayyibiyya. One of the conditions for belonging to the Tijani *Tariqah* is that the disciple should not join any other order, unlike other *Tariqahs*, especially the Qadiriyya, which consider separation and independence a necessity when the disciple reaches the rank of leadership.

<sup>92</sup> For more details, we can refer to: Salah Abad, *Al-Jazai’r Khilal Al-Hukm Al-Turki: 1515-1830*, Dar Huma, Algeria, 2012: 176.

- a) The dwindling of financial resources sourced from privateering activity. The Sufi uprisings against the Ottomans were motivated by the fact that they found themselves in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries facing a financial crisis caused by a significant decline in privateering revenues. Privateering activities were a critical pillar of the Ottoman economic system during this era.
- b) The Ottomans resorted to compensating for the shortfall by encouraging investment in agricultural production. Still, this strategy was ineffective, especially considering the unregulated export of these agricultural products to France.
- c) The upsurge in the population's food security needs meant that the tax burden weighed heavily on them.

The historical context of Ottoman Algeria reveals that the tribes faced several challenges, including economic instability, religious persecution, and political uncertainty. These factors combined created deep-rooted reasons for the tribes to revolt against the Ottoman Turks. The tribes often turned to Sufi *Tariqahs*, a mystical Islamic order, as their leaders and protectors in times of distress. These revolts and the rise of Sufi *Tariqahs* created a power vacuum and made Ottoman Algeria vulnerable to external powers. It is in this context that French colonialism found an appealing target. The French saw an opportunity to exploit the internal divisions and take control of the region, leading to decades of colonization and exploitation.

## CHAPTER V

### SUFI *TARIQAHS* IN THE FACE OF COLONIALISM

#### 5.1. Sufi Resistance: Loyalty to the Order Versus Loyalty to the Homeland

Both French colonialism and the preceding Ottoman intervention were aware of the importance of Sufi *Tariqahs* in the colonial equation, both politically and militarily. Interestingly, the French considered this factor right from the beginning, to the extent that French military commander General Bugeaud sought advice from his advisers on the necessity of reaching an agreement with the Sufi *Tariqahs*. This was exemplified in his meeting with Sheik Mohyiddin ibn El Mubarak, the spiritual leader of the Qal'iyya *Tariqah*. However, this agreement came at a cost. Although France aimed to alleviate the situation and undermine the resistance through this agreement, it granted some political aspirations to the representatives of these rebellious movements. They were given political representation by bestowing the title of “Agha” upon Sheik Mohyiddin and assigning him the role of appeasing the Arabs and mediating between them and their colonizers.<sup>93</sup>

It is important to note that the Sufi order valued resistance to colonization over allegiance, indicating that jihad among the Sufis had cultural implications that defined their relationship with their homeland and freedom. This perspective on the concept of jihad went beyond its spiritual aspects and encompassed practical dimensions. This played a significant role in the success of resistance against French colonization. For instance, the colonizers attempted to downplay the significance of Emir Abdelkader's resistance (who died in 1883) by reducing it to the dimension of jihad as a Sufi practice, citing the personality of Emir's father, Mohiuddin, to imply that he inherited his revolutionary inclination against France from his father's Sufi vision.

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<sup>93</sup> Aboul-Kasem Saadallah, “Tarikh al-Jaza'ir al-Thaqafi”, Vol. 4: 33.

The claim that Emir Abdelkader's resistance was solely based on Sufi beliefs is inaccurate. His resistance had a broader context that went beyond Sufism and included a nationalistic dimension. Additionally, many followers of Sufi *Tariqahs* were aware of the colonial tactics and actively resisted them under the banner of nationalism. Thus, nationalism played a more comprehensive and significant role in defining the Algerian cause.<sup>94</sup> Sufi *Tariqahs* such as Rahmaniyya, Derkaouiyya, Tayyibiya, and Shadhiliya did not actively encourage their followers to participate in anti-colonial resistance independently. Instead, they focused on their distinctive sectarian beliefs rather than the core values of their faith. However, they would support any sincere call for resistance from a Sufi or a popular leader loyal to their homeland.

It appears that one of the reasons for the phenomenon of rallying around resistance was the followers' awareness in these *Tariqahs* of the fact that jihad, as a means of defending Islam, is an obligation that should be consistent among all Muslims, regardless of their denominational affiliation - be it Sunni or Sufi. Protecting oneself, one's land, and honor are among Islam's essential demands. This may explain why some young Algerian Muslims, even in their early stages as disciples of Sufi *Tariqahs*, did not consider it a condition that was superior to their religious devotion, precisely, jihad and resistance.

Historians tell the story about Emir Abdelkader's father, Mohiuddin, highlighting the Qadiriyya order's approach to jihad. When Mohiuddin died, his eldest son, Mohammed Al-Saeed, became the leader of the Qadiriyya order. At that time, Al-Saeed's son, Ahmed bin Mohammed Al-Sa'i, was still young. Unlike his father, Al-Saeed did not base his understanding of jihad on Sufism but instead on the general principle of jihad in Islam. As a result, he engaged in battle at the walls of Oran in 1832. The Qadiriyya order's followers seemed to balance two interconnected commitments. The first is a religious commitment shared with other Muslims, which involves defending the land of Islam and resisting colonization. The second is a specific commitment that emphasizes devotion to the self and avoiding the distractions of life.

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<sup>94</sup> Aboul-Kasem Saadallah, *Tarikh Al-Jazai'r Al-Thaqafi*, Vol. 4: 44.

The relationship between the individual and the society is causal. The Sufis believed that resisting the colonizers brought them closer to Allah and was part of a Sufi devotee's requirement. This confirms what the founding Sheiks and their disciples said earlier, that the fight against the colonizers is based on Islamic law and that the Sufi must comply with the Shariah law, or else they would be deviating from Islam. The understanding of resistance against colonialism varied between the Qadiriyya and other Sufi *Tariqahs*. In many cases, jihad against the colonizers involved a combination of political maneuvering and military action, as was the case with Emir Abdelkader. However, some Sufis also included their economic interests and the pursuit of political status, which are associated with loyalty to the colonizers. Therefore, there are conflicting accounts of allegiances between various Sufi orders, where some justify colonialism by claiming that Sufi Islam, in its spiritual sense, requires withdrawal into spiritual contemplation away from the concerns of life. In contrast, others argue that the homeland must be protected, "Indeed, the house has a Lord who protects it."

French colonial policy was cunning in its establishment of relationships with Sufi *Tariqahs*. The policy conducted comprehensive studies to examine these *Tariqahs'* political, economic, and ideological interests and subsequently used various means to blackmail them. Emotional and moral inclinations were exploited to force the *Tariqah* leaders to comply against their will. Later on, we will see the effectiveness of these methods in achieving its goals. For now, it is essential to highlight a quote from one of the military leaders that summarizes this colonial policy toward Sufi *Tariqahs*:

Gaining the allegiance of a Sufi sheik is more beneficial to us than equipping an entire army, even if they number in the millions. If we relied on money and armies to subdue them, it would not yield the same results as the promising word of the sheik: that submitting to our forces does not secure its consequences because it is not from the heart. However, the word of the sheik brings us hearts, bodies, and money as well.<sup>95</sup>

During the colonial period, the French authorities targeted the economic structure of Sufi *Tariqahs* and their intellectual and spiritual structures. They understood that the connection between spirituality and religiosity was decisive in Sufi resistance. French perspectives on this relationship focused on what the sheiks of the *Zawiyas* taught their

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<sup>95</sup> Huda Shlouli and Sara Fatouma. "Al-*Tariqah* al-Tijaniyya: Aurélie Picard (1948-1933)." Master's Thesis, Algerian Universities, 2020-2021, 33.

followers, selecting passages from the Quran and the Sunnah that encouraged resistance to colonialism. The French authorities used this awareness of Sufi *Tariqahs* to weaken them. They began by sowing discord between the *Zawiyas*, their disciples, and their leaders, implementing the “ranks” policy, insinuating that each Sufi order was competing with the others. This opportunistic approach to dealing with Algerian people, especially their Sufi components, made it clear that the French representatives had no principles in dealing with Algerian subjects as long as they all declared loyalty to France and attacked one another.<sup>96</sup>

The Sufi *Tariqahs* did not react uniformly to French colonization, as various factors and interests influenced their responses. Some *Tariqahs* had unique historical circumstances that affected their stance, such as the division of the Qadiriyya order between resident shaykhs abroad and their followers residing internally. These contexts impacted the *Tariqahs*' relationship with the colonial power. While some *Tariqahs* initially rejected colonization, others sought justifications and accommodations. However, all these positions can be viewed as attempts by their proponents to incorporate them within the framework of the doctrine of jihad.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> About Kasem Saadallah, *Tarikh Al-Jazai'r Al-Thaqafi*, Vol. 4: 237.

