

# Evolution of the Oath of Allegiance (*bay'a*) as Justification for Rule during the Almoravids\*

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The Almoravids (*al-Murābiṭūn*, ca. 1061–1147), which grew out of the religious reform movement among the Ṣanhāja Berbers in the western Sahara, marked a major turning point in the history of the Maghrib and al-Andalus, with the two regions being ruled for the first time by a single authority and the Mālikī school of jurisprudence being uniformly adopted.<sup>1)</sup> However, as far as the people in the Maghrib and al-Andalus were concerned, the Ṣanhāja Berbers, who formed the nucleus of the dynasty, were foreign outsiders. In their rule over this vast region with its diverse population, it was the oath of allegiance (*bay'a*) that played an important part in the various phases of the expansion of dynastic authority.

In general terms, the oath of allegiance was considered to be a contractual act by which a certain number of persons, acting individually or collectively, recognized the authority of another person and demonstrated their willingness to submit to him. It was the means by which the ruler demonstrated the legitimacy and authority of his political power. The process usually involved two separate ceremonies: the *bay'at al-khāṣṣa* (private *bay'a*: the “notables” ceremony) where central figures of the dynasty, such as members of the royal family, court officials, and military leaders, swore allegiance privately to the ruler, and the *bay'at al-'amma*, a public event where ordinary people could swear their loyalty. After these ceremonies were completed, envoys were sent to obtain the same *bay'a* oaths from governors and military commanders in the various regions.<sup>2)</sup>

Although the oath of allegiance had been performed in the Maghrib and al-Andalus from before the Almoravid conquest, in view of the increasing number of references to *bay'a* in the chronicles and contemporary letters, it appears to have played a substantial role in the recognition of Almoravid power.<sup>3)</sup> This paper analyzes the Almoravid *bay'a* in terms of the occasion, the participants, and the procedures, and identifies changes related to the dynasty's power structure and its sphere of control. This analysis will provide ways of thinking about dynastic rule and how it is justified.<sup>4)</sup>

Chronicles, biographies, and letters are the main historical sources used in this analysis. Since there are hardly any chronicles extant that were compiled at the time of the Almoravids, I have used materials from a later period, notably from the Marīnids (1269–1465). Since they contain quotations from scattered sources, they can be thought to reflect the situation at the time, and they also make it possible for us to scrutinize the views of those later chroniclers. Among them, *Bayān* by Ibn ‘Idhārī (d. after 1312) and *Ḥulal* (written in 1381) are of particular importance since they cite contemporary historians like Ibn al-Ṣayrafī (d. 1162 or 1174/75) and al-Warrāq (d. after 1160).<sup>5)</sup>

## 1. The Oath of Allegiance at the Time of the Foundation of the Almoravid Dynasty

### 1-1. ‘Abd Allāh b. Yāsīn and the Berber tribes

The Almoravid movement, which gave rise to the Almoravid dynasty, began when, during his return from pilgrimage to Mecca, Yaḥyā b. Ibrāhīm (d. ca. 1048), chief of the Gudāla (or Guddāla, Jaddāla) tribe of the Ṣanhāja Berbers, which occupied the region from the western Sahara to the Atlantic coast, met the jurist of the Jazūla tribe ‘Abd Allāh b. Yāsīn al-Jazūlī (d. 1059) and invited him as a religious leader of his tribe in ca. 1038.<sup>6)</sup> Ibn Yāsīn not only required his followers to adhere to Mālikī school of law but also ordered the conquest of surrounding areas and tribes. His followers were called *al-Murābiṭūn* (Almoravids).<sup>7)</sup> He declared jihad on neighboring tribes from around 1039/40 and his power expanded as conquest continued. Successive Ṣanhāja sub-tribes, notably the Lamtūna, Gudāla, and Massūfa, swore oaths of allegiance to him following their defeat. For example, *Rawḍ al-Qirṭās* notes in its account of the conquest of the Lamtūna in 1042:

Then, he [Ibn Yāsīn] proceeded toward the Lamtūna tribe, and going to them, fought them and won. They submitted, repented (*tāba*) and made an oath of allegiance (*bay‘a*) to him, on the condition that they followed the Qur’an and the Sunna.<sup>8)</sup>

These tribes became the core of the Ṣanhāja military federation.

Yaḥyā b. Ibrāhīm, who had invited Ibn Yāsīn to his tribe, is said to have assumed the leadership (*ri’āsa*) of around seventy Ṣanhāja sub-tribes that were joined in a confederation.<sup>9)</sup> However neither the ranking of the tribes that made up *al-Murābiṭūn* nor the hegemony of the Berber leaders was decisive,

and it was Ibn Yāsīn's will that determined how things went. At first Yaḥyā b. Ibrāhīm and his tribe, the Gudāla, played a central role, but after his death, Yaḥyā b. 'Umar (d. 1056), a chief of the Lamtūna tribe, became leader of the confederation and enjoyed Ibn Yāsīn's patronage, leading to the dominance of that tribe within the movement.<sup>10)</sup> When Yaḥyā b. 'Umar died, Ibn Yāsīn named Yaḥyā's brother Abū Bakr b. 'Umar (d. 1087) as his successor. This marks the first time it can be confirmed that the *bay'a* oath was offered to the chief of a Berber tribe. In addition to the tribes belonging to the Almoravids, the people of the great caravan city Sijilmāsa dominated by the Zanāta tribe and of the Dar'a valley south of the Atlas also swore allegiance to Abū Bakr b. 'Umar.<sup>11)</sup> Interestingly, *Bayān* reports that Ibn Yāsīn, already established as a figure of authority, mediated the swearing of fealty to Abū Bakr by the people of Sijilmāsa. By doing so, he made it known that Abū Bakr was the new leader of the Berber tribes, thereby laying down the leader-follower relationship among the tribes.<sup>12)</sup> By nominating Berber tribal leaders, Ibn Yāsīn maintained his absolute power and also set the stage for them to become commanders of the Almoravids.

## 1-2. Leadership among the Berber tribes

In 1059, Ibn Yāsīn was killed by his enemies the Barghawāta, a tribe centered on the Atlantic coastal plain belonging to the Maṣmūda confederation. With no effective religious successor apparent, Abū Bakr succeeded to the political and military leadership of the Almoravids. He continued to mount military expeditions to various places, and the Barghawāta and Zanāta tribes, as well as the area around modern-day Fes, came under his control.<sup>13)</sup>

He was succeeded in turn by his cousin, Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn (r. 1061 or 1072–1106), to whom he had relinquished power in stages, first placing him in the vanguard of the army (*muqaddima*). After that, Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn gradually expanded his authority.<sup>14)</sup> According to *Rawḍ*, it was about that time that the ruler of Meknès swore allegiance to Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn.

