

## FRANCE'S AFRICAN COLONIAL POLICIES IN THE EXAMPLE OF NORTH AFRICA \*

*KUZEY AFRİKA ÖRNEĞİNDE FRANSA'NIN AFRİKA SÖMÜRGE POLİTİKALARI*

**Mohamed Abdelrhman Mohamed ALİ\*\***

**Abstract:** Between the 18th and the 20th century, France built a great colonial empire in Africa. The French Colonization had its authentic mentality since France as a state passed many historical developments, which consequently affected its colonial methods. The study aims to review summarily the French colonial policy by identifying general determinants for its methods by taking North Africa as a study case. The study starts with a brief look at the history of French colonialism and the philosophy of French colonialism. Then, the study reviews North Africa as a study case briefly as a practical example of those colonial styles. Throughout the essay, the study uses the historical approach and deduction from specific to general, and from the study case to generalize the whole scope of the study, to reach the result that the French colonization was more direct and violent compared to the British one. However, the French colonization was still influenced by the British methods in some areas, and North Africa is one of them. Moreover, the French colonization was based more on the idea of making those colonies part of the homeland of France, especially after the French Revolution.

**Keywords:** Colonialism, French Colonial Empire, Francization Policy, Francophone

**Öz:** Fransa, 18. ve 20. yüzyıllar arasında Afrika'da büyük bir sömürge imparatorluğu kurmuştur. Fransa'nın tarihsel gelişimi bakımından özgün süreci, sömürge yöntemlerine de yansımıştır. Böylece, çalışma, Kuzey Afrika'yı örnek olay olarak ele alarak Fransız sömürge politikasını, yöntemlerinin genel belirleyicilerini belirleyerek özet olarak incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma, Fransız sömürgeciliğinin tarihine ve Fransız sömürgeciliğinin felsefesine kısa bir bakışla başlamaktadır. Daha sonra çalışma, bu sömürge tarzlarının pratik bir örneği olarak Kuzey Afrika'yı bir çalışma vakası olarak kısaca gözden geçirmektedir. Bu çalışma tarihsel yaklaşımı ve özelden genele ve çalışma örneğinden çıkarımları kullanmaktadır. Makalenin temel bulgusu Fransız sömürgeciliğinin İngilizlere kıyasla daha doğrudan ve şiddetli olduğudur. Ancak Fransız sömürgeciliği bazı bölgelerde hâlâ İngiliz yöntemlerinden etkilenmektedir ve Kuzey Afrika da bunlardan biridir. Üstelik Fransız sömürgeciliği, özellikle Fransız Devrimi'nden sonra, daha çok bu kolonilerin Fransa'nın anavatanının bir parçası haline getirilmesi fikrine dayanıyordu.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sömürgecilik, Fransız Sömürge İmparatorluğu, Francizasyon Politikası, Frankofon

---

\* Geliş Tarihi: 19.11.2023, Kabul Tarihi: 17.12.2023. DOI: 10.54132/akaf.1393086

\*\* Doktora Öğrencisi, Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli Lisanüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü, Uluslararası İlişkiler Programı, e-mail: elgaby.mohamed@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0002-1550-6229

## Introduction

The French reaction to the recent military coups in Central and West Africa such as the last two coups in Burkina Faso in January and September 2022 on a row, the Gabonese coup d'état on 30 August 2023, and the Nigerien coup d'état in July 2023, brought to mind the French colonial image, which undoubtedly proves that the link between France and its colonies has not been severed. Although Britain, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, and the Netherlands were partners of France in its colonization of Africa. However, the relations of the aforementioned countries with their African colonies didn't continue, or at least didn't continue at the same level as France's relationship with these colonies continued. Hence, the question arises about the specificity of French colonialism and the specificity of its presence in Africa. Therefore, this question prompts a re-examination of France's colonial methods.

Before delving into the subject of French colonialism in Africa, it may be useful to introduce some definitions for the main concept related to the phenomenon of colonialism, which helps build a conceptual frame for the work. As for colonialism itself as a concept, it may not be possible to talk about a common definition of colonialism. Because it has been applied in many different geographies, in different periods of history, and by various countries. Colonialism is a practice or policy of control by one power over other people or areas, usually through the establishment of colonies and usually for economic domination (Tignor, 2005: 340). When the word colonialism is mentioned, the period from the Renaissance to the first half of the 20th century and European countries such as Great Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, and Italy always come to mind. However, due to the defeat of Spain's famous Armada in 1588 and Portugal's internal affairs, Spain and Portugal left the race of colonialism early. As for Germany and Italy, these two countries joined this race late because they achieved national unity late and could not obtain large colonies. Therefore, colonialism is synonymous with British and French colonialism. France and England were able to establish huge colonial empires, and the two countries have different methods of managing their colonies. Colonialism history can be divided into two important periods, direct colonization in the period before World War I, and indirect colonization in the period after the end of World War I, which started with the establishment of the League of Nations, as a new mandate system was established and the colonies were called mandates. We can say that the mandate system is an important step towards independence.

