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Abdullah Ibn Yacine's Ribat and his Role in Changing the Situation in the Islamic Occident (430- 483 AH/ 1038- 1090 AD)

Prof. SAFFEDINE Mahieddine
Mustafa Stambouli University. Mascara- Algeria.
moheiddine.saffeiddine@univ-mascara.dz

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Abstract:

The Almoravid State (432–542 AH / 1040–1147 CE) is attributed to the ribat (religious fortress) established by the jurist Abdullah ibn Yasin among the camps of the Sanhaja tribes in the southern region, which today lies between Mauritania and Senegal. Despite the difficulties he faced, Abdullah ibn Yasin—who arrived in this region alone—transformed the Berbers of these tribes from marginalized groups on the fringes of the desert into a state that controlled the western Islamic world for about a century.

Abdullah ibn Yasin succeeded in spreading knowledge among these tribes to the point that some of them became scholars. He also formed from them an army that managed to bring al-Maghrib al-Aqsa and a significant part of the al-Maghreb al-Awsat under Almoravid authority, unifying them doctrinally. The Almoravids also crossed into Al-Andalus, where they defeated the Christians and delayed the fall of Al-Andalus by approximately four centuries.

Keywords: Ribat; Abdullah ibn Yasin; Almoravids; Islamic Maghreb.

Introduction:

The Islamic Maghreb witnessed significant political changes at the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century AH (late 10th and early 11th centuries AD). One of the most prominent changes was the indigenous population (the Berbers) taking charge of their own affairs. This led to the emergence of Berber kingdoms in the Islamic Maghreb that organized political administration and catered to the economic, social, and cultural interests of their inhabitants.

Abdullah Ibn Yacine's Ribat and his Role in Changing the Situation in the Islamic Occident (430- 483 AH/ 1038- 1090 AD)

In the year 362 AH / 972 AD, the Fatimid caliph al-Mu'izz li-Din Allah (341-365 AH / 952-975 AD) decided to leave the Islamic Maghreb for Egypt. He entrusted the governance of the Maghreb to the Banu Ziri family to rule on behalf of the Fatimid state. This Sanhaja Berber family took over the administration of various affairs in the Islamic Maghreb. However, soon after, the Banu Hammad, a branch of the Banu Ziri, broke away to govern the central Maghreb, leaving the Banu Ziri in charge of only the lower Maghreb.

Meanwhile, the far Maghreb witnessed the rise of a Berber state established by the Sanhaja of the south, known as the Almoravid state, named after the Ribat founded by Abdullah ibn Yasin( ). Its establishment led to significant geopolitical changes in the Islamic West.

How was this ribat founded? How was the groundwork laid for the establishment of the Almoravid state? What were the most significant changes in the Islamic West resulting from this Ribat? These questions and more will be addressed and answered in this research.

I. The conditions of the Islamic Occident before the establishment of the Almoravid state:

During the first half of the fifth century AH (the first half of the 11th century AD), the Islamic Occident experienced political turmoil.

I.1- Lower and Central Maghreb:

Following the departure of the Fatimids to Egypt in 362 AH/ 972 AD, they entrusted the Islamic Maghreb to the governance of the Banu Ziri al-Sanhajids, led by Buluggin ibn Ziri (362-373 AH / 972-984 AD) (Ibn Khillikan, 1972, 1/ 286.), with the stipulation that the Islamic Maghreb remained politically and sectarianly submissive to the Fatimid caliphate in Cairo. However, the Zirid rulers soon encountered difficulties, notably the onset of attempts by their governor over the Middle Maghreb, Hammad ibn Buluggin (Nuwayhid. A, 1980, 122-123.) (408-419 AH / 1018-1029 AD), to break away from the Zirid State (362- 563 AH/ 972- 1167 AD). Hammad succeeded in realizing his ambition, establishing the Hammadi State (405- 547 AH/ 1015- 1152 AD), thus dividing the eastern region of the Islamic Maghrib into two entities: the Zirid State, which retained control over the Lower Maghreb, and the

Hammadi State, which extended its influence over the Central Maghreb.

