

The Poetic Experience of Shaykh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī (fifteenth century CE) in His Journey to the South of the Sahara

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Abstract: In this study we attempt to treat the literary aspect, and in particular the poetic dimension, of Shaykh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī, one of the eminent figures of western Algeria in the ninth century AH, corresponding to the fifteenth century CE. The shaykh was known as a scholar, a jurist, and a Sufi, yet his literary and poetic personality is almost forgotten. We shall therefore try in this conference paper to introduce the shaykh as a poet and to present his Poetic experience, which took on the coloring of life in the south of the Sahara during a missionary journey full of events and fruitful in achievements.

If poetry is a means of expressing the inner emotions, a register that records the events of history, and a missionary and reformist platform, then from this appears the importance of inquiring into the life of al-Maghīlī the poet, for the nature of the human soul is plumbed to its depths only when it is studied from every side; and a soul such as that of Shaykh al-Maghīlī is the more deserving that the seats of poetic giftedness within it be sought out, given the religious, moral, and missionary weight it carries in the history of western Algeria.

Keywords: al-Maghīlī; journey; western Algeria; the south of the Sahara; Poetic experience.

1.Introduction

The contact between Algeria, the central Maghrib (al-Maghrib al-Awsaṭ), and the south of the Sahara formed a strong bridge that joined the two regions across several fields, the most prominent of which was probably the scholarly and cultural domain. That contact gave rise to a rich movement of learning, culture, and letters, attested by the abundant manuscripts in every branch of the sciences and arts and by the emergence of exceptional figures who took part in the movement of journeys ¹ that never broke off between the two great centers named above.

Among the foremost figures of Algeria whose names are bound up with the journey to the south of the Sahara is Shaykh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī, a man who found rest only on the backs of mounts or within the corners of the Sufi lodges. He never settled to remain in one place or to take his ease in another; his burning spirit was content to abide only where it gave more than it received and spent more than it took.

¹ al-Tirḥālāt is the plural of riḥla, vocalized with a kasra on the rā’; opening it with a fatḥa, as is common among scholars, is not permissible, because its singular is of the pattern fi’la with a kasra on the fā’, so the kasra is obligatory in this form. [trans.] The note concerns the correct vowelings of the Arabic word rendered here as "journeys."

The personality of Shaykh al-Maghīlī, brimming with vigor, came to the fore bearing in its depths sound judgment and penetrating thought. Its bearer broke through the veils that screen religious calling, and at his hands people were guided; he plunged into the thick of jurisprudence, and under him scholars came of age; he entered the trial of politics, and through him God set the machinery of authority aright; he disciplined himself in speculative theology and the craft of writing; and he composed poetry, through which God brought benefit to whom He willed among His servants.

Anyone who wanders through the pages of the books that chronicle the fifteenth century CE, the ninth century AH, in the region of the south of the Sahara grasps beyond doubt that al-Maghīlī took the lion's share of attention as a central figure who left a direct mark upon the Western Sudan (historical) and shaped its history. We do not overstate the case in saying that the age of al-Maghīlī became a span of time by which events are dated, given its weighty standing and far reaching effect.

It was this figure that drew me to feel out in him something of what others had passed over or treated only sparingly, and I found myself before al-Maghīlī the poet, the side of him that had always stood behind the others, behind his jurisprudence, his reform, his statecraft, and his struggle. I turned toward it in an effort to offer something of substance, aware though I was that the matter was no easy one, owing to the scarcity of the sources and their failure to set out al-Maghīlī's poetic output as fully as his scholarly and juristic production.

In fairness to scholarship, I note that more than one researcher has examined al-Maghīlī's poetry. Among them is Wāfī Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Ḥāj Mājid, in a study entitled *The Poetic Vision of Imām al-Maghīlī: The Poem of Prophetic Praise as a Model*, who nonetheless reduced al-Maghīlī's poetry to a single poem; and likewise Aḥmad Abā al-Ṣāfi Ja'farī, in a study entitled *Imām Shaykh Muḥammad al-Maghīlī as Reformer and Man of Letters*, who for his part gave al-Maghīlī's poetry little attention.

From this point the questions of the study take shape, and so we ask: did Shaykh al-Maghīlī live through a genuine poetic experience? Did his personality, or some part of it, leave its imprint on the page of his Poetic experience? And what is the weight of al-Maghīlī the poet beside al-Maghīlī the scholar and jurist?

In this study I will do my utmost to pursue that question, drawing on such references as came to hand to reach an answer to the problem. I have built the work out of an introduction, then a biography of Shaykh al-Maghīlī, then an account of his journey to the south of the Sahara, then an analysis of his Poetic experience, and I close it all with a conclusion that voices the study's findings and recommendations. Success rests with God, upon Him is the reliance, and from Him is help sought.

2. Biography of Shaykh Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī ²

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² Among them: Maḥfūz b. Sā'id Būkrā' al-Saṭīfī, *al-Farqad al-Nā'ir*, p. 357; and Aḥmad Abā al-Ṣāfi Ja'farī, *The Algerian Manuscripts and Their Notables in the African Libraries (al-Makhṭūṭāt al-Jazā'iriyya wa-A'lāmuhā fī al-Maktabāt al-Ifrīqiyya)*, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Endowments, Algeria, 2015, p. 149.

2.1 Lineage and tribe

Some³ trace his descent to the noble house of the Prophet, so that in their account he is Muḥammad Abū ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Karīm b. Muḥammad b. al-Maghīlī b. ‘Umar b. Makhlūf b. ‘Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. Yaḥyā b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Qawī b. al-‘Abbās b. ‘Aṭīyya b. Mannād b. Sarī b. Qays b. Ghālib b. Abī Bakr b. Abī Bakr⁴ b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Idrīs al-Aṣghar b. Idrīs al-Akbar b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Kāmil b. al-Ḥasan al-Muthannā b. al-Ḥasan al-Sibt b. ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, and of Fāṭima al-Zahrā’, daughter of the Messenger of God (PBUH). This is a curious lineage on two counts.

The first: ascription to the noble house is a distinction and a gift that no one disputes, all the more so for one who holds it and has the better right to it. Yet we have no record that he ever wrote of himself; had this been his descent he would have set it down in the opening pages of his books or devoted a separate treatise to it. The establishment of lineage, as transmitted from Mālik and Ibn Rūshd, rests on assertion and possession: assertion is that the holder of the lineage speaks of his descent, and possession is that his descent is widely known among the people⁵. Were it current in the books of biography and lives it would be known, but no such thing occurred.

The second: everyone who wrote his biography stated that Maghīla is a Berber tribe, so how can the subject be a Berber by origin while his descent at the same time runs up to the noble house?

The editor of the book *Commentary on the Opening Chapter, the Mother of the Book (Tafsīr Sūrat al-Fātiḥa Umm al-Kitāb)* noted that there are those who testify to the nobility of al-Maghīlī’s descent, then reported from some of them that when al-Maghīlī was asked about his lineage he held back and would not speak of it, out of humility⁶, and recited by way of citation verses of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (RA), the opening of which is:

* Mankind, considered in the light of comparison, are equals; their father is Adam and their mother is Eve^{7*}

Perhaps this, if it is sound, suffices to spare us any entry into disputes over noble descent and the wrangling that attends them. What remains agreed upon and current among the biographers is that his name is Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī, this last word vocalized with a fatḥa on the mīm

² Abū Bakr is repeated twice. [trans.] The note flags a duplication of "Abū Bakr" in the lineage cited in the body *Tilimsānī wa-Dawruhu fī Ta’sīs al-Imāra al-Islāmiyya fī Ifrīqiyyā al-Gharbiyya*, Dār al-Gharb, n.ed., n.d., p. 27; and others.

³ Among them: Maḥfūz b. Sā’id Būkrā’ al-Saṭīfī, al-Farqad al-Nā’ir, p. 357; and Aḥmad Abā al-Ṣāfi Ja’farī, *The Algerian Manuscripts and Their Notables in the African Libraries (al-Makḥṭūṭāt al-Jazā’iriyya wa-A’lāmuhā fī al-Maktabāt al-Ifriqiyya)*, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Endowments, Algeria, 2015, p. 149.

⁴ Abū Bakr is repeated twice. [trans.] The note flags a duplication of "Abū Bakr" in the lineage cited in the body.

⁵ Muḥammad b. Ja’far al-Kattānī, *The Beneficial Brief Account (al-Nubdha al-Yasīra al-Nāfi’a)*, edited by Muḥammad al-Fātiḥ al-Kattānī and Muḥammad ‘Iṣām al-Sharīf, Dār al-Thaqāfa li-l-Jamī’, Damascus, Syria, 1st ed., 1998, pp. 78-79.

⁶ See: Muḥammad al-Maghīlī, *Exegesis of the Opening Chapter of the Book, a Reminder for People of Understanding (Tafsīr Sūrat Fātiḥat al-Kitāb Dhikrā li-Ūlī al-Albāb)*, edited by Muḥammad b. Sālim al-Tuwātī, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, Lebanon, 2025, p. 13.