Another related concept to the study is Francization, (in French: La Francisation), which means the policy of spreading and expanding the French language and the French culture, communicating it to the world and making it dominant, pioneering, and dominant over other languages. The term appeared at the beginning of the French colonization campaign in countries, especially African ones. This concept has a strong linkage with the colonial empire built by France. It is considered one of the most

important signs of French colonialism, and it reflects one of the most important aspects of French colonialism and the French view of their colonies, which we will discuss in the French colonial philosophy section.

### **1.French Colonial History**

French colonial history is synonymous with the French Colonial Empire. This concept consisted of overseas colonies and mandate territories that came under French sovereignty starting from the 16th century. This colonial empire, between 1534 and 1980, has an important place in the modern history of the world (Uygur - Uygur, 2014). French colonial history is divided into two phases, as a distinction is often made between the “First French Colonial Empire”, which lasted until 1814, when most of it was lost or sold, and the “Second French Colonial Empire”, which began with the invasion of Algeria in 1830. The First French Colonial Empire began in the 17th century by establishing colonies in North America, the Caribbean, and India, but France lost most of its possessions following its defeat in the Seven Years’ War<sup>1</sup>. The second French Colony began with the occupation of Algeria in 1830. At its peak, the Second French colonial empire became one of the largest empires in history. The total amount of land under French rule, including France, had reached 11,500,000 km<sup>2</sup> in 1920, with a population of 110 million in 1936 (Hargreaves, 2005: 1). The second French colonial empire remained intact despite Germany’s occupation of France in the 1871 War of German Unification and during World War II. After the war, anti-colonial movements began to challenge French authorities, and France unsuccessfully fought fierce wars clinging to the empire in Vietnam and Algeria in the 1950s and early 1960s. By the end of 1962, most of France’s colonies gained independence. From another aspect, we can make another division of French colonialism into two distinct periods, the period before the French Revolution and the Period after the French Revolution, because the transformation during the revolution left great effects on the French human mind, and therefore, this transformation established a new order of colonial philosophy.

### **2.French Colonial Philosophy**

Before delving into the subject of French colonial methods in North Africa, knowing the French colonial philosophy and the realities of colonialism will be useful to understand French Colonialism’s main lines. We can explain the real reasons behind French colonialism as follows:

- To provide new markets for industrial products and the increasing need for raw materials for the sustainability of industrial production, while simultaneously seeking markets to sell these products and paving the way for French investors.
- The desire to control the rich resources of agriculture and mineral

---

<sup>1</sup> It should not be forgotten that one of the most important reasons for Napoleon’s expedition to Egypt was determined as compensation for France after losing its colonies in Canada.

production on the continent is central to the sustainability of large-scale capital investments.

- The use of colonies was an effective way to end the population crisis.
- The desire to employ African workers in France increased in order to invest more capital and transport Africans to European and New World colonies for the purpose of the slave trade. (Dinar, n.d.).

Nevertheless, of course, these reasons were not the ones declared to justify French colonialism, but rather a philosophical and moral framework was presented for the colonial mission. It is also important to recognize the principles of French colonialism or precisely the French Colonial mentality. We can explain the principles on which French colonialism is based as follows:

### **2.1. Civilization Mission**

The French thinkers and the French elite community thought that French culture was pioneering and high. In other words, there was a vibe and feeling of exceptionalism and excellence in France at that time. This feeling of French cultural excellence led to the French see themselves as a superior race and they saw the other nations, including Africans, as inferior races (Ferry, 1884: 199-201). As a result of that national consciousness of cultural excellence, the French adopted the idea of the duty to transfer this civilization to other nations. Accordingly, French colonialism found an important intellectual basis, and this principle was to transfer civilization to other nations. We can see that in the French thinker, statesman, and leading proponent of colonialism, Jules François Camille Ferry's words: "The higher races have a right over the lower races, they have a duty to civilize the inferior races" He called it France's "Mission Civilisatrice" or "civilizing mission (Ferry, 1884: 210-211). This idea, which shaped the core of French colonial ideology, some analysts think it still occupies the minds in France as President Macron declared in 2017, that the problems in Africa are "civilizational." (Rutabingwa, 2017). As a result of that French national consciousness of excellence, being civilized was synonymous with being French. To be more specific the idea of "Mission Civilisatrice" or Civilization Mission started to rise and became a dominant sign of French colonial expansion under the Third Republic (Burrows, 1986: 109)<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, bringing civilization

---

<sup>2</sup>When we look at the French idea of "Mission Civilisatrice," that is, bringing civilization and Catholic Christianity to less civilized peoples, we find that it is very similar to the ideas of the first American pioneers who arrived in North America, such as "Manifest Destiny" idea. As the American pioneers believed that God had chosen this land for them and that expanding it was a sacred mission. For example, the Protestant Father John Cotton says: "When the Lord created us and breathed into us the spirit of life, He gave us the Promised Land (America); As long as we are now in a new land, there must be a new beginning of life in which we work for the glory of this chosen people." In addition to, the American president McAllney decided to go to invade the Philippines in order to "raise their status, civilize them, and convert them to Christianity." Indeed, when President Taft invaded Mexico, he declared, "I must protect my people and their property in Mexico until the Mexican government understands that there is a God in Israel (America) that must obey him." In fact, these

to other societies was synonymous with Francization, and this had a great impact on French colonial methods.

