

# **The Cultural History of the Sahara Algeria in the Writings of the Abū al-Qāsim Sa'd Allāh**

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## **Abstract:**

In this research paper, we present the contributions of the renowned historian Professor Dr. Abū al-Qāsim Sa'd Allāh - may Allah have mercy on him - in introducing the cultural history of the Algerian desert. This is done through his efforts in highlighting the reformist role of scholars in the region and introducing their works. Additionally, he acknowledges the role of zawiyas (religious schools) and schools in spreading awareness and preserving national values and traditions, as well as teaching language and religion to the youth. We also present his introduction to the books and studies that have tackled the history of the desert, whether they are Arabic or foreign, through his readings. Sa'd Allāh has also dedicated a significant amount of his writings to the journeys undertaken by individuals in the harsh desert sands. Although Sa'd Allāh did not specifically focus on the cultural history of the Algerian Sahara, he mentioned it as scattered fragments here and there in his multiple works that influenced the Algerian library from a national perspective. He was ahead in uncovering the conspiracy plotted by colonialist historians to distort our history for over a century and a half.

**Keywords:** Sa'd Allāh; Sahara; History; Books; Travels.

## **Introduction:**

Abū al-Qāsim Sa'd Allāh is considered one of the most important Algerian historians, and most of his writings are about the history of Algeria. Although we may not find a specific book on the cultural history of the Algerian Sahara in his works, this does not mean that he did not discuss its history in his writings. Since the Sahara is the largest part of the Algerian state's territory, its history is an important part of Algeria's history.

As a recognition of the efforts of the chief historian in introducing the history of the region, we decided to dedicate our research paper under the title: **"The Cultural History of the Algerian Desert in the Writings of the Chief Historian Abū al-Qāsim Sa'd Allāh,"** in order to highlight the role of the chief historian, Professor Dr. Abū al-Qāsim Sa'd Allāh, in introducing the schools and

zawiyas of the south and their role in the educational aspect. It was also a starting point in most cases for jihad against the French colonizers. Additionally, he introduced us to some of the scholars who were born in the desert and their works, and acknowledged their efforts in writing the local history of the region. He also engaged in reading some books, writings, and research that dealt with the history of the desert, whether local or foreign. As for the journeys that traversed the sands, he also addressed them through his writings.

#### **- Defining the Southern Desert Regions according to Sa'd Allāh:**

Before delving into Abū al-Qāsim Sa'd Allāh's definition of the cultural history of the desert, we thought it would be best to start by defining the concept of the Algerian Southern Sahara regions. Sa'd Allāh believes that there is no clear and agreed-upon definition for the concept of the Southern Sahara in Algeria. Sometimes it refers to the line that follows the Saharian Atlas, including Biskra, Bou-Saada, M'sila, El Oued, Bechar, and 'ayn Madi, all of which are considered southern. Other times, it only refers to the sandy land, including Touggourt, Ouargla, Hassi Messaoud, Metlili, and Touat, which form the southern line. These boundaries also extend to include Béchar, Tindouf, Reggane, 'ayn Salah, Tamanrasset, and Djanet. He also states that he will use the term "South" to refer to all the cities and villages located beyond the Saharan Atlas to the borders of Mali and Niger <sup>(1)</sup>.

#### **Firstly- introducing schools and Sufi lodges in the south:**

There is no doubt that schools and Sufi lodges have played a prominent role in the history of the Algerian Sahara. Many scholars and leaders have graduated from them, and they have often been the starting point for most of the revolutions that the desert regions have witnessed. Additionally, most of the Sufi lodges resisted colonial expansion, although some of them preferred to compromise due to competition for influence from one side or due to specific circumstances surrounding a particular lodge from another side.

We have defined Abū al-Qāsim Sa'd Allāh in most of the educational aspects prevalent in the south; with its sheikhs and teaching methods, such as the Toulka Zawiya of Sheikh 'alī li bin 'omar, the Nasserite Zawiya in Khnaka Sidi Naji, the Sheikh Al-Mukhtar bin Khalifa Zawiya in Ouled Jalal, the Muḥammad bin Belqasm Zawiya in El Hamel, and the Tajania Zawiya with its branches 'ayn Madi and Temacine, and the Qamar Zawiya <sup>(2)</sup>. The educational movement was not limited to the sheikhs of the zawiyas; there were also volunteer teachers in various mosques, some of whom also volunteered to teach in their homes or other places. However, when the occupation put an end to the phenomenon of free education supported by endowments, this type of education became limited to the Sufi zawiyas or the zawiyas of the fighters who obtained recognition from the French authorities for political and social reasons <sup>(3)</sup>.