In this year [1063], al-Mahdī b. Yūsuf al-Jaznā'i, the magistrate (*ṣāhib*) of Meknès rendered the *bay'a* to Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn and submitted to *al-Murābiṭūn*. Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn granted Mahdī [the rule] of his region (*'amal*) and ordered him to lead his own army to fight in the Maghrib against the tribes of that region. And so he formed an army and led it out of the city of Awsaja to where Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn was.<sup>15)</sup>

Here, al-Mahdī b. Yūsuf's right of control was recognized in exchange for the rendition of *bay'a* to Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn and as a result, al-Mahdī responded to a request for him to supply a military force. In 1071, when Abū Bakr left on an expedition to the Sahara, he entrusted part of the army to Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn and named him his deputy in the Maghrib.<sup>16)</sup> *Bayān* tells us that subsequently Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn increased the number of his own followers. Learning of this the following year when he returned, Abū Bakr decided to cede his power to his cousin and go back to the Sahara. The two men met in the vicinity of Marrakesh. According to *Bayān*, Abū Bakr voluntarily gave up his rule over the Maghrib to Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn and this arrangement was formalized in the presence of notaries (*'udūl*) and the leaders (*a'yān*) of other tribes. On the other hand, *Hulal* says that the Lamtūna chiefs (*ashyākh*), powerful court officials, the commanders (*umarā'*) of the Maṣmūda tribe, clerks, witnesses (*shuhūd*), notables (*khāṣṣa*), and ordinary people (*'amma*) were in attendance. Though the two accounts differ in who attended, they are both clear that power was delegated in the presence of tribal leaders and chiefs.<sup>17)</sup> Their approval may have been necessary, since the two men were first and foremost the military commanders of the forces made up of the Berber tribesmen and their authority rested on the military strength of the tribes. It should also be noted that when *Bayān* reiterated its description of the meeting in a summary, it says that it was Abū Bakr who nominated Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn and rendered *bay'a* to him. However, none of the other chronicles use the word *bay'a*. Because *bay'a* creates a hierarchical relationship between lord and follower, the authors of the chronicles either assumed it did not take place at that time or that no such relationship existed between the two that could be expressed in terms of *bay'a*.

### 1-3. Conquest of al-Andalus

The Almoravids led by Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn continued to extend their power in the Maghrib and around 1070 built a new capital, Marrakesh, as their base. Their military power became known among Taifa kingdoms (*mulūk al-tawā'if*, 1031–1090)<sup>18)</sup> in al-Andalus, which appealed to them for military help against the Christian kingdoms of the north of the Iberian Peninsula. This is because the Christian kingdoms were expanding their power and advancing into al-Andalus at the time, and the Taifa kingdoms were unable by themselves to raise armies to resist. After around 1081, the kings and jurists of Seville and Granada sent intermittent appeals to the Almoravids, and in 1086, in response to these repeated requests for help, Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn took his army to al-

Andalus and defeated the forces of Alfonso VI of Castile-León (r. 1065–1109 in León and 1072–1109 in Castile) at Zallāqa (Sp. Sagradas) near Badajoz. Some of the sources say that the Taifa kings rendered *bay'a* to Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn at this time.<sup>19)</sup>

After the Battle of Zallāqa, Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn returned to the Maghrib, but pleas for help continued to come from al-Andalus and he crossed the Strait of Gibraltar in 1088 again to provide military assistance. From 1090 onwards, however, the Almoravids set out to conquer al-Andalus, starting with Granada, and going on to Córdoba and Seville. According to *Iḥāṭa*, the people (*ahl*) of Granada rendered *bay'a* to Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn.<sup>20)</sup> There is no information about how other areas were conquered but it is conceivable that in al-Andalus, as in the Maghrib, that *bay'a* oaths were rendered by representatives and inhabitants of the area at the time of victory or conquest.

Thus in the early period of Almoravid rule, as power among the Almoravids passed from the religious leader Ibn Yāsīn to Abū Bakr, the military leader of the Berber tribes, and then on to Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn, *bay'a* took the form of an acknowledgement by the people and tribes of the defeated area of their submission to Almoravid sovereignty. This can be found in the Maghrib as well as in al-Andalus.

A letter to the Abbasid Caliph al-Mustazhir (r. 1094–1118) written by Abū Bakr b. al-'Arabī (d. 1099), a man of letters (*adīb*) from Seville, gives a contemporary description of the Almoravid situation at the time. It says that during his expedition to al-Andalus, Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn called upon the people of the region to join him in a jihad against the Christian kingdoms and to render him a people's *bay'a* (*bay'at al-jumhūr*).<sup>21)</sup> It confirms that, similar to the swearing of allegiance by the magistrate of Meknès in 1063, Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn demanded of those submitting to him that they should provide military force and show obedience by means of the *bay'a*. And in his *Muqaddima*, the greatest Arab historian Ibn Khaldūn (d. 1406) wrote that the *bay'a* was “a contract to render obedience” (*al-'ahd 'alā al-tā'a*).

It is as though the person who renders the oath of allegiance made a contract with his amir, to the effect that he surrenders supervision of his own affairs and those of the Muslims to him and that he will not contest his authority in any of [those affairs] and that he will obey him by [executing] all the duties with which he might be charged, whether agreeable or disagreeable.<sup>22)</sup>

The *bay'a* that Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn demanded is an excellent example of this.

## 2. Nomination of Heirs-Designate and the Accession *Bay'a*

### 2-1. Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn's nomination of his son 'Alī b. Yūsuf as heir-designate

In 1103, in the latter years of his rule, Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn nominated his son 'Alī b. Yūsuf (r. 1106–43) as his heir-designate (*walī al-'ahd*, lit. “successor [by virtue of] a covenant”) and secured the *bay'a* to him. This is the earliest example of an Almoravid ruler nominating his son as his heir and the *bay'a* being performed to him. It is also a landmark event in the evolution of the *bay'a* as an Almoravid court ritual, since this was the form that became fixed thereafter. Many sources speak of this nomination of an heir-designate and the associated *bay'a*, though there are small differences according to author.<sup>23)</sup> In summary, to follow Vincent Lagardère, Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn nominated his successor in Marrakesh and then crossed to al-Andalus. Going to Granada, he confirmed that *bay'a* had been rendered to 'Alī b. Yūsuf and in Córdoba performed a ritual of nomination. According to *Rawḍ*, “all the commanders (*umarā'*) of the Lamtūna tribe, city notables (*ashyākh*),<sup>24)</sup> and jurists” rendered *bay'a* to 'Alī when Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn had it performed in Córdoba. This is the first time jurists are mentioned as taking part in the *bay'a* ritual in Almoravid al-Andalus. In both Marrakesh and Córdoba, Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn made it known that 'Alī was his heir-designate and directly confirmed people's endorsement of it. *Bayān* makes the first mention of a nomination covenant (*'ahd*) being drawn up as well. Section 3-1 below examines this document, said to have been prepared by the secretary Ibn al-Qaṣīra (d. 1114/5).

