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The Resistance of Cherif Boubaghla (1851-1854) : A Symbol of Popular Resistance Against French Colonialism

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Abstract:
Popular resistance movements represent a prominent milestone in contemporary Algerian history, as they proved the people's defense of their land under the leadership of commanders who achieved significant victories on the ground. Among the popular resistances that left a clear mark was the resistance of Cherif Boubaghla (1851-1854 AD) against French colonialism in the Kabylie region.

Keywords: *Kabylie, Cherif Boubaghla, Popular Resistance, French Colonialism.*

La résistance de Cherif Boubaghla (1851-1854) : un symbole de la résistance populaire contre le colonialisme français

Résumé :
Les mouvements de résistance populaire constituent un jalon majeur de l'histoire contemporaine de l'Algérie, car ils ont démontré la volonté du peuple de défendre son territoire sous la direction de chefs de guerre qui ont remporté d'importantes victoires sur le terrain. Parmi les résistances populaires qui ont laissé une empreinte indélébile figure celle de Cherif Boubaghla (1851-1854) contre le colonialisme français en Kabylie.

Mots-clés : *Kabylie, Cherif Boubaghla, résistance populaire, colonialisme français.*

Introduction:

In the history of Algeria, there are many resistance movements waged by the Algerian people against any intruder. The period of French colonialism was filled with popular resistance movements across all parts of the country. As soon as the French colonizer intended to move and penetrate, they would find in their path a people jealous (protective) of their country. This is what French colonialism had to swallow in terms of facts and realities regarding the Algerian people's rejection of it in all forms, by all means, and despite all incentives.

The Kabylie region is considered one of the areas that inflicted material and human losses upon the French ranks, forcing them to change their mistaken beliefs and alter their plans at every moment due to their inability to confront the local inhabitants.

As a notable, but not exclusive, example is the resistance of Cherif Boubaghla (1851-1854), which went through two phases, and each phase had its own characteristics. This is what we will focus on in this article, which is titled: "The Resistance of Cherif Boubaghla (1851-1854): A Symbol of Popular Resistance Against French Colonialism

1. Geographical Characteristics:

The Kabylia region is located east of Algiers. The natural boundaries of the Greater Kabylia (Djurdjura) are defined by the Mediterranean Sea to the north and the Isser River from its mouth to the ruins of the Ben Henni Bridge to the west. To the south, it is bounded by the Djurdjura range and its western extension reaching the Isser, while to the east, it is

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bordered by the eastern extension of the Djurdjura range[1]. Its area is estimated at 15,000 km².

The geographical features of the Kabylie region can be categorized into two main sections:

1. The First Section: Located to the south of the Jurdjura mountain range and extending southward to the Bibans Mountains.
2. The Second Section: The coastal strip extending between the Mediterranean Sea to the north and the Jurdjura mountain range to the south[2].

The text you provided further details the division of the Kabylie region, especially during the French colonial era:

The First Section broadly forms what is metaphorically known as Lesser Kabylie or Eastern Kabylie .

The Second Section constitutes Greater Kabylie or Western Kabylie.

These divisions were widely used during the colonial period to fragment the Algerian society.

Colonial Administrative Divisions Following the French occupation of the region (both Lesser and Greater Kabylie), it was divided into administrative areas by decisions made in 1850, 1852, 1853, and 1854.

Délis District included: Béni Thour, Iflissen, Thaourqueth, Amraoua, Béni Khelifa, Béthrouna, El Maâtkas, Béni Jennad, Zerkhfaoua, Béni Ghobri, Azazga, Béni Fraoucen, Béni Yiraten...

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[1]Hateau, & Le Tourneau. The Kabylia Region and the Kabyle Tribes. Tizi Ouzou: Dar El Amel for Printing, Publishing, and Distribution,2013, P25

[2] Saïdi, M,French Colonial Policy in the Kabylia Region and the Population's Positions Towards It (1871–1914) (Vol. 1). Algeria: Dar Sayyid al-Khair for Books, 20121,PP34-35

Draâ El Mizan District included: Béni Sedka, Béni Yenni, Béni Ouacif, Béni Menguellet, and M'chedallah... etc.

This division remained in effect, even though the region was re-divided repeatedly during the French period. However, the locations of these centers, which were famous for their knowledge and scholars, persisted[1].

he Jihad of the Kabylie Region:

> The Kabylie region remained independent until 1846 and stood firm against the French enemy until 1857. This resilience is largely attributed to the rugged mountains which aided its inhabitants in resisting the occupier, who found it difficult to penetrate[2].