<sup>97</sup> The word “mujahada” (striving) is one of the terms agreed upon by the Sufis, as there is no Sufism without mujahada. However, at a detailed level, mujahada appears to have layers of meaning. There is the necessary mujahada of self-discipline alone, as mentioned in Chapter 6 of “Al-Risala Al-Qushayriyya” (The Qushayri Epistle), where Qushayri dedicates a section to it and names it “Al-Mujahada” (The Striving). On this occasion, Qushayri does not provide a direct definitional explanation of mujahada; instead, he indirectly refers to what the Sufis have said about this concept. These statements exhibit a remarkable convergence, such as the narration attributed to Al-Qushayri: “This matter [the knowledge of Sufism] is based on three things: eating only when in need, sleeping only when necessary, and speaking only when necessary.” It should be noted that Qushayri’s exploration of the concept of Sufi mujahada is based on verse 69 of Surah Al-Ankabut (The Spider) in the Quran, where Allah says, “And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allah is with the doers of good.” Thus, the meaning of mujahada, from the perspective of the Quran, involves inward action, self-discipline. However, it is important to consider another concept associated with the term “mujahada,” which is the term “jihad,” as they are phonetically related. Initially, we notice that Qushayri does not find any contradiction between “jihad” and “mujahada.” This is evident as he analyzes the concept of mujahada among the Sufis in the context of the mentioned verse, which mentions “jihad” but not “mujahada.” This implies that both words have the same meaning in Qushayri’s mind. Referring back to Ibn Ashur, we find that he states regarding the same verse, “This jihad refers to persevering through trials, enduring hardships, and defending against the enemy’s plots. It is what is mentioned at the beginning of the Surah [And whoever strives only strives for [the benefit of] himself. Indeed, Allah is free from need of the worlds.]” Ibn Ashur, in explaining the meaning of jihad and mujahada, emphasizes the cultivation of the self and the inward direction. However, he differs in that he connects jihad to historical contexts, represented by the absence of a specific time for the enemy’s jihad, according to the historical timing of the revelation of the verse. This indicates that the concept of jihad in the Quran is historically gradual, starting from disciplining the self to confront its desires and progressing to confronting the real enemy in reality and history/colonialism, meaning an enemy that violates the lands of Islam. From here, it becomes clear that, from Ibn Ashur’s perspective, jihad is intertwined with self-jihad, meaning that jihad has a dual nature in terms of perception and

During periods of danger faced by Muslims or their nations, the Islamic community's response to colonialism varied among different Sufi orders and even within the followers of the same order.<sup>98</sup> For instance, while the Qadiriyya Sufi order engaged in armed resistance against France in Algiers, it adopted a more submissive and supportive stance under Ahmed Al-Bakai Al-Qadir's leadership in regions like Senegal and Timbuktu. It is important to note that El Hadj Omar was highly influential in West Africa when French colonization began; influenced by Wahhabis, he transitioned from Qadiriyya to Tijaniyya. He persistently fought against the French until his passing, although his movement ultimately faltered despite his son continuing his efforts. Abu Al-Qasim Sa'dallah wonders, "How can Tijaniyya be fighting against France in West Africa and be loyal to it in Algeria? How can these opposing allegiances exist within the same Sufi order?"<sup>99</sup>

Another researcher argues for the necessity of avoiding blaming the entire Tijaniyya *Tariqah* for not resisting colonization. This is because it is considered a relatively young *Tariqah*, as it was "only fifteen years old when colonization entered Algerian lands."<sup>100</sup> Furthermore, its economic situation and geographical distribution did not enable it to engage in resistance. When colonization began, the spread of Tijaniyya in terms of the number of *Zawiyas* (religious lodges) and disciples was limited compared to other *Tariqahs* prevalent in northern Algeria. The researcher concludes from this

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action, or in other words, faith and law. However, this difference between Qushayri and Ibn Ashur is rooted in the Quran itself, as both interpretations find support in the Quran. It is an intellectual effort from two different perspectives within the framework of principles, and the Quran provides room for such differences, making it a context that represents a measure for evaluating the validity of these opinions.

<sup>98</sup> It is considered by some researchers that affiliation to a Sufi order can serve as a necessary psychological preparation for resisting colonization. This view explains the stance of Emir Abd al-Qadir of Algeria towards French colonialism, as well as the positions of others who belong to various Sufi *Tariqahs*. For example, Sayyid Muhi al-Din, along with his companions and his son Abd al-Qadir, focused on spreading the Qadiriyya order, which means they undertook the psychological preparation for the struggle. They established centers in villages, neighborhoods, and among tribes, and dispatched preachers to call people to Allah. It was these individuals who nourished the jihad movement led by the Emir, may Allah have mercy on him. In other words, the Sufi movement, within the three *Tariqahs* (Qadiriyya, Sanusiyya, and Badawiyya), primarily emphasized the dissemination of spiritual and material courage, as well as the cultivation of noble ethical qualities such as bravery, selflessness, and sincerity, so that the seeker would fear only Allah and not be intimidated by anyone else. This is how their hearts grew stronger, their spirits elevated, and it became difficult for oppressors and enemies to subjugate them. (Jawad Al-Marabti, "Sufism and Emir Abd al-Qadir al-Hasani al-Jaza'iri," Dar al-Yaqza al-Arabiya, Syria, 1966: 31.)

<sup>99</sup> Aboul Kasem Saadallah, *Tarikh Al-Jazai'r Al-Thaqafi*, Vol. 4: 195.

<sup>100</sup> Ahmed Derkoush, *The Attitudes of Sufi Tariqahs towards Colonialism in Algeria and Tunisia (1830-1914)* - Master's thesis at the Algerian University, Academic Year: 2010-2011, p. 58.

that “those who demanded resistance from the Tijaniyya against colonization were either misguided or have ulterior motives. In the regions where the Tijaniyya *Tariqah* spread, its followers were actually at the forefront, as demonstrated by the stance of Sidi El Taher Boutaiba.”<sup>101</sup>

These variances in the stances of these *Tariqahs* toward colonization cannot be solely attributed to the mentioned ideological principle of the necessity of hostile relations with the colonizer. Perhaps this principle should be the last thing to consider among all reasons. This phenomenon appears to rise above accusations and absolutions of specific individuals but rather points to interconnected contexts, particularly the complex relationship between the *Tariqahs* and the colonizer. It seems that the two most significant factors contributing to this situation are intelligence agencies and political naivety, including the use of women by intelligence agencies.

## **5.2. The Role of French Intelligence in Manipulating Anti-Colonial Sufi *Tariqah* Resistance**

The topic of Sufi *Kashf*, or spiritual revelation, appears disconnected from the present discussion. Despite claims that *kashf* played a part in French spies infiltrating heavily fortified Sufi *Tariqah* strongholds, there is no evidence to support this theory. *Kashf* may have no bearing on practical matters. Nonetheless, we will illustrate instances where various Sufi *Tariqahs* were infiltrated, and their resistance neutralized through covert operations and intelligence gathering conducted at unexpected junctures.

### **5.2.1. The Qadiriyya Resistance and Espionage Infiltration**

The Qadiriyya’s resistance against French colonialism does not absolve them of occasional collusion with the colonizer. However, it is important to note that this conspiracy was not widespread enough to represent the *Tariqah’s* general stance. Rather, the predominant position of this *Tariqah* was one of confrontation and rejection of colonialism. The Qadiriyya *Tariqah* was considered by the French to be

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<sup>101</sup> Ahmed Boutiba was close to the Sheikh of the Tijaniyya, Ahmed, before accompanying him on the pilgrimage and becoming his son-in-law. He was authorized to spread the Tijaniyya order. He was exiled to the island of Sainte-Marguerite for a period of eight years (1863-1871). (Ahmed Derkoush, p: 59)

the most threatening Sufi *Tariqah*, primarily because the resistance was associated with a symbolic struggle that included broader nationalistic resistance for the homeland. Consequently, the French authorities relentlessly tried to defeat Emir Abdelkader, using espionage to achieve this goal. Historical accounts provide us with shocking examples of security infiltrations, the first of which was the infiltration of French spies into the center of Qadiriya hold.

A clear example is the French spy Leon Roch (d. 1901), who stayed with the Emir for two years. During Emir Abdelkader's resistance, starting in 1832, France, his colonial homeland, experienced a significant impact. Although the Emir was a Qadiri, his affiliation with the *Tariqah* was part of his vision of resisting colonialism. His Qadirism had national dimensions, and he used his Islamic affiliation to enter Algerian Emir's political circles. This entry opened a legislatively sanctioned door for him to achieve his hidden goal: serving his colonial homeland's project. Through a falsely declared goal, he claimed to "stand alongside the Emir to enlighten Muslims and introduce them to French civilization."<sup>102</sup> However, he eventually revealed his true intentions. When the Emir announced jihad against French colonialism and consulted Leon Roch on the matter, the latter responded, frustrated, stating that he "did not want to fight the motherland France that protects his brothers'. When the Emir emphasized to him that as a Muslim, he must oppose the enemies of Allah, Roch exploded in his face and openly declared that he was never a Muslim."<sup>103</sup> Emir Abdelkader's political resistance seemed feeble against an agent who almost openly declared his espionage. However, the Emir allowed him to leave, stating that his reaction was based on emotion rather than certainty. This decision enabled Leon Roch to safely depart the Emir's sphere of influence with valuable secrets. It later enabled the French colonial army to achieve its goal of occupying the city of Constantine in 1837.

His political acumen may have influenced Emir Abdelkader's treatment of a French spy. Although he did not associate politics with cunning, he strongly believed in declaring one's Islam sanctified. However, this position was unacceptable, given the

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<sup>102</sup> Youssef Menasseria, *Muhimmat Leon Roch fi al-Jaza'ir wal Maghreb (1832-1990)* - National Book Institution, Algeria, 1990: 24.

<sup>103</sup> Youssef Menasseria, *Muhimmat Leon Roch fi al-Jaza'ir wal Maghreb (1832-1990)* - National Book Institution, Algeria, 1990: 32.

circumstances prevailing in Algeria at the time. The country was embroiled in a bitter conflict that took various economic and political forms, with religion as a major driving force in the battle. We have seen its impact on the Spanish occupation of Algeria, and this religious influence remains significant in the ongoing conflict between Sufi *Tariqahs* and French colonization.

