

Ahmed Al-Maqri and his intellectual contributions

أحمد المقرئ وإسهاماته الفكرية

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Abstract:

Algerian scholars who made scientific trips to the Maghreb and the Arab East made an important contribution to scientific life. Notably, Abu al-Abbas Ahmad al-Maqri al-Tilimsani (1041 AH 1631 AD) whose scientific activity extended from Fez and Marrakesh to the East in Egypt, the Hijaz, and the Levant, as he led the study councils at the Al-Qarawiyyin Mosque for 15 years he spent in the Maghreb, where he was also Imam and Mufti.

He was highly regarded by rulers and kings. His books were well received, and he remained in constant relationship with the Maghreb and the Levant. He was keen to extend the ropes of knowledge as demonstrated in his comprehensive introduction to the history and literature of the Maghreb and Andalusia through his book Nafh al-Tayib and other books. He was a man of letters, an encyclopedic writer in various sciences such as hadith, fiqh and History.

Keywords: Ijazah, Correspondence, Andalusia, Nafh al-Tayb.

ملخص:

أسهم علماء الجزائر ممن كانت لهم رحلات علمية الى المغرب والمشرق العربي إسهاما هاما في الحياة العلمية، وكان في مقدمتهم العلامة الحافظ ابو العباس احمد المقرئ التلمساني (1041 هـ 1631 م) تمثل ذلك في سعة نشاطه العلمي الذي امتد من فاس ومراكش الى المشرق بمصر والحجاز وبلاد الشام، إذ تصدر مجالس الدرس بجامع القرويين التي استوعبت مختلف العلوم العقلية والنقلية، فافاد منها العلماء، طيله 15 عاما قضاها في المغرب حيث تولى الخطابة والامامة والفتوى.

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لقد وتداول العلماء وتلامذته كتبه ونال حظوة بالغة لدى الحكام والملوك، وبقي على اتصال دائم مع علماء المغرب والمشرق عبر مراسلاته وكتبه، حرصا منه على مد حبال المعرفة وتلاقح علوم وآداب الفريقين، في تقريب و تعريف واسع وشامل لتاريخ وأدب المغرب والأندلس، عبر كتابه نفح الطيب في غصن الأندلس الرطيب وغيره، فكان له القدم الراسخ في العلم حتى وصف بالكاتب الموسوعي لأنه طرق مختلف الفنون والعلوم في كتبه ومجالسه ، مؤرخا وفقها ومحدثا وأديبا.

كلمات مفتاحية: الرحلات، إجازات، مراسلات، الأندلس، نفح الطيب.

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1. Introduction

Ahmed bin Mohammed Al-Maqri Al-Maliki Al-Ash'ari is one of the most important figures of thought and knowledge in Algeria during the Ottoman era in the eleventh century AD. He had a unique personality and deep knowledge. His passion was attracted to both east and west of the Arab world countries, in constant movement, persistently seeking and spreading knowledge. He traveled to the Maghreb and toured the Arab East, he held and led scientific councils as a lecturer, debater, teacher and author. He is the prominent author of Nafh Al-Tayeb Min Ghusn Al-Andalus Al-Ratib; the literary encyclopedia that is a unique scientific treasure, a luxurious historical and literary encyclopedia, and one of the most important research sources, full of diversified knowledge and literature. Al-Maqri left a cultural legacy, a diverse and abundant intellectual contribution, as he wrote in all the arts of language, literature, tafsir, hadith, history, aqaid and fiqh. He deserved to be considered an influential encyclopedic writer of all ages, because he included in his books an abundant collection of various historical, literary, linguistic and religious knowledge. His deep knowledge and excellent teaching skills made his influence extended beyond his time to the rest of the eras.

2. Ahmed al-Maqari

He is Shihab al-Din Abu al-Abbas by nickname Ismail Pasha Al-Baghdadi,1951,p157),Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Yahya(Al-Zirkli, Al-A'lam, 2002,vol1,p237)Ibn Abd al-Rahman bin Abi al-Aish bin Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Abi Bakr bin Yahya bin Abd al-

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Rahman bin Abi Bakr bin Ali al-Qurashi al-Maqri al-Tilmisani (Abu Abbas Shihab al-Din 1983, p06), the historian, writer, and al-Hafiz (Al-Zirakli, Al-A'lam, vol1, p237) His family's origins go back to the Quraish tribe as reported by Ibn Al-Khatib, Ibn Khaldun, Ibn Al-Ahmar, and Ibn Marzouq (Abu al-Abbas Ahmad al-Muqri 2004, p5). His family name al-Maqri is related to the village of Maqah, located in the M'sila region, in the northeastern part of the desert, below the foothills of the Saharan Atlas Mountains. From the village of Maqra, the fifth grandfather of the family, Abd al-Rahman ibn Abi Bakr Bin Ali, moved during the sixth century to Tlemcen, he accompanied Sheikh Shuaib bin Al-Hussein Al-Ashbili, known as Abu Madin Al-Ghouth. He settled there and practiced trade, and his descendants became famous there. Among the most renowned people of his family in the 8th AH century was Judge Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ahmed bin Abi Bakr al-Maqri (Abu Abbas al-Maqri, 1983, p06) Abu Othman Saeed bin Ahmed al-Maqri al-Qurashi al-Tilmisani.