The French concentrated their attention on the Kabylie region because, in their view, it was the most receptive and influential on the rest of Algeria's provinces. It was an area close to the capital, Algiers, with a dense population, difficult terrain, and limited resources. It was not conducive to widespread European settlement or economic and capitalist exploitation. Furthermore, it was a region characterized by the distinct features of its inhabitants, including their language, customs, and special traditions, which made the Kabyle individual hold onto their independence, strengthen their tribal affiliation, and refuse integration with others, striving to secure their livelihood and meet their needs[3].

The reality on the ground is sufficient evidence to refute the claims of French colonialism. The best proof lies in the first

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[1] Al-Mahdi Al-Bouabdelli. Biography of Sheikh Al-Mahdi Al-Bouabdelli, followed by the Biographies Section. Algeria: Alam Al-Ma'rifa,2013, P77

[2] Larbi Menour. History of the Algerian Resistance in the Nineteenth Century. Algeria: Dar Maarefa.2006,pp189-190

[3] Saïdi, M, op.cit. PP254-255

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mujahideen (freedom fighters) who ignited the fuse of popular resistance against the French occupation, including:

-Cherif Moulay Mohamed, nicknamed Bououd (1845–1847).

-The resistance of Boumaza.

-The revolution of Moulay Ibrahim, which extended its reach to the villages of Béjaïa.

However, the strength of the French enemy overcame them. The Béni Mlikech tribe paid a heavy price in lives and property for their support of the resistance. Despite this, the spark of resistance in the Kabylie region did not die out; rather, it was rekindled by the resistance of Cherif Boubaghla[1]

2. The Character of Cherif Boubaghla:

One of the most important revolutions that erupted in the **Zouawa region** was the revolution of **Cherif Mohamed El Amdjad Ben Abdelmalek**. He arrived in **Sour El Ghozlane** in **1849** as a stranger to the area. He would move around visiting some major Sheikhs, writing **amulets**, and treating the sick using traditional methods. At that time, his age was around **forty years old**.

People differed concerning his origin:Some said he was **Moroccan** from **Morocco (Al-Maghrib Al-Aqsa)**.

Others claimed he was a former *Spahi* (Algerian cavalryman serving the French) in the Miliana guard.

A third team mentioned that he had escaped from the **Toulon prison** [2].

He was called **Hajj Mohamed Al-Maghribi** and nicknamed **Boubaghla** because he used a **mule** (*baghla*) for

[1] Larbi Menour.op.cit, PP89-90

[2] Perret, E. The French in Africa: Algerian Narratives. Paris: Bloud et Barral Libraires-Éditeurs n.d.P31

all his travels[1]. Some even suggested that his mule would strike its legs whenever the French enemy approached the revolutionaries.

French sources indicate that Boubaghla had two horses:

One was black, which he called Darwish, and he rode it into battles.

The second was named Juwad, and he rode it during travels and celebrations.

Despite Boubaghla's attempts to shed this nickname and replace it with others, such as Mohamed Boussi, the name Boubaghla stuck with him throughout his life, and history knows him by it.

Background and Education:

Cherif Boubaghla was born in 1810 and his real name was Mohamed El Amdjad Ben Abdelmalek[2]

Regarding his education, Boubaghla, like most Algerians, received a Qur'anic education in his birthplace. Due to his intelligence and excellence, his father, who was a farmer, decided to send him to the city of Miliana. There, he studied Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), Sharia, and Judiciary under the guidance of Sheikh Ahmed Ben Youssef.

Boubaghla also received military training during his *Jihad* in the ranks of Emir Abdelkader's army, who would send him as an emissary or a caller to Jihad in the Kabylie region.

Physical and Mental Characteristics

Physically and personally, Boubaghla was a strong man. He was of medium height, muscular, dark-skinned, and broad-shouldered. His face was wide, adorned with a red

[1]Ibrahim Mayassi. Glimpses of the Algerian People's Struggle. Algeria: Office des Publications Universitaires (OPU) .2007, P117

[2] Assia Tamim. Algerian Figures: 100 Personalities. Algeria: Dar El Misk for Publishing and Distribution,2008,P27

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beard. His eyes were large and dark with a piercing gaze. His nose was broad and flat, and his lips were thick. Intelligence was clearly visible on his face.

Mentally, Boubaghla was distinguished from childhood by extraordinary intelligence. He was also known for his courage, boldness, political, and military acumen. Furthermore, he was an influential orator. He would address the people in the markets, calling them to Jihad. They would quickly rally around him and join him, as he carried the Qur'an in his hand and motivated them to fight in defense of God's religion and land against the occupying "infidels"[1].