As for the teaching systems and the names of some teachers in mosques and schools in Biskra in the late 19th and early 20th centuries AD, which

corresponds to the 13th and 14th centuries AH, such as Sheikh Muḥammad ban Abū al-Qāsim Ḥammār, Mustafā ban Muḥammad Zādī, and Mr. Zardūmī. It also spoke about the spread of French education in this region through the reports of the French inspectors Montilansqui, Sanekalber, and Dornone<sup>(4)</sup>.

The inspectors directed the teachers to prepare the students to enter French religious schools, not to teach the parents Arabic grammar, literature, and Islamic religion. This deprived the teachers of their religious status not only in terms of the legal profession, but also in terms of subjects and guidance<sup>(5)</sup>.

Sa'd Allāh highlighted the role of the Tawat and AL-'Azwad regions and their surroundings in trade, Sufism, and science for centuries, citing the book by Dr. Muḥammad Al-ṣṣālḥ Ḥūtiya on "Twāt and Azawād," in which Sa'd Allāh mentioned that they remained far from the eyes of the colonizers in the modern era, although they were a transit point for trade caravans. He also emphasized that this region has preserved the Arab-Islamic heritage and its social and cultural system despite the isolation and distance between palaces. He explained the political, economic, and cultural importance of the region, in addition to the pioneering role of Sufi paths and zawiyas. It is a station for communication between Algeria and its neighbors to the west and south, as well as a link between the peoples of Africa and the Arab-Islamic Maghreb<sup>(6)</sup>.

In his recent exhibition about the schools of Mīzāb, he introduces us to the ibn Yesgin Institute, which was founded in 1850 AH/1266 AD. He elaborates on the translation of its founder, Sheikh Muḥammad Ibn Yūssuf ' ṭFAYAš , and tells us about his reformist movement and his role in demanding that the colonial authorities respect the protection treaty of 1269 AH/1853 AD. This was achieved by reducing fines on the people of Mīzāb and leaving the rents of the Waqf properties in the hands of the Ibādī mosques. He also tells us about his composition of his book "Al-ššāfiya" about the history of Mīzāb<sup>(7)</sup>. He also provides us with a complete and detailed translation of the activities and works of the journalist Abī Al-Yakdān Ibrāhīm ibn Isā (1888-1973 AD/1306-1393 AH) and his role in the field of journalism and in the publication of books through the establishment of the Arabic printing press in 1350 AH/1931 AD. Sa'd Allāh mentioned that his first newspaper was Wādī Mīzāb, which was issued in 1345 AH/1926 AD and was printed in Tunisia and distributed in Algeria. As for his first book, "Iršād Al-ḥā'irīna," it was published in 1342 AH/1923 AD. He also participated in the establishment of the Association of Algerian Muslim Scholars in 1350 AH/1931 AD and was elected as a member of its administrative council in 1353 AH/1934 AD. Thus, his activities were associated with the national reformist movement that called for the Renaissance and the liberation of Algeria through Islam and the Arabic language. The French administration prevented him from publishing his newspapers between 1345 AH/1926 AD and 1357 AH/1938 AD, but he would change their titles whenever he was prevented from doing so. However, after 1358 AH/1939 AD, he stopped publishing newspapers

and focused on writing, including the still unpublished manuscript "Sullam Al-Istiqāma," which consists of seven parts on jurisprudence, the history of his newspapers, and the history of Ibādī<sup>(8)</sup>.

It also indicates that Sufi paths do not exist in the Wādī Mīzāb for reasons related to the Ibādī school itself, and perhaps also due to the failure of the jihad movement at the national level, as well as the scientific and commercial nature of the Mīzāb people. However, the creed of the Sheikh existed among both the followers of the Ibādī school and the followers of the Mālikī school in the region. The respect for the Sheikhs among the Ibādī followers reached a high level, but they do not have 'awrād (regular prayers), ḥadarāt, or ziyārāt like most zawiyas in other areas. However, they have developed a reverence for some sanctuaries, shrines, and places where they believe in blessings and hidden secrets. This is hardly different from what exists in other regions. As for the Metlili region, there are respected and even sacred places for the Sheikhs, represented by domes, mosques, and mausoleums, such as the tomb of Mūlāy Sulaymān ibn Mūlāy ibn Muḥammad, the leader of the Ashraf of Metlili, and the Zawiya of al-Hāḡ Mūsā ibn Aḥmad, the dome of Al-Hāḡ Būhafṣ ibn Sīdī Sheikh, and the domes of Sheikh Abd Al-kādr Al-ḡilālī some of which belonged to Sheikh Bū'mama's followers. In Ghardaia and its suburbs, there are numerous mosques with a Sufi character, as well as maqāmāt and shrines specific to each sect. However, we do not find the well-known zawiyas found in the rest of the country, nor the same Sufi paths like al-Tīḡāniyya and al-Rahmāniyya. Perhaps this exists among the followers and individuals, but not in the form of institutions and sheikdoms<sup>(9)</sup>.

