

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Contemporary Algerian Scholars and Their Ijtihad in Islamic Sciences: The Case of Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam

Oussama Thabet Sekhri

Department of Sharia and Law, Faculty of Islamic Sciences, University: Algiers 1 , Benyoucef Benkhedda, Algeria

Email : [mohamedthabet114@gmail.com](mailto:mohamedthabet114@gmail.com)

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## ABSTRACT

This study, entitled “Contemporary Algerian Scholars and Their Ijtihad in Islamic Sciences: Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam as a Model”, aims to shed light on the role of contemporary Algerian scholars in serving and enriching the field of Islamic sciences. The study addresses two main themes: the first part focuses on exploring the concept of Ijtihad in Islamic sciences, including its nature, rulings, and the conditions required for a Mujtahid. The second part seeks to enhance knowledge about the life and contributions of the prominent Algerian scholar, Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam, with particular emphasis on his Ijtihad and the services he rendered to Islamic sciences.

This research comes as an attempt to understand and highlight the significant contributions made by Algerian scholars in developing religious concepts and strengthening the scientific understanding of Islamic sciences. It concludes with several important findings, among which is that Algeria is rich with its scholars engaged in Ijtihad in Islamic sciences, and that among these scholars, Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam stands out as one whose knowledge deserves to be sought and whose scholarly legacy requires further study.

**Keywords:** Ijtihad, Algerian scholars, contemporary, Mohammed Bay Boulalam.

## INTRODUCTION

A careful observer of the academic environment in Algerian universities and institutes notices a clear neglect of the intellectual contributions of Algerian scholars and an injustice to their scholarly legacy. Many scientific researches and academic studies in Algerian universities often limit the study of Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh), Usul al-Fiqh, and other Islamic sciences to schools outside Algeria. It is also observed that many of those in charge within these institutions, including professors and supervisors, tend to import fatwas from different sources, especially in contemporary issues (nawazil). This occurs despite the fact that Algerian scholars, both past and present, have played an important role in this field through their commentaries on abridged texts, their issuing of authentic fatwas suited to contemporary issues, as well as their works in inheritance law and comprehensive fiqh encyclopedias. Among these notable scholars is Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam.

This misconception has motivated me to conduct this research entitled “**Contemporary Algerian Scholars and Their Ijtihad in Islamic Sciences: Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam as a Model.**” The purpose is to highlight Sheikh Boulalam’s contributions in strengthening the foundations of Maliki jurisprudence in ways that respond to the needs of his time, through the framework of

principles, objectives (maqasid), and jurisprudential rules, thereby contributing to the renewal of religious concepts in harmony with authentic scholarly tradition.

Accordingly, this study has been structured into two main parts. The first part addresses the concept of Ijtihad in Islamic sciences—its definition, rulings, and the conditions of a Mujtahid. The second part focuses on the life and scholarly contributions of the Algerian scholar Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam, with particular attention to his independent reasoning (Ijtihad) in the service of Islamic sciences.

### **Significance of the Study:**

- To highlight the role of Algerian scholars and their Ijtihad in serving Islamic sciences in accordance with the needs of this era.
- To introduce Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam as one of Algeria's contemporary reformist scholars, distinguished by his modern religious vision and his effective contributions to Islamic thought.
- To shed light on the scientific legacy of Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam, who renewed Islamic thinking through his writings and scholarly efforts.
- To present the remarkable contributions of Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam in enriching religious and intellectual concepts, establishing him as a respected reference in Algeria's religious and academic landscape.

### **Research Problem:**

Since this study addresses the efforts of Algerian scholars in serving Islamic sciences under contemporary challenges, with Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam as a model, the central research problem can be stated as follows:

**What are the efforts of Algerian scholars in this field, and what are the manifestations of these efforts in serving Islamic sciences?**

This main problem branches into the following questions:

- What is Ijtihad, and what are the conditions required for a Mujtahid?
- Who is Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam?
- What are the manifestations and efforts of Sheikh Boulalam in serving Islamic sciences?

### **Methodology:**

The nature and title of the research required the adoption of the **descriptive-analytical method**, as the aim is to identify the role of Algerian scholars in serving Islamic sciences through the example of a distinguished contemporary scholar who devoted his life to this field, particularly in Maliki jurisprudence.

