

The journalistic status of Ahmed Reda Houhou through his articles Al-Shuala newspaper "Anmudha"



Latreche Hanene

"University of Amir Abdelkader for Islamic Sciences ,Faculty of Arts and Islamic Civilization."Latreche25hanene@gmail.com

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Résumé :

L'objectif De Cette Etude Est De Mettre En Lumière La Place De Reda Houhou Dans Le Journalisme A Travers Ses Articles Dans *Al-Basa'ir* Et *Al-Shu'ala*, En Soulignant Les Principales Questions Qu'il A Abordées Et L'objectif De Ses Ecrits, Qui Etait De Critiquer La Politique Française Et De Guider Ultérieurement La Politique Algérienne. En Tant Que L'une Des Figures Intellectuelles Algériennes Contemporaines, Reda Houhou A Joué Un Rôle Important Dans La Résistance Au Colonialisme Français. À Travers Ses Ecrits Dans *Al-Basa'ir* Et *Al-Shu'ala* Pendant Les Années 1950 Et 1951, Il A Lutté Contre Toutes Les Formes De Soumission A L'occupation. Ce Faisant, Il A Tracé Un Repère De Résistance Culturelle Dans Tous Les Lieux Où Il Est Intervenu. En Utilisant La Méthode Historique Et Analytique, Nous Visons A Dégager Les Diverses Questions Abordées Par Reda Houhou, Mettant En Avant Sa Position Sur Les Politiques Coloniales, Ce Qui Lui A Permis De S'imposer Comme Une Figure De Renom En Algérie Et A L'étranger Avant Et Après L'indépendance De l'Algérie.

Mots-Clés : Ahmed Reda Houhou, Journal *Al-Shu'ala*, Sa Place Dans Le Journalisme.

Abstract:

The Aim Of This Study Is To Reveal The Journalistic Status Of Reda Houhou Through His Articles In *Al-Basa'ir* And *Al-Shu'ala*, Highlighting The Main Issues He Focused On And The Objective Of His Writings, Which Was To Critique French Policies And Later Guide Algerian Politics. As One Of The Prominent Contemporary Algerian Intellectuals, Reda Houhou Played A Significant Role In Resisting French Colonialism. Through His Writings In *Al-Basa'ir* And *Al-Shu'ala* During The Years 1950 And 1951, He Fought Against All Forms Of Submission To The Occupation. In Doing So, He Created A Landmark Of Cultural Resistance In Every Place He Visited. Using The Historical And Analytical Method, We Aim To Deduce The Various Issues Discussed By Reda Houhou, Emphasizing His Stance On Colonial Policies, Which Earned Him A Prestigious Position In Algeria And Abroad Before And After Algeria's Independence.

Keywords: Ahmed Reda Houhou, *Al-Shu'ala* Newspaper, His Journalistic Status.

Introduction :

How Beautiful Algeria Is With Its Men, How Wonderful It Is With Its Pens And Intellectuals, And How Great It Is With Its Heroes Who Are As Tall As Mountains And As Humble As Prophets. It Is Algeria, The Creator Of The Mujahideen Martyrs, The Creator Of The Victory That Has Become Algerian Signatures That Are Ratified In All The Fighting Countries And By Algeria's Men And Writers. A Liberation Man Who Left Golden Letters... He Is The Martyr Writer Ahmed Reda Houhou

Ahmed Reda Houhou Published Many Journalistic Articles That He Wrote And Published In Many Newspapers, Both Inside And Outside Algeria

What Are The Reasons For Ahmed Reda Houhou's Journalistic Writing?

What Are The Most Prominent Topics He Addressed In His Articles And Writings?

1-Birth and Early Life of Ahmed Reda Houhou:

Ahmed Reda Houhou, a prominent figure in Algerian literature, was known for his opposition to French colonialism and his advocacy for resistance against the occupiers. He was born on December 15, 1910, (Mouloud Ouyemir, Al-Basa'ir)2023)in the village of Sidi Okba in Biskra Province. He began his education at the age of six when he enrolled in primary school, thanks to his father. He completed his primary education in 1928 but was unable to continue his secondary studies due to the restrictive policies imposed by the French colonizers. (Mohamed Saleh Ramadan, 1984, pp. 8-11))

Houhou worked briefly in the postal service before emigrating to the Hejaz region. His father, Sheikh al-Hajj Muhammad Houhou, was a respected leader known as the "Sheikh of the Tribe." He passed away and was buried in Mecca at the Al-Ula cemetery; may God rest his soul.