Sa'd Allāh talks about the activity of the Association of Scholars in the desert, where he reveals the issue of the colonial authorities besieging the schools of the Association of Scholars in the south and restricting them by not granting them permission to operate like in the north. He also refers to the publication of the governor-general instructing the governors of the south to arrest and imprison any teacher affiliated with the association if they mention its name or invite people to join it<sup>(10)</sup>.

### **Secondly- introducing the desert scholars and their efforts:**

The spiritual value and civilizational status of any region is measured by the number of scholars it produces. Over the centuries, the Algerian desert has produced many scholars, some of whom have been of interest, such as Abū al-Qāsim Sa'd Allāh. We know about Al-Biskrī, Al'udwānī, Al-Talilī, Al-Qmārī, 'ṭfayaš, Al-'Uqbī, and others.

- 1- 'Īssa ibn Salāma Al-Biskrī (9th century AH/15th century CE): Sa'd Allāh introduces us to a scholar from Biskra who excelled in discourse and Sufism. He studied under "Al-tta'ālibī and grandson of Ibn Marzūk", and in the year 860 AH/1456 CE, he authored a book on the virtues of the Quran from a Sufi perspective, titled "Al-Llawāmi' wa-Al-'Asrār fī Manafī' Al-Quran wa Al-

'Aḥbār." However, it is not known where he was born or where he died. Sa'd Allāh mentions that he may have completed his education in Tunisia, as he mentions a number of its scholars in his aforementioned book. Also, by mentioning the fortress of Hawāra, it appears that he also studied in western Algeria.

The book is divided into three sections: the first section titled "The Virtues of the Noble Quran and its Accompanying Aspects," the second section titled "Benefits and Characteristics and their Accompanying Aspects," and the third section titled "Supplications, Stories, and Sending Blessings upon our Master Muḥammad."

Al-Biskrī mentions that he derived his information from scholars such as Al-ḡazālī, Al-Samarqandī, Al-Mundirī, Abu Al-Qasim Al-ḡāfiqī, Al-Burzulī, Ibn 'Arafa, Al-Quṣayrī, and others. He also quotes his teacher Al-ta'ālibī and some contemporary scholars.

However Sa'd Allāh criticized him for this book, saying, "Although the subject matter is noble and the title is interesting, the pearls and secrets that Al-Biskrī intended are of a specific type, which is a mixture of Sufism, asceticism, frivolity, and foolishness. He does not seek to derive the secrets of the Quran from its miraculous nature, its lofty meanings, and its legislations, nor does he aim to explore its rhetorical brilliance and human aspirations. Instead, he aims for something else from the Quran, which is relying on its verses as amulets and talismans, and repeating some of them as supplications and invocations in Sufi gatherings." This type of writing, which was prevalent during the ninth century, reveals the source of the disease in Algerian society at that time. If the opinion leaders in this society were of the Al-Farayastī, Al-Ttāzī, and Al-Biskrī type, then we can conclude that it was a sick society. It is not surprising, then, that the state disintegrated and fell prey to foreign invasion. Sa'd Allāh also adds that he found another work by Al-Biskrī in history, related to the conquest of Africa, but its news is mythical mixed with history<sup>(11)</sup>.

**2- Sheikh Al'udwānī (lived until around the mid-11th century/17th century):** Sa'd Allāh Al'udwānī, who originated from Wādī Souf, introduces us to him and praises his efforts in serving history. He is credited with documenting important events that took place between the 9th-11th centuries (15th-17th centuries). These events were not limited to Wādī Souf alone, but also encompassed Ziban, and eastern Algeria in general, as well as Tunisia and Tripoli. Without him, these events would have been lost to the present generation, depriving local history of an important link in its human, economic, and religious chain. Although he presented these events in a simple format, few show interest in them as time has buried and forgotten them. However, his book was of great importance due to his sense of history and his keenness to document it, in the absence of blogs and official documents.



As Sa'd Allāh Fath suggested, a library should be established in his name to honor his efforts. This library would contain various copies of his book, as well as contemporary documents and works related to him and his events, such as the works of Ibn Ḥaldūn, Al-Zarkašī, Ibn Abī Dīnār, Al-Hassan Al-Wazzān, and other authors from Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, and Libya. In addition, it would include books and documents from the Ottoman Empire, neighboring European countries such as Spain, Portugal, and Italy, as well as African countries like Songhai, Mali, and Ghana.

However, the original version of Al'udwānī book is still missing, and only a modern copy from the 13th century AH/19th century CE exists, which is two centuries after his death .