Among the scholars of the tenth AH century and the beginning of the eleventh AH century, sixteenth century AD. Al-Kattani wrote his biography with great admiration as follows: "He is the Imam, the Hafiz, the Musnad Historian, Abu al-Abbas Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Maqri al-Tilmisani al-Fasi, buried in Egypt".

It has been verified that his death was in 1041 AH. His student Sheikh Abd al-Baqi al-Hanbali al-Dimashqi stated: "He decided to live in the Levant and went to bring his family from Egypt, and all that remained was to leave it, so he died in Egypt, and he was buried in the Mujawereen cemetery in the year forty-one" (Al-Kattani, Vol2, P13)

2.1 Al-Maqri's birth and upbringing

Shihab al-Din al-Maqri was born 986 AH (1578 AD) in Tlemcen, as confirmed in his book Nafah al-Tayeb, "There I was born, and my father, and my grandfather, and my great-grandfather." (Muhammad Abd al-Hayy ibn Abd al-Kabir vol2, p574) Ibn al-Khatib added in confirming this, "He, his

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father, his grandfather, and his great-grandfather were born in Tlemcen” (Mustafa bin Fathallah Al-Hamawi, vol2, p263).

2.2 Al-Maqri's Sheikhs:

Al-Maqri studied with most of the scholars of his time. Indeed, “He was a marvel of time in his ability to write rhyming and elegant writing, and he used local poetry with wonderful types. He was also a hadith jurist. He lived for a period in the Zawiya Della'ia studying hadiths under Sheikh Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr Al-Dala'i who was marveled at the strength of Al-Maqri's memory and intelligence”(Muhammad Hajji, 1988 AD, p115).

Among his most prominent sheikhs:

- His uncle, the scholar Abu Othman Saeed bin Ahmed Al-Maqri, was the Mufti of Tlemcen for about sixty years, and its Imam at its Great Mosque for forty-five years (Abu Abbas Shihab al-Din vol8, p05). He learned jurisprudence and hadith from him, narrated the six books from him, and recited Al-Bukhari to him seven times.
- Abu Al-Hasan Ali bin Abdul Rahman bin Ahmed bin Imran Al-Salasi, he was a judge and mufti in the city of Fez (Died in 1608 AD).
- Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Qasim bin Muhammad bin Ali al-Qaysi al-Gharnati by origin, and al-Qassar by title (Lisan al-Din Ibn al-Khatib, 1974-vol1, p136). He was the mufti of Fez, and the hadith scholar of Al-Aqsa Maghreb.
- Abu Abdullah bin Muhammad Al-Hawari held the position of issuing fatwas, imamate at Al-Qarawiyyin (Died in 1022 AH).
- Al-Suma'i, who is Abu Al-Abbas Ahmad bin Abi Al-Qasim bin Muhammad bin Salem bin Abdul Aziz bin Shuaib Al-Harawi Al-Zamrani Al-Tadali (Died in 1031 AH).
- Abdul Raouf bin Taj al-Din bin Ali bin Zain al-Abidin al-Manawi (Died in 1031 AH).
- Abu Al-Qasim bin Abi Al-Naim Al-Ghassani (Lisan al-Din Ibn al-Khatib, vol2, p164): The Imam, the prominent scholar, judge and mufti in Fez

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(murdered in 1032 AH).

- Ahmed bin Al-Qadi(Ismail bin Al-Ahmar,1982,p51): He is the imam and scholar of Musnad Fez and its historian Shihab al-Din Abu al-Abbas Ahmed bin Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Ahmed bin Ali bin Abi Al-Afia Al-Miknasi Al-Najari Al-Fassi.

- Muhammad bin Abi Bakr Al-Dala'i, who died in the year 1046 AH, is the son of Sheikh Abu Bakr Al-Dala'i bin Muhammad Abu Abdullah Al-Majati Al-Sanhaji Al-Qasimi Al-Idrisi Al-Hasani. He grew up and studied in Fez, went to Hajj in 1005 AH, and he passed through Egypt and elsewhere. Abd al-Hay al-Kattani described him in his book "Fiḥras al-Fahāris" by saying, "The imam, the scholar Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr al-Dala 'i, was knowledgeable of Sahih al-Bukhari and mastered its compilation"

- Abu Al-Saud Najm Al-Din Muhammad bin Ahmed bin Abdullah bin Mufarrej Al-Omari Al-Ghazi (Died in 1061 AH).

- Abu Al-Irshad Nour Al-Din Ali bin Zain Al-Abidin bin Muhammad bin Zain Al-Abidin Ibn Abdul Rahman Al-Ajhour (Died in 1066 AH).

2.3 Al-Maqri's students:

Due to the multiplicity of sources of knowledge and the councils of scholars inspiring Al-Maqri, he thus formed a brilliant school that brought followers together from the Arab East and the West countries. He was the genius of his time, hence many students followed him.

Among his students:

- Hamdoun Ibn Muhammad Ibn Musa Al-Abar (Died in 1071 AH): He was an imam in jurisprudence and consulted on rulings. He performed the best of Al-Mukhtasar and concluded it every year. He was the Imam of the Al-Andalus Mosque for a long time and had good fatwas and a well-known footnote to Al-Mukhtasar. He took it from Al-Maqri and others.

- Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Abi Al-Qasim bin Sawda Al-Gharnati Al-Marri (Died in 1076 AH): He was extensive in knowledge, proficient in memorization, and he ruled over fatwas and led the congregation in Fez for many years.

- Shihab al-Din ibn Abd al-Rahman ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Amadi, al-Dimashqi, al-Hanafi (Died in 1078 AH): He was a virtuous and

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noble man, of good understanding, a writer, and a poet. He had wonderful handwriting, and quick and precise writing.

2.4 Al-Maqri's marriage and children

Al-Maqri married three wives in his life. His first wife was from Tlemcen, and she was the daughter of Mufti Muhammad bin Abdul Rahman bin Jalal Al-Tilmisani, the Mufti of Fez and Tlemcen. As for his second wife, she was the Moroccan daughter of Al-Qadyari. He married her during his stay in Fez. She gave birth to their daughter in 1026 AH, the only daughter who lived from his children and got married. His third wife, an Egyptian from the Wafai family, bore him a daughter who died when she was young, and he also had a son, whom he named Muhammad al-Makki, who died when he was young. This is confirmed by the condolence letter sent by the Mufti of the Two Holy Mosques, Abd al-Rahman Ibn Issa, to al-Maqri, dated in the month of Dhul-Hijjah in 1034 AH.

2.5 Al-Maqri's writings:

Al-Maqri left several works, some of which were printed, some were manuscripts, and others are lost. He mentioned them in his saying:

I have a composition of more than twenty, eight more that concern us.

Let him see without exception, By God, I hope to achieve a distant goal.

His writings include:

- Rawdat Al-Aas Atirat Al-Anfas fi Dhikr men lakituhum min A'lam Al-Hadhratain Marrakesh Wa Fez: Al-Maqri began writing this book to introduce those scholars that he met in Fez and Marrakech, to present it as a gift to the Moroccan Sultan Ahmed Al-Mansur after meeting him. He completed this book after his return to Tlemcen in 1011 AH; but when he returned with the book ready to Fez in 1013 AH a year after the death of the Moroccan Sultan. Through three hundred and fifty pages, Al-Maqri collected thirty-four personalities from the two Moroccan metropolises.
- Azhar Al-Riyadh fi akhbar Al-Qadi Ayyad wa ma yonassiboha mimma yahsol bihi irtiah wa irtiadh: He composed this book during his stay in Fez 1013 AH (1027 AD), in five volumes. It is a comprehensive encyclopedia about the news of the Faqih and Qadhi Ayyad, due to his important position among the people of Tlemcen and also the strong

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admiration that Al-Maqri has for him.

- Hosn Al-Thana fi al-Afwi Aamman Jana: the code of behavior through the hadiths of the Prophet (Peace be Upon Him) and the Quranic verses. Manuscript copy in Cairo. Printed in India.
- Ithaf Al-Mughrim Al-Moghri bitakmil Sharh Al-Sughra: Al-Maqri wrote this book about Aqaid in Fez then completed it later in 1028 AH.
- Idha'at al-Dujnah fi Aqaid Ahl al-Sunnah: He began composing this set of poems during his visit to the Hijaz in 1629 AH, and taught it in the Two Holy Mosques, and completed it in Cairo (1630 AH). Abd al-Qadir al-Ghussein explained the reason for its composition. He said: "For I was studying under him the Sughra of al-Sheikh al-Senussi in Egypt, so we asked him to compose a set of poems in Aqaid, and every time he delivered a lesson then he composed that into a poem and recite it the next day until he completed the set". Abdul Qadir had a copy of the set with comments by Al-Maqri with his footnotes where he said: "And I have completed the set in Cairo". Al-Maqri wrote at the end of that copy what reads: "The author of this doctrine says, the poor servant Ahmed Al-Maqri Al-Maliki - may Allah reward him - I corrected this copy to the best of my ability and fixed (the mistakes) that I found."
- I'maal al-Dhihn wa al-fikr ri al-massa'l al motanawi'a al-ajnas al-warida di in Sidi Muhammad bin Abi Bakr Barakat al-Zaman wa Baqiyyat al-Nas: He edited this book in Cairo (1041 AH), which is about Aqaid and Fiqh. They are answers to the questions of Sheikh Muhammad al-Dala'i, which he addressed to him from al-Zawiya al-Dala'i during the days when al-Maqri was living in Cairo (Muhammad Abd al-Karim al-Maqri, p277).
- al-Nafahat al-anbari fi wasf Ni'al khayr al-Barya: He included various types of prose and poetry and completed writing the book in Cairo (1030 AH). A manuscript copy is in Morocco.
- Fath al-Muta'al fi madhi al-Ni'al: It is said that al-Maqri completed writing this book in fifteen days on the subject of prophetic literature, and that he copied this book near the feet of the Messenger (in his Mosque), may Allah bless him and grant him peace.
- Azhar al-kimama fi akhbar al-'imama and nobdha min malabis al-

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mahdhod bil'isra' wa al-imama: He wrote this book near the head of the Messenger (in his mosque), may Allah bless him and grant him peace, then he completed it in Medina in 1033 AH. Its subject is prophetic literature, in which he mentioned, described and praised the clothing of the Messenger, especially his 'imama (turban).