In addition, the **exploratory method** was also employed in order to investigate and document the life of Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam for the purpose of introducing him comprehensively.

### **Research Structure:**

The research is divided into an introduction, two main chapters, and a conclusion, as follows:

- **Introduction:** providing the background, research problem, significance, methodology, and structure.

- **Chapter One: Ijtihad in Islam**
  - Definition and reality of Ijtihad.
  - Conditions required of a Mujtahid.
- **Chapter Two: Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam and His Ijtihad in Islamic Sciences**
  - His birth, upbringing, and death.
  - His scholarly efforts and authored works.
- **Conclusion:** presenting the main findings and recommendations derived from this study.

## **Chapter One: Ijtihad in Islam**

### **First: The Reality of Ijtihad**

#### **1. The Linguistic Definition of Ijtihad:**

The term Ijtihad is derived from the root word juhḍ, which means “capacity” or “effort.” It is said: Ijtahid jahḍak (“exert your utmost effort”). Some have also defined juhḍ as hardship and difficulty, while juhḍ may also signify energy or strength <sup>1</sup>.

In the linguistic sense, Ijtihad means exerting effort in matters that involve hardship and difficulty. For example, it is said: “He exerted effort in carrying a rock,” but it is not said: “He exerted effort in carrying a date seed” <sup>2</sup>.

Some scholars set a limit for the linguistic definition of the term, describing it as: “Exerting one’s utmost effort in accomplishing a matter.” They pointed out that it requires effort and endurance <sup>3</sup>.

#### **2. The Technical Definition of Ijtihad:**

With regard to the technical term Ijtihad, scholars and schools of thought have not agreed upon a single definition. Even within one school, differences are found. Upon examining most of the given definitions, it becomes clear that the differences lie mainly in wording. Below are some of these definitions, followed by the one we find the most comprehensive and effective.

Al-Kamal Ibn al-Humam defined it as: “The exertion of a jurist’s effort to obtain a presumptive (non-certain) legal ruling.” <sup>4</sup>

Al-Amidi defined Ijtihad as: “Exerting one’s utmost effort in seeking a presumptive opinion regarding a matter of the Shari‘ah rulings in such a way that the person feels within himself an inability to exert further effort.” <sup>5</sup>

Although this definition is precise, it suffers from excessive detail beyond necessity. Saying that Ijtihad is “exerting utmost effort” is sufficient without the need for additions such as “in such a way that the person feels within himself...” and so on.

#### **3. The Definition I Prefer:**

The definition that we prefer and adopt for Ijtihad is the one provided by Abu al-Thana’ al-Asfahani, author of Bayan al-Mukhtasar, a commentary on Mukhtasar Ibn al-Hajib. He defined Ijtihad as: “The exertion of a jurist’s effort to obtain a presumptive legal ruling.” <sup>6</sup>

We have chosen this definition because it is free from the complexities and redundancies that affected other definitions of Ijtihad.

### **Second: The Conditions Required of a Mujtahid**

Ijtihad consists of three essential elements: the person of the Mujtahid, the issue in which Ijtihad is exercised, and the act of exertion itself, which represents the effort and reasoning undertaken by the Mujtahid to arrive at the legal ruling. The conditions of Ijtihad—whether agreed upon or disputed—are related to each of these three elements. What concerns us in this study are the conditions pertaining to the Mujtahid himself. Accordingly, we will analyze the qualifications of a Mujtahid by reviewing the conditions required of him.