### 2-2. Accession of 'Alī b. Yūsuf and response

'Alī b. Yūsuf, having been nominated heir-designate by his father in 1103 and having received the oath of allegiance at that time, acceded to rule in 1106 on Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn's death. Despite having received it already, he was again rendered *bay'a* on the occasion of his accession to the throne. *Rawḍ* describes the situation as follows:

When his ['Alī b. Yūsuf] father Yūsuf [b. Tāshfīn] died, he wrapped his father in his own garment and taking the hand of his brother Tamīm, went out before *al-Murābiṭūn*. He then announced his [Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn] death. Thereupon Tamīm placed his hand on that of 'Alī and rendered him *bay'a*. Then he ordered *al-Murābiṭūn*. “Stand. Perform *bay'a* to the

Commander of the Muslims (*amīr al-muslimīn*) [‘Alī b. Yūsuf].<sup>25)</sup> And those in attendance, the Lamtūnas and the other Ṣanhāja tribes, the jurists and all the tribal chiefs (*ashyākh qabā’il*) performed *bay'a* to him [‘Alī b. Yūsuf] and so the *bay'a* to him in Marrakesh completed. He [‘Alī b. Yūsuf] then sent letters notifying all the regions of the Maghrib and al-Andalus, as well as the southern regions, of his father’s death and his nomination as heir-designate and ordering them to make the oath of allegiance. Thereupon *bay'a* arrived at the place where he was from all localities with the exception of Fes and people came both to mourn and celebrate.<sup>26)</sup>

Thus when ‘Alī b. Yūsuf ascended the throne, tribal chiefs and jurists performed *bay'a* directly before him, while it was also done by letter, in the same way as it had when he was designated heir by his father. However, as we see in the last part of the quotation, there were refusals and delays regarding the performance of *bay'a* in Fes and also, as we will see, in Córdoba at the time of this accession.

The chronicle *Rawḍ*, which is essentially a history of the city of Fes, and *Jadhwat*, a biographical dictionary with entries for nobles connected with Fes, provide us with information concerning the situation in that city. Yahyā b. Abī Bakr (d. after 1106), the commander of Fes and nephew of ‘Alī b. Yūsuf, had been appointed to his position by his grandfather Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn. When he received news of his grandfather’s death and his uncle’s accession, he refused to render allegiance to his uncle. A group (*jamā’a*) of Lamtūna tribesmen agreed to this refusal. Receiving news of this, ‘Alī b. Yūsuf embarked on a campaign against him, and Yahyā b. Abī Bakr fled, surrendering Fes.<sup>27)</sup> Another version however says that Yahyā b. Abī Bakr gave his oath of allegiance in exchange for security through the good offices of Mazdalī, the governor (*āmīl*) of Tlemcen in modern-day Algeria, who had already rendered *bay'a*. Afterward, Yahyā b. Abī Bakr was sent first to the Sahara, and finally to the port city of Algeciras in al-Andalus.<sup>28)</sup>

On the other hand, according to *Mu‘jam*, the commander of Córdoba, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥājj (d. 1114/5), plotting an uprising against ‘Alī b. Yūsuf, delayed giving his oath of allegiance.<sup>29)</sup> This was supported by prominent figures (*mala’*) from among the notables (*mashyakha*) and jurists of Córdoba.<sup>30)</sup> Afterwards, ‘Alī b. Yūsuf pardoned Muḥammad b. al-Ḥājj and appointed him governor (*wālī*) of Fes and its environs. Six months later, he was appointed governor of Valencia and finally fell in battle near Córdoba against Alfonso the Battler (r. 1104–34), king of Aragón-Navarre, in 1115.<sup>31)</sup>

As the above examples show, although ‘Alī b. Yūsuf had been nominated



by his father and was rendered *bay'a* before his father died, his accession was not self-evident and it had to be approved again by *bay'a*.<sup>32)</sup>

Immediately after his accession, 'Alī b. Yūsuf is thought to have traveled to al-Andalus to look at the situation there and to make his accession known directly. According to *Hulal* and *Bayān*, “judges, jurists, leaders (*zu'amā'*), chiefs (*ru'asā'*), literati (*udabā'*), and poets” greeted him in Algeciras.<sup>33)</sup> This may be considered a celebration to welcome the sovereign, and although no *bay'a* was performed, representatives of the local population took part. The jurists had already given their oaths on the occasion of 'Alī's nomination and can be said to have represented the local population following the abolition of the Taifa kingdoms during the reign of Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn. And, after the rendition of oaths in the Maghrib and 'Alī b. Yūsuf's visit to al-Andalus, the appointment and dismissal of the governors of the various regions took place respectively.<sup>34)</sup>

From around 1120, Ibn Tūmart (d. 1130), the founder of the Almohad movement, began criticizing and defying the Almoravid regime in the Maghrib. According to *Nazm*, citing Ibn al-Rā'ī, he refused to render *bay'a* to 'Alī b. Yūsuf at Aghmat in 1121/2.<sup>35)</sup>

Tribesmen and local notables at times delayed or refused to render *bay'a*, and this led to them being subjected to punitive campaigns by the sovereign. The examples cited here show that the Almoravid *bay'a* was not simply a formality but actually functioned as an expression both of obedience and revolt.

### 2-3. 'Alī b. Yūsuf's designation of his heir and the *bay'a* subsequently

In 1128, around twenty years after his accession, 'Alī b. Yūsuf designated his son Sīr b. 'Alī heir. *Bayān* gives the particulars. First 'Alī summoned tribal representatives (*nuwwāb al-qabā'il*) “of firm faith and good judgement” and asking them who was qualified to be named heir-designate, they suggested electing Sīr b. 'Alī. And he ordered a letter be prepared that rendered *bay'a* to Sīr b. 'Alī and it was sent to the governor (*āmīl*) and judges of al-Andalus. As a result, the oath of allegiance was concluded at all the military bases (*qā'ida*).<sup>36)</sup> At the time, 'Alī b. Yūsuf had his cousins as well as his brothers Tamīm b. Yūsuf and Ibrāhīm b. Yūsuf attend. Here *Bayān* records accounts by contemporary chroniclers like Ibn al-Ṣayrafī and al-Warrāq, but they contain omissions and it is not clear exactly where the *bay'a* was concluded. *Nazm* says this happened in Córdoba. On the other hand, according to Ambrosio Huici Miranda, who has reconstructed from various sources the situation in al-Andalus during the reign of 'Alī b. Yūsuf and concerning its regional



governors, on Friday, the 14th of Jumada I, AH 522 (16 May 1128), 'Umar b. 'Alī, son of 'Alī b. Yūsuf and governor of Granada, conducted a ceremony naming Sīr b. 'Alī heir-designate.<sup>37)</sup> In view of these facts, we may assume that the naming of the heir-designate and the *bay'a* ritual also took place in Granada and Córdoba and that, following the approval of kinsmen and tribal representatives, *bay'a* rituals were performed in various places.<sup>38)</sup> Letters were sent to judges as well as local officials in al-Andalus, an indication of the important role they played, both socially and politically, along with jurists. Here too, appointments and dismissals of governors took place after the rendition of *bay'a*.