- Zobdat Azhar al-Kimama, which is a compendium of the previous book where he summarized in an arjoza containing three hundred and five verses (Muhammad Abd al-Karim al-Maqri, p279-280).
- Nafh al-Tayib min Ghusn al-Andalus al-Ratib wa Dhikr Waziriha Lisan al-Deen ibn al-Khatib: This scientific and historical encyclopedia is his last writing that he completed in 1038 AH, and for which al-Maqri became famous. This great literacy masterpiece contains the finest texts in clear and honest images about Andalusia. When al-Maqri resided in Damascus (1037 AH = 1627 AD), he was inspired by the beauty of the city and started to share with his audience the history of Andalusia and talk about Lisan al-Din Ibn al-Khatib, then one of his close friends and students, Ahmad Ibn Shahin, asked him to write a book on the subject.

3. Al-Maqri's status and legacy in patrimonial and contemporary studies

3.1 Al-Maqri's scientific journeys and influence in the sixteenth century

Al-Maqri traveled to many countries, regions and cities that had a profound impact on his scientific and cognitive formation, his influence and intellectual, religious, and political contributions through his interactions with scholars. His trips between Arab cities started from Al-Qarawiyyin Mosque in Fez to Marrakech, then Al-Azhar Al-Sharif in Egypt, then the Hijaz, Mecca and Medina, passing through Damascus, and al-Quds.

In Fez, Al-Maqri had all the favorable conditions for creativity, study and writing. This city was full of scientific councils in all its regions, as he visited Morocco in the year 1013 AH and stayed there until the year 1027 AH. At that time, he had combined teaching, imamate, literature and fatwas, so his council in the Al-Qarawiyyin Mosque became a crowded council attended by students, pioneers of literature, and jurists and scholars flocked to him to draw from his knowledge and seek his approval to copy his books and attend his councils.

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He traveled to the Arab East in 1027 AH/ 1618 AD and performed Hajj repeatedly where stayed in Medina for a period and wrote many books there. He entered Egypt and Levant where he gained great fame and wrote his encyclopedic book *Nafh al-Tayyib*. Then al-Maqri visited al-Quds in 1029 AH / 1620 AD and returned to Cairo then began to repeat the Hajj from there. Every time he held scientific sessions and dictated lessons in jurisprudence, hadith, biography and literature. He dictated hadith lessons next to the shrine of the Messenger; may Allah bless him and grant him peace. Then he returned to Egypt in 1039 AH/ 1630 AD then entered al-Quds in the same year. Next he traveled to Damascus where he was amazed by its construction and the softness of its scenery. It reminded him of his first treaty in Tlemcen in the village of al-Abbad, where the shrine of the knower of Allah, Abu Madyan al-Ghawth, is located. He also admired the morals of the people of Damascus, their gentle nature and generosity, especially when Ahmad bin Shahin sent him the key to the al-Jaqmaqiya School in his honor and recognition of his high scientific status.

Al-Maqri headed the study session in the Umayyad Mosque after the dawn prayer. When the people increased and crowded around Al-Maqri's teaching class, he went out to the courtyard of the mosque under the dome known as Al-Ba'uniyya, which is dedicated to the great scholars. The completion day of his teaching semester was a memorable celebration in the Levant, attended by thousands of people, so the ceremony was moved to the middle of the courtyard, then again to the door where the prophetic flag is placed on Fridays in the months of Rajab, Sha'ban, and Ramadan. A chair for sermonizing was brought to him, so he climbed the chair and delivered a speech on beliefs and hadith that had never been heard before. The session was from sunrise until close to noon. When he got down from the chair, people crowded around him, kissing his hand, seeking his blessing, and asking for his prayers, none of the visiting scholars before him to Damascus had received such acceptance as he did on that day (Al- Muhibbi Muhamed, vol 1, p305).

Al-Maqri was a regular attendant on the service of the noble Science at Al-Azhar Mosque and was in constant contact with the Levant, the Middle

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Maghreb and the Far East. Friendly and scholarly letters would come to him from here and there, and he would respond to them as well.

Al-Maqri was busy teaching and writing at Al-Azhar Al-Sharif throughout his stay in Cairo, where he would teach al-Aqaid in the courtyard of Al-Azhar Mosque and dictate Sahih Al-Bukhari.

He went to Mecca five times from Egypt, during which he dictated the Noble Hadith and gave many lessons. He also visited Medina seven times, where he dictated the Prophetic Hadith in the sight and hearing of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. He wrote several books there, such as Fath Al-Muta'ali and Azhar Al-Kumama fi Akhbar Al-'Imamah.

Al-Maqri, with his strong memory and deep knowledge, attracted the attention of Egyptian scholars when they saw his virtue and the breadth of his knowledge. Ahmed Al-Ghanimi, one of the scholars of Egypt, said about this: "... and we were gladdened by the breath of his knowledge with the return of lessons that were studied there, and with him existence was revived, and every ignorant envious person died, so we called upon Allah- Glory be to Him - to perpetuate his stay in these Egyptian lands for the benefit of students and even righteous scholars" (Muhammad bin Abdul Karim, p227)

3.2 Al-Maqri's scientific status among his contemporaries

Al-Maqri was an excellent writer and a unique scholar who brilliantly represented the true image of his era and his society, he was an active participant and influencer who creatively inspired his generation.