### **1. Islam:**

In Islam, a Mujtahid must be a Muslim, since Ijtihad is regarded as an act of worship, and Islam is a prerequisite for the validity of worship. It is also a condition for the acceptance of one's fatwa and Ijtihad. It is worth noting, however, that being a Muslim is not a condition for one's ability to engage in Ijtihad, for a non-Muslim may theoretically have the intellectual ability to perform Ijtihad and deduce rulings. Nevertheless, his Ijtihad would not be valid in itself. Al-Amidi states: "The first condition is that one must know of the existence of the Creator, what is obligatory for Him in terms of attributes, and what He deserves of perfection; that He is necessarily existent by Himself, living, knowing, capable, willing, and speaking—such that accountability is conceivable from him. He must also affirm the Messenger, peace be upon him, and what he brought from the transmitted Shari'ah."<sup>7</sup>

### **2. Reason:**

The Mujtahid must be of sound intellect. Al-Shafi'i said: "He is not allowed to perform analogy unless he is of sound mind, able to distinguish between similar matters, and does not rush to give a ruling without firm establishment."<sup>8</sup>

### **3. Knowledge of the Arabic Language:**

The Mujtahid must be knowledgeable in the Arabic language and its styles of expression, since the divine message, whether in the Qur'an or the Sunnah, was revealed in Arabic. Allah the Almighty says: ﴿قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا غَيْرَ ذِي عِوَجٍ لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ﴾ (Al-Zumar, verse 28).

### **4. Knowledge of Usul al-Fiqh (Principles of Jurisprudence):**

The Mujtahid must possess comprehensive knowledge of Usul al-Fiqh, as it encompasses everything required for Ijtihad. He must be well-versed in its concise and detailed works, according to his capacity, since this science forms the foundation and framework of Ijtihad. Furthermore, he must approach each of its issues with a guiding perspective that directs him toward the truth. If he does so, he will be capable of returning subsidiary issues to their principles with ease. Otherwise, he will face great difficulty in responding. Al-Ghazali stated: "The most important sciences of Ijtihad consist of three disciplines: Hadith, the Arabic language, and Usul al-Fiqh."<sup>9</sup>

### **5. Knowledge of Abrogation (Naskh):**

The Mujtahid must be aware of abrogating and abrogated rulings to avoid issuing judgments based on abrogated texts. He must also be familiar with all aspects of textual evidence, whether general or specific, and understand the different types such as explicit (mufassar), ambiguous (mujmal), clarified (mubayyan), qualified (muqayyad), and absolute (mutlaq). Without such knowledge, his Ijtihad would not be valid. Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) said to a judge: "Do you know the abrogating and the abrogated?" He replied: "No." Ali said: "You are ruined, and you have ruined others."<sup>10</sup>

## 6. Understanding the Objectives of Shari‘ah (Maqasid al-Shari‘ah):

The Mujtahid must have a deep understanding of the objectives of the Shari‘ah, ensuring that his reasoning aligns with the higher purposes intended to safeguard human welfare. These objectives revolve around the preservation of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property. A Mujtahid must consider the welfare of the people, interpreting and applying texts to real-life situations in light of the maqasid. Since textual expressions may carry multiple possible meanings, he must identify the interpretation most consistent with the intent of the Lawgiver. In cases where secondary evidences appear to conflict, the Mujtahid must resolve them by adhering to what aligns best with the intent of the Shari‘ah. Al-Shatibi said: “The first matter is to understand the objectives of the Shari‘ah—that they are based upon the consideration of benefits, and that benefits are only valid as such because the Lawgiver has regarded them as such, not because the human being perceives them so. For benefits differ according to relations and perspectives. They should not be considered as mere desires or inclinations of individuals, but rather in terms of their inherent benefit or harm.” He further added: “When a person reaches a level where he understands the intent of the Lawgiver in every matter of the Shari‘ah and in every field, he attains a status that qualifies him to act as a deputy of the Prophet ﷺ in teaching, issuing fatwas, and judging according to what Allah has shown him.”<sup>11</sup>

## CHAPTER TWO: SHEIKH MOHAMMED BAY BOULALAM AND HIS IJTIHAD IN ISLAMIC SCIENCES

### First: His Birth, Upbringing, and Death

#### 1. His Birth:

Sheikh Abu Abd Allah Mohammed Abd al-Qadir bin Mohammed bin al-Mukhtar bin Ahmad Boulalam al-Qablawi al-Jaza’iri, widely known as Sheikh Bay, traces his lineage to the well-known Arab tribe of Fulān. Opinions vary regarding its precise origins, though it is known that its roots go back to the Himyar tribe in Yemen. Sheikh Bay was born in the year 1348H / 1930CE in the village of Sahl, in the municipality of Iqbali, Adrar Province, southern Algeria.