Sīr b. 'Alī, however, died in 1138, before he could succeed his father, and left no issue. Therefore 'Alī b. Yūsuf named another son, Tāshfīn b. 'Alī (r. 1143–45), who had distinguished himself fighting in al-Andalus, as heir-designate.<sup>39)</sup> *Bayān* reports the circumstances surrounding the election of Tāshfīn b. 'Alī and the ensuing rendition of *bay'a*. When Sīr b. 'Alī died, the Almoravid chiefs (*ashyākh*) asked 'Alī b. Yūsuf to name a new heir-designate. He told them, "Gather together, choose for yourselves, and agree on the one you are satisfied with."<sup>40)</sup> Therefore, the notables (*khāṣṣa*) and the people (*āmma*) gathered together in the ablution place of the Great Mosque of Marrakesh and discussed who to elect. Then they cried in one voice, "Tāshfīn, Tāshfīn." 'Alī b. Yūsuf therefore named Tāshfīn b. 'Alī as his heir and had both their names engraved on coins. Tāshfīn b. 'Alī sent letters ordering the oath of allegiance be made to him to the coastal region (*udwa*) and al-Andalus, and to places in the Maghrib. People took the oath and *bay'a* dated Rajab AH 533 (March 1139) arrived from every district. 'Alī b. Yūsuf had not himself made this nomination but had left it to the Almoravid military leaders, who took the initiative in the procedure. These men are thought to have been Berber tribesmen.<sup>41)</sup> This indicates that they were maintaining the structure of the early days of the dynasty, retaining its authority. The method of receiving the oath of allegiance on the occasion of the nomination by letter was also being maintained.

When 'Alī b. Yūsuf died in 1143, his heir-designate Tāshfīn b. 'Alī ascended the throne and *bay'a* was performed.<sup>42)</sup> *Hulal* says he named his son Ibrāhīm b. Tāshfīn (r. 1145) his heir a month before he died in battle against the Almohads in 1145, but it gives no details about any *bay'a* ritual or those who took part. All the Lamtūna tribe made an oath of allegiance to Ibrāhīm b. Tāshfīn upon Tāshfīn b. 'Alī's death, but his uncle Ishāq b. 'Alī (r. 1145–47) immediately annulled it and had the oath performed to him. This led to a rift between the two powers, and this state of confusion continued until the

Almohads took Marrakesh in 1147.<sup>43)</sup> Ibn Tūmart and his successor ‘Abd al-Mu’min had in fact also been receiving *bay’a* from their followers and the people they conquered from the 1120s, when they had begun to extend their power. They too were following the same tradition of asserting legitimacy through the use of an oath of allegiance.<sup>44)</sup>

## 2-4. Summary

Ever since Yūsuf b. Tāshfin’s nomination of ‘Alī b. Yūsuf as his heir designate in 1103, the *bay’a* was used by the Almoravids specifically at the time of the ruler’s accession and the heir’s nomination. As opportunities for the conquest of Muslim settlements decreased, it changed from being associated with conquest into a form of recognition of royal authority on occasions such as accession and succession. Its conclusion was led by kinsmen, commanders of the Lamtūna tribe, and tribal representatives; this emphasized the ties with the tribes that had existed since the beginning of the dynasty and that were maintained by means of the *bay’a* ritual. Jurists and judges were also party to it, especially in al-Andalus, where they represented the local population. As a ceremony performed directly before the sovereign, it was held in Córdoba and Granada in al-Andalus, as well as in the capital Marrakesh. In addition, after ‘Alī’s accession, the use of letters made the *bay’a* available simultaneously over a vast area. Nomination of the heir and accession also provided an opportunity for the sovereign to travel to al-Andalus to examine the situation there and to appoint and dismiss governors. Thus the *bay’a* created the opportunity to consolidate control. It played a substantial role during the Almoravid dynasty in unifying and legitimizing rule, as it had done following the death of a particularly absolute religious leader in the earliest years of the dynasty.

The *bay’a* also reveals the ideology of rule of the Almoravids. While seeking an oath of allegiance from the population of areas under their control, the Almoravid sovereign also recognized the suzerainty of the Abbasid Caliphate and rendered *bay’a* to the Caliph to seek recognition of his rule. In the aforementioned letter to the Caliph al-Mustazhir, Ibn al-‘Arabī also reveals that Yūsuf b. Tāshfin rendered *bay’a* to Caliph and sought his permission to rule the Maghrib and al-Andalus under the suzerainty of the Caliph.<sup>45)</sup> The Almoravid sovereigns not only received *bay’a* from those under their control but also performed *bay’a* themselves in order to place themselves within the political order of the Islamic community headed by the Caliph and so strengthen their legitimacy to rule over a vast area.<sup>46)</sup>

### 3. *Bay'a* Procedures in the Almoravid Court

This section reconstructs *bay'a* procedures undertaken by the Almoravid court from accounts found in collections of letters and documents, including form letters as models. It also examines the assertions made by the court through them. Similar to other Islamic dynasties, Almoravid letters and documents were prepared by secretaries (*kātib*) and issued in the name of the ruler or the military commander. Many of the secretaries appointed by and serving the Almoravids were from al-Andalus. Well-known among them are Ibn al-Qaṣīra, Ibn Abī al-Khiṣāl (d. ca. 1142), and Ibn 'Aṭīya (d. 1158).<sup>47)</sup>

#### 3-1. Covenants on the nomination of the heir-designate

As detailed above, Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn's nomination of 'Alī b. Yūsuf as his heir-designate and the associated *bay'a* was one of the most important events in the dynasty's history and several nomination covenants (*ahd*) have come down to us through quotations in historical sources. *Ḥulal* records one drafted by the jurist and *wazīr*<sup>48)</sup> Ibn 'Abd al-Ghafūr in Marrakesh in AH 495 (1101/2).<sup>49)</sup> And according to the secretary Ibn al-Qaṣīra, a draft existed in Córdoba in the month Dhu al-Hijjah, AH 496 (September 1103), which corresponds to the account in *Bayān* quoted above.<sup>50)</sup> Putting this together, we can say when the nomination was held in Marrakesh, a covenant was drawn up by Ibn 'Abd al-Ghafūr, and later when nomination and *bay'a* ceremonies were also held in al-Andalus, another covenant was prepared by Ibn al-Qaṣīra. It was this latter one that was recorded among the various prescribed forms for "Covenants of kings to the heirs to the royal authority (*al-mulk*)" contained in the *Ṣubḥ al-a'shā*, an administrative manual that is virtually an encyclopedia compiled by Shihāb al-Dīn al-Qalqashandī (d. 1418) during the Mamluk sultanate (1250–1517). This will form the basis of discussion here, as it conveys how the *bay'a* ceremony was performed, and there is also a strong possibility that it became the model for future generations.<sup>51)</sup> It contains about four hundred words.