Al-Maqri was highly regarded by scholars of his time, whether in Tlemcen or in any other country, driven by admiration for his scientific and literary personality, as he was revered and beloved by them, as indicated by most of his writings, including Azhar al-Riyadh in a letter sent by his friend Muhammad al-Wajdi from Fez to al-Maqri in Tlemcen after his return from the far west of Morocco, where he says: "We have been informed of the welcome and reverence with which the notables of that country, Tlemcen, welcomed you, which has never been repeated. Someone like you is worthy of glorification, and someone like them can appreciate the price of pendants." (Ahmad al-Maqari, p 94)

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So this welcome and reverence from the notables of Tlemcen for al-Maqri after his return from his trip to Morocco indicates his status among them, that scientific and literary ability that qualified him to be entrusted with writing the biography of Judge Iyad and his news, as he says in his book Azhar al-Riyadh: "At this date, books came to me from that region of Tlemcen, and among its chapters were And its branches of origins are seeking to define and become familiar with some of the conditions of Sheikh Imam Sidi Abi al-Fadl Iyad Ibn Musa"(Ahmad al-Maqari, vol1, P12)

As for the scholars of the far Maghreb, they held him in the highest regard and respect, and this was clear in the correspondence from his sheikhs and contemporary scholars, such as his sheikh Ahmad Ibn al-Qadi, the author of the books Jadwat al-Iqtibas and Durrat al-Hijal, and his sheikh Ahmad Baba al-Tambuqti and Muhammad al-Mukallati al-Fasi, and from Sheikh Saeed Qadura, the Mufti of the city of Algiers, and Sheikh Abdul Karim Ibn Fakun, the Mufti of Constantine.

As for Egypt, his influence on his scientific environment was great, through his many books that he wrote in Egypt, in which he dealt with various things that were not taken into account by the scholars of Egypt, such as his book Fath al-Muta'al, Nafh al-Tayyib, and Idhā'at al-Dajna. Also, the students from al-Azhar al-Sharif flocked to him as soon as he arrived in Egypt, sat with him and learned from him knowledge in many arts, and he granted them Ijazat, which is clear evidence of his scientific superiority and intellectual brilliance.

Furthermore, the praises of the scholars of Egypt for al-Maqri's books, such as what was in his book Fath al-Muta'al, which they highly praised, such as Sheikh Abdul Karim Effendi, the judge of Egypt, Sheikh Abu al-As'ad Yusuf bin Wafa, Sheikh Ahmed bin Abdul Warith al-Siddiq, the Maliki Mufti of Egypt, Sheikh Muhammad bin Musa al-Jamazi, and many others.

As for Damascus, Syria, he received great hospitality, welcome, affection, love and appreciation from its scholars and people for his knowledge, virtue and literature. They overwhelmed him with their generosity, they honored and invited him to their gatherings. Many scientific and literary discussions took place between them. They studied under him

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and took Ijazat from him, such as Sheikh Ahmed Al-Amadi, the Hanafi Mufti, Ahmed bin Shaheen, Ibrahim Al-Akrami, Muhammad Al-Kalashni, Taj Al-Din Al-Mahasini and others.

Al-Maqri excelled in the science of Hadith, his fame spread through the dictation of Sahih al-Bukhari in the courtyard of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. His lessons in the Aquidat al-Imam al-Ash'ari represented in his poem Illumination of the Darkness in the Beliefs of the People of the Sunnah, which he studied in Egypt, the Hijaz, al-Quds, Gaza, and Alexandria, where it met with great acceptance in all countries, and scholars asked him for a license in it, and some of them asked him to allow him to explain it, such as Abdul Karim al-Fakun al-Qasentini.

Al-Maqri enjoyed a high status and standing among the scholars of the Hijaz, such as Sheikh Taj al-Din bin Ibrahim al-Makki al-Maliki, who praised him in his review of the book "Fath al-Muta'al", and the Sharif of Mecca, Muhsin bin Hussein, and the Mufti, Abdul Rahman al-Marshadi.

Moreover, the kings of Morocco and the rulers of the East highly regarded Al-Maqri due to his goodness and righteousness, they trusted his solid knowledge, to the point that they resorted to him in hard issues, as happened in the incident of the Mizab al-Rahma. They did not reject his request, as happened in the story of Sheikh al-Ghussein with the Emir of Gaza, and they were keen to acquire his books and seek their blessings, as al-Maqri said in a letter he sent to his Sheikh Muhammad al-Dila'i: "And among what Allah blessed him (Al-Maqri) with was that he composed "Fath al-Muta'ali fi Madh al-Na'al" and "Azhar al-Kammah fi Akhbar al-'Imamah" in the Prophet's Presence (His Masjid) and each of them was a large volume, and the servant (Al-Maqri) intended to send them to his master before this date ,but Allah decreed that some of the state's notables took them(Muhammad bin Abdul Karim, p330)

These scientific trips were intended to expand the circle of knowledge, learning, writing, and getting to know scholars and writers in the East.