His father, Mohammed Abd al-Qadir, was a scholar and judge in the Tidikelt region, while his mother was Khadija bint Mohammed al-Hassan. Sheikh Mohammed Bay had four brothers, making him the fifth child and the third in birth order<sup>12</sup>.

#### 2. His Upbringing:

He grew up in a scholarly and religious family renowned for knowledge and learning. His father, Sheikh Mohammed Abd al-Qadir, took particular care of his son’s education from a very young age. Sheikh Bay was raised in an environment surrounded by faith and learning under his father’s supervision until his father’s death in 1372H / 1952CE. His father was not only a parent but also a teacher and guide, nurturing him with kindness and religious upbringing. Though his father’s death was a profound loss, his influence continued to shape Sheikh Bay’s scholarly character.

His mother also played an important role in his life, providing him with care, affection, and constant support. Another key figure was Mohammed Abd al-Rahman bin al-Makki, the husband of his maternal aunt, who became his second mentor after his father. He loved him as a father loves his son and guided him to memorize the Qur’an, establishing for him a solid foundation in jurisprudence and grammar. Sheikh Bay’s upbringing was marked by care, affection, and a nurturing environment that greatly contributed to his religious and intellectual formation<sup>13</sup>.

In 1954CE, Sheikh Mohammed Bay married Fatima bint al-Hajj al-‘Arabi Farjani, a member of the Farjani family from Souf, whose lineage traces back to Oued Souf. This marriage was blessed

with nine children—three sons: Mohammed Abd Allah, Mohammed Abd al-Qadir, and Ahmad Boulalam, all of whom pursued careers in public service, and six daughters: Nasira, Rahma, Zahra, Aisha, Umm Kulthum, and Mabrouka.

After the passing of his first wife Fatima Farjani in 1999CE, Sheikh Bay remarried that same year, taking as his wife Fatima bint al-Sheikh Ma‘mari, a woman belonging to the Zawi tribe <sup>14</sup>.

### **3. His Death:**

In his final moments, while lying on his deathbed, Sheikh Bay uttered words that deeply moved those present: “I have pardoned whoever has wronged me.” He then summoned all the doctors present in the hospital and declared to them and the attendees: “Bear witness that I testify there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.” Shortly thereafter, his soul departed to his Lord on the morning of Sunday, the 23rd of Rabi‘ al-Thani 1430H, corresponding to April 19, 2009CE.

His funeral was held the following day, and his body was laid to rest in the new cemetery of the city of Ouled <sup>15</sup>.

## **Second: The Scholarly Efforts of Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam and His Works**

### **1. His Efforts in Religious Reform**

The foremost priority of Sheikh Mohammed Bay was religious reform, as religion constitutes the foundation upon which the servant’s relationship with his Lord is built. For this reason, he worked diligently to purify and correct the creed, cleansing it from any distortions that had spread in the Adrar region. He fought against innovations (bid‘a) and revived the Sunnah, believing this to be the path toward comprehensive reform and the strengthening of the spiritual bond between man and his Creator. In this way, Sheikh Mohammed Bay sought to establish a strong and sound religious foundation in society, grounded in correct belief and the application of the Prophetic Sunnah.

He did not limit himself to emphasizing the importance of creed reform, but also took firm stances against certain religious practices that were not in accordance with Shari‘ah. He boldly challenged those who organized celebrations (wa‘dat and zardat) around the graves of saints, involving folklore such as drumming, dancing, gunfire, flutes, and mixed gatherings under the pretense of seeking blessings. He firmly rejected such practices as contrary to the etiquettes of legitimate visitation and incompatible with the words of the Prophet ﷺ: “I had forbidden you from visiting graves; now visit them.”

Alongside his focus on creed, Sheikh Mohammed Bay also opposed violations in acts of worship, particularly the use of tayammum without legitimate excuse. He observed that this practice was becoming widespread in desert regions, stressing that water must be used whenever available, as the concession applies only to those genuinely unable to use water.