The reason for Ahmed Reda Houhou's migration to the Hejaz, according to Professor Osama Houhou, was due to harassment by Bashagha Ben Qana, who accused him of opposing the interests of the French state. At that time, Ahmed Reda Houhou was 25 years old, in 1935. After arriving in the Hejaz, he enrolled in the College of Sharia in Medina, where he excelled in his studies and graduated in 1938 with the highest honors, qualifying him to work at the college. (Mohamed Saleh Ramadan, 1984, pp. 8-13)) He was later appointed editor-in-chief of the "Al-Manhal" magazine for two years. Subsequently,(Mouloud Ouyemir, Al-Basa'ir, 2023) he moved to Mecca and worked in the Telephone and Telegraph Department.

In 1946, following the death of his parents, Houhou returned to Algeria and joined the Association of Algerian Muslim Scholars, becoming an active member. In the same year, he was appointed director of the "Education and Teaching" school founded by Sheikh Ibn Badis, a position he held for nearly two years. He was later assigned to manage the "Al-Tahteeb" school in Shattouta, in the municipality of Chelghoum Laïd, about 50 kilometers from Constantine. However, his tenure there was brief, and he returned to Constantine to take up the role of general secretary at the Ibn Badis Institute.(MOhamed Saleh Ramadan, 1984, pp. 14-15)

On September 25, 1946, his first article titled "Confused Thoughts" was published in the "Al-Basa'ir" newspaper after its reissuance. In 1948, he was elected a member of the Administrative Council of the Association of Algerian Muslim Scholars. In May 1949, he represented Algeria at the International Peace Conference in Paris. On October 27 of the same year, he established the "Constantine Appearance" Association, through which he showcased his plays such as "The Miser," "The Rose Seller," and "The Queen of Granada."

In addition to his contributions to theater, Houhou wrote short stories like "The Last Writer," "Ghada Umm al-Qura," "The Son of the Valley," and "With the Wise Donkey," solidifying his status as a pioneer of short story writing in Algeria. He also translated numerous literary works from French. In 1955, he published a collection of short stories titled "Human Models," further cementing his legacy in Algerian literature

2- Second- His hobbies and activities

Ahmed Reda Houhou was a man of diverse talents and interests. He played football as a goalkeeper and participated in car racing. He also had a passion for bookbinding, performing magic tricks, and theatrical acting.

He took part in notable plays such as "Pharaoh of the Arabs," performed in a café under the auspices of the "Al-Uqabi Youth Cultural Association," where he served as secretary, and "Bilal," staged in Biskra.

Despite his extensive exposure to French culture, Houhou chose to write in Arabic. In a letter sent from France in 1946, he expressed his sentiments towards Paris by stating, "Paris is not loved these days." In 1955, his Tunisian colleague, Abu Al-Qasim Karro, requested a copy of his manuscript "Human Models," highlighting Houhou's significant influence on Algerian literature and his dedication to the Arabic language. (Professor Osama Houhou in his talk to *El Messa* about Ahmed Reda Houhou, the martyr writer, published in *El Messa* on 31-01-2010)

3- Third - his death: Ahmed Reda Houhou was arrested by French police on March 29, 1956, accused of allegedly inciting resistance against the colonizers, following his arrest ;he was threatened with encution. Houhou was taken from his home at six o'clock in the evening and initially detained in Al-Keddia prison, He was later transferred to Jebel El-Wahsh ,overlooking the city of Constantine, where he was executed . After Algeria gained independence, his body was discovered alongside eight other in mass grave in Wadi Hmeimeen, His remains were Subsequently reburied with honor in the Martyrs' Cemetery in Kharoub. "Ahmed Reda Houhou" stands as a martyr of the Algerian struggle, embodying the strength of both words and the fight for the national liberation.