Since 435 AH / 1043 AD, the Banu Ziri initiated measures to sever their political and sectarian ties with the Fatimids, opting instead to pledge allegiance to the Abbasids (Ibn al Atheer, 1997, 8/41). This transition was solidified in 441 AH / 1050 AD (Al-Hadi Roger Idris, 1992, 1/231), provoking the ire of the Fatimids and instigating their desire for retaliation against the Sanhajids ruling over the Zirid and Hammadi States.

Motivated by revenge, the Fatimids incited the tribes of the Banu Hilal, settled in southern Egypt, to migrate to Ifriqiya. They arrived in the region in 443 AH / 1052 AD, causing widespread chaos. By Ramadan 449 AH / 1057 AD, they had breached Kairouan, looting and devastating the city, erasing its landmarks (Ibn Adhari, 1983, 1/294). This incursion plunged Ifriqiya (the Lower Maghreb) and the central Maghreb into a state of political instability and turmoil (Ibn Khaldun, 2000, 6/20).

I.2- The Maghrib al Aqsa (Far Maghreb):

It was engulfed in chaos, fragmented into various emirates, with each clan asserting control over its respective territory and resisting amalgamation with others. The Meknassa tribe dominated the eastern regions of the Maghrib al Aqsa, while the Banu Yafran settled in the Salé region, encompassing the districts of Chellah and Tadla. The Maghrawa tribe held control over the northern territories, particularly Ceuta, and exercised authority over Fez. Meanwhile, the Banu Khazroun governed Sijilmasa (Harkat, 2000, 138- 144).

The dominance of the Zenati factions across the Far Maghreb was blemished by internal rivalries, leading to widespread injustice, pillaging, tyranny, fear and soaring prices (Ibn Adhari, 1983, 4/ 9-10). Ibn Abi Zara' vividly portrays this tumultuous scenario, remarking, "The allure of power and the absence of a unifying leader have weakened them. They face threats from neighbouring tribes, resulting in the loss of wealth and bloodshed, leaving their sanctuaries vulnerable "(Ibn Khaldun, 2000, 6/ 280).

Thus, scarcity became widespread, fear permeated the land, and prices soared to unprecedented levels, ushering in a period of severe hardship where security gave way to apprehension, justice to

injustice, and tranquillity to severe strife. Hunger and exorbitant prices became commonplace.

In addition to these tribulations, the Far Maghreb harboured the state of Barghawata (125- 451 AH/ 743- 1059 AD) during this era. Occupying the territory of Tamesna in the western region along the Atlantic Ocean, it was bordered by the rivers of Abu Ragrag to the north and Oum al-Rabie to the south (Ibn Khaldun, 2000, 6/ 280). Founded by Saleh ibn Tarif (al-A'sqalani, 1971, 3/ 171), who claimed prophethood and introduced a new religion, the state faced incessant invasions from neighbouring regions but managed to withstand until the arrival of the Almoravids in the far north of the Maghrib al Aqsa.

In the southern region of Morocco, the south Sanhaja Berbers, often referred to as the Mulathamunes (masked men, currently known as the Touareg) flourished. Comprising numerous tribes (Hassan A, n. d, 76), including Lamtuna, Jdala, Masoufa, Jazoula, and Lamta, they lived in fragmentation and discord despite their abundance. This internal division allowed the Sudanese Kingdom of Ghana, situated in the south, to surpass them and seize control of the city of Awdaghusht. This state of affairs persisted until the emergence of the Almoravid State.