The Sheikh remained consistent in his fight against religious innovations and violations, persistently criticizing them in his school, through his sermons, in mosques, during Qur’anic exegesis, and on various occasions. He took advantage of Islamic seasons, such as the two Eids, the month of the Prophet’s birthday (Mawlid al-Nabawi), and the nights of Ramadan, to deliver sermons on creed, monotheism, and faith.

These occasions provided Sheikh Mohammed Bay with opportunities to reach broader audiences, as mosques were filled with people of different ages and social groups. In such gatherings, religious words had greater impact, and he directed his sermons toward essential issues of faith and religious upbringing.

Like Sheikh Ibrahim Bayoud, Sheikh Mohammed Bay used these seasons to deliver sermons and address pressing social issues. This was a common method among scholars and preachers who sought to strengthen religious education and raise the cultural awareness of Algerian society.

While scholars in the Touat region often limited themselves to advice in schools, mosques, and seasonal events, Sheikh Mohammed Bay went beyond these confines. He traveled from place to place to teach people their religion and correct their beliefs. His lessons in Ouargla, Tamanrasset, Oran, and other provinces testified to his tireless dedication to this mission. He also taught in the holy lands during pilgrimage seasons, and his writings focused largely on religious, ethical, educational, and social reform. These activities clearly demonstrated his passion and commitment to this cause.

His frequent lectures across Algeria, along with his repeated visits to the holy lands, stand as strong evidence of his determination to lead a true reformist movement against innovations and unlawful practices. His efforts left a lasting mark on reinforcing religious and ethical guidance wherever he went <sup>16</sup>.

## **2. The Characteristics of His Reformist Methodology**

**a.** Sheikh Mohammed Bay emphasized the cultivation of gentleness and kindness in all his interactions, whether in teaching or preaching. This emphasis was evident in his frequent use of stories and illustrative examples in his sermons, such as the story of a man repenting from alcohol addiction. These narratives served as educational tools designed to stimulate reflection and encourage moral contemplation. By employing such methods, Sheikh Mohammed Bay sought to instill kindness and gentleness in society, whether in the educational context or in preaching, in order to positively influence behavior.

**b.** He was distinguished by his precise presentation of issues and his examination of them from multiple angles, as seen in his analysis of the question of assuming *ihram* (ritual consecration) from Jeddah. He explained that this matter could be studied from different perspectives, stating: “*Either these appointed places (mawaqit) are devotional in nature—in which case, the Prophet ﷺ did not specify a miqat for the people of Africa because their lands were not yet opened, and thus they may assume ihram from wherever they arrive—or these mawaqit are entry points, in which case ihram from the arrival point is valid.*” In this manner, Sheikh Mohammed Bay demonstrated his capacity for comprehensive and systematic analysis, contributing to a deeper understanding of jurisprudential issues.

**c.** His methodology also involved connecting issues with their parallels and carefully identifying their underlying principles (*tahqiq al-manat*), as illustrated in his fatwa concerning whether a menstruating woman could carry a mobile phone containing the entire Qur’an. He ruled that this should not be equated with holding a physical *mushaf*, while pointing out related considerations, such as ringtones that might include adhkar like the call to prayer (*adhan*) or even music. His approach reflected careful handling of such questions, ensuring sound religious guidance while maintaining fidelity to the principles of Shari‘ah.

**d.** Sheikh Mohammed Bay also excelled in reasoning and providing justifications for rulings, as exemplified in his analysis of the permissibility of women delegating others to perform the stoning of the pillars (*ramy al-jamarat*) during Hajj. He explained that such delegation is both necessary and justified under Shari‘ah, given the circumstances. This demonstrated his skill in offering clear reasoning and religiously grounded justifications, lending strength and authority to his conclusions.