(12)

**3 -Sheikh Muḥammad Al-Ttāhar Al-Talilī (1328-1424 AH/1910-2003AD):** Sa'd Allāh reported a translation of it, in which he said that he collected the supernatural intelligence, the living memory and the indefatigable portfolio to the last breath in his life, and that he is (infinitely ambitious) always ready to hunt down religious and literary knowledge and sciences, whatever their source and by all means possible, and he can accept the knowledge of astronomy, arithmetic, chemistry, physics and others. If he had what was available to the ancient scholars and the Jesuits, he would have surpassed them in their work with innovation and innovation.

The Sheikh excelled in collecting knowledge and arts, judging people and things, and realizing the secrets of man, but he rejected politics because of what it was in the colonial era, not its civilizational meaning, because it was burned during the French rule in his area "gambling" or while studying in Tunisia or when he studied in the suburbs of Bejaia or during the Algerian liberation revolution. Finally, when he was neglected and insulted by the rulers of the country after independence, he did not seem to matter. He turned to God and closed his door in the face of unwanted visitors for fear of harming them, and it reached the point that they were questioning him in matters, and if he agreed with them, they invoked him, and if he opposed them, they hurt him.

Whoever contemplates his thoughts and poetry sees his departure from what he disgraces to what he adorns and sees him in preserving his dignity and preserving his science and morals.

Indeed, whoever did not know the upbringing of Sheikh Al-Talilī, his circumstances and his psyche, it was difficult for him to realize his goals and understand his meanings. In the eyes of his peers, he was difficult. He must be begged in an unusual way if he wishes to address him, because he weighs things and words on the scale of gold and may retreat and reject what he had accepted because he thought and believed that safety in retreating from a step after which he regretted.

Sa'd Allāh adds that Professor Ibrahim Raḥmanī dealt with a specific topic, which is Sheikh Al-Talīlī's interest in the sciences of the Quran, such as readings, drawings, static and omissions. As for Professor Ġnabzia, he focused on his activity in the field of modern education, following this in a gambling school and its program. Professors Ahmed Zḡab and Adel Maḥlū also presented two important topics from the works of Sheikh Al-Talīlī: "The Sheikh's attention to the linguistic issue, as shown by his restriction on the return of the colloquialist to his eloquent origin, and then the children's poetry of the Sheikh and his technical, psychological and educational advantage" <sup>(13)</sup>.

He also enumerated his fifteen compositions, <sup>(14)</sup> especially the notebooks containing a track record of Arabic words, proverbs and riddles now common in southern Algeria and in the Wādī Souf region specifically. <sup>(15)</sup> Therefore, his compositions are divided into two types <sup>(16)</sup>:

- Special: It deals with the news of the Wādī Sūf region, especially gambling.

- General: It deals with the Arab-Islamic culture and its men.

Sa'd Allāh also praises the Sheikh for preserving this Arabic linguistic balance, because blogging is the best way to preserve the heritage of the nation.

<sup>(17)</sup>Sa'd Allāh has scattered some of the Sheikh's works according to his will, especially his divan and his book "Al- ttābit wa Al-Maḥdūf fī Al-Qur'ān" <sup>(18)</sup>

#### **4 - Ḥalīfa ibn ḥassan Al-Qmārī (1123-1207 AH/1711-1792 AD):**

Sa'd Allāh wrote a translation of it stating that he was born gambling in one of the sub-districts of Wādī Suf, and spent his scientific life between his hometown, Biskra, Sidi Aqaba, and the strangulation of Sidi Naji. Despite this isolation, he used to draw from the sources of Tunisia and Constantine and rode the Moroccan pilgrimage, which was taking the road of the desert on its way back and forth, and among the scholars he met and passed by Abd Al Qādr ibn Aḥmed ibn šaqrūn Al-Fassī, as well as Al-Nnassirī Al-Ddar'ī, the owner of the "Al-RriḥLa Al-Kubrā", and Sa'd Allāh presented him with his book mentioned in jurisprudence "ḡawāhir Al-'Iklīl fī Muḥtaṣar al-šayḥ Ḥalīl", who completed his systems when he became old in the year(1192AH/1778AD), and he enumerated his verses Muḥammad Al-Ttāhar Al-Talīlī with nine thousand eight hundred and seventeen verses. Sa'd Allāh added that he also collected important jurisprudential issues such as al-Nnawāzil and fatāwā in a book known as al-Kunnāš , in which he is known for three hundred pages of large size. He also wrote an explanation on al-Sanūssiya and al-Aḡrūmiya systems and has a poem on the knowledge of the impact, fatwas and social opinions, but his effects were not collected and only printed by the aforementioned systems (ḡawāhir al-' Iklīl), which was printed by Sulayman al-Bārūnī In the early twentieth century in Egypt <sup>(19)</sup> .