I.3 Andalusia:

Between the years 399 AH and 422 AH (1008 to 1030 AD), Andalusia experienced what came to be known as the Berber sedition or Andalusian strife (Ibn Adhari, 1983, 4/ 76), It was a bloody conflict between the andalusian Berbers and the inhabitants of Cordoba over the caliphate. This tumultuous period culminated in the collapse of Umayyad central authority and the fragmentation of Andalusia into approximately twenty sectarian kingdoms. Among these, the most notable were the Kingdom of Beni Jahwar in Cordoba (422- 462 AH/ 1031- 1070 AD), the Kingdom of Beni Dhu al-Nun in Toledo (422- 478 AH/ 1031- 1085 AD), the Kingdom of Beni Abbad in Sevilla (422- 483 AH/ 1031- 1090 AD), and the Kingdom of Beni Ziri in Granada (422- 483 AH/ 1031- 1090 AD) initially held sway, but internal strife and conflicts weakened them, rendering them vulnerable to the ambitions of Alfonso VI (1065-1109 AD), King of Castile and Leon. In 478 AH / 1085 AD, Alfonso VI captured Toledo, effectively dismantling the Kingdom of Beni Dhu al-Nun. Subsequently, he began to exert

pressure and threats on other neighbouring kingdoms, particularly the Kingdom of Beni Abbad and the Kingdom of Beni Ziri (Ibn al-Kardbus, 1965- 1966, 77). Faced with imminent danger, the rulers of these realms (kingdoms) had no recourse but to seek assistance from the Almoravid state.

II. Establishment of the Ribat of Abdullah ibn Yasin:

Several historians, despite their differences in some details, agree on the narrative that Yahya Ibn Ibrahim Al-Jadali, the leader of the Sanhaja tribes in the south, left his homeland in the year 427 AH / 1035 AD to embark on a pilgrimage journey. Upon his return, he passed through Al-Qayrawan and attended some lessons of the Maliki scholar Abu Imran al-Fasi (Al Kadi Ayyad, 1982, 7/ 243-252) there. He admired his knowledge and asked him to send someone with him to the land of the Sanhaja who knew the veiled ones and understood their religion. Abu Imran al-Fasi directed him to one of his students in the southernmost part of the Maghrib al Aqsa, Wajaj ibn Zallu al-Lamti (Al-Nasiri , 1997, 2/ 7), who managed a ribat in the city of Nafis (Al- Bakri 2003, 2/ 346 / / Anonymous, 1985, 208). This latter appointed one of his students named Abdullah ibn Yasin to go with Yahya ibn Ibrahim al-Jadali to the veiled ones in the south to be their teacher, mentor, and guide. Upon their arrival at their destination, Abdullah ibn Yasin began to criticize the actions and practices of the veiled men that contradicted divine laws and the traditions of the Prophet. This weighed heavily on them; thus, they were forced to leave. Abdullah, along with Yahya Ibn Umar (Al-Zirkli, 2002, 8/ 160-161) and about seven men, sought refuge on an island at the mouth of the Senegal River (Ibn Khaldun, 2000, 6/ 243) and established a ribat known as the Ribat of Abdullah ibn Yasin or the Ribat of Senegal, which would have a very significant impact.

II.1- Introducing Abdullah

Abdullah ibn Yasin, also known as Abu Muhammad, was a Berber jurist from the Berber tribe of Jazoula Senhaji. His lineage traces back to Yasin Ibn Makuk ibn Sair ibn Ali, while his mother was Tin Yazamarn. Born in Tammanaout, situated in the southern region of the Maghrib Al-Aqsa near the Kingdom of Ghana (Al-Bakri, 1992, 2/ 859), he embarked on a quest for knowledge that led him to Andalusia. Entering Andalusia after the year 422 AH /

1031 AD, he spent seven years there, enriching himself with abundant knowledge (Ibn Sammak, 1979, 20).

Upon his return to the Maghrib Al-Aqsa, Abdullah ibn Yasin brought back a wealth of knowledge and proposed a unified project to the feuding Masamidah tribes. However, their elders rejected the proposal, citing their inability to agree on a leader due to ongoing conflicts (Ibn Adhari, 1983, 4/ 9- 10).

