

Political Conditions' Effect on Scientific Expedition Movement Between the Central Maghreb and Al-Andalus in the Fourth and Sixth Centuries AD



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Date of submission: 10/03/2025 **Date of acceptance:** 21/05/2025 **Date of publication:** 03/06/2025



Abstract :

From the beginning of the Islamic conquests until the fall of the last Muslim stronghold (Granada, 1492 AD) in the Lands of Andalus, communication between it and the Central Maghreb lasted from the first century AH to the end of the ninth century AH (8 to 15 AD). During this time, the two countries experienced a common, interactive, and intertwined history, making it difficult, if not impossible, to study this shared history simultaneously. Since it is possible to distinguish between two types of scientific movements (from and to) controlled by various factors and reasons, particularly political ones, that were known by the two countries, we will attempt to highlight an important aspect of these interactions, represented in the movement of scientific expeditions between them during a significant period, which is between the fourth and sixth centuries AH. We will also highlight the most important scientific pioneers and their effects in both countries.

Keywords: Al-Andalus; Central Maghreb; Communication; Scientific Expedition; Political Environment

Introduction:

From the first century AH to the end of the ninth century AH (8 to 15 AD), that is from the beginning of the Islamic conquests until the fall of the last Muslim stronghold (Granada, 1492 AD) in Al-Andalus,

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communication between the two countries occurred. During this time, the Central Maghreb and Al-Andalus experienced a shared, interactive, and entwined history. The scientific movements between them during this significant period, which spans the fourth and sixth centuries AH, will thus be highlighted as an important aspect of interactions between the two countries. What sets this period apart is the difference in the political standing of the two adversaries.

The Shiite Fatimid Dynasty was established after a risky coup in Maghreb at the beginning of the study period, and the ensuing fallout had a direct impact on the security of the central Maghreb, causing it to descend into chaos and instability.

This situation affected numerous aspects of the country's life, but perhaps what matters most are the effects it had on the intellectual and practical life of the Maghreb in general and the Central in particular, particularly between sects. Since the majority of the Maghreb's population is Sunni, the newfound Fatimids and their Shiite doctrine caused a conflict between the Maghreb and their Sunni sect, and if not Sunni, it is closer to Sunnis than to Shiites, particularly those actions taken by proponents of the Shiite doctrine of harassing supporters of the doctrine of the Maghreb in general and the Central Maghreb in particular.

This situation caused many Central Maghreb scholars and students to migrate, either to escape these persecutions or to find a suitable environment in which to receive and disseminate science. What is perhaps important in this case is their migration to Al-Andalus, which at the start of the studied period was in a state of stability, particularly after the establishment of the Umayyad Caliphate there. The rulers of that region, including Al-Mustansir Billah, paid attention to science and scientists, which encouraged the migration of Central Maghreb scientists and students to Al-Andalus.

In contrast to the transition from chaos in the Maghreb to stability at the end of the study period, and from stability in Al-Andalus to chaos and retreat at the end of the study period, scientists were prompted to migrate from Al-Andalus to a variety of locations, including the Central Maghreb countries. The study's goal is to draw attention to the current climate as a source of blasphemy or alienation for scholars.

Literature Review:

Although the perspective of each researcher varies, the topic has been studied by several scholars, and this study comprises:

Cultural interactions between Maghreb throughout the Almoravids, Almohads, and Al-Andalus eras (5-7 AH) is the title of a PhD thesis in

Islamic history from the Department of History, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Abu Bakr Belkaid Tlemcen. The study raised the following issue: Did cultural connection during the Almoravid and Almohad periods result from the Maghreb and Al-Andalus' relationship?

Haj Abdelkader Khalaf's master's thesis on Islamic life: "The Berbers' intellectual contribution in Al Andalus from the Amiri era to the end of the Almoravid existence (371-539 AH / 981-1144 AD)," Department of Archaeology and History, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Oran, and the question he raised: What are the boundaries of Berber participation in the space of thought and culture in Al Andalus during the period under study?

Research Problem

Therefore, the following question is brought up: How much did the political climate of the fourth and sixth century AH influence the direction of scientific movements (migrations) between Al-Andalus and the Central Maghreb? What effects do these movements have?

Methodology:

This study used a number of methods. The historical method was adopted to chronicle recent developments, and the comparative approach was used to analyze differences between the two research periods. The analytical method also examined how political factors impact intellectual and scientific life.