**5 Al-Ttayab Al-‘Uqbī (1307-1379 AH/1890-1960AD):** Sa‘d Allāh spoke about the biography of Sheikh Al-Oqbi, including the fact that he was born in Sidi ‘Uqba near Biskra in the year (1307AH/1889AD). His family emigrated to the Hijaz before he reached the age of five, where he memorized the Quran in Medina and studied the circulating sciences. However, the Turks exiled him to Al-Rum Eli after the Arab Revolution and then to Anatolia and Izmir. After the First World War, he returned to Mecca, where Sharif Hussein entrusted him to manage the Qibla newspaper and the Amiri Printing Press.

He returned to his hometown of Biskra in the year (1338AH/1920AD) and established with the writers and reformers the newspaper "Echo of the Desert" in the year (1345AH/1926AD), and Sheikh Al-‘Uqbī founded the newspaper "Al-Islah" in the year (1927AH/1346), and he was also a representative of the scholars in Algiers before the establishment of their association, because he was known to be the most influential in the rhetoric.<sup>(20)</sup>

**6 ‘Abd Al- ‘Aziz Al-Ttamīnī (1130- 1223AH/1718-1808 AD):** Sa‘d Allāh provided a translation for him, and it was stated that his first life did not show anything unusual in it. He memorized the Qur'an as his peers, learned the principles of science, and practiced trade like other people of his country, but what distinguished him is his slow work to reform his society and his fight against corruption and nervousness that broke out in it, and some of the heresies that also spread. To encourage his Sheikh Yahya bin Saleh Al-Afdali was a great deal in carrying the message of reform, and thus Al-Ttamīnī graduated in religious positions until he was recognized by the scientific imamate and the sheikhdome of the mosque, and he became head of the council that was considered the supreme authority in the entire Mīzāb. Sa‘d Allāh also developed a definition of his book " Al-Nnīl wa šifā’u Al-‘Alīl", which was written for eighteen years, which is a book in Ibādī jurisprudence. Sa‘d Allāh says about him that he compared the work of Ahmed Al-Wansharisi in Maliki jurisprudence, as he enumerated his works in jurisprudence, monotheism, consensus, hadith, logic and a set of fatwas.<sup>(21)</sup>

**7 Mufdī Zakariya (1330- 1396AH/1912- 1976AD):** Sa‘d Allāh 's interest in the poet of the revolution was Mufdī Zakariya through an intervention he presented under the title Mufdī Zakariya and National Currents, so he was translated as being born in the Sahara (Ban Yasqan), but his family moved him to Annaba and went to Tunisia to study from Ḥaldūnia to Zaytūna, as he explained the poet's point of view in the national currents that he lived, being active in a critical stage that the Maghreb region went through, which is the period of the thirties that witnessed the celebration of the centenary of the occupation of Algeria. And the announcement of the barbarian dahir in Morocco, the holding of the Eucharistic Conference in Tunisia, and the repercussions of the execution of ‘umar Al-Muḥtār in Libya, in addition to the dissolution of the North African Star Party in (1348AH/1929AD) as a



punishment for calling for independence, Sa'd Allāh adds that whoever addresses the study of this poet must expand his culture, it is not enough for him to be a poet like him or a politician to write about self-made like him or to be on his part to do justice to him or without his side to put him in his place among poets, and scholars of this distinguished personality must be familiar with the political and cultural conditions of the homeland in the twentieth century, as well as the conditions of the Maghreb and the Arab Levant<sup>(22)</sup>.

**8 Sheikh 'ṭfayaš (1235-1332 AH/1820-1914 AD):** He is Muḥammad bin Yūssuf' ṭfayaš, known as the Qutb, born in the year (1236AH/1821AD) in Mīzāb. His education was mostly self-taught, so he memorized the Qur'an and learned the principles of religion in Arabic sciences, except for his studies with his brother Ibrahim, who was educated by him as a mature man. He began writing early and chose the topic of grammar despite its difficulty before he exceeded twenty, and he interpreted the Holy Quran three times, as he wrote in many sciences that exceeded three hundred between lengthy and short, and the sciences on which he worked are monotheism, jurisprudence, hadith, rhetoric, language sciences of morphology, grammar, ordinances and astronomy, in addition to history, arithmetic and logic<sup>(23)</sup>.

He also contributed to public life in Mīzāb, where he assumed social and religious responsibilities and issued fatwas, and he was also striving to develop solutions to people's issues in their relations with each other, their neighbors, the French colony, as well as with the Islamic world. His correspondence abroad was also evidence of his keenness to communicate his opinion, and one of the means of communication was also to print his books abroad at a time when Arabic printing was still difficult and limited<sup>(24)</sup>.

