



## The Influence Of The Sheikhiya Sect On Sheikh Bouamama's Resistance (1881-1908)

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### Abstract:

Sheikh Bouamama was a member of the western branch of the Ouled Sidi Sheikh tribe. He pursued his education under various scholars, most notably Mohammed bin Abd Rahman, a prominent figure of the Sheikhiya sect. His reputation grew among the tribes, earning him recognition as a sheikh. Sheikh Bouamama significantly contributed to reviving and spreading the Sheikhiya sect across Algeria. His revolution originated from the zawiya (Sufi lodge), establishing him as both a religious leader and a mystical warrior.

Sheikh Bouamama's revolution was both religious and political, with the main aim of resisting French occupation and stopping the colonial advance into southern Oran in Algeria. His leadership combined spiritual guidance with militant resistance, making his revolt one of the most significant in modern Algerian history. His uprising lasted until his death in 1908, making it one of the longest and most impactful revolts against French colonial rule. His efforts not only hindered colonial expansion but also inspired future resistance movements. The legacy of his revolution remains one of the most important in contemporary Algerian history.

**Keywords:** Sheikhiya Sect, Southern Oran, Resistance, Revolution, Settler Colonial Occupation, Sufism.

### Introduction:

The sheikhs and leaders of the Sufi sects played a vital role in resisting the French occupation of Algeria. These orders, through their leaders and sheikhs, provided an essential framework that helped the Algerian people preserve their Islamic cultural heritage, especially during the French colonial period. These leaders assumed the responsibility of organizing, coordinating, and spreading their teachings, ideas, and principles derived from Islamic law. Sheikh Bouamama is regarded as one of the most prominent leaders of the armed popular resistance that marked the late 19th century in southern Oran, Algeria. Consequently, the year 1881 is considered a period of resurgence and transformation in the region, during which Sheikh Bouamama sought to expand his influence and ideas to central southern Algeria.

He communicated with tribal sheikhs, asking them to join his revolution and collaborate with him to serve Islam and Muslims, free Algerians from the grip of the French colonial authorities, and resist their policies.

Sheikh Bouamama played a significant role in spreading the ideas and principles of the Sheikhiya order through his jihad, reaching as far as Moroccan territory. He was a shrewd religious and political leader, a Sufi warrior known for his piety, devotion, and love for his homeland, Algeria. His revolution gained widespread recognition in several regions of southern Algeria, thanks to his religious and militant rhetoric and his struggle against French occupation. Because of his effective resistance, the French colonial administration dispatched some of its best generals to confront him, notably General Louis Hubert Gonzalve Lyautey.

Sheikh Bouamama was a member of the western branch of the Ouled Sidi Sheikh tribe. He pursued his education under several scholars, with the most notable being Mohammed bin Abd Rahman, a prominent figure of the Sheikhiya sect. His reputation grew among the tribes, leading to his recognition as a sheikh. Sheikh Bouamama played a crucial role in reviving the Sheikhiya sect and spreading it throughout Algeria. His revolution began from the zawiya (Sufi lodge), establishing him as both a religious leader and a mystical warrior. His uprising was both religious and political, primarily aimed at resisting the French occupation and stopping the colonial advance into the southern regions of Oran in Algeria.

Thus, the following question arises: To what extent did the Sheikhiya sect contribute to shaping Sheikh Bouamama's religious and militant character? And where can we observe its clear influences in his revolution?

### **The Personality of Sheikh Bouamama**

Mohamed, son of Arabi, son of Sheikh, son of Harrama, son of Mohamed, son of Sidi Ibrahim, son of Al-Taj, known as Bouamama, was born in the palace of Hammam El Foukania in the city of Fakik around the year 1838 or 1840. These details are sourced from French documents originally derived from contemporary civilian oral sources related to Sheikh Bouamama. Most documents and books corroborate this information, although there is a narrative suggesting his birthplace as "Ferrat Mestoura" near the palm tree of Ibn Brahimi in the valley of

"Zouzfana." It also suggests that his original name was Bouamama and not Mohamed, as commonly believed (Miassi, 1996, p.93).