The above problem is addressed in this study according to the following plan:

- Introduction
- The first axis: A Geopolitical Study of the Two Regions (Central Maghreb and Al-Andalus) during the Period between the 4th and 6th Centuries AH
- The second axis: The Political Environment of the Study Space during the Fourth Century and Its Impact on the Direction of the Scientific Movement.
- The third axis: The Political Environment of the Study Space during the Sixth Century AH and Its Impact on the Direction of the Scientific Movement.
- Conclusion

The First Axis: A Geopolitical Study of the Two Regions (Central Maghreb and Al-Andalus) During the Period Between the 4th and 6th Centuries AH

1. Environment or Geographical Space of the Case Study:

1.1 Central Maghreb:

When Arab geographers separated the Maghreb into three sections—the lowest, the Central, and the maximum (Far)—they used the term "Central" to distinguish between the areas that were close to and distant from the east. This is why it was given this name¹. Because of the Central Maghreb's mediation, historians disagree over its bounds. According to the author of *Al Istibsar* (Insight), Taza 2 is the country that marks the end of the Central Maghreb and the start of the Far Maghreb.²

The Central Maghreb's eastern borders are inaccurate because they lack a natural barrier, unlike its western borders, even though historians were able to modify its western borders.³ According to Ibn Khaldun, its eastern borders begin in Pune and extend northward to Aris and subsequently the Aures. Even Tebessa reiterated that the nations of Medea,⁴ Mitija, and Sanhaja from Algeria border the eastern part of the Maghreb. Generally speaking, the Central Maghreb's geographic area extended from Tahret to the Moulouya Valley.⁵

1.2 The Lands of Al-Andalus

Its position, which encircles the oceans on most of its sides, gave it the original moniker, the Iberian Peninsula.⁶ About the Andalusians who lived there, it is a peninsula, whereas Iberia is related to its early Iberian people.⁷ Al-Andalus's Greek name is Ishbania, which the invading Muslims later adopted as Al-Andalus.⁸

The location of Al-Andalus is in the southwest of the European continent, north of the Maghreb. It is encircled by water on three sides: the North Sea to the north, the Sea of Darkness to the west, and the Roman Sea (Mediterranean Sea) to the east and south.⁹

The Second Axis: The Political Environment of the Study Space during the Fourth Century and Its Impact on the Direction of the Scientific Movement:

1. The Political Environment of the Central Maghreb and Al-Andalus during the Fourth Century AH:

1.1 The Political Environment in the Central Maghreb during the Fourth Century AH:

The Central Maghreb countries during the third and fourth centuries AH are not far from the events that Maghreb experienced generally. During this time, several factors led to a state of chaos and instability in Maghreb, which led many scientists and science students to migrate in search of or request a suitable environment for the dissemination of science. From the destinations that went to Al-Andalus,

which at the time had such an environment, what were the causes of the chaos that Maghreb experienced?

The establishment of the Fatimid Dynasty and the resulting phase of conflict between the Fatimids (Shiites) and the states that existed in Maghreb were the results of a dangerous coup that occurred in the Maghreb in general and the Central Maghreb at the end of the third century AH and the beginning of the fourth century AH. This coup hurt the overall situation in Maghreb and brought about a state of chaos and instability.

Beginning in 289 AH and ending with the fall of the Aghlabid and Rustumid Dynasties in 296 AH,¹⁰ the Fatimids fought numerous wars with the Aghlabid Dynasty (in the Near Maghreb and the East of the Midwest) and the Rustumid Dynasty (in the Central Maghreb). During this time, the majority of the cities in the central Maghreb were taken, including Constantine, Setif, Tebessa, and Tahrt, the capital of the Rustemid Dynasty.¹¹

Following a partial resolution for the Fatimid Dynasty in Maghreb, a conflict of a different nature arose between the Fatimids themselves, between Abdullah Al-Shi'i and Ubayd Allah Al-Mahdi. This conflict culminated in the latter's murder at the orders of the Mahdi slaves, and Abd al-Shi'i's supporters committed a significant act of sedition.¹²

The Fatimids' arbitrary policies towards the Maghreb's residents, which included taxing them heavily and instituting new, strange religious rites that the locals had never heard of since the first Islamic conquests, were another factor contributing to the chaos that the region experienced during this time. In addition, the insults to the senior companions and imams of Islam¹³ were widely condemned by the population as well, which repeatedly caused revolutions against them.¹⁴

Maghreb also became a place of conflict between the Fatimids in Maghreb and the Umayyads of Al-Andalus. The Umayyads sought to expand their influence in Maghreb because they were afraid of each other doing the same. As a result, Maghreb suffered greatly, particularly the central Maghreb.¹⁵

One of the reasons why so many scholars and students from the Maghreb in general and the Central East in particular migrated to Al-Andalus was because of the unstable security conditions in the Central Maghreb countries and the negative effects they left behind. They were looking for a suitable environment to learn or spread. This raises the question of what Al-Andalus' political climate was during this time.