He also worked as a teacher educating children in the Qur'an, writing amulets, and treating the sick using traditional methods, which helped him interact with the people and raise their awareness to engage in battle against the French colonizer[2].

Causes of the Resistance:

The provided text highlights the immediate causes of the resistance led by Cherif Boubaghla as two main factors:

French Attempts to Consolidate Occupation

The continuous efforts by the French to solidify their occupation and control over the Kabylie region, which threatened the local people's independence and way of life.

- The Events of the Zaatcha Uprising:

The successful, though ultimately crushed, Zaatcha Uprising (1849) served as a major source of encouragement

[1] Abdelmadjid Ben Neamia, Mohamed Maamer, & Ahmed El Hamdi. Encyclopedia of Algerian Figures 1830–1954. Al-Biar: Publications of the National Center for Studies and Research on the National Movement and the Revolution of November 1, 1954.2007.PP77-78

[2] Assia Tamim.OPCIT,P27

for the local population to refuse submission to the French occupiers. This event demonstrated that effective resistance was possible and boosted morale for similar uprisings.

hases of the Resistance

The provided text focuses on the early activities and preparation phase of Cherif Boubaghla's resistance, specifically his presence and mobilization in the Kabylie (Zouawa) region:

Pre-Resistance Presence

It was not unusual for Cherif Boubaghla (referred to here as Cherif El Hashemi to be in the Zouawa region (Kabylie), as some sources indicate he had visited it before:

- As an emissary sent by Emir Abdelkader.
- As a caller to Jihad.
- As a visitor to one of the local Zawiyas (religious schools/centers).

Debates on Origin

The source notes the controversy surrounding his origin:

- Some sources mention that Mohamed El Hashemi came from Tafilalt, though this claim is often disputed, as many *Ashraf* (descendants of the Prophet) claimed origins from Saqiet El Hamra, Tafilalt, or generally "The West" (Al-Gharb).
- Some suggest he was from the vicinity of El Attaf or perhaps from the Ouled Aïssa in El Adhaoura.
- One narrative even states that he was from the Ashraf of the Zouawa region itself.

What is certain is that the Cherif knew the region and its people well, particularly through the leader Si El Djoudi and his visits to the Werdja Zawiya, which was run by Lalla Fatma.

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Mobilization and Preparation

The Cherif El Hashemi was determined to declare Jihad against the French and their collaborators in the Zouawa region.

He was accompanied by a number of horsemen and initially settled in Béni Idjar near Azazga.

Students of the Zawiyas joined him and began propagating his call among the masses in the name of religion, patriotism, and independence.

Thanks to this effort, Boubaghla successfully collected funding dedicated to the budget of the Jihad.

Skills and Background

The text strongly suggests that Boubaghla was an influential orator and a smart, educated man, evidenced by his stances and the declarations he issued to the people.

His political and military training was clearly acquired in the Emir Abdelkader's military school, as he was around forty years old at the time[1].

He had participated in the Emir's wars and was well-informed about the course of affairs, perhaps even having held some responsibilities

The Pledge of Allegiance (Al-Bay'ah)

The text describes the pivotal moment when Cherif Boubaghla officially launched his resistance movement through a public pledge of allegiance:

The Gathering and the Pledge

In the Souk Tleta (Tuesday Market) of Béni Idjar, Boubaghla organized a large gathering to secure the *Bay'ah* (pledge of allegiance) and officially declare collective Jihad.

[1] Abdelkrim Bousefsaf, et al. Dictionary of Algerian Figures in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (Vol. 1). Constantine: Dar Medad University Press.2015, P435

- After the people rallied around him, he unfurled his banners among them and delivered an influential speech.
- This speech prompted the Sheikhs (chiefs) and Marabouts (religious leaders) of the region to step forward to offer him their allegiance and loyalty.
- The terms of the pledge were centered on supporting the Word of God and expelling the enemy.

Key Supporters

Among those who pledged allegiance at that time was Lalla Fatma N'Soumer the leader/administrator of the Werdja Zawiya

3. Unanimous Support:

All the masses and Sheikhs of the Zouawa (Kabylie) region responded and pledged allegiance to him.

The only exceptions were the individuals who held positions under the French administration[1].

The people of Zouawa and the students of the Zawiyas joined his call, aiding in his propaganda. It is evident that he was an influential and educated orator[2].

He even declared that he was the "Man of the Hoursent by God to deliver the Muslims from the infidels.