As for those many praises and Ijazat that Al-Maqri granted to his contemporary scholars, along with the literary discussions and scientific

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questions that his books are filled with, in language, jurisprudence, interpretation and hadith, they show the extent of his high scientific status and literary standing. He transferred the Andalusian school of art and literature to the East through his scientific and literary gatherings and his writings, the most important of which was his encyclopedia “Nafh Al-Tayyib”, from which he intended a literary and creative approach that would teach writers.

Al-Maqri was therefore a brilliant teacher and a skilled lecturer in every art that he knocked on and delved into, especially dictating the Noble Hadith and teaching Aquida of Imam al-Ash'ari. He taught at al-Qarawiyyin in Fez, at al-Azhar in Egypt, at the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, in Mecca, Medina, Alexandria, Rashid, and other cities. His teaching of Sahih al-Bukhari in the Umayyad Mosque, which lasted from sunrise until near noon, gained him a reputation that spread throughout the Arab East.

As for al-Aqaid, his student Abd al-Baqi al-Hanbali said about him: “I entered Egypt in the year 1028 AH and found him in the courtyard of the al-Azhar Mosque teaching al-Aqaid that is the art of the people of the Maghreb. By Rajab, he opened al-Bukhari and came up with something even more amazing.”(Al-Kattani, “Fihres al-Faharis”, Vol 2,P13-14)

3.3 Al-Maqri's distinguished intellectual heritage

Al-Maqri left behind a huge wealth of books that filled libraries and became among the most important sources in literature, language, history, Aquaid and jurisprudence, written in Tlemcen, Fez, Egypt and the Two Holy Mosques.

It is noticeable from his diverse intellectual production that Al-Maqri was open minded to various thought forms while preserving the authenticity of his research and transmission, which was embodied in the cultural, literary and historical encyclopedia “Nafh Al-Tayeb” and all his other works, thus achieving integration and balance in extending the ropes of authentic Maghreb heritage to Arab East.

In general. Al-Maqri's heritage occupied a pivotal and essential position in the path of Maghrebi, Andalusian and Arab literature and culture. His strong and effective presence in the focal points of the main radiant

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scientific centers in the Arab world “Tlemcen, Al-Qarawiyyin Mosque in Fez, Al-Azhar, Al-Hijaz, al-Quds” during a critical stage of the eleventh century AH, enabled him to form different and broad patterns, described as encyclopedic in their thought and comprehensiveness. They became distinguished qualitative sources in their presentation due to the abundance of their production and their representation of the spirit of their era.

Al-Maqri began his intellectual and literary production inspired by the rich scientific environment in Fez and Marrakesh, where he met scholars, jurists and rulers whom he admired, and from whom he received favour and welcome. He began to compile his first book “Rawdat Al-As, Al-Atira Al-Anfas fi Dhikr Man Laqatumuh Min A’lam Al-Hadratayn Marrakesh and Fez” after meeting the Moroccan Sultan Ahmed Al-Mansour. He recorded everything related to his first trip to the far west of Maghreb, reciting literature and biographies that included prose and poetic texts of thirty-nine scholars and writers whom he met in his journey.

As for his book “Nafh al-Tayib min Ghushn al-Andalus al-Ratib wa Dhikr Waziriha Lisan al-Deen ibn al-Khatib” - it is a literary, scientific and historical encyclopedia. it contains the finest texts in clear and honest images about Andalusia, the news of its people, the characteristics of its society, the biographies of its people, the methods of its writers, the integrity of its scholars, the biographies of its kings, the behaviour of its ministers, its life, thought and literature. Had it not been for this encyclopedia, most of the texts of the news of Andalusia would have been lost, as most of the sources he relied on and quoted from have become obsolete. The motive for writing it was influenced by the scientific environment in Damascus where Al-Maqri resided (1037 AH = 1627 AD) and saw among those he was sitting with a passion and desire to know the conditions and news of Andalusia in his talk to them about it and about Lisan al-Din Ibn al-Khatib, which prompted one of Al-Maqri’s close friends and students, Ahmad Ibn Shahin, to ask him to write a book on the subject.

Nafh al-Tayyib was an important and indispensable source for any researcher or historian seeking its material or writer wanting to drink from its unparalleled abundance.

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The first volume is about Andalusia. History, cities, production, sects, conquests, and figures in politics, thought, religion, poetry, and literature in 704 pages. The second volume is about some of those who traveled from Andalusia to the Levant, so it included about (307 figures), while the third volume includes some of the arrivals to Andalusia from the people of the Levant, more than 475 figures. The fourth volume is in more than two hundred pages and includes more than 700 figures, followed by a discussion of the enemy's victory over Andalusia and the people's appeal for help to save it.