Sa'd Allāh made a comparison between Sheikh 'ṭfayaš, who is the pole of the Ibādiyat West, and Sheikh 'Abd Allah Al-Ssālmi, the pole of the Ibādiyat Orient. Sa'd Allāh highlighted some of the similarities and differences between the lives of the two sheikhs, each of whom lived through the period of transformation that the Islamic nation went through from colonialism to independence and freedom, and despite the spatial dimension between them and the weak conditions of Muslims and the control of foreigners over them, it did not prevent them from communicating and common interest in the fate of the Islamic nation, and for this reason each of them called for reform, advancement and sectarian tolerance, overcoming differences and the reasons for separation and encouraging Muslim rulers to rule with justice, consultation and adherence to the teachings of Islam<sup>(25)</sup>.

### **Third- Introduction to books and studies:**

The huge written heritage left by Abu al-Qasim Sa'd Allāh reflects a wide culture and deep knowledge of the various books and studies that dealt with the history of Algeria. He worked hard to read and acquire all the works related to the history of Algeria. He was not only introducing these studies to researchers

and historians, but also criticizing them, highlighting their advantages and revealing their disadvantages. Therefore, we have selected a number of these works that dealt in their places with the history of the Algerian Sahara.

1- **Tārīḥ Al'udwānī:** Sa'd Allāh presented and investigated and commented on it, this book contains three hundred and sixty-nine pages, which was originally a manuscript, but it was not unknown, in which Sa'd Allāh said: "We did not discover it, and we were surprised by the large number of copies of the manuscript in the hands of people. ", But the French documents talked about it since the year (1266AH/1850AD) as an important document for the history of the Arab Maghreb(Tunisia, Algeria and Tripoli), and even the Arab Mashreq.

Al-Adwani wrote his book in the century(11AH/17AD), which falls within the local history. It dates the tribes that settled south-east of Algeria and south-west of Tunisia, and their Arab origins and their march from the Orient to Morocco and their struggle against the rulers from Hafsiyyites and Ottomans. It also chronicles the lives of people under the rule of adventurers from various cities: Tripoli, Gafsa, Kairouan, Tozeur, Biskra, Constantine...etc. In the meantime, he talks about the Almoravids, their role with the public, the rulers, and their relationship with foreigners such as the Spaniards.

On the other hand, it is a book that enters into the so-called folk literature, its language and the customs of the people it talks about, the women and myths it tells, and the tales, adventures and dignities...Etc., all this makes it a piece of folk literature that when you read it, it is as if you are reading a piece of Banī Hilāl's Tagribat or One Thousand and One Nights. It also becomes a good book to read in Asmar and Majlis for entertainment, lesson, decoding and expanding the field of imagination. In this regard, it is more like a book of epics, in which reality, fiction and myth are included. Al-Adwani did not mention the title of his book and did not mention its sources except casually, as its main source is the strong memory, and it was inspired by a Bedouin society, condemned by fate and nature to struggle around some oases, water wells and pastures, or around secondary cities such as Kairouan, Gafsa, Tozeur and Biskra<sup>(26)</sup>.

2- **Ray Al-Ġalīl:** It is a manuscript by a Libyan traveler named 'Abd al-Jalil al-Fazani. The title of this manuscript is "Ray Al-ġalīl fī Aḥbār Banī 'Abd Al-ġalīl, one of the sultans of the Fezzan". It is written in one hundred and three papers, and it is written in a clear, legible and colloquial font. What Sa'd Allāh noticed about this manuscript is that its author wrote it while he was residing in Paris. As for the date of its authorship, it was the year(1268AH/1852AD). The book is in two parts, but the difference between one part and another is not clear from the general plan of the book.

This book contains important information about the Maghreb, Sudan and Egypt in the aforementioned century, and what concerns us in the subject of our research from this author is the wars that took place between the Algerians and

the French in his time, especially in the eastern desert region, such as Wādī Rīḡ and Taghrat, and specifically the revolution of Sharif bin Abdullah.

What Sa'd Allāh notes about this book is that its title does not fit exactly with its topic ('Aḥbār Banī 'Abd Al-ḡalil), and that more than half of it is dedicated to the news of the Algerian country.

Sa'd Allāh has submitted a study of this book, in response to the desire of some Libyans who pressed him to provide his information about this manuscript<sup>(27)</sup>.

**3- The spread of Islam in Africa:** Sa'd Allāh presented this book, which was written by Nehemiah N.Levtrpion, R.Pouwels, and the full title of the book:

N.Levtrpion and R.Pouwels: **The History of Islam in Africa**, Ohio State University, USA, 2000.

Sa'd Allāh praised the role of the two researchers because the book enters into collective work due to the breadth of its material geographically, chronologically and objectively. The book deals with the history of Islam and Muslims in Africa over centuries.

Sa'd Allāh regrets that the Muslims of the Islamic Maghreb did not undertake a similar project, and he bemoans the cancellation of African studies from university programs, and the lack of a strategy that serves the common interests with Africa<sup>(28)</sup>.