His Organization and Planning for Jihad:

Boubaghla's planning for Jihad focused on expanding his popular base and coordinating operations against the French: The Founding Phase and Mobilization (1850-1851)

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[1] Abou El-Kacem Saadallah. The Algerian National Movement (Vol. 1). Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami. 1992, P346

[2] Salah Ferkous. (2003). The Concise History of Algeria: From the Phoenician Era to the French Withdrawal (814 BC – 1962 AD). Algeria: Dar El Ouloum for Publishing and Distribution,2003, P435

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Recruitment Attempt: Boubaghla attempted to mobilize the tribes that had previously fought alongside Moulay Ibrahim, sending them letters urging them to engage in Jihad and take up arms[1] .

French Maneuver: Boubaghla remained in the Sour El Ghozlane region throughout 1850. By early 1851, he began activities that the French authorities deemed "suspicious," leading them to issue orders to the officers of the Arab Bureau in Sour El Ghozlane for his arrest.

Withdrawal and Refuge: Boubaghla realized the trap in time, left the area, and headed to the Qalaa of Béni Abbès.

- Settlement in Béni Mlikech: When the inhabitants of Qalaa discovered his true purpose, they became divided, so he departed and settled in Béni Mlikech, which welcomed him warmly on February 24, 1851 [2].

Structure and Commencement of Military Operations Appointment of Leaders: Boubaghla appointed four key leaders to oversee the resistance in different areas:

1. Hadj Ali Naith Aoudia in Tâarcla.
2. Ahmed Ousoula in Ighchen.
3. Si Hadj Dahou in Taberkatine.
4. Hadj Mouhi Eddine in Izerar Oukentou[3].

Mobilization and Fortification: Boubaghla contacted the region's Sheikhs and corresponded with prominent figures, calling on them to fight the French. He managed to establish camps for the revolutionaries and fortresses for resistance in the villages of Béni Mlikech.

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[1] Amar Ammoura. The Gateway to General Algerian History (Vol. 1). Algeria: Dar El Maarefa. 2009.P267

[2]. Amar Ammoura. OPCIT, PP267-268

[3] Mahfoud Kaddache. The Algeria of the Algerians: History of Algeria 1830–1954. Algeria: ANEP Publications,2008, p137

Dismissal of Collaborators: He began his operations by expelling the *Qiyad* (local chiefs) and Sheikhs appointed by the French colonizers, choosing others in their place.

He set out to expel the leaders and sheikhs appointed by French colonialism, replacing them with others. On March 2, 1851, he achieved his first victory over the forces of Officer Beauprêtre, the governor of Beni Mansour. Subsequently, on March 10, 1851, he attacked the estate (*Aziba*) of Bachagha Ibn Ali Cherif, a collaborator with the French, at his Zawiya in Chellata. During this raid, he seized 300 head of cattle and a flock of 30,000 sheep. Following this victory, people flocked to join his ranks, including students from the Zawiya of Sidi Ahmed bin Idris in Illoula Oumalou.

On March 19, 1851, an attack was launched against the warehouse of the Chellata province, which was collaborating with the French. Between March 24 and April 4, his attacks extended to villages under French authority, achieving significant success. Throughout 1851, Cherif Boubaghla sought to intensify his revolutionary activities, reaching out to leaders in northern Constantine within the villages and mountains of the Babor region[1].

4. The Attack on Béjaïa:

Boubaghla was determined to attack the French enemy in the city of Béjaïa (Bougie) due to several motivating factors:

Motives for the Assault

French Garrison Vulnerability: The city was ripe for attack because its inhabitants had already imposed a siege on the French garrison stationed there. The garrison was reduced to

[1]Belah, B. Contemporary History of Algeria from 1830 to 1989, (Vol. 1). Algiers: Dar Al-Ma'rifa.2006, P187

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relying solely on supplies arriving by sea, and the activities of the local Arab Bureau were paralyzed.

Previous Uprisings: The powerful uprisings of Béni Slimane, Mézaïa, Béni Oughlis, and Béni Imile (among others) in 1850 encouraged action. The leader of this powerful movement was a Cherif named Moulay Ibrahim, who successfully incited the local population against the enemy. Notably, General Barral, who had participated in the Zaatcha massacre, was killed during Moulay Ibrahim's movement.

Initial Actions and Siege (December 1850 – May 1851) Pre-Attack Mobilization: Before launching the major assault, Boubaghla sent messages and envoys to various regions, calling for Jihad and threatening collaborators with death.