## 2.2. Missionary

Since the medieval, France considered itself the guardian of Catholic Christianity, a view that was evident even in Napoleon's wars. This view was reflected in France's general colonial policy. In fact, it became a sacred duty of the French to bring Christianity to Africa<sup>3</sup> (Efe, 2020). The idea of bringing Catholic Christianity was related to the idea of civilization mission, as civilizing other nations was perceived as turning them into the Catholic faith. The idea that was discussed by the Former Minister of the Navy and the Colonies of France Jean-Baptiste Colbert in his brochure "Sixty Articles Code Noir" was the Christian basis of slavery in French Africa. For example, the first eight articles of that manifesto declare that slaves shouldn't have any religious practice other than Catholic Christianity (Turhan, 2020: 52). The Code's sixty articles, which also known as the Black Code became later the Colonial Ordinance, regulated the life, death, purchase, religion, and treatment of slaves by their masters in all French colonies. It provided that the slaves should be baptized and educated in the Catholic faith (Buchanan, 2011).

## 2.3. French Colonialism and British Colonialism

Historically, there was a great colonial race between England and France in the 18th and 19th centuries; actually, the administrative methods used by the two countries were different from each other because of the difference in the views between the two countries. France, as a colonial power, is completely different from other colonial countries, specifically Britain. The French had a different view of the lands they occupied as they viewed the lands they occupied as a part of the motherland France, which interprets their civilization mission, and why their colonies were subjected to assimilation attempts, the francization policy came also from this point. Thus, the francization of the inhabitants of the colonies was one of the first priorities of the French (Şirin, 2020). French colonial administration is often characterized as more "direct rule" than the British did; traditional authorities were largely ignored (G. Mills, n.d.). To ensure the good exploitation of the colonies, France adopted a certain centric policy in every field and gave great importance to all its administrative, military, economic, and even social and religious aspects. Nevertheless, it shouldn't be ignored that, this policy differed from one colony to another, according to the nature and date of the occupation, and according to other circumstances relating to the geography of the colony and the nature of its people. (Lee - A. Schultz, 2009).

---

views were the moral justifications of the classic colonialism in that period, another example is the British mission of "White Man's Burden". (Mohamed, 2023)

<sup>3</sup> The missionary delegations and schools work was an effective tool for all European colonialists

On the other hand, the British viewed the colonial process from a more expedient and realistic perspective. The British saw their colonies as a warehouse of raw materials and materials. That is why the British did not want to interfere with the indigenous peoples and the internal affairs of these countries, British colonialism in Egypt's case is a clear example of that<sup>4</sup>, contrary to French authorities, which destroyed the institutions, appointed chiefs, and dismissed them at will. The first priority of the British colonialists was to exploit the wealth of this land as much as possible. These methods of the British came from a different opinion, which was that the British believed that their stay in these lands was not eternal and that they would leave in one day. For these reasons, British colonialists granted extensive authority to native and local governments ("Nigerian Scholars", n.d.).

### **3. Study Case: France'S Colonies in North Africa**

#### **3.1. Algeria**

French colonialism has started in 1830, following the famous "Hand Fan Incident"<sup>5</sup>, and continued until the Independence of Algeria in 1962. Generally, Colonial France, with the help of its experts and theorists in various fields, pursued a comprehensive policy aimed at subjugating the land, destroying humanity, and exploiting the wealth in Algeria. Algeria's linguistically, religiously, and ethnically harmonious society has been one of the targets of this policy. Actually, France has tried to disintegrate Algerian society through various policies, ideas, and theories, such as the divide-and-rule policy.

##### **3.1.1. French Administrative and Political Policy in Algeria**

French colonial policy was associated with encouraging European settlement and providing aid to European settlers, with the aim of stabilizing the French presence and continuing the colonial policy. Indeed France from the beginning tied France to Algeria and considered it a French territory. The French administration is divided into two periods or stages.