The opening words record that this is a letter of appointment (*tawliya*) and commission (*tawṣiya*) from Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn's to 'Alī b. Yūsuf. Next are words of praise for both men, followed by details of the reasons for the election of 'Alī b. Yūsuf.<sup>52)</sup> It suggests there were other candidates for the nomination but Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn sought the advice from appropriate people, who all agreed on 'Alī b. Yūsuf. And so Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn nominated him and entrusted him with the important affairs of the people and the state and charged him

with the fear of God and with being just, not deviating from the rulings of the Qur'an and the Sunna. Then Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn called for the *bay'a* oath to be performed for 'Alī b. Yūsuf. All those present and those nearby offered their hands and gave him their oath, performing the *bay'a* ceremony. Further, Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn ordered that an announcement (*mukhāṭaba*) that the *bay'a* oath had been performed be made to all the other people, so that through the nomination of the heir-designate, anxiety might dissipate and joy arise. Then came the prayer: "May God bless them [the people] in the *bay'at Riḍwān* ("the pledge of good pleasure" or "the pledge which pleased [God]"),<sup>53)</sup> in the handshake of superiority (*ṣafqat ruḥḥān*), and in the call for good fortune and peace." Finally, it states that testimony was made to Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn regarding the above, that all those who had been subjected to the oath had met Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn in place of 'Alī b. Yūsuf,<sup>54)</sup> that they had submitted and shaken hands voluntarily, and that this letter had been prepared in Córdoba.

This document gives details of how the nomination of, and rendition of the *bay'a* to, 'Alī b. Yūsuf by Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn took place. It shows not only that 'Alī b. Yūsuf was the superior candidate but that after careful consideration and consultation, the election and nomination of the heir-designate followed a proper procedure, so asserting its legitimacy.

### 3-2. Letter concerning the performance of the *bay'a* oath ceremony (*kitāb al-bay'a*)

The next document is a form letter and has no specific information about the sender, the receiver, or the date.<sup>55)</sup> It was included in a collection of letters prepared by various secretaries; the introduction to the collection says it was drawn up by Ibn Abī al-Khiṣāl and was one of the finest works on *mubāya'a* (making the *bay'a* oath) ever produced. In the bibliographical note, the editors speculate that it may have been for the *bay'a* ceremony on the occasion of the nomination of 'Alī b. Yūsuf's son Sīr b. 'Alī as heir-designate (1128). However, as already mentioned, 'Alī b. Yūsuf made a number of nominations of an heir, so it is not possible to determine to whom this letter refers. The letter is quite long, around 640 words in all, and its contents are not easy to understand.

The letter opens with words of praise for Allah, and continues with a supplication to the Prophet Muḥammad and the "the Rightly-Guided Caliphs." Here the Prophet Muḥammad is the one who made "the pledge of good pleasure" (*bay'at Riḍwān*) a customary practice, who gave the opportunity for the handshakes of pledges (*ṣafqāt al-aymān*), who concluded a treaty with those who rendered an oath of loyalty when obedience became necessary, and

who warned against the splintering of the group. The Rightly-Guided Caliphs brought to an end differences in religion and assumed the duty of nominating his own heir. They were seen as those who wanted to help Muslims after death as they did during life. The nomination of an heir occurred when the father-king, realizing his approaching end, decided to name his successor out of respect for the tradition where the Prophet Muḥammad named Abū Bakr to follow him, and elected a person not originally in a position to be named heir, because that person was thinking of his people. Then a covenant of obedience (*'aḡd-hu al-muṭā'*) was sent to a certain local official and all the Muslims in the area, and this official made the pledge and called upon all the people there to render the *bay'a* oath. And so all the Muslims turned to the *bay'a*. When these glad tidings were received, the people hastened to proffer the handshake of oath, to listen and obey to the best of their ability, and rendered the *bay'a* oath “on the condition that those who followed him who endorsed the heir-designate would be considered *ḥizb* (a group of supporters of a person who share his ideas) and those followed him who did not endorse the heir-designate would be [an opponent] in war (*ḥarb*).” At the end, together with the date, “the distinguished men of a certain family (*al-mala' min banī fulān*) and those who follow them add their names to this letter.”

This letter covers details about the reception of the covenant (*'aḡd*) in which the father-king asked for the *bay'a* oath, the rendering of the oath by the people, and the entering of specific names into the record. Since it continues with a sentence about signatures, we can consider it to be a form letter concerning the rendering of *bay'a* that was to be signed and sent by the person performing it. The procedure was that local officials made the *bay'a* oath, called upon the local population to do likewise, and signatures that this had been done were taken from members of certain groups among the population. In addition, the expression “a person not originally in a position to be named heir” indicates that the election of the heir-designate was not a predetermined fact. Among the words praising the Prophet Muḥammad and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs there is an indirect suggestion that there were divisions and disagreements within the court over the nomination of a successor, which is consistent with the situation at the time if we assume that this is a letter from 'Alī b. Yūsuf naming his heir-designate. Here traditions about the Prophet and the Rightly-Guided Caliphate are set down to justify the election of the heir and the procedures associated with the *bay'a* oath. The letter was sent from those who were to perform the oath (local officials and populace) to the sovereign which means they were the ones to justify the procedure.

### 3-3. Response to the *kitāb al-bay'a*

Finally, let us look at a letter showing the ruler's response to the *kitāb al-bay'a*.<sup>56)</sup> This is also a form letter and does not contain any particular date, but it was drafted by the secretary Ibn al-Qaṣīra in the name of 'Alī b. Yūsuf and issued from Marrakesh. The editor of this letter Maḥmūd 'Alī Makkī dates it to about 1106, just after 'Alī's accession to the throne. It contains only about 120 words and compared with the two documents we have discussed above its writing style is extremely concise and bureaucratic. I quote below the section of interest to this paper.

When your valued letter has arrived, we<sup>57)</sup> have read its meaning and have understood the meaning in the summaries and particulars in your words in it. We are aware of your devotion to us and your hopes for us down to the present. With great regard for and goodwill toward you, we will act to fully execute what is in this letter. At this time, we will neither ignore your wishes nor be indifferent to strengthening your power and weakening the power of those who deceive you, if the Great and Almighty Allah wills. Allah is the ruler of your situation and the One who corrects it. He is [the ruler of] your actions and the One who gives them success. There is no god but Allah. We have already issued a deed (*ṣakk*). It will arrive with our letter of reply and is a bond that you will be responsible for what is recorded in your own letter confirming you have performed the *bay'a* oath (*kitāb bay'at-kum*), that there is no contradiction in the bond concerning you, and that [people] will not stray from the path in things either great or small. Truly God is your protector with favor and good fortune, the One who protects you and yours and makes it easy for you to stop making excuses concerning the bond. Peace be upon you.