First Attack (December 1850): He first attacked Béjaïa in December 1850, specifically targeting tribes that had been forced to submit to the enemy. However, winter snows forced both Boubaghla and the French to retreat, limiting their actions to skirmishes.

Expansion from Béni Mlikech: In March 1851, he was in Béni Mlikech, where he received strong support. From there, he expanded the revolution's circle to the areas of Hamza and Béni Abdelli, etc.

Threatening Collaborators: He sent threatening letters to all local chiefs (*Qiyad*) who were cooperating with the enemy, but he urged genuine Muslims among them to repent and return to the right path.

Cutting Supply Lines: On May 1, 1851, Boubaghla attacked the communication line linking Béjaïa and Sétif and ordered the execution of some collaborators. This led many pro-French chiefs and officials to flee to Béjaïa seeking protection.

Full French Siege: The French in Béjaïa became totally besieged, unable to leave. The revolutionaries burned the

properties of the colonists near the city and beat drums to intimidate the garrison, while the commander, De Wengi, remained trapped.

The Grand Assault and Immediate Aftermath

The Main Attack: The major attack on Béjaïa began on May 10, 1851.

Boubaghla's army numbered about 10,000 fighters, including some cavalry, and he led his army with rare courage.

His forces had a musical band that beat drums to boost enthusiasm, and they carried three red and green flags.

As they advanced, they chanted the phrase "Lā ʾIlāha ʾIllā Allāh" (There is no god but God).

French Defense: The enemy struck them with cannons as they approached the city, but the revolutionaries continued to advance despite some confusion, attacking the homes and properties of the French in the Béjaïa plain.

French Losses: The French occupation army suffered severe losses in killed and wounded soldiers, turning the Zouawa region into a "cemetery for the invaders"[1].

Continued Siege: Despite the attack, the French remained trapped in Béjaïa until reinforcements arrived from Jijel and Algiers by sea.

Reorganization and Ideological Warfare

Reorganization: Boubaghla reorganized his forces and continued to receive allegiance and aid from the population. The revolution included even those who had been forcibly subjected to the enemy.

[1]Bachir Kacha El Ferhi. A Concise Account of the Events and Incidents of the French Occupation of Algeria (1830–1962). Algeria: National Agency for Communication, Publishing, and Advertising (ANEP),2007, P65

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Ideological Effort: Alongside his tight organization, Boubaghla worked to spread his ideas, clarifying his goal and purpose for the war. He relied on religious texts, mixing his speeches with Qur'anic verses and religious poetry to strengthen the resolve of fighters and supporters, and to threaten collaborators and rebels.

The French Counterattack

Relief and Counter-Offensive: After the arrival of reinforcements, the enemy broke the siege and attacked Boubaghla's army from land and sea.

French Terror: Those who fell into enemy hands suffered moral and material terror. The enemy proceeded to burn homes, destroy supplies, and displace the inhabitants.

Fortification: The French then installed a garrison on the international side of the Soummam River valley and built a tower in Lejbabra for this purpose.

The Battle of Oued Bousselam.

June 1, 1851: The Battle of Oued Bousselam took place, where Boubaghla faced General Bousquet and inflicted heavy losses on him.

Strategic Retreat: Boubaghla was able to withdraw from the battle before the arrival of General Camou's army, whom Bousquet had called for assistance.

The Battle of Aïn Zaouia and Subsequent Conflicts

The text describes several key battles and the shift in strategy during Cherif Boubaghla's resistance against the French forces between 1851 and 1854:

The Battle of Aïn Zaouia (August 18, 1851)

The Event: On August 20, 1851, Captain Pechot, commander of the Bordj Menaïel garrison, reported a defeat in the Battle of Aïn Zaouia that occurred on August 18, 1851.

The French Explanation: Officers of the Arab Bureaus attributed the defeat to the Makhzen forces (local auxiliaries)

believing in the power of evil spirits to protect the Cherif from harm, claiming he could not be hit by bullets.

French Concern: The defeat also led to the loss of prestige for the *Bach Agha* (Chief) Yabaoui and the diminishing influence of Belkacem Oukaci. This incident greatly increased the French command's worry and fear of the Cherif, who had successfully gained the trust of the mountaineers who regarded him as the leader of the resistance[1]

The Battle of Boghni (October 30, 1851)

The Defeat: The battle against General Pélissier on October 30, 1851, resulted in a defeat for Boubaghla.

Pélissier's Strategy: Pélissier succeeded by employing a strategy aimed at separating the resistance from the population. He spread terror through acts of arson, killing, and retaliation against the tribes supporting Cherif Boubaghla's resistance.