Bouamama is considered to be from the younger branch of the Sidi Sheikh family tree. A look at this family tree reveals Bouamama's position among the descendants of Sidi Al-Taj and the descendants of Harrama. We realize his role in perpetuating their glory, much like what was witnessed during the era of his grandfather, Ibrahim. In fact, Bouamama may have given a new dimension to that glory through his revolution, characterized by boldness and defiance.

Learning the Quran alongside other religious practices is a blend of strangeness and mystery, especially among the men of the zawiyas who surround it with utmost secrecy due to its profound impact on minds and its authority over souls. Considering it as the measure of excellence, the key to inspiration, and a tool for penetrating the unseen, it is referred to in the popular imagination of Algerians as "karamat" (miracles). Every righteous sheikh or saint possesses a variety of these miracles, which they display to their followers, thus enhancing their status among them. These miracles are circulated among clans and tribes to increase the number of followers (Bouaziz, 2009, p.298-299).

In 1874, Bouamama and his family moved to "Mghrar El Tahtani" near the shrine of his grandfather Ibrahim to work on creating suitable conditions for fulfilling his grandfather's will, "Sidi Sheikh," which involved reviving the traditions of the Sheikhiya sect based on piety and righteousness (Tommy, 2013, p.201-213). This marked the first influence of the Sheikhiya sect, shaping Sheikh Bouamama's personality and upbringing on the principles of this order (Bouaziz, 2009, p.299).

French documents indicate that Bouamama suffered from epilepsy since his youth, a condition that persisted into his adulthood. He experienced neurological episodes that caused him to lose consciousness and enter into states of coma, during which he exhibited behaviors such as speaking to his abdomen and performing other magical movements. Other documents suggest instances of his escape to unknown places, with one disappearance lasting six years. These accounts fueled imaginative narratives about him. However, these escapes were, in reality, manifestations of the Sufi sheikhs and saints' inclination towards seclusion. Many of them sought solitude in mountains and remote locations for worship and closeness to Allah. This is a common practice among Sufis, with strong examples such as the seclusion of Sidi Abid El Sharif in the high mountains of Fawat in Tebessa for several years.

Despite the contradictions surrounding the Sufi Sheikh Bouamama, all of this remains evidence of a remarkable personality in every aspect: in his way of life, attire, wealth, and his skillful style in attracting followers. Perhaps the secret to the success of his zawiya and his approach lies in his ability to innovate and in the failure of his enemies, especially the one known as Ibn Abi Mahalli (Zouzou, 1981, p.37).

#### **Bouamama's Activity at the Zawiya:**

The Sheikhiya Zawiya played a prominent role in the modern history of Algeria between 1875 and 1908, deep in the Algerian desert. The name of its founder, Sheikh Bouamama, became synonymous with resistance against French colonization through the grand jihad movement he led against this occupation in the southwest of Algeria during the period from 1881 to 1908. This revolution, imbued with Sufi spirituality, found its origins in the zawiya established by Sheikh Bouamama in "Mghrar El Tahtani" in 1875 (Ashour, 2020, p.358).

Bouamama's activity at the zawiya he established in "Mghrar El Tahtani" between "Ain Sefra" and "Jnein Bourzeg" dates back to the year 1876. His activity there drew the attention of the French military surveillance, especially during the year 1880. Some French military reports spoke of his popularity among the Saharan tribes and the increasing support for his zawiya, particularly from the tribes of Razine, Hemiane, and Trafi. Other reports mentioned the gifts (tributes) brought to him by the tribes of Beni Jil, Alad Jerir, and Dhawi Munir, viewing Bouamama's invitation to them to liberate them from colonization as a threat to French presence.

It appears from the available reports that people's support and allegiance to Bouamama were not entirely spontaneous but rather the result of a calculated plan. Bouamama called for defiance against French authority by moving between tribes or corresponding with them. He also dispatched his emissaries (envoys) to others with the mission of mobilization and preaching the imminent joy of Muslims and urging them to prepare weapons and stockpile ammunition in anticipation of the day of celebration. As a result, governors of departments like Tlemcen, Saïda, Mascara, and the French military authorities proposed stopping him (Bouaziz, 2009, p. 300).