1.2 The Political Environment of Al Andalus during the Fourth Century:

After Prince Abdul Rahman bin Muhammad came to power in 300 AH, he engaged in protracted wars to regain control of the nation under the central authority in Cordoba. This was in contrast to the difficult circumstances that Maghreb was facing at the start of the Fourth Century AH. Al-Andalus was also experiencing political unity and great military power. The Umayyads' dominance also reached into northern Far Maghreb, where emirs rushed to join the Umayyad alliance¹⁶ and faced the threat of the Fatimid Dynasty's rise in Maghreb. To bolster his religious standing against the Fatimid kingdom in the Maghreb.¹⁷ Abd Al-Rahman ibn Muhammad proclaimed himself caliph of Al-Andalus in 316 AH/929 CE ¹⁸ and was known as Al-Nasir Li-Din Allah.¹⁹

2. The Impact of the Political Environment of the two case studies on the Direction of Scientific Expeditions:

Many Maghrebi students and scientists decided to migrate to areas more secure for their lives as well as a suitable environment for the dissemination or learning of science because of the chaotic and deteriorating political situation that occurred in Maghreb in general and in central Maghreb in particular at the end of the third century and the beginning of the fourth century AH. This hurt the nation's scientific and intellectual field, particularly on the pioneers of the Maliki School. The caliphate represents the height of development and wealth in every domain.

The rulers of Cordoba did not hesitate to bless this scientific activity because they wanted to give these expatriates security and stability. They surrounded them with their care and showered them with gifts. This is especially true in the scientific and intellectual field, where many qualified scientists, scholars, and those who want to learn have gathered in its major cities. They also included scientists and students of science from the East, which is tired of the people of science and knowledge.

The Umayyad Caliph in Al-Andalus, Abdul Rahman bin Muhammad Al-Nasser, valued science and its inhabitants for the religion of God during his reign (300–350 AH). He also created the right environment for scientific advancement and cultural development,²⁰ which his son Caliph Al-Hakam Al-Mustansir Bi Allah would later exploit during his reign (350–366 AH).

It was stated by Ibn Al-Khatib: "A scholar, jurist of doctrines, an imam in genealogical knowledge, a preserver of history, a collector of

books, a distinguished man from every world and generation, and across all places and periods, devoted himself and dedicated his efforts to it, becoming an authority, a role model and a fundamental reference to be followed."²¹ Al-Hakam Al-Mustansir Billah supported the scientific movement and gave it all the resources it needed to succeed locally.²²

The majority of scholars cited his virtues and wrote numerous classifications about him because, after assuming power in Al-Andalus, Al-Mansur bin Abi Amer continued his predecessors' commitment to science and scientists. He was a lover of scientists and would often sit and debate with them.²³ We will show examples of the first scientific expeditions from the Central Maghreb to Al-Andalus in the fourth century AH. These instances of the Al-Andalus rulers' concern for science and its inhabitants drew science enthusiasts from the Central Maghreb to visit it.²⁴

Examples of the Scientific Movements' Pioneers (Migrations) from the Central Maghreb to Al-Andalus:

1) Ahmed bin Qasim bin Abdul Rahman bin Abdullah bin Muhammad Al-Tamimi Al-Tahirti - nicknamed Abu Al-Fadl - (309-395 AH):

He was born in Tahret, in the heart of the Maghreb, and moved to Cordoba from Al-Andalus with his father when he was a little boy in 334 AH. He resided at the "Masrour" mosque, where he was educated by elders and his father was present.²⁵

2) Ahmed Bin Makhlouf Al-Messili - known as Al-Khayyat -:

He came from the Central Maghreb and settled in Al-Andalus. He was a jurist who was well-versed in matters and skilled at holding onto them. He started a discussion regarding the Maliki thought in Fiqh and was pious, modest, and moral. He passed away in Cordoba in 393 AH.²⁶

3) Abu Al-Qasim Abdullah Bin Khalid Bin Musafir, known as Al Orani and Ibn Al-Kharraz (338 -411 AH): ²⁷

"He was a righteous man and adhered firmly to Sunnah, with a longstanding expedition which lasted twenty years.... we found no one more reliable than him, none was more outstanding or dedicated to the Sunnah than him, from whom a group of people in Al-Andalus learnt knowledge," Ibn Al-Qadi said of him in his account of his more than two-decade-long expedition to Al-Andalus.²⁸

4) Abu Muhammad Abdullah Bin Yusuf Bin Talha Bin Amroun (Died in 429 AH / 1038 AD) :

According to one of his contemporaries regarding this Maliki jurist scholar of hadith who was born, raised, and educated in Oran: "He came

to Al-Andalus as a merchant in 429 AH, and inhabited Seville at the time of the great flood in that year, and he was trustworthy, and tells extensive stories about African sheikhs such as Muhammad bin Abi Zaid Al-Qayrawani and his counterparts, and he had knowledge of arithmetic and medicine and was influential in it".²⁹