Abdullah Ibn Yasin emerged as a formidable figure, characterized by his prowess as a jurist, devout religious commitment, strong resolve, patience, and effective leadership (Al-Nuwairi, 2003, 24/ 254). He joined the ribat of Wajjaj ibn Zallu Lamti, located in the town of Nafis (Ibn Abi Zar'a, 1992, 123) or Malakus (Al- Bakri, 1992, 2/ 860 // Ibn Adhari, 1983, 4/ 8). Described as "a discerning student, possessing nobility, religious virtue, piety, jurisprudence, literary prowess, and political insight"(Ibn Abi Zar'a, 1992, 123), Abdullah Ibn Yasin possessed all the qualities requisite for successful leadership.

Ibn Yasin remained in the ribat of Nafis until he journeyed with Yahya ibn Ibrahim in 430 AH / 1039 AD towards the southern Sanhadja territories (Ibn Abi Zar'a, 1992, 123). There, he began to actualize his objectives, which included restoring the Mulathamunes to the correct teachings of Islam, bolstering the Maliki school, fostering Muslim unity, and spreading Islam into the pagan regions of Sudan.

The Sanhaja tribes welcomed Abdullah Ibn Yasin eagerly, expressing hope and anticipation for his leadership. One elder, upon seeing the camel ridden by Ibn Yasin, remarked: "This camel must have come to this desert for a significant purpose," (Al Nuwairi, 2003, 24/ 255) indicating the tribes longing for a unifying leader to guide them towards prosperity.

Ibn Yasin started guiding the Mulathamunes on matters of halal and haram in their affairs. Due to suspicions regarding the source of their wealth, he refrained from consuming the meat and milk of their livestock, instead subsisting on what he hunted in the wilderness (Al- Nuwairi, 2003, 132). Although austere in his diet, Ibn Yasin did not adopt asceticism in his relationships with women, " as he was married and known to marry and divorce multiple women monthly, drawn to their beauty and speech " (Al- Nuwairi, 2003, 132).

However, Ibn Yasin soon encountered the challenges typical of reformers. Certain Mulathamunes individuals oppressed him, looting his home and expelling him. In response, he departed with Yahya ibn Ibrahim to an island at the mouth of the Senegal River, where he established a Ribat. This ribat would later hold significant importance, serving as a centre for Islamic jurisprudence among the southern Sanhadja berbers.

Subsequently, Ibn Yasin prepared the Mulathamunes militarily, aiming to unite all the tribes of the southern Sanhaja and expand their influence northward and southward, subjecting all regions of the Maghrib al-Aqsa to Almoravid authority. While he made progress towards these goals, Ibn Yasin did not live to witness the Almoravids' complete control over the provinces of the Far Maghreb and the western parts of the Central Maghreb, as well as Andalusia. He succumbed to wounds sustained in battle against the Barghawata in 451 AH / 1059 AD (Al- Bakri, 1992, 2/ 863 // Ibn Adhari, 1983, 4/ 16). Before his passing, he convened the leaders of the Almoravids, likely passing on his vision and aspirations for the future.

Recommended to remain united and cautioned against envy, hatred, and power struggles, emphasizing the importance of listening to and obeying their leader, the leaders of the Almoravids unanimously agreed on Abu Bakr ibn Omar al-Lamtuni as their leader (Al-Dhahabi, 2006, 13/ 502-503/ / Ibn Abi Zar'a, 1992, 132). However, Abdullah ibn Yasin remains the de facto spiritual founder of the Almoravid state, owing to the ribat he established at the mouth of the Senegal River and his efforts in preparing the men who aided him in realizing his vision.

II.2- Creation of Abdullah Ibn Yasin's Ribat:

II.2.1- Definition of Ribat:

Religious outpost, a centre for spiritual and educational activities and Djihad.