Intermittent Warfare (1852 – 1854)

Punitive Raid: On January 14, 1852, Boubaghla launched a swift retaliatory attack against the French-submissive village of Amegoun.

Resumption of Resistance: Boubaghla was unable to significantly resume his resistance until 1853, when he exploited the fact that many French military units had been sent away to participate in the Crimean War[2] Guerrilla Warfare (1852-1854): Shift in Tactics: Boubaghla realized that confronting the French army in an open war was no longer advantageous, as the enemy was better armed and more experienced. He therefore resorted to guerrilla warfare

[1]Mohamed Essghir Feredj. History of Tizi Ouzou from its Origin until 1954. Algeria: Thala Publications,2007, PP95-96

[2] Mohamed Cherif Ould El Hocine. From Resistance to the War for Independence (1830–1962). Algeria: Casbah Editions.2010,P22

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French Response: This shift forced General Paul, the commander of Béjaïa, into a war of hit-and-run tactics. Paul became convinced that he must pursue Boubaghla and retaliate against the tribes sheltering him by cutting down their trees, destroying their crops, burning their homes, and banning the establishment of markets.

French Counter-Measure: The French occupation authorities countered Boubaghla's method by establishing several observation posts in the Djurdjura Mountains to monitor his movements.

Key Attacks: One of the most important attacks led by Boubaghla during this phase was the attack on a French post in Selloum in 1853, resulting in the capture of significant booty.

5. General Randon's Campaign :

Planning: On February 17, 1853, the Minister of War requested that the Governor-General of Algeria submit a comprehensive plan for a major military campaign to be sent to Greater Kabylie.

The Plan: General Randon submitted this plan, and it was decided that two military divisions would move out.

General Randon's Campaign and the Final Battles (1854)

The text details the execution of General Randon's massive military campaign against Kabylie in 1854 and the eventual fate of Cherif Boubaghla.General Randon's Deployment (April – June 1854)

General Randon's plan to subjugate Greater Kabylie involved two main military divisions aiming for a unified goal:

1. First Division: From the Oued Sahel basin.
2. Second Division: From Draâ El Mizan.

They were tasked with converging on a single objective: Djebel Sebta Ath Yahi in the center of the Djurdjura range. After securing this area, they would fan out until the whole of Kabylie was subdued.

Initial Clashes and Boubaghla's Injury

April 2, 1854: The first confrontation occurred when Boubaghla burned a lazib *(small settlement) belonging to the Ashraf of Aït Khlili tribe, who were followers of Bachagha Oukaci. They sought Oukaci's aid, leading to a battle with casualties on both sides.*

During this battle, Cherif Boubaghla suffered a serious head injury He sought refuge with Si Larbi Cherif, the head of the Tazrouth Zawiya in Aghrib.

Operation Azazga (April 7, 1854)

Captain Wolff, governor of the Arab Bureau in Algiers district, agreed with the Bachagha to use force against the tribes supporting Boubaghla.

Wolff decided to attack the Azazga region, where Boubaghla was located, from two directions: Aït Jennad and Aït Ghobri.The operation took place on April 7, 1854. A fight ensued, but the exhaustion of ammunition forced the forces of Belkacem to withdraw.

The Main Campaign and Subjugation (June 1854)

Following these uprisings, General Randon launched a full-scale campaign targeting the Kabylie territories, particularly the Sebaou Wadi basin and the upper Djurdjura, with the primary goal of subjugating the Aït Jennad tribe.

Massive Force: Randon brought in forces from Algiers, Constantine, and Oran, gathering eight military corps from Algiers, seven from Constantine, in addition to the forces from Oran.

Deployment (June 1, 1854): Military operations began on June 1, 1854, with the Cheghoufa region chosen as the center

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of operations due to its proximity to the target, the Béni Jennad tribe.

Aghrib Battle (June 3, 1854): On June 3, the French reconnaissance team was met by all resistance fighters from the villages of Béni Jennad, Zerkhfaoua, Béni Fliç, and Aït Ghobri in the Aghrib region. Due to Randon's overwhelming force, the entrenched revolutionaries were defeated. The French captured Aghrib after fierce resistance and then burned the villages of: Thaqerseft, Ikhrian, Tazrouth, Thlathghana, Azrou, and Adhrar.

- Surrender of Béni Jennad (June 7, 1854): The Béni Jennad tribe requested *Al-Aman* (safety/amnesty), agreed to the terms of surrender, and were allowed to return to their ruined villages.