-(Youssef Kanfoud. Volume 5, Issue 1, June 2021, p. 278)

4- Reda Houhou's journalistic activity .:

Ahmed Reda Houhou was a prominent Algerian writer and journalist, born in 1910 in Sidi Okba, near Biskra. He was actively involved with the Algerian Muslim Scholars Association (Association des Oulémas), contributing to its reformist movement. His journalistic career began with his first article published in *Al-Basair* on September 17, 1937, while studying at the School of Sharia Sciences in Medina. In this article, he praised the Al-Uqabi Youth Association for its patriotism and dedication to noble principles. He also wrote an anthem titled "The Al-Uqabi Youth Association Enthusiastic Anthem," published in *Al-Basair* on July 16, 1937, expressing his admiration for the youth of Sidi Okba. Despite being forced to leave Sidi Okba in 1934, he cherished its memory deeply.

During the 1940s and 1950s, Houhou contributed extensively to *Al-Basair*, writing about literary criticism, political issues, intellectual debates, and biographies. He authored a series of articles highlighting six professors from the Ibn Badis Institute, offering readers fresh insights into the humanity of these scholars known for their academic rigor. His conviction in these principles remained steadfast, growing stronger over the years.

In addition to his contributions in Algeria, Houhou also published articles in Tunisia's *Al-Sabah* newspaper and contributed to the Hejaz-based *Al-Manhal* magazine(Saleh Al-Kharfi, Dar Al-Gharb1992.), founded by Professor Abdul Quddous Al-Ansari. The late Algerian poet Saleh Kharfi compiled many of Reda Houhou's remaining works in a book titled "The Martyr of the Algerian Revolution, Ahmed Reda Houhou in the Hijaz," published by the Islamic West House. This collection chronicles his journey from Sidi Okba to the Hijaz(Professor Osama Houhou published in *El Messa* on 31-01-2010)

5-Ahmed Reda Houhou's literary thought through his

articles:

Perseving the legacy of a writer who dedicated his life to the unity of thought ,religion and homland, Are there writers in Algeria?

According to Professor Houhou, literature represents: "the authentic expression of an individual's emotion touts imagination and inner reflections person's feelings, thoughts, fantasies, and inner thoughts." It indicates "the advancement and progress of every nation and the spiritual appearance of every people... Arts and literature serue as the true measure of a nation "s conditions and the precise indicator of their humanity "s strength affection, and sublimity." Who is the writer? A writer is someone who transforms literature a spiritual language addressing emotion in an honest and precise manner."

He conveys his inner emotion and portrays a vivid image of his expresses his imagination and perceptions. Without taking into account the discontent of this person or the satisfaction of that person. The writer is the one who can reach the depths of souls and analyze them and the subtleties of things and depict them.

The writer, as described by Ahmed Reda Houhou, is an ideal creature, and he is more like a king than a son of Adam, as he burns in order to spread light, and suffers in order to make others happy. This creative person "takes pleasure and delights at the expense of himself and his health. He carves his pleasure from his mind and body. He finds pleasure in the colors of torment, and he also finds joy in the forms of misery. Rather, he finds in these pains that he suffers and these tragedies in which he lives a beacon that illuminates his thinking and reveals to him the falsity and deceit of life. "

He also stressed in many of his articles that the literary profession is always connected to misery, danger, and denial. This is because God has decreed that “literature and the arts will have fame, greatness, and immortality in this world as much as He has decreed misery, misery, and denial for those who engage in them.”

Are there writers in Algeria? He believes that there is no writer in Algeria who matches his previous definition. Rather, there are those working with literature and talents who need guidance and encouragement. Algerian writers, poets and artists are ““They are raw materials in need of industry and refinement.” Or in other words, the Algerian writer is “good seeds latent in good soil that need irrigation and care to germinate, grow, and bear fruit.” So what is the solution? Arabic literature is in need of guidance and a transition from the literary article to the creation of story literature because the literary story is “broader in scope, more general in scope, and more impactful than essay literature.” The first step in the path of this new construction begins in the school, where the teacher must take care to “strengthen the students’ awareness of rhetoric, writing, and acting.”(*Al-Basa’ir*, Issue 90, September 5, 1949)

Satisfying all readers is an unattainable goal Houhou wrote a series of articles in *Al-Basair* newspaper entitled “The Wise’s Donkey.” He began it in January 1949 with an article entitled: “An Hour with the Wise’s Donkey,” in which he talked about his delicious reading and enjoyable reading of the book “My Donkey Told Me” by the Egyptian writer Tawfiq Al-Hakim. (“*Al-Basa’ir*, Issue 87, 18 July 1949.)