Ribat, derived from the Arabic word "ribat," meaning to tie or bind (Ibn Mandhur, 1994, 7/ 302), refers to a military and religious structure constructed at the frontiers facing Dar al-Harb, the areas inhabited by non-Muslims who pose a threat to Muslim territories. It serves as a stronghold where Muslims dedicated to jihad for the sake of Allah can take refuge and prepare for battle (Al- Bukhari, 2001, 4/ 35). In essence, ribat involves the dedication

of oneself to the defence of Islam and the preparation for war against enemies (Ibn Sayyidah, 2000, 9/ 162). The term "ribat" is also used to denote the act of residing in such a fortified position and engaging in jihad (Al- Maqrizi, 1998, 4/ 302).

In Ribat, the Almoravids were engaged in worship, learning, jihad for the sake of Allah, and protecting commercial convoys from bandit assaults, either for payment or in devotion to Allah. These pursuits not only bound the participants from sin but also deterred them from engaging in immoral behavior (Ibn Mandhur, 1994, 7/ 303).

II.2.2- Establishment of Ribat:

Abdullah Ibn Yasin encountered strong opposition from some Mulathamunes veiled, who vandalized his home and looted his belongings, forcing him to leave (Al- Bakri, 1992, 2/ 353). Intent on heading south to the country of Al-Takrur, which had embraced Islam in 435 AH / 1043-1044 AD (Anonymous, 1986, 217), Ibn Yasin was dissuaded by Yahya ibn Umar, successor to Yahya ibn Ibrahim. Yahya ibn Umar expressed his intention to benefit from Ibn Yasin's knowledge, emphasizing the value of his presence in their land (Ibn Abi Zara'a, 1972, 124).

Yahya ibn Umar described an island off the coast, accessible on foot when the sea receded and by boat when it was full, abundant with pure halal sustenance from wild trees, land game, various birds, beasts, and whales. He proposed that they inhabit this island, living in devotion and worship until death (Ibn Abi Zara'a, 1972, 124- 125). Inspired by this proposition, Abdullah ibn Yasin, along with seven men from the tribe of Jdala or Kdala, established a ribat on the island (Ibn Abi Zara'a, 1972, 125). The Ribat later became known as the Ribat of Abdullah ibn Yasin (Dandash Esmat, 1988, 69) or the Ribat of Senegal (Mahmoud, n d, 140). Here, Ibn Yasin implemented a unique methodology to prepare the Mulathamunes for their mission. He renounced everything and chose to live in this remote land, enduring hardships for the cause.

II.2.3- Ibn Yasin's Approach to the Preparation of the Mulathamunes:

Since his arrival at the southern Sanhadja tribes with Yahya ibn Ibrahim, Ibn Yasin emphasized virtuous conduct. He consumed only halal food and drink, adhered strictly to Islamic laws, and encouraged others to do the same. Before founding the ribat, he

instructed seventy Mulathamunes men of varying ages (Al- Bakri, 1992, 2/ 352 // Ibn Adhari, 1983, 4/ 8), establishing himself as a respected elder and role model among them. These initial followers became the nucleus of those who later joined him in the ribat.

After establishing the ribat, Ibn Yasin devised an educational and training program for the benefit of the Mulathamunes. The numbers of those joining him quickly swelled, reaching around a thousand men within three months. The program included:

1. Purification of Sins: Prospective members were required to atone for their past sins through corporal punishment, such as receiving whippings for offenses like adultery or slander. They were then encouraged to embrace a renewed commitment to Islam (Al-Bakri, 1992, 2/ 356).
2. Teaching Islamic Basics: Ibn Yasin instructed newcomers in fundamental Islamic practices such as ablution, prayer, Quranic recitation, hadith study, and jurisprudence (Al-Nuwairi, 2003, 24/ 257).
3. Discipline: Ribat attendees were disciplined rigorously, with mandatory attendance at congregational prayers and punishments for infractions like missing prayers or raising voices in the mosque (Al-Bakri, 1992, 2/ 357).
4. Military Preparation: As the number of ribat attendees reached three thousand (Ibn Abi Zara'a, 1972, 126), Ibn Yasin initiated plans for military action. He established a treasury to collect zakat and tithes for purchasing weapons (Ibn Abi Zara'a, 1972, 126). Attendees were trained to obey their leaders unquestioningly, even if it meant fighting against their own kin (Ibn Sammak, 179, 20), they said to him: "O blessed Sheikh flexible what you want, you find us obedient hearers, and if you ordered us to kill our fathers, we would have done" (Ibn Abi Zara'a, 1972, 125).

Realizing the readiness of his followers for military action, Ibn Yasin authorized them to leave the ribat and make contact with the tribes of the southern Sanhaja. This marked the beginning of profound geostrategic changes in the Islamic West.

III- The Role of the Ribat of Ibn Yasin in Changing the Conditions in the Western Islamic World:

III.1- Unification of the southern Sanhaja tribes under a joint singular authority introduced a unique dynamic, wherein leadership was divided between two key figures. One was the military and political leader, who commanded the allegiance of all Almoravid tribes, necessitating their obedience and loyalty. Initially embodied by Yahya ibn Omar Al-Lamtouni, this role was essential in governance. The other figure was the jurist, epitomized by Abdullah ibn Yasin, tasked with religious guidance, preaching, and spiritual direction. Notably, the jurist's authority surpassed that of the military and political leader;(Ibn Abi Zara'a, 1972, 127) instances such as Ibn Yasin's correction of the Emir of the Almoravid through physical discipline underlined this hierarchy, " Yahya ibn Omar was very obedient to Ibn Yasin in what he orders him to do(Ibn Abi Zara'a, 1972, 127), and It was even said that Ibn Yasin beat the Emir of the Almoravid (Al Qadi Ayyad, 1982, 2/ 333 // Ibn Abi Zara'a, 1972, 127). This distinctive power structure elucidates the supremacy of the jurist within the emerging Almoravid state. Moreover, under the reign of Ali ibn Yusuf ibn Tashfin (500-537 AH / 1106-1143 AD), jurists not only maintained their esteemed status but also saw a considerable increase in influence (Abd al-Wahid al-Marrakuchi, 2006, 130). Such a governance model, unparalleled in other Islamic realms preceding or succeeding the Almoravid state, remains a historical anomaly.

III.2- Transformation of the Southern Sanhaja from ignorance to interest in sciences :

Before Abdullah ibn Yasin's arrival in the land of the southern Sanhadja tribes, people there, were largely ignorant of Islam, knowing only the two testimonies and lacking knowledge of the Quran (Al Qadi Ayyad, 1982, 8/ 82 // Ibn Abi Zara'a, 1972, 122). However, upon Ibn Yasin's arrival, they gathered around him eagerly, and he began to educate them in Quranic studies, interpretation, hadith, and jurisprudence. Initially numbering around seventy men (Al-Bakri, 2/ 859), these early learners likely aided Ibn Yasin in educating the three thousand who eventually joined the ribat. Consequently, the Almoravid transformed from an illiterate and ignorant nation to one that included a significant number of jurists. Notable figures among them included Al-Mansur ibn Muhammad ibn al-Hajj Dawood ibn Umar al-Sanhaji al-Lamtuni, described as intelligent and knowledgeable in Islamic teachings (

Ibn al-Abbar, 1995, 2/ 193-194), and Maimun ibn Yasin al-Sinhaji al-Lamtouni (died 530 AH /1136 AD) who was dedicated to the transmission and acquisition of knowledge (Ibn Al Abbar, 1995, 2/ 196- 197).