⁷ The verse is by ‘Alī, may God be pleased with him. [trans.] This identifies the author of the verse cited in the body.

as a relative adjective from Maghīla, a Berber tribe that settled Tlemcen, Oran, and the Far Maghrib, and a branch of the Ṣanhāja, the greatest of the Berber tribes⁸. The lineage of Maghīla is precisely Berber, of the descendants of Fātin b. Tamṣīt⁹.

Maghīla is a large tribe. One part of it pressed forward and settled near the mouth of the Chelif River in Algeria, while another part dwells on the outskirts of Fez, Sefrou, and Taza in the Far Maghrib¹⁰. Some scholars hold that Maghīla is a tribe of the Tlemcenian Berbers¹¹. The Berbers of the Maghīla tribe had another district named after them in the administrative province (*kūra*)¹² of Shadhūna in al-Andalus¹³, owing to the migration of a number of the tribe's members to al-Andalus. This was because Maghīla had the distinction of having aided the rise of the Umayyad caliphate there: when ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Dākhil, the founder of that caliphate, fled Syria from the violence of the ʿAbbāsids, he alighted among the Maghīla and took cover there for a time, and a number of the Maghīlīs subsequently emigrated to al-Andalus and settled there at the beginning of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Dākhil's rule over it¹⁴. Groups of the Maghīla also lived in Badajoz, as shown by a place that bears its name (*maghilla*)¹⁵.

By contrast, the author of the geographical dictionary *Muʿjam al-Buldān* holds¹⁶ that Maghīla is a district within the territory of Shadhūna in al-Andalus, and for him it is Mughayla with a ḍamma on the mīm rather than a faṭḥa, an Arabic word meaning water that runs over the ground, as recorded in the lexicon *Lisān al-ʿArab*, though it carries other senses as well¹⁷. It appears that the author of *Muʿjam al-Buldān* loaded this name with more than it can bear, vocalizing its first letter so that its Arabic sense would hold, but we discount this, given the concurrent reports of researchers that Maghīla is of Berber origin; nor do we think that a tribe of Berber origin would take an Arabic name.

⁸ ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Saʿdī, *Tārīkh al-Sūdān*, p. 163.

⁹ ʿAbd al-Wahhāb b. Maṣṣūr, *The Tribes of the Maghrib (Qabāʾil al-Maghrib)*, the Royal Press, Rabat, the Far Maghrib, n.ed., 1968, pp. 309-310.

¹⁰ See: Abū ʿUbayd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Bakrī, *The Maghrib, on the Recounting of the Lands of Africa and the Maghrib (al-Mughrib fī Dhikr Bilād Ifrīqiya wa-l-Maghrib)*, introduced by Hamāh Allāh Wuld al-Sālim, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, Beirut, Lebanon, n.ed., 2012, p. 115.

¹¹ Maḥfūz b. Sāʿid Būkrāʿ al-Saṭīfī, *al-Farqad al-Nāʿir*, p. 357.

¹² Its plural is *kuwar*; it denotes the village and the town. [trans.] A gloss on the term *kūra* used in the body.

¹³ Khalīl Ibrāhīm al-Sāmarrāʾī and others, *The History of the Arabs and Their Civilization in al-Andalus (Tārīkh al-ʿArab wa-Ḥaḍāratuhum fī al-Andalus)*, Dār al-Kitāb al-Jadīda al-Muttaḥida, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st ed., 2000, p. 81.

¹⁴ See: ʿAbd al-Qādir Bawābiyya, *The Berbers in al-Andalus and Their Stance toward the Strife of the Fifth Century AH (al-Barbar fī al-Andalus wa-Mawqifuhum min Fitnat al-Qarn al-Khāmis al-Hijrī)*, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st ed., 2011, p. 55.

¹⁵ See: ʿAbd al-Qādir Bawābiyya, *al-Barbar fī al-Andalus wa-Mawqifuhum min Fitnat al-Qarn al-Khāmis al-Hijrī*, pp. 125-126.

¹⁶ Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Dictionary of Countries (Muʿjam al-Buldān)*, Dār Ṣādir, Beirut, Lebanon, vol. 5, n.ed., 1977, p. 163.

¹⁷ Jamāl al-Dīn Ibn Manzūr, *The Tongue of the Arabs (Lisān al-ʿArab)*, prepared by Amīn Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Wahhāb and Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq al-ʿUbaydī, Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, Beirut, Lebanon, 3rd ed., 1999, vol. 10, pp. 160-161.

Moreover, as already noted, most of the historians who concerned themselves with the Berbers fixed Maghīla with a fathā on the mīm rather than a ḍamma, and this is the reading al-Sam‘ānī preferred¹⁸.

Some places were named after the tribe and still bear its name today: Maghīla of Badajoz in Spain¹⁹; Maghīla in the province of Tiaret in Algeria²⁰; and likewise a town between Fez and Meknès founded by a man named Maghīl before Islam entered the lands of the Maghrib in 716 CE (98 AH)²¹, who was perhaps the great ancestor after whom the tribe was named.

Al-Maghīlī, the subject of this study, is affiliated with the Maghīla tribe rather than with the towns we have mentioned, and he was counted among its leading men²². As for his birth, its date is disputed across several reports, all of them built on conjecture and estimate, so they do not concern us, except that the agreed point is that it fell in the fifteenth century CE, corresponding to the ninth century AH. In that century he spent most of his life, and he may have lived a little into the two centuries flanking his own, that is, the close of the fourteenth and the start of the sixteenth centuries CE (the eighth and the tenth centuries AH), though this does nothing to unsettle the question.

They also differ, as far as we know, over the place of his birth. Some say he was born in Fez, Morocco²³. Some hold²⁴ that his birth was on the outskirts of Tlemcen, to which he is ascribed. And some report that his birth was in Maghīla near Tiaret, saying that he is given the relative name al-Tilimsānī²⁵. This latter ascription is the stronger, since al-Maghīlī is frequently traced to Tlemcen, which lies at such a distance from Tiaret that the latter does not fall within the province of Tlemcen, so the more probable view is that his birth was at Tlemcen or its outskirts. His birth on the outskirts of Tlemcen is also indicated by what al-Bakrī reported of the Maghīla tribe, where he said in describing its

¹⁸ See: Abū Maṣṣūr al-Sam‘ānī (d. 1166 CE / 562 AH), *The Genealogies (al-Ansāb)*, annotated by ‘Abd Allāh ‘Umar al-Bārūdī, Dār al-Jinān, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st ed., 1988, vol. 5, p. 355.

¹⁹ Saḥar al-Sayyid ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Sālim, *The History of Islamic Badajoz and the West of al-Andalus in the Islamic Era (Tārīkh Baṭalyūs al-Islāmiyya wa-Gharb al-Andalus fī al-‘Aṣr al-Islāmī)*, Shabāb al-Jāmi‘a Foundation, Alexandria, Egypt, n.ed., n.d., p. 195.

²⁰ Mabrūk Maqdam, al-Imām Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī al-Tilimsānī wa-Dawruhu fī Ta’ṣīs al-Imāra al-Islāmiyya fī Ifrīqiyyā al-Gharbiyya, p. 27.

²¹ Muḥammad b. Muṣṭafā Būjandār, *The Rejoicing in the Biographies of the Notables of Rabat (al-Ightibāṭ bi-Tarājim A’lām al-Ribāṭ)*, edited by Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm Najīb, Najībawayh Center for Manuscripts and Heritage Service, Dublin, Ireland, 2nd ed., 2014, p. 27.

²² See: Būzayānī al-Darrājī, *The Amazigh Tribes: Their Roles, Their Homelands, Their Notables (al-Qabā’il al-Amāzighiyya: Adwāruhā, Mawāṭinuhā, A’yānuhā)*, Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, al-Qubba, Algeria, n.ed., 2007, vol. 1, p. 206.

²³ Saḥar ‘Antar Muḥammad Aḥmad Marjān, *The Mālikī Jurists and Their Influence in the Society of the Western Sudan (Fuqahā’ al-Mālikīyya wa-Āthāruhum fī Mujtama’ al-Sūdān al-Gharbī)*, Maktabat al-Thaqāfa al-Dīniyya, Cairo, Egypt, 1st ed., 2011, p. 123.

²⁴ Mabrūk Maqdam, al-Imām Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī al-Tilimsānī wa-Dawruhu fī Ta’ṣīs al-Imāra al-Islāmiyya fī Ifrīqiyyā al-Gharbiyya, p. 27.

²⁵ Saḥar ‘Antar Muḥammad Aḥmad Marjān, *Fuqahā’ al-Mālikīyya wa-Āthāruhum fī Mujtama’ al-Sūdān al-Gharbī*, p. 123.

hometown: "Maghila used to inhabit the town of Āslan east of Arshaqūl (Rashqūn), an old fortified town with a wall of stone, possessing a congregational mosque and a market" ²⁶.