Then he stopped writing until readers wondered about him and worried about him, so Sheikh Abdul Rahman Shaiban - his friend and colleague at the Abdul Hamid Bin Badis Institute - wrote an article in *Al-Basa’ir*, asking: “Where is Al-Hakim’s donkey?”(*Al-Basa’ir*, Issue 87, July 18, 1949) Which accustoms its readers to important topics in various arts in a funny and attractive manner. He urged him to return to writing and continue the struggle with the word. After two and a half months, Ahmed Reda Houhou responded to Sheikh Shaiban’s advice and announced the return of Himar al-Hakim with his usual frankness and boldness, but he did not provide the reasons that prevented him from writing during that period. Despite his declared determination, Houhou did not write what he promised. After a short period, his contribution appeared, which consisted of responses to readers’ letters and not an article on the expected topic.

He then resumes his famous series in four episodes, then publishes the mail of the wise donkey in two episodes.

He received many letters from admirers and disaffected people. Perhaps the strangest of them is represented by the long letter in which its owner, Ahmed Reda Houhou, was accused of dirtying Al-Basair newspaper because it is a respectable religious newspaper and has nothing to do with talking about the donkey and its species. Another correspondent said that he feared that this reformist newspaper would become a zoo, or turn into a book on zoology!

Professor Ahmed Reda Houhou did not express concern about these harsh criticisms, but he was affected by some of them. Perhaps this is what discouraged him from continuing to write on this topic or on other topics for a long time!

The last literary ambition

On 3February, 1956, Professor Ahmed Reda Houhou announced in Al-Basair newspaper a huge and ambitious cultural project under the title: "The Present of Culture and Literature in Algeria." In this context, he corresponded with many intellectuals and scholars in order to submit their CVs to him and send him copies of their books or manuscripts.

He is considered the second Algerian writer to complete a literary work of this type. The first is Muhammad al-Hadi al-Senussi, author of the book "Poets of Algeria in the Present Era." With it, he saved a valuable treasure of modern Algerian poetry.

As for Professor Houhou, he was unable to write his desired book, as he was martyred under colonial torture a month and a half after announcing this noble cultural project. May God have mercy on him, and grant him sincere researchers who will collect his heritage, study his effects, and fulfill his final literary ambition

6 - Ahmed Reda Houhou thought about the permissibility of books and his writings

The text discusses the thought and literary contributions of the Algerian writer Ahmed Reda Houhou, who was known for his clear stance against colonialism and his honest approach to addressing social and intellectual issues. His major writings and articles reflect his support for modern Islamic reformist thought and his progressive view of society.

His first significant work, "The Methods in the Service of Colonialism", showcased his analytical and writing talents, as well as his alignment with reformist Islamic ideas. He also presented an extensive review of the book by Muslim orientalist Nasreddine Diné, who admired the beauty of the Algerian desert. Houhou became known for his article "Observations of a Muslim Orientalist on Some of the Orientalists' Opinions and Their Books about Islam."

His most notable literary works include:

- "Ghada Umm Al-Qura" (1947): A story about women in the Arabian Peninsula.
- "With Al-Hakim's Donkey" (1953): Satirical essays influenced by Tawfiq Al-Hakim.
- "Her Revelation" (1954): Emotional, traditionally styled stories.
- "Human Models" (1955): Socially themed short stories.

It was reported that many of his manuscripts were lost or stolen, including eight plays and a bound volume of the *Al-Shu'la* newspaper. Another lost work was his book "On Literature and Sociology", written during his time in the Hijaz. A small unpublished booklet titled "Ten Years in the Hijaz 1935–1946" was also found, documenting his experiences in the region. (Osama Houhou published in *El Messa* on 31-01-2010) .

7- His political activity:

Ahmed Reda Houhou's contributions extended beyond literature and journalism to the political sphere. He participated in the First International Peace Conference, held in Paris from April 20 to 25, 1949.