6. Boubaghla's Escape:

Boubaghla, still recovering from his injury at Si Larbi Cherif's Zawiya, was advised by the Béni Jennad to leave the area.

They knew that Belkacem Oukaci had offered a large sum of money to Boubaghla's host in exchange for handing him over. The host refused to break his oath and advised Boubaghla to leave the Zawiya.

Boubaghla left for Aït Idjer on June 2, 1854, and later moved to Iloula Oumalou[1] .

7. End of the Campaign:

Randon's campaign continued its attacks on the villages of Bouzeguen, Sidi Amer Wel Hadj, and Ihitoussen. His forces

[1] Laaribi, M. S. Azazga Through History. Tizi Ouzou: Dar El-Amel for Printing, Publishing, and Distribution.2017

focused on destroying the villages of Sahel and Thourirth and deliberately cutting down the fruitful trees.

July 6, 1854: The Sheikhs of Aït Idjer came requesting amnesty for surrender. This date marked the end of the campaign (July 6, 1854), and the French forces returned to their bases in Constantine, Algiers, and Oran.

8. Post-Campaign Administrative Reorganization:

Following the campaign, the Bachaghalik of Sebaou was directly attached to the Délis district, having previously been attached to Algiers.

A new governor, Captain Wolff, was appointed.

The region was divided into three *Aghaliks* (governorates) to ensure effective control and suppress resistance:

Aghalik	Included Areas
First Aghalik	Ouaguenoun, Béni Aïssi, Béni Zmenzar, Hassnaoua, Aït Iraten, Abid Chemlal, Sebaou, Oum Dour, Thala Outhmane, Tigoubaine, Aït Jennad, Flissa El Bahar, and Zerkhfaoua.
Second Aghalik	Aghrib, Aït Fraoussen, Aït Ghobri, Asif El Hammam, Aït Yahia, Aït Itouragh, Aït Bouchaïb, Aït Khlili, Ighil Inzekri, Tiguerrin, Amdoun, and Abouhinoun.
Third Aghalik	Caf Lekab, Bordj Sebaou, Sidi Naâmane, Draâ Ben Khedda, Maâtka, Béni Khelifa, and Béthrouna.

As for Boubaghla, he left Ait Irathen on November 6, 1854, heading towards Beni Melikeche, where he rested for some time before returning to his revolutionary activity, which he had started nearly four years earlier.

He entered a decisive battle with Captain Wool during the spring of 1854, alongside Lalla Fatma N'Soumer, who, with her brother Al-Taher, took command of the infantry, while

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Boubaghla led the cavalry. The battle ended in a decisive victory for the Algerians. Boubaghla was wounded in the thigh during the battle, and Lalla Fatma N'Soumer attended to his injury. Impressed by her courage and strong personality, he proposed marriage to her brother, who agreed, and Lalla Fatma N'Soumer also consented; however, she was still married to her husband, who refused to grant a divorce[1]

The last battle Boubaghla fought was in the Jenad region, during which he sustained a severe injury to his eye. This forced him to spend a period of treatment and convalescence as a guest of the Beni Yenni. After his health improved, Boubaghla decided to return to Beni Melikeche, the only tribe that had supported him from beginning to end, in an attempt to free them from the retaliatory war launched against them by the French army.

Boubaghla lost many of his men in these attacks. At the same time, due to the pressure of the French occupation, there were no longer many volunteers joining the resistance. Consequently, the fighters gradually diminished until they did not exceed sixty in number.

During the year 1852, Boubaghla retreated to Djurdjura, away from Bejaia, and issued a (proclamation/manifesto) to his followers, calling upon them to stand firm and open their hearts to God. He worked to reconcile differences between people and sent his aides to strengthen the resolve of the populace and solve their problems, which the enemy's interference made even more complicated.

[1] Boualem Bessaih.Figures of the Algerian Resistance Against French Occupation: By Sword and Pen 1830–1954. Algeria: National Agency for Publishing and Advertising (ANEP).2010,P120

9. Cherif Boubaghla and Lalla Fatma N'Soumer:

Lalla Fatma N'Soumer's resistance coincided with the presence of Cherif Boubaghla in the region, and he participated with her in major battles, including:

- Battle of Oued Sebaou (April 7, 1854).
- First Battle of Icherriden (June 16, 1854).
- Battle of Tachekkirt (July 18, 1854).

