

The Contribution of Ulad Sidi Shaykh to the Movements of Resistance in Algeria (1845-1908)

إسهامات أولاد سيدي الشيخ في حركات المقاومة في الجزائر (1845-1908)

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Date of receipt: 29/09/2021, Date of revision: 22/12/2021, Date of acceptance: 31/01/2022

Abstract

This article deals with the contribution of Ulad Sidi Shaykh to the popular movements of resistance against the French occupation in Algeria from 1845 to 1908. The research is motivated by an attempt to understand the position of the leaders of Ulad Sidi Shaykh vis-à-vis the French colonial administration and their role in the movement of resistance against the French occupation.

The research paper concludes that, some leaders of Ulad Sidi Shaykh collaborated with the French colonial administration by accepting administrative posts as *bach-agma*. In contrast, others rejected all its offers to influence their followers to accept the colonial system and abandon resistance movements.

Keywords: Ulad Sidi Shaykh, Movements of Resistance, Shaykh Bu Amama, French Occupation, Algerian Saharan Atlas

ملخص

يتناول المقال إسهامات أولاد سيدي الشيخ في حركات المقاومة الشعبية للاحتلال الفرنسي للجزائر في الفترة من 1845 إلى 1908. تهدف الدراسة إلى محاولة فهم موقف زعماء أولاد سيدي الشيخ من الإدارة الاستعمارية الفرنسية بالإضافة للدور الذي لعبوه في حركات المقاومة الشعبية ضد الاحتلال الفرنسي.

خلصت الدراسة إلى أن بعض زعماء أولاد سيدي الشيخ تعاونوا مع الإدارة الاستعمارية الفرنسية بقبولهم لمناصب إدارية كباش آغا، بينما البعض الآخر رفض كل العروض والإغراءات المقدمة من قبل الإدارة الفرنسية للتأثير على أتباع الطريقة لتقبل الاحتلال الفرنسي والتخلي عن مقاومته. **الكلمات المفتاحية:** أولاد سيدي الشيخ، حركات المقاومة، الشيخ بوعمامة، الاحتلال الفرنسي، الأطلس الصحراوي الجزائري

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1. Introduction

The history of humankind cannot obviously be dissociated from religious beliefs whose interpretations have given birth to various institutions, brotherhoods, and consequently to various forms of practices. The latter's survival has depended on the degree of faith of their advocates and adherents and their determination to preserve and consolidate them. This article consists of five sections, in which we are going to trace the establishment of the Shaykhiya brotherhood and its evolution, in section three. Section four is devoted to the contribution of the leaders of Ulad Sidi Shaykh to the movements of resistance against the French colonial rule in the southwest region of Algeria. The first four sub-sections in section four are devoted to the main battles led by Ulad Sidi Shaykh *Sh'raga* and *Laghraba* from 1845 to 1880. In the last sub-section in section four, we examine the popular resistance led by Shaykh Bu' Amamah from 1881 to 1908. The reason for choosing the topic lies in the fact that the contribution of Ulad Sidi Shaykh to fighting against the French colonial rule did not take enough space in the academic research as the other movements of resistance like those led by al-Amir Abdul Qadir in the West of Algeria, al-Mokrani and Shaykh al-Haddad in the East of Algeria, Lalla Fatma N'Sumer in the Kabylie, etc. The study relies on the descriptive historical approach based on a careful reading and insightful observation followed by an attempt to explain the events and then draw conclusions.

2. Literature Review

Among various studies, five can be considered significant references to the Shaykhiya Order and the role of Ulad Sidi Shaykh in the movements of resistance in Algeria. These references can be divided into those which were written by French officers and historians like Louis Marie Rinn, Octave Depont and Xavier Coppolani, Jules Cambon and others; and those written by Algerian historians and writers like Abul Qasim Saad Allah, Muhammad ben Tayeb al-Bushikhi, Hamza Boubakeur and Djilali Sari. In fact, the French were the first who investigated the Sufi brotherhoods in Algeria by the late nineteenth century. Though Rinn is a specialist in the Sufi Orders, his writings should be dealt with caution given his military background as a graduate of the famous French military Academy, Saint-Cyr. In his book "*Marabouts et Khouan*", he claims that the religious leaders, namely the leaders of the Sufi Orders, did not oppose the French occupation because they believed that their presence came in conformity with God's will, that is, nothing can happen without His will so, any rebellion or revolution against

it is seen as an act against God's will. In short, true believers must accept God's will as being represented in the French occupation. In this context, Rinn argues:

“Cette obéissance à des Chrétiens ne trouble pas, du reste, la conscience des Musulmans, car, dissent-ils, ‘rien n’arrive sans la volonté de Dieu, et puisque Dieu a donné la force aux Chrétiens et leur a permis de soumettre les Musulmans, les vrais Croyants doivent se courber devant cette force, qui est une émanation de la volonté de Dieu.” (Rinn, Marabouts et Khouan: Etude sur l'Islam en Algérie, 1884, p. 17)

“This obedience to Christians does not disturb the conscience of Muslims because they believe that nothing happens without the will of God. Since God has given power to Christians and enabled them to subdue Muslims, true believers must bow down to this force which comes in conformity with the will of God.”