---

<sup>4</sup>When the British came to Egypt, they recognized both the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire and the sovereignty of the existing palace in Egypt. For example, Lord Dufferin, the British Ambassador in Istanbul in 1883, created The Egyptian Administrative Constitution. Lord Dufferin Report rejected direct rule like a colony and indirect rule through a British representative like that seen in the Princely States in India. In this aspect, Dufferin wrote an interesting sentence: "The Valley of the Nile could not be administered from London as it would arouse the permanent hatred and suspicion of the Egyptians". (Mansfield - Pelham, 2010: 109)

<sup>5</sup>There are many reasons behind France's occupation of Algeria, but the direct reason is known as the hand fan incident as Hussein Pasha, Dey of Algiers, hit the French consul with a hand fan in response to a rude response from the French consul, who said to him: "The King and the people of France will not respond to your letters" when Hussein Pasha asked him about the answer for his letter asking France to pay its wheat's debts to Algeria. (Armaoğlu, 1997: 190)

### Military Regime:

The military regime ruled from the beginning of the 1830 occupation until the end of 1870. This period was marked by military rule, as a military administrator appointed by the Minister of War, governed Algeria. French officers on duty headed the Arab offices. Organizing people, collecting taxes and fines, managing the population, and general authority were under the supervision and control of French officers.

### Civil Regime:

This system started in 1871 with the French Third Republic, which witnessed a boost in colonial studies “sciences coloniales” (Duluçq, 2018: 5)<sup>6</sup>. The aim of which was to colonize in a scientific manner based on a useful study simulating the English experience in India and Egypt. According to the constitution of the Third Republic, legislative authority in Algeria was based on parliamentary decisions but was governed by ministerial decrees. Algerian affairs were included in the French ministries, and the Governor-General implemented the decisions of the French Minister of the Interior. The Constitution of the Second French Republic (1848) recognized Algeria as a French province and divided Algeria into 3 provinces in the north and a military district in the south. One of the most important signs of the period of civil rule of French colonialism in Algeria and in the history of French colonialism in Algeria, in general, is the “Native Law”, which was issued in 1871 at the beginning of the Third Republic, and which was later applied to all French colonies starting from 1889 until 1944 - 1947. Among the most important that the law stipulated was to make the indigenous population of Algeria subservient to the colonizers. The law also resulted in other consequences, namely the ownership of fertile agricultural lands to European colonizers (settlers) who came from France, Italy, Spain, and Malta. This law made Algerians work for landowners according to what is known locally as “the fifth,” which means that the Algerian only takes one-fifth of the produce from the land he serves. Even the movements of Algerians, who came to be called “natives,” became regulated and required licenses from the colonial authorities. (Gabriel, 2021) (Baroudi, 2018)

#### 3.1.2. French Colonial Cultural and Educational Policy in Algeria

Colonial education policy in Algeria was based on three pillars: Francization, Christianization, and assimilation, in order to erase the Algerian national character and strike at its core elements (Islam-Arabism). In order to implement this purpose, the colonial authorities issued a decision on March 23, 1843, to confiscate Islamic endowments throughout Algeria and assign them to the management of French properties (Domain) (Gabriel, 2021). The Colonial administration deliberately

<sup>6</sup> Since the first days of France in Algeria, they promoted local scientific research in line with the cultural and political model of the “bureaux arabes” in Algeria, like the Arab Bureau in Cairo. In the 1840s, these administrative offices included Arabists who were assigned the task of gathering information on the native inhabitants (Duluçq, 2018: 5).

fought Arab and Islamic education, passing a 1904 law that prohibited Algerians from opening a school for Arabic and Qur'an education without permission from the administration, as well as exposing Algerians to the culture of France. French colonialists worked to establish and spread French colonial education to ensure integration into his religion (Makhloufi, 2023: 71). We can summarize the French colonial education in Algeria in some points, which can be generalized for all of Africa:

- A policy based on a clear distinction between European students and Algerian students.
- The colonial character of educational policy.
- Selectivity and social selection.
- Selectivity in enrollment in French education schools.
- Selectivity in school guidance policy (Abish, 2017: 130,131).

### **3.2. Tunisia**

The French occupation of Tunisia came as a result of the colonial fever that struck France after the Franco-Prussian War in 1870, as the French administration wanted to divert attention from Europe after the wound that France suffered at the hands of Germany<sup>7</sup>. Thus, after occupying Algeria, France wanted to expand its colonial empire, so it set its sights on Tunisia. In March 1881, under the pressure of military power, France succeeded in bringing Tunisia under its protection (Ashwaq - Aisha, 2014: 40). Thus, instead of abolishing the existing political system in Tunisia, France placed it at the disposal of the Resident General. France took power away from the Beys and allowed them to rule officially, perhaps following the British style in Egypt.

#### **3.2.1. French Administrative and Political Policy in Tunisia**

The first thing France did in Tunisia was to remove international restrictions. In fact, it tried to liquidate Tunisian debts and return loans to creditors in order to rule Tunisia unilaterally. France also moved to abolish the consular courts that existed before the protectorate (Shabika, 2019: 53). Following this, France established a new administrative system:

##### **General Financial Administration:**

As we mentioned previously, the most important goal of the French protectorate in Tunisia was economic control over Tunisia. Therefore, the Protectorate Authority assumed the responsibility of regulating Tunisian finances and abolishing the International Finance Committee. Thus, a French advisor supervised Tunisian finances. The Protectorate Authorities also abolished the consular courts. (Shabika, 2019: 54)

##### **French Resident General:**

---

<sup>7</sup> All of Europe encouraged France to pursue this colonial policy, including Germany, because France was a large country with a population of 25 million, which was a large number in Europe at that time. Therefore, the European power saw that France's preoccupation with its African expansions would bring peace to the old continent. (Ramzy, 1948: 33).