French officers described Lalla Fatma N'Soumer as wearing red clothing during those battles, urging fierce combat. She was surrounded by women who chanted war cries (*zaghareet*) to incite the Muslims, administer first aid to the wounded, and supply food and war materials. When Cherif Boubaghla was wounded in one of the battles, Lalla Fatma N'Soumer personally took charge of bandaging his wounds and saving him from the enemy.

10. His Death:

Sources agree that the death of Cherif Boubaghla occurred on December 26, 1854, but they differ regarding the circumstances and details of his demise. Generally, there are two main accounts describing how Boubaghla was defeated:

11. Account 1: The Suicide Attack

The first account states that Boubaghla and the few men remaining by his side launched a suicide attack on the morning of December 26, 1854, against the French army led by General Camou. His fate was to be killed by the French soldiers, one of whom decapitated Boubaghla.

According to this same account, the French, in an attempt to cover up this heinous act, pinned the blame on the Kaid of Beni Mansour and accused his men of killing Boubaghla following his attack on them. Some sources even suggest that Boubaghla was treacherously murdered by men from Beni

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Melikeche who disposed of his body far away, inventing a story of him attacking their village and stealing their livestock to avoid being accused of treason.

12. Account 2: The Ambush and Beheading

Another account states that on the evening of December 26, 1854, Boubaghla tried to organize an attack on some of his adversaries in Beni Abbes who were ploughing their lands. He was accompanied by his old companion Abdelkader Al-Madbouh, the Arabs of Okrouch, and about sixty men from Beni Melikeche. They managed to seize some heads of cattle, reportedly six, and retreated to the left bank of Oued Sahel. However, orders were immediately given to the guard forces stationed in Tazmalt, led by Lakhdar Mokrani, to intercept their route.

During the skirmish between the two parties, Abdelkader Al-Madbouh and most of the other men fled. Boubaghla was wounded and fell to the ground. He tried to escape into a small wadi (valley) to hide, but Boumerzoug Mokrani, his brother Lakhdar Mokrani, and three other horsemen chased after him. A man named Lakhdar Ben Darraji managed to shoot him in the leg, incapacitating him. They captured him, and though he pleaded for his life, they finished him off. They severed his head near Tazmalt and handed it over to the Governor of Bordj Bou Arreridj, who then displayed his head on a pole in the middle of the marketplace on December 28, 1854, alongside his horse, clothes, weapon, and the seal he used in his correspondence.

Boubaghla left behind two wives: Taasadt Bint Omar from Beni Mendass, and Yammina from Sidi Aissa[1], two sons

[1] Commandant Robin.History of Sharif Bou Baghla. Algiers: Adolphe Jourdan, Bookseller-Publisher, 1884,P357

named Sheikh Ben Eddine and Mohamed Saddouq, and one daughter.

Boubaghla turned the land of the Zouaoua (Kabylia) into a cemetery for many officers and soldiers of the French army until his martyrdom[1].

Conclusion:

The tribes were able to stand against the French occupation without the French fully establishing their influence over the area. This was primarily due to the mountainous and fortified topography of the region, combined with the deeply entrenched Jihadi ideology among the people of Zouaoua (Kabylia), who refused to accept the French intruder on their lands. Repeated French attempts to subjugate the area met with utter failure until 1857.

The inhabitants of the tribes carried the banner of Jihad and upheld the truth, joining the resistance leaders such as Ouezzou, Boumaza, and Moulay Ibrahim, achieving tangible results on the ground.

One of the notable resistances in Kabylia was that of Cherif Boubaghla, who rose to the challenge of confronting the French occupation. He employed various tactics such as hit-and-run (guerrilla warfare), maneuver, and direct confrontation, inflicting heavy losses on the enemy.

Cherif Boubaghla sought to restore and revitalize the revolutionary organization that had never been extinguished

[1] Salah Ferkous. The Concise History of Algeria: From the Phoenician Era to the French Withdrawal (814 BC – 1962 AD). Algeria: Dar El Ouloum for Publishing and Distribution.2003.

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in Kabylia and to guide back to the right path those who had been deceived by the French colonization.

Even though the accounts of Cherif Boubaghla's death vary, he remains a symbol of the Algerian popular resistance. Even after his death, he was not spared from brutal abuse, as his head was sent, along with those of the heroes of the Zaatcha resistance, to the Musée de l'Homme (Museum of Man) in Paris. This simply confirms the French complex regarding the revolutionaries and their documented crimes in dealing with the leaders who disrupted and confounded their calculations. They had believed that the inhabitants of the region would submit easily, but the series of popular resistances in Kabylia and the stubborn refusal of the inhabitants to yield, preferring Jihad over following the French infernal policies, proved them wrong.

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