**4- The Golden Age of Trade between the Maghreb and Black Africa:** Sa'd Allāh talked about this book written by the British A.O. Boufule, and reported that the first edition of it appeared under the title "Caravans of the Ancient Desert" in the year (1833AH/1249AD), after which the author decided to print it in the year (1958AH/1378AD) under the title "The Golden Age of Trade. "It has so far been revised and added to by researchers. Bouville's goal was to reveal how the desert played an important historical role; it enriched the Carthaginians, puzzled the Romans, and then became a major passage for caravans.

In this book, there is a statement that the trans-Saharan roads have woven and strengthened the relationship of blood and culture between the peoples of the north and south of the desert, and how the desert has become a major crossing for the caravans of the Association of the cities of the north civilized by the many souks and centers of the south<sup>(29)</sup>.

**5- Al-Ddi'āya'ilā sabīli Al-mu'minīna:** Sa'd Allāh gave a translation to the author of this book, Ibrahim' ṭfayaš , the son of Muḥammad bin Yūssuf EL-Shahir, and praised his reformist role, and since the book was published in (1342AH/1923AD), the author, according to Sa'd Allāh, was at the forefront of patriots and reformers. The topics contained in the book were thoughts and opinions he expressed about issues that were taking place after the First World War in Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt in national and international forums. He called for renewal and diligence and praised the working scholars. He also

discussed the reasons for the delay of Muslims and the factors of European progress, the issue of evangelization of Christianity, and the methods of spreading Islam. He also relied in his thoughts on a group of scholars of history, Hadith and literature. He mentioned some of them as models in the margin and presented their opinions and texts in the text. Sa'd Allāh counted twelve translations for him, but his work on this book was within the framework of presenting the most prominent ideas contained in the book and he chose some of his translations <sup>(30)</sup>.

**6- Saint and Revolutionary:** This book was printed in the year (1415AH/1994AD), and it is originally a doctoral thesis by Mrs. Julia A. Klancy-Smith. CLENCY-Smith, a non-French study of popular revolutions, comes from an American specialist. It deals with the popular protests, or revolutions, that took place in the area of Wādī Rīg and the eastern desert up to the gutter and Metlili, and the role of religious dignitaries and leaders in it, as well as the role of the Tunisian depth; Al-Jarid region, in these revolutions that took place between (1246AH/1830AD) and (1318AH/1900AD).

Sa'd Allāh elaborated on the seven chapters of this book, where he found a lot of new information about the revolutions that took place in the region; the researcher used many of the archival documents she found in Tunisia, France and in some European countries <sup>(31)</sup>.

**7- Other books:** In addition to all of the above, Sa'd Allāh referred to some books that were written in the history of the desert, such as:

- **Al-Rrisāla Al-ššāfia fī tāriḥ Banī Mīzāb**, written by Sheikh Muḥammad ibn Yūssuf ' ṭfayaš , in the year (1297AH/1880AD) after the request of the French orientalist Emile Masakri. ' ṭfayaš believes that he replied in his letter in a way that does not harm Islam and Muslims, in reference to the fact that he wrote this acronym for the French, and this book includes the genealogies of the children of Mīzāb, their origin, beliefs, histories and men <sup>(32)</sup>.

- **Al-Ssarūf fī tāriḥ Wādī Sūf**: 'Ibrahim Al-ʿwāmī, one of the judges of Sūf, scholars and writers of his generation, wrote a history of the region in the year (1331AH/1913AD) at the request of one of the French, also called officer Kovich. According to Sa'd Allāh, the book is divided into two parts, the first in historical matters and ostracism, and the second in genealogy, the first is larger than the second, and its sources on this author are twenty and he wrote it in the year (1331AH/1913AD) <sup>(33)</sup>.

- The book of **Al-qawl Al-basīṭ fī'ahbār Tamanṭūt**, which is a work in history and genealogy, written by Bin Bada Haida <sup>(34)</sup>

- The book of **manṭiqat Twāt** by Abdul Rahman Salka published in the year (1341AH/1922AD) <sup>(35)</sup>.

- The book of **Al-Tibr Al-Masbūk** by Sheikh Muḥammad al-Saih, which is a book on the history of the Tijani Zawiyah in Tamasin.

- **Tārīḥ qabā'il Al-Az'ğar (Al-Huğğār)**, which is a restriction written by Sheikh Ibrahim Ould Sidi, and sent to Sheikh Al-Tijani. It was referred to by Henry Duveyrier (Henri) in the book *Discovering the Desert* in (1277 AH/1860AD) ().<sup>36</sup>

- **Tārīḥ Al-Zza'aṭīša**: Sa'd Allāh believes that this manuscript is prepared by Taher Amer according to what Sheikh bin Zakri told him, and he also says that he searched for the manuscript on several occasions but did not stand on it, and he also adds that there may be a copy of it in the library of Sheikhs Abdul Majeed Habba or Abdul Karim Tawati<sup>(37)</sup>.