The Emir's lack of political diplomacy, based on maneuvering and cunning, made it easy for the French intelligence agencies to infiltrate. Leon Roch cleverly exploited this weakness and often neutralized the effect of the resistance movement. Roch knew that Islam acts as an equalizer among people, not distinguishing between those who were born Muslims and those who converted. When he arrived at "Médéa" in 1838, he appeared before the Emir and shed tears while complaining about the injustice and tyranny of the Caliph Al-Buhmidi and his men. Roch played on the political naivety of the Emir and said to him, "Is this how a Christian who has embraced Islam of his own will is received?" He then pleaded further, and the Emir believed him, promising he would never abandon him in good faith.<sup>104</sup> From this, it becomes evident that Sufi *Tariqahs* had no connection to the above-mentioned *kashf* (spiritual revelation) of the resistance in Islamic lands. The resistance movement required political cunning, which was often absent,<sup>105</sup> and through which many resistance efforts were weakened or destroyed on many occasions due to its apt use by French intelligence, including spies like Leon Roch.

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<sup>104</sup> Youssef Menasseria, *The Mission of Leon Roch in Algeria and Morocco (1832-1990)* - National Book Institution, Algeria, 1990: 28.

<sup>105</sup> It is not fair to perceive the policy of Emir Abd al-Qadir in all its stages as disregarding the circumstances. Otherwise, even his enemies themselves testified to his political prowess. Philippe Chantérin mentioned in his book "Abd al-Qadir al-Mu'min" that when the French violated the Treaty of Tafna and returned on October 16, 1839, the Emir resorted to diplomatic means. He wrote to the Ottoman Sultan seeking help and approached the British government, reaching out to its consulates in Tunis and Tangier. He also wrote to the commander of the British forces, Field Marshal Viscount Hill, proposing a mutual benefit arrangement with the British. He told him that the Arabs lacked weapons to resist French control and that if the English provided them, they would gain Arab friendships of significance in Marrakesh, Tunis, Algeria, and Tripoli. (This account was conveyed by Morad al-Marabit in "Sufism and Emir Abd al-Qadir al-Hasani al-Jaza'iri" published by Dar al-Yaqdha al-Arabiyya, Damascus, 1966: pp. 65-66).

### **5.2.2. The Military Resistance of the Qadiriyya *Tariqah***

Emir Abdelkader's Qadiriyya played a crucial role in his national vision, with the primary objective being national liberation. Engaging in politics alone was insufficient, and a solid and cohesive internal front was a prerequisite for success in battle. The Emir waged a two-front jihad, the first of which was against betrayal, where no compromise was tolerated. Historians note that he frequently reminded people of the Quranic verse: "And do not argue on behalf of those who deceive themselves. Indeed, Allah does not like anyone who is a betrayer and sinful" (Quran, 4:107). On the second front, there were occasional economic or social conflicts among the tribes. However, the Emir was firm in not allowing such divisions. It's worth mentioning that he made constant efforts to reconcile the tribes of the "Mina" River, who were prone to clashes with each other, and he succeeded in establishing lasting peace with them. Once the internal front became more united, the Qadiri nationalist Emir focused on his primary goal of dedicating himself to the liberation struggle against the French enemy.

Regarding military excursions, we can examine minor skirmishes and battles with strategic objectives. One notable battle was the attack on Oran in 1833. It was a reaction to the French governor's raid on the village of "Ad-Dabba," which is located south of the fortress of Huwara. The inhabitants of the village were subjected to severe punishment. The Emir was able to rally forces from the surrounding forests and valleys to confront the enemy. The mujahideen emerged victorious, inflicting severe losses upon the enemy. This defeat humiliated the occupying army, and General Boyer was punished and isolated for his responsibility.

As for strategic battles, we can turn to the Battle of "Al-Muqtaa" (or Macta), which occurred three years after the attack on Oran in 1836. This was an intense battle that lasted for two consecutive days and nights. The enemy had prepared for it with various resources:

- Military leadership: General Alphonse Trézel
- Army: A detachment of cavalry and 5,000 soldiers, along with four mountain cannons and many vehicles.

On the other hand, the resources at the disposal of the Emir were as follows:

- Commander: Emir Abdelkader
- Commander of the right flank: Mujahid Al-Bouhamidi
- Commander of the left flank: Mujahid Boushguer
- Number of horsemen: 2,000
- Number of foot soldiers: 1,000

The conflict began with General Trézel's forces arriving at the hills of Oran and launching a heavy artillery bombardment. In contrast, the Emir aimed to encircle the enemy and compel them to surrender or retreat. This plan was effectively carried out as the general and his troops fled into the forests, abandoning their weapons. Many were killed in action, including officers such as Duke Arlillon and Commander Audinot. On the Emir's side, several mujahideen leaders like Agha Kaddour ibn Bahr, Khalifa ibn Mahmoud, a representative of Arzew, and Mohamed ibn Al-Jilani Al-Warghi were martyred in battle.

The victory had a significant political impact, leading to disappointment within the French government and parliament. The Prime Minister was compelled to acknowledge that the invasion of Algeria was a losing operation. He clarified that he was not criticizing the military forces' capability but stating that the operation had been unsuccessful. After the speech, the deputies in the council expressed their disagreement and created an uproar that disrupted the order. Later, they reconvened and made some decisions, including removing Count Droulans, the governor of Algiers, and replacing him with Marshal Clausel. They also planned an attack on the Emir's headquarters in "Ma'askar" (Mascara) but failed to occupy it.<sup>106</sup>

The Emir's kindness toward the spy Leon Roche resulted from his good nature, not due to any political tactics. His handling of General Clausel's attack on the city of "M'askar" (Mascara) is proof of this. The Emir responded uniquely to the attack that helped the Algerian cause. He ordered the city's evacuation, removing all provisions from its stores and bakeries and emptying all its inhabitants. When Clausel and his

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<sup>106</sup> For detailed information about this battle and the attempt to occupy the Emir's headquarters in "M'askar," (Mascara) you can refer to: Ali Muhammed Muhammed Al-Sallabi "Kifah al-Sha'b al-Jaza'iri dhid al-Ihtilal al-Faransi." Dar Al-Ma'arif in Lebanon, p. 421-422.

soldiers arrived, they found the city deserted, except for the Jews who refused to leave. The Jews offered their surrender, but they were unable to provide any assistance to Clausel. The French commander suspected a plan to eradicate his forces and was filled with doubts and anxieties. The next day, he ordered his soldiers to withdraw from the city and return with whatever provisions they had brought from Oran.<sup>107</sup> During their retreat, the freedom fighters ambushed the enemy soldiers, intercepting their path at night and relentlessly raining bullets upon them. The ambush was successful, as the enemy soldiers abandoned many of their vehicles. Due to the high number of casualties, they unloaded the ammunition and equipment from the vehicles and replaced them with their wounded. The enemy soldiers fled into the rough and rugged terrain for safety.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Qadiriyya *Tariqah*, led by Sheik Mahieddine, was at the forefront of fighting against the French occupation in Algeria. After his death, his son Mohammed Al-Saeed took over as the leader of the Qadiriyya. However, following Emir Abdelkader's defeat against the French, his brother Mohammed Al-Saeed, the sheik of the Qadiriyya, accompanied him to the Levant. After Mohammed Al-Saeed's death, his son Al-Murtada succeeded him in the new branch in Beirut.

France finally defeated Emir Abdelkader, who led the resistance against French occupation from 1839 to 1847. He was deported to France and later settled in the East. As a result, France could eliminate the threat of the Qadiriyya *Tariqah*, which became irrelevant in the Algerian context. The Qadiriyya's decision-making power now rested with the resident sheiks in either Baghdad or Lebanon. Emir Abdelkader's agreements with France influenced this situation after his defeat. Al-Murtada focused on spreading knowledge and Qadiriyya practices and continued to lead the Qadiriyya until he died in 1912.<sup>108</sup> This unique historical position of the Qadiriyya, despite its failures against the occupation, granted the Sufi sheiks and their followers greater freedom of maneuver, mobility, and the ability to gain external allegiances. Meanwhile, within

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<sup>107</sup> Details of this battle strategy in: Sallabi. "Kifah al-Sha'b al-Jazairi": p. 425

<sup>108</sup> Abdul Aziz Shahbi, "Al-Zawaya wa Al-Sufiyya wa Al-Azaba wa Al-Ihtilal Al-Faransi fi Al-Jaza'ir" (The Zawiyas, Sufism, the Azabah, and the French Occupation in Algeria), Dar Al-Gharb for Publishing and Distribution, Algeria, n.d., p. 102.

Algeria, the Qadiriyya broke down into smaller leaderships and dispersed throughout the region:

- Sheik Boutelilis, the leader of the Qadiriyya in Oran.
- Si L'Ahwal Abdulkadi, the leader of the Qadiriyya in Wadi Al-Khair, an area that oversees the affairs of the *Tariqah* between Mostaganem and Relizane.
- Ibn Al-Nakhal in Guelma.

Other branches were established in the East and South of the country.<sup>109</sup>

This led to the popularization of the Qadiriyya in different social classes, enabling them to gain more loyalties and form a bloc that the colonizer had to consider in all strategies aimed at consolidating control over Algerian territory.<sup>110</sup> Despite this, history still recalls the golden days of resistance against French colonization by heroic figures from the Qadiriyya Sufi *Tariqah*.

### **5.2.3. Resistance of the Qadiri Ibn Nasser ibn Shahrah**

The resistance led by Emir Abdelkader, despite being colored by political maneuvering and military action, gave birth to Qadiri resistance fighters who would change the course of Algeria's history for generations to come, ultimately leading to the country's freedom. Among the many battles fought, the resistance of Qadiri Mujahid ibn Nasser ibn Shahrah stands out as one of the most important, especially for historians interested in both resistance and jihadist action. He symbolized Qadiri's popular resistance and was born in Laghouat in 1804. His Qadiri affiliation was a part of his nationalism, similar to the jihadist vision of his leader, Emir Abdelkader. Discussions about his ideologies and religious beliefs often compare him to Emir Abdelkader, both in warfare and religion.