The French Resident General placed the Bey on the throne on behalf of France under his protection. The Resident General, in his capacity as representative of the French government, exercised all the sovereign powers provided for in the treaties between the Bey and France. (Shabika, 2019: 56)

Secretary General of the Tunisian government:

It was recognized as a body to monitor the affairs of the Tunisian government and included the regional administration, the Shura Council, and the municipalities, but the central authority remained in the hands of the French Resident General. (Shabika, 2019: 58)

### **3.2.2. French Colonial Cultural and Educational Policy in Tunisia**

Education in Tunisia during the French protectorate was a tool of hegemony and control and a complement to other forms of intervention, whether economics, administration, or politics. The educational policy during this period didn't aim to create an educated Tunisian generation, rather its aim was to create a mid-level Tunisian elite that served its current and future interests, so its policy was limited, whether in the field or in the number of students. In summary, education became subject to French systems and French was formalized as the language of education (Shabika, 2019: 88).

## **3.3. Morocco**

French protectorate was imposed on Morocco on 30 March 1912, following the signing of the French Protectorate over Morocco by Sultan Abdul Hafiz, and the period of protectorate continued until Morocco gained its independence in 1956. The French protectorate included the central region of Morocco, controlled by France under the Treaty of Fez, according to which Morocco was divided into three protectorates: the northern region and the desert region under the Spanish protectorate, central Morocco under the French protectorate. The internationally protected city of Tangier between France, England, Germany and Spain. (Miller , 2013: 74)

### **3.3.1. French Administrative and Political Policy in Morocco**

France attempted to rule Morocco indirectly through traditional authority, keeping it in its functions, as it had done in Tunisia as the Makhzen state, headed by the Sultan, was preserved and reorganized. The Resident General was the chairman of this authority, which transferred power to the French. The new administrative and political control enabled the establishment of a legal framework that would facilitate economic colonialism, which was considered the ultimate goal of the protection system. (no author, 2004)

### **3.3.2. French Social and Cultural Policy in Morocco**

At the beginning of the occupation, Protectorate officials brought social transformation, but they were slow, however, their social transformation policy accelerated after three decades of occupation of Morocco, which led to the rise of a new country and a new society. Demographically, Morocco has witnessed a significant increase in the number of foreigners, creating a lucky few who dominate the economy and administration. Among the most important social transformations are changes in the field of education. As a matter of fact, there have been radical changes in the level of structures and goals of education. The education provided to Moroccans by the French protectorate was part of a policy complementary to the military intervention and was one of the tools that facilitated the exploitation of Morocco's wealth.

### **3.4. Mauritania**

Mauritania has been exposed to colonial action since the fourteenth century, following the political disintegration of the Maghreb, and since the late fifteenth century, during the period of geographical discovery, through occupation and exploration by the European powers of Spain, Portugal, England, the Netherlands, Belgium, and France. The French occupation in Mauritania, which started in 1902, had a different perspective than its existence in other Maghreb countries, which, is proved in the Coppelani Committee. The committee stated in March 1902 that the Mauritians were based on their cultural, intellectual, and moral level, religion, primitive traditions, and social status, as well as on the fact that the Mauritians had surpassed North Africa and the civilization of the ancestors of the Europeans in the middle ages. He presented a report explaining that they had a high civilization. According to this report, the committee recommended a peaceful and gradual occupation (Abbas, 2015: 56).

#### **3.4.1. Outlines of France's Political and Administrative Policy in Mauritania**

The French policy was designed based on Coppelani's recommendations, and we can summarize this program as follows:

- To respect the local social order prevailing in Mauritania.
- Implementation of the divide-and-rule policy among families competing and fighting for the leadership of Mauritania.
- Sending military campaigns to deter resistance groups.
- Consume the active social forces in society.
- Coppelani established a style of indirect rule and administration through the chiefs of major tribes such as Trazra, Brakna, and other Mauritanian tribes. (Abbas, 2015: 57)

### **3.4.2. Outlines of France's Educational and Cultural Policy in Mauritania**

French authorities in Mauritania had made tremendous efforts to open schools since the beginning of the occupation. At the same time, French authorities were only taking in little from the children of Mauritians due to many obstacles, including the opposition of the ulema to French education, the spread of Qur'an schools, and the view that foreign education was contrary to Islamic law. French cultural policy was based on three principles:

- Urbanization.
- Francization.
- Selectivity. (Abbas, 2015: 72,73)

## **4. France's Colonial Methods**

After examining one important study case for the French colonialism in Africa. We can deduce some important generalizations about whole Africa.