2.2 Life and career

Shaykh al-Maghīlī, Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm, was, in the words of his biographers, "the seal of the verifying scholars, the learned and erudite imam, the discerning and deeply understanding master, the upright exemplar of Sunni learning, one of the keen minds of the age, and one of those singular scholars granted abundance in knowledge and precedence" ²⁷. He was forward in affairs, described as "bold in undertaking matters, stout of heart, and eloquent of tongue" ²⁸; nor is it any wonder that he was so, being "among the greatest of scholars and the most excellent of the pious, unyielding in enjoining right and forbidding wrong" ²⁹.

The features of his character took shape after stages of learning that those who seek ease and comfort never attain, stages reserved for the people of travel, who mount hardships and toils.

Al-Maghīlī's first stage was in his own town of Tlemcen, a home of learning and scholars, where he received the rudiments of knowledge and memorized the Holy Qur'an under his teacher, the erudite Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā al-Maghīlī, known as al-Jallāb. From him he also took the foundational texts of jurisprudence, such as al-Risāla, the Mukhtaṣar of Khalīl, Ibn al-Ḥājjib, and some of the works of Ibn Yūnus. He likewise studied under Shaykh al-Ḥasan b. Makhlūf Abarkān, and under Abū Zakariyyā Yaḥyā b. Yaddar (Īdīr) b. ʿAtīq al-Tilisī. He then moved to Bijāya, where he studied under Shaykh Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Waghīlīsī and Abū ʿAlī Maṣṣūr b. ʿAlī al-Manqalātī, and remained there a while that allowed him to gain proficiency, training, and practice ³⁰. After that he traveled to Algiers and studied under ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Thaʿālibī around 1465 CE (870 AH) ³¹; Algiers was perhaps a stop on his return route from Bijāya to Tlemcen ³².

²⁶ Abū ʿUbayd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Bakrī, *al-Mughrib fi Dhikr Bilād Ifriqiya wa-l-Maghrib*, p. 79.

²⁷ Ibn Maryam al-Madyūnī, *The Garden, on the Saints and Scholars of Tlemcen (al-Bustān fi Dhikr al-Awliyāʾ wa-l-ʿUlamāʾ bi-Tilimsān)*, prepared by Muḥammad b. Abī Shanab, the Thaʿālibiyya Press, Algiers, 1907, p. 253.

²⁸ Abū al-Qāsim al-Ḥafnāwī, *Acquainting the Successors with the Men of the Predecessors (Taʿrīf al-Khalaf bi-Rijāl al-Salaf)*, the Eastern Fontana Press, Algiers, 1906, p. 168.

²⁹ Muḥammad b. ʿAskar al-Shafshāwanī, *The Spreading Tree of the Recorder, on the Virtues of Those Who Were in the Maghrib among the Shaykhs of the Tenth Century (Dawḥat al-Nāshir li-Maḥāsin man Kāna bi-l-Maghrib min Mashāyikh al-Qarn al-ʿĀshir)*, edited by Muḥammad Ḥajjī, Dār al-Gharb, Rabat, 2nd ed., 1977, p. 130.

³⁰ Belḥāj Jalūl, *The Impulse to Travel in the Life of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī (Hājis al-Riḥla fi Ḥayāt Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī)*, *al-Dhākira Journal*, no. 13, 2019, p. 19.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

³² See: Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Idrīs al-Ḥasanī, *The Excursion of the Yearning One in the Traversing of the Horizons (Nuzhat al-Mushtāq fi Ikhtirāq al-Āfāq)*, *Maktabat al-Thaqāfa al-Dīniyya*, Cairo, Egypt, n.ed., 2002, vol. 1, p. 252 and following.

He then headed to Fez after the year 1469 CE (874 AH), on account of the ordeal of Shaykh Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Wansharīsī, whom the sultan accused of conspiring against him, and from Fez to Tuat in 1477 CE (882 AH)³³. He did not return to Fez except for the disputation in 1486 CE (891 AH)³⁴.

Through these successive journeys and consecutive travels the character of Shaykh Muḥammad al-Maghīlī ripened, after he had roamed regions and cities and met great masters, until the gifted student and the able pupil became a teaching shaykh, a jurist and theologian, a prolific author, indeed a formidable disputant. He was drawn into a round of disputation with Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, if not several rounds, the most important of which was perhaps the disputation over the ruling on logic, for al-Maghīlī permitted it while al-Suyūṭī was known to forbid it.

Historians have spoken of that disputation, some of them to excess, as when they claimed that al-Suyūṭī praised al-Maghīlī in rhymed prose, this being its wording: "Hear my words, my brothers; I have seen a shaykh of the age, he is al-Maghīlī al-Tilimsānī, who has no peer in any land; he knows exegesis and the Qur'an, the science of grammar and meanings, the science of rhetorical embellishment and clarity, and the science of logic and demonstration"³⁵. This is feeble speech that could not be ascribed even to the least of al-Suyūṭī's students, let alone to al-Suyūṭī himself. It rises no higher than the talk of a market storyteller, not that of a scholar whose fame had reached the horizons. In any case, what is established of a poetic exchange falling within the genre of poetic flytings (naqā'id) suffices, an exchange that indicates beyond doubt al-Suyūṭī's recognition of al-Maghīlī's standing; for otherwise al-Suyūṭī would not have stooped to dispute with any but one whose rank he knew and whose worth he held in high regard.

Shaykh al-Maghīlī attained the rank of disputation and argument, of give and take, and of composition and authorship, leaving behind more than thirty works³⁶. We mention the printed among them, not the manuscript ones, owing to their currency among researchers:

a. The Commentary on Clarity in the Sciences of Exposition (*Sharḥ al-Bayān fī 'Ulūm al-Tibyān*): edited by Dr. Abū Azhar Balkhayr Hāṭil, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, Lebanon, first printing 2010; a work on rhetoric and embellishment, comprising 544 pages.

b. A Treatise on the Jews (*Risāla fī al-Yahūd*): edited by 'Abd al-Raḥīm b. Ḥadda and 'Umar Benmariyya, Dār Abī Raqrāq, Rabat, Morocco, 2005 printing; this is an epistle answering a question put to him about the Jews, and the book comprises 188 pages.

c. The Crown of Religion on What is Incumbent upon Kings and Sultans (*Tāj al-Dīn fimā Yajib 'alā al-Mulūk wa-l-Salāṭīn*): edited by Muḥammad Ramaḍān Yūsuf, Dār Ibn Ḥazm, Beirut, Lebanon, first edition 1994; this book is a brief, concise epistle concerned with offering counsel to rulers and

³³ Nāṣir al-Dīn Sa'idūnī, *From the Historical and Geographical Heritage of the Islamic West (Min al-Turāth al-Tārīkhī wa-l-Juḥrāfī li-l-Gharb al-Islāmī)*, Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st ed., 1999, p. 267.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 268.

³⁵ Faraj Maḥmūd Faraj, *The Province of Tuat during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries CE (Iqīm Tuwāt khilāl al-Qarnayn al-Thāmin 'Ashar wa-l-Tāsi 'Ashar al-Mīlādiyyayn)*, master's thesis, University of Algiers, 1977, p. 93.

³⁶ A group of professors, *Encyclopedia of Algerian Writers and Scholars (Mawsū'at al-Udabā' wa-l-'Ulamā' al-Jazā'iriyīn)*, introduced by Muḥammad al-Amīn Balghīth, Manshūrāt al-Ḥaḍāra, Bir Touta, Algeria, n.ed., 2014, p. 600.

princes, gathering in it the most sincere counsels for whoever takes charge of the affairs of the Muslims, and it does not exceed 64 pages.

d. What is Permissible for Rulers in Restraining People from the Forbidden (*Mā Yajūz li-l-Ḥukkām fī Radʿ al-Nās ʿan al-Ḥarām*):

e. Answers to the Questions of the Sultan of Gao (*Ajwiba ʿalā Asʿilat Sulṭān Kāghū*): both are printed within the book *The Imam al-Maghīlī and His Influence on Islamic Government in Medieval Nigeria (al-Imām al-Maghīlī wa-Āthāruhu fī al-Ḥukūma al-Islāmiyya fī al-Qurūn al-Wuṣṭā fī Nijīriyā)* by Shaykh Ādam ʿAbd Allāh al-Ilūrī, the Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī Company, Cairo, Egypt, 1974. The book offers a survey of the Arab Maghrib and the manifestations of Arab civilization in Nigeria, al-Maghīlī's testament on what is permissible for rulers in warding people off from the forbidden, a collection on the affairs of governance, the questions of its sultan, and al-Maghīlī's answers to them; the book runs to 70 pages.

f. The Pith of the Kernel on Returning Thought to Correctness (*Lubb al-Lubāb fī Radd al-Fikr ilā al-Ṣawāb*): edited by Abū Bakr Belqāsīm Ḍayf al-Jazāʿirī, Dār Ibn Ḥazm, Beirut, Lebanon, first edition 2006; a treatise on the science of logic, in the region of eighty pages.

g. The Practice of Day and Night (*ʿAmal al-Yawm wa-l-Layla*): edited by Aḥmad Bāghlī, Thāla Publications, al-Abyār, Algiers, 2008; a collection of daily remembrances, supplications, and litanies to be observed by the Muslim.

h. The Refutation of the Muʿtazila in Their Corrupt Beliefs (*al-Radd ʿalā al-Muʿtazila fī Iʿtiqādātihim al-Fāsida*): edited by Muḥammad b. Sālīm al-Tuwātī, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, Beirut, Lebanon, 2020; its subject is plain, a work of doctrine in which the shaykh set himself to refute the Muʿtazila, and the book runs to 120 pages.

i. The Exegesis of the Opening Chapter of the Book, a Reminder for People of Understanding (*Tafsīr Sūrat Fātiḥat al-Kitāb Dhikrā li-Ūlī al-Albāb*): edited by Muḥammad b. Sālīm al-Tuwātī, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, Beirut, Lebanon, 2025; a work of exegesis in which the shaykh treated the Opening Chapter, expounding and clarifying its meaning and noting its benefits, and the book runs to 144 pages.