In 1846, he assumed the leadership of the Arba'a tribes and embarked on his journey as a jihadist. From that moment on, he refused to engage in dealings with

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<sup>109</sup> For more details about the extensive spread of the Qadiriyya order, see: Abdul Aziz Shehabi, "Al-Zawayia wa Al-Sufiyya wa Al-Azabah wa Al-Ihtilal Al-Faransi fi Al-Jaza'ir" (The Zaouias, Sufism, the Azabah, and the French Occupation in Algeria), Dar Al-Gharb for Publishing and Distribution, Algeria, n.d., p. 103.

<sup>110</sup> For further details see: Darkush, *Mawaqif al-Turuq*, pp. 72-96.

colonial authorities, despite being offered numerous opportunities. His steadfast rejection of colonial rule was a defining feature of his leadership, and he became known for his unwavering commitment to the cause of his people. Despite facing significant challenges and opposition, he remained resolute in his beliefs, inspiring his followers to continue the struggle for independence and self-determination.<sup>111</sup> It is essential to highlight the heroic battle led by a Qadari commander in the Laghouat region. This strategically significant battle marked a turning point with the French between consolidating control over Algeria and the beginning of their retreat and withdrawal. The battle occurred on May 22, 1852, south of Wadi Djedi, and was named after the French officer Colonel Coligny. The mujahid advanced with his army from Ouargla and took control of Nekkousa, then Temacine. The French forces suffered a resounding defeat and lost 150 soldiers. The region of Laghouat played a crucial role in this confrontation with the heroic Qadari leader:

- Being an advanced center for the guard soldiers.
- Serving as the gateway to the desert and other desert regions.
- It is a military site that allows authorities to monitor the movement of populations toward Sub-Saharan Africa.

Due to the strategic significance of this location, the French army confronted Ibn Nasser Ibn Shahrah again. They prepared a two-stage strategy, beginning with a siege phase followed by a battle phase:

Siege Phase:

- From the north, General Youssef
- From the northwest, Colonel Tronchon
- From the west, General Belisi
- From the southwest, General Boscarrin
- From the southeast, Colonel Ban
- From the east, Major Moran

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<sup>111</sup> The French officer presented an enticing offer to him on September 5, 1851, while he was accompanied by the tribes of Arba'a. However, he sensed a threatening tone in the French officer's language, so he devised an ambush for this mission. He disarmed Carus and his soldiers, stripped them of their uniforms, except for what covered their modesty, and then released them, ordering them to return from where they came and inform those concerned that Ibn Nasser bin Shahra would join those representing religion and independence. See: Ahmed Darkush, "Mawaqif al-Turuq al-Sufiyya min al-Isti'mar fi al-Jazair wa Tunis (1800-1914)", Master's thesis, 2010-2011: p. 81.

Battle Phase:

The significant conflict occurred between December 2nd and 4th, 1852. It was exceptionally violent, with the French disregarding the rules of warfare. The French military displayed a disconcerting predatory behavior, resulting in the deaths of two-thirds of the city's inhabitants, leaving their remains strewn across the area. The devastation was so widespread that even books and Qur'ans were not exempted but instead were burned. A colonial officer from France expressed this voracious attitude toward inflicting pain by stating,

Our soldiers attacked the town from all sides... They did not hesitate to eliminate anyone who opposed them or attempted to resist, using everything at their disposal. Those who remained of the resistance were dealt with using white weapons.

In such harsh circumstances, it was unexpected for Qadiri Ibn Nasser Ibn Shakra to emerge victorious; however, his determination and sacrifice for his homeland and religion made liberation a reality.

#### **5.2.4. The Shadhiliyya's Anti-Colonial Military Resistance**

The Shadhiliyya *Tariqah* is a Sufi order that traces its origins to Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili, born in Morocco in 1196 CE and passed away in 1258 CE. Al-Shadhili was a Sheik Abdulsalam bin Mshish student who introduced him to Sufism. The Shadhiliyya *Tariqah* is believed to have emerged from the Qadiriyya *Tariqah*.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Sheik Muhammad al-Mukanni represented the Shadhiliyya in Algeria amidst the French occupation of the country in 1830 CE. Sheik al-Mukanni established the Shadhiliyya Zawiyah, a spiritual center located south of Medea, in 1865 CE. At that time, the conflict between the Algerian people and the French occupiers became more intense, particularly after the colonial authorities issued two decrees that oppressed the Algerian people. The first decree, issued in 1863 CE, allowed the French to seize land from the original owners. The second decree considered Algerians mere French subjects with no political or civil rights unless they abandoned their conditions indicating their original allegiance to their homeland, Algeria.

At this critical point of identity struggle, the Shadhiliyya's educational approach, which focused on preaching, guidance, Quranic education, and the Arabic language, became a means of resistance against the colonial occupiers. Sheik Muhammad bin Raqia taught the principles of religion and Sufism in his *Zawiya* in the Bukhari Palace (Qasr al-Bukhari). His dedication to preaching and guidance served as a form of jihad against the occupation.<sup>112</sup> The Shadhiliyya is considered one of the most important *Tariqahs* that applied the concept of "sufuf" or branching off into subsidiary paths. Historical books mention its branches, including Zaruqiyya, Aissawiyya, Karzaziyya, Ziyaniyya, and Shaikhyya. It is important to note that the Shadhiliyya played a significant role in resisting French colonialism. Historians agree that one of the most prominent faces of resistance within the Shadhiliyya was embodied in the 'Shaikhyya' *Tariqah* and its affiliated branches. The Shaikhyya is attributed to Sidi Shaikh Abdul Qadir Bousmah, a prominent figure within the Shadhiliyya who passed away in 1615 CE. Historical texts famously referred to his descendants as "Ouled Sidi Shaikh" (the Children of Sidi Shaikh).

It is essential to recognize the significance of those who resisted French colonialism. Their resistance was not baseless but rather rooted in two interconnected objective factors. Firstly, their unyielding commitment to Islam prevented them from pledging allegiance to the colonizer, and they saw France as an invading foreign enemy to their land. Secondly, they had significant material and political power, which enabled them to bring their vision of resistance and jihad to reality. The descendants of Sidi Shaikh held a prestigious status within their community due to their familial and religious heritage. Their geographic location, with access to southern desert routes and northern hills, further strengthened their significance. They relied on religion and Sufism, governed politics and influence, formed a strong alliance among tribes and clans, and emphasized spiritual and worldly aspects of life while propagating their religious path through their political authority.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Abdelaziz Chehbi, *Al-Zawaya wal-Sufiyya wal-Azaba*, Dar El Gharb for Publishing and Distribution, Algeria, n.d., p. 108.

<sup>113</sup> Abdelaziz Chehbi, *Al-Zawaya wal-Sufiyya wal-Azaba*, Dar El Gharb for Publishing and Distribution, Algeria, n.d., p. 120.

The Shadhiliyya Sufi-Shaykhi *Tariqah*, according to France, was responsible for several revolutions, including the revolution led by the mujahid Sheik Bouamama (d. 1908). Sheik Bouamama is still remembered in Algeria for his significant contribution to the country's liberation. In 1874, he settled in the south of Ain Safra, where he established a *Zawiyah* and gained many followers. In 1875, he became the leader of the Shadhiliyya *Tariqah*. Bouamama was deeply committed to the Sufi *Tariqah* and loyal to liberating his country and reforming Algerian society. It was believed that these two objectives were interconnected and could only be achieved through a revolution against the French occupation in 1881. The revolution of Bouamama had both direct and indirect causes. One of the direct causes, as narrated by historical accounts, was the killing of the French officer, Captain Wayne Bruner, along with four of his guards from the Spahi cavalry during his attempt to suppress Sheik Bouamama's revolution on April 22, 1881. Among the indirect causes was the influence of reformist ideas from the East, particularly the call of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, an advocate of Islamic reform, to establish an Islamic alliance to combat colonialism and liberate Muslim lands.

Bouamama's revolution was not a haphazard or unplanned event. It was characterized by careful planning and control. This involved preparing the Saharan tribes both psychologically and through the provision of arms by instilling revolutionary consciousness through the followers of the Sheik affiliated with the Shadhiliyya *Tariqah*. Sheik Bouamama was able to gather around 2,300 soldiers quickly. The Sheik's first conflict with the French military occurred on April 27, 1881, in the Ain Sefra region. The occupying army was defeated in this battle, although some of Sheik's men were martyred. Following this harsh defeat, the French colonial army tried to regain control by reinforcing their forces in the area with additional infantry and cavalry regiments and appointing Colonel Inusatti as the commander. However, these efforts proved futile against the resilient Sufi mujahid. On May 19, 1881, France was forced to engage in a second battle against Sheik Bouamama in the mountainous region of El Ksar. The French army had suffered psychological and military setbacks and needed to restore its reputation. However, the French resorted to extreme cruelty, disregarding basic rules of war and not sparing women, elders, and children. Despite this, Bouamama and his fighters achieved a significant victory, losing 60 French soldiers. These revolutionary victories encouraged Sheik Bouamama to intensify his

attacks against French interests. He cut telegraph lines and attacked the French Algerian Company's outposts. France was determined to suppress this revolution, and deployed additional forces to southwestern Algeria. Colonel Tigri was appointed to punish the tribes that supported Sheik Bouamama's revolution. The colonialists knew that the religious factor represented an obstacle to breaking the alliance between the resistance figures and their followers. The *Zawiyah* was seen as the ultimate symbol of their beliefs in the Tariqis. Therefore, Tigri's conflict with Sheik Bouamama and his followers began by targeting the destruction of the *Zawiyah* in the Béni-Bouya region, along with the strongholds of Magroul Al-Fouqani and Magroul Al-Tahatani. This was followed by brutal executions that led to dreadful massacres among the local population, even those who remained neutral and did not pledge allegiance to the Sheik. Despite this extreme cruelty, it did not waver faith among *Tariqah's* mujahideen. In fact, Sheik Ben Slimane Ben Hamza from Ouled Sidi Sheik Al-Gharraba allied with Bouamama's revolution with a battalion of 300 fighters, pushing the battle to its utmost limits. With this added support, many tribes in Ain Safra loyal to colonial powers were rendered inactive in the southwestern region.

