

‘Iyād b. Mūsā (476/1088–544/1149)

‘Iyād b. Mūsā, better known as al-Qāḍī ‘Iyād, was a Mālikī jurist, traditionist and judge. He was born in Cueta (Sabta), a city whose status as a way-station for travelers afforded ‘Iyād numerous opportunities to study with renowned scholars as they traveled from the West to the East and vice versa. Most of his early years in Ceuta were spent in studying. His legal studies centered on the *Mudawwana* and the *Muwaṭṭa*’. At the age of 30, he spent a year studying in Andalusia. He then returned to Cueta, where his reputation as a scholar, strengthened by the year he spent in Andalusia, drew the attention of the ruling dynasty at the time, the Almoravids (430s/1040s–541/1147), who appointed him as judge in his city. During his 16-year tenure as judge of Cueta, ‘Iyād earned a reputation for both competence and integrity in his position. The authorities then transferred him to the Andalusian city of Granada, where he served as a judge for two years. After falling out of favor with the Almoravids, however, he was dismissed, and he returned to Cueta where he resumed teaching for the next six years.

‘Iyād was a loyal supporter of the Almoravids on account of their staunch adherence to Sunnism and the Mālikī school law. Accordingly, ‘Iyād opposed the reformist Almohads, whose founder, Ibn Tūmart (d. 524/1130), proclaimed himself the Mahdī and accused the Almoravids of corruption and heresy. ‘Iyād served as one of the leaders of the failed resistance to the Almohad movement (524/1130–668/1269). After the Almohads seized Cueta, ‘Iyād traveled to Cordoba to seek the assistance of Ibn Ghāniya (d. 543/1148), who had served as the governor of Andalusia under the Almoravids and remained loyal to them. Cueta then rebelled against the Almohads, who quickly subdued the uprising. As punishment for his involvement, the Almohads exiled ‘Iyād to the small, isolated village of Dāyy where he was appointed as a judge. Soon thereafter, ‘Iyād left to Marrakesh, where he passed away in unknown circumstances. Some biographers attributed his death to natural causes while others claimed that Ibn Tūmart ordered him to be assassinated for his opposition to the Almohads.

‘Iyād was a committed Mālikī and was recognized in his time as both a major legal authority and the most notable hadith scholar of the Islamic west. His *Mashāriq al-anwār* elucidates and explains individual words that appear in the hadith collections of the two *Ṣaḥīḥs* of al-Bukhārī and Muslim and the *Muwaṭṭa*’ (together which he dubbed “the three mother-books”). In it, ‘Iyād also offers commentary on some of the more abstruse hadiths as well as the identity of obscure hadith transmitters, and corrects errors that had arisen in some of the recensions available in his region which he blamed on relaxed standards of hadith transmission. ‘Iyād’s *Tartīb al-madārik wa taqrīb al-masālik li-ma’rifat al-‘ulamā madhhab Mālik* is a rich source of Mālikī biographies which includes the transmitters of the *Muwaṭṭa*’. It also presents a vigorous defense of the Mālikī school of law. A significant number of his judicial decisions were collected in the work *Madhāhib al-ḥukkām fī nawāzil al-aḥkām*.

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