

A B S T R A C T

*The Eastern Basrah and the Western Basra :
A close Relationship.*

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Basrah of Iraq and Basra of Morocco are the two poles around which evolved the historic process that united the Arabs from the Arabian Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean.

Iraqi Basrah was the first Islamic fortress in the west of "Abolla". Due to its geographical position, it was a melting pot of civilizations, a commercial centre, and a shelter for scholars. Populated then with half a million inhabitants, Iraqi Basrah is well remembered, especially, for its colossus scholars who have enriched the Arabic thought and left their impact on both Morocco and Andalusia, such as Hassan Al Basri, Al Jahidh, Sibawaih, Khalil Al Farahidi, Al Akhfach, and Wāsil Bnu A'ta'.

While Iraqi Basrah is famous and still flourishing, the Moroccan Basra, which was destroyed completely in the twelfth century, was also so important that we should make an effort to locate it geographically and historically

and show to what extent it was a strong link between Arabs from Andalusia to Iraq.

The Moroccan Basra is an Idrissi town located at about forty kilometres from the blue marsh (Moulay Bousselham). Famous Arab historians such as Ibn Haoukal, Yacout, Al Bakri, Ibn Adhari and Others, did not fail to mention it. Perhaps the town was built as a summer resort by Moulay Idriss II, but it is certain that it was conquered by Al Hakam II, king of Cordoba (363 H./973 A.D.), and destroyed by Abu Al Foutuh on Al Aziz Bi'llah's orders (368 H.).

According to some historians, Basra of Morocco was surrounded by a wall with ten gates and had a Mosque, two hammams, some gardens and grazing fields, and plains of wheat and cotton. It was known as Al Hamra because of its red earth. Its inhabitants traded mainly in cloth. In the tenth century its population was estimated to about two thousand families.

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or "hearths". Its women were known for their beauty all over Morocco.

From the third century of the Hegira, Basra of Morocco played an important role in the reinforcement of relationships among the Arabs from Cordoba to Bagdad. It was a resting place for caravans on their way from Andalusia to Bagdad, through Sijilmassa, Yemen, and Iraqui Basrah. Ibn Haoukal related that he was surprised to see a contract between two peoples from Sijilmassa concerning a debt of forty thousand dinars. "I have never heard of such a thing in the East at all", he said.

Basra of Morocco produced great personalities whose renown embraced North Africa,

such as : Mohammed Al Maknassi who classified the biggest bibliography ever known by Moroccans.

Moroccan scholars did not fail to deal, in their studies, with the erudites of the Eastern Basrah, especially Al Jahidh.

Al Akhfach and Sibawaih are two names that Moroccans used to give to their own erudites as an acknowledgement of their high knowledge, especially in grammar. Several Moroccan grammarians, indeed, thrived in various places of Morocco, and among some of them, a strong controversy was about the works of Sibawaih, who was supported, however, by Abu Bakr Al Khudb, Med Bnu Ahmed Bnu Tahar, Al Ishbili Al Fassi, and Ibnu Balbakht Aïssa Bnu Abdel Aziz Al Jazuli Al Murrakuchi.

...Thus, the two Basras contributed to tighten Arabs relationships Culturally, Commercially and Socially.