French colonialism held a significant advantage in the balance of power and eventually emerged victorious. However, after documenting his Tariqi jihad, Sheik Bouamama was compelled to withdraw to the farthest regions of Morocco. The colonial authorities sought to capture him, either dead or alive, to quell his rebellion entirely. Despite their efforts, they suffered a significant defeat on April 16, 1882, when they tried to catch up with him in Shat Tighri. Sheik Bouamama fiercely attacked them, inflicting heavy losses. Due to the significant threat posed by this Tariqi sheik to the colonial administration, France was left with no choice but to negotiate and make peace. On October 16, 1899, Governor-General Lefèvre granted Sheik Bouamama complete amnesty without conditions.

#### **5.2.5. The Rahmaniyya *Tariqah's* Bitter Confrontation with Colonialism**

The Rahmaniyya Sufi *Tariqah* originated in Algeria in 1183 CE. Its founder, Sheik Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Rahman al-Azahari, gave it its name. The *Tariqah* gained significant influence and a large number of followers, becoming a threat to French colonialism. It was responsible for over 50 percent of the total number of Sufi lodges

(*Zawiyas*) in Algeria, with 117 *Zawiyas* and an impressive 1,529,614 followers, according to statistics collected by the orientalist Rein in 1896.<sup>114</sup> Algerian historian Aboul-Kasem Saadallah categorizes the Rahmaniyya Sufi *Tariqah* as one of the three main *Tariqahs* that resisted colonialism.<sup>115</sup>

### 5.2.6. The Most Important Revolutions

- The Revolution of Darqawi Sheik Bouzian in Zaatcha (Biskra)

During the Sufi resistance to colonization, it was observed that various Sufi *Tariqahs* coordinated with each other regardless of their doctrinal differences. This highlights the effectiveness of Emir Abdelkader's approach, which viewed Sufi resistance through the lens of nationalism. A clear example of this coordination was observed between Sheik Al-Hanqi, a Rahmani, and Sheik Bouzian, a Darqawi. Another instance of such coordination was between Sheik Bouzian and a Qadiri Sheik, Mohammed Essghir bin Ahmed bin Elhaj Khalifa Al-Emir Abdelkader. When the latter rose up against colonization in the Aurès region, the colonizers forced him to retreat to the Tunisian borders. However, he continued maneuvering until he received a message from Sheik Bouzian, the leader of Zaatcha, informing him that he had ignited the war against French colonization.

The coordination among Sufi resistance indicates a cohesive vision that surpasses the differences in Sufi *Tariqahs'* doctrines. Emir Abdelkader understood the importance of achieving harmony and self-strength to resist colonizers successfully. Sheik Bouzian's revolution was based on a considerable understanding of the meaning of the revolution against colonizers. When the occupying forces approached the town, the revolutionaries shot at them, and the confrontation lasted for hours until the defeat of the Carcosa. The calls of the revolution's leader, Sheik Bouzian, resonated with many tribes, and they received support from various directions. "Saraya (brigades) from the

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<sup>114</sup> Shabou Beshra and Shabou Maryam, "Al-Zawaya wa al-Turuq al-Sufiyya wa Duroha fi Mawajaha al-Isti'mar al-Faransi bi al-Jaza'ir khilal al-Qarn al-'Ishrin, al-*Tariqah* al-Rahmaniyyah Namudhajan." (Sufi *Zawiyas* and *Tariqahs* and their Role in Confronting French Colonialism in Algeria during the Twentieth Century: The Rahmaniyya Sufi Order as a Model.) Master's thesis in Algeria, 2019-2020: 42.

<sup>115</sup> Saadallah writes: "If we were to examine the Algerian resistance between 1840 and 1848 from a modern political perspective, we would find that it operated under the leadership of three parties: the Qadiriyya Order, the Darqawiyya Order, and the Rahmaniyya Order" (Al-Haraka Al-Wataniyya, Vol. 1, p. 298.)

southern slopes of the Aurès Mountains, led by both Sheik El-Hanqi, the Qadiri leader of the Rahmani *Tariqah* in the “Khieran” area, and Sidi Sadik bin Elhaj, the Sheik of the Tiber Massin *Zawiya* in Sidi Msammer, moved secretly to support Sheik Bouzian.”<sup>116</sup> With Sheik Ahmed Belhaj, a mujahideen group was assembled on Saturday, August 25, 1849, totaling 2000 fighters. Sheik Sadik Belhaj joined this force with an additional battalion of 700 horsemen. The leadership of the combined forces was given to Sheik Abdelhafid as they advanced toward the city of Biskra. During their journey, they gained support from various tribes, boosting their total number from 2,700 to 3000 mujahideen.

Sheik Bouziane had a well-planned strategy that involved reacting according to the intensity displayed by the colonial army. The French forces arrived at Zaatcha on July 16, 1849, led by Colonel Caroubier, to besiege the town using an army of 2,000 soldiers. Upon their arrival, the revolutionaries confronted them with gunfire, leading to several hours of confrontation that resulted in a humiliating defeat for Caroubier and his soldiers. As he attempted to escape, he and his soldiers found themselves trapped. Their situation worsened when several groups responded to the call of the revolutionary leader Sheik Bouziane. However, traitors who worked against their own country and religion sometimes compromised this coordination among the different resistance groups. As soon as Ibn Shnouf, the leader of Sidi Okba, learned about these movements, he promptly informed the French garrison commander in Biskra, Saint Germain, about the situation.

Saint Germain, along with forces from the Biskra garrison, intercepted the local population and collaborators from Ibn Shnouf’s followers. The two groups clashed in a significant battle on September 17, 1849, in the village of Sériana, north of Tehouda. The garrison commander, Major Saint Germain, was killed in the battle. The French army prepared a force of 4,493 soldiers to restore their prestige on October 7, 1849. They besieged the oasis of Zaatcha, cutting off its supplies of food and weapons, and began shelling the walls. They also occupied the *Zawiyas* (religious institutions). Despite the harsh siege, the resistance managed to impose its will on the occupying

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<sup>116</sup> Hanane Belaachach, *Dawru al-tayyār al-ṣūfī fī al-thawrāt al-sha‘biyyah khilāl al-qarn al-tāsi’ ‘ashar milādī* (The role of the Sufi movement in popular revolutions during the nineteenth century), Master’s thesis, (2012-2013): 71.

force, causing them to lose 35 soldiers. This prompted the French general to request assistance from the central administration in Algeria. Military regiments in Constantine, Batna, Bousaada, Skikda, and Annaba were issued *Tariqahs* to move to Zaatcha. The village was occupied by French forces, resulting in widespread destruction and hardship for the inhabitants. Despite this despair, the revolutionaries remained resilient and launched a daring attack on the occupying forces, successfully taking down guards and soldiers with bladed weapons. Meanwhile, the French forces controlled the town's streets and squares. Amidst all this chaos, Bouziane emerged as a heroic figure but tragically fell victim to martyrdom at the hands of the enemy.<sup>117</sup>

- The Revolution of Al Khengi in response to Bouziane's Call to Arms

In the character of Abd al-Hafidh Al Khengi, two qualities often found in road resisters converge: Sufi knowledge and enthusiasm for jihad. The revolution initiated by him in response to Sheik Bouziane's call to arms can be viewed as an expansion of the Zaatcha revolution. Thus, it falls within the coordination framework we previously mentioned between the various uprisings against the colonizer. This coordination played an important role in weakening the colonizer, even in cases where the uprisings were unsuccessful.

Sheik Al Khengi responded to Sheik Bouziane's revolution by communicating with his disciples. He reached out to two of his close associates, Sheik Sadiq Belhaj, his disciple, and Sheik Mohammed Essghir bin Ahmed bin El Haj, the successor of Emir Abdelkader. Sheik Al Khengi also invited the leaders of the *Tariqah* and the sheiks of the *Zawiyas* affiliated with him to join the battle. According to this military and propagational strategy, Sheik El Khengi successfully united tribes and clans, gaining their support and forming an army consisting of one thousand mujahideen and seven hundred horsemen from the followers of Sheik Sadiq Belhaj. At the same time, Al Khengi dispatched a messenger to Ibn Chenouf, a French intelligence agent, urging him to assist his country against the enemy. However, as previously mentioned, Ibn Chenouf was a traitor who worked against his people and country, aiding the French

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<sup>117</sup> For further details about this battle, you can refer to: Hanan Belaachach, *Dawru al-tayyār al-ṣūfī*: 72 and onwards.

army in avoiding revolutionary ambushes on multiple occasions. This colonial collaborator was informed about the plans of the mujahideen through Chenouf.

Al Khengi significantly understood the political and war-related circumstances in which the battle was fought. He used this knowledge to counteract many of those who opposed his revolution and proved himself to be capable. Unfortunately, he was defeated due to the unequal distribution of power that favored the colonizer. His soldiers were scattered in the mountains, and a hundred of his cavalry and mules were killed. However, this defeat didn't break his determination. On November 4, 1849, he decided to recapture Biskra and end the siege on Zaatcha.