Furthermore, according to French documents, Sheikh Bouamama adopted another method to gain the trust of his followers, strengthen his supporters, and instill belief in everyone's faith in the imminent victory he called for. This method relied on executing miraculous scenes and presenting astonishing magical performances to the audience and impressive displays to visitors. As a result, everyone believed in the sheikh's evidence and blessings. Some French reports support this when they say: "Visitors to Bouamama leave sane and become insane".

The French military authorities were aware of Sheikh Bouamama's movements and intentions through information provided by the locals themselves. However, they did not arrest him due to the respect and veneration he held among the Sahrawis. Instead, they prohibited them from visiting his zawiya and performing the duty of visitation (gift-giving) (Miassi, 2007, p.162).

### **Sheikh Bouamama's jihad:**

#### **The Battle of Moulak<sup>1</sup>**

The spark of Sheikh Bouamama's revolution ignited with the killing of a French officer, a first lieutenant, and four of his guards when they attempted to arrest "At-

Tayyib Al-Jarmani," a relative and one of Bouamama's associates, on April 22, 1881. This incident led to the mobilization of several tribes, including "Travee," "Amor," "Ash-Shurafa," "Ouled Sidi Ahmed Al-Majdoub Hamyan Ja'anba," as well as the entire population of the southern palaces, "Benu Jil" and "Ouled Jrir." Meanwhile, the "Ouled Sidi Al-Shaikh Al-Gharabah" sent supplies to support the revolution (Khalifi, 2010, p.65).

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<sup>1</sup> - The French refer to it by this name, or the Battle of Chellala, while the inhabitants of the area call it "The Battle of Tazina," and they refer to the place as Boubrit or "Mekitelat Boubrit," which they say was fought by one of the members of the Ouled Sidi Ahmed Mejdaoub tribe when they were accompanying Sheikh Bouamama. However, historical documents prove that the officer Beau prêtre was killed in the Battle of "Ouina Boubakar" in 1964 by Mr. Slimane Ben Hamza, the leader of the resistance, who was martyred in the same place.

**The French military organization:** consists of:

- Three regiments of infantry: the first composed of Zouaves, the second of foreign legionnaires, and the third of riflemen, led by Colonel Swiney.
- Four squadrons of African army snipers led by Colonel Innocenti.
- Artillery battalion.
- Various supporting units.
- Three tribal units: Saadia, Ferndah, and Tialet tribes led by Aga Kaddour Ouled Ada for the first and second units, while the third unit was under the leadership of Aga Kaddour Sahraoui.
- Two thousand five hundred (2500) loaded camels with supplies and ammunition guarded by six hundred (600) locals.

This military organization is under the command of General Colliynon Dancy, but he relinquished overall command to Colonel Innocenti due to illness in the city of El Bayadh (Zouzou,1981, p.12 -13).

**The military organization of Sheikh Bouamama's army:**

It was under his command and consisted of 2300 men, including cavalry and infantry, as follows:

- 700 cavalry and infantry from the Trarza tribes.
- 180 cavalry and infantry from the Ouled Ziad tribes.

- 160 cavalry and infantry from the Ahrar tribe.
- 250 cavalry and infantry from the Ouled Sidi Sheikh tribe of Ghraba.
- 100 cavalry and infantry from the Mghar tribe.
- 170 cavalry and infantry from the Ouled Amor tribe.
- 50 cavalry and infantry from the Ouled Sidi El Taj tribe.
- 500 infantry from the southern palaces residents.
- 190 cavalry and infantry from other tribes (Miassi, 1997, p.303).

A large number of tribes rallying around Sheikh Bouamama indicates the significant influence he had on these tribes. This is evidence of the tribes' adoption of his approach, the Sheikhiya sect, which calls for revolution against French colonial presence and the liberation of the country from this occupation.

