

SANKORE'



Institute of Islamic - African Studies International

www.sankore.org/www.siiasi.org

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا

CHAPTER VIII

IDENTIFICATION OF THE TUAREGS

The Tuaregs are the Massufa who trace their ancestry to the Sanhaja. The Sanhaja trace their lineage to the Himyar¹ as is mentioned in the Kitab 'l-Khilil 'l-Mawshiya Fii Dhikr Akhbar 'l-Marakhashiya. The actual quote is: "These are the Lamtun who are attributed to the Lamtuna from the descendents of Lamt. Lamt, Judaal, Lamṭ and Maṣṭuf trace their lineage to the Sanhaja. Lamt was the ancestor of the Lamtuna. Judaal was the ancestor of the Judaala. Lamṭ was the ancestor of the Lamṭa. Maṣṭuf was the ancestor of the Massufa. They continually journey in the desert as superb travelers and never stay in a single local nor have they a city in which to take refuge. Their journeys in the *Sahara* between the lands of Islam and the *Bilad's-Sudan* took two months travel.

The Tuaregs are on the *deen* of Islam and follow the *Sunna*. They perform the *jihād* against the *Bilad's-Sudan*. The Sanhaja trace their lineage to the Himyar. There are no blood relations between them and the Berbers except through a single kin. They originally left Yemen, journeyed through the *Sahara* and settled in the West. The original cause of this was one of the rulers of the Tubabî'a, who was unlike any of the kings of his people that proceeded him. None had attained the eminence which he had obtained, neither the might of his kingdom, the depth of his military raids, and the indignity of his enemies. He subdued the Arabs as well as the non-Arabs. All of the communities which preceded him were forgotten. He was once informed by one of the learned men concerning the recent events of history and about the revealed books of Allah to His Messenger, upon him be peace. He informed him that Allah `azza wa jalla had sent a Messenger who was the seal of the Prophets and had dispatched him to every nation. He believed in him and accepted all that he came with. It is said about him that he said in verse:

"I bore witness of Ahmad that he is

The Messenger of Allah the Creator of the breath of life.

If my years had extended to his time,

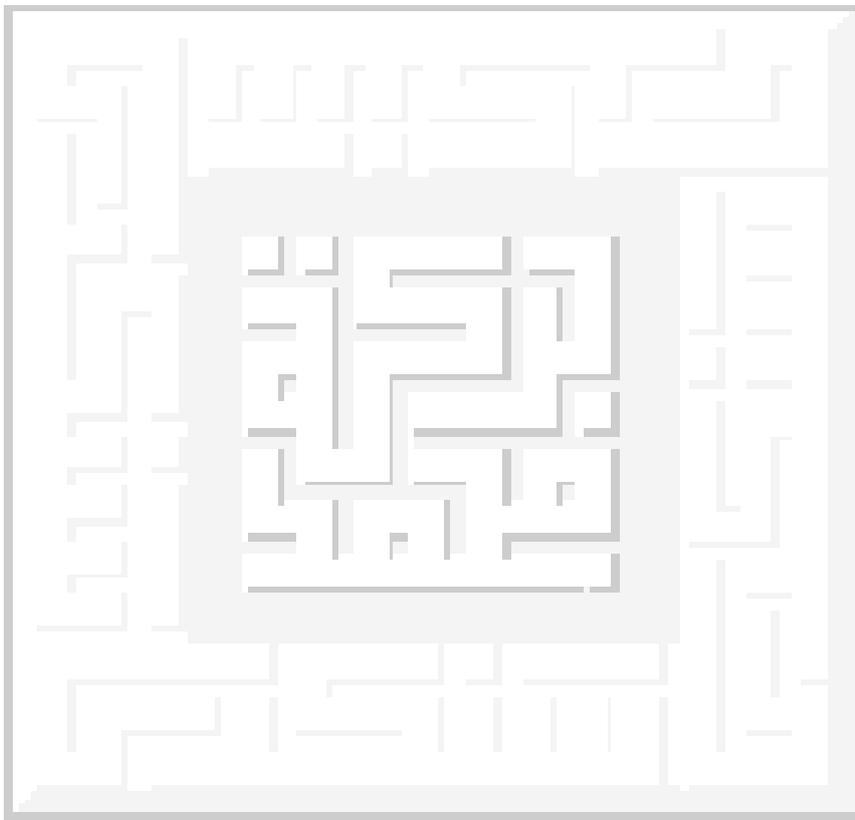
I would have been one of his *wazirs* and his cousin."

In many poetic verses there are proofs of this famous story. He then traveled to the Yemen and invited its people to what he believed. Only a small group from among his people, the Himyar, answered his call. When he died the disbelievers overcame the believers. Each of those who believed in him at Tubabî'a were afflicted with either: death, banishment or made into fugitives. Due to this they began to wear

¹ This is a collective cognomen for the pre-Islamic people of southern Arabia who entered Africa in pre-Islamic times.

the face veil (*talathamuu*) similar to their women. They then fled with their souls and dispersed in all the regions of Saba.²

The forefathers of those who presently veil themselves departed from Yemen and were the first to wear the face veils. They then moved from region to region and from local to local for many years until they reached the furthest west in the country of the Berbers. They were delighted by that land and settled there. The face veil became their manner of dress and they were not punished nor avoided except for that custom. They eventually became Berber by tongue by being in close proximity with them and through intermarriage. The *Amir* Abu Bakr ibn Umar ibn Ibrahim ibn Turiqet 'l-Lamtuni, who founded the red city of Marrakech was the one who brought them out of the west into the *Sahara* at the time that the Judaala threatened the lives of the Lamtuna.³ At that time he left behind his paternal cousin, Yusef ibn Tashfin over the Maghrib.⁴



Institute of Islamic-African Studies International

² Saba is the lands which include Yemen, Ethiopia and the surrounding region. This land was under the control of the Abyssinians.

³ He was the principal leader of the *al-Murabituun* movement which conquered Spain and Morocco.

⁴ This happened in 453 A.H./1061 C.E.