#### **Fourth - Desert Trips:**

Journeys are an important source of history, especially in terms of social, cultural, and even geographical aspects. Many Muslim and foreign travelers have crossed the Algerian desert, although many foreign trips are present and printed, since most of them were exploratory and espionage trips for the purpose of occupying the desert or benefiting from its bounties. However, Arab trips are few and rare, so Abu al-Qasim Sa'd Allāh provided us with a great service by publishing a number of them, which greatly contributed to unveiling many historical facts that were overlooked by foreign trips.

**1- Riḥlat Al-Hāğ ibn al-Ddīn Al-Ağwātī**: Sa'd Allāh arabized the journey of bin Al-Din Al-Aghwati in North Africa, Sudan and Diriyah from English to Arabic, but this work is still shrouded in ambiguity because its information is very important, and it needs additional information as well. Ibn al-Din al-Aghwati combined news about the desert, its villages, oases and customs, part of the Arabian Peninsula, Djerba, Gabes, Chinguetti and so on. Written by Laghouati in a booklet containing fourteen pages in the year (1242AH/1826AD) at the request of the American Consul in Algeria, "**William Hodson**"<sup>(38)</sup>. Although the latter asked him for more information and detail in it as well, but he was satisfied with that amount, and Sa'd Allāh imagines that Ibn al-Din had written more than that for himself, but he summarized for the consul what he saw as sufficient. The latter translated it from Arabic into English with the foreign correspondent of the Royal Asian Society (London), and printed at the Oriental Translation Foundation in London in (1246AH/1830AD)<sup>(39)</sup>. Davisak also translated it into French from the English text and published it with important corrections.

Among the most important areas he mentioned in his trip are: Laghouat, Taqdamt, 'ayn Madi, Jabal Amour, Metlili, Wādī Mīzāb, Al-Qaliah(EL menia), Ourgla et Touggourt, Tawat, Tamimoun, 'ayn Saleh, Chinguetti, Ghadamis, Diriyah, Gabes and the island of Djerba. During their interest in the desert and trying to discover it, Europeans and Americans have benefited from this information about villages, their routes and people's customs. Sa'd Allāh goes on to say that what was published from this trip is important. Finding this entire



trip is very important in the event that Ibn al-Din continues to write about his adventures and acquaintances in the Levant and the desert <sup>(40)</sup>.

**2- Riḥlat AL-Bey Muḥammad Al-Kbīr 'ilā AL-ḡanūb :** Sa'd Allāh exported the book of Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Karim, who fulfilled the manuscript written by Ahmad ibn Halal al-Tilmsani entitled: "The Journey of the Bey Muḥammad al-Kabir" The journey lasted from the day of Exodus, Thursday 09 Rabi' al-Awwal 1119AH/19 January 1785AD, to the day of return to the camp on Wednesday 28 Rabi 'al-Thani 1119 AH/10 March 1785AD. The official trip included certain hilly villages, and places of settlement of independent tribes, confined between the cities of Mascara in the north of the western Baylik, and Laghwat in the south <sup>(41)</sup>.

### Conclusion:

- That Abū al-Qāsim Sa'd Allāh was one of the Algerian historians; who took it upon themselves to write the cultural history of the Sahara from a national point of view, and thus revealed the plot hatched by the historians of the colonial school to distort our history for more than a century and thirty-two years.

- And that Sa'd Allāh, although he did not single out the cultural history of the Algerian Sahara with a special author, but the reader finds in his writings abundant scientific material represented in his interest in an aspect of the social and cultural history of the desert; through exposure to schools and corners spread across the cities of the desert; such as the Tijani corner in gambling and Tamaseen, and the corner of Hamil, Biskra schools and Wādī Mīzāb schools, and its role in establishing education, especially after the intervention of the French colonizer and preventing the education of young people in their language, religion and culture.

- He also talked about desert scholars and their writings, such as Al-Bakri, Al-Adwani, ' ṭfayaš , and others, and noted their role in writing the local history of the region so that we can compare, criticize, and scrutinize what was recorded by the exploratory missions that roamed the Algerian desert.

Through our knowledge of his written heritage, we found him passionate about introducing the studies, researches and books that dealt with the history of Algeria in general, and we have found a number of those that dealt with the history of the Algerian Sahara; such as the book of the Golden Age of Trade between the Maghreb and Black Africa, a saint and a revolutionary, and the spread of Islam in Africa.

His interest in the politeness of the trip also led him to search for its owners, and to collect what they wrote during their trips, and what concerns us are the trips that took care of the desert, such as the trip of Ibn al-Din al-Aghwati, and the trip of Bay Muḥammad al-Kabir.

Thus, the late Sheikh of historians contributed to building the edifice of the local history of the region in particular, as well as the edifice of national history in general, and his contribution was great in correcting the errors of history.

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