This is what we have come upon of al-Maghīlī's printed works. He has many manuscripts still awaiting the lifting of the veil and the drawing back of the curtain so that they may come forth into the light of scholarly study; indeed, the printed books we have mentioned are far outnumbered by their like still confined to the shelves of the archives in Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Paris, Nigeria, and elsewhere ³⁷.

3. His journey to the south of the Sahara

³⁷ See: ʿAbd Allāh Ḥamādī al-Idrīsī, *The Works of Shaykh al-Maghīlī (d. 1504 CE / 909 AH): A Bibliographical Approach (Āthār al-Shaykh al-Maghīlī: Muqāraba Bibliyūghrāfiyya)*, Proceedings of the Algiers International Symposium on Imam Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī, the National Foundation for Printing Arts, Algeria, December 2023, pp. 385 to 412.

It appears that Shaykh Muḥammad al-Maghīlī did not consent to a life of settlement and fixity in a single place; rather, he was enamored of travel, devoted to movement, given to choosing adventure, scorning residence and stillness while finding ease in departure and journeys, and his life story is replete with this, for "the impulse to travel was one of the traits of al-Maghīlī's character, explained by that extraordinary capacity to repeat journeys to far places, as in his coming to Tuat twice" ³⁸. He roamed Algeria, Bijāya, Egypt, the Hijaz, and Jerusalem ³⁹, and perhaps roamed other places the historians did not record; but his journey to the south of the Sahara was what formed the most important portion of his life, for the events it held, which al-Maghīlī inscribed with his singular character, so that those events in turn inscribed his life and his course.

3.1 The political and economic circumstances of the journey

The Maghrib in general, and the central Maghrib in particular (Algeria), is joined by a coastal plain between south and north, so the trade routes never fell quiet, since the Black African tribes in the western Sahara were in pressing need of the table salt that came to them from the Maghrib ⁴⁰. All of that was before Islam, and when God favored the Maghrib with Islam the Muslims grew more attentive to these trade routes and put them to use for worldly and religious ends alike. Thus contact took shape between the Maghrib and the south of the Sahara, then widened after the successive migrations of the Berber Muslims to West Africa ⁴¹.

Algeria (the central Maghrib) contributed to realizing the cultural and civilizational connection between the north of the Sahara and its south ⁴². Ouargla ⁴³ was an important outlet for trade toward the Sahara, to the point that it became akin to the gateway of the Sudan, while Tlemcen formed an important commercial link joining al-Andalus with the south of the Sahara; as for Tuat, it was the meeting point of the caravans and a gathering station for them from North Africa to its south ⁴⁴.

Accordingly, the Algerian caravans, especially the Tlemcenian and the Tuati ones, were among the most important means that did much to spread Islam and enliven cultural activity in the lands of the Sudan, by carrying the books and manuscripts whose trade flourished, all the more so since the Algerian caravans counted among their members a company of scholars, jurists, and callers to the faith.

What also helped in this was that Tuat in the fifteenth century stood removed from political and military upheavals, for its remoteness from the seat of rule of the Zayyānids, the Ḥafṣids, and the

³⁸ Belḥāj Jalūl, *Hājis al-Riḥla fī Ḥayāt Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī*, p. 16.

³⁹ See: Belfarḥ 'Abd al-Raḥmān, *On the Journeys of al-Maghīlī (Min Riḥalāt al-Maghīlī)*, the Algerian Journal of Manuscripts, vol. 21, no. 1, 2025, p. 147 and following.

⁴⁰ Ḥasan Aḥmad Maḥmūd, *Islam and Arab Culture in Africa (al-Islām wa-l-Thaqāfa al-'Arabiyya fī Ifrīqiyyā)*, Dār al-Fikr al-'Arabī, Cairo, Egypt, 3rd ed., 1986, p. 190.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

⁴² Jamāl Zakariyyā Qāsim, *The Historical Roots of Arab African Relations (al-Uṣūl al-Tārīkhiyya li-l-'Alāqāt al-'Arabiyya al-Ifriqiyya)*, Dār al-Fikr al-'Arabī, Cairo, Egypt, n.ed., 1996, p. 145.

⁴³ It is present-day Ouargla, a province in the Algerian southeast. [trans.] A gloss locating Wargalān.

⁴⁴ Sharīf Asmā' and Sha' bānī Nūr al-Dīn, *The Cultural and Intellectual Interaction between Algeria and the Western Sudan (al-Tafā'ul al-Thaqāfī wa-l-Fikrī bayna al-Jazā'ir wa-l-Sūdān al-Gharbī)*, Qabas Journal for Human and Social Studies, vol. 6, no. 1, 2022, p. 611.

Marīnids made it a refuge for everyone fleeing those conditions. In that period it was under the control of the Maʿqil Arabs ⁴⁵, and so it enjoyed quiet and stability, far from the schemes of the self-interested and the extortion of the sultans.

As for the economic side, "Tuat after the Islamic conquest was a verdant oasis, sought out by the masters of the caravans crossing the Great Sahara, who provisioned themselves there with water and dates in order to continue the march toward the markets of the Western Sudan" ⁴⁶. Given Tuat's position on the route of the trans-Saharan trade caravans, it came to be an important station for these caravans and a great storehouse of goods ⁴⁷. By contrast, Tlemcen in this period was exposed to political and military turns of fortune: the assaults of the Ḥafṣids upon it followed one upon another, coups against the princes came in succession, and Tlemcen lived in the furnace of conflict, upheaval, and chaos ⁴⁸.

3.2 From Tlemcen to Tuat

In the shadow of those circumstances mentioned above, between the turns and disturbances of Tlemcen on one side and the calm and stability of Tuat on the other, to which some add a third factor in the exposure of North Africa to Portuguese aggression against the ports of the Far Maghrib ⁴⁹, it was, then, amid this turbulent atmosphere that al-Maghīlī's journey toward the Sahara took place. He set out toward Tuat twice, the first around 1465 CE (870 AH) and the second around 1477 CE (882 AH) ⁵⁰; these are conjectural, approximate dates that often conflict with other conjectures not grounded in documents and evidence.

Although the accounts differ over the date of al-Maghīlī's entry into Tuat, they agree that it was in the last quarter of the ninth century AH, corresponding to the late fifteenth century CE. He found himself caught between the two stones of the mill: when he entered Tuat he found it corrupt, not in respect of politics, security, and governance, but in respect of morals and religion. The Jews, who wrought corruption in it, lorded it over the people, and held sway, were the first stone of the mill, while the corruption of the people, their immersion in unlawful innovations and superstitions, and their distance from religion were its second stone. Shaykh Bābī Balʿamd, may God have mercy on him, says of al-Maghīlī when he entered Tuat: "He found it neglected, with great corruption having appeared in it, especially from the Jews, may God curse them. And what the shaykh did was what he did, taking

⁴⁵ Faraj Maḥmūd Faraj, *Iqlīm Tuwāt khilāl al-Qarnayn al-Thāmin ʿAshar wa-l-Tāsi ʿAshar al-Milādiyyayn*, p. 4.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴⁷ Faraj Maḥmūd Faraj, *Iqlīm Tuwāt khilāl al-Qarnayn al-Thāmin ʿAshar wa-l-Tāsi ʿAshar al-Milādiyyayn*, p. 4.

⁴⁸ See: Wahbūsh Muḥammad, *The Political and Urban History of the City of Tlemcen in the Medieval Period (al-Tārīkh al-Siyāsī wa-l-Umrānī li-Madīnat Tilimsān fī al-ʿAṣr al-Wasīṭ)*, the Algerian Historical Journal, no. 10, 2018, p. 95.

⁴⁹ Mabrūk Maqdam, *al-Imām Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī al-Tilimsānī wa-Dawruhu fī Taʿsīs al-Imāra al-Islāmiyya fī Ifrīqiyyā al-Gharbiyya*, p. 82.

⁵⁰ Belḥāj Jalūl, *Hājis al-Riḥla fī Ḥayāt Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī*, p. 21.

retribution against them and purifying the land of their defilement first, then purifying it of superstitions and corrupt practices second, so that his entry was a great conquest" ⁵¹.