### **The Course of the Battle**

"Abderrahmane Ben El-Sitouni" describes the preparations of both sides for the day of the "Moulak" encounter within a lengthy narrative recorded by the Public Affairs Office on August 20, 1881. He appears to be a spy who informed the French military about the movements and projects of Sheikh Bouamama. He describes it as follows: "On the following day, we left early from 'Ouaklat Hammam,' where the French troops were camped. The arrangement was as follows: at the forefront were three factions of the tribes, the right, left, and center, under the command of Commander Beladri, Agha El-Haj Kaddour Ouled Adda, and Agha El-Haj Kaddour Ben Sahraoui respectively. These factions carried their flags high. About two hundred meters away from them, the units forming the troop came in two parallel rows, followed by a long caravan guarded by a small force of spahis. Before we could camp between 'Touijine' and 'Moulak,' we encountered the infantry of the Sheikh Bouamama on one side of the 'Ratm' valley and the cavalry from the west. Meanwhile, the French troops began shelling the enemy's (Sheikh Bouamama's forces) supplies, and gunfire erupted with the infantry of the Sheikh, who couldn't withstand our fire. In the 'Ratm' valley, we found thirteen bodies from the Ouled Sidi El-Sheikh, including the body of a black man."

The first to advance to confront the men of the Murabitin from the Travaie tribes were the Ahrar tribe. However, the battle was not fierce between the two sides. During it, the Ahrar tribe said to the Travaie tribes, "We do not wish to fight you, as evidenced by the fact that we loaded our rifles only with powder. We ask you to chase us when we finish unloading our rifles and retreat backward because we have no choice but to flee." This indeed happened as the Travaie tribes pursued the Ahrar tribe and attacked the rear of the caravan, far from the French troops, and eliminated

the French snipers at the rear. A fierce battle ensued where the French infantry began firing at the caravan, haphazardly according to the best description, while the horsemen unleashed their camels in all directions. Fortunately, a part of the caravan was stopped by the Razineh tribe, and they returned it to the caravan; otherwise, the entire caravan would have been taken from us. Around noon, after the fighting, the colonel began to write and send mail. There were stray camels with their loads of barley, biscuits, and other supplies scattered on the ground, and no one thought of reloading them. The officers were among their soldiers, but no one wanted to reload the caravan, as fear was evident among these people (Zouzou, 1981, p.14-15).

### **The Military Activity of Sheikh Bouamama at the Beginning of the 20th Century (1900-1908)**

Despite being away from the region where his uprising initially broke out, Sheikh Bouamama did not cease confronting the French and their allies. From his position in the town of Figuig and its surroundings, having arrived from Deldoul, the Sheikh sent out detachments here and there to harass French forces and their Algerian tribal collaborators. He also incited Algerian and Moroccan tribes against the French authorities and provided them with useful information.

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In May 1903, a member of the French Foreign Legion was

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assassinated. To investigate the matter, "Jonard" personally went to the h scene but fell into an ambush at "Fajj Zenaga" on May 31, 1903. He was

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unharmd, and Officer "Fayet" narrowly escaped being captured by

Moroccan Berber horsemen. b

a On June 16, 1903, a group of 250 men from Berber tribes launched a t surprise attack on the Mahari unit of the Saharan troops belonging to the t "Touat" division in the vicinity of "Hassi Ghzal," resulting in numerous casualties. In mid-August 1903, a large force gathered in the Moroccan town of "Boudenib," composed of tribal men from Doui Menia, Ouled Jrir, and the Chaamba, all supporters of Sheikh Bouamama. They attacked the oasis of "Taghit," where a French military garrison was stationed under the

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<sup>2</sup> - Located 27 kilometers from Amra on the left bank of the Zouzezana River and to the north of the town of Taghit.

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command of Captain "Soussiebille." After French reinforcements arrived, the

attackers withdrew towards Moroccan territory. The outcome was 50 casualties among Sheikh Bouamama's supporters and 9 dead and 21 wounded among the French (Khalifi, p.222).

Additionally, ambushes were set for the French columns at "El- Mnaker" on September 2, 1903. Captain "Wauchée" suffered significant losses, including the deaths of several officers, non-commissioned officers, and French soldiers. Captain "Wauchée" himself died from his wounds. Two soldiers from the Saharan division managed to escape and requested reinforcements from the "Taghit" garrison. Captain "Soussiebille" responded and evacuated 50 wounded soldiers.