5) Abu Bakr Yahya bin Abdullah bin Muhammad al-Qurashi al-Jamhi al-Wahrani: (died in 431 AH / 1039 AD:

Ibn Khazraj stated: "Our sheikh had a deep command of science, excellent in retention and deep in comprehension, and the science of hadith was the main subject of his talks and discussions." He was a member of the Oran community, well-versed in Hadith, and educated in both his native country and Al-Andalus.³⁰

The Third Axis: The Political Environment of the Study Space during the Sixth Century AH and its Impact on the Direction of the Scientific Movement:

1. The Political Environment of the Central Maghreb and Al-Andalus during the Sixth Century AH:

1.1 The Political Environment of the Central Maghreb during the Sixth Century AH:

If we look at the political situation of the Maghreb in general and the Central Maghreb in particular, we can see that it was in turmoil at the end of the third century AH and the beginning of the fourth century AH. However, at the beginning of the sixth century AH, things started to improve, and the Maghreb enjoyed great political stability under the rule of the Almoravids and Almohads. However, when its sons left it to go to the enemy " Al-Andalus " in search of safety and a suitable environment for their scientific endeavours, the latter became subject to deplorable political conditions that affected many aspects of life there. In the following, we will outline the factors that led to this decline.

Al-Andalus' political situation deteriorated, particularly from the start of the fifth century AH to the start of the sixth century AH, as a result of the Christians' conquest of numerous Muslim strongholds. Alfonso VI took control of Toledo in 487 AH/1085 AD, with the aid of the division and conflict that afflicted Muslims following the Fitna in the fifth century AH (11 AD), which resulted in the creation of over twenty kingdoms or emirates at war with one another.

They joined forces against one another with the Christians, who seized the chance to reclaim as much as they could from the Muslim territories. Even though the Almoravids, Almohads, and their successors from Bani Marin intervened, this process of recovery forced many of the

scholars of Al-Andalus to migrate and settle in different Islamic countries, such as the Central Maghreb, which welcomed arrivals from Andalusian islands and those seeking the best environment for conducting their scientific research.

1.2 The Impact of the Political Environment of the Two Study Spaces on the Direction of Scientific Expeditions:

The scientific and intellectual life in Al-Andalus suffered as a result of the political situation's decline. Its sons sought a suitable environment for the reception and dissemination of various sciences, and some of them left for the Central Maghreb countries, where security conditions were more stable than those of Al-Andalus in the sixth century AH. Examples of scientific expeditions from Al-Andalus to the Central Maghreb are shown in the following.

Examples of the scientific movements (migrations) pioneers from Al-Andalus to the Central Maghreb:

- Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Marwan bin Jabal Al-Hamdani:

He was born in Al-Andalus (from the city of Chlobinia), raised in Tlemcen, and is a jurist and judge from Oran. From 584-585 AH until 592 AH, he served as governor of the districts of Tlemcen and Marrakesh, then Seville, before returning to Marrakesh.³¹

-Abu Imran Musa bin Muhammad bin Marwan Al-Hamdani:

Although he was originally from Oran, he lived with his father, Abu Imran bin Marwan, for a while. Due to his father's authority over Almohads, he was raised in Marrakech under the care of the caliphate, where he received an education, cultivation, and education. His father taught him jurisprudence, and he also picked up information from other people. He served for a short time as a judge in Malaga and then Granada until his death in (Shaaban, 608). The sultan, the governor of Granada, and other subordinates attended his funeral, which was a major ceremony.

-Abu Muhammad Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Jabal Al-Hamdani

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Originally from Al-Andalus (the city of Chlobinia), he was now from Oran. He was a well-known orator and jurist who amassed enormous wealth as a result of his loyalty to the Sultan. At the start of Rabi' Al-Akhir in 557, he passed away in Marrakech.³²

Conclusion

An important conclusion can be drawn from this: the political environment, in general, and the security factor and political stability in particular, play a significant role in igniting the intellectual and scientific

life of any region. The more stable the political environment and the less unstable the security situation, the more stimulating and attracting thinkers and scientists the environment will be, and there will be a positive and active scientific movement full of numerous events and prolific scientific and intellectual production, which reflects the search of thinkers and scientists on stability and a fertile political environment. the one that supports their scientific and intellectual output and gives them favourable circumstances to foster intellectual life and care. To demonstrate how the political climate of the fourth and sixth century AH impacted the migrations of scientific missions between Central Maghreb (now Algeria) and Al-Andalus, we conducted this study. We caused those expeditions to have their effects.

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