The content of this letter suggests it was a reply by the sovereign to a letter from local inhabitants who had performed the *bay'a* oath. A deed was sent with it, certifying that the letter confirming the *bay'a* oath had been performed had indeed been received. The actual wording of this deed is not evident, but it probably gave proof that the *bay'a* confirmation letter had been received and that the letter of reply was from the sovereign.<sup>58)</sup> Also, this "*bay'a* letter" (*kitāb bay'at-kum*) is very likely the one discussed in the previous section, that local officials and residents had performed the *bay'a* oath.

To sum up what we know about the *bay'a* oath ceremony performed by the Almoravid court at the time of the nomination of the heir-designate, first it

took place in the presence of the sovereign and a nomination covenant was drawn up. Some kind of document was also probably drawn up concerning the *bay'a* oath performed at the accession, but the details are unknown. This was followed by letters written and signed by local officials and residents who had received letters asking for their oaths, confirming they had done so. Finally, on receipt of this letter, the sovereign sent a letter acknowledging it, together with a deed. This is in line with the descriptions in the chronicles that following the ceremony in the presence of the sovereign, letters ordering the oath to be performed were sent to all regions, and letters confirming the performance of the oath were received by the court. This was the standardized procedure for the Almoravids. The use of letters enabled the extension of *bay'a* from the nobility to the whole realm. These letters incorporated the precedents of the Prophet and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and rhetoric that justified kingship, effectively making it known that the sovereign himself was the rightful ruler. Letters from the local population gave their approval for this. Thus it was concluded what might be called a contract of submission and obedience.

### Conclusion

A diachronic examination of the *bay'a* oath in the Almoravid court reveals changes in both participants and procedures. The oath represents the preservation and continuation of a tradition that existed from the dynasty's foundation: the kernel of its power structure was formed by means of ties between Berber tribal groups, where the approval of kinsmen, Lamtūna commanders, and tribal representatives took precedence. From a different angle, the presence of jurists and judges became prominent, probably because they came to be valued by the dynasty and became part of the nobility. At the same time, they were representatives of the local population. As the Almoravid rulers expanded their sphere of domination, they also broadened the area in which *bay'a* oath ceremonies were performed by the use of letters, concluding contracts of obedience and submission to their rule with the people. The fact that the drawing up of *bay'a* letters more or less coincided with the conquest of al-Andalus and that the letters were produced by secretaries native to that region suggests that the Almoravids may have inherited the secretarial and documentary traditions of al-Andalus and applied them both there and in the Maghrib.

The *bay'a* was performed as an oath of allegiance in both the Maghrib and al-Andalus before the Almoravid dynasty. The Almoravids, Ṣanhāja



Berbers of the western Sahara, adopted this tradition and used it as a real opportunity to assert their legitimacy as rulers and ascertain the obedience of the population, creating a prescribed form for it. The unified rule of the Maghrib and al-Andalus and the application of the *bay'a* oath throughout the territory through the use of letters allowed *bay'a* to take root in the Maghrib.<sup>59)</sup>

### Notes

- \* This is a revised and extended English version of the author's following article: Noguchi Maiko, "Murābito-chō ni okeru baia no hensen to tōchi no seitōka" (The *Bay'a* and the Legitimization of Almoravid Rule), *Tōyō gakuho*, 96-4, 2015, pp. 1–26.
- 1) The following works give an outline of the Almoravids: Bennison 2016; Bosch Vilá 1990; Lagardère 1989, 1998; Viguera Molins et al. 1997. For the religious situation in the region and the Almoravid movement: Kariya 2012, pp. 38–50; Kisaichi 2004, pp. 19–48.
  - 2) Hanne 2013, p. 143; Tyan, "Bay'a," *EP*; Ḥarakāt, "Bay'a," *Ma'lamat al-Maghrib*. For *bay'a* in political theory, *Ahkām*, trans., pp. 5–43; *Muqaddima*, I, pp. 356–357 (trans., I, pp. 428–430).
  - 3) What seems to be the first reference to an oath of allegiance in pre-Almoravid Maghrib is found in a geographical work by the Andalusī geographer and historian, Abū 'Ubayd al-Bakrī (d. 1094), referring to the year 803 (AH 187), during the Idrisid dynasty (789–926) (*Masālik*, II, p. 307). In al-Andalus, its existence can be traced back to the beginning of the tenth century, during the Umayyads of Spain (756–1013), but nothing earlier has been found and further study is needed. Eric J. Hanne has discussed the *bay'a* process with regard to the Caliphs of the Abbasid dynasty (750–1258) for the same period, focusing on aspects of the process itself, and the 'language' used by chroniclers to refer to these oaths. Hanne 2013, pp. 141–157.
  - 4) Studies concerning the legitimacy of Almoravid rule have discussed *bay'a*, for example, in relation to the Abbasid recognition of the Almoravid rule, and how genealogy can legitimize a dynasty's authority. Felipe 2014; Fierro 2007; Lévi-Provençal 1955.
  - 5) The titles of each chronicle are as follows. Ibn al-Ṣayrafī, *Kitāb al-anwār al-jallīya fī akhbār al-dawla al-Murābiṭīya*; 'Abd al-Malik b. Mūsā al-Warrāq, *Kitāb al-muqtabis fī akhbār al-Maghrib wa-l-Andalus wa-Fās*.
  - 6) *Ḥulal*, pp. 19–20; *Masālik*, II, pp. 351–52; *Bayān*, IV, pp. 7–8; Bosch Vilá 1990, pp. 49–51; Lagardère 1989, pp. 45–46.
  - 7) The word *al-murābiṭūn* refers to those who gathered together in fortified convents called *ribāt*. "Almoravids," the name of the dynasty, derives from this. There are many theories about the interpretation of *murābiṭ* and *ribāt*. Chabbi and Rabbat, "Ribāt," *EP*; Norris and Chalmers, "al-Murābiṭūn," *EP*.
  - 8) *Rawḍ*, p. 159. A similar procedure occurred in 1056/7 (*Rawḍ*, p. 163).
  - 9) *Rawḍ*, p. 154; *A'māl*, II, p. 385. These sources call him *amīr* (commander). However, in the *Bayān* and *Ḥulal* he appears simply as "a man of the Gudāla tribe." *Ḥulal*, p. 19; *Bayān*, IV, p. 7.