The conference was chaired by Frédéric Joliot-Curie, and notable attendees included Louis Aragon (France), Pablo Picasso (Spain), Alexander Fadeyev (Soviet Union), Petronini (Italy), Ahmed Reda Houhou, and Andrei Mandos (Algeria).

The central theme of the conference was "Combating the arms race and the nuclear threat to the world."

Houhou represented Algeria and delivered the **official Algerian speech in Arabic**, expressing greetings on behalf of all Algerians—Muslims and Europeans, men and women, young and old.

He emphasized the importance of unity and peace, portraying war as a deadly beast that must be defeated. According to Professor Osama Houhou, Ahmed Reda Houhou was saddened that some Arab delegations chose not to speak in Arabic at the event, while he proudly did. (Osama Houhou published in *El Messa* on 31-01-2010)

8 - The issues addressed by Reda Houhou through Al-Shuala newspaper:

The newspaper Al-Shouala, which he founded and ran himself, contained many articles, especially satirical articles aimed at conveying the reality of the suffering of Algerians.

Through the articles he wrote in Al-Shouala newspaper, he highlights the issues that Algerian society experienced during colonialism, especially the issues that emerged during his life and his views on them, whether through ordinary articles or through the sarcastic style that he conveyed through his literary writings.

1- Introduction to Al-Shuala newspaper

Mohamed Nasser defined it in his book *The History of the Algerian Press* as a week of struggle and criticism supervising the Bushmal administration, the privileged owner, Sadiq Hamani, the editor-in-chief, Ahmed Reda Houhou. It was issued in Constantine, 15 December, 1949. Its direction is national reformist, concerned with political and cultural issues, concerned with social and cultural figures, under the column "In the Balance."

A corner for popular poetry, "Under the Whips We Sing," continued to be published until February 1951, issuing about 54 issues (Muhammad Nasser 2015, p. 72),

2-His struggle and thought through Al-Shuala newspaper:

- He wrote in its first issue, issued on Thursday, December 15, 1949: that Al-Shu'la newspaper's first goal would be to expose all the enemies and plotters of the "children of the forbidden," as he called them, so that they could purge the country of them. We find in his article an awareness of the political situation, and he stated through his article that the Parliament The traitor and scholar who uses his knowledge to serve colonialism The treacherous and political spy who competes for positions and is negligent in serving the nation is more

dangerous than the colonizer himself. We usually find him using broad terms such as the nation and not Algeria (Mouloud Ouyemir, Al-Basa'ir, 2023) . This may be to show the extent of his unlimited belonging to Algeria and that it is part of the Islamic and human world as a whole. The newspaper's goal is to expose all of these.

As for the second issue, issued on Thursday, December 22, 1949, he spoke about the representatives and what Issa bin Salem had done, as well as about Jamal Dardour and Al-Amin Dabbaghin with their resignation from Parliament after they had succeeded in the elections on behalf of their parties. He advised them that it would not be easy for them to give up their seats. Parliament, especially because of the privileges they may obtain for the nation through it, and that they have the right to abandon subordination to parties, but they must take to the streets to show the nation that. If they are re-selected, they must defend the nation, and this shows the extent of Ahmed Reda's awareness of exercising the parliamentary right to bring rights and advocates for them. It can also be said that he laid the foundations that a parliamentarian must have, including conscience, honor, and dignity, in addition to patriotism.

The second issue also contained an incident that occurred in Constantine. He even mentioned the date, and this shows the extent of his knowledge of November 23, 1949 AD. At 11 o'clock in Bazit, through which he conveys the tragedy that the Algerians are suffering from. In addition to poverty, homelessness in the mountains, and the practice of various jobs in order to earn food, he also pointed out that agriculture and livestock raising were only for the sake of earning daily food. However, they were not spared from persecution by the agents of France, whoever he explains. Mr. Zaitout bin Salim A deputy in the municipal council who, along with a group of police, arrested the street vendors, shows through this incident that these representatives are more dangerous than the colonizer in and of themselves, and that their danger is greater than the danger of the colonizer, and we notice every time they destroy him from their intentions and actions.