## **3. The Works of Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam**

Sheikh Boulalam established himself as a distinguished author in various fields, leaving behind a significant legacy across multiple branches of Islamic sciences, including Qur'anic studies, Hadith, Fiqh and Usul al-Fiqh, grammar, and history. His works demonstrate his encyclopedic scholarship and his originality in religious thought. He distinguished himself through his unique methodology in versification (nazm) and commentaries, particularly by linking many branches of scientific texts to their evidences and foundations within the framework of the Maliki school. The following is a brief overview of his works:

**a. In Qur'anic Sciences:**

- Al-Miftah al-Nurani 'ala al-Madkhal al-Rabbani fi al-Gharib fi al-Qur'an: a commentary on Nazm Gharib al-Qur'an by Sheikh Mohammed al-Tahir al-Tilili al-Sufi al-Jaza'iri. He completed the fair copy in early Sha'ban 1409H <sup>17</sup>.
- Diya' al-Ma'alim 'ala Alfyyat al-Gharib li-Ibn al-'Alim: a commentary on Alfyyat al-Gharib by Sheikh Mohammed bin al-Sayyid Mohammed bin al-'Alim al-Zajlawi al-Tuwati, composed in two volumes. He completed the fair copy in early Jumada al-Thani 1409H <sup>18</sup>.

**b. In Hadith Terminology:**

No scholar from Adrar was previously known to have authored works in this field, and Sheikh Boulalam was the first to introduce this discipline into the zawiyas and schools of Touat through his writings, including:

- Kashf al-Dithar 'ala Tuhfat al-Athar: a commentary on Nazm Tuhfat al-Athar by Sheikh Mohammed al-Amin al-Qurashi. He completed the fair copy on 17 Jumada al-Ula 1411H <sup>19</sup>.

**c. In Fiqh:**

- Zad al-Salik Sharh As-hal al-Masalik: his first published work, in two volumes, a commentary on the poem As-hal al-Masalik by Sheikh Mohammed al-Bashar. He completed it on 24 Rajab 1406H <sup>20</sup>.
- Al-Kawkab al-Zuhri Nazm Mukhtasar al-Akhdari: a versification of the text Mukhtasar al-Akhdari by Abd al-Rahman al-Saghir al-Akhdari, on worship. He began on 5 Safar 1408H and finished the fair copy on 16 Safar 1408H, taking only eleven days to complete it <sup>21</sup>.
- Al-Jawahir al-Kanziyya li-Nazm ma Jumi' fi al-'Aziya: a versification of al-'Aziya by Sheikh Abu al-Hasan Ali al-Maliki al-Shadhili, covering creed, worship, transactions, inheritance, and ethics, in 34 chapters, 1049 verses, across 56 pages.
- Fath al-Jawad Sharh 'ala Nazm al-'Aziya li-Ibn Badi: a commentary on Ibn Badi al-Kunti's versification of al-'Aziya, addressing creed, worship, transactions, inheritance, and ethics. He completed the fair copy on Friday morning, 11 Jumada al-Ula 1408H <sup>22</sup>.
- Al-Saba'ik al-Ibriziyya Sharh 'ala al-Jawahir al-Kanziyya: both the versification and commentary are his, while the prose text belongs to Abu al-Hasan al-Maliki al-Shadhili (al-'Aziya). It consists of one volume covering creed, fiqh, transactions, inheritance, and ethics. He completed the fair copy on 8 Rabi' al-Thani 1410H <sup>23</sup>.
- Al-Ishraq al-Badri Sharh ala al-Kawkab al-Zuhri: a versification and commentary of Mukhtasar al-Akhdari by Abd al-Rahman al-Saghir al-Akhdari on worship and ethics. He completed it on 13 Rajab 1410H.
- Al-Mabahith al-Fikriyya Sharh 'ala al-Urjuza al-Bakriyya: a commentary on the didactic poem al-Awlawiyyat by Sheikh Mohammed bin Abd al-Rahman al-Bakri al-Tanlani al-Tuwati, covering creed, fiqh, and ethics. Completed on Thursday, 5 Shawwal 1414H <sup>24</sup>.