Then Lisan al-Din Ibn al-Khatib takes up three volumes (5-6-7) about his ancestors, upbringing, sheikhs, and connections with kings and notables, along with a number of long examples of his production in prose and poetry, then his children and some of his other connections. This book has received great and significant attention from the audience of readers, senior scholars and literary giants who have devoted themselves to studying and praising it, both in the past and present, including Issa Al-Tha'alibi Al-Jaza'iri, who taught it to his students in Mecca. Among the scholars who have worked on summarizing and abbreviating it are:

- Ibn Al-Wakil: "Taghrid al-Andalib ala Ghusn al-Andalus al-Ratib".
- Ahmed bin Mohammed Al-Titouani Al-Fasi: "al-lo'lo' al-khassib min Nafh al-Tayib".
- Sheikh Ahmed Dahlan, Sheikh Ahmed Al-Jaza'iri, and Sheikh Hamouda bin Mohammed Al-Nouri.

Thus, Al-Maqri opened the gate of Maghrib to the Arab East, and the window of Andalusia before them, he extended to them the ropes and bridges of Maghrebin-Andalusian knowledge and thought, then transferred its tributaries from the Arab East to his compositions and sessions, which became widespread and exceeded the horizons.

Al-Maqri was truly a link for civilizations and far-flung human thought that shone during his time in Tlemcen, the capital of science, rich in Andalusias heritage and civilization where Al-Maqri gathered the knowledge, sciences and literature. Then he was influenced and dazzled by the radiant scientific movement in Fez when he entered it in 1009 AH, then Marrakesh at the height of its prosperity under the Saadi rule.

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- “Azhar Al-Riyadh”: This book is filled with rare news about Morocco and Andalusia, in addition to a biography of Qadhi Iyad and what is related to his personality and the news of his time. Its subject is literature, history and biographies, and it contains many scientific, historical and jurisprudential benefits.
- “Fath Al-Muta'ali fi Wasf Al-Na'al”, which is a book on prophetic literature, describing the sandals of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.
- “Idha'tul Dojna fi Aqaid Ahl al-Sunna”: in al-Aqaid, it is a poem containing 500 verses and includes 17 chapters and an introduction. It has many commentaries by great scholars such as Abdul Ghani Al-Nabulsi.
- “Urf Al-Nashq fi Akhbar Dimashq” (Muhammad bin Abdul Karim ,P272-278): In History and Literature.

3.4 Al-Maqri's contribution to the scientific movement and intellectual renaissance:

Al-Maqri enjoyed a strong memory that captured everything he read, understood and stored as testified by his contemporary scholars who stated that he was the most knowledgeable and aware of poetry and events of his time. Al-Babli said, “Nobody from the Maghreb has reached us more knowledgeable than Sheikh Al-Maqri”(Al-Ayyashi, Vol 2, p 128) . Al-Qadiri said, “We did not know at the time of the subject of the biography (Al-Maqri) anyone who had a better memory than him.” (Al-Qadiri, Vol1, p185). There is no stronger and more truthful evidence of this than what he deposited in his book “Nafh Al-Tayib,” as he derived it all from his memory that formed his specific source in the Arab East when he left his books in the Maghreb(Ahmad al-Maqari, vol 1, P108-109).

Al-Muhibi said about Al-Maqri: “He is the preserver of the Maghreb, the master of eloquence, and he has no equal in the quality of his intellect, clarity of mind, and strength of intuition. He was a brilliant sign in the science of theology, interpretation, and hadith, and a dazzling miracle in literature and lectures. He has popular writings”.

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Al-Maqri had a rare memory, so he was known as the Hafiz of Maghreb. His student Yahya al-Shawi al-Miliani al-Jaza'iri said "My master Ahmad al-Maqri memorized all the books in the library of Sultan al-Dhahabi. He memorized them in a period of three years and told them, 'If the Sultan's library burned down, I would dictate them from memory.' (Abdul Rahman Al-Jilani, Vol3, p145-148) Thus, his intellectual contribution during his era was through the participation in various sciences and arts, with his diversified writings, flourishing the scientific and literary movement, with a significant influence that extended beyond distant, later times. Therefore, his scientific contribution became a reliable source to many studies and researches.

His journey to the far Maghreb (Morocco) was very productive during the reign of Al-Mansur Al-Saadi, which witnessed intellectual and scientific prosperity, literary prosperity, and an abundance of scientific production, as well as a great expansion in educational activity in private schools, kuttab, the places of faqihs and educators, zawiyas, official student schools, and mosques. 53 This scientific environment provided by Sultan Al-Mansur Al-Saadi motivated Al-Maqri for writing and teaching lessons in the schools he visited as distinguished scholar, such as al-zawiya Dila'iyya, Al-Abarin Mosque, which witnessed an active scientific movement to the point that the students who came to it took up residence next to it, considering that it is located between the Al-Qarawiyyin Mosque and the Al-Attarin School in Fez.

Al-Maqri was very knowledgeable and mastered the twelve sciences known to his era: tafsir (interpretation), fiqh (jurisprudence), tawqit (timing), fara'idh (inheritance rules), the principles of fiqh, Osul al-Deen (the principles of religion), language (Arabic) sciences, Naho (grammar), Bayan (rhetoric), history, and Sufism. We find that he excelled in fiqh until all eyes were drawn to him when he arrived in Fez and attended the council of Sheikh Ali bin Imran Al-Salasi at the Al-Qarawiyyin Mosque and discussed with him some of the fiqh (jurisprudential) issues that were difficult for him, and he excelled in them and benefited. "He was the one who was at that time deeply rooted in fiqh and well-versed in it, so Al-Salasi acknowledged him and treated him fairly. On that day, his fame spread to every passerby, he approached people,

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and they approached him. He mingled with students and writers and sought Ijazah (license) from scholars for himself and they sought Ijazah from his uncle Saeed through him. He used to impress the professors and students of Fez with the strength of his argument, the presence of his intuition, and the power of his memory”.