### **4.1. Assimilation and Francization**

After the French Revolution, the French character gained significant self-belief, and this actor was reflected in the French colonies. Indeed, the policy of assimilation as an approach had its origins in the French Revolution – equality, fraternity, and freedom should apply to all who are French. The first beneficiaries of this principle were the inhabitants of the cantons of Saint-Louis in Senegal in the 1790s. Assimilation was based on the assumption of the superiority of French culture and civilization. As part of France's "civilizing mission", when "barbarian" people were encountered, it was France's duty to civilize them and convert them into French. The French assimilation policy also rejected African culture, believing it to be non-existent or at least worthless. Rather, African society was seen as largely in a state of war and flux, without history or civilization. (Thomas, 2011: 15).

### **4.2. Education Policy**

One method linked to assimilation attempts is the French education policy. The French were trying to cultivate French culture and language wherever they went. In fact, the education policy established by the French occupation administration in Africa is the most distinctive feature of the French general policy, and another issue that reflects the philosophy of French colonialism is to subjugate the peoples and eliminate their components and social existence (Moradi - Cogneau, 2014).

#### **4.2.1. Features of French Education Policy in Africa**

- A clear distinction between European students and African students:

At a time when European schools were preparing their students for further education subjects to qualify them for scientific expertise, the schools that France created for Africans were more like literacy schools, in that they worked to prepare Africans to do marginal work, whether in the administration or in factories, and to do what the settlers commanded.

- *Colonial character of education policy:*

Especially in terms of language, French was the language of official education in the schools established by the French, and French was already used as the official language in all institutions. Language policy was one of the most important and unique features of French colonialism. Until today, French language policy is one of the current and critical problems in Africa, and this assimilation language policy of France is an important feature of post-colonialism and neo-colonialism.

- *Selectivity and social selection:*

A selective membership in French educational schools as the French administration did not allow all members of African communities to be admitted to its schools, only those who showed goodwill against the French occupation were accepted. (Abish, 2017: 130)

- *Aims of French Education Policy in Africa*

Subjugation and Control of African society. To bring the African society to full integration and assimilation. An economic goal represented in meeting the demands of the French market. The division of African societies. Francization of African societies. (Abish, 2017: 132)

### **4.3. Religious Policy**

The region includes Algeria and Tunisia, from today's Morocco state, where French Catholics carried out missionary activities, to the Tripoli State of the Ottoman Empire. Catholic missionaries there were expanding their areas of activity from north to south. Missionary activities aimed not only at Christianization but also at creating societies devoted to the service and satisfaction of white people in order to be good Christians. Thus, religious legitimacy was provided for the "master" status of white people. Language and cultural policy carried out together with missionary activities also constitute an important link of colonial activities. French colonial religious policy took a tougher stance in North Africa, especially in Algeria, where French colonialism fought the Islamic cultural resistance movement, such as the resistance movements led by Emir Abdelkader Aljazairi and Sheikh Abdelhamid Badis, which were based primarily on the concept of jihad. France implemented a religious policy that combined intimidation and provocation in order to Christianize Algerian Muslims. Mosques were converted into medical and administrative centres and stables, and

some were converted into churches. France also destroyed some large mosques, such as the mosque in the city of Algiers. France confiscated the assets of the Islamic foundations and also exiled and deported dissident imams and scholars such as Judge Muhammad bin Mahmud al-Annabi, Judge al-Maliki Abdel Aziz, and Mufti Mustafa Al-Kabbati. French colonial authority worked to encourage and facilitate the activities of missionaries and missionaries, such as the Jesuits and the White Fathers' Society (Bin Aida, 2008: 34).

#### **4.4. French Colonial Administrative Methods**

French colonialism is famous for its brutal methods, and those methods tell us about the pain experienced by France in Africa. France has also committed major human rights violations in countries where it has political influence. Generally, African societies were divided into 'cantons' (districts). Chiefs who were insufficiently efficient or non-subservient were often deposed and replaced, with little regard for traditional and indigenous status. The French colonizer divided the inhabitants of the colonies into two categories: 'Citoyen' and 'Sujet'. Indeed, a dual legal system was established: French law for whites, métis, Africans in Saint-Louis, and the few Africans naturalized as 'Citoyens' in West Africa. On the other hand, "Subjects", the Africans were subjected to a system called justice indigène (G. Mills, n.d.). As for working conditions, Africans had to provide labor, often had to migrate long distances for little money, and working conditions were often very poor as significant numbers of men died and families and local communities were disturbed. The taxation system was used by colonial administrations not only to generate revenue but as an important tool to achieve their goals: such as encouraging Africans to collect natural materials for export and forcing large numbers of Africans to provide labour. ("Coursehero", n.d.).