Just as the colonizer attempted to eliminate Bouziane through bribery, he made a similar effort with Sheik Al Khengi. The French commander, Saint Arnaud, sent him messages offering safety, but the Sheik refused and went to Tunisia. However, when he sensed his impending fate, he returned to his homeland on July 13th, 1850. The occupying forces surrounded him in an attempt to capture him alive; however, destiny determined that he passed away before they could do so. The defeat of Sheik Al Khengi was not because of any lack of courage or willingness for sacrifice but instead resulted from inadequate planning and insufficient numbers.

- The Revolution led by Sheik Sadek bin Al-Hajj

The idea of national liberation became intertwined with Sufi beliefs, attributed to various *Tariqahs* who participated in resisting colonialism. This notion was seen as a political and jihadist vision that Emir Abdelkader opposed in response to French colonialism. Historians highlight the uprising led by the Rahmani Sufi Sheik Sadiq bin Al-Hajj, whose nationalist stance paved the way for his revolution through collaboration with other sheiks beyond the Rahmaniyya. On November 4, 1849, he convened with leaders including Sheik Abdul Hafiz Al-Khanqi and Sheik Muhammad Al-Saghir bin Ahmed Belhaj, affiliates of Emir Abdelkader's caliphate, demonstrating their commitment to continuing jihad.<sup>118</sup> Influenced by this intellectual perspective on understanding jihad, Sheik Sadiq bin Al-Hajj successfully rallied 2000 mujahideen

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<sup>118</sup> Shahrazad Shelbi, "Thawrat Wahat Al-Amri wa 'alaqatha bi al-muqawama al-sha'biyya bi mantiqat al Ziban fi al-qarn 19," Master's Thesis in Algeria: 2008-2009

from different backgrounds at Mount Ahmar Khaddou and 50 knights from Wadi Souf. Despite their failure to liberate the city of Biskra from colonial rule, this mindset led the Sheik to support the Zaatcha revolution in 1849, initiated by Sheik Bouzian. The battle erupted on September 17, 1849, resulting in allied forces of diverse paths successfully vanquishing pioneer Saint Germain in what became known as the “Great Revolution of Sheik Sadek bin Al-Hajj.”<sup>119</sup> The most important for this uprising are three:

- i. The issuance of a decree by the colonial authorities in 1856 obliged Algerian residents in Biskra to send their children to study in French schools. Sheik saw this decree as an attempt to erase the Algerian identity of Arab-Islamic origins and replace it with Western values by replacing the language of the Quran with French.
- ii. The strengthening of the pillars of the French occupation system by attracting a group of traitors and informants from the locals. The occupation used them to sow discord among the tribes and residents and try to win them over with various temptations, such as positions, titles, and money, in the service of the French interest. This situation increased the grumbling of the locals and the exacerbation of their security concerns about their lives and possessions.
- iii. The authority of the occupation forcibly seized land and livestock from locals.

Sheik Sadiq bin Al-Hajj had strong reasons to reject and resist the colonizers. He planned to revolt against them, and the first step was to prepare the *Zawiyas*, especially the Rahmaniyya, who were under his Sufi influence, by sending secret letters to their leaders and followers, urging them to prepare for jihad. The colonizer’s tempting methods did not deter him, even when General Desfou corresponded with him on October 13, asking for cooperation and abandonment of the idea of jihad. The reasons for confrontation became clear, and General Desfou set off from his camp in the “Shatma” area with a corps consisting of 2962 riflemen, 401 warriors, an artillery group, and another for aid. In contrast, Sheik Sadek bin Al-Hajj’s army consisted of 1500 mujahideen. The two armies clashed in the Tinuglin area, resulting in a half-day-

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<sup>119</sup> See, for example: Shahrazad Shelbi: 68 and beyond.

long battle that caused numerous casualties, including many martyrs. The colonial army lost two soldiers and had fifteen wounded.<sup>120</sup>

The conflict concluded with Sheik Sadek bin Al-Hajj retreating to southern Tunisia, where the followers of Emir Abdelkader are situated. However, the collaborators, particularly Ibn Shenouf, betrayed him to the colonial authorities, leading to his arrest on January 20, 1859. He was then condemned to death along with his sons Ibrahim, Taher, and Ghazali, but Napoleon commuted the sentence to life imprisonment. Consequently, he was transferred to El Harrach prison in Algeria, where he passed away as a martyr on Monday, July 27, 1862.

- The Revolution of Lalla Fatma

The Sufi heroine's jihad was linked to her participation in the armed uprising led against colonialism by the Sufi mujahid Sharif Boubaghla (1809-1854). His rebellion began in Beni Melikech, presently located in the province of Bejaia. This revolt emerged as a response to the colonizer's attempts to subjugate the Kabyle region and northern Constantine, which posed challenges for their occupation. In this context, General Saint Arnaud led an army of 8700 soldiers from "Mila" and reached the Jijel area on May 16. Upon crossing the large river, Sharif Boubaghla confronted them and engaged in a fierce battle. Despite initial successes by the French army in pushing forward and looting villages, they could not break down the determination of the mujahideen. It is interesting that this unparalleled determination to jihad, despite being based on the imbalance between the enemy and the mujahideen, found a motive from the incitement of women, and considering resistance as a value of manhood: "The rural woman played a direct role in steadfastness, and French officers tell us that: We asked the tribes: Why are you insisting on defending the village against an army led by someone like [General] "Joe ?" They answer us: We were ready to surrender in front of these huge revolutions, but our women refuse that and threaten that they will abandon us forever if we do not continue to defend."<sup>121</sup>

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See, for example: Shahrzad Shelbi: 68 and beyond.  
er to: Shelbi, "Thawrat wahat al-Amri Oasis: 70 and beyond.

<sup>121</sup> Ali Mohammed Mohammed Sallabi, "Kifah al-sha'b al-jazairi: 639.

In the context of enthusiastic sacrifice for the homeland, the resistance of Sufi women against colonizers is noteworthy. One such example is Lalla Fatma, who fought alongside Sheik Boughla. Despite the betrayal of the French spy Bekar, who condemned the Tijaniyya *Tariqah*, sheiks, and followers, Lalla Fatma N'Soumer, a Mujahidah and Rahmaniyya Sufi, showed rare courage and wise leadership in the revolution led by Sheik Boughla. Lalla Fatma was born in the village of Wargla in the Ain El Hammam district and inherited her Sufi orientation from Mohammed bin Issa, the leader of the Rahmaniyya. Her jihad was a reaction to the occupation army's penetration into the land of Zouawa. She showed superior ability in inspiring hearts to love jihad and follow the path of resistance, which led the tribes and sheiks of the villages to join her. With this military strength, she was able to skirmish with the enemy so much that she became a symbol of bravery and leadership in the revolution under the name of their predictor - the French - Joan of Arc.<sup>122</sup> Among the battles in which this Rahmaniyya Sufi woman showed efficiency in resisting colonialism, historians are keen to mention two:

The first battle: "Wadiya" in 1851, was fought against the French army led by the generals Randon and MacMahon. It occurred on the hill "Tamzguida," and Lalla Fatima N'Soumer fought fiercely with Bou Baghla. However, given the power imbalance, she suggested that Bou Baghla withdraw to preserve the mujahideen. They agreed and withdrew to Bani Yeni, where they were able to regroup. They called the tribes and the rural areas to holy jihad and then headed to the Wadiya area to confront the enemy's advance. They achieved a significant victory, and Lalla Fatima N'Soumer killed the traitor Al-Joudi with her own hands and saved Bou Baghla from certain death when he fell wounded in the battle.<sup>123</sup>

The second battle: "Sibaw." The battle, which occurred in April 1854, was a significant event in history. According to historical accounts, the French enemy would have been almost victorious had it not been for the devastating defeat of Lalla Fatima N'Soumer. Bou Baghla, the leader of the rebels, was martyred on December 26, 1854, leading Lalla Fatima to become the leader of both the military and the religious Sufi *Tariqah*

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<sup>122</sup> Salah al-Din Maamri, "al-*Tariqah* al-Rahmaniyya wa dawruha fi muqawamat al-isti'mar al-faransi bi al-Jazai'r (1849-1872)" - Master's Thesis in Algeria, 2019-2020: 52.