The letter sent to him by Abu al-Hasan al-Shami is an evidence of his high status and lofty position and the people’s interest while teaching his class in Fez, he said: “His scientific and deep knowledge is genuine as seen in his teaching class al-Borda, he was very prominent to the point that people would pour in on him like a flood and would flock to him from every corner of the city”.

His sessions were attended by a large crowd of students and notables of Fez who flocked to him during his teaching hadith, and he gained wide fame. Thus, he extended a bridge of cultural communication between Algeria and Maghreb. Al-Maqri's dedication to preserving the heritage of Maghrebin and Andalusian literature is substantial since he preserved those important documents that he worked hard to collect and protect from loss.

The spirit of his era was embodied in his writing, as was the interest of his contemporaries among the scholars in the religious sciences, such as tafsir , fiqh, aqaid, and hadith. His interactions with scholars and writers from the Maghreb and the Levant also appeared clearly in his books, where poetic exchanges and literary correspondence took place between them, such as requesting ijazah, riddles, requesting fatwas, and fiqh, linguistic, and doctrinal questions. This demonstrates the status of his intellectual and scientific activity, his literary contribution, and his participation in leading the cultural and scientific scene during his era.

The spirit of that era is evident in Al-Maqri’s keenness to hold frequent scientific meetings with his contemporary scholars when he arrived in the capital, Algiers, which he reached in 1027 AH and stayed there for a short period. He was keen to meet its notables to discuss various scientific issues. He met with the Hanafi Mufti, Al-Khatib Muhammad ibn Husayn Qarman, the poet and writer Muhammad ibn Ras al-Ayn, and the Mufti of Algiers, Sa’id Qadura.

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In the same context, Al-Maqri had scientific circles in which he taught tafsir, whether in the councils that he led during his stay in Maghreb where he spent 14 years as a teacher, imam and mufti, or in the various Islamic cities where he settled and resided. Abdul Karim Al-Fakoun mentioned in his book, Manshur Al-Hidayah, “Ahmad Al-Maqri took up teaching at the Great Mosque of the city of Algiers after he left Morocco due to the turmoil in its conditions, and among what he studied there was tafsir. He stayed in Algiers hosted by faqihs and scholars and he took up teaching there and taught tafsir”.

The tafsir is also the reason for his fame in Egypt, as when he came to Egypt he found a rare tafsir in one of the books in the marketplace in which its author interpreted Surat An-Nur and mentioned a rare fiqh issue, so Al-Maqri memorized it easily due to his intelligence, leadership and amazing memory. It happened that someone asked about that issue in one of the councils in which many Al-Azhar scholars and jurists had gathered, so they were all surprised by the question, except that Al-Maqri answered him with what his memory contained, and when he was asked about his source, he referred to the unknown book of tafsir. Therefore, it became clear to those present: his abundant knowledge, strong memory and high stature(al-Qadiri, Nashr al-Mathani, vol1, P295).

This story was the starting point of his fame in Egypt and proof of his superior scientific ability. Al-Maqri wrote the book “I’rab Al-Quran”, that is a tafsir of the Quranic chapters and their grammar which demonstrates his deep understanding of the explicit meaning of the Quran.

4. Conclusion

The extent of Ahmad Al-Maqri’s contribution to intellectual and scientific life is clear through his abundant writings. His movement and travel in countries, east and west, increased the extent of his influence and presence in the intellectual and scientific scene, despite his alienation from his homeland and separation from his family, and the coldness he encountered in Egypt and the turmoil of political conditions in the Maghreb. However, this did not deter his determination to continue his path and scientific progress, so he acquired the upper hand in literature and the firm footing in science and the great merit in writing and teaching. His influence extended outside his

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surroundings and his country to many Islamic scientific centers, so he deserved to be considered a unique pole of civilizational and cognitive radiation.

Al-Maqri's contributions demonstrate his civilizational role in spreading Islamic and human sciences during his era. He was of encyclopedic thought, and he provided abundant and diversified productions, as he was a literary historian, Sufi jurist and theologian. He participated in rational and transmitted sciences, including the sciences of the Quran, tafsir , hadith, monotheism and fiqh, which demonstrates his scientific superiority, the breadth of his knowledge, his activity and his high ability to write and lecture.

Scholars and rulers have recognized his virtue and acknowledged his vast knowledge. His gatherings were filled with pioneers of knowledge from students and scholars. He held the positions of imamate, and fatwa, and held and advanced chairs of teaching in the science of Aqaid, tafsir, hadith, history, fiqh, language, and literature. He was keen to connect cultural and intellectual ties between the Arab East and West, and to build bridges of knowledge through the history of Maghreb and Andalusia, and to unveil the scientific heritage of the Islamic Maghreb.

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