#### **Conclusion**

When we look in general at colonialism history, we must say that French Colonialism is unique, as on one hand, the traces of French colonialism continue until today, and we can easily notice France's strong relations with its former colonies and the great influence of France on its former colonies, especially in the countries in West Africa. For instance, even the currencies of some French former colonial countries are subject to the French Franc, and their gold reserves are even kept in the French Central Bank. On the other hand, France's ongoing cultural and political relations with its former colonies today bring to mind the question of how independent these countries are from France, especially when we notice France's role in many political change processes whether elections or coups in those countries. Thus, the question of the former French colonies was always a cornerstone of Post-Colonialism studies. By a detailed look at French colonial policy in North Africa, it's noticeable that French colonial policy there was pretty different from French

colonial policy in West Africa or sub-Sahara Africa, with an exception in Algeria of course. This is due to the difference in the demographic and cultural nature of that region from all of Africa, on the one hand, this region witnessed the concept of the state many centuries ago before colonialism. On the other hand, the Islamic heritage and the Arabic language were strong obstacles to Francization policies. Consequently, France in this region preferred to follow an indirect, orientalist colonial method by maintaining the existing authority and ruling through it.

As for the Algerian exception, compared to the situation in Algeria, French colonialism followed a softer attitude in Tunisia, Morocco, and Mauritania, because France did not want to relive and provoke the resistance and problems it encountered in Algeria, therefore it followed a more reasonable and indirect policy. There were many reasons for the French violent colonial policy in France. Firstly, Algeria's stubborn resistance from the first days led to aggressive reactions by France. Secondly, France's lack of experience in the colonial aspect, as Algeria was one of its first colonies, so when we compare to its policy in Tunisia, Morocco, and Mauritania we may find that France had gained a lot of experience in dealing with Muslim societies due to its gained experience in Algeria. From another perspective, France had benefitted from the British experience in Egypt, in its applications in Tunisia, Morocco, and Mauritania.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- “Coursehero”. (n.d.). France in Africa. Retrieved from [www.coursehero.com/Boundless-World-History \(The Scramble for Africa\): https://www.coursehero.com/study-guides/boundless-worldhistory/france-in-africa/](http://www.coursehero.com/Boundless-World-History-(The-Scramble-for-Africa):-https://www.coursehero.com/study-guides/boundless-worldhistory/france-in-africa/) (Accessed 18.11.2023)
- “Nigerian Scholars”. (n.d.). [nigerianscholars.com](http://nigerianscholars.com). Retrieved November 11, 2023, from West-African Colonial Administration » Summary of West-African Colonial Administration (Comparison of British and French Colonial Administrations): <https://nigerianscholars.com/tutorials/west-african-colonial-administration/comparison-of-british-and-french-colonial-administrations/> (Accessed 15.11.2023)
- ABBAS, Afaf (2015), *اينات يروم يف يس نرفلا رامعتسالا 1903-1960*. French colonization in Mauritania 1903-1960. Master Thesis. Biskra, Biskra, Algeria: Muhammad Kheidar University.
- ABISH, Samir (2017, September), *ةيس نرفلا ةيميلعتلا ةسايسلا صئاصخو فادهأ*. Objectives and characteristics of French educational policy in Algeria. *Journal of Social Studies and Research*, pp. 128-135.

- ARMAOĞLU, Fahir (1997), 19. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarih (The 19. Century Political History). Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi.
- ASHWAQ, Bin & AISHA, Khatari (2014), ين اطي ربل او يس نر فل ايرام عتس ال ا عس و ت لا ، ا ل a ب ر ع ي ف French and British colonial expansion in West Africa during the nineteenth century. Master`s Thesis. Algeria: African University Ahmed Draya - Adrar.
- BAROUDI, Abdul Salam (2018, June 14), ي ل ا ه ا ل ا ن و ن ا ق ، ن ي ح . ر ا م ع ت س ال ' ب ق ا ع ' ن ي ح ا ل ب ن ي ي ر ئ ا ز ج ل ا ل ا ل ا ل a م ك ا ح م The Native Law... when colonialism 'punished' Algerians without trial. Retrieved from maghreboices.com: <https://www.maghrebvoices.com/a/441828.html> (Accessed 19.10.2023)
- ADIDA, Bin & MAJEED, Abdul (2008), ر ئ ا ز ج ل ا ي ف ي و ض ن ن ل ا ب ا ط خ ل ا ، ( ١٩٢٥ - ١٩٥٤ ) Renaissance discourse in Algeria (1925 - 1954). Doctorate Thesis. Algiers, Algeria: Algeria University, Department of History.
- BUCHANAN, Kelly (2011, January 13), Slavery in the French Colonies: Le Code Noir (the Black Code) of 1685. Retrieved from Library of Congress: <https://blogs.loc.gov/law/2011/01/slavery-in-the-french-colonies/#:~:text=The%20Code's%20sixty%20articles%20regulated,on%20Sundays%20and%20religious%20holidays> (Accessed 28.10.2023)
- BURROWS, Mathew (1986), 'Mission Civilisatrice': French Cultural Policy in the Middle East, 1860–1914. *The Historical Journal*, 29(1), 109 - 135.
- DINAR, Ali (no date), French in West Africa. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania - African Studies Center. Retrieved from [https://www.africa.upenn.edu/K-12/French\\_16178.html](https://www.africa.upenn.edu/K-12/French_16178.html) (Accessed 23.10.2023)
- DULUCQ, Sophie (2018, October), Writing African History in France during the Colonial. Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History, pp. 1-25.
- EFE, Mustafa (2020), Afrika'da Fransa kâbusu – I: Tarihsel arkaplan (France's nightmare in Africa – I: Historical background). Ankara: Anadolu Ajansı. Retrieved from <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/analiz/afrika-da-fransa-k%C3%A2busu-i-tarihsel-arkaplan/1725259> (Accessed at: 03.12.2023)
- MILLS, Wallace G. (n.d.). French Colonial Policies (French Approaches in Colonial Policy). In W. G. Mills, *History 317.2 Africa in the Twentieth Century* (class notes). Saint Mary's University. Retrieved from <http://smu-facweb.smu.ca/~wmills/course317/his317.html> (Accessed 24.11.2023)