Quotation translated by the author.

Trumelet and Cambon focused on the role of Ulad Sidi Shaykh in the movement of resistance. Depont and Coppolani examined the Sufi brotherhoods in Algeria through a descriptive approach focusing on their origins, spheres of influence and statistics about the number of *Zawaya*, *Muqaddam* and followers in each of these Sufi Orders. Si Hamza Boubakeur, Rector of the Mosque of Paris from 1957 to 1982, and a descendent of Sidi Shaykh, in his book "Sidi Cheikh: Un Sufi Algérien", dealt with the religious aspect of *tarīqah* Shaykhiya and the contribution of Ulad Sidi Shaykh in the movements of resistance. The author also presented a very detailed genealogy of the dynasty of Ulad Sidi Shaykh with its different tribes under the two major clans, *Laghraba* and *Sh'raga* (the Westerners and Easterners), in addition to the most important events that marked the history of Ulad Sidi Shaykh from the establishment of the Shaykhiya Order to the French colonial period. However, the book should also be treated with caution given the fact that the author is a descendent of Ulad Sidi Shaykh and a prominent figure of the Shaykhiya Order, so biased descriptions and analyses of some events cannot be avoided. Djilali Sari also wrote a very interesting book, in French, about the revolution of Shaykh Bu Amama in which he relied on the French archive materials.

The following source on the Shaykhiya Order and its founder, Sidi Shaykh is a very detailed work written by Muhammad ben Tayeb al-Bushikhi. The author talks about the genealogy of Ulad Sidi Shaykh, which goes back to Abu Bakr as-Seddiq, the first Caliphate, who immediately

succeeded Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and the *sanad* (the chain of authority) of the Shaykhiya Order, which goes to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He also examines the relationship between the two antagonistic clans of Ulad Sidi-Shaykh, *Laghraba* and *Sh'raga*, and the revolutions led by Ulad Sidi Shaykh against the French occupation from 1845 to 1903 (البوشيخي، 2011، صفحة 7). Another study in Arabic conducted by Abul Qasim Saad Allah in his book "The Cultural History of Algeria", Volume 4, where he argued that Ulad Sidi Shaykh helped the French in their occupation of the Algerian Sahara. It can be concluded that most of the works on the Shaykhiya Order are written by either French military officers or by descendent of Ulad Sidi Shaykh, except Abul Qasim saad Allah, which makes them biased and both failed to provide objective studies; therefore, their works need to be treated with caution.

3. The Emergence of the Shaykhiya Brotherhood

In 1615, after the death of the spiritual leader of Shādhilīyya, Sidi Abderrahmane bin M'hamed es Sahli, Sidi Shaykh left Figuig to establish his own *tarīqah* in the region of al-Bayyadh. The new *tarīqah* was simpler than the Shādhilīyya to suit better his illiterate nomad people. In fact, Sidi Shaykh had been a *muqaddam* in the Shādhilīyya Order founded by Abul Hassan Alī ash-Shādhilī in the thirteenth century before he created his own *tarīqah* (Abbou, 2017, p. 165). The *sanad* of Shaykhiya, also called *silsilat al-baraka* (the chain of blessing) goes back to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through twenty four shuyukh: Abdul Qadir es-Smaḥi, M'hammad bin Abdul Rahman es Sahli, Ahmad bin Yusuf el Miliani, Ahmad Zerruq, Ahmad al Hadrami, Abul Hasan al Qarafi, Ibn Ata'a Allah, Abul Abbas al Mursi, Abul Hasan e Shadili, Abdu s Salam bin M'shish, al Attar ez Zayyat, Abu Madyen alGhuth, Mulay Bu'Azza (Abu Ya'aza), Ibn Harzhum, Abu Bakr Yahya, Abu Hamid al Ghazali, Abul Ma'ali al Juweini, Abu Taleb al Makki, al Imam al Jariri, Abul Qasim al Juneyd, Ma'aruf al Karkhi a Siri Saqti, Habib al Ajmi, al Hasan al Basri, Ali Ibn Abi Talib, Muhammad (PBUH) (البوشيخي، 2011، صفحة 11).

According to Louis Rinn, Shaykhiya is neither a religious community nor a congregation or even a charity association, it is a maraboutique network controlled by individuals who were in constant division (Rinn, Marabouts et Khouan: Etude sur l'Islam en Algérie, 1884, p. 350). Rinn is referring to the division that happened amongst the descendant of Sidi Shaykh after the death of the fourth Caliphate, Shaykh Sidi Bin Eddine, in 1756, which gave birth to two antagonistic branches, Ulad Sidi Shaykh *Laghraba* under the

leadership of Shayky Suleiman and Ulad Sidi Shaykh Sh'raga (the Westerners and Easterners) under the leadership of Shaykh al Arbi of the disagreement about managing the main *Zawiya* (البوشيخي، 2011، صفحة 73). In the late nineteenth century, Shaykh Bu Amama established a third branch which was independent from the two previous branches (البوشيخي، 2011، صفحة 73). The *wird* is an Arabic word meaning the litany. Each Sufi *tarīqah* has its own litany comprising particular spiritual rituals that involve disciples being in direct contact with God.

4. The Contribution of Ulad Sidi Shaykh to the Movements of Resistance

At the beginning of the French occupation of Algeria, most of the Sufi Brotherhood showed strong resistance. They refused to be ruled by Christians who were seen as *Kuffar* (unfaithful, enemies of God). This was evident the declaration of jihad through the movements of resistance that broke out in different regions in Algeria under the leadership of prominent Sufi figures (سعدالله، الحركة الوطنية الجزائرية، الجزء الأول، 2011، صفحة 331). In the West, for instance, al-Qadiriyya contributed to the revolution of al-Amir Abdul Qadir al-Jazairi (1830-1837). Er-Rahmaniya Brotherhood declared *jihad* (holy war) against the French through their contribution to the revolutions of Shaykh Buzian in Zaatsha, in 1849, Sidi Ahmad bin al-Bakkay in 1849, Shaykh Muhammad Bu Khentash in 1860, Ulad Madi in 1864 and the revolution of Shaykh al-Muqrani and Shaykh al-Haddad in 1871 (قاصري، 2015، الصفحات 16-17). Shaykh Umar, the Muqaddam of Er-Rahmaniya in the Kabylie region, supported the revolution of Lalla Fatma N'sumer against the French after the fall of Bu Baghla (بلعربي، 2006، صفحة 109).

The contribution of the leaders and followers of Shaykhiya to the movements of resistance against the French colonial occupation remains a debatable topic between those who supported the point of view accusing Ulad Sidi Shaykh of collaborating with the French administration and those who argue that they showed great resistance to the French penetration into the Algerian Sahara through the various revolutions that marked their history. Louis Rinn confirms the involvement of some leaders from Ulad Sidi Shaykh in the military campaigns led by the French Army to crush the movements of resistance in the region of Ouargla in the southeast of Algeria. Rinn states:

“Aussitôt, un grand déploiement s’organisa à Géryville et à Laghouat. Ceux de Géryville se portèrent immédiatement sur Ouargla

sous le commandement du bach-agma Si Bou Beker, fils et successeur de Si Hamza. ... Cependant le Chérif continuait ses incursions. ...Le 13 Octobre 1861, il était repoussé à Ksar el Hiren, il était forcé de se replier sur N'Goussa ou il compa les 18 et 19. C'est là qu'il fut surpris par les goums de Géryville à la tête desquels se trouvait Si Bou Beker et Si El Ala, frères de Si Hamza. ...La prise du Chérif valut au jeune bach-agma la croix d'officier de la Légion d'Honneur" (Rinn, Notes pour Servir à l'Histoire d'Ouargla, 1923, pp. 406-407)

"Soon, a large deployment was organised in Géryville and Laghouat. Those of Géryville went immediately to Ouargla under the command of bach-agma Si Boubeker, son and successor of Si Hamza... However, Chérif continued his forays. On October 13, 1861, he was pushed back to *Kasr* el Hiren. He camped in N'Goussa on 18 and 19. He was surprised by the *goums* (indigenous forces) of Géryville at the head of which Si Boubeker and El Ala, brother of Si Hamza. The capture of Chérif of Ouargla earned the young bach-agma the officer's cross of the Legion of Honour."

Quotation translated by the author.

In the same context, Abul Qasim Saad Allah argues that Ulad Sidi Shaykh were the first to accept to rule on behalf of the French under the concept of indirect rule. Moreover, some of them got married to French ladies like Hamza ben Boubeker who married Ferret, daughter of a commander in the French Army (1830-1954). (سعدالله، تاريخ الجزائر الثقافي، الجزء الرابع (1954)، 1998، صفحة 105)

"وقد وجدنا أولاد سيدي الشيخ قد عاونوا الفرنسيين، بل هم الذين القوا القبض على محمد بن عبدالله (شريف ورقلة) رغم أنه كان مسنودا بالطريقة السنوسية، وهي ترجع إلى نفس الأصول الصوفية التي يرجعون إليها. ...كان الحاكم العام جول كامبون يلتقي بالمنيعه بقدر بن حمزة الذي كان ثائراً ثم غاضباً ولاجئاً بضع سنوات. وقد أعلنت وسائل الإعلام الفرنسية أن قدور بن حمزة سلم حصانه إلى كامبون رمزاً للطاعة و الرجوع عما كان عليه. ... ولكن هذه الوسائل أضافت أن قدور بن حمزة قد حيا العلم الفرنسي الذي حياه جده في ورقلة عندما كان خليفة عليها..." (سعدالله، تاريخ الجزائر الثقافي، الجزء الرابع 1830-1954، 1998، 111-106)

"We have found that Ulad Sidi Shaykh had helped the French, they were the ones who captured Muhammad bin Abdullah (Chérif of Ouargla), even though he was supported by al-Sanusiya brotherhood, which goes back to the same Sufi origins to which they

refer. ... Governor Jules Cambon met Kaddur bin Hamza who was rebellious, angry and refugee for some years in el-Menia'a. The French mass media announced that he handed over his horse to Cambon to symbolise obedience and repentance...These mass media added that Kaddur bin Hamza saluted the French flag that his grandfather had saluted in Ouargla when he was a caliph there."

Quotation translated by the author.

Though Abul Qasim Saad Allah, one of the prominent Algerian historians, does not belong to the school of the French historians nor to the writers' descendant of Ulad Sidi Shaykh dynasty, his writings must be dealt with caution because most of the references he relied on are written by French officers. He mainly relied on the works of Rinn, De Neveu, Deveyrier, Garrot, Depont and Coppolani, and the archives of Aix-en-Provence. These sources themselves should, as mentioned before, be examined with caution.

The other school of writers represented by the descendants from the dynasty of Ulad Sidi Shaykh shows a completely different image of Ulad Sidi Shaykh and their role in the movements of resistance against the French occupation. The two most important works in this school are: a French source, "*Un Soufi Algérien Sidi Cheikh*" by Cheikh Si Hamza Boubakeur, and an Arabic source, *أولاد سيدي الشيخ الغرابية و الشراقة –التصوف و الجهاد و السياسة-* (Ulad Sidi Shaykh *Laghraba* and *Sh'raga* – Sufism and Jihad and Politics-) by Muhammad Ibn Tayeb al-Bushikhi.

Cheikh Si Hamza Boubakeur confirms that some leaders from Ulad Sidi Shaykh provided great services for the French forces to extend their domination on the Algerian Sahara. Among these leaders Shaykh Nu'aymi, the full brother of Sidi Hamza, whom the author described as the chief of the fifth column (Boubakeur, 1990, p. 148). Another leader from the dynasty of Ulad Sidi Shaykh, the chief of the younger branch of *zawyet* Sidi Shaykh, Shaykh Ben Tayeb had also secretly concluded a collaboration agreement with the French authorities. The agreement resulted in the submission of Hmayyan, an important fraction of the confederation of Ulad Sidi Shaykh (Boubakeur, 1990, p. 148). On the other hand, Sidi Hamza bin Abi Bakr one of the most prominent leaders in the confederation of Ulad Sidi Shaykh, had been recognised as *Khalifa* by the French authorities before he was deprived of this title and placed under house arrest in Algiers until he died in suspicious conditions on August 21st, 1861. The French believed that getting rid of Sidi Hamza would pave the way for the colonisation of the Sahara; however, it opened a new era of the struggle of the southern Algerian

masses for their independence from the French occupation. The death of Sidi Hamza triggered the movements of resistance in the Sahara, which only ended with the death of the leader of the last revolution, Shaykh Bu Amama, in 1908 (Boubakeur, 1990, p. 161).

4.1. The Battle of Ayn Boubker (April 1864)

As it has already been mentioned, the suspicious death of Sidi Hamza caused an acute crisis in the relations between the confederation of Ulad Sidi Shaykh and the French authorities. The eldest son of Sidi Hamza was nominated *Bach-agma*, that is to say, an official of the French administration but not a *khalifa*. His favourable attitude towards the French administration and his collaboration in the capture of Chérif of Ouargla, as it was previously mentioned, made him an unpopular personality in the confederation of Ulad Sidi Shaykh. After his death in 1863, he was succeeded by his brother Sidi Sliman ben Hamza. In contrast, the latter showed strong aversion towards the French, whom he considered responsible for his father's death. The chiefs of the tribes, the *muqaddam* of *zawaya* Shaykhiya and particularly his uncle Sidi Laala encouraged him to declare jihad against the French. On April 6th, 1864, Sidi Sliman headed for Géryville at the head 7.500 horse riders. They took the direction of Ayn Boubkr where they surprised, by the daybreak, Colonel Beauprêtre and his forces. The whole column was destroyed, The guard of Colonel Beauprêtre shot sidi Sliman after he had killed the latter (Cambon, 1897, pp. 845-846). In short, the attack ended by the victory of Ulad Sidi Shaykh over the French army. According to Boubakeur, this victory stirred the Algerians from the West to the East, and gave them back their self-confidence and the hope for liberation (Boubakeur, 1990, p. 175) . After the death of Sidi Sliman ben Hamza in the Battle, the chiefs of the tribes met in haste and proclaimed Sidi Mohammed, the third son of Sidi Hamza, sultan of the confederation of Ulad Sidi Shaykh.

4.2. Youm Battle (February 1865)

The Youm Battle of Garat Sidi Cheikh was one of the bloodiest clashes between the French supported by the *goum* and Ulad Sidi Shaykh led by Sidi Mohammed ben Hamza, the son of Sidi Hamza Ibn Abi Bakr. It took place in February 1865, and it ended by the death of Sidi Mohammed after he had been seriously injured in the Battle. This memorable Battle was one of the most significant actions against the French, as described in detail by Colonel Trumelet, the commander of the French troops, in "*Sidi Cheikh un*

Soufi algérien" (Boubakeur, 1990, p. 188). It is worth noting that the French were often not involved directly in the fight. They were usually using their *goum* as allies to fight for them. Colonel Trumelet described this as: "*bataille entre canailles*", which means: "battle between scoundrels or rabble" (Boubakeur, 1990, p. 157). Soon after the death of Sidi Mohammed Ben Hamza, his brother Sidi Ahmed Ben Hamza was proclaimed sultan of the confederation of Ulad Sidi Shaykh.

4.3. Ben Hattab Battle (March 16th, 1866)

Sidi Ahmed Ben Hamza was fifteen years old when he was proclaimed sultan of the confederation of Ulad Sidi Shaykh (البوشيخي، 2011، صفحة 199). With the help of his uncle Sidi Laala, he began preparing his army to take vengeance for the killing of his brother. Colonel de Colomb intercepted Sidi Ahmed and his men at Ben Hattab near Géryville. The fight ended with an overwhelming victory of Ulad Sidi Shaykh. With twelve surviving officers, Colonel de Colomb fled to Géryvillet thirty kilometres from the battlefield (Boubakeur, 1990, p. 197). This brilliant victory encouraged Sidi Sliman ben Kaddur, the nephew of Sidi Shaykh ben Tayeb, the leader of *Laghraba*, the other clan of Ulad Sidi Shaykh. Sidi Sliman left his clan to join the rival clan of Ulad Sidi Shaykh under the leadership of Sidi Ahmed ben Hamza. This alliance between *Laghraba* and *Sh'raga* under one banner warmed the hearts of the resisters. They led two attacks against l'Bakakra and Lamghawliya at En-N'besh in the late March 1867, and against Asla, Shellala al-Guebliya and Dharaniya and Busemghoun on April 4th, 1867 (البوشيخي، 2011، صفحة 201). This alliance did not last long because of a family dispute between Sidi Ahmed and Sidi Sliman and ended by the surrender of the latter to the French, who appointed him as *bach-gha* over the H'mayyan tribes. Sidi Ahmed and his men withdrew to the southwest around Tafilalt because of the prevailing drought. He stayed there until he died in October 1868. It was reported that he died of cholera but for many would have been empoisoned (Cambon, 1897, p. 878).

4.4. The Battle of Magoura (April 17th, 1871)

After the death of Sidi Ahmed, his half brother, Si Kaddur ben Hamza succeeded him. In January 1869, Si Kaddur ben Hamza gathered the leaders of Ulad Sidi Shaykh, *Sh'raga* and *Laghraba*, Sidi Ahmed Ammar ben Lahbib al-Tijjani, Shaykh *zawyet* Ayn Madhi and the leaders of the rebellious tribes. The meeting came out with the decision to confront the French military forces in Ain Madhi, near Laghouat. In mid-January 1869,

the revolutionaries headed towards their objective. On February 1st, they attacked the French forces under the command of Colonel de Sonis, in Um-ed-Deddab. The men of Sidi Kaddur showed great courage, but they suffered heavy losses due to the imbalance of power in favour of the French, who used the Chasspot, a sophisticated rifle with quick shots and easy use (Cambon, 1897, p. 879). This defeat led again to the division of the two branches of Ulad Sidi Shaykh, Si al-Haj al-Arbi, son of Sidi Shaykh ben Tayeb, the leader of *Laghraba*, accused Sidi Kaddur and Sidi Laala for being responsible for the defeat in the Battle of Um-ed-Debdab because of their personal prudence at the time of attacking the enemy. At the same time, Sidi Kaddur retaliated that it was the betrayal of Si al-Haj al-Arbi that was the cause of their hasty escape (Cambon, 1897, p. 882).

Despite the depth of the chasm between the two branches of Ulad Sidi Shaykh, and the impossibility of reconciliation after the collapse of the unity agreement, the notables of the tribes loyal to Ulad Sidi Shaykh began a new attempt to bring the two branches together. The attempt succeeded in unifying Ulad Sidi Shaykh *Sh'raga* and *Laghraba* under one banner of *jihād*. After this reconciliation, they fought side by side against the French occupation army under Colonel Renaud d'Avène des Méloizes in the Battle of Magoura. The Battle ended with the victory of Ulad Sidi Shaykh over the French occupation army (Boubakeur, 1990, p. 228). Yahya Bouaziz talked about the killing of about 200 men amongst the forces of Sidi Kaddur and a number of the French forces among whom two officers, Mercier and François (207 صفحة، 2013، بوعزيز). The French began planning for revenge to reestablish confidence amongst the allied tribes. They also saw in the unity between *Laghraba* and *Sh'raga* a danger that they must get rid of it. The French did not need much effort to drive a wedge between the two branches due to the historical conflicts between them.

Indeed, the unity between the two enemy brothers broke down after an incomprehensible and unjustified attack of Sidi Kaddur against *Lagharaba* at Uglat es-Sedra, on August 3rd, 1871. He killed two of his cousins, Sidi al-Haj al-Arbi and Sidi Sliman ben Sidi Shaykh ben Tayeb (205 صفحة، 2011، البوشيخي). Sidi Ma'ammam, the leader of *Laghraba* threatened his rival Sidi Kaddur to take revenge for killing his brothers. Four months later, Sidi Ma'ammam and Sidi Sliman ben Kaddur supported by the French army attacked Sidi Kaddur and his uncle Sidi La'ala at a location called al-Mengueb, at about 40 kilometers to the south of Labnud. Si Ma'ammam ben Shaykh had taken with his contingent a very active part in the Battle of al-Mengueb of December 23rd, 1871 (Cambon, 1897, p. 892).

His revenge was satisfied. Sidi Kaddur and his uncle were wounded after they suffered heavy losses (209 صفحة، 2013، بوعزيز). They withdrew to Gurara, in the south, they established a settlement to which they gave the name *K'sar Kaddur* (Deporter, 1891, p. 21), close to Sidi Mansur, a small village, in the province of Tinnerkuk, at about 50 kilometers to the north of Timimoun, the capital of Gurara. This brilliant victory of Ulad Sidi Shaykh *Laghraba* over Ulad Sidi Shaykh *Sh'raga* was actually a victory of the French against resistance movements without losing a single soldier. The French relied on the concept of 'divide and rule' or 'divide and conquer' to deal with these resistance movements. Trumelet, as it has already been mentioned, described the situation by the expression '*bataille entre canailles*'. The defeat of Sidi Kaddur ended with his surrender in March 1884 and the decline of the movements of resistance led by Ulad Sidi Shaykh *Sh'raga*.

If we examine the attitude of Sidi Kaddur through the various incursions and attacks against the French colonial occupation from 1868 to 1882, we find that most of them were either against Arab tribes collaborating with the French, or against his cousins from Ulad Sidi Shaykh *Laghraba*. Therefore, these actions were actually serving the French interests. Furthermore, there was no reference to any French casualty in all his military actions against the French, often consisting of collaborating tribes and mercenaries. It is also important to mention that Sidi Kaddur and his brothers Si Eddin and Si Hamza used to receive an annual allowance of 15.000 francs each from the French administration (Cambon, 1897, p. 919). In June 1884, the allowance attributed to Sidi Kaddur was increased to 18.000 Francs. Such measures aimed to persuade Sidi Kaddur to help the French extending their influence on Twat and Gourara as pointed out by Ibrahim Mayyassi (317 صفحة، 1997، مياسي). Another incident represents a sound argument about the suspicious attitude of Sidi Kaddur, when he met Shaykh Bu Amama, a prominent Sufi and revolutionary figure, (It is not excluded that the meeting was at the instigation of the French to persuade Shaykh Bu Amama to abandon the resistance). He harshly reprimanded him for declaring jihad against the French saying:

"Why did you declare jihad without consulting us and you are not qualified to do it? We are the defenders of the banner of Ulad Sidi Shaykh and not you. And those Berbers you drag behind you, are they really *mujahideen*? Are not they a group of bandits? The war is serious and not a joke. Why did you wait until this war exhausted

us, and then you rose up! It is really an adventure" (البوشخي، 2011، صفحة 210)

Quotation translated by the author

This suspicious and incomprehensible attitude of Sidi Kaddur leads to whether there was no undeclared cooperation with the French. The following declaration of Jules Cambon confirms this point of view:

"En Mars 1892, Si Kaddur était venu saluer à El Golea, M. Cambon, Gouverneur général, lors de son voyage dans l'extrême sud, et, dans l'intervalle de ces diverses visites, il s'employait à différentes reprises auprès des populations du Gourara en faveur de notre influence" (Cambon, 1897, p. 928).

"In March 1892, Si Kaddur came to El-Golea to greet Mr. Cambon, Governor General, during his trip in the far south, and in the interval between these different visits, he worked on various occasions with the population of Gourara in favour of our influence."

Quotation translated by the author

4.5. The Revolution of Shaykh Bu Amama

After the decline of the resistance movements led mainly by Ulad Sidi Shaykh *Sh'raga*, a new revolutionary Sufi figure, Shaykh Bu Amama, emerged in Moghrar, at about 130 kilometers to the south of Géryville. He is Muhammad ben al-Arbi ben Belhorma ben Muhammad ben Brahim ben Sidi Taj. He was born in al-Hammam al-Fugani Figuig in 1840. In 1875, Shaykh Bu Amama left his home town to settle in Moghrar where he decided to break with the two branches of Ulad Sidi Shaykh and establish his *zawiya* (مياسي، 1997، صفحة 299). It is said that Bu Amama introduced an unusual formula in the *wird* of Shaykhiya, that is, the repetition as many times as possible of: "*La ilaha illa Allah, Bu Amama Dayf Allah*", and it means: There is no God but Allah and Bu Amama is the Guest of Allah "as stated by Hamza Boubakeur and Muhammad al-Amin Belghit (بلغيت، 2000، صفحة 189), and "*La ilaha illa Allah Bu Amama Waliyu Allah*", and it means: There is no God but Allah and Bu Amama is the friend of Allah "as stated by Muhammad ben Tayeb al-Bushikhi (البوشخي، 2011، صفحة 210), and Shaykh Bu Amama and his followers relied on a hadith narrated by Abu Dawood (4291); classed as saheeh by as-Sakhkhaawi in *al-Maqasid al-Hasana* (149), and by al-Albani in *as-Silsila as-Saheeha* (n° 599): "At the beginning of every century Allah will send to this *ummah* someone who will

renew its religious understanding" (al-Munajjid, 2021). Therefore, Shaykh Bu Amama was considered as the man of that period.

From a doctrinal point of view, the Sufi Order that Shaykh Bu Amama instituted was derived from Shaykhiya, but it was less exclusive and rejected the traditional conception of hereditary *baraka* (blessing) (Denffer, 1976, p. 169). Shaykh Bu Amama taught that a saint whatever his rank in the Sufi Hierarchy, could not, once he was dead, keep a transmissible *baraka*. In other words, he protested against the belief of the transmission of divine favours that a saint might deserve from God as an inheritance and by bright right, to his children (Boubakeur, 1990, p. 247).

Thanks to his strong personality and enthusiastic religious discourse, which had a connection with the Crusades, that is, the French conquest to Algeria was seen as a continuation of these wars, and that combatting the invaders was compulsory duty for every Muslim, Shaykh Bu Amama could mobilise the support of several tribes. In a short time, he could recruit two thousand and three hundred knights from different tribes, among which Trafi, R'zayna, Lahrar, Braber, H'mayyan, Ulad Ziyad, Ulad Ammur, Ulad Sidi Shaykh *Laghraba* and Sh'amba (303 مياسى، 1997، صفحة).

Despite the warnings and the disheartening words of Sidi Kaddur, the supporters of Shaykh Bu Amama continued their campaign, and after hesitation, he finally accepted to join them. The first confrontation with the French and their allied tribes took place at S'fissifa, few kilometers south to Ain Sefra, on April 27th, 1881. The Battle was too short and ended by the victory of Shaykh Bu Amama and his men over the French and their allied tribes (Graulle, 1905, pp. 32-41). Shaykh Bu Amama and his men headed northwards. On their way, they massacred the Spaniards established in El-Kheiter, and crushed the regiment of Colonel Innocenti in Tazina (Moulak) on May 19th, 1881 (Boubakeur, 1990, p. 252). According to Graulle, the Battle ended with a heavy toll on both sides; the French lost 60 soldiers while the men of Shaykh Bu Amama lost 200 (Sari, 1881, p. 99).

In retaliation to the killing of the Spanish workers and the French soldiers, Colonel De Négrier blew up the mausoleum of Sidi Shaykh, the spiritual leader of Ulad Sidi Shaykh and the founder of Shaykhiya brotherhood (Graulle, 1905, p. 107). This action dismayed the entire confederation of Ulad Sidi Shaykh, even those who remained in obedience to France. Not only the confederation of Ulad Sidi Shaykh but also all the Algerians were shocked by that event. It is worth noting that with this action, the French succeeded, to a large extent, in inciting the tribes, especially the two branches of Ulad Sidi Shaykh, against Shaykh Bu

Amama as being responsible for what happened. These developments did not discourage Shaykh Bu Amama from moving northward to Saida and Tiaret. While he was preparing his men to attack Tiaret, Saida was emptied of its European inhabitants. This generated panic amongst all the colonists in the surrounding villages who began fleeing towards Mascara and Sidi Bel Abbes.

After completing his preparations to continue his victorious action northward, alarming news came to thwart his plans and break the momentum of his men. An emissary came to warn him that the Sultan of Morocco, Moulay Hassan 1st, (r.1873-1894) had ordered the tribes of southern Morocco to quickly form an army to attack Shaykh Bu Amama and that the first troops launched behind him had already headed to Ain Sefra (Graulle, 1905, p. 254). The news plunged Shaykh Bu Amama and his men into sadness and confusion. Shaykh Bu Amama realised the seriousness of the situation, he found himself caught in the crossfire; the French army in the north and the Moroccan troops in the south. Consequently, he decided to put an end to his plan, and withdraw southwards to Gourara. He settled in the village of Ulad Abbou in Deldoul (188 صفحة، 2001، خليفي)، at 70 kilometres to the south of Timimoun. He stayed first inside the *al-Qasba* (the village), then, he built his own *zawiya* outside *al-Qasaba* to fit the increasing numbers of his followers. He spent about ten years there teaching people and spreading the principles of *tarīqah* Shaykhiya al- Bu Amamiya before taking refuge in southern Morocco where he lived until his death in Sidi Malluk in 1908. By his death, all the movements of resistance of Ulad Sidi Shaykh had declined.

5. Conclusion

It can be concluded that the writings on the history of the movements of resistance led by the leaders of Ulad Sidi Shaykh who belong to Shaykhiya brotherhood are subject of subjective impressions and personal viewpoints of their authors, which are often far from objectivity. For example, most French writers (military officers) and pro-colonialism Arab writers describe the military actions of the movements of resistance as looting, killing and burning. In contrast, the Arab writers, especially the descendants of Ulad Sidi Shayk describe these actions as heroic operations in the context of *jihad* (the holy war) against *al-kuffar* (the infidels). It is critical to mention that Abul-Qasim Saad Allah, known as the father of the Algerian historians, focused on the few leaders who collaborated with the French authorities when they accepted to rule on their behalf as *bach-gha*

in some provinces, to generalise this on all the leaders of Ulad Sidi Shaykh. This judgement seems unfair against some leaders like Sidi Muhammad ben Hamza, Sidi Laala ben Boubkeur and Shaykh Bu Amama, who achieved impressive victories against the French and their collaborators. As to the achievements of these resistance movements, it is worth noting that they did not achieve their objective represented in expelling *al-kuffar* from the Muslim lands. The main reason for this failure lies in the division between Ulad Sidi Shaykh *Sh'raga* and *Laghraba*, which was wisely invested by the French through the policy of 'divide and rule' by sowing hatred and rancour between the two branches to exterminate each other. Besides, the Moroccan besieging of the movements of resistance led by Shaykh Bu Amama by preventing them from seeking refuge in the Moroccan lands negatively affected the continuation of the resistance. Finally, it can be said that the revolution of Shaykh Bu Amama is considered as one of the most violent revolutions after the revolution of al-Amir Abdul Qadir in the west of Algeria from 1832 to 1837.

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