Furthermore, the resistance fighters attacked the palaces of "Messaad," "M'trafa," "Cherouine," and "Timimoun" in the southern region. In response, "Lyautey" expressed his impressions as follows: "Bouamama remains the major obstacle, and all my efforts are directed towards isolating and besieging him to put him at our mercy. Have I succeeded in all of this? If we have failed to capture him for twenty-two years, I do not claim that I will eliminate him within six months." On November 4, 1903, Lyautey wrote from Ain Sefra: "It seems that Bouamama is the one to blame for all our troubles and harassment. His position has been clearly hostile for a long time; we find his influence everywhere... He is behind all the uprisings and disturbances. To get rid of him, all my efforts must be directed towards him. If he falls, almost all the troubles we face on our southern Algerian border in the Oran region will also fall." (Khalifi, p.225)

Sheikh Bouamama moved to northeastern Morocco after receiving letters from Sultan Moulay Abdelaziz and his defense minister "Mohamed El Jabbas" requesting him to leave "Figuig." Sheikh Bouamama joined forces with the rebel "Bou Hmara," and this alliance was considered a continuation of his mission, which he had begun in southwestern Algeria. Accompanied by his entourage, which comprised various tribes and included around 1,000 tents, he reached the vicinity of "El Oued El Haye," 20 kilometers west of the Algerian-Moroccan border near "Oujda," in May 1904. Several Moroccan tribes joined him, and he fought multiple battles as part of his alliance with Bou Hmara.

In the context of Sheikh Bouamama's fight against French collaborators, a group from the Shaanba tribes under his command attacked members of the "Mehayah" tribe on May 20, 1905, seizing their livestock. On May 27, 1905, a caravan loaded with food supplies was looted by tribes loyal to the Moroccan authorities. This caravan, which consisted of eleven mules driven by seven men, was headed to Sheikh Bouamama's camp from the coastal regions.

This means that Sheikh Bouamama's revolution did not cease in 1882 but remained active until the French occupation of Oujda in 1907. There were skirmishes, isolated clashes, ambushes, limited raids in specific locations and times, intercepting military convoys heading to and from the south, and retaliating against French collaborators by striking them in their positions and seizing their assets.



As General Lyautey mentions in some of his letters, a military unit left Sheikh Bouamama's camp in Morocco in December 1904 and entered Algerian territory in the southwestern region. This unit consisted of 90 horsemen and 100 camels. They engaged in one of their battles against French forces near the city of Béchar, resulting in nine fatalities and the loss of several camels and sheep. The French lost three soldiers from the "Frères de la Matinée" unit and two from the "Frères de la Nation" unit. The same unit attacked a French patrol in "Hassi Ouachan" in "Zouzfana" on December 13, but left behind a group of camels and some rifles after retreating from the battle. They also attacked a convoy of the "Ouled Ziad" in an area on the northern border of the Great Western Erg. This battle resulted in the death of 33 men from the convoy and the injury of 31 others, along with the capture of 461 camels and around 1,000 sheep (Khalifi, p.225).

Sheikh Bouamama led fierce warriors who were deeply committed to their cause, knowing they were under the leadership of a resolute Sufi leader who was not deterred by any obstacle in his duty of jihad and resistance (Khalifi). However, the advancing age of the sheikh and his affliction with some illnesses in his later days, coupled with the French takeover of the nearby city of Oujda in March 1907, ultimately brought his armed uprising to an end. When he passed away in October 1908, his son Sidi Tayib succeeded him as the head of the zawiya.

### **The Influence of the Sheikhiya Sect on the Life and Struggle of Sheikh Bouamama**

Sheikh Bouamama adopted a systematic approach aimed at improving the conditions of the region, avoiding internal conflicts, chaos, and disturbances that plagued the southwestern region of Algeria. His zawiya (religious school) became a destination for various tribes, thus instilling the teachings of the Sheikhiya sect in the hearts of his followers and disciples. This spiritual foundation was the starting point for declaring jihad against the French presence.

Sheikh Bouamama was fully aware of the jihadist movement he intended to initiate and lead. He informed his followers and disciples that this path involved hardship and suffering, the abandonment of children, families, and homelands. He did not compel anyone to join him, allowing them the choice to follow or abandon him. However, he made it clear that what he was undertaking was jihad, a significant tenet of Islam.