<sup>123</sup> For details of the battle and its results, see: Salah al-Din Maamri, "*Tariqah* al-Rahmaniyyah: 52."

through the Zawiya of Wargla. Despite the loss, Lalla Fatima decided to continue fighting and rallied the people of Zawaya around her. They fought a fierce battle against the enemy in the battle of Ashridn in 1857. Even though the rebels were defeated due to the lack of military balance, they could withdraw to the mountains of Jurjura and continue the jihad from there. Lalla Fatima's insistence on fighting became a thorn in the throat of the French army, leading them to decide to eliminate her with a massive army ordered by the French governor-general, consisting of 35,000 men. On July 11, 1857, two armies clashed at the village of "Iliten". The rebels numbered 7,000 mujahideen. Despite their defeat, the French army suffered a loss of 44 soldiers, including two officers. After the incident, the French military leadership aimed to capture Lalla Fatima, who was eventually caught and exiled to the Zawiya of Bani Sliman near the city of "El Madia." She lived there for six years, practicing devotion and asceticism away from the hustle and bustle of life. However, she passed away in September 1863 at the young age of 33. Her words and teachings echo through the ages: "Freedom is a rare flower that all peoples seek, but it only thrives among those who water it with blood."<sup>124</sup>

### **5.2.7. Loyalty to Colonization by Undermining Asceticism and Planting Women**

The Qadiriyya resistance, led by Emir Abdelkader, fought against colonization and stood for national values. However, their political naivety led to the penetration of colonization. An example is the role played by the agent Leon Roch in his relationship with the Emir, his followers, and the Algerian resistance, both Sufi and non-Sufi. Despite this, it would be wrong to presume that the Qadiriyya, represented by the Emir, acted as agents of colonization. At most, it can be said that they unintentionally neglected certain limited national rights without intending to do so. The Shadhili branch, among others, achieved significant victories against colonizers, similar to the Shaikhiyya revolution led by Sheik Bouamama. However, there are instances where Sufi *Tariqahs* have collaborated with the colonizers by planting women, intelligence agents, and spies. This shows a clear intention to serve the colonizers, and they even praised them, likening their authority over the Algerian people to a mother's caring authority over her children. The colonizers were keen on breaking the strength and

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

prestige of asceticism among Sufi followers, making it difficult to establish asceticism and avoid worldly temptations without adhering to Shariah requirements. The Tijaniyya *Tariqah*'s relationship with the French occupier is a prominent example of this issue. Sheik Mohammed Al-Kabir, the holder of the Great Sajjada and the successor of Sheik Ahmed Tijani Al-Akbar, the founder of this *Tariqah*, stated in a sermon delivered before the head of the French military mission in Ain Madi on the 28<sup>th</sup> of Dhu al-Hijjah, 1350 AH: "It is our duty to support our beloved France materially, morally, and politically. Therefore, I say this not out of arrogance or boasting but out of accountability and honor in fulfilling our duty. My ancestors made the right choice by joining France before it reached our lands and its noble armies occupied our territories."<sup>125</sup>

The deviation in understanding jihad among some Sufi *Tariqahs* has shifted from jihad against the enemy to focus on internal struggle. However, this concept has now been completely reversed, where jihad involves standing with the colonizers and aiding them against the people of the land and the nation. To examine the causes of this deviation in the concept of jihad, particularly with regards to French intelligence and their efforts to infiltrate the Tijaniyya *Tariqah* through female agents and undermine the influence of asceticism in people's hearts, it is essential to consider two stages that underpin this intelligence penetration. The first stage is the ideological vision upon which the colonizers based their measures to domesticate Sufi *Tariqahs*. The second stage revolves around the practical achievements built upon that ideological vision.

- Tijaniyya and Loyalty to French Colonization

The resistance of Sufi *Tariqahs* against colonization is a source of pride for Algeria, as it played a significant role in achieving freedom and growth. However, amidst this bright heroism, there were instances of betrayal and espionage that hindered the plans of jihad and the timeline for independence. As a result, historians have negative opinions about some *Tariqahs*, alleging that they were reluctant to participate in the resistance and even targeted their people on behalf of the colonizer. This phenomenon is often associated with the Tijaniyya *Tariqah* within Algerian Sufism.

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<sup>125</sup> Idris Mohammed Idris, "Mazahir al-Anharafat al-Iqdiyyah 'Ind al-Sufiyyah wa Atharaha al-Sayyi' 'ala al-Ummah al-Islamiyyah.," Ibn Rushd Library, Riyadh, 2nd edition, 2005: 909.

- Breaking the Authority of Asceticism in the Hearts of Sufi *Tariqah* Followers

To achieve their goals, the Tijaniyya movement reinterpreted certain verses of the Quran, specifically those pertaining to jihad and resistance. Ali Mohammed Mohammed Salabi points out that many politicians and *Tariqahs* were fooled by the Tijaniyya's slogan of "adhering to the creed of peace." He explains that the most important principle in the Tijaniyya's belief system is peace, which initially convinced Prince Abdelkader and his officials of their good intentions and righteousness. However, as time passed, it became clear that the Tijaniyya's concept of peace involved accepting the rule of the strong, even if they were invading occupiers, and conditioning people to accept colonization and occupation as long as their interests and well-being were not affected.

- Breaking the Authority of Asceticism among Sufi Followers

This was achieved by reinterpreting the Quranic verses, particularly those related to jihad and resistance. In this context, Ali Muhammad Muhammad Sallabi mentions that many politicians and Sufi leaders were deceived by the slogan raised by the Tijaniyya, which emphasized "adherence to the doctrine of peace." He states, "Peace is the most important principle in the Tijaniyya doctrine. This initially led Emir Abdelkader and his officials to believe in their goodwill and righteousness. However, time revealed the true nature of this doctrine, which considers peace as accepting the rule of the strong, even if they are invading occupiers. It conditioned the acceptance of colonization and occupation as long as their personal status and interests were unaffected."<sup>126</sup>

In this reinterpretation, the aim was to align the meaning of the verses with the colonizer's will and desire to reinforce their power over the country. This approach

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<sup>126</sup> Ali Mohammed Mohammed Sallabi, "kifah al sha'b al-jaza'iri": 447. This approach is affirmed by the historian Abu al-Qasim Saadallah, who noted that the pretext of the Tijaniyyah allegiance to colonialism based on the difference with the Qadiriyyah was not a valid excuse that cannot be justified: "What is said about the competition between the Tijaniyyah and Qadiriyyah as a reason for the Tijaniyyah's refusal to join the resistance during the forty years is incorrect in our view, because the resistance has surpassed being a movement led by the Qadiriyyah *Tariqah* since the prince is not the entirety of the resistance. If we found Tijani fighting against the enemy in the manner of Bumazza (At-Tayyibi) or the manner of Hajj Musa (Al-Darqawi), we would say that it is a personal dispute. However, he preferred Sufism over jihad, despite the presence of the enemy in the country. (Saadallah, "Al Haraka al wataniyya al Jaza'iriyya (1830-1900), Vol. 1, Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, Beirut, 1st edition, 1992, p. 300.)

was consistent with the views of Orientalists and intellectuals employed by the colonial powers to influence the Sufi Tariqahs and their followers per the colonizer's agenda. Leon Roch, the agent we mentioned earlier, infiltrated the ranks of Emir Abdelkader between 1837 and 1839. As he states, "I realized that the majority of Arab tribes would benefit from joining the French cause. However, the Quran threatens Muslims who accept living under Christian domination. Although Abdelkader used such verses to incite jihad, they can be interpreted inversely, suggesting that Muslims can suspend jihad if they know they have no chance against the enemy. In such cases, jihad becomes a form of suicide, and accepting God's decree becomes obligatory."<sup>127</sup>

The interpretation of jihad, which the Tijaniyya supports, is not in line with the Quranic definition of surrendering to the occupier. Strangely, the Tijaniyya hold this position, considering their leader, Ahmad al-Tijani, often called for the downfall of Ottoman rule, even though the Turks were invited to Algeria to help resist Spanish colonization.

The visionary stance of some Sufi *Tariqahs*, particularly the Tijaniyya, which exhibit a submissive relationship, may be rooted in socio-economic factors and their resulting political influence. The Tijaniyya's attempt to justify their abandonment of resistance in the name of legal judgments sought from the Quran was unconvincing. It contradicts a fundamental principle of Islam, which is the defense of oneself and honor, not only through material weapons but also through political astuteness. There is a clear difference between engaging in political maneuvering when in a weak military position and succumbing to or remaining silent about colonization.

Researcher Raji' Darqush mentioned that it is necessary to avoid blaming a faction within the Tijaniyya for not resisting colonization for organizational and economic reasons. This could have been accepted if that faction had chosen to remain silent. However, actively siding with the colonizer against their people cannot be justified except by a weakened understanding of the ideological meaning of jihad and a keenness to preserve economic interests and political influence through allegiance to the ruler, who is the colonizer in this context.

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<sup>127</sup> Ben Youssef Tlemceni, "Master's Thesis in Algeria: al-*Tariqah* al Tijaniyyah wa mawqifuha fi al-hukm al markazi fi al-jaza'ir (1782-1900)," Academic Year 1997-1998: 208.

The Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya held contrasting views on the resistance against French colonization during the reign of Emir Abdelkader and the Tijaniyya leaders. These perspectives had practical implications that went beyond the immediate historical circumstances and led to the establishment of a strategic alliance that aimed to consolidate colonization and change the Algerian identity. Historians narrate that after Emir Abdelkader lost hope in the Tijaniyya's loyalty to the homeland, he attacked its original homeland, the "Ain Madhi" region. Subsequently, the Tijaniyya sheiks retaliated by seeking to "conclude an official treaty with French colonization" in early July 1839. Mohammed al-Saghir al-Tijani officially contacted the French governor-general "Galey," taking advantage of the deteriorating relationship between Emir Abdelkader and France. He sent a message proposing that the sheiks of the desert made him an Emir and requesting ammunition to strengthen his rule. The proposed terms were as follows:

- Appointing one of the sheiks of the desert as the governor of "Medea" city.
- Having the Tijaniyya leader holds a high position in the desert.
- The appointed Bey served as a mediator between France in Algeria and Mohammed al-Saghir, the leader of the desert.

In return, France would obtain the following:

- Recognition.
- Payment of taxes and *zakat*.
- France's expansion of influence over the Arabs and their affairs.<sup>128</sup>

It is important to note that the Tijaniyya's surrender to French colonization was not without motive. Rather, it was orchestrated by the colonizer, based on:

- Use of female espionage

The factor of intelligence played a significant role in reducing the reverence for asceticism among people, making them more vulnerable to the control of colonizers. One of the most well-known instances was the story of Aurélie Picard, a French spy. In 1870, she captivated the exiled Sheik of the Tijaniyya in Bordeaux, France, with

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<sup>128</sup> See more details in Ben Youssef Tlemcani, "Master's Thesis in Algeria: al-*Tariqah* al Tijaniyyah wa mawqifuha fi al-hukm al markazi fi al-jaza'ir (1782-1900)," Academic Year 1997-1998: 200.

her youth and exceptional beauty. This story is often mentioned in history books. “The Sheik of the Tijaniyya [Ahmed Tijani] was a handsome eighteen-year-old man when he visited Bordeaux. He was received by the city’s bishop and its leader while the cannons of Russia pounded the gates of Paris in 1870. There, he met Aurélie Picard, whom he admired and fell in love with, eventually marrying her.”<sup>129</sup> According to history books, a French woman exerted a significant influence over the positions of the Tijaniyya sheiks for several decades. She even had a child with Sheik Ahmed, who later played a crucial role in winning the hearts of the French people during World War II, as we will discuss later.