Al-Maghīlī took up teaching at Awlād Saʿīd in the province of Tuat, and he set up a judicial seat at which he resolved the disputes that arose among the people. He also confronted the Jews, who had gained command of the joints of Tuati society and taken firm hold of it; here al-Maghīlī obtained a fatwa for the demolition of churches and synagogues, and his supporters set about carrying it out, razing the synagogues of the Jews and expelling them from Tuat. Al-Maghīlī then traveled after this to the Western Sudan, and when his son was killed at Tuat he returned to it as a wrathful combatant, but he met great opposition from the jurists of Tuat, so he yielded to peace and withdrew to the Valley of Abū ʿAlī, where he founded among his supporters his Sufi lodge (*zāwiya*) and made it a center for the call and for teaching, until the decree of death overtook him there in 1504 CE (909 AH) ⁵².

3.3 From Tuat to the south of the Sahara

The heated events that Tuat witnessed after al-Maghīlī's entry into it were themselves the cause of his departure from it. We have already noted that al-Maghīlī possessed a proud soul that loathed humiliation and abasement and loved might and triumph, and that for him there was no might except under the banner of religion and its rulings. So al-Maghīlī's character appeared to us: he entered no region except in flight from abasement toward might, and from falsehood toward truth. Were we to return to the beginning of al-Maghīlī's life in his youth, we would judge it likely that this came from the counsel of his kinsman by marriage, Shaykh al-Thaʿālibī, who enjoined him not to dwell in a house of disgrace. Supporting us in this conclusion is the view of Maqdam Madū, who explained the cause of al-Maghīlī's departure to West Africa by the events of his disagreement with some of the jurists over the rulings concerning the Jews, for he issued a fatwa that they did not hold dhimmī status and so deemed their blood licit. This brought him the enmity of many, and he departed for the south of the Sahara ⁵³.

After Tuat and its events, it occurred to al-Maghīlī to travel to Aīr (aheer), and he entered the town of Takedda (Takedda) ⁵⁴ because it was the nearest geographically to the province of Tuat. He met its sultan, and the people profited from his teaching, so he had a residence there for a time, which a number of seekers turned to account, taking knowledge from him; among them, perhaps, was Ayd

⁵¹ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī, *The Refutation of the Muʿtazila in Their Corrupt Beliefs (al-Radd ʿalā al-Muʿtazila fī l-tiqādātihim al-Fāsida)*, edited by Muḥammad b. Sālim al-Tuwātī, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, Beirut, Lebanon, 2020, p. 34.

⁵² See: Aḥmad Bāy Balʿamd, *The Lofty Journey to Tuat (al-Riḥla al-ʿAliyya ilā Tuwāt)*, Dār Hūma, Algeria, 1st ed., 2005, pp. 82-83; and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Baʿuthmān, *Al-Maghīlī's Campaign against the Jews of Tuat and Its Effect on the Craft Economy of the Region (Ḥamlat al-Maghīlī ʿalā Yahūd Tuwāt wa-Atharuhā ʿalā al-Wāqiʿ al-Ḥirafī fī al-Minṭaqa)*, *Journal of Social and Historical Research*, no. 4, 2013, p. 130 and following.

⁵³ Mabrūk Maqdam, *al-Imām Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī al-Tilimsānī wa-Dawruhu fī Taʿsīs al-Imāra al-Islāmiyya fī Ifrīqiyyā al-Gharbiyya*, pp. 29-30.

⁵⁴ Bilād Ahīr and Takedda are a Tuareg land lying within the rule of Niger. [trans.] A gloss locating Aīr and Takedda.

Aḥmad al-Tāzakhīṭī⁵⁵. He then made for Kashina, which is the same as Katsina (katsina), and Kano (kano)⁵⁶, remaining in the two of them about two decades by some estimates⁵⁷. He carried there the principal works of Mālikī jurisprudence⁵⁸ in order to occupy himself with teaching them, and perhaps with composition by way of commentary and abridgment, and he left behind in that place distinguished students. In Kano he met with its sultan and wrote for him a treatise on the affairs of governance and rule⁵⁹. He then turned back to the lands of Takrūr⁶⁰, reaching the town of Kāghū, also called Gao (Gao)⁶¹, whose sultan at that time was Askiya al-Ḥājj Muḥammad; for him he wrote a composition to answer questions the sultan had put to him⁶².

Al-Maghīlī's journey to the Western Sudan ran along this course, in our view, because its author chose the route with care: he chose the lands of Aīr (present day Niger) as the nearest point to Tuat, then moved on to Katsina and Kano (present day Nigeria) as the two nearest to Aīr, and he most probably deferred his journey to the lands of Takrūr (present day Mali) because it lay on his route of return to Tuat, since he intended to return to his home, where his supporters, his schools, and his mosques were, for it is the way of a person, when old age overtakes him, to long for the homeland in which he finds comfort among his people.

3.4 The impact of al-Maghīlī's journey on the people of the Sudan

The coming of Shaykh Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī to the south of the Sahara (the Western Sudan, or West Africa) and his meeting with its sultans led him to take up the work of reform in those regions, to write epistles to them on the affairs of the sultanate and rule, and also to counsel the servants of God by enjoining right and forbidding wrong, all of which attests to the existence of scholarly exchange within the African context⁶³.

That cultural exchange bore much fruit, for al-Maghīlī left behind great local scholars such as "Shaykh Muḥammad al-Ṣabbāgh, known as Dan Marina, and the jurist Shaykh Dan Mathānī al-Kashnawī, and

⁵⁵ See: Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī, *The Commentary on the Exposition in the Sciences of Clarification (Sharḥ al-Bayān fī ʿUlūm al-Tibyān)*, edited by Dr. Abū Azhar Balkhayr Hāṭil, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st ed., 2010, p. 26.

⁵⁶ They are among the most famous and important cities of Nigeria, both lying in the north of the country. [trans.] A gloss on Katsina and Kano.

⁵⁷ He is Aḥmad Kānī, in his book *Islamic Jihad in West Africa (al-Jihād al-Islāmī fī Gharb Ifrīqiyyā)*; this was transmitted by Abū Azhar Balkhayr Hāṭil in his edition of *Sharḥ al-Bayān fī ʿUlūm al-Tibyān*, p. 26.

⁵⁸ See: Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī, *Sharḥ al-Bayān fī ʿUlūm al-Tibyān*, p. 26.

⁵⁹ Ibn Maryam al-Madyūnī, *al-Bustān fī Dhikr al-Awliyāʾ wa-l-ʿUlamāʾ bi-Tilimsān*, pp. 254-255.

⁶⁰ It is a part of the Sultanate of Mali, and there is no city bearing this name today; on this see: Muḥammad b. Nāṣir al-ʿAbbūdī, *Lines from What Is Observed and Transmitted about the Land of Takrūr (Suṭūr min al-Manzūr wa-l-Maʿthūr ʿan Bilād al-Takrūr)*, King Fahd Library, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 1st ed., 1999, p. 10.

⁶¹ A city in northern Mali, on the border with Niger and Burkina Faso to the east, and with Mauritania and Senegal to the west. [trans.] A gloss locating Gao.

⁶² Ibn Maryam al-Madyūnī, *al-Bustān fī Dhikr al-Awliyāʾ wa-l-ʿUlamāʾ bi-Tilimsān*, pp. 254-255.

⁶³ ʿAbd al-Qādir Ḥaydara, *Manuscripts and Their Role in Scholarly Communication in the African Context (al-Makḥṭūʾāt wa-Dawruhā fī al-Tawāṣul al-ʿIlmī fī al-Siyāq al-Ifrīqī)*, *Journal of African Scholars*, no. 6, year 3, 2023, p. 230.

others among the scholars in the various regions of the lands of Hausa" ⁶⁴. Many works likewise appeared at the hands of those scholars in the various branches of the Islamic sciences and forms of knowledge, and in the different arts ⁶⁵. Indeed the matter went wider than this, for we find many of the institutes and universities of the Western Sudan concerned with teaching the legacy of Shaykh al-Maghīlī; by way of example, we find the scholars of Timbuktu ⁶⁶ occupied with teaching al-Maghīlī's books, such as his didactic poem (*rajaz*) on logic ⁶⁷.

Al-Maghīlī's influence remains preserved among the people of the Western Sudan, and his written works and traditions, together with the oral reports transmitted from him, are still kept by students and scholars. That journey also had a great effect in correcting some of the conditions of which kings and common folk alike complained, in addition to the wholesome mark he left among the jurists, who through him returned to exercising their role in the judiciary, combating the manifestations of polytheism and idolatry ⁶⁸.

What al-Maghīlī accomplished in the south of the Sahara in general, and in Nigeria in particular, counts as a historical epoch by which one dates developments in the religious, cultural, and linguistic spheres, for some Nigerian researchers say: "The spread of the Arabic language may be attributed to the efforts of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī, who came from Tlemcen to teach Arabic Islamic education in Katsina, Nigeria" ⁶⁹.