III.3- Unification of the Islamic occident doctrinally:

The Almoravid state was established upon the Sunni Maliki school of thought, which was the doctrine of their leader Abdullah ibn Yasin, the founder of ribat. This doctrine was firmly established among his followers, who in turn worked to impose their doctrine on the territories they conquered. They eradicated the Barghawata in 451AH/ 1059 AD, who followed a religion introduced to them by Salih ibn Tarif, who claimed prophethood during the Umayyad caliphate of Hisham ibn Abd al-Malik (105-125 AH / 723-743 AD), at the beginning of the second century AH. He established laws and a Quran inspired by himself for his followers, which remained intact despite the numerous campaigns launched against them by Islamic states in the Islamic West, whether it be the Idrisids, the Fatimids, or even the Umayyads in al-Andalus. The Almoravids eventually defeated and completely eradicated their doctrine.

The Almoravids also eradicated the Musawiya Shia school, which was present in limited areas of the Sus region and the surroundings of Dara' (Ibn Hawkal, 1996, 90- 99) , and remains of the Kharijite and Mu'tazilite doctrines, which were concentrated in the areas stretching between Sus and Aghmat (Ibn Hawqal, 1996, 99).

In 469 AH / 1076 AD, the Almoravids launched military campaigns led by Abu Bakr ibn Umar and his son Yahya towards the Ghana Empire, which was pagan and Zoroastrian (Al- Bakri, 1992, 2/ 873). They succeeded in converting it to Islam (Azzuhri A, n.d, 125) and spreading the Maliki doctrine there, thus achieving doctrinal unity in all the regions under their control (Belghit, 1986-1987, 211).

III.4-Transformation of the Almoravids into the foremost military power in the Islamic West:

After Abdullah ibn Yasin managed to unify the Murabitun tribes under a single military, political, and religious leadership, he organized them into a disciplined military organization. " They fought on horseback and foot, with most of their combatants forming the front lines, wielding long spears for thrusting, followed

by rows of men wielding maces, each man carrying several of them to deliver precise and devastating blows. They had a man carrying their flag positioned in front of the formation. They remained steadfast, whether the flag was raised or lowered…"(Al-Bakri, 1992, 2/860). This enabled them to expand into neighbouring areas.

They conquered the Draa region and the city of Sijilmasa (Al-Idrisi, 1409 AH, 1/ 225-226) in 447 AH / 1056 AD, and the following year they seized Sus and the Masamida lands (Ibn Abi Zara'a, 1992, 128-129). They eradicated the Barghawata emirate in 451 AH / 1059 AD (Ibn Abi Zara'a, 1992, 130-133), thus gaining control over all parts of the Maghreb Al- Aqsa. Prior to this, they had invaded the city of Awdaghusht, which was part of the Ghana kingdom, and seized it in 446 AH / 1054 AD (Al-Bakri, 1992, 2/ 862). They also expanded eastward at the expense of the western and central regions of the Maghreb al- Awsat 474 AH/ 1081 AD, then crossed into al-Andalus, defeating Alfonso VI and eliminating the Taifa kings, unifying and subjugating al-Andalus under their control. It became part of the Almoravid Empire, which extended from Zaragoza and northern Cordoba to the south of Oujda, and from the Beni Mazghanna islands and the eastern coast of al-Andalus to the Atlantic Ocean.

III.5- Saving al-Andalus from Christian threat:

After twenty-three years of turmoil and political chaos that began in al-Andalus in 399 AH / 1008 AD, Abu al-Hazm ibn Juwhar (ibn A'mira. D, 1989, 1/ 319) officially declared the end of Umayyad rule there in 422 AH / 1031 AD, signaling the end of centralized rule in al-Andalus. Each ruler became independent in his own region, leading to the formation of the Taifa kingdoms, which fought among themselves, some attacking others and others allying with Christians against their fellow Muslims. This exposed the weaknesses of these kingdoms to the Christians, encouraging them to covet and aggress upon them. Alfonso VI seized Toledo from Banu dhu Nun in 478 AH / 1085 AD, and he continued to blackmail and threaten other kingdoms, especially the Taifa kingdoms of Seville under the Banu A'bbad and Granada under the Zirids, and the Taifa kingdom of Badajoz under the Banu al-Aftas. When the threat of this Christian king became imminent to the Taifa kingdoms, their kings had to seek the help of the Almoravids, who rushed to aid the Muslims. They allied with the Christians in the