- 10) *Ḥulal*, p. 21; *Rawḍ*, p. 160; *Bayān*, IV, pp. 8–11. Cf. Kariya 2012, p. 47. All the sources refer to Yaḥyā b. 'Umar as *amīr*. Regarding the selection of leaders among the Berber tribes, Messier says that this was done through customary election and that Yaḥyā b. 'Umar was chosen in this way (Messier 2001, p. 60). Bennison points out that Yaḥyā b. 'Umar's mother Safīya was from the Gudāla tribe and there is a strong possibility she was a sister of Yaḥyā b. Ibrāhīm. Though it might seem unusual that the son (in this case Yaḥyā b. 'Umar) of a deceased man's (in this case Yaḥyā b. Ibrāhīm) sister (in this case Safīya) should inherit, this was a common matrilineal inheritance pattern among the Ṣanhāja, and it seems to have been followed here, with Ibn Yāsīn's approval (Bennison 2016, p. 28).
- 11) *Ḥulal*, p. 23; *Rawḍ*, pp. 162, 169; *Bayān*, IV, pp. 14–15.
- 12) As a result, many sources refer to Ibn Yāsīn as "the de facto *amīr* who gives orders and enforces prohibitions." *Ḥulal*, p. 21; *Rawḍ*, p. 160; *Bayān*, IV, p. 12.
- 13) *Rawḍ*, p. 169.
- 14) One theory says that Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn's rule began in 1072 when Abū Bakr returned to the Sahara and this date has been widely adopted in recent years. But this leaves a decade long lacuna in Almoravid history. Ferhat, "Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn," *EF*; Lagardère 1989, pp. 79–84.
- 15) *Rawḍ*, p. 177. Cf. *A'māl*, II, p. 388. Oaths of allegiance were made by various tribes in 1071/2 (*Rawḍ*, p. 179).
- 16) *Ḥulal*, pp. 24–25; *Rawḍ*, pp. 162, 170, 175; *A'māl*, II, p. 387; *Bayān*, IV, pp. 18–21. There is considerable disparity in the dates of the first appointment—*Rawḍ* gives 1056 and *Bayān* gives 1068/9. *Ḥulal* and *Bayān* say he was entrusted with one third of the army, and *Rawḍ* says with one half.
- 17) *Ḥulal*, pp. 26–27; *Bayān*, IV, pp. 24–25. Cf. *Rawḍ*, pp. 171–172; *A'māl*, II, pp. 387–388; *Iḥāṭa*, IV, pp. 302–303; Lagardère 1989, pp. 82–84. *A'māl* says that after Abū Bakr left for the Sahara, Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn had the Ṣanhāja tribes renew their oath of allegiance.
- 18) Literally "kings of the territorial divisions," these were independent states in various parts of the Iberian Peninsula that emerged following the breakup of the Umayyads of al-Andalus. Cf. Wasserstein 1985.
- 19) *Rawḍ*, pp. 174, 179; *A'māl*, II, p. 388.
- 20) *Iḥāṭa*, III, p. 290. However, there are many explanations concerning how Granada was conquered. Ashbākh 2011, p. 98.
- 21) *Shawāhid al-jilla*, p. 301 (trans. by Viguera Molins 1977, pp. 351–353); Felipe 2014, p. 58. What is called here *bay'at al-jumhūr* can be considered the same as *bay'at al-'amma*.
- 22) *The Muqaddimah* (trans.), I, p. 428. Cf. *Muqaddima*, I, p. 356.
- 23) *Ḥulal*, pp. 78–80; *Hulla*, II, pp. 248–249; *Rawḍ*, p. 197; *Bayān*, IV, pp. 42–44; *Iktifā'*, I, p. 422. Cf. Bosch Vilá 1990, p. 165; Lagardère 1989, pp. 146–147.
- 24) The word "shaykh" often appears in the historical record. In many cases it is associated with the Berber tribes, and it is then translated as "tribal chief." However here the account concerns an Andalusian city (Córdoba) and so it is translated as "city notable."
- 25) This title was used by the Almoravid sovereigns from the time of Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn.
- 26) *Rawḍ*, p. 199. *Bayān* also describes the *bay'a* ritual. Those in attendance included tribal leaders (*zu'ama'*) and chiefs (*ru'asā'*) but not jurists (*Bayān*, IV, p. 48). *Ḥulal* says that Tamīm b. Yūsuf performed *bay'a* (*Ḥulal*, p. 84).

- 27) Concerning the rejection of *bay'a* and ensuing suppression, Satō writes: "Muslims in cities and rural areas in various parts of the country reserved for themselves the expedient of canceling their oaths of obedience and allegiance to the caliph and omitting his name from the *khutba* (Friday sermon) if they thought he was not just. This was of course a challenge to the authority of the caliphate and was subject to armed suppression, but it is significant that this was an established practice" (Satō 2004, p. 169). In his theory of the caliphate, al-Māwardī (d. 1058), a prominent jurist of the Shāfi'i school, stated that once electors have chosen one person among the candidates for caliph (*imām*), they must render *bay'a* to him, and it is this *bay'a* that brings the appointment to completion. Subsequently, all members of the *umma* must submit and perform *bay'a* to him. According to this, since *bay'a* had already been rendered to 'Alī b. Yūsuf, Yaḥyā b. Abī Bakr should have submitted and done the same; by refusing to do so he would be regarded as a rebel and subject to suppression. Cf. *Ahkām*, trans., pp. 11–12, 138–146.
- 28) *Rawḍ*, pp. 199–201; *Jadhwat*, II, p. 460. Cf. Codera y Zaidín 2005, pp. 94–99; Lagardère 1998, pp. 14–15.
- 29) *Mu'jam*, pp. 175–176, 190. Cf. Lagardère 1998, pp. 14–17.
- 30) All the same, Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Ḥamdīn (d. 1114), a judge from Córdoba, appears to have supported the accession of 'Alī b. Yūsuf. Fierro 1994, pp. 89–90.
- 31) *Bayān*, IV, pp. 48–49, 53–54; *Jadhwat*, II, p. 460.
- 32) According to historical records, despite the fact that 'Alī b. Yūsuf was the youngest of Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn's sons and his mother was a Christian, he was chosen as successor over his half-brothers. *Ḥulal*, p. 77; *Rawḍ*, p. 198. This may well have been the reason for the refusal of some to give him the oath of allegiance.
- 33) *Ḥulal*, p. 85; *Bayān*, IV, p. 48.
- 34) *Rawḍ*, p. 201; *Bayān*, IV, pp. 48–49, *Jadhwat*, II, p. 460. It is worth noting that it was customary during the Buyid dynasty in Iran for the army to demand a substantial allowance (*rasm al-bay'a*) in exchange for *bay'a* when the sovereign assumed office. This applied also to the appointment of Abbasid Caliphs. Mottahedeh 2001, pp. 50–54; Shimizu 1972, p. 79. Cf. Hanne 2013, pp. 148–149, 153.
- 35) *Naẓm*, p. 83. Ibn Tūmart started a movement opposing the Almoravids based on *tawḥīd* (unitarianism) ideas, which is generally called the Almohad movement. His successor 'Abd al-Mu'min founded the Almohad dynasty (1130–1269). Shatzmiller, "al-Muwahḥidūn," *EF*.
- 36) *Bayān*, IV, p. 78.
- 37) *Naẓm*, p. 148; Huici Miranda 1959, p. 112. Cf. Lagardère 1998, pp. 143–146.
- 38) There is a variety of scholarly opinion regarding Almoravid co-capitals, with some saying Granada, and others Seville. However, based on the location of the *bay'a* ritual, it seems that Córdoba, the capital of the Caliphate of Córdoba (929–1031), was equally important.
- 39) *Bayān*, IV, pp. 78–80, 97–98. Cf. *Ḥulal*, p. 120; *Rawḍ*, p. 208; *Iḥāṭa*, I, pp. 247–249.
- 40) This was due to the fact that Sīr b. 'Alī's mother Qamar was jealous of Tāshfīn b. 'Alī. She had raised another of 'Alī b. Yūsuf's sons, Ishāq b. 'Alī, as her own after his birth mother died, and wished for him to be named heir-designate (*Bayān*, IV, p. 97).
- 41) A treatise of *ḥisba* (a manual for the management of the marketplace) dealing with Seville in the same period mentions Almoravid soldiers belonging to the Berber