The material and moral traces, both written and oral, that al-Maghīlī left behind remain a beacon across the Western Sudan, and the people of those lands still extol his deeds; the works, conferences, symposia, and gatherings all celebrate al-Maghīlī and his heritage and acknowledge his effort and his accomplishment.

4. His Poetic experience

⁶⁴ The Hausa are a people who inhabited the north of Nigeria. [trans.] A gloss on the Hausa.

⁶⁵ ʿĀdam Mbā, Scholarly Travels and Their Effect on the Revival of Scholarly Communication in the Lands of the Western Sudan (*al-Riḥlāt al-ʿIlmiyya wa-Atharuhā fī Inti ʿāsh al-Tawāṣul al-ʿIlmī bi-Bilād al-Sūdān al-Gharbī*), Journal of African Scholars, no. 6, year 3, 2023, pp. 219-220.

⁶⁶ Timbuktu is one of the most important cities of Mali and a metropolis among the metropolises of the Western Sudan. [trans.] A gloss on Timbuktu.

⁶⁷ al-Ḥājj ʿAbd Allāh Ūmbī, The Relation between the Scholarly and Religious Centers in Sub-Saharan Africa: The University of Sankoré at Timbuktu as a Model (*al-ʿAlāqa bayna al-Marākiz al-ʿIlmiyya wa-l-Dīniyya bi-l-Frīqiyā Janūb al-Ṣaḥrāʾ: Jāmiʿat Sānkūrī bi-Tunbuktū Namūdhajan*), Journal of African Scholars, no. 6, year 3, 2023, p. 201.

⁶⁸ See: ʿAbla Muḥammad Sulṭān, The Maghribī Elements in the Western Sudan (Their Political and Civilizational Role from the Rise of the Almoravids to the End of the Songhai State) (*al-ʿAnāṣir al-Maghāribiyya fī al-Sūdān al-Gharbī*), doctoral dissertation, Center for African Research and Studies, Cairo University, 1999, p. 130; by way of: Munādī ʿUthmān, Scholarly Exchange between the Central Maghrib (Algeria) and the Metropolises of Sub-Saharan Africa (*al-Tabādul al-ʿIlmī bayna al-Maghrib al-Awsaṭ (al-Jazāʾir) wa-Ḥawāqir Ifrīqiyā fī Janūb al-Ṣaḥrāʾ*), the National Symposium: Civilizational Communication between Algeria and the Countries of the African Sahel between the Sixteenth and Twentieth Centuries CE, Hamma Lakhdar University, El Oued, October 2017.

⁶⁹ Māyā Tūnī al-Ḥājj and two others, The Arabic Language along the Silk Roads: Its Role and Its Legacies (*al-Lughā al-ʿArabiyya ʿalā Imtidād Ṭuruq al-Ḥarīr: Dawruhā wa-Mawrūthātuhā*), UNESCO Publications, Paris, France, 2025, p. 64.

4.1 His poetic heritage

In the opening of Shaykh al-Maghīlī's entry in the *Encyclopedia of Algerian Writers and Scholars* he is presented as a jurist and poet⁷⁰, and this prompts us to recall the saying of some, "This is the verse of a jurist"⁷¹, an expression that disparages the poetic gift of the jurists. Shaykh al-Maghīlī, by the reckoning of those who hold this view, is included in the saying, for everyone who wrote a notice on him paired his name with jurisprudence; yet I have not found a single one of the biographers who treated him, many as they are, describing him as a poet, apart from what I mentioned of the encyclopedia just now. They did, however, mention that he has verse, and between the one and the other there is a wide gap, for that a man should have verse and that he should be a poet are not one and the same thing, since to characterize a man as a poet is an acknowledgment that he has passed beyond the elementary stages of versification, at which one halts at mere meter, and has reached an advanced degree in which he has acquired the poetic gift and so become a poet.

Applying the name of poet to someone, in our view, requires that he have given his poetic output care, either by recording it in his own hand or by reciting it within the hearing of those who memorize, who then transmit it from him. But none of this has reached us regarding al-Maghīlī, and there is no doubt that he was not as concerned with it as he was with the sciences of the sacred law; rather it was a respite for him at one time or another. He may also have made little of poetry, acting upon the doctrine of al-Shāfi'ī, who said:

* Were it not that poetry debases the learned, I would today be a greater poet than Labīd^{72*}

The intent of al-Shāfi'ī, may God have mercy on him, is that an abundance of poetry does not befit the learned jurist, since it lowers his standing, and that the description "poet" does not suit him. Suppose, for example, that someone in some gathering, or in some book, said or wrote: "the poet 'Alī (RA), the poet 'Abd Allāh b. al-Mubārak, may God have mercy on him, the poet Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī, may God have mercy on him." Imagine that we hear or read this; would we not be set on edge by it and find it distasteful? All of that is because these men reached a rank above the rank of poetry, namely the rank of understanding in religion, so it is more fitting that they be known for this, not that their names be paired with poetry in disparagement of them. Far be it from them to be debased.

As for poetry apart from jurisprudence and learning, it raises the worth of its author, for there is found in the sound hadith the saying of the Messenger of God (PBUH): "Indeed, some poetry is wisdom"⁷³. We are not here concerned with discussing the ruling on poetry in Islam; we only wished to adduce the standing of poetry in Islam, and the preceding hadith is a decisive proof of that.

⁷⁰ A group of professors, Mawsū'at al-Udabā' wa-l-'Ulamā' al-Jazā'iriyyīn, p. 599.

⁷¹ See: 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddima (al-Muqaddima)*, text established by Khalīl Shaḥāda and Suhayl Zakkār, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, Lebanon, n.ed., 2001, p. 797.

⁷² Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī, *His Dīwān (Dīwānuhu)*, explained by 'Umar al-Ṭabbā', Dār al-Arḩam b. Abī al-Arḩam, Beirut, Lebanon, n.ed., n.d., p. 60.

⁷³ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, on the authority of Ubayy b. Ka'b, no. 6145. (The hadith may be consulted in the Hadith Encyclopedia online at <https://dorar.net/hadith>.)

Al-Shāfi'ī's foregoing statement, as we have said, pertains to the learned and to no one else: whenever a man is learned in the sciences of the sacred law it is preferable for him to make little of poetry, because poetry is nearer to the affairs of this world while learning cleaves more closely to the affairs of the hereafter. Add to this that the learned jurist stands at the rank of seriousness and resolve, so that when he turns to poetry he descends from that station. Moreover, he is, before that, at his most truthful when he studies the sciences of the sacred law with their texts and questions, so that when he turns aside to poetry he may slip and stray if he is not on his guard, for poetry, as is well known, "the sweetest of it is the most mendacious," and this does not befit the learned. Hence we find al-Maghīlī sparing in poetry, and perhaps the reasons we have mentioned justify all of that.

We are addressing a matter of some importance when we try to investigate fully a poetic experience in the case of a jurist at a time when we do not possess a complete picture of his poetic output, for al-Maghīlī left behind no collected *dīwān*, but only scattered pieces here and there, whose dispersal it is impossible to gather in a short span. Yet, seeking God's help, we shall try, taking as our model the words of Imru' al-Qays:

*... we strive for kingship, or else we die and so are excused⁷⁴ *

So al-Maghīlī has no independent *dīwān*; rather there are several poems, among them the *mīmīyya* in which he emulated the Burda (al-Būṣīrī's Mantle ode), and he also composed on the question of the Jews poems censuring them and censuring those who allied with them⁷⁵. This may be on account of his making little of poetry, as we have said, or it may be on account of the loss of most of his poetry, as some researchers hold. The researcher Wāfi Ṣalāḥ Mājid says: "Al-Maghīlī, may God have mercy on him, was an eloquent poet, as his contemporaries who wrote notices on him affirmed, and his poetic output varied between didactic verse and lyric verse of sentiment ... but most of this heritage has not reached us"⁷⁶. Whatever the cause of the scarcity of al-Maghīlī's poetry, we are dealing with an actual necessity, and so we shall treat the matter through the poetic material available to us.

The sum of what has come into our hands of al-Maghīlī's poems (taking a poem to be what reaches seven verses or more) is as follows:

a. A *mīmīyya* in praise of the Prophet, composed in emulation of al-Būṣīrī's Burda: it consists of twenty seven verses in the *basīṭ* meter, its opening being⁷⁷:

⁷⁴ *Dīwān* of Imru' al-Qays al-Kindī (*Dīwān Imri' al-Qays al-Kindī*), edited by Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, Dār al-Ma'ārif, Cairo, Egypt, n.d., 5th ed., p. 66. (The verse is applied to one who has not fallen short in his quest.)

⁷⁵ Aḥmad Bābā al-Tinbukī, The Attainment of Joy through the Embroidering of the Brocade (*Nayl al-Ibtihāj bi-Taṭrīz al-Dībāj*), introduced by 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Hadāma, Dār al-Kātib, Tripoli, Libya, 2nd ed., 2000, p. 577.