Through this, Sheikh Bouamama successfully instilled enthusiasm among his followers for jihad against the French colonizers. This unwavering commitment to his cause, despite overwhelming adversities and obstacles, was rooted in his profound faith in Allah. He stood firm against all forms of pressure and never surrendered throughout more than a quarter-century of resistance, until his death on the 10th of Ramadan 1326, corresponding to October 7, 1908 (Miassi).

Sheikh Bouamama embarked on a mission to uphold the truth and declare jihad, seeking to expand its reach. He visited various tribes in southwestern Algeria,

promising them the declaration of jihad at the opportune moment. Additionally, emissaries of the Sheikhiya sect were dispatched to other tribes, inviting them to prepare for jihad by providing weapons and ammunition, assuring them that they would hear from him soon, symbolically referred to as "Sultan" in Sufi expression.

Sheikh Bouamama's strategy also involved organizing lessons for the general populace of Algerians and calling upon tribes to engage in jihad against the French forces. Alongside his piety and righteousness, the Sheikh possessed military leadership skills and political maneuvering abilities. He was keen on uniting Muslims and serving Islam in belief and action, principles deeply rooted in the Sheikhiya sect that he embraced and was nurtured upon within the zawiya. This zawiya played a significant role in representing refusal of exploitation, colonization, and occupation (Trika, 2020, p.21-32).

Sheikh Bouamama also focused on establishing spiritual connections with the tribes, making their hearts resonate with his approach in Sufi sect, characterized by piety, righteousness, and a life of jihad. He became convinced that religious fervor alone could bring about change amidst the prevailing hardships in the region. This sentiment is evident in the text of one of the messages calling for jihad, which reads: "... We announce the call for jihad in the path of Allah, following the tradition of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, against the disobedient French infidels, may Allah curse them, who have transgressed against us, oppressed us, and sought to degrade our noble religion – Allah forbid – hoping that the Lord, Glorified and Exalted, will grant us victory over the infidels."

Sheikh Bouamama sought to restore the status of the Sheikhiya Sufi sect to its former glory. Therefore, he advocated for harmony among its members, consistently avoiding clashes with his tribal kinsmen. He rejected fighting among Muslim brethren in general, preferring withdrawal over engaging in combat with his extended family, despite their attempts to provoke him. He denounced violence and bloodshed, citing the righteous predecessors as evidence. His diligent efforts to establish his authority and improve the image of the Sheikhiya Sufi sect included organizing religious lessons to garner more supporters. He also incited the populace to demand that the Moroccan Sultan send sufficient forces to protect the locals against French aggressions. Some French sources even attributed Sheikh Bouamama as the catalyst behind the political maneuvers of Sultan Hassan I of Morocco against France, urging him to bolster Moroccan influence militarily and administratively in Touat.

Sheikh Bouamama engaged in fierce battles alongside his followers and disciples, driven by his deep religious convictions. The vast armies rallied under his banner, numbering in the thousands, owed their allegiance to nothing but their strong belief that they were fighting against the forces of disbelief, carrying the banner of jihad for the sake of Allah and the promotion of truth. Specifically, everyone was convinced that the spiritual leader had no goal other than steadfast faith. He proved to the masses that he was not seeking political leadership but rather aimed to be

understood as a spiritual leader rising against injustice and persecution. He led loyal fighters who defended their honor and refused to remain silent in the face of the tyranny of oppressors.

Sheikh Bouamama is considered the true renovator of the Sheikhiya sect in the modern era. He inherited the Sheikhiya tradition from his mentors, notably Mohammed ben Abdelrahman, one of the prominent figures of Sheikhiya in the town of Beni Ounif. Sheikh Mohammed directed him to settle in the town of Maghara and establish a Sheikhiya lodge there, reviving the legacy of the Sidi Sheikh Lodge in the lower Maghara town. Bouamama aimed to unify the followers of Sidi Sheikh after years of division. One of the Sheikhiya narrators said, "... Sheikh Bouamama called for goodness and for abandoning disputes and division, but the remaining leaders of Sidi Sheikh's descendants had great ambitions for power and authority. Sheikh Bouamama worked on renewing and reviving the Sheikhiya sect after it was almost erased due to conflicts among the factions of Sidi Sheikh's descendants over leadership and various material matters" (Shatrah, p.350).