- Anwar al-Tariq liman Yurid Hajj al-Bayt al-‘Atiq: on the rituals and secrets of Hajj, including rulings and fatwas. Completed on 10 Shawwal 1415H <sup>25</sup>.
- Fath al-Rahim al-Malik fi Madhhab al-Imam Malik: a didactic poem in Maliki jurisprudence, consisting of 2509 verses on creed, worship, transactions, inheritance, and ethics. Completed on Friday, 6 Ramadan 1416H <sup>26</sup>.
- Multaqa al-Adilla al-Asliyya wal-Far‘iyya al-Muwaddihah lil-Salik ‘ala Fath al-Rahim al-Malik fi Madhhab al-Imam Malik: in four volumes, a commentary on his own poem Fath al-Rahim al-Malik. Completed on Wednesday, 11 Rabi‘ al-Awwal 1418H <sup>27</sup>.
- Al-Istidlal bil-Kitab wal-Sunna al-Nabawiyya Sharh ‘ala Nathr al-‘Aziya wa Nazmiha al-Jawahir al-Kanziyya: in two volumes, commentary and versification of the prose text by Abu al-Hasan al-Maliki al-Shadhili. Covers creed, fiqh, transactions, inheritance, and ethics. Completed on Tuesday, 17 Rajab 1418H <sup>28</sup>.
- Iqamat al-Hujja bil-Dalil Sharh ‘ala Nazm Ibn Badi ‘ala Muhimmat min Mukhtasar Khalil: 4000 verses, explained in four volumes. Completed on Thursday evening, 6 Jumada al-Thani 1420H <sup>29</sup>.
- Marji‘ al-Furu‘ ila al-Ta’sil min al-Kitab wal-Sunna wal-Ijma‘ al-Kafil: in ten volumes, a commentary on the versification of Khalifa bin Hasan al-Sufi’s Mukhtasar Khalil, entitled Jawahir al-Iklil. Completed on Thursday evening, 17 Dhu al-Qa‘da 1422H <sup>30</sup>.
- Tuhfat al-Multamis ‘ala al-Daw’ al-Munir al-Muqtabas fi Madhhab al-Imam Malik bin Anas: a commentary on the versification of Sheikh Mohammed bin Mohammed al-Futisi al-Libi. His last work in fiqh, preserved as a three-volume manuscript, completed on 23 Ramadan 1429H <sup>31</sup>.

#### **d. In Usul al-Fiqh:**

No scholar of the Touat region was previously known to have authored in this field. Sheikh Mohammed Bay was the first to pioneer it, facilitating the study of this important discipline for students of knowledge. He authored two works in this area <sup>32</sup>:

- Muyassar al-Husul ‘ala Safinat al-Wusul fi ‘Ilm al-Usul: a commentary on the versification of Matn al-Waraqat by Sheikh Mohammed al-Amin al-Qurashi bin al-Basir al-Hashimi. Completed on Friday, 7 Sha‘ban 1411H <sup>33</sup>.
- Raka’iz al-Wusul ‘ala Manzumat al-‘Umayriti fi ‘Ilm al-Usul: a commentary on the versification of Sheikh Sharaf al-Din al-‘Umayriti. Completed on 1 Jumada al-Thani 1412H <sup>34</sup>.

## **CONCLUSION**

Praise be to Allah, by whose grace righteous deeds are perfected. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and his trustworthy companions, as well as those who follow in their footsteps and adhere to their guidance until the Day of Judgment. After that:

In concluding this research, I have arrived at several results and recommendations, the most important of which are:

#### **Results:**

1. It is not permissible for everyone to engage in independent reasoning (Ijtihad) in Islamic sciences; rather, it is the domain of those qualified and knowledgeable scholars

2. Algeria is abundant with its distinguished scholars who contribute to the renewal of knowledge
3. Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam is among those scholars who are qualified for independent reasoning (Ijtihad)
4. Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam is someone from whom knowledge can be sought

### **Recommendations:**

1. The aspect of independent reasoning (Ijtihad) among Algerian scholars remains fertile and requires further study and analysis. Therefore, I encourage researchers to explore this field and extract its treasures.
2. The presented examples of the independent reasoning of Algerian scholars in our era, represented by Sheikh Mohammed Bay Boulalam, are just a glimpse of their vast contributions. While his independent reasoning offers insight into his methodology, it does not fully depict the overall landscape of independent reasoning among Algerian scholars. This is an invitation for researchers, including myself, to continue investigating this aspect and highlight the remaining wealth of knowledge regarding the independent reasoning of Algerian scholars.

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