- In the tenth issue, for example, issued on Thursday, February 16, 1950, he spoke in an article entitled "The Colonial Council destroys the law that it took into its own hands." Through it, he demonstrated that it is not surprising that the agents of colonialism, along with the French colonialists, refused to cancel this decision, especially since through it they obtained privileges so that they could

torture their brothers and make them more miserable, because their greatest concern is To please the colonizer, he mentioned a number of names, including Ait Ali Muhammad, Ibn Halima Ahmed, Ibn Salem Abdel Qader, Several shantufs...etc He also explained the position of these people through poetic verses that show the extent of their reprehensibleness and shameful positions. We will quote some of the verses from them to show how important poetry is in exposing the political situation and highlighting it.

Oh Mona, the palm of an angel * I see me as the king of my masters
Keep my secret from your loved ones * Don't tell my children
Here, we will let you know what you want. We will reveal to you my secrets and more
He followed it with a poem entitled "The Algerian Council Speaks." Her words reflect the extent of political awareness and her style is in the colloquial language so that everyone can understand it, for example. My provisions, save me from Paris * I cooked in the middle of the vestibule
Add a little bit of Indianness to it and spend it on this goat
Brother, you understand us.

- As for the thirteenth issue, Thursday, March 9, 1950, its title is "The Constitution of Algeria and the Representatives of Mengelan." Through this article, he gave a clear explanation of the concept of the constitution and the concept of representatives, and showed that the Islamic nation has lived under the oppression and tyranny of the rulers since the end of the first Islamic era, in order to strengthen the freedoms that France and other European nations are calling for.

It will not be fair as long as the nation does not put it in place, because every nation is more knowledgeable about its affairs and it alone has the right to draw up its constitutions. This shows the extent of Ahmed Reda Houhou's boldness in revealing and exposing all the intentions of the coloniser, and the extent to which the people are devastated by the political situation, and that society is exhausted by its various decisions that serve its projects in the first place. The people are tired of the betrayal of the representatives and the black colonial newspapers

Al-Shuala Magazine, Issue 16, Thursday, March 30, 1950 AD. Its title is, Ladies and Gentlemen, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani tells you about the Algerian Parliament and Representatives.(Bachir Metija, Algiers, 2015.)

Reda Houhou always continues in his emphasis on the rejection of the representatives of Parliament and the French Constitution because the Constitution must come from the people as well as their

representatives. This was evidenced by him conveying the thoughts of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani at the end of Ismail's reign when he proposed

The free people of Egypt should draw up a constitution for them, and his answer was valuable, meaning that the parliamentary power of any nation must be from the same nation...etc.

He also included "Bani Wei Wei Song" in the same issue, in which they try to respond to the criticism directed at them through the Al-Shu'ala and Al-Basair newspapers.

Among what was stated therein Under the whips* it is sweet to sing Enough crying, our people If you were as rich as we are You did what you didn't do(Bashir Mitidja 2015)

In addition to the political opinions that he expressed through his writings in Al-Shuala newspaper, he also conveyed his admiration for Western civilization and the development it had achieved, such as his transmission of the sophistication and civilization the Soviet Union had achieved, and that the basis for that was their interest in culture and education. He conveyed the extent of the Soviets' keenness to raise the cultural level of all workers, even farmers. He also spoke of the extent of their interest and keenness to advance the child because he constitutes the entity of the nation. He conveyed and described the institutions, parks, and homes that the state established dedicated to children of all ages, due to the state's awareness that the basis of the development of states is education. The entity and development of the state lies in caring for the child because he is the pillar and future of the nation(Ahmed Reda Houhou', " Al-Shuala newspaper, issue 45)

conclusion:

The last thing we can say is that Ahmed Reda Houhou is considered among the Algerian pens that left their mark on the memory of the Algerian people. He is a writer and journalist who resorted to the press to express his opinions and ideas about the various political, social, and even cultural issues that Algerian society experienced through his reporting and criticism of the conditions inside and outside Algeria. Through his articles, which were generally aimed at educating the people Politically, socially, and even culturally, whether through purposeful short stories or articles that carry in their content a civilized message to raise awareness of the colonized peoples in general and the Algerian people in particular.

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