- Ṣanhāja, Lamtūna, and Lamṭa tribes. *Hisba*, pp. 77–79 (trans., pp. 61–63).
- 42) *Bayān*, IV, p. 101; *Jadhwat*, I, p. 170.
- 43) *Ḥulal*, p. 135; *Bayān*, IV, p. 105; *A'māl*, II, p. 397.
- 44) *Ḥulal*, pp. 103, 107–109, 130, 143; *Rawḍ*, pp. 220, 225–229, 236–241; *Bayān*, IV, pp. 68–69; etc.
- 45) *Shawāhid al-jilla*, pp. 279–290; Lévi-Provençal 1955. Cf. *Muqaddima*, I, p. 386.
- 46) According to Hanne, the terminology of rituals involving oaths of loyalty among the Buyids and Seljuk rulers “rarely, if ever, includes specific references to the *bay'a* oath, opting instead to use such terms as *ḥilf*.” Hanne 2013, pp. 152, 156–157. Although the Almoravid sovereign recognized the authority of the Abbasid Caliphate, they effectively acted as occupying a similar status.
- 47) Lagardère 1998, pp. 245–298.
- 48) Generally, the title of a high official, but under the Almoravids it was the title of a high-ranking secretary.
- 49) *Ḥulal*, pp. 78–80.
- 50) *Rawḍ*, pp. 558–560; *Iḥāṭa*, II, pp. 369–370; *Ṣubḥ*, X, pp. 160–162; Lagardère 1998, pp. 263, 295. The material used in this paper is from the *Rawḍ* appendix. *Rawḍ* is not clear about the author or source, but *Iḥāṭa* and *Ṣubḥ* say Ibn al-Qaṣīra.
- 51) The editor of *Ḥulal* says Ibn ‘Abd al-Ghafūr’s was the first nomination covenant and that Ibn al-Qaṣīra’s may have been its confirmation (*ta’kid*) (*Ḥulal*, p. 79).
- 52) The letter is basically written in the third person singular.
- 53) The “*bay’at Riḍwān*” seems to refer to the oath of loyalty sworn to the Prophet Muḥammad on the occasion of a dispute with the Quraysh, prior to the Treaty of al-Ḥudaybiya in 628. Cf. *Qur’an*, 48: 10, 18; *Sīrat* (trans.), III, pp. 131–132, 609. This pledge, together with “the pledge of the women” (*bay’at al-nisā’*), is considered the prototype of the *bay’a* (Tyan, “Bay’a,” *EF*).
- 54) From this account and also the chronicles, ‘Alī b. Yūsuf does not seem to have been present at this ceremony (*Rawḍ*, p. 197).
- 55) *Rasā’il*, pp. 28–33. On bibliographical notes, *Rasā’il*, pp. 12–13.
- 56) *Wathā’iq*, p. 70, n. 10. On explanatory notes, *Wathā’iq*, p. 41.
- 57) Here the first-person plural is used. This is the majestic plural, the royal “we,” used by a person of high rank, such as a sovereign, to refer to himself.
- 58) *Naẓm* gives an example of Ibn Tūmart’s *ṣakk*. Beginning with a supplication to Allah and the Prophet Muḥammad, it continues “I say I am Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh Tūmart, the last *mahdī*,” followed by the date (*Naẓm*, p. 89).
- 59) There are abundant examples of the use of the *bay’a* oath and letters in the Almohad dynasty that followed. Its content may have undergone various changes but it continued to remain a ritual until the present reigning dynasty of Morocco, the Alaouite (1664 or 1668–).

## Bibliography

### Primary sources and abbreviations

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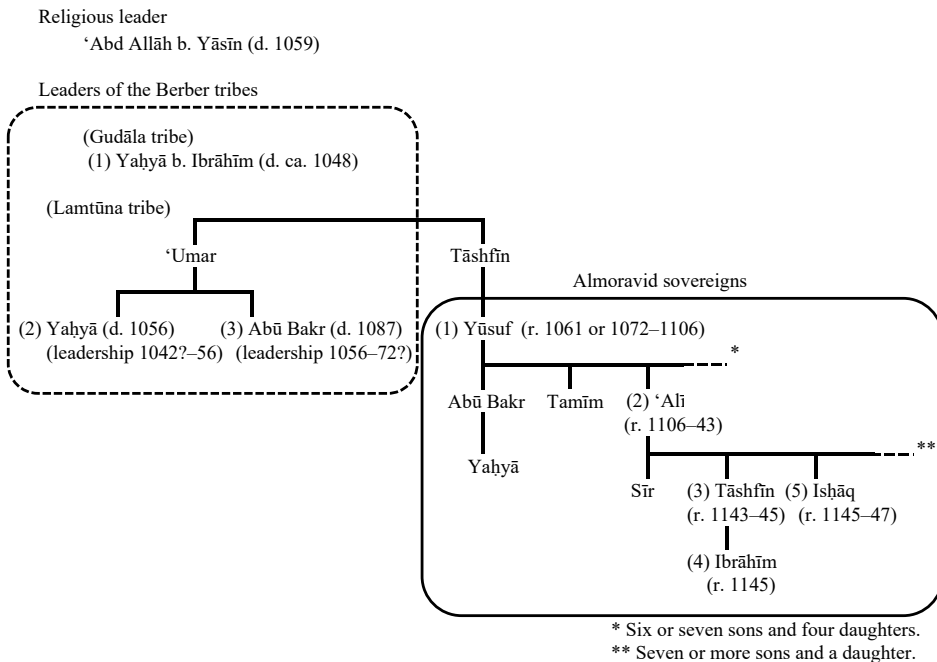


Figure. Genealogical table of the Almoravid sovereigns