Sheikh Bouamama built the lodge there with the help of the town's residents and declared that he was always connected to the Sheikhiya sect. This means he didn't innovate a new method, nor did he declare a separation from it. Instead, he proclaimed it as "Sheikhiya Bouamama," open to all Muslims without reservation or discrimination, to confront external threats. Anyone could affiliate with another sect, and all sects were unified in confronting the occupier.

Sheikh Bouamama supervised the Sheikhiya sect, refining and organizing it according to his vision, making its source what he innovated from it. He named it the "Faithful Path" so that his cousins wouldn't feel he was usurping their inheritance from their first ancestor. What he intended for the sect was achieved with mastery, skill, and genius. The bottom-up approach in the dhikr made it contemporary, turning disciples and dervishes into a formidable army that struck fear in the hearts of enemies and achieved remarkable victories. He led an uprising that only ceased with his death, working tirelessly to unify the tribes (Belgheith, 2000). He turned "Ouled Sidi Sheikh," "Jadba," "Hamiyan," "Amor," and "Shanabah" into a formidable force, whereas they were previously engaged in disputes over pasture and water sources. He elevated them into history, as one

French commander remarked: "Bouamama's uprising is the cause of an entire people." Bouamama himself stated, "I was created for the welfare of the loyal children of this country, obedient to the commands of the Quran," and he often said, "The true army is the Quran."

Sheikh Bouamama made the enemy, with its formidable forces, reconsider its strategies in the face of resistances, regardless of their form or supporters. His revolution stemmed from the Sufi (Sheikhiya) tradition, rising against the dismal conditions experienced by Algerian citizens, understanding the realities of the era and pulsating with the aspirations of the future. In this sense, it complemented the

efforts initiated by Ahmed Bey, Emir Abdelkader, and others, deepening through the descendants of Sidi Sheikh and the rebels in In'ezz, Dghamsha, and the Jerrara region, forming a cornerstone upon which subsequent movements could build upon.

### **Conclusion:**

The Sheikhiya Sufi tradition raised the banner of jihad against French colonization, uniting its voice against it through various means and achieving remarkable results. This led the French colonial administration to recognize the power of this religious institution and attempt to suppress and distort its image. However, despite its diverse stances, the Sheikhiya Sufi tradition played a prominent role in cultural resistance, jihad for the sake of Allah, combating assimilation, and preserving the values of society and its Muslim identity through education, social solidarity, and political engagement.

The Sheikhiya tradition, belonging to the Sufi lineage, exhibits similarities with other Sufi paths in various worldly and spiritual aspects, encompassing both favorable and unfavorable dimensions. It emerged as a pivotal force during the 19th century, a period marked by Algeria's grappling with one of the most formidable forms of colonization in modern history. This significance was particularly pronounced during the tenure of Sheikh Bouamama, who devoted his life entirely to the service of his nation and its populace. Hence, it becomes imperative to recognize and commemorate this, emphasizing the noteworthy contributions of individuals across different historical epochs.

### **Results:**

- Sheikh Bouamama adopted a strict approach in combatting moral decadence and deviation from the fundamental tenets of authentic Islamic faith.
- Sheikh Bouamama achieved the consolidation of tribes and the accumulation of resources, arms, and munitions by leveraging the organizational structures within the Sheikhiya Sufi tradition.
- Sheikh Bouamama defiantly opposed the French occupiers and refused to capitulate to them, despite facing a considerable imbalance in military capabilities.
- The Sheikhiya Sufi tradition prominently contributed to fostering jihad among the Algerian tribes in the western Oran region.
- Many historians consider Sheikh Bouamama's revolution to be a national issue.
- The revolution spearheaded by Sheikh Bouamama resulted in a multitude of varied consequences.

Under pressure from the French, Sheikh Bouamama was compelled to retreat from Algeria and relocate to the Fijig region in Morocco, where he continued his struggle until his death.

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