- JIBRIL, Hassan. (2021), 132 years of colonialism.. This is how France plundered Algeria's resources. Istanbul: Anadolu Ajansi (AA).
- HARGREAVES, Alec G. (2005), Memory, Empire, and Postcolonialism: Legacies of French Colonialism. Lanham, Maryland, USA: Lexington Books.
- LEE, Alexander, A. SCHULTZ, Kenneth (2009), Comparing British and French Colonial Legacies. Los Angeles: University of California.
- MAKHLOUFI, Jamal (2023), Fighting French Colonialism and Free Arab Education in the Chlef Basin Between 1956-1931. Academy for Social and Human Studies, 15(1), pp. 71-80.
- MANSFIELD, Peter & PELHAM, Nicholas (2010), A History of the Middle East (4th ed.). London, UK: Penguin Books.
- MILLER, Susan (2013), A History of Modern Morocco. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- MOHAMED, Sakhri (2023, May 1), The Religious Dimension in American Foreign Policy. Retrieved from Alentesharnews-paper.com/: <https://alentesharnewspaper.com/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%B9%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%8A%D> (Accessed 01.12.2023)
- MORADI, Alexander & COGNEAU, Denis. (2014, May 7), British and French educational legacies in Africa. Retrieved from cepr.org: <https://cepr.org/voxeu/columns/british-and-french-educational-legacies-africa#:~:text=French%20ideology%20aimed%20at%20assimilation,the%20only%20language%20of%20instruction> (Accessed 14.12.2023)
- No author. (2004, October 3), French military rule in Morocco...colonialism and its effects. Retrieved from aljazeera.net/: <https://www.aljazeera.net/knowledgegate/2004/10/3/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%85-> (Accessed 27.10.2023)
- RAMZY, A. (1948), French colonization in North Africa. Cairo: Almatbaeat Alnamudhaja.
- RUTABINGWA, Vivianne (2017, July 11), Macron Got A Lot Wrong About Africa ... But Made One Good Point. Retrieved from NPR.org (Goats and Soda): <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2017/07/11/536445457/macron-got-a-lot-wrong-about-africa-but-made-one-good-point#:~:text=In%201884%2C%20a%20French%20statesman,at%20the%20core%20of%20French> (Accessed 22.11.2023)



- SHABIKA, Fatiha (2019), *سياسة فرنسا في تونس (1880 - 1920)* (French policy in Tunisia and its social effects (1880 - 1920)). Master Thesis. Al-Masila, Algeria: Mohamed Boudiaf University.
- ŞİRİN, Bekir (2020), *Fransa'nın üç ayaklı sömürü sistemi; Dil, eğitim ve frank* (France's three-legged system of exploitation; Language, education and the franc). Ankara: Milli Gazete. Retrieved from <https://www.milligazete.com.tr/haber/5678403/fransanin-uc-ayakli-somuru-sistemi-dil-e-gitim-ve-frank> (Accessed 21.10.2023)
- THOMAS, Martin (2011), *Introduction: Mapping the French Colonial Mind*. In M. Thomas, *The French Colonial Mind* (Vol. 1, pp. 1-47). Nebraska: University of Lincoln. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1075&context=unpresssamples> (Accessed 13.11.2023)
- TIGNOR, Robert (2005), *Preface to Colonialism: a theoretical overview*. Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Markus Weiner Publishers.
- TURHAN, Yunus (2020, December), *Fransa'nın Afrika Politikası: Değişim ve Süreklilik* (France's African Policy: Change and Continuity). *Dünya Siyasetinde Afrika*, 6, 51-80.
- UYGUR, Fatma ve UYGUR, Erdoğan (2014), *Fransız Sömürgecilik Tarihi Üzerine Bir Araştırma* (A Research on the History of French Colonialism). *Türkiye Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 173(173), 273-286.