This particular woman, along with other spies, had a dual role. Firstly, she aimed to ruin the reputation of the Tijaniyya sheiks and their followers, who were known for rejecting worldly pleasures and luxuries. She succeeded with this objective to a great extent. The woman even constructed a “palace” around 10 km away from Ain Madhi, which was said to combine Eastern and Western styles in its furniture, possessions, and drinking habits, with added Arab features and Islamic spirituality. This palace became the center of French civilization in the Sahara. French guests would stay there, just like in any European palace, complete with its furnishings, food, drinks, and gardens.<sup>130</sup>

The idea of “self-jihad” was once a central aspect of the religious relationship of many Sufi *Tariqahs*, including the Tijaniyya. However, it seems that this concept is no longer valid. Clearly, the Sheik of the Tijaniyya, who is married to Picard, now indulges in refined Western French pleasures and luxuries. We believe this phase may have been necessary to build a positive and supportive stance for colonization. As Ibn Khaldun mentioned, seeking comfort in luxurious bedding became impossible without the support of the colonizer. Therefore, we understand that this second phase is a practical stage supporting colonization, which is easier for Picard to achieve than the first stage. The first stage relates to thoughts and positions, while the second stage concerns the requirements and practical implications of the stance.

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<sup>129</sup> Cited from the English traveler: Huda Shalaway and Fadila Saker, in: “*Al-Tariqah al-Tijaniyyah*: 28 and 29.”

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.* 31

Picard's desert palace has become a sanctuary for French leaders. They gathered there to determine firm positions and actions regarding colonization in Algeria. The Sheik of the Tijaniyya and his followers have blessed these meetings. The Tijaniyya followers have aided the French armies by providing information and fighting alongside them. Even the sheiks considered it an honorable duty and a means of seeking rewards from Allah. In 1931, Sheik Ahmed Tijani, the Khalifa, delivered a speech in front of the French military mission in Ain Madhi, praising the significant colonial role played by the French. It is worth noting that Picard remained committed to her Catholic faith throughout the 61 years she spent inside the Zawiya, between Muslims, from 1870 to 1930.<sup>131</sup>

During the World War, infiltration significantly affected Algeria's strategic position in the major international options. According to Abu al-Qasim Saadallah, the son of the spy provided remarkable services for France during World War II. The spy, Picard, was responsible for giving birth to Ali ibn Ahmed Tijani, who later took charge of the Tijaniyya affairs. Ali ibn Ahmed Tijani passionately supported France against its enemies, particularly Germany and Turkey. He urged his supporters in the Islamic world to condemn Turkey's entry into the war, citing the atrocities committed by the Turks in Algeria that harmed the religion and the customs of the locals. He claimed that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had said, 'Leave the Turks as they have left you.' He asked his supporters to align themselves with France, praising its virtues and countless material benefits. He considered France their true mother and called upon Muslims to support it with their souls, wealth, and children against their enemy Germany and its allies Austria and Turkey."

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid. 38

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

The Zawiya and Sufi *Tariqahs* have always been associated with worship, piety, charity, education, and discipline. Therefore, studying these *Tariqahs* without considering their ideas and beliefs has not been easy. However, exploring the political views of these *Tariqahs* toward colonialism and interpreting their positions and stances on the most significant motives that drove these trends reveals another aspect of these *Tariqahs* that many people are unaware of. It was challenging to fairly evaluate the various *Tariqahs* and their beliefs, especially given the abundance of literature and references available. Most of the literature either praised the *Tariqahs* excessively, portraying them as infallible and faultless or criticized them, blaming them for the colonialism and control that the region faced.

Throughout my research, I have aimed to examine the evolution of the most significant *Tariqahs* in the region, focusing on their stance toward French colonialism and how the colonial authorities treated them. Each section concludes by summarizing the current state of the Sufi *Tariqahs* and highlighting the most notable changes that have taken place.

During the end of the Ottoman rule in this region, societies were in dire need of assistance, and that's when these *Tariqahs* emerged and spread. They played a vital role in filling the vacuum left by the state, and through their institutions called "endowments," they served the community in various fields such as charitable, educational, and economic work. The *Tariqahs* took on the duty of education, preaching, and guidance and fulfilled it to the best of their abilities.

The *Tariqahs'* role has become increasingly significant due to external aggression aimed at destroying the cultural landmarks, religions, languages, and wealth of the region. The *Tariqahs* have been against colonialism from the outset, but colonial powers have tried to minimize their impact and eliminate them using exploitation, espionage, threats, temptation, theft, and looting. Colonialism has also encouraged

division and conflict between *Tariqahs*, such as the Qadriyya and Tijani *Tariqahs* in Algeria, which has weakened them and made it easier for colonial powers to subjugate and control them. Despite some sheiks' bias toward colonialism and their willingness to implement its policies, most members of the *Tariqahs* have stood against colonialism and its attempts to tighten control over the country.

The colonizers could only take over this region by weakening the influence of the *Tariqahs*. The *Tariqahs* were a major obstacle to the colonizers' goals, and they were seen as a real threat to colonialism. The colonizers studied these *Tariqahs* in detail, seeking to understand every aspect of their existence. They worked to weaken and break up the *Tariqahs*, even going so far as to interfere in the appointment of their elders. The Algerian experience was an important reference for colonizers and provided them with a fertile ground to gain valuable experience in dealing with obstacles. This experience helped them avoid similar issues during their colonization of Tunisia.

The *Tariqahs* possessed both human and economic resources, which attracted the attention of colonialism. The colonial powers either attempted to break them or gain their support. The rebellion movements against colonialism, which operated outside the scope of these *Tariqahs*, were not given much weight. Even after the *Tariqahs'* role in confronting colonialism ended, none of the national liberation movements possessed the advantages of owning and controlling human resources and economic institutions. From the start, these *Tariqahs* were consistent with the spirit of national liberation and stood with society and its aspirations for freedom and independence. However, when most of these *Tariqahs* ceased their role in the confrontation, society looked to other formations and organizations for support.

It is important to reiterate that the positions taken by certain *Tariqahs* were mainly personal stances of their sheiks and did not necessarily reflect the views of their disciples and followers. In fact, the followers often held opposing views, consistent with public opinion, resulting in colonialism failing to achieve the compliance expected from these *Tariqahs* and their leaders.

Based on the resistance of Sufi *Tariqahs* to colonization, we can draw the following conclusions:

The Sufi *Tariqahs* represented the common people the colonial authorities attempted to study and use to serve their interests. Their experience influenced French policy toward these *Tariqahs* in Algeria. The authorities did not hide their fear of these resistant *Tariqahs*, which they could not control through either incentives or punishments. The French colonial forces attempted to produce studies to demonstrate the danger of Sufi *Tariqahs*, as these religious groups, as called by Marcel Suleiman, often transformed into “dens of revolution” against the foreigners and against the Romans infiltrating the lands of Islam. According to his claim, the *Zawiya* was not considered a place to learn the Noble Quran but turned into a place where protests were planned.

It is important to reevaluate various opinions concerning the resistance in Algeria. With a deep understanding of Algeria’s political and military history, one cannot underestimate the significant contribution of Sufi *Tariqahs* in achieving the country’s freedom and independence. Although this opinion cannot be generalized, it remains prominent, especially considering that Sufi *Tariqahs*, that cooperated with colonization, hardly hold any significance compared to those who resisted it. In this regard, the Tijaniyya *Tariqah* stands out as a prominent example.

The resistance to colonial powers was not solely expressed through military conflicts, as significant political confrontations played a pivotal role. The colonization’s tactics involved strategies such as planting spies and undermining ascetic values by seducing women, ultimately aiming to influence the acceptance of colonization. Understanding the concept of jihad in Sufi *Tariqahs* and its relationship with Sunni scholars is crucial, especially in recognizing that, according to these *Tariqahs*, jihad encompasses more than just psychological struggle.

The resistance of the Sufi movement against colonization introduced an essential principle of liberation struggles, emphasizing that the nation is more important than any religious order, such as *Tariqah*. Emir Abdelkader extensively advocated this principle and fought against French colonization by upholding it. Eventually, most

Sufi *Tariqahs* adopted this understanding and put it into practice by engaging in fierce battles. However, these battles ultimately led Algeria to achieve its current state of independence.

After surveying the two models discussed in this study, it can be concluded that the religious perspectives on Western colonization are complex. It is impossible to establish absolute judgments about them. Nonetheless, it can be said that the intertwined factors involved in its construction are as follows: The Sufi *Tariqahs* share a Sunni religious background. Originally, jihad against Christians was a common element among these *Tariqahs*, but its interpretation later changed due to various socio-economic and geographical factors.

Some *Zawiyas* benefited economically from their properties, donations, and gifts from followers. As a result, they were motivated to maintain good relations with the colonizers in order to safeguard their interests. This included playing political roles under their umbrella, like mediating and issuing fatwas in support of them. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some *Zawiyas* in Algeria, such as the Wazzaniyya and Tijaniyya, submitted entirely to European colonization, while others chose to resist. There were some exceptions to this pattern, but submission generally became linked with French dominance and control over the tribe's resources.

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