Battle of Sagrajas in 479 AH/ 1086 AD, which ended in a resounding victory for the Almoravids. Yusuf ibn Tashfin then dissolved the Taifa kingdoms and captured some of their kings, such as al-Mu'tamid ibn 'Abbad, the king of the Taifa kingdom of Seville (431 AH - 488 AH / 1040 - 1095 AD), and 'Abd Allah ibn Bulluqin, the last king of the Taifa kingdom of Granada (465 AH - 483 AH / 1073 - 1090 AD). He re-unified al-Andalus starting from 483 AH / 1090 AD, thus achieving political unity between the Maghreb and al-Andalus, which had been lost since 138 AH / 755 AD, the date of the independence of A'bd al-Rahman the Dakhil in al-Andalus and the establishment of the Umayyad state there.

Looking back about a century, we notice that it was the Umayyad al-Andalus that militarily intervened in the Maghreb since the reign of 'Abd al-Rahman al-Nasir (300-350 AH / 912-961 AD), who seized Ceuta in 346 AH / 957 AD (Ibn Adhari, 1983, 1/ 222), and later the Umayyads seized Tangier and Melilla during the rule of al-Hakam al-Mustansir (350-366 AH / 961-976 AD) (Taqqosh, 2008, 352). Andalusian military intervention in the far Maghreb continued during the reign of al-Hajib al-Mansur Muhammad ibn Abi 'Amir to suppress the revolt of Ziri ibn 'Atiyya al-Maghrawi in 387 AH/ 997 AD (Al-Zirkli, 2002, 3/ 63). The situation remained the same until the fall of Almoravid rule in al-Andalus and the beginning of the Cordoban or Berber turmoil in 422 AH / 1031 AD.

From the above, it is clear that the emergence of the Almoravid state and its control over the Maghreb al-Aqsa tilted the balance of power in favor of the Maghreb at the expense of al-Andalus. The Almoravids managed to reduce the threat posed by Christian kingdoms to Muslims in the Iberian Peninsula and delayed the fall of al-Andalus by about four centuries.

Conclusion:

- Through this brief presentation, we can draw several conclusions, the most notable of which are:

- Abdullah ibn Yasin, from the moment he arrived in the lands of the southern Sanhaja tribes, was keen to set an example in adhering to what is lawful, performing acts of worship, and practicing asceticism in food, clothing, and housing.

- A single man, armed with knowledge and determination, and with clearly defined goals in mind, was able to transform a

people living in ignorance and illiteracy into a people who achieved religious and political unity for the western Islamic world.

- The plan followed by Abdullah ibn Yasin in preparing the Almoravids to accomplish the unification project was sound. He began by educating them and urging absolute obedience to the leader, then training them in the use of weapons, then he called the rest of the southern Sanhaja tribes to join his project peacefully, and finally leaving the ribat to begin implementing his project.

- The authority of jurists in the Almoravid state was stronger than that of the political rulers.

- The personality of Abdullah ibn Yasin was the main driving force behind large numbers of the southern Sanhaja joining his ribat and enduring the harsh training they received within it.

- The Almoravids were able to cleanse Islamic Maghreb of misguided sects such as the Shiite sect and the Mu'tazila sect, and in contrast, they unified Islamic Maghreb under the Maliki school of thought.

- The Almoravids restored Islam's prestige after defeating the Christians in the Battle of Sagrajas and delayed the fall of Andalusia by more than four centuries.

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