⁷⁶ Wāfi Ṣalāḥ Mājid, The Poetic Vision of Imam al-Maghīlī (the Poem of Prophetic Praise as a Model) (*al-Ru'ya al-Shi'riyya 'inda al-Imām al-Maghīlī (Qaṣīdat al-Madh' al-Nabawī Namūdḥajan)*), Proceedings of the Algiers International Symposium on Imam Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī, the National Foundation for Printing Arts, Algeria, December 2023, p. 339.

⁷⁷ al-'Abbās b. Ibrāhīm al-Samlālī, The Notice of Those Eminent Figures Who Settled in Marrakesh and Aghmat (*al-l'ām bi-man Ḥalla Marrākush wa-Aghmāt min A'lām*), reviewed by 'Abd Allāh b. Maṅṣūr, the Royal Press, Rabat, Morocco, 2nd ed., 1999, vol. 5, pp. 110-111.

* Glad tidings to you, O heart: this is the master of the nations, and this is the presence of the Chosen One within the sanctuary *

and its close:

* upon Muḥammad the Chosen, and the Family, then upon his Companions, for as long as a riding party journeys toward their dwelling *

b. A *dāliyya* censuring the allies of the Jews: its substance is eighteen verses in the shortened rajaz (*mujzū' al-rajaz*), its opening being ⁷⁸:

* I have declared myself quit, before the Loving Lord, of any nearness to the allies of the Jews *

and its close:

* and hasten against whoever ⁷⁹ of them has passed away, to the gardens of eternity *

c. A *lāmiyya* composed on the ruling concerning logic, which he sent to al-Suyūṭī; it consists of twelve verses in the *ṭawīl* meter, its opening being ⁸⁰:

* I have heard of a matter the like of which I have not heard, and every report has the same ruling as its origin *

and its close:

* and if not, then seek a demonstration of the error of some of them, by a method that delivers you from the venom of his arrow *

d. A *lāmiyya* describing the city of Fez: it has seven verses in the *kāmil* meter, its opening being ⁸¹:

* O Fez, may God give life to your soil, and water you from the streaming rain of the lavish clouds *

and its close:

* and sit beside the fair basin therein, and drink from it in my stead, may I be your ransom, and slake your thirst *

⁷⁸ Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī and Abū al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Marzūq, Two Epistles on the Protected People (*Risālatān fī Ahl al-Dhimma*), edited by 'Abd al-Majīd al-Khayālī, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st ed., 2001, pp. 45-46.

⁷⁹ This is a broken hemistich that does not scan metrically; the correct reading is wa-'jal 'alā man qad maḍā, so perhaps qad was inadvertently dropped by the copyists. [trans.] An author's note on a textual defect in the verse cited in the body.

⁸⁰ Muḥammad b. Ḥajar, A Disputation between al-Suyūṭī and al-Maghīlī on the Science of Logic (*Munāzara bayna al-Suyūṭī wa-l-Maghīlī fī 'Ilm al-Manṭiq*), Amārāt Journal, vol. 1, no. 1, 2017, p. 33.

⁸¹ Abū al-'Abbās al-Nāṣirī, The Thorough Investigation of the History of the Dynasties of the Far Maghrib (*al-Istiṣā li-Akhbār Duwal al-Maghrib al-Aqṣā*), edited by Ja'far al-Nāṣirī and Muḥammad al-Nāṣirī, Dār al-Kitāb, Casablanca, Morocco, n.ed., 1997, vol. 1, p. 224; and Ibn Abī Zar' al-Fāsī, The Entertaining Companion in the Garden of Pages, on the History of the Kings of the Maghrib and the City of Fez (*al-Anīs al-Muṭrib bi-Rawḍ al-Qirṭās fī Akhbār Mulūk al-Maghrib wa-Madīnat Fās*), Dār al-Manṣūr for Printing and Copying, Rabat, Morocco, n.ed., 1972, p. 34.

In addition to the poems we have mentioned, al-Maghīlī has verses scattered here and there, among them verses in the midst of his answers to the Askiya, whose opening is "When the sultan brings near the best of his people" ⁸², and two verses about the Jews whose opening is "My beloved is whoever shows enmity to the one I hold as enemy" ⁸³; and perhaps there is much else upon which our eye has not fallen.

As we attempt to approach al-Maghīlī's poetic personality, we shall confine ourselves to the distinguishing characteristics of his verse, with mention of some important observations, to ward off the prolixity that might weigh down this study, which calls for concision.

4.2 The characteristics of al-Maghīlī's verse

a. The scarcity of his poetic output: We mentioned earlier that al-Maghīlī's poetry that is in the hands of scholars is very little (even counting the manuscript portion of it), not exceeding a few tens of verses, and the cause of this lies in two matters with no third:

The first: that most of al-Maghīlī's poetry was lost through not being preserved either orally or in writing, which goes back to al-Maghīlī's lack of concern with that, since he was concerned, on the contrary, with writing down his scholarly output in jurisprudence. Add to this the loss of the manuscripts on which he, or one of his acquaintances, might have recorded his verse, owing to the vicissitudes of time, the constant traveling, and the length of the era, in addition to the practices of the invaders who succeeded one another over the region of the Arab Maghrib and the Western Sudan.

The second: that al-Maghīlī was sparing in his poetry from the outset, which is explained, as we have seen, by the turning of the jurists, and he is one of them, toward the religious sciences and their slight concern with poetry, so that for them it is only a diversion and an outlet not long dwelt upon. If we add to all of this the jurist's preoccupation with teaching and instruction, we realize that his talent did not burst forth into poetry, owing to his frequent engagement with others, since poetry requires of the poet seclusion and isolation.

b. The shortness of his poetic breath: Witnessing to this is that the longest of his poems in our hands does not reach thirty verses, and this has a principal cause in the improvisation of poetry and the lack of preparation for it, which is the case with the naturally gifted poet who is not given to artifice ⁸⁴. For this reason we may judge al-Maghīlī to be a poet free of artifice, who sends forth verse by improvisation, and so he stops at a point not far extended in the poem. This is not counted a flaw; rather, length and brevity in poems may be a merit, and many distinguished poets have explained the

⁸² Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī, *The Questions of the Askiya and the Answers of al-Maghīlī (Asʿilat al-Asqiyā wa-Ajwibat al-Maghīlī)*, edited by ʿAbd al-Qādir Zabāydiyya, the National Publishing Company, Algeria, n.ed., 1974, p. 25.

⁸³ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī and Abū al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Marzūq, *Risālatān fī Ahl al-Dhimma*, p. 24.

⁸⁴ See: Muḍar Nūrī Shākir al-Ālūsī, *Spontaneity and Improvisation in Abbasid Poetry up to the End of the Third Century AH (al-Badīha wa-l-Irtijāl fī al-Shiʿr al-ʿAbbāsī ḥattā Nihāyat al-Qarn al-Thālith al-Hijrī)*, Dār al-Manhal, n.ed., 2014, p. 24.

brevity of their poems in a way that makes it count for them, not against them. 'Aqil b. 'Ullafa⁸⁵, when he was asked about the reason for the brevity of his verse, answered, "A necklace need only encircle the neck," while al-Ḥuṭay'a explained the brevity of his poems by saying, "because they are more penetrating to the ears and more clinging to the mouths"⁸⁶. Perhaps al-Maghilī, when he composed his verse, hoped it would be light enough to fly across the horizons and be carried by travelers, and so he kept it short to make it easy to memorize.

c. The religious coloring: Perhaps the most prominent of it is the singing of the Prophet's praise, to which he devoted his *mīmiyya* poem, in which he emulated al-Būṣīrī's *Burda* poem (both being of the Ṣanhāja). This poem is dominated by religious words and expressions, for Sufism in it is plain in his phrases: "presence," "be absent from cares," "ask and you shall obtain," "O Messenger of God, take my hand," "intercede for your servant" ... It is also dominated by exaggeration in seeking the intercession of the Prophet, as is the case with the Sufis, an example being his words in the fifteenth verse, addressing the Messenger of God:

* So intercede for your servant and mend his brokenness, for the fracture, from the sin he has incurred, has all but destroyed him *

d. The rousing tendency: Among the things that indicate al-Maghilī's ardor, and his stirring of the ardor of others, is his use of the device of repetition that became widespread in Arabic poetry in general and in Jāhilī poetry in particular: "It is no secret that repetition in all these places has a great relation to the poet's psychological circumstances and the nature of his life ... and there is no doubt that he used to notice that repetition kindles ardor in the breasts of those around him and provokes them to fight, and so he used it"⁸⁷. The ardor we mean need not be the ardor of fighting; rather it is every ardor that moves the souls of others toward something. In his *mīmiyya*, al-Maghilī repeated an entire hemistich four times, in verses (5, 6, 7, 8), namely his words:

* O my master, O Messenger of God, take my hand ... *

His aim in this is clear, namely to drive people to feel what he feels of rapture and delight in intimate address to the Messenger of God, and for that he rouses them by the repetition that opens with the call, so as to make his hearers know that he is in a world other than theirs and a state other than their state. Returning to the ardor that repetition carries, we find al-Maghilī repeating the word "the Jews" eight times in his poem of eighteen verses whose opening is:

* I have declared myself quit, before the Loving Lord, of any nearness to the allies of the Jews *

That al-Maghilī repeats the word "the Jews" to this extent declares with all frankness the measure of the hatred for them rooted in his soul, for his stance toward them, his opposition to them, and his striving against them are well known, all of which became clear in his reliance on repetition in his

⁸⁵ 'Aqil b. 'Ullafa: an Umayyad poet of the Banū Murra, well known by the kunya Abū al-'Amallas. [trans.] An identifying note on the poet 'Aqil b. 'Ullafa.

⁸⁶ Rābiḥ al-'Awbī, *Criteria in Arabic Literary Criticism during the Second and Third Centuries AH (Ma'āyir fī al-Naqd al-Adabī al-'Arabī khilāl al-Qarn al-Thānī wa-l-Thālith li-l-Hijra)*, Dār al-Kitāb al-Thaqāfī, Jordan, 1st ed., 2005, p. 35.

⁸⁷ Nāzik al-Malā'ika, *Issues of Contemporary Poetry (Qaḍāyā al-Shi'r al-Mu'āṣir)*, Maktabat al-Nahḍa, 3rd ed., 1967, p. 233.

verse, by way of what we have illustrated, as though by it he were trying to transmit those blazing feelings in his rebellious soul to other souls that would share the same feeling with him and partake of the same stance.

e. Formal innovation: In the previous poem, in which al-Maghīlī attacks the allies of the Jews, the innovative bent in the form of the Arabic poem appears plainly. The custom of the generality of the Arab poets was that their poems be vertical and traditional, governed by a single end consonant and a unified rhyme, until a new art appeared called the *musammaṭ* (strophic verse), which is that the poet takes his poem and divides it into different rhymes: a portion with one rhyme, then a hemistich containing a different rhyme that recurs between every two portions differing in rhyme⁸⁸. An example is his words in the fourth portion of the aforementioned poem (in the rajaz):

* Have they not seen how the Lord of mankind decreed, in what is past,

that he shall not win acceptance, the one with whom the Jews are pleased *

Thus al-Maghīlī kept dividing the rhymes of his poem along the following patterns: (d, d, m, d), (m, m, m, d), (rū, rū, rū, d), (ḍā, ḍā, ḍā, d), (r, r, r, d), and so the strophic patterning proceeded to its end.

f. The missionary coloring: Al-Maghīlī's personality, expressed by his proud missionary soul, remained present in his verse. If his prose and his epistles had the larger share of his missionary life, some of his verses also performed their part of a missionary, communicative role. In the epistles of his answers to the questions of the sultans (the Askiya as an example), we find al-Maghīlī turning his call into eloquent verse, or, let us say, availing himself of poetry in conveying his call by way of counsel and guidance. He says, for example (in the ṭawīl):

* When the sultan brings near the wicked of his people and turns away from their good ones, he is corrupt,

and when the sultan brings near the good of his people and turns away from their wicked ones, he is righteous *

These are two verses of a three line piece whose close we have refrained from citing. In them appears al-Maghīlī's concern to rely on poetry in counsel and guidance, and the two verses carry a great missionary value bearing on the affair of governance and authority and showing the true mettle of the ruler and its signs. Yet the two verses, in terms of poetic beauty, are, in our opinion, weak and simple, for had he been content with the first he would have had no need of the second, since the two are as if a single image, an image whose repetition, if it suits prose and oratory, does not suit poetry at all; and whenever the like of this enters poetry, it weakens it.

g. Didactic versification: The role al-Maghīlī played in teaching the people of Tuat and the Western Sudan, we reckon, gave him a capacity for didactic versification. Al-Maghīlī, like many of the jurists, linguists, and hadith scholars who practiced teaching, acquired a facility for turning scholarly knowledge into verse molds easy to grasp and clear in expression. We also reckon that he had

⁸⁸ See: 'Abd al-Hādī 'Abd Allāh 'Aṭīyya, Features of Renewal in the Music of Arabic Poetry (*Malāmiḥ al-Tajdīd fī Mūsīqā al-Shi'r al-'Arabī*), Bustān al-Ma'rifa, Cairo, Egypt, n.ed., 2002, p. 102.

abundant versified composition, most of which was lost; what inclines us to this is the scholarly and pedagogical experience we have mentioned, added to his experience in poetry and in the science of logic. Since we possess no decisive proofs of that, we shall content ourselves with the example of his versified composition that he sent to al-Suyūṭī, disputing with him over the ruling on logic. Among what he said (in the ṭawīl):

* Is it possible that a man is an authority in knowledge yet forbids the Criterion in part of what he says?

Is the constructed logic anything but an expression of the truth, or its verification at the time of ignorance of it? *

By "a man" he means al-Suyūṭī, who is a renowned authority in knowledge, and by "the Criterion" he means logic. Al-Maghīlī made logic a truth and a verification, because it is an instrument toward knowledge and a criterion between truth and falsehood. The two verses carry no artistic, aesthetic image, because they are of the sort of scholarly, didactic poetry meant to establish rules, transmit evidences, or secure benefits.

h. The poetic image: In the book al-Istiqṣā there appears a beautiful descriptive poem by al-Maghīlī in which he sings of the city of Fez, after he had grown familiar with it and then become distant from it, so that longing moved him to recall it. He said (in the kāmil):

* O Fez, may God give life to your soil, and water you from the streaming rain of the lavish clouds *

In this text al-Maghīlī "treats an aspect of memories, yearning, and longing, addressing from afar the city of Fez in which he had spent a time of his life ... and the intensity of his fond passion for it and his eagerness toward it led him to imagine it a paradise upon earth" ⁸⁹. Among the things by which he described it, exaggerating contrary to the custom of the jurists, is his saying:

* O garden of eternity, which has surpassed Eden in its radiant, lovelier aspect *

Thus he addressed the city as the garden of eternity, then stated that its beauty is greater than the beauty of Eden, and this lies outside the description of the jurists, who were known for guarding against the images of poetry; we have mentioned earlier that the sweetest poetry is the most mendacious. Al-Maghīlī went on presenting the descriptions of Fez in a manner that indicates two things: the first, that he lived in it for some time, until he came to know its places, indeed grew familiar with them and accustomed to them; the second, that he became distant from it and so yearned and longed for it, so that his verse flowed from his soul, tender and sweet, and by this he passed from being a pure jurist to being a sheer poet.

This is what we have been able to mention of al-Maghīlī's poetic experience. What stood in the way of our going deeper into it was the unavailability of a collected and complete poetic output; for this reason our study was scattered and dispersed, owing to the dispersion of al-Maghīlī's verse in the

⁸⁹ Muḥammad Murtāḍ, *The Poetry of the Jurists in the Arab Maghrib in the Second Hijri Half-Century (a Collection and Study) (Shi' r al-Fuqahā' fī al-Maghrib al-'Arabī fī al-Khumsīyya al-Hijriyya al-Thāniya: Jam' wa-Dirāsa)*, doctoral dissertation, University of Tlemcen, Algeria, 1994, p. 200.

bellies of various books. Had his verse been gathered for us, our study might perhaps have been more precise in its control and more amply expanded.

5. Conclusion

After this delightful journey in the company of Shaykh Muḥammad al-Maghīlī, we may say that we draw from it the following:

- Western Algeria was, and still is, in constant contact with the south of the Sahara, and whatever the causes and motives of that contact, they will doubtless lead to a close scholarly, cultural, and social connection.
- The contact between western Algeria and the states of the south of the Sahara gave birth to a scholarly and literary heritage whose banner was carried by a group of eminent figures such as Shaykh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī.
- Shaykh al-Maghīlī was a towering figure and a lofty, spreading tree whose name the states and peoples of the south of the Sahara still repeat, recounting his deeds and drawing from his spring.
- Shaykh al-Maghīlī appears as an encyclopedic figure, for he was known for jurisprudence, practiced the call, took on the task of teaching, set himself to reform, enriched the libraries with composition, and composed poetry.
- Shedding light on Shaykh al-Maghīlī's poetic experience helps in grasping more of his personality and serves to present an added picture of the shaykh, given the role of poetry in plumbing the depths and disclosing the truths of reports.
- A fruitful study of Shaykh al-Maghīlī's poetic gift requires gathering the scattered pieces of his verse into a printed, critically edited dīwān that secures the attribution of the poetry to him without conjectures and ensures its freedom from the errors that mar verse and poet alike; without this, the study of al-Maghīlī the poet remains deficient, built on guesswork and surmise.

We therefore recommend the following:

- Facilitating researchers' access to the national and international manuscript repositories, and gathering Shaykh al-Maghīlī's poetic heritage in a manner that meets the conditions of scholarship and objectivity.
- Drawing on collective work among researchers, since gathering al-Maghīlī's scattered verse, mentioned above, cannot be accomplished within an individual framework; and if it should appear so, it will inevitably fall short of achieving the scholarly aim. There is a need to intensify the joint symposia among the social, linguistic, religious, and historical sciences, for such mutual enrichment will be fruitful, will open the horizons of scholarly research